

STRATHROY UNITED CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES
SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2021 10:45 AM

PRESENT: Cathy Adkin, Dennis Adkin, Andre Aerts, Shirley Aerts, Elgin Austen, Patti Baratta (Secretary), Barb Bett, Mike Bett, Brenda Bourdeau, Marie Campbell, Ian Carter, Joan Carter, Joan Childs, Art Clark, Janet Clark, Wanda Dickey, Dianne Dixon, Colleen Fletcher, Donna Garrod, Valerie Garrod, Terry Gentleman, Diane Goodhand, Doug Goodhand, Marjorie Harris, Arlene Johnson, Alice Jolliffe, Ken Jolliffe, Patti Krista, Rayner Krista, Gary Krupa, Irene Krupa, Sandra Linton, Barbara MacKinnon, Rev. Brad Morrison, Sarah Morrison, David Morton, Gail Morton, Peter Stenzel, Ida Traxler, Anne Walker, Don Walker, Tina Zimmermann **42 Present.**

1. Constitution of the Annual Congregational Meeting and Opening Prayer Rev. Brad Morrison
2. Appointment of Chairperson and Secretary
 Motion by Dianne Dixon / Sandra Linton that Marjorie Harris be appointed Chairperson for this 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting. **CARRIED**
 Motion by Tina Zimmermann / Ida Traxler that Patti Baratta be appointed Secretary for this 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting. **CARRIED**
3. Motion to Allow Adherents to Vote
 Marjorie Harris officially closed Church Council meeting as quorum established.
 Motion by David Morton / Barb MacKinnon allowing adherents to vote on financial and administrative matters. **CARRIED**
 Motion by David Morton / Barb MacKinnon allowing adherents to vote on mission and ministry matters. **CARRIED**
 Motion by David Morton / Barb MacKinnon allowing adherents to vote on pastoral relationship matters. **CARRIED**
4. Approval of the Agenda
 Motion by David Morton / Dianne Dixon to approve the agenda as printed. **CARRIED**
5. Approval of Minutes of All 2020 Congregational Meetings
 Motion by Sandra Linton / Cathy Adkin that the Minutes of the March 1, 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting be accepted as printed on pages 9 to 14. **CARRIED**
 Motion by Sandra Linton / Cathy Adkin that the Minutes of the November 1, 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting be accepted as printed on pages 15 to 16. **CARRIED**
6. In Memoriam Rev. Brad Morrison
 Rev. Brad read the names of the deceased while lighting a candle. This was followed by a minute of silence.

7. Approval of the 2020 Annual Reports of Council, Teams, and Groups, excluding Finance and Nominating Teams

It was noted that the Celebration of Baptisms as listed on page 28 of the Annual Report should read "Lucas Arnold Kal Fickling, **son** of Jeffery Fickling and Kelsey Kalverda".

Motion by David Morton / Barb MacKinnon to receive the 2020 reports. **CARRIED**

Motion by Ida Traxler / Ian Carter to approve the 2020 reports, excluding Finance and Nominating Teams. **CARRIED**

8. Review and Approval of the 2020 Financial Report

Patti Krista

- **Balance Sheet – Cash:** Chequing Account at \$156,844. In 2021, there has been a transfer of \$96,000 to Frontier Capital. Large donation of shares (over \$30,000) received in 2020 and split between General and Compassionate Funds.
- **Balance Sheet – Investments:** Other Equity Funds of \$24,860 refers to bequest of three equity funds from the Estate of Dorothy Linnell. Unrealized Loss from Other Equity Funds is \$587. Frontier Capital Investments increased from \$320,444 in 2019 to \$398,955 in 2020. Unrealized Gain from Frontier Capital is \$85,135.
- **Statement of Receipts and Expenses - General Fund:** Envelope Donations higher than budgeted due to donation of shares over \$30,000 which were sold via BMO Nesbitt Burns and then transferred to Libro. This donation was split between General and Compassionate Funds. Fundraising Revenue reduced due to COVID-19 pandemic. Successfully applied for Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) which subsidized staff employment. By end of year 2020, \$28,506 has been provided via CEWS. Total Revenue is \$152,701. Teams did a good job controlling expenditures which was also reduced to the pandemic. Total Expenditures is \$206,125. Transfer of Unrestricted Bequest Fund Interest & Realized Gain to Operations was \$10,467 which reduced Total Excess of (Expenditures over Receipts) to \$42,956. Final Deficit at End of Year is \$37,404 after \$5,553 Surplus at Beginning of Year applied.
- **Statement of Team Expenses – General Fund:** Please refer to pages 35 to 36 for the details of Team expenses.
- **Special Projects Fund:** Total Special Projects Fund is \$5,317. As there was no special project identified in 2020, this fund continues to grow.
- **Mission and Service Fund:** There was \$10,152 raised through Envelope Donations. M&S Soup & Roll Lunch Fundraising raised \$384. Bequest Fund Interest of \$4,464 allocated to meet pledge of \$15,000.
- **Compassionate Fund:** The Balance on Hand at End of Period is \$13,866.
- **Bequest Fund:** Donation from Linnell Estate of \$24,860 recorded under Unrestricted Bequests. Please refer to page 39 for deductions made during the year. Total Closing Balance is \$1,840,838.
- **Schedule of Investments:** BMO Global Smart (Initial Value 20,000) represents the Principal Protected Note. If this security is held to the Maturity date, the minimum amount to be realized at the Maturity date will be its initial value.
- **Account Analysis – Solar Panels:** The Solar Panels will be paid off by mid-2022. Afterwards, that revenue will be directed towards the General Fund.

Motion by Dianne Dixon / Sandra Linton to approve the 2020 Financial Report found on pages 33 to 47.

CARRIED

Question: What discussion has occurred regarding the \$85,135 of Unrealized Gains from Frontier Capital?

Answer: No official discussion has occurred to date due to the volatility of the markets in 2020. The Investment Team will be discussing what to do regarding the \$85,135 of Unrealized Gains from Frontier Capital.

Question: As the Compassionate Fund is doing well, what will be done with it?

Answer: Church Council was unaware that large year-end donation had been split between the General and Compassionate Funds. The Compassionate Fund will be discussed at next Council meeting.

9. Financial Review Report

Joan Childs

Joan Childs noted that a financial review is not an audit. All documents have been reviewed and the Balance Sheet verified. The amounts shown on the financial statements accurately reflect the books of account. The transactions recorded on the books of account are complete and up to date. There is adequate documentation to support the amounts shown on the Balance Sheet and the transactions reflected on the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures. Thank you to Tim McMillan and Patti Baratta for their cooperation and keeping accurate records.

Motion by Barb MacKinnon / Don Walker to accept and approve the 2020 Financial Review Report found on page 48.

CARRIED

Motion by Don Walker / Ida Traxler to accept Church Council's recommendation that \$37,404 be allocated from the Unrestricted Bequest Fund to the General Fund to eliminate the deficit effective December 31, 2020.

CARRIED

10. Presentation and Approval of the 2020 Budget Proposal

Patti Krista

- Patti Krista thanked Joan Childs for her Financial Review on behalf of the Finance Team and Strathroy United Church.
- **Receipts:** Anticipate that Envelope Donations and Fundraising will remain low. Note that the Roast Beef Dinner scheduled for April was not considered at the time budget was drafted. Rentals include The Stepping Stone. While the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) is not included in the budget, there is a possibility that it can still be applied for in 2021. Total revenue amount expected to be \$152,703.
- **Expenditures:** Property Team expenses have increased due to changes expected in utilities. Trustees' expenses have also increased due to significant increase in insurance. The Presbytery Assessment amount has also gone up. Total expenditures amount expected to be \$206,124, for a deficit of \$53,421.

Motion by Ken Jolliffe / Barb Bett to approve the 2021 Budget found on pages 49 to 52.

CARRIED

11. 2021 Mission & Service Objective

Motion by Dianne Dixon / Joan Carter that we accept and approve Council's recommendation to set the 2021 Mission & Service objective at \$13,000.

Question: Why is the Mission & Service objective decreased?

Answer: Before restructuring, the Presbytery Assessment was paid out of the Mission & Service Fund. Previously, the total amount pledged for Mission & Service, included a compulsory amount for denominational assessment and a voluntary amount designated for Mission & Service. As such, Mission & Service was paying for the administrative work as well as local support. With the restructuring, amounts raised for Mission & Service are directed to

local support projects only, while the Presbytery Assessment pays for the administrative work that was previously paid out of Mission & Service. For example, prior to restructuring, if \$15,000 was raised for Mission & Service, \$2,000 of that would be for administrative costs with the remainder (\$13,000) going towards local support projects. As a result, the compulsory amounts of the Presbytery Assessment are increasing to replace the money that was given through Mission & Service. In conclusion, the same amount of money is being directed towards Mission & Service.

Question: Why is the Presbytery Assessment amount equivalent to the amounts budgeted in 2018 and 2019?

Answer: The Presbytery Assessment went down in 2020 due to huge adjustments to the congregation. Given that Strathroy United Church was in a deficit position at the time of restructuring, the lowest tiered amount was chosen. The amount budgeted in 2021 should be the maximum amount.

It was commented that reducing the Mission & Service objective by \$2,000 would reflect poorly on Strathroy United Church given as there is \$1,840,838 in the Bequest Fund. Despite difficulties, Strathroy United Church did well in 2020 as the Unrealized Gain from investments was more than the deficit incurred.

It was also commented that while Strathroy United Church meets the Mission & Service objective, it is not often done through Envelope Donations and M&S Soup & Roll Lunch Fundraising.

Motion by David Morton / Tina Zimmermann that the 2021 Mission & Service objective be amended to \$15,000. **CARRIED**

Motion by Dianne Dixon / Joan Carter that we accept and approve to set the 2021 Mission & Service objective at \$15,000. **CARRIED**

12. Nomination Report

Motion by David Morton / Cathy Adkin to accept the Nominations Report as printed on page 6. **CARRIED**

Motion by Ian Carter / Ken Jolliffe that nominations close. **CARRIED**

Motion by Barb MacKinnon / Ida Traxler to approve the slate of candidates as printed. **CARRIED**

Motion by Ken Jolliffe / Dianne Dixon that the Congregation empowers the Council to appoint members to vacancies as required. **CARRIED**

a) Appointment of the Financial Reviewer for 2020

Motion by Elgin Austen / Barb MacKinnon that the Congregation empowers the Council to appoint members to vacancies as required. **CARRIED**

13. New Business

a) Special Project for 2020

Tina Zimmermann

- **Audio/Visual System Upgrade – Phase 3:** Phases 1 and 2 of the Audio/Visual System Upgrade are complete. Though \$10,000 was approved, Phases 1 and 2 were completed at \$6,355.75 for a remainder of \$3,644.25. To cover the costs of Phase 3 (\$6,634) an additional \$3,500 is being requested.

Motion by Ken Jolliffe / Sandra Linton to approve an additional \$3,500 to add Phase 3 of the upgrades to our Audio/Visual System. **CARRIED**

Question: Will the \$3,500 be taken from the Restricted Bequest Local Community Fund?

Answer: Yes.

b) Other

None

14. Appreciations

Diane Goodhand took this opportunity to bring courtesies to staff on behalf of the Ministry & Personnel Team.

This past year has brought challenges that we could never have imagined, however, due to the wonderful staff that we are so fortunate to have and their willingness to work as a team allowed the work of the church to continue despite restrictions that were put in place.

Leading the Ministry team is Rev. Brad Morrison. In addition to regular worship services, Brad touches many people through his ministries with Bible and book study groups, ongoing contact with congregational members, and community outreach all of which needed to be modified to meet new criterion. Brad's support during this past year has been invaluable as not only did he transition to online services and step in to work with Andy when the choir could not participate, but he was part of the search team for a new custodian and spent time researching equipment to allow for livestreaming and to update the sanctuary audio video system. The assistance that Brad continually provides to staff, individual teams, and council is much appreciated.

Patti Baratta, office administrator, oversees the day-to-day operation of the church and assists Rev. Brad as needed, ensuring all administrative duties are performed as required. With the ongoing and sometimes daily changes to protocol's during the pandemic, Patti provided Council with the necessary information in a timely manner to keep members updated as required. Patti is always willing to help in any way she can, and we are grateful to have her as part of our staff.

Music Director Andy Cloutier provides his ministry of music in a variety of different ways. During the last year, Andy has adapted to contributing to the Sunday services either in the sanctuary, on the church lawn, or from home. In addition to providing the music Andy has also covered for Rev. Brad and provided pulpit supply during vacation, and we thank him for his willingness to offer this support.

After over 17 years with Strathroy United Church, custodian John Larocque retired at the end of December and, although there were constraints in place at the time, fortunately we were able to recognize this milestone with a socially distanced reception. We thank John for his many years of looking after the maintenance of our church building, ensuring that it is a safe environment for our staff, congregation, tenants, and guests. We wish you a long and healthy retirement.

Joe Rychel was hired to fill the position of custodian and brought with him many skills that will be beneficial to the position. As with John, Joe has adapted to the many changes necessary to ensure we are meeting all our health and safety protocols. We look forward to having Joe as part of our church staff.

Treasurer Tim McMillan looks after the financial aspects of our church. Tim records all financial transactions providing detailed reports monthly with great attention to detail, making them easy to understand. To ensure that our financial position was impacted as little as

possible over the past year Tim was diligent about applying for all government programs that we were eligible for and we appreciate his work on this.

Our Child and Youth Leader, Kaeleigh Berdan, works with the youth of our congregation and community. With the need to cancel in person programming, Kaeleigh felt it important to keep in contact with the youth, so she arranged to connect virtually until the time when we could meet in person. We would like to thank her for her dedication to these young people and we know that they look forward to being together again when safe to do so.

Thank you to each and every one of our staff. While the year ahead still has a lot of unknowns, we know that our dedicated staff will continue to work together, and we are certain that we will get through these most difficult times.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Marjorie Harris, Chair of Council, for her leadership and guidance as well as the Team Chairs – Tina Zimmerman, David Morton, Patti Krista, Elgin Austin, and Doug Goodhand – and their teams for all they do throughout the year to make a difference to not only our church but also the community.

At this time, there are a few people that will be stepping down from teams: Don Walker (Property), Cam Brown (Ministry & Personnel), and Doug Goodhand as Chair of Trustees (though he will remain on team). Thank you for the many years that you have volunteered your time in support of Strathroy United Church.

15. Close Meeting

12:10 PM

Next Annual Congregational Meeting date to be decided by Church Council.

16. Closing Prayer

Rev. Brad Morrison