

# **News and Information on the Heating/Freezing/ Flooding at All Saints' Westboro Anglican Church and First United Church Ottawa**

February 6, 2026

We have had quite the 2 weeks at the church! As you know, on JANUARY 25th, we all attended a rather chilly service and fellowship in the hall. What followed was a series of heating system failures, freezing pipes, and floods. Members of both churches rallied quickly to help remove the water, lift items off the floor and out of the affected areas. Both churches switched to online Sunday services on February 1st.

This week, there have been more leaks. Professional cleaning and damage mitigation teams have been working each day to repair, test, and clean the systems. The work is still underway with Lamar Mason, the chair of the Joint Property Committee, overseeing the work. There is significant damage, and we are working with our insurance provider to address our claim. Time is required to dry out, remediate and repair the damage. There are dryers, heaters, and electrical cords, and most of the radiator covers are off, exposing the pipes for inspection and repair. It is not safe for people to be in the building, and any wet snow that is tracked in will increase the drying time, resulting in a further delay to return to normal use.

Our partnership team is in contact daily. Kathryn Otley, Kanana Muketha and Robert VanderBerg are the points of contact for accurate information. Please contact one of these three with any questions or concerns. If we do not have an immediate answer we will consult and respond as soon as possible.

## ***What does this mean for our churches?***

The building will be closed until February 16th.

We have just returned phone service to the church, and we have limited Wi-Fi and internet – not steady enough to use for Zoom this weekend.

**Therefore, service will be online from home this weekend (February 8th).**

Our hope is to be able to firm up the internet capability and offer online services projected from the church sanctuary on Sunday, the 15th and be back for in-person worship on the 22nd.

Please note that this schedule may change should any work delays be encountered. All rentals and church programs will be halted until the last week of February.

The Food Bank has adapted to serve clients at the door. Together we are preparing spaces for worship, gathering, meeting and working. It will be weeks before the offices will be ready for us to resume working in that space. Our office staff will temporarily relocate to the choir rooms of the respective churches.

These have been challenging weeks and we appreciate the support, through action and prayer, from our communities. Many have gone above and beyond to help – thank you. We will continue working together to resolve these issues and look forward to gathering in our space again. We will provide weekly updates until we are able to return to normal operations.

In peace and unity,  
The Venerable Kathryn Otley, Reverend Doctor Kanana Muketha and  
Robert VanderBerg, Chair of Council, First United