

Council of Guiding Elders – Minutes March 20th, 2024 Edith Rankin Memorial United Church

In Attendance: Bill Spencer, Ruth Pettis, Betty Jean Kippen, Chris Sproule, Joyce Morrison, Ken Williams, Rev. Michelle Down

Regrets: Margaret Merkley, Gordon Sinclair, Peter Merkley

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: Ruth Pettis reflected on the Mysteries of Spring from “Step Into the Day” by Florence Niven.

(Note re future devotional schedule): council agreed that all members of Council should help with devotionals in a rotational manner. Ken will be responsible for the April 2024 Devotional with the following rotation: (Betty Jean Kippen – May 2024; Chris Sproule – June 2024; (note: no Council Meetings in the summer); Joyce Morrison-Sept 2024; Margaret Merkley – October 2024; Gordon Sinclair – November 2024; Peter Merkley – Dec 2024; Bill Spencer - January 2025; Ruth Pettis – February 2025; Ken Williams – March 2025 etc.)

Commendations, Regrets, Prayer Concerns:

Much has been happening at Edith Rankin over the past month and many folks were recognized for their contributions. These included but not limited to:

- The “Pie Day” efforts which were very successful
- The auction
- The Irish Stew night for which a great crowd attended

All of these initiatives reflect the good and healthy community within Edith Rankin.

A number member’s names were offered up in prayer.

Correspondence:

Several items of correspondence had been received:

- Karl Butler had enquired about a “Remit” which he had noted. This relates to the initiative of the United Church of Canada to accommodate the inclusion of First Nations into the UCC governing documents. This had been discussed by council and agreed with under a Joint Truth and Reconciliation Group (JTRAG) initiative of the local United Churches.

There will also be a collaborative service on June 21st to continue this initiative locally.

- Gord Bell noted the upcoming public meeting to discuss the proposed residential development on the lands opposite ERMUC and suggested we should ask for the inclusion of traffic lights. Council agreed and asked if Doug Huddle might attend the meeting on our behalf.
- Bill suggested and Council agreed to ask Dave Randal, an ERMUC member and retired plumber to help with advice on plumbing issues.
- Letter of gratitude from Sydenham St U.C. for our participation in the Pancake Breakfast which helped raised funds for solar panels at the “All our Relations Land Trust”.
- There will be a collaboration service June 21

2. **Business Arising from Feb 21st, Minutes:**

No particular items were raised.

Minutes of the Previous Meetings:

Council reviewed the draft minutes of Feb 21st, 2024.

Motion:

Moved by Ken Williams, seconded by Ruth Pettis to accept the minutes of the council meeting of Feb 21st, 2024.

CARRIED

3. **New Business:**

1. **Affirmation Update Documents:**

Council briefly reviewed these documents and the proposed schedule with the new members.

Motion:

Moved by Joyce Morrison, seconded by Betty Jean Kippen to receive both the Affirmation Update Documents and proposed schedule.

CARRIED

2. Office Administrators New Hours:

The report and recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee (new employment opportunity), in consultation with the Ministry and Personnel Committee regarding the new employment opportunity accepted by the Office Administrator with Unifor was received and reviewed by Council. Council agreed it would be mutually beneficial to all parties.

3. Our Future Projects, Actions/Reactions, Establishing Priorities:

Bill put forward a number of projects/proposals either underway or which need further consideration as follows:

- Kitchen Renewal: proceeding well, close to implementation
- Chairs for the church hall: It was noted the existing chairs are getting worn and the chairs recently purchased by the Bridge Club are heavy. Bill suggested there might be an opportunity to collaborate with the Bridge Club to get new stackable chairs that could be stored on trollies for ease of handling.
- Stewardship Initiative: proceeding
- Collaboration with other local United Churches: proceeding
- UCC Indigenous Relations: ERMUC has reviewed and endorsed the UCC initiative to strengthen and support this initiative. Locally, the JTRG continues.
- Church Wellness, future attendance, cures, etc: Although Council spent time reviewing some of these challenges it was felt this item needs more time and consideration separately at a future meeting.
- Environment/Climate Change – our ERMUC role: this is a very challenging task as noted in recent Broadview articles. Some ideas of roles we could play included: we could put more messages reflecting more modest, manageable opportunities in Tidings as a start. We could also initiate some “Micro Stewardship” such as providing supplies for members to pick up litter or have a specific event on the ERMUC grounds one day.
- The Homeless: Gord Sinclair could not be here today but would like to address the item at our next Council meeting.

Overall we need to establish a Game Plan!

Reports:

1. Treasurers Report:

Peter Merkle could not be here today. He will follow up next month.

2. Minister's Reports:

Michelle outlined a number of events over the coming few weeks including:

- TGIF (“Thank Goodness it’s Family Night”) this coming Friday. 75 folks have registered so far.

- Palm Sunday (March 24th) Ruth Judd and Lorna Thorne have been reaching out to families connected to ERMUC.
- Also to connect families, and especially children, to Easter Sunday (March 31st)
- During Holy week there will be collaboration services. Maundy Thursday services will be celebrated at Cookes Portsmouth U.C. at 6:00pm. Good Friday services will be held here at ERMUC.
- Easter Sunday –Craig Pettis is organizing breakfast. There will be a congregational group photo following the 10:00 service.
- There will be a focus on stewardship during May
- Michelle wanted to particularly lift up Alma Barney for filling in with Pastoral visitation while we filled the gap as Elizabeth Amirault moved on.

Announcements: none

Closing Prayer: Michelle closed with a prayer.

Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of council will be – Wednesday April 17th. Again, the meeting will be held in person at the church beginning at 9:00am.

Bill Spencer, Chair

Ken Williams, Secretary