

St. Andrew's United Church Community of Faith Board Meeting

ZOOM MINUTES

Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 21, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

Present: Diane Cowley, Janis Peters, Nathan Best, Barb Brockway, George Spencer, Doris Coulter, Joan Cooke, Donna Dunlop, Tom Allin, Alain Beaudin

Regrets: John Lennox, Lenore Lennox, Bob Thomas

1. **WELCOME** - Janis

2. **LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE** – Doris Coulter

3. **DEVOTION** - Janis

4. **OPENING PRAYER:** Rev. Debbie McMillan

5. **AGENDA REVIEW:**

Additions - M&P

Deletions -

6. **MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES –**

MOTION was made by Nathan Best, that “June 17, 2021, Board Minutes be approved as distributed.” Seconded by Diane Cowley. Carried

7. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) **ST. ANDREW'S STRUCTURE DOCUMENT REVIEW** – Standing Committees have reviewed and revised their responsibilities in accordance with the revised UC of C Manual. Due to vacation schedules, the next Structure Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 21st to review the remaining sections of the Structure document and then present it to the Board on Tuesday, November 16th. The Team received an email from Norm Jarvis, Pastoral Care, inquiring about the status of the Benevolent Fund, his revisions to their Mandate, and the Church Role. This matter will be deferred until Debbie has spent more time with the congregation to assess the needs and best practices.

b) **ST. ANDREW'S VISIONING** – Where to from here? Busy? Yes? That is when we get the most done! Right! Debbie will look further into a program to help to put a visioning together. Debbie has offered to look at the forms around a program she was familiar with and come back with some feedback on it next meeting. Janis will contact YWCA regarding a previous Visioning session, including other consultants.

- c) **PAINTING, CLEANING & TIDYING CHURCH** – This project is approximately three-quarters completed. There is a list of “To Do’s” on the bulletin board in the back foyer. Please look and see what you can help with and cross off whatever work you accomplish. Contact Janis Peters at 905-389-7428
- d) **NEW ELECTRONIC CHURCH SIGN** – Refer to B&G Report below.
- e) **LIVE STREAMING** – October 10, 2021, target date for installation completion
- f) **HFRC COVENANTING AGREEMENT** – Rev. Debbie received approved covenanting templates from HFRC. We will be hosting these services once we are able to have services in person at the church.
- g) **TECHNICAL COORDINATOR/SUPPORT POSITION - From: "Cottrell, Micol"**, Acting Minister, Pastoral Relation (covering for Diane Blanchard). “If it is a lay position, it does not need the approval of the Regional Council. I hope this provides clarity.” These discussions and decision-making will continue behind scenes. Until a resolution is approved by the Board, Nathan has volunteered to help assess the technical needs of the church to find a suitable candidate.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

- 9. **DEFERRED & FUTURE BUSINESS** (These items are either deferred or are ongoing pending future action)
 - a) Fresh Start Program
 - b) Rick Hansen Foundation – Pending report

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a) **REQUEST FROM REV. BOB TSCHANZ RE REFUGEE - DISCUSSION** “Ten or twelve years ago I worked through SISO with a family of five who was migrating from Iraq. We are still friends. The mother had another son (Haider - sp?) who had been borne to her out of wedlock when she was a teenager. He chose to remain in Iraq with his grandmother. Since then, he married, had a son, and his wife left him. The grandmother died. Haider and his son are, I believe, living in Turkey and want to come to Canada. The family here has been trying to sponsor them, but they need to have the backing of an authorized church. There would be no financial commitment, and Haider will have immediate employment in the family's garage here. I know that St. Andrew's and the Muslim Men's Prayer Group sponsored a large family two years ago. Is it possible that they could provide the legal niceties (I don't understand the details) that my friends require? Bob Tschanz.” There isn't a particular timeline. The family just wants to bring them here as soon as possible. Haider (sp?) and his son are on their own; with no family. Adil and his children here (his wife died of cancer two or three years ago) realize the Afghanistan crisis is likely to slow their application even more. They are alone in Turkey with no work or family. Adil's wife (Haider's mother) died about two years ago of a rare form of cancer, but Adil relates to Haider as his son.

It is understood that the situation with the refugees from Afghanistan is likely to cause a further delay, but it would be wonderful to get the application officially started.

Janis will look for some people to research what the process looks like and what our responsibilities are to take this on. Janis will talk to some of the church members that help with sponsoring the last family as well as Bob Tschanz to learn more about what we need to do.

- b) **PHOTO DIRECTORY** The previous company offered to edit another directory. We will revisit doing this in spring or fall 2022. It was suggested that we include pre-paid advertising in the back of the next directory.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Affirming Team (Bob Thomas) – No report

Buildings and Grounds (Evan Wilson & George Spencer) - A sub-committee of Buildings and Grounds has met in person several times over the summer, primarily trying to resolve the recommendation for the ***replacement of the external sign*** with an electronic version. When all aspects of the replacement are taken into consideration, the competing proposals are in the range of \$50 thousand, with a possible start-up next spring/summer. As the dollars are well more than the dollars originally suggested, we have met with a sign company to evaluate the possibility of retaining the existing sign footings, supports, and sign frame, replacing only the portion inside the frame (i.e., sign rehabilitation, instead of sign replacement, likely saving survey, and building permit costs). The electronics would be identical to a sign replacement. Again, because of COVID restrictions, the process is taking longer than we hoped.

A new contractor has been retained to deal with the **sidewalk replacement and window well repairs**, at an estimated construction cost of \$19,420. plus, taxes. Works likely next spring/summer. Other contracted works are delayed, primarily because of competition from well-funded institutions.

Many **painting and repair works** have taken place over the summer, and are continuing, along with continuing yard and routine maintenance works.

Concerning caretaking, our **caretaker** is currently at half time and half money, that being 15 hours per month. If approval to open is given, we will request full-time at 30 hours per month. We are trying to give focus direction with the limited hours.

Our committee members have limited knowledge of **air treatment systems**. If any of our church family can give guidance on this issue, it would be very much appreciated. This will go in the LOOP as an announcement for help. Janis will place this notice in the LOOP .

Christian Development - Sunday School Coordinator Job Description approved by the Board at the September 14th Ad Hoc meeting. The next step is approval by the Regional Council Human Resources at the end of September 2021. No further report.

Finance and Stewardship – Treasurer Alain Beaudin

2021 Budget Performance 1st Eight Months

Budgeted **Revenue** was under by \$21,000 which was more than offset by under Budget **Expenses** of \$40,000 in B & G, Human Resources, & Utilities.

In addition, we have received **CEWS** subsidy payments of \$28,700 YTD. & small business provincial **grants** of \$20,000. The bottom line is that we have a \$37,400 **surplus** YTD Vs a planned deficit of \$29,900 YTD. - a \$67,300 **improvement** over budget.

It should be noted that current **Offerings** continue to run approx. \$4,000 per month less than pre-pandemic levels.

The **CEWS** claim for period 19 was filed on **September** 18, 2021, for \$1,865.48

HORSESHOE FALLS REGIONAL COUNCIL (Tom Allin) Several communities of faith have inquired if the **vaccine passport** being instituted in Ontario applies to them.

The legal advice the regional council has received to date is that communities of faith do not have grounds to request this information. Privacy legislation protects medical information and there has been no provincial action mandating such information be shared in a community of faith. In fact, worshipping communities have been specifically exempted from the vaccine passport.

There is also the ethical/faith issue of denying people access to the church. How do we make the faith available to all and protect those who gather?

Communities of faith are encouraged to:

1. continue to follow provincial legislation and local public health advice when gathering in person;
2. screen attendees at any in-person event and maintain their contact information;
3. follow best practices when in-person: masks, maintain social distance, manage traffic flow through the building, provide sanitizer, minimize contact, follow advice re singing).

Several months ago Dr. Tam, Chief Public Health Officer, met with religious leaders asking us to encourage vaccinations. Dr. Tam outlined the research behind the vaccine and its safety and asked faith leaders to be partners in promoting vaccinations. Communities of faith are encouraged to follow these steps to manage risk.

This is our current advice. Throughout the pandemic, advice has changed based on new information. We will keep you posted if new information comes our way. As always, the decision rests with the governing body of the community of faith and these are recommendations to them.

Any governing body that feels vaccine passports should be required for worship is encouraged to write their local Member of Provincial Parliament, Minister of Health, the Honorable Christine Elliott, and Premier, the Honorable Doug Ford, to advocate for an expansion of the legislation.

Ministry and Personnel (Tom Allin) – No Report ahead of time. However, Tom mentioned that someone was outside the church banging on the doors and windows while a person alone. The person was not familiar with St. Andrew's protocol regarding calling the police; therefore, call a couple from the congregation who lived nearby. Janis will ensure a notice is placed in the LOOP to reinforce that, should anyone feel threatened or unsafe in the church, 911 should be called immediately. This same notice will be posted within the church as well. Tom suggested having Minister reserved parking spots insight of the security cameras at the front and back of the church. B&G will look into this suggestion

Outreach (Chair vacant currently) – No Report

Pastoral Care/Friendly Visitors (Norm Jarvis & Donna & Bev Dunlop) – Friendly Visitors will send Thanksgiving cards to the members of the congregation who cannot attend services and to those known to need support.

Trustees (Rich Cooke)

Memorial Fund - Revenue for the 8 months totaled \$6,444, consisting of \$6,432 in memorial gifts & \$12 in interest. Expenses were nil. The balance in the fund is \$10,641.

The Board approved the reallocation of the Memorial Fund monies toward a new electronic sign.

It was hoped this project would be completed prior to the cold weather.

Trustee Fund - Revenue for the 8 months was \$46,212, consisting of \$3,667 in Manse GIC interest, \$148 in Operating GIC interest, \$2,358 in Trustee GIC interest & \$39 in bank interest. In addition, \$40,000 of Operating Fund monies were entrusted to the Trustees
Expenses for the period were \$48,955, consisting of \$5,140 for insurance, the \$3,667 in Manse GIC income transferred to the Operating Fund & \$148 in Operating Fund GIC interest rolled over Of the \$40,000 of entrusted monies, a new 1 year cashable GIC was purchased for \$30,000.
The balance in the fund is \$266,953, plus the Building Fund Entrusted Monies of \$146,461, plus Operating Fund entrusted Monies of \$80,162 for a total of \$493,580.

An Operating Fund GIC at Tangerine in the amount of \$40,147.95 matures on 25 October 2021. The Trustees' Investment group has reviewed investment opportunities for these monies.

A motion was made by Alain Beaudoin that “the Operating Fund GIC, in the amount of \$40,197.95, which matures on 25 October 2021, be rolled over with interest into a 1-Year Cashable GIC at Meridian at a rate of 0.85% at maturity.” Seconded by Doris Coulter. Carried.

UCM (Leon Mitchell) - No Report

UCW (Diane Cowley) - UCW need a new secretary as the existing secretary needs to step down for health reasons.

Worship (Paul Holder) - We ended June on a bittersweet note as we bid farewell to Laurie White and Ken MacDonald after they had led us through sixteen months of pandemic closure of the sanctuary and into the world of virtual worship. They did a fantastic job, and both will be greatly missed.

Alain Beaudin led three services and I followed with three more in July and early August, and then she was there.....she of the radiant smile, our new full time minister, Rev. Debbie McMillan. Alain did a great interview with her on her first Sunday as the worship leader. That gave us a lovely introduction to her and let us know a little bit more about her and her background. Then she followed with four messages called "Introductions" and we learned some more. Now she is into a series of messages on the relatively new liturgical season of Creation. So, already it seems that we are moving forward on a new road of hope and new beginnings. We are planning to be open again for worship in the sanctuary in October once all the protocols for safety and the service procedures have been established.

Another big thank you to Cindy Juriga, our music director, who has steadfastly selected and played music for ALL of the virtual services since March of last year, a task which I can assure you is not as easy as she makes it look and sound.

Thanks to all those who have been involved in putting together our virtual services over the last sixteen months. You have done a stellar job, and now we move forward into a new future!

12. MINISTER REMARKS – Rev. Debbie McMillan

I want to begin by thanking all of you for making my first month in St. Andrew's so enjoyable. The plants you have given me are doing so well. I have already had to transplant them. I guess they are happy and content---just like me.

I have enjoyed the luxury of only driving 3 minutes and 12 seconds---rather than 40 minutes to work. I have enjoyed the luxury of doing one service instead of three---each one with different scriptures customized to suit different settings. Having one service is a blessing—and so is living in the neighbourhood!

I have been doing all of the things that ministers normally do:
making visits;
attending meetings;
leading worship and presiding over funerals.

What isn't so normal is how COVID protocol affects all of that work. It's tougher, but it feels so good to be busy.

I met with Josie and with Cindy on my first day. I want to thank them for continuing to help me get used to the workflow of our church. It amazes me how busy our community of faith still is even though our worship space is still closed.

I met with Tom Allin and Hugh Sherwood on that same day. Thanks, gentlemen, for answering all of my questions. You are both so easy to talk to.

I met Alain and Aidan. I am in awe of the St. Andrew's work they and their whole family took on through COVID. I thank them and Jenn Bonner for their prep work and ongoing ministry to all of us.

I met with the Ad Hoc "Re-opening" team, the board, the governance restructuring team, and CD as well—

all within my first month. Thank you to all of those team members for answering all my questions and teaching me about St. Andrew's.

It has been exciting to book a wedding and set up a baptism too!

It has been exciting to work on creating a Sunday School Co-Ordinator position to help us make sure we have children's ministry in place even when we don't have the halftime staff position set up.

It has been exciting to talk about creating a tech position.

It has been exciting to work with Jack Licop and set up our first Youth Group Outing for 2021 set up!

It is exciting to prepare a covenanting service as a Horseshoe Falls regional rep for a colleague who is now at Linden Park: she and I were both in the same presbytery when I lived in Barrie.

Oh and heads up: 7 of my written works will be in the 2022 United Church Lenten Devotional!

All of that in just one month. Can you imagine where we will all be in one year if this pace keeps up? That question excites me!

Thanks again, everyone. I love how well we are working as a team. May God bless us in our new endeavours---as there will be many more to come.

Yours in Christ, The Rev. Debbie McMillan

Prayers and Benediction – Closing Prayer – Rev. Debbie McMillan

Adjournment - 8:40 p.m.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING: Tuesday, October 19, 2021, 7:00 pm
ZOOM? Who knows?**