

James Bay United Church

Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 2026/08/27

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Sanctuary

Chair: Scott Jantzen

Secretary: D'Arcy McPherson

In attendance: Scott Jantzen (Chair)
Gordon Miller (Treasurer)
André Fontaine (M&P)
Marg Lunam (Thrift Shop)
Diane Monteith (Member at large)
Colleen Nichol (Pastoral Care)
Rev. Greg Powell (Minister)
D'Arcy McPherson (Secretary)

Regrets: Martin Stewart (Past-Chair)

Opening Prayer & Lighting Christ Candle: Greg

Personal Check-in: 1-2 minutes each to share where we are at this moment and to connect a little more deeply with each other, as we wish.

Covenant: We covenant together ... to listen and speak with respect ... to express our views ... to be aware of each other and ourselves ... to be mindful of time, making room for each person to contribute ... to ask for help as needed ... to pause for discernment when we are uncertain ... to remember that our work here is part of a larger church and a larger calling ... to ask whether this is truly the work of the Board ... to trust those doing the work ... to meet our commitments ... to speak with one voice once a decision is made.

Board Development – Gordon shared his connection to the holy.

Approval of Minutes – June 25, 2026, (Marg/André). Carried.

Correspondence

- Letter to the Minister of Housing was noted (Please see Appendix F).
- A noise concern was discussed regarding activity before and after AA meetings in the early morning, as well as the volume of music at the Thrift Shop. The AA

group and Thrift Shop have been made aware of the concerns. Greg has responded to the individual who raised the concern.

Ratification of Email Motion

The following motion re: Grant Application to Victoria Civic Heritage Trust was agreed to via email and ratified by the Board:

Moved: That James Bay United Church make application to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust for funding under the Victoria Downtown Heritage Incentive Program for an amount up to \$ 150,000 for the purpose of exterior painting and rehabilitation;

And, that we, the board of James Bay United Church recognize the full financial implications from development of the project and acknowledge that the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust not be responsible for any further financial assistance other than the funding applied for;

And, that we, the board of James Bay United Church guarantee that there are adequate funds available to complete the project and to continue to operate the facility.

(Diane/Colleen). Carried

Minister's Report (Greg) (Please see Appendix A)

Executive Discussion

In addition to the Minister's Report, the Board discussed the role of creating an Executive Committee to assist in preparing matters for full Board discussion. It was proposed that the Executive Committee would provide an opportunity to clarify issues, identify key considerations and determine which matters require full Board discussion, while avoiding preconceived conclusions.

The value of addressing appropriate matters at the Executive level was noted, particularly where issues do not require full Board discussion. The example of the noise concern was referenced. It was also noted that the Executive Committee provides an opportunity for officers to raise concerns and receive timely feedback.

The Chair emphasized the importance of respecting Board members' time and maintaining meeting start and end times by bringing matters to the Board when they are ready for discussion or decision.

Members expressed appreciation for the efficiency of the process and noted that the Board was particularly well prepared for the August meeting.

The Executive Committee would normally meet on the Tuesday in the week preceding the monthly Board meeting. Agenda items would be included in the group document and/or forwarded to the Secretary.

Moved: That James Bay United Church form an executive consisting of the board chair, treasurer and minister, whose function would be to prepare agenda items for presentation to the board.

(Marg/Colleen). Carried.

Worship

The Board received the Worship report and noted Sarah Hovey's decision to step down from her role. Candis and Greg will assume responsibility. Additional volunteers may be approached as needed.

The Board discussed reviewing the worship schedule and responsibilities one to two months in advance, potentially on a quarterly basis. The schedule will be considered a living document and adjusted as needed. Sarah's presider and preacher guidelines will be circulated to assist with the transition.

Continuing Education

The Board was supportive of Greg's interest in the LeaderSHIFT continuing education program offered by the Pacific Mountain Region. The program provides clergy development through a cohort model, retreats and opportunities to connect with others in ministry. Participation is intended to support professional development and reduce the isolation that can accompany ministry.

Board Chair's Report (Please see Appendix B)

Organizational Charts – Retreat Follow-Up

The Board reviewed the organizational charts developed at the retreat and discussed next steps. Members were invited to review the digital versions against the original posters and identify any necessary changes or corrections.

The next step will be to synthesize the four charts into one draft for further Board review and revision. The revised organizational chart will then be shared with the congregation for initial feedback and to support awareness of the work and open communication channels.

The Board also reviewed the retreat documents to ensure that no significant items had been missed.

Draft Governance Model Discussion

The Board reviewed the draft governance model, considering whether it reflected the congregation's discussions at the recent retreat, whether any areas required clarification, whether there was general agreement with the proposed approach, and whether additional components should be included.

The Board agreed that the draft generally captures the essence of who the congregation is and aspires to be, and expressed overall support for the sentiments and direction of the document.

Discussion identified several areas for further refinement:

- **Terminology and definitions:** Greater clarity is needed regarding terms such as *ministries*, *programs*, *activities*, *groups*, *teams* and *Ministry Stewards*. The Board discussed adding a glossary or

definitions section. In particular, the description of Ministry Stewards as supporting “clusters of related ministries” may need revision to better reflect the congregation’s actual structure.

- **Information, reporting and accountability:** The section addressing reporting to the Board requires clarification. The Board distinguished between information required by the Board for governance and oversight and broader reporting or communications intended to keep the congregation informed and engaged. There was support for greater transparency and for creating a central repository for significant ministry and program reports.
- **Communication with the congregation:** The Board discussed opportunities to regularly highlight the work of ministries, programs and activities through e-news and other communications. Better communication could increase awareness of the congregation’s work and potentially encourage greater participation and volunteer involvement.
- **Reporting through Ministry Stewards:** The concept of Ministry Stewards providing brief, regular updates to the Board was discussed. Possible questions could include what is currently energizing a ministry or program, what is getting in the way and whether there is anything the Board needs to understand or assist with. Further clarity regarding the role and expectations of Ministry Stewards will be required.
- **Relationship to the organizational structure:** The Board agreed that development of the governance model and organizational chart are closely connected. There was some concern about advancing the governance model too far before the organizational structure, including the proposed Ministry Steward model, is more fully developed.
- **Volunteer capacity:** Concern was expressed about adding another layer of volunteer leadership and whether sufficient individuals would be willing to serve as Ministry Stewards. It was noted that clearly defining the role, expectations and time commitment—and framing it as relational, meaningful work—may make the positions more attractive to potential volunteers.
- **Congregational involvement:** The Board recognized that any significant change to the governance structure will require engagement with and support from the congregation. When presented, the rationale should clearly describe the challenges of the current structure, the vision for a new approach, and what is being asked of the congregation.

Additional components suggested for consideration included a glossary, a covenant, reference to United Church of Canada requirements regarding Board membership and elections, and clearer principles concerning decision-making, including the Board's practice of striving for consensus while recognizing formal voting requirements. Input from PMRC may also be appropriate.

There was general agreement that the discussion provided sufficient direction for preparation of a revised draft. The organizational chart will continue to be developed in parallel with the Governance Model.

Upcoming Communication Meetings

The Board reviewed the proposed schedule for consultation with staff, ministry and program leads, and the congregation regarding the governance model and organizational structure:

- **September 27 – Staff, Ministry and Program Leads:** An opportunity to introduce the work underway on the governance model and organizational chart, listen to concerns and receive feedback. Board members are encouraged, but not required, to attend.
- **October 18 – Congregational Meeting:** Presentation and discussion of the proposed governance model and organizational chart, along with an overview of the 2027 budget process.
- **November 15 – Congregational Meeting:** Proposed ratification of the governance model and organizational chart and presentation of the 2027 budget.

The Board discussed whether this timeline was achievable and agreed to proceed on the basis that the work could be completed within the proposed schedule.

Policy Review Work and SWOT

The Board discussed the policy review and previous Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) consultation in the context of the significant work currently underway on the governance model, organizational structure and upcoming fundraising campaign.

Given that these projects are time-sensitive and expected to be completed within the next few months, the Board agreed to defer the broader policy review work until there is greater capacity to undertake it. Approximately 20 existing policies remain to be reviewed and advanced. Work related to agreements with various groups will continue as required.

The Board also discussed the importance of acknowledging the considerable input received through the congregational SWOT exercise, including the lunch consultation and surveys. While this input helped inform the Board retreat and is reflected in the governance and organizational work now underway, members agreed that the congregation should understand that its feedback was heard and considered.

The SWOT material will be revisited to ensure that significant issues have not been overlooked and to help inform future communication with the congregation. Particular themes noted included competition for volunteers and limited financial resources.

The broader policy review will resume following completion of the current priority projects.

Treasurer's Report (Gordon) (Please see Appendix C)

Financial Report

Gordon provided an update on the ongoing refinement of the church's financial reporting. He noted that the financial statements to the end of June are substantially improved and approaching the desired level of accuracy and usefulness.

The accounting structure includes approximately 60 categories, with revenues and expenses assigned not only by account but also to the appropriate ministry, program or activity. This allows financial information to be consolidated at the ministry level while retaining the ability within QuickBooks to drill down into individual transactions and expenditures.

An Arts Ministry report was provided as an example, showing individual programs such as Community Chorus and Tuesday Night Jazz together with consolidated ministry totals. The Treasurer noted that this type of reporting provides ministry leads with a clearer picture of their overall financial position while allowing additional detail to be accessed when required.

Work will continue to refine the format and presentation of the reports, including developing a consistent look and feel for PDF reports and determining how best to present differing levels of financial detail.

Fundraising Campaign and Capital Projects

The Board received an update on preliminary planning for a significant fundraising campaign. Four individuals are currently working on the initiative, with additional people expressing interest. The campaign is expected to develop over the coming months and continue into January.

Discussion emphasized the importance of developing a compelling case for support that reflects the church's longstanding service to the community as well as its significant capital needs. Potential needs include exterior and interior building deterioration, energy efficiency and window improvements, infrastructure upgrades, and substantial improvements to the kitchen used to support year-round community meal programs.

The Board discussed the scale of the potential campaign and noted that the effort required for a major fundraising initiative may warrant considering a larger campaign encompassing several capital priorities rather than fundraising for individual projects separately. A specific campaign target has not yet been established and will depend in part on available grants and the amount the

church is able to contribute. The campaign's leadership structure, case for support and individual volunteer roles also remain under development, with the possibility of external leadership or expertise being considered.

An update was also provided on exterior painting work. A contract of approximately \$37,500 has been signed for painting the Thrift Shop, with work potentially beginning within the next several weeks. Quotes for painting, carpentry and detailed work on the church total approximately \$295,000, with an additional \$30,000 contingency anticipated. Final carpentry costs remain to be determined.

No contract for the church work will be signed until the outcome of the Heritage Trust funding application is known.

Ministry & Personnel (André)

- Staffing updates (in camera)

Moved that the meeting go in camera.

(Gordon/Colleen). Carried

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The board continued in camera to discuss staffing updates.

Moved that the meeting leave in camera

(Scott/Marg). Carried.

.....

Moved that the James Bay United Church Board approve an increase in Natalia Zhuravlova's Communications and Donor Relations position from 50 to 60 hours per month, effective September 1, 2026.

(Colleen/Marg). Carried.

Closing Prayer: Greg

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2026.

APPENDIX A

James Bay United Church | Minister's Report

I have had a wonderful summer and am looking forward to a busy and meaningful autumn. Here is some of what's been capturing my attention:

1. Our endeavours to paint the church and thrift shop continue.
 - a. Our application to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust (VCHT) for \$150,000 to paint the church will be reviewed on September 21. If granted, those funds would cover just under half of the \$331,000 we estimate based on quotes and contingency.
 - b. We have signed a contract to paint the thrift shop without a grant because we have applied for the maximum amount for the church. Further, the thrift shop is not yet designated a heritage building.
2. Related to 1. above, Gordon and I are moving through the early stages of a major fundraising campaign. We will present more on this at Thursday's meeting.
3. I am interested in forming an executive committee of the board to 'pre-digest' topics on the board agenda. Normally this would include the Treasurer, Chair, Secretary, and Minister. However, in light of D'Arcy's daytime work commitments, the executive might not include the Secretary. I will raise this for discussion on Thursday.
4. Our worship planning team has begun a new process of inviting leadership for services from which I will be absent. We offer Sarah Hovey much gratitude for having done this work over the past couple of years.
5. Things are moving along for the fall open house beginning Friday, September 18. The parking lot party on Saturday the 19th is the big focus at the moment.
6. Our affirming group will gather on September 1 for the first time. I have met a couple of times with Colleen Adair and I'm looking forward to the direction in which the group takes the initiative.
7. Still in the works or on the horizon:
 - a. Church directory (digital or print) – need to draft a privacy policy
 - b. Policies and procedures
 - c. Joint initiatives with other United Churches (Fairfield and Oak Bay)
8. I have registered for an 8-month continuing education program called "Sowing Promise: Renewal & Revitalization Pathway for Clergy". It will involve two weeks away (but no Sundays away).

With much gratitude, Greg

APPENDIX B

James Bay United Church | Board Chair Discussion items

- Review of Org Charts from retreat and next steps
 - At the board retreat in June, small groups created posters illustrating alternate visions of the organizational chart
 - Contents of the posters have been transcribed in digital format
 - Board members will reconvene in their small group from the retreat and will be given their poster and a copy of the digital version and will be asked to ensure accuracy of the digital version.
 - Next steps will be determined. Synthesize a single model from the work done at the retreat. Subcommittee of the board. Volunteers?
- DRAFT Governance Model Discussion (20 min)
 - Board members were provided with the latest version of a DRAFT governance model where the bullet form statements were converted to paragraph form. Board members were asked to read the document and be ready to discuss the following four questions:
 - Does this document capture the essence of “who we are and who we want to be” as we discussed at the retreat?
 - Are there sentences that are ambiguous or that need explanation?
 - Do you agree with the sentiments of the document?
 - Are there other components that need to be included?
- Upcoming Communication Meetings
 - September 27 - Meet with staff, ministry leads and program leads to listen to their concerns and to inform of our thinking/progress about governance model and revised org chart (ministry clusters and ministry liaisons). Board members are welcome and encouraged to attend.
 - October 18 - Congregational Meeting - to discuss DRAFT governance model, DRAFT Organizational Chart and budget process.
 - November 15 - Congregational Meeting - to ratify Governance Model and Organizational Chart and present DRAFT 2027 budget.
- Policy review work & SWOT
 - The board currently has three significant projects under way that demand our attention; Governance model, Org chart revisioning, major fundraising campaign.
 - All three are time bound and will be completed in the next few months.
 - Recommendation to postpone work on policy review and the SWOT Analysis until after the governance model, org chart revisioning, and fundraising work are completed.

APPENDIX C

James Bay United Church | Treasurer's Board Report

Please refer to this link to review the financials for the first six months of 2026: [James Bay United Church \(JBUC\) Profit and Loss.xlsx](#)

APPENDIX D

James Bay United Church | Worship

This is my report on the Summer Series, the upcoming Season of Creation and an update on the status of the worship team.

The Summer Series, as you all know, was based on John Phillip Newell's book *The Great Search*. We had 4 services that highlighted 4 different people from the book. The teams in each case – presider, preacher and music director, all worked very well together to offer heartfelt, thoughtful and meaningful services. By all accounts, though the congregation was a bit sparse at times, they were very well received, providing both spiritual support and ideas to ponder.

These are the comments from our team meeting on Aug. 18:

*“Appreciation of lay-led services: healthy for church community, not just one person with all responsibility, high quality, effective when spoken from personal experience
-planning with music is integral, well supported by high quality of music”*

Season of Creation (Sunday Sept 13 – October 11 Thanksgiving)

Greg had the inspiration to focus on Water which led to a very creative and wide-ranging discussion about all the ways we could explore this element and have the services be relevant, interesting and inspiring, both spiritually and ecologically. These are our notes from the meeting to give you a sense of the possibilities being considered. As you can see it is a very rich subject.

Five Sundays focused on theme of Water:

*-**Life/Creation** (Genesis; science, where all life comes from--primordial water, amniotic fluid; 71% of Earth's surface; approx. 70% of human body; consciousness & agency of water, water as mirror to inner truth); sacred feminine*

*-**Purification/ Cleansing/Healing** (baptism, ritual washing, rhythm-tide-waves-soothing, fluidity, softening, predictability, connection to universe e.g. moon and tides)*

*-**Judgement/Destruction** (flood, parting of Red Sea, current events of controlling the water e.g. Strait of Hormuz & Arctic ocean)*

*-**Spiritual Renewal** (imagery of water as Divine Presence), Jesus walking on water*

*-**Provision/Gratitude/Thanksgiving** (sacred wells, water from a rock, quenching thirst, Jesus with woman at the well)*

Status of Worship Team Lead

I am stepping down as of Aug. 31 from the lead role, but not from the worship team. I very much enjoy the team and the creative work we do together and am ready to pass on the responsibilities of leadership.

So far, the plan is:

Greg is the lead – convene meetings, set agendas and chair the meetings

Greg and Candis – set up and oversee leadership roster for community led services.

They will also oversee & roster for Communion set-up/clean-up as well as buying juice.

(This was formerly done by me. We need someone to take this on)

Going forward I think it will be good to have this much better system for keeping track of the congregation led services with the spreadsheet/roster that Greg and Candis have created.

At a glance it looks pretty straightforward. In reality, unfortunately, it is a lot like herding cats. It takes a lot of time and many emails and conversations to actually get it done and make sure everything runs smoothly. Does that need to be done by Greg, or another person?

The services that come monthly are fairly easy to create, using the liturgical calendar or other special days for themes and music.

The Summer Series needs a specified leader(s). There is a lot of extra work involved with researching topics/books and creating the flow of the services as well as props and the nuts and bolts of who is doing what.

In 2026 we will have done 15 congregation led services. So far Greg foresees 12 for 2027. My feeling is that fewer is better for the congregation. Also, that we are careful not to cluster too many of them together. We didn't really consider that going into this year. Looking at the schedule of services, between June 7 and Aug 30 there are 7 congregation led services. We did a really good job with our services and at times it felt like we didn't have a minister. We need Greg to be here leading us in worship. We pride ourselves on being a 7 day a week church and I applaud that. People come to church for many reasons. For me, and for many others, the worship service is the beating heart of the church. We need to make sure that Greg and the worship team have all the resources we need to keep creating meaningful, joyful, intriguing and hopeful services which are so desperately needed in our community and the world today.

(Stepping off my soap box now)

I love being a member of James Bay United Church. It has been my privilege to assist with leading our worship team in the past year and a half and I look forward to many more years of contributing in various ways to our community of faith.

Yours in Christ,

Sarah Hovey

Aug. 25, 2026

APPENDIX E

James Bay United Church | Thrift Shop Report

August 2026

Summer is always lots of fun at the shop, the vibe in James Bay is enhanced with the opening of the community market in Spring and we benefit from all of that shared energy. Customers arrive with rhubarb or dill spilling out of their shopping bags!

Sales are consistently brisk and our volunteers have stepped up to cover for one another as we all take some vacation time, so that's good.

Our donations are noticeably greater than a year ago and that presents some challenges but we manage and are hopeful that our connection at Big Brothers (who pick up excess stuff each week) continues to be strong.

This fall we are looking to expand our volunteer base, particularly in the leadership roles. We are currently putting together some documentation that we hope will attract some new energy; this will be crucial for the ongoing health of the ministry. More to come on that in the next weeks.

We gathered for a "pop up shop" one afternoon in June for our volunteers who appreciated time to actually shop and visit, there's not a lot of time for that on a work day! Then we had a lovely afternoon of visiting at a garden party in July, hosted by one of our volunteers and will celebrate our successful summer with our annual Hot Dog Party to be held next week. It's great for us to get together outside the shop.

As always, we depend on our amazing volunteers and are grateful for their energy, their hard work and their care and commitment.

Marg Lunam

APPENDIX F

James Bay United Church | Correspondence



26 August 2026

Hon. Christine Boyle
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Via email: HMA.minister@gov.bc.ca

Hon. Grace Lore
MLA Victoria-Beacon Hill
Via email: grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Dear Ministers Boyle and Lore;

Re: Situation at Orchard House in Victoria

I hope all is going well for you both these days.

Our congregation at James Bay United Church on Michigan Street in Victoria has become aware of a situation at Orchard House (647 Michigan Street) that has become deeply concerning for our neighbours there. Several Orchard House residents are involved with our congregation and meet regularly in our building.

As you may know, these residents are leaseholders whose landlord has been levying substantial fees to cover the costs of various repairs and upgrades to the building. In some cases, these additional fees exceed \$3,000 per month—more than the entire monthly pension income of some residents. Given Victoria's housing costs, several are now facing the very real possibility of homelessness.

I find it deeply troubling that such a situation can arise under our current housing framework, where a landlord appears to have unreasonable latitude to pass significant costs on to leaseholders. The leaseholders themselves have no ownership stake in the building as an asset, yet they can be required to bear substantial costs associated with its maintenance and improvement and capital upgrades.

511 MICHIGAN STREET, VICTORIA BC V8V 1S1
office@jamesbayunited.com 250-384-5821 www.jamesbayunited.com
Building bridges since 1891

When I first learned about this situation, I assumed there must be some misunderstanding or exceptional circumstance. Seeing that residents are tied up in costly and lengthy litigation, I am increasingly concerned that there is a significant gap in our housing protections—one that needs to be addressed before others find themselves in a similar situation. Long-term residential leaseholders fall into a gap between the Residential Tenancy Act and Strata Property Act, leaving the landlord in full control of scope and timing, while residents bear the financial burden.

On behalf of our neighbours, I am asking your ministry and your office to intervene and examine this situation, with a view to establishing reasonable limits on the costs that landlords can pass on to leaseholders. As a homeowner and small-business owner, I understand that buildings require maintenance, repairs, and upgrades, and I recognize that it may be reasonable for some of those costs to be shared with leaseholders. However, imposing extraordinary costs all at once, particularly on people living on fixed incomes, can have devastating consequences. It also sets a troubling precedent for housing security in our community. Leaseholders are part of Victoria housing fabric that seem to lack statutory protections and accessible dispute-resolution mechanisms.

I know that housing affordability and homelessness are concerns that both of you and in your ministerial roles take seriously. Victoria and British Columbia are already struggling to provide adequate housing for vulnerable residents, and it seems counterproductive to allow existing residents to be pushed toward homelessness through extraordinary housing-related costs.

I would be grateful for whatever attention you are able to give this matter. I would also welcome any information about what options may be available to protect the residents of Orchard House and prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.

With much peace and gratitude,



REV. GREG POWELL

Minister, James Bay United Church

250-304-9316