

HIGHLAND HILLS UNIFIED BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 7, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Brian Austen, Rebekah Chevalier, Shawn Chevalier, Neil Darby, Erskine Flook, Janet Heffer, Bruce McClennan, Debbie Sherwin, Pat Thornett, Rev. Max Ward, Barbara Walford-Davis, Marybeth Wilson

Regrets: Joan Chapple

Rev. Max opened with prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: Barbara Walford-Davis/ Neil Darby moved and seconded the approval of the agenda. **Carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of March 1, 2023, Unified Board meeting.

Motion: Rebekah Chevalier/ Marybeth Wilson moved and seconded acceptance. **Carried.**

Business Arising from the Minutes:

Neil Darby reported that there will not be a dehumidifier installed this year.

Brian Austen reported that the fire plan has been done and maps will be posted soon.

Neil reported that Dyson Alarm was in last month and checked the fire extinguishers, as well as checking the alarms. Janet Heffer has been checking the defibrillators and it was suggested she do a little tutorial with a few people, including Paul Rutledge, as to how to do this.

Janet noted that the photocopier is still working and has not needed to be replaced yet.

Business Conducted Via Email:

Motion: Moved by Bruce McClennan, seconded by Neil Darby, that the Lift Committee, consisting of Neil Darby, Erskine Flook and Bruce McClennan, on behalf of Highland Hills United Church, enter into a contract with James Baldry for the supply and installation of a lift as per the drawings prepared by the architect, Duncan Ross, at a price not to exceed \$80,000. **Carried.**

PASTORAL CHARGE

Chair: Janet Heffer noted that it's good to see more happening around the church. She thanked the Lift Committee for their recent work on getting a contractor.

Clergy: Rev. Max Ward had sent a report in advance (attached).

Pastoral Care: Marybeth Wilson had circulated a report in advance. It read: Sadly, the report for this meeting includes the announcement that the Committee's co-chairperson, Barb Parish, has died recently. Barb has been involved with pastoral care calling for this pastoral charge for many years. In this role, and in many other ways, she will be deeply missed. As well, I was recently informed by another caller that she wishes to be relieved of this responsibility. As a result, I am in search of two new callers. Any suggestions would be gratefully received.

Treasurer and Finance: Erskine Flook had emailed a report on finances in advance (attached). From the beginning of the year, \$10,000 per month has been transferred from the church account to the pastoral charge account and the funds received from Hope United have also been deposited into the Charge account in order to rebuild its balance. As the agreement for Rev. Max's services at Hope UC has been extended, starting in July, Erskine will decrease the amount HHUC transfers to the Charge account.

Regarding the church, the revenue has stayed constant but with extra costs January-April, so there is a shortfall of \$21,000. As previously noted, \$10,000 was transferred earlier from the charge.

It was suggested that we consider who might chair Stewardship/Fundraising, which is currently vacant. It was also noted that rentals are also down. It was confirmed that the overall projection is that there will be a shortfall of approximately \$30,000 to \$41,000 by the end of the year. The current reserves are \$620,000 and if the shortfall isn't addressed, this will decline over the years. The shortfall doesn't include the \$10,000-20,000 interest from investments or additional revenue from Hope United.

It was suggested that people be encouraged to review their givings and consider increasing them. People do not necessarily know the state of the church's finances or the issues impacting the shortfall. **Action item:** Erskine will put something into the bulletin about finances.

Motion: Moved by Erskine Flook/ seconded by Neil Darby that we give approval to transfer \$10,000 from investments to the CIBC bank account for use by the general bank account.
Carried.

Ministry and Personnel: Shawn Chevalier had emailed a report in advance (attached). He noted that things have been going well with Rev. Max supporting Hope United. They have requested that the contract be extended another 6 months to the end of the year and for Rev. Max to increase the frequency of his preaching from 2 Sundays a month to 3 Sundays.

Debbie Sherwin noted that if she is doing pulpit supply that she will go to Hope United after.

There was a concern raised about Rev. Max not being able to visit with people after each service due to travelling to Hope United in Norland. Shawn noted that Rev. Max has been intentional about visiting with people at the beginning of the service and that also with Zoom, he is able to connect with people.

It was suggested that occasionally Hope United be invited to attend a Sunday here. Currently Hope doesn't have Internet to be able to provide a Zoom service, so our congregation cannot go there. Having them come for a Sunday would be a way to get to know each other and would be one less Sunday Rev. Max would have to travel. This could be raised with Hope United and explored over the next 6 months.

The question was asked if this is a temporary situation while Hope United searches for a minister, and the answer is no. The larger context is the reduction in the number of new ministry personnel and also the difficulty of smaller congregations attracting ministry personnel when they can only offer part-time ministry.

Motion: Moved by Shawn Chevalier/ seconded by Debbie Sherwin that we approve the extension of the fee-for-service contract with Hope United by 6 months to the end of the year, and to increase the frequency of Rev. Max preaching to 3 Sundays a month. **Carried.**

Motion: Moved by Shawn Chevalier/ seconded by Barbara Walford-Davis that Rev. Max be able to preach in Norland on Sunday, July 9 due to the Norland Summer Festival with the understanding that Hope United will supply the funds for pulpit supply at HHUC. **Carried.**

Manse: The front stairs have been repaired.

Maple Lake Trustees Report and Update: Rev. Max included information about this in his report.

Worship/Pulpit Supply/CE: Janet sent a report in advance (attached).

Outreach: Pat Thornett had emailed a report in advance (attached). June 28 will be the HAVE Walk for Water and they will be doing Walking 2 by 2 for Abbey Retreat Centre and welcome people to join this.

ACCEPTANCE OF HHPC REPORTS

Motion: Erskine Flook/ Pat Thornett moved and seconded the acceptance of all committee reports. **Carried.**

HIGHLAND HILLS UNITED CHURCH REPORTS

Trustees: Bruce McClennan had sent a report in advance (attached). He reminded us that groups using our church facilities are required to have insurance. There is a new system for this insurance with HUB. The cost is just a bit more. Bruce has put together a guideline for groups and is waiting for this to be approved by HUB.

Property: Neil Darby had circulated a report in advance (attached). He noted that new lights have been installed in the downstairs bathroom. They are looking at the sill under the front stained-glass window, which requires repair.

A question was raised regarding what tasks the caretaker is supposed to do. Neil said he has reviewed the list of duties. Several issues were raised, including cleaning the stairs from the front entry, dusting the hymn books, and cleaning the basement after funerals. **Action item:** Brian and Neil will sit down with Paul to review his duties.

Kitchen: It was noted with appreciation that the kitchen passed inspection and the certificate has been posted.

Stewardship/Fundraising: There is currently no chair. Could this be broken down into projects headed up by various people?

UCW: Pat Thornett had emailed a report in advance (attached). It was noted that Pat needs assistance.

ECORC: Debbie Sherwin spoke to the remit around the structure of the Indigenous church. Historically, these churches are among the oldest in the United Church. Indigenous churches were not included in union talks in 1925. Many have had very little upkeep in the last 45 years. The Indigenous church has asked that structural barriers to be removed so they can

define their own structure.

We are being asked to step back and trust the Indigenous church to do this work. They still want a place in the United Church, but they need to self-define this. About 66 communities of faith make up the Indigenous church. Average Sunday worship is about 1,000 worshippers. It's more a community ministry than a Sunday morning worship model.

At the spring meeting ECORC voted unanimously in favour and now each community of faith in the region must vote before March. If we don't vote, it is recorded as a no. **Action item:** Each Board is encouraged to review the information sent out about this in an email from Rebekah, particularly the YouTube video, and to educate themselves. Then we will vote on this at our next meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF HIGHLAND HILLS UNITED CHURCH REPORTS

Motion: Brian Austen/ Bruce McClennan moved and seconded acceptance of the reports. **Carried.**

NEW CHARGE BUSINESS

Lift Fundraising: It was suggested that there be a special appeal, with a thermometer to track the progress. It was also suggested that a letter go out about this to the congregation. The fundraising goal for the anticipated cost is \$80,000. It was suggested that it be called the We Lift You Up campaign. With the chair campaign, it was helpful to have Kim as the face of the campaign. It was suggested we find someone who could be the face(s) of the lift campaign.

It was suggested that we have a potluck dinner as a social event with musical entertainment and ask for donations. It was noted that there are many talented musical people in this congregation. It could have the feel of a kitchen party. This cannot be advertised as a community event otherwise the food would need to all be prepared in the kitchen. Another suggestion is a large garage/trunk sale. But people would be responsible for removing anything they don't sell.

A time and talent auction was another suggestion. It was noted that the choir at Zion United used to put on a strawberry social with musical entertainment and also have a musical night with a hymn sing. Could there be a community group to do the cleanup after a dinner? Could we do a catered dinner? Mulligans in Minden caters. We would need a licence from the township. It was also suggested that we could look into a liquor licence for a catered dinner. Another suggestion was a progressive dinner. Or to have a travelogue in conjunction with a dinner. **Action item:** Barbara and Bruce will go to Mulligans to discuss catering and gather information.

A special meeting with a small group needs to be held to discuss lift fundraising. **Action item:** Brian, Neil, Marybeth, Max, Janet, and Barbara volunteered to meet. It was suggested that Bruce Downs be consulted for ideas. Wednesday, June 21st, 7 p.m. upstairs in the church was chosen as the date. Erskine will include information about lift fundraising in what he shares with the congregation.

Assistive Hearing Devices: There were a couple of people at the recent funeral who had difficulty hearing some of the speakers. This prompted the discussion that we have some assistive hearing devices that can be hooked into the sound system. These will be used at the upcoming celebration of life.

Next meeting: The next meeting was set for Wednesday, Oct. 4, at 1:30 p.m.

Marybeth closed the meeting with a prayer. Rebekah moved adjournment.

Chair, Janet Heffer

Secretary, Rebekah Chevalier