

**MINUTES OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD
OF SYDENHAM-HERITAGE UNITED CHURCH
On Wednesday, December 8, 2021**

Present: Sharon Davidson, Norma Janzen, BJ Leighton, Larry Pickard, Jacquie Scatcherd, Rev. Paul Shepherd, Ron Stinson, Lorne White, Yvonne Wright

Regrets: Terry Matheson, Darrell Picketts,

Absent: Andrew Advincula, Shelley Grisdale

Sharon called the meeting to order.

Land Acknowledgement offered by Sharon

Devotion offered by Ron – reading from ‘365 Meditations’ titled “Being Real Instead of Being Right”

Congregational Health – no items

Motion to accept the agenda moved by Ron Stinson and seconded by Larry Pickard. Carried.

Motion to accept the Minutes of November 10, 2021 with the following corrections moved by Lorne White and seconded by Ron Stinson. Carried.

Corrections:

- **Under Community Day, second bullet should read “music was well received many thanks to Sonny Sinclair and Jim Linington for their roles in organizing the music”**
- **Third bullet – correct \$200 to \$300**

Business Arising from the Minutes

1. Seasons Ministry

- Continued discussion about this long term outreach ministry of our congregation
- Seasons does not wish to recommence these services unless they can be guaranteed a weekly service
- Board considered the history of this ministry
- Challenge at this time is having a full roster to commit to weekly provision of services – once a month by minister, other services to be staffed by lay leaders
- There are some differing understanding of role/expectation of minister/lack of clarity in between the job description of minister and position of M&P that this should be staffed more by lay leaders than minister
- Effort to bring other congregation in to share this ministry have not met with success
- **Discussion**
- **Action:** no resolution, will come back for update to future meetings.

2. Rental Agreement

- Draft agreements have been circulated to board members for review
- No concerns expressed about content

Motion to accept the Rental Agreements for use by the Property Committee moved by Ron Stinson and seconded by Lorne White. Carried.

- Thanks to the committee who developed these agreements

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3. Harassment Policy

- The United Church of Canada Harassment Policy has been circulated to board members to review
- Recommendation of M&P that this be posted alongside our Congregational Behavioural Covenant
- While there is a section on Racism in this United Church of Canada Policy we need to ensure that the fuller document authored by The United Church of Canada is also posted with the Harassment Policy and Behavioural Covenant

Motion that Sydenham-Heritage United Church accepts The United Church of Canada Harassment Policy as our Congregational policy and that it be posted in the church alongside our Behavioural Covenant moved by BJ Leighton and seconded by Ron Stinson. Carried.

Minister Report

- Advent groups have commenced
- Interfaith group continues
- Brantford General Hospital Spiritual Care Office is looking to local churches who may be interested in donating objects that reflect their community of faith
- Paul raised concern within the congregation
- He has been told that there are people choosing not to participate in events/committees because they feel they will not be respected for their views
- Paul believes there have been polarizing conversations on the Board
- His challenge is what is the ‘because’ preventing people from participating?
- How do we deal with people we don’t agree with?
- **Discussion**
- **Action:** Board and congregation need to determine how to address feeling of being “unsafe” within our community of faith
- Need to dust off our Behavioural Covenant that speaks to this issue

Correspondence - none

Decision Making and Communication Process

- Concern expressed about the **process** of the recent decision to resume singing and responsive readings during worship
- This concern is not about the decision but about the **process**
- The input of the Worship Committee was sought on this question – process included an open and inclusive email discussion and a subsequent motion was processed through the same process and sent to the Board Chairs as per their request
- The Process was not open and inclusive at the Board level, not all members were included in original email albeit unintentionally, no email motion processed by the Board before the action was initiated
- **Discussion**
- **Action:** This item needs to be raised, moved, approved and documented within minutes

Motion that Sydenham-Heritage permits singing under masks while maintaining COVID protocols and incorporates Responses during the worship service, under masks while maintaining the COVID protocols effective November 28, 2021 moved by Yvonne Wright and seconded by Ron Stinson. Carried.

- Any future situations where decisions need to be made outside regular meetings must include intentional, transparent and inclusive processes

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Nominating Committee

- Our Annual General Meeting will be scheduled for February
- Need to reactivate Search Committee
- Sharon will contact past committee members to determine who might be interested in this role again for 2022

Committee Reports

Spiritual

- Many thanks and much appreciation for the work of the Pastoral Care Committee
- One of the strongest committees in our congregation
- Worship is looking for more members and a co-chair for 2022
- Brought forward that singing has increased Sunday attendance...we need to consider Christmas Eve – if there is overflow would it mean use of auditorium or a second service? Do we begin early registration for Christmas Eve?

Youth – no report

Stewardship (Fundraising, Social, Outreach)

- Meeting last evening
- Shelley has resigned as Board Representative, Verna will step into this role
- Sunday Supper Club on hold for another year, may need to consider a different outreach to the community served by this program – such as a link to services like the Roger Boyd Ministry
- Christmas Breakfast seems to be moving forward for this year with support of Benevolent Fund
- Stewardship Analysis Report outcomes showed good work on behalf of M&S; key priorities for our congregation are generosity, gratitude, legacy planning, benevolent stories, minutes for mission, why do I give testimonials, seminars in financial planning, PAR

M&P

- Cost of living increases for our employees brought forward for consideration
- The increase in Ontario this year is 2.4%

Motion that we provide cost of living increases to Aileen Johnston and Linda Brown effective January 1, 2022 moved by BJ Leighton and seconded by Ron Stinson. Carried.

- Paul has moved from Category D to Category E as he now is in the 11-13 years of service category of the United Church of Canada which translates to \$62,696.00 inclusive of 1.3% cost of living increase. This is combined with the 18% in his contract which translates to \$11,285.00. Total salary is \$73,981.00

Motion to recommend the increase in salary from Category D to Category E inclusive of the 18% for Rev. Paul Shepherd moved by Ron Stinson and seconded by BJ Leighton. Carried.

Communication

- Advent Newsletter has been distributed

Property

- Stage curtain has been installed
- Some concern about the Christmas tree lights...Paul offered to look at it and determine if the challenges can be addressed

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Trustees - no report

Finance

- Have initiated conversation with Trevor about shifting to employee as per direction of United Church of Canada
- Concern expressed about the content of the written review completed by Tammi Crayne
- Sense is the actual review was completed well, a full month of records was reviewed as is usual practice and there were no concerns, however, the letter does not state that
- Discussion about if a bookkeeper should be sought for next review
- Ron will follow up with Tammi about content of letter
- Finance is looking for new members

Treasurers Report

- Budget meeting last week
- Books are complete January to November 2021 – current deficit is \$67,828.00, in past December is a higher giving month so anticipate this amount will reduce
- Projecting a \$65,000 deficit 2022
- Minister salary increase will be added to budget
- All board members are asked to review the proposed Budget documents and bring questions, concerns, comments to January meeting

Horseshoe Falls

- Summary of Fall Conference circulated

Edge

- Received information about New Horizons, a grant for Seniors Program – to support healthy aging and aging in place
- The timeframe is very tight (submission date is December 2021) which is unfortunate

Faith Profile

- This work will be completed in New Year

Horseshoe Falls

- Andrew will be our youth delegate to General Council

Shared Ministries

- None of the other churches are participating in the shared calendar

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 12, 2022

Darrell will chair

Norma volunteered to provide devotion

Paul closed the meeting with a prayer

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Sharon Davidson, Co-Chairperson

Darrell Picketts, Co-Chairperson

Jacquie Scatcherd, Secretary