

Council of Guiding Elders – Minutes November 15th, 2023

Edith Rankin Memorial United Church

In Attendance: Bill Spencer, Gordon Sinclair, Peter Merkley, Margaret Merkley, Andrew Robb, Ruth Pettis, Ken Williams, Rev. Michelle Down

Regrets:

Guests:

1. **Call to order:** Bill called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Mission Statement: We seek to be a welcoming community, anchored in God's love, challenged to sail on the winds of the spirit, sharing the Good News of Christ with each other and the world.

Devotional: Andrew Robb reflected on our faith as being a powerful uplifting presence, a light for our path with truth and grace.

Commendations, Regrets, Prayer Concerns: Rev. Down noted a number of members of our congregation who have recently experienced the loss of a family member or are suffering illness. Michelle noted that she has performed 34 funerals in the 37 months she has been at ERMUC. As such she will be offering a 4 week GRIEF Series starting November 30th and running until Dec 21st. Council paused to reflect on these member's whose names were offered up in prayer.

Correspondence:

1. **Vacancy:**

Council acknowledged the resignation letter received from Eliazbeth Amirault who has served as our Minister of Pastoral Care, effective Dec 31st to take up a full time position as Spiritual Health Associate at Kingston General Hospital. Council was encouraged that she intends to remain a member of ERMUC and are gratified that she will have an exciting and fulfilling opportunity to do the work she is trained for. A celebration of Elizabeth's ministry will take place at ERMUC on Sunday December 17th after worship.

Her vacancy raises questions with respect to the long term options and opportunities to replace her together with short term interim strategies.

Council decided that the best way forward would be to fill the position on a temporary basis for 6 months. Council will identify a search committee to examine the longer term opportunities. Gord offered to help Michelle organize this endeavor.

2. **Governance:**

We have received a call from a member of the Council of Guiding Elders and ADHOC committee for Governance-Policies and Procedures at Pacific Spirit United Church in B.C. She was looking at our website and asked that someone from our Council would

contact her to discuss the topic and if we feel it works well here at Edith Rankin, the challenges it presents and so on. Gordon Sinclair agreed he would follow up.

3. Office Administration:

Stephanie Van DerPryt will be on medical leave from Monday November 20th to Monday January 8th, 2024. An Ad Hoc Committee consisting of the Treasurer, her Supervisor, her M&P Twin and Rev. Down will work to ensure that the medical leave is suitably covered. She will be paid 100% of salary but ERMUC can apply to receive back 85% for replacement Office Administration. Some Office Administration tasks will be completed by the replacement and some by volunteers.

Motion:

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Ruth Pettis to send Stephanie flowers on Monday, the day before her surgery.

Carried

4. Council Email:

Michelle asked that council approve the tech team (Paul Currie) to reinstitute the church office email to be copied to the minister's email for the duration of the medical leave.

Motion:

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Gordon Sinclair to include Rev. Down on the ERMUC church office email distribution for the duration of the medical leave.

Carried

5. Electrical Needs:

In June, Council approved the Tech Team's request to proceed with needed upgrades to the computer and electrical needs for both the church office and the media desk. We have added an intensive computer and video system. Secondly, some of the equipment is located in the furnace room which suffers from the extra warm environment. \$4K has been spent to date with approximately \$5.4K needed to complete the job, well within the anticipated \$10K. Council agreed the Tech Team should proceed with the improvements outlined in Paul Currie's email of Nov 13th.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meetings:

Motion:

Moved by Ken Williams, seconded by Bill Spencer to accept the minutes of the special council meeting of Nov 1st, 2023 by Video conf to approve the draft Financial Plan for 2024.

CARRIED

Motion:

Moved by Ken Williams, seconded by Bill Spencer to accept the minutes of the regular council meeting of October 18th, 2023 by Video conf.

CARRIED

3. **Business Arising:**

4. **New Business:**

1. **Christmas Preparations:**

Michelle reminded council that Christmas Day falls on a Monday. As such there will be two services Christmas Eve: a 10:00-11:00am Christmas Eve Family Service and a 7:30pm Christmas Eve Communion and Candle Light Service. Beyond that preparations are already in place for a number of Advent Services.

2. **Church Electronic Sign:**

A team consisting of Brian McCracken, Craig Pettis, Heinz Becker and Bill Spencer have been working on this and are close to finalizing details for a sign which will meet our needs and come within the budgetary target of \$15K.

3. **Stewardship Campaign:**

Again, we are close to meeting the target. How successful will be known within the next few weeks. A plan to distribute Christmas Envelopes is being developed.

4. **Affirming Progress/Process:**

This will be a rather lengthy process but Bill is concerned that it remain a topic on Council agendas. The committee continues to meet, working on a resolution of the material collected at the congregational meetings and developing both the vision statement and plan of action to be submitted to the Affirming Action program within the United Church administration.

5. **Photo Album:**

Margaret Merkley noted that she is in the process of making arrangements to have the photo company available April 1 for picture taking. Craig Pettis has kindly volunteered to take pictures of members not here for the photo shoot. This will include shut-ins and others who can't get out.

6. **Committee Vacancies:**

Bill noted his concern with the number of current vacancies on committees as well as the number of individuals extending their term to meet demands. Council agreed it was an urgent issue and asked that Bill contact the former Nominating Committee Chair for advice.

Reports:

1. Treasurers Report:

Peter had circulated (both the overview and the detailed numbers) prior to the meeting. He has only received one question from the congregation (easily resolved) regarding the Financial Plan which will be presented to the congregation this Sunday (Nov 19th) for approval. The “Annual Notice to Reader Financial Statements for Dec 31,2022” will be presented to Council

2. Minister’s Reports:

Rev. Down noted a number of details regarding the medical leave for the Office Administrator as noted here and in her attached report. She was struck by the number of funerals she has had to conduct since coming to Edith Rankin and so is planning a 4 week GRIEF Series starting November 30th. Three sessions will be held at Edith Ranking and one at Crossroads PUC.

Following is the Advent Series:

Nov 26 – Advent 1: 8am Fellowship breakfast,
 9:30-10:00 Merry Minstrels Fiddle Group having a
Christmas Carol sing in the sanctuary before worship
 10:00-11:00 Worship with Limestone Ringers and Chancel
Choir
Dec 3 – Advent 2: PEACE SUNDAY
 10:00-11:00 Worship with Limestone Ringers and Chancel Choir
 5:00 Family Christmas Turkey Dinner
 7:00 Sunday School Christmas Celebration
Dec 10 – Advent 3: JOY SUNDAY
 10:00-11:00 Worship with Chancel Choir performing a
 CHRISTMAS CANTATA
Dec 17 – Advent 4: LOVE SUNDAY
 10:00-11:00 Worship with Limestone Ringers and Chancel Choir
 11:00 Celebration for Elizabeth Amirault’s ministry among us
Dec 24 – Christmas Eve 10:00-11:00AM Christmas Eve FAMILY SERVICE with
Costumes and Birthday Cake for Baby Jesus
 7:30PM Christmas Eve COMMUNION AND CANDLE
LIGHT SERVICE
Dec 31 – Happy New Year 10:00 – 11:00 Happy New Year Service with readings and
hymns.

Announcements: none

Closing Prayer: Michelle closed with a prayer.

Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of council will be – Wednesday December 20th, at 9:30 am. Given this is close to Christmas the meeting will be held in person at the church.

Bill Spencer, Chair

Ken Williams, Secretary