



ST JAMES UNITED CHURCH

Come Be Yourself

An Affirming Ministry

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Everett Hindley
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Room 208, Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, SK
S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Hindley:

The people of St. James United Church share the view of many people in Saskatchewan who are very concerned about the quickly growing number of deaths of IV drug users by overdose in our province.

As members of the United Church of Canada, we are guided and inspired by the teachings of Jesus who offered healing, including to those who were not seen as respectable in his society. He saw those lacking respect as people of worth and deserving of the help they needed. From this perspective, we commend the Government for its plan to create 13 safe consumption sites, as detailed in the Thursday, April 29th edition of the Leader Post in Regina.

Your long-range strategy obviously considers the serious level of advantage being taken by pushers and it reflects concern for the desperate circumstances of some marginalized people in the province. Further, it reflects belief that the life of every citizen matters - we strongly believe this as well. The other significant element is that sites provided for safe consumption can provide community connection for those who don't have that support in their lives.

In light of the above, we have two questions for you:

1. Would you provide some detail around the strategy you have in mind? Even though there will be a drug task force, the fact that direction has been given to develop the 13 sites suggests there is already an outline of at least a tentative plan in existence.
2. Longer-term solutions will take time. In the interim, will you consider public funding and other supports for the existing safe consumption sites in Regina and Saskatoon?

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,
Richard Hazel
Chair of Council
St. James United Church