

RHUC BOARD MEETING
Minutes of October 9, 2024
(to be approved November meeting)

Present - Ralph Dunham, Harry Ramsaran, June Blanchette, Carolyn You, Sue Baker, Steve Ruminsky, Karen Dale, David Leyton-Brown, Doug Loweth, Julie Horne, Jane Wedlock, DJ McCready, Howe Foo, Dianne McLeod, Nancy Hart

Devotion - Carolyn

Land Acknowledgement – Steve (June did this due to technical problems)

Regrets -none

Approval of Agenda – approved as written

Approval of Minutes of last Board Meeting

Minutes of September 11, 2024 – approved as written

Business Arising for the Minutes

Nava's probation – Sue – probation ends in 2 weeks and there will be another report – salary raise was included in Nava's offer letter to be at the end of 6 months, ie October 29, 2024

Retreat plans – due to necessary additional board meetings no retreat time has been planned

Correspondence

None currently

Minister's Report

Karen – included at end of minutes

Question : who should be following up with folks who have an idea for a program/workshop etc that they wish to implement?

Action -

Other Regular Reports/Updates

Shining Waters Region/General council/visit of Moderator – David

- Our financial situation is not unlike many in Shining Waters and Canadian Shield Regions
- Region is encouraging conversations of amalgamation
- 15% of churches in Canadian Shield cannot afford a minister – have lay leadership
- There has been an acceleration in rate of church closures since covid

- **Suggestion:** have a picnic table outside with free tea/coffee/hot chocolate
- Faithful Futures Endowment – a legacy giving initiative coming soon
- SHRC stewardship officer willing to do an online meeting
- **Action:** David will put notice in next week's newsletter to see if people interested in looking at the resource from moderator re reaching out to the community
- **Discussion:** Would this fall under Generous spirit? Who is on Generous spirit?
- Moderator visit November 17, 2024 – she is willing to meet with some of the board
 - o Has a resource for congregation regarding how to reach out to community

Finance – Second Quarter Report-Julie

- Financial Statements to June 30, 2024 presented, including Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Operations – General Fund, Statement of Operations – All Funds
- **Suggestion:** have a sign with a QR code in each room/Centennial Hall in the church for folks who wish to make a donation directly to the church
 - revenue is our problem, need more rentals etc, loans will be tough if we can't show that we have a cash flow to support the loan
 - report differentiates between Fundraising and Programs (Fundraising is for events advertised specifically as fundraising, whereas Programs include pickleball etc)
 - **Question:** how are bequests recognized and how is congregation informed? (important for congregation to know that people have left bequests etc) – Nava sends a letter of thanks, Karen is informed, Dianne is informed
 - Action:** Julie will investigate this

Operations – Doug

- Major Repair Team is an ad hoc team (currently Dan, Gord Rideout, Doug, Ken Dunn?, Mark Baker?)
- Operations Committee favours doing plastering of ceiling all at once (~ \$25000 difference if done in two phases) along with interruption of availability of the sanctuary
- Roof –recommendation to do partial repairs to prevent further water damage, while absorbing the costs of plastering the full ceiling – realize that further roof repairs down the road
- Air source heat pumps being investigated by Major repair team
- **Action: Questions to ask contractors:**
 - o has any allowance already been made in the estimates to account for organ
 - o is flat part by organ included in the plastering estimate
 - o more details about the plaster work needed
 - o further conversation needed with Mr Helier (?) re organ protection
 - o explore doing partial roof repairs with contractors
- **Action:** next Operation Meeting to include conversation re Dan's shift in roles
- **Action:** Harry – trying to contact someone with expertise at the regional level

New Business

Congregational Meeting impression/discussion

- Good feedback from congregation and heartfelt letters received
- Congregation looking for more alternatives from the board
- Questions about timing and sequence of repairs – too late before winter?
- Great love of the building but open to other ideas/amalgamation
- Don't want building to deteriorate if it is a potential asset
- Do we want to be project managers or doing what we are called to do?
- **Action:** Meeting with David West to happen asap – DJ, Doug, Jane W, Karen
- Talk with other churches re amalgamation re sharing space
- **Action:** Karen will talk with minister at St Matthew's United Church
- **Action:** Steve will talk to someone re valuation on the manse
- **Action:** Doug will have conversation with TUCC, and he offered to prepare various scenarios for the congregation
- What information needed before another congregational meeting is called?
- Independent governing structure to be explored
- **Action:** Jane W has spoken to Sydenham UC in Kingston, previous notes from community consultations, Kendra Fry etc will look for notes
- **Action:** Nancy will pull common threads, key ideas from the letters received from congregation

Further Discussion of Issues re Property

Brief Updates

December Pot Luck

Next Meeting

Meeting with Moderator

November 13

Adjournment



Minister's Report to the Board October 9, 2024

Karen J. Dale

On Monday October 7, two of us sat in the sanctuary and prayed for peace. It was a year since violence erupted again in the land that is holy to people of Jewish, Islamic and Christian faiths. We lit candles, even though the sun streamed in through the windows, the flickering flames reminded me of the fragility of our world.

The silence of the space enveloped us as we sat with the pain of the death-dealing reality of war. We held space for peace in our world, as the Shalom Seekers did on-line. Our souls connected to how many other thousands, maybe millions of others also praying for peace...I can only image.

Are we willing to continue to hold space so that people can come together and be transported by beautiful music, be shaken to our core by voices different from our own...to come together to pray?

And in that silence as I tried to be present with those hurting from the ravages of war, I held those within our community who are in pain. People who are hurting because of our actions. Those trying to find a place but who keep experiencing blocks to their full participation in this faith community. Pain caused by being told directly or indirectly, "that's not how we do it here". Pain caused by being so quick to tell our experience, that we talk over the voices of others and in so doing silence and denigrate what was trying to be offered.

Community is all about holding space for each other. It is about letting go of the myths we tell ourselves. I would say that one of those is "we are a welcoming community". Are we? Could we do more? How about being a community of equity and inclusion?

At the congregational meeting I heard people lamenting the dropping numbers. But what about the people who do walk through our doors on a regular basis. We need to look at why some walk in, never to return, or stay for a short time.

Some people sense the possibility of this place but there is also a lack – it might be programs for children, maybe language barriers but it is also the difficulty of finding their place. Are we willing to do the uncomfortable work of changing? Are we willing to confront the pain we cause others by not accepting the gifts they bring?

This work is more challenging than repairing the roof and replacing the ceiling. It is also a wondrous thing, a joy-filled way of being. It is how we follow the way of Jesus, who walked with those on the margins, ate with the outcasts of society. Jesus whose greatest obstacles came from the religious law-abiders rather than those "at the edge".

Nancy Hart

J. McCready