

**MINUTES OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD
OF SYDENHAM-HERITAGE UNITED CHURCH
On Wednesday, October 14, 2020**

Present: Jane Baxter, Sharon Davidson, Norma Janzen, Terry Matheson, Larry Pickard, Darrell Picketts, Jacquie Scatcherd, Rev. Paul Shepherd, Ron Stinson, Lois White, Lorne White, Yvonne Wright.

Absent: Sue Cross, Shelley Grisdale; Bella Leighton,

Regrets: Gail Merritt,

Sharon called the meeting to order.

Paul offered the Land Acknowledgement

Sharon lit the Christ Candle.

Lois offered the devotion: “All I Ever Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten”

Congregational Health – no items or discussion

Motion to accept the agenda moved by Ron Stinson and seconded by Darrell Picketts. Carried.

Review and Approval of the Minutes of September 9, 2020 moved by Lois White and seconded by Yvonne Wright. Carried. Many thanks to Ron Stinson for recording those minutes.

Review and Approval of the Minutes of October 1, 2020 moved by Ron Stinson and seconded by Norma Janzen with the following corrections:

1. Terry Matheson should not be noted as absent
2. Under updates, bullet 4 should read ”Larry will reach out to Shelley to share suggestion of Take Away Turkey Dinner” not to advise of Sharon’s intention to seek another representative from Outreach to the Board.

Business Arising

1. Voting of Board Chairs

- Within the United Church of Canada the chair can only vote to break a tie – the Manual counsels that if a tie needs to be broken – the Chair and the Board step back and reflect as such a situation may indicate the group is on the wrong path
- If the Chair wishes to participate in the discussion prior to any vote, they must leave the active chair role for that discussion and this is to be reflected in the minutes

2. Reopening Committee Update

- Version 5 was presented to the Board on October 1st
- Feedback was taken back to the committee by Paul – all feedback incorporated with the exception of the following item
- Question about how to respond to an individual who does not wish to comply with the guidelines was considered by the committee; committee did not wish to add any language to guide in that potential situation; the committee felt individuals need to step up and enforce the messaging of the guidelines

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- No masks would be worn by the minister, lay leader or music director
- Board chose not to act on the document at last meeting
- It is felt clarity and consistency about expectations is needed by all who are in the building
- Does Board wish to approve this document at this time?
- Discussion

Motion to accept the “How to Be Church Safely Version 6” be accepted and approved as presented moved by Darrell Picketts and seconded by Norma Janzen. Carried.

Ministerial Report

- Lay Supervision Team established for Jane Baxter
- Sunday Supper Club meeting of all providers from the varied faith groups occurred this past month – decision to not entertain resuming meals Sunday Supper Club until after new year
- Reopening committee participation
- End of Life program planning
- 54 pastoral events
- 2 memorials
- Planning is actively happening for Remembrance Day and Advent discussion groups
- Biased Discussion group had 14 participants
- Paul’s book “Evolving Christianity – Using Scientific thinking to evolve Christianity to fight racism and other social diseases” is being released shortly
- Brantford Immigration Partnership – as the group defines its focus Sydenham-Heritage United Church can determine how to connect
- Gordon Welsh passed away on Monday
- Mike Dowholis passed away a week ago

Jane Baxter’s Report

- All three learning goals are active
- LST (Lay Supervision Team) in place
- End of Life Café – met with the group that was originally formed under Rev. Bill’s leadership (the original sessions were postponed due to COVID)
- Seven sessions will happen via Zoom – planning is occurring
- Prayer group – occurring each Tuesday at 6:30pm – themed each week; Jane also participating in services weekly by offering Prayers of the People

M&P Committee Report & Music Director Contract

- At most recent M&P meeting informal conversation about the expected Reopening Document guidelines and impact for staff
- Contact Designates for staff shuffled
 - Aileen – Carol Ann Sawkins
 - Paul – Ron Stinson
 - Trevor – BJ Leighton
 - Linda – Sheila Gollan
- Exit interview with Rev. Bill occurred September 14th
- A very positive meeting
- Three items M&P wish to share with the Board as feedback

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1. Poor communication even at the Board level
2. Current governance model is not working with some committees reporting to the Spiritual Lead
3. Worship should have a representative to the Board

Contract with Music Director

Trevor provided feedback regarding the terms of the contract as outlined in the October 1st minutes

- He is excited and honoured to be offered the position
- He expressed feeling welcomed by the Sydenham-Heritage United Church community
- He has requested four paid absences annually – with any more being his financial responsibility
- He has requested \$450.00 a week to accommodate time to meet online service needs and to work towards increasing the number of hymns during worship, and to accommodate the time to manage the choir online
- Concern on part of Board that contract currently reads “temporary”
- Discussion

Motion that Trevor Dalton be paid the equivalent of \$450.00 a week, retroactive to October 1, 2020 moved by Terry Matheson and seconded by Ron Stinson. Carried.

- **Decision**
- The away time will be granted as requested
- The contract will no longer be titled “temporary”
- **Action: small committee will be set to develop and finalize the terms and conditions of the contract – Terry Matheson, BJ Leighton, Trevor Dalton and Norma Janzen**

Correspondence – none

Issue of Absenteeism

- Committees where absenteeism of representation at board meetings; significant period of time without committee meetings or significant period of time without reports being provided to Board Meetings is an issue for the following committees: Outreach, Youth, Spiritual, Stewardship
- Sharon, as she indicated at last meeting reached out to Outreach Committee members, small committee (4 or 5); members appear to have stepped away for varied reasons, has gone from a very active group to inactive
- Spiritual coordinator – the role has not been active
- Pastoral Care and Worship Committees (which are intended to report to the Spiritual lead) are very active
- Stewardship has become inactive
- Youth has not been active
- Cannot continue to move forward without addressing these concerns, while the break in activity made some sense in March when the hope was all would be normal in September, the pandemic is not resolving soon and it is felt we can't remain “on hold” indefinitely
- There is great need in our community, how can we respond, participate as the church we wish to be at this time – recently a request was made that Sydenham-Heritage contribute food to an outreach to those on the street being headed by another congregation and apparently our response was no, this is a concern
- Discussion
- **Action**

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- Paul requested to convene a meeting of the Outreach Committee to address how to reactivate this committee in a manner that permits safety and participation in community efforts
- Stewardship will be brought to the table for conversation following the Outreach meeting
- If necessary volunteers to both committees will be canvassed from the congregation

Committee Reports

Spiritual – no report

Worship

- Planning occurring for Remembrance Day service and Advent services
- Bell Lane services are going well, 25 in attendance each week
- Prayer group is occurring under leadership of Jane
- Trevor's contract is being finalized

Pastoral Care

- Active committee
- Phone tree continues to provide contact as fits for each recipient of the contact (contact is minimally monthly)
- Newsletter being prepared by Communication Committee will address the concern that there may be people falling through the cracks – it will provide information on how to connect to the church during this time

Youth – no report

Outreach – no report

Stewardship – no report

Communication

- Website clean up is happening
- Announcement section updated
- Board minutes are currently contained on website under announcements
- Discussion
- **Action:** Board minutes older than three months will be archived and can be accessed by link that will be available
- Trevor's bio has been added to the team
- Snippets is being sent to 215 email addresses weekly and opened by 40% of recipients; 15% of those recipients used Snippets to access the website
- Newsletter is ready to be sent out to 210 addresses – will offer information about how to access the church during this time, update on building and audio/video projects; it is hoped that the newsletter will be monthly

Property

- Installation of video and sound system ongoing
- Committee requesting consent of board to remove Bill's name from outside sign and replace with Paul's
- Discussion

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- **Action:** the Board agreed to this update to the sign
- Gordon Welsh donated \$8,000.00 for Sanctuary flooring refinishing project
- Property committee is requesting that the Board consider applying the dollars originally approved for the Sanctuary floor to be utilized to refinish the Auditorium floor (the original quotes for auditorium floor were \$10,000 - \$12,000)
- Discussion
- **Action:** Board will discuss this request further at November meeting
- Larry will write a letter on behalf of the Board to the family of Gordon Welsh recognizing his contribution

Trustees – no report

Finance

- Givings are down \$17,001.00 compared to last year
- In 2019 there were 124 givers
- In 2020 there have been 117 givers
- Between April and September 2020 there have been 83 givers
- Income is down \$36,926.00
- Deficit is currently \$50,185.00 compared with last year at this time \$30,931.00
- Wage subsidy application moving forward
- Rough calculations show Sydenham-Heritage United Church should receive approximately \$45,000.00 in wage subsidies – which would reduce the deficit to approximately \$5,000.00
- Norma requires a letter for Revenue Canada, from the Board, authorizing her to act on our behalf in the Wage Subsidy application and to be able to access “my business account” as required for this process

Motion that Norma Janzen be authorized to act on behalf of Sydenham-Heritage United Church to access “My Business Account #119207645RR0001” to complete the Wage Subsidy Application process moved by Norma Janzen and seconded by Darrell Picketts. Carried.

- **Action:** Norma will request Aileen place the letter on letterhead
- Darrell and Jacquie will sign the letter on behalf of the Board

Edge

- Will explore funding options for an elevator as part of our visioning

Horseshoe Falls

- Virtual conference set for Nov 12-15, 2020
- Sydenham-Heritage profile needs to be updated and submitted in 2021 (we are currently using the JNAC)
- This work had commenced just before COVID shutdown – will need to be a focus moving forward

New Business - none

Closing prayer offered by Jane

Devotion for next meeting – Terry Matheson

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Next Meeting: November 11, 2020 Darrell will chair

Sharon Davidson, Co-Chairperson

Darrell Picketts, Co-Chairperson

Jacquie Scatcherd, Secretary