

Congregational Meeting July 23, 2017

This meeting was formally called (ie giving due notice) for a congregational conversation.

Karen outlined the steps leading up to this conversation:

- A conversation with Gordon in the Spring about our priority of deepening our connections in the neighbourhood, and Gordon's passion for communication and community engagement
- Karen brought to the Board the proposal that we consider investing in staff time to move forward with our priority of deepening connections with the neighbourhood, and that she was in conversation with someone with broad experience in various communication methods and community engagement.
- The Board met with Gordon Miller on June 26th for a first interview. All members of the Board were immediately taken by Gordon's passion for engaging with people, the breadth of his creative ideas about how we could connect with a wide range of people and build relationships that would let people know more about James Bay United. We were impressed by his ability to help us see things from a different perspective, and sense our possibilities instead of our limitations. We agreed we wanted to explore this opportunity further.
- We proceeded to speak with references and to investigate funding sources to cover the costs of a contract.
- After doing significant reference checks, we met again with Gordon to consider his proposal of the initiative he would undertake with JBUC.

Cheryl Caldwell offered details of funding a Communication and Neighbourhood Engagement Initiative:

The estimated cost for one year is approximately \$37,000, which includes a contract with Gordon for 20 hours per week over 48 weeks as well as office supplies and advertising.

The Board suggests setting aside \$40,000 which includes a small contingency allowance. We have identified three funding sources for this project:

- **Abundant Community Initiative:** \$12,000. We have already included this in our 2017 budget so those funds are already earmarked.
- **ProVision Grant:** \$20,000. We are going to be making a new grant application to the Victoria Presbytery ProVision Fund. We are optimistic that our new application would be considered favourably. What we are proposing aligns well with the objectives of that fund.
- **Grace Priority Fund:** \$8,000. We are looking to take \$8000 from the Grace Priority Fund. We still have funds available from the bequest we received last year from Lydia Kinnear and

have recently learned that Percy Butler has left us a bequest for \$10,000.

- If the results are successful we anticipate the possibility of an on-going position. That decision will be made following an evaluation and a further conversation with the Congregation. We will identify revenue sources for the future as part of the evaluation. We are talking with Gordon and he with us about ways he could be helping to make the work he is doing partially self-sustaining.

Gordon introduced himself, and we moved into conversation, with questions, observations, responses.

Gordon left the gathering. There was a “straw vote” to confirm that what we were hearing was indeed a strong sense of support for engaging Gordon in this focussed work.

The meeting concluded celebrating the anticipation of Gordon joining us in September, beginning with a one year contract. We sang a refrain that was part of our morning worship: Dare to let God encourage. Dare to let God inspire. God is making all things new. The challenge now is ours. Dare to let God, Dare to let God.

Chair: Karen Dickey

Secretary: Cheryl Caldwell