

Parish of Central Saanich Council Minutes – Special Meeting

December 1, 2020 - 7:00 p.m. by Zoom

Participants: The Rev. Lon Towstego, Chair
Derek Osman Lynda Clifford Greg Robinson Ian Stuart
Deb Butler Terry Hartley Karen McColm Ken Pedlow
Sandra Scarth David Stewart Leslie Pedlow (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: The Rev. Matt Humphrey (moving house)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Rev. Lon opened the meeting with a prayer.

Lon expressed his thanks to all for their leadership and flexibility in so many different ways and situations.

It was **Moved** by Lynda Clifford, **Seconded** by Don Wilson that the Minutes of the November 17th Council meeting and the Minutes of the November Special Council meeting be approved. **CARRIED.**

Lon explained that the purpose was to discuss his plan for upcoming services in December. He highlighted that there were 656 Cases today of COVID-19 (10 on the Island). He indicated that he had spoken with Barry Foster, the Executive Officer of the Diocese in recent days and he can say with 99 per cent certainty that the current closure will be extended well into January. Ian interjected that his latest information is that the Government will continue with the current restrictions or stronger ones at least until the end of January. Barry Foster reiterated that each Parish may make their own decisions around closures (although not openings). Lon also emphasized that the second wave of the virus is beginning to strike very close to home with an outbreak at Broadmead Lodge. Lon feels it is prudent to plan ahead as if the closure will go beyond Christmas.

Lon indicated that despite the concerns that good things were taking place and that good progress was being made on services, especially the special Christmas Video Offering. The Committee did a wonderful pulling together a high quality product with the help of Gary Moss. He shared the screen with a document outlining what is currently planned for the month of December – an excerpt is below:

- December 6, Pre-recorded service from inside St. Stephen Church is being completed this Thursday with very small group. Gary Moss recording..
- December 13 Lessons and Carols, pre-recording from St. Mary Church on December 8th and a 10:30 Zoom Coffee and Chat.
- December 15 release Christmas Video with preamble suggesting ways of using it.
- December 20 Zoom Service 10:30 AM
- December 26-Jan 2 "sabbath" from services and for the offices per Diocesan Administrator's suggestion
- January.....

Lon opened up the floor for questions or comments.

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David asked what the format of the December 20 Zoom service would be. Lon indicated it would follow the same pattern as the November 22nd Zoom service. Cathy has offered to provide some music from her home. There was some discussion whether or not music was necessary. The feedback from the first Zoom service was very positive and it was suggested that the format should remain consistent so that people will know what to expect. Lon indicated that it would be opening prayer, Gospel reading, sermon closing prayer. The goal is to keep it short. It was suggested that perhaps Cathy could join the zoom meeting early and play music during the period of time that people were joining the meeting, similar to a prelude at an in-person service and that would be sufficient. Lon thought that was workable, especially if he had everyone muted so that there wasn't chatter over the music.

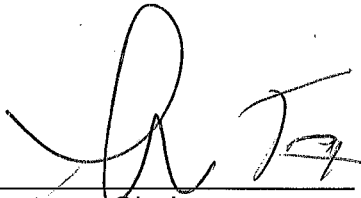
There was some discussion regarding the release date of December 15th for the special Christmas video. Some thought it was a bit soon. Lon suggested that he would provide an appropriate preamble suggesting ways that it could be used.

There was some concern that there wouldn't be anything offered for Christmas Eve or Day. After a bit of discussion Greg suggested that the special Christmas video could be re-released on Christmas Eve. There was agreement that this was a good idea.

Lon read a letter from The Very Rev. M. Ansley Tucker, Diocesan Administrator (attached) where she has outlined her suggestion that the Diocese "make a gift to each other of a true sabbath leave from December 26 to January 2, 2021. This means all staff, clergy and lay – to whatever extent possible – have this week to rest and refresh."

Derek and Lon met this afternoon and discussed the Administrator's letter. They are both supportive of this suggestion. Let's stand down. This would mean that there would be no service (in-person or on-line) on December 27th. This would mean that an on-line service for January 3rd would need to be prepared in advance. Brett had been asked to preach on December 27th but will be asked to prepare for January 3, if he is willing. It was suggested that we could use music that was in the "bank".

Ken Pedlow made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. and closed the meeting with a prayer.



Lon Towstego, Chair



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November 30, 2020

Dear Friends:

I am writing to you in these extraordinary times with an extraordinary proposal. It comes out of the recognition, in speaking with many clergy and lay leaders, that COVID has taken its toll on us. Our churches have responded faithfully and creatively, often having to learn new skills on the fly. But people are tired, stressed, and even a bit cranky.

I am proposing that in all the parishes of our diocese, we make a gift to each other of a true sabbath leave from December 26 to January 2. This means that all staff, clergy and lay—to whatever extent possible—have this week to step back, and to rest and refresh.

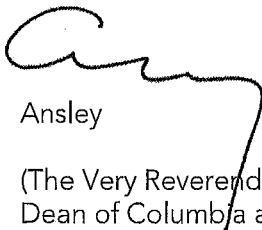
In practice, this means that our clergy, administrative staff and lay leaders are not expected to provide a service of worship, in person or online, on Sunday, December 27.

This week would not be treated as a holiday: it is a gift.

Of course, we know that sometimes, emergencies and other time-sensitive obligations arise, and these would have to be managed in the usual way. But for the most part, this is generally a low-key week in our common life and can easily afford us a chance to regenerate.

In the meantime, I hold you in the crucible of God's love, and pray that this may be a holy Advent for you.

Yours faithfully,



Ansley

(The Very Reverend) M. Ansley Tucker
Dean of Columbia and diocesan administrator