

CHARGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
NOTES FROM MEETING OF July 11, 2016
ZION UNITED CHURCH, CARNARVON

NOTE: These notes were taken during a fast paced and lively discussion session. They are a record of the discussion, but they have not been checked, formatted or reviewed.

ATTENDANCE

- **Maple Lake:** Albert Carpenter, and Allan Upton
- **Minden:** Brian Austen, Eric Casper, Debbie Sherwin, Lois Deacon, Janet Heffer, Don Ballantyne, Nancy Ballantyne, Jerry Rome, Ollie Rome, Tom Parish, Barb Parish, Pat Thornett acting secretary.
- **Zion:** Charlene Cooper, Ron Clark, Nerina Clark, Dave Wilson, Erskine Flook, Michelle Wolfe Miscio, Mary Jane McMullen, Linda Voicey, Barbara Braker, Walter Braker, Dale Toye, Wilma Heggart, Lucille Hoeksema, Robert Hoeksema, Jim Hicks, Mary Hicks, Ross McMullen, Fred Chapple, Margo Davidson, Tom Davidson, Gail Flook, Doreen French, Ginny Hopkings, Joyce Wiltshire, Joy Davey, Glenna Koehler, Ted Koehler, Laurie Stibbards, Andy Cooper, Anne Beattie-Stokes, Mary Margaret Farrow(summer), Paul Rutledge.

OPENING - Andy Cooper, Chair called the meeting to order. He advised that the topic for the meeting was buildings. This topic can foster a lot of reaction and emotion but it is a secondary item to the amalgamation. He asked that those speaking would be respectful, courteous and patient. A guide might be What Would Jesus Do.

Andy referred to their visit to Ireland and the changes that may happen there because of Britain's exit from the European Union. We need to think about what we are doing as in their case the majority ruled but they may not have been right.

Andy then read the opening prayer that had been part of our service on June 12th.

What do we need to house our congregation(s).

- Things to consider :

- numbers, activities
- what we have will it serve us in the future
- chairs or pews
- rentals – what facility would rent well
- what is required for special purposes, wheel chair access, kitchen, meeting room(s), gym, offices.

-Responses

- we need all of those, but we can only afford some
- what is the best thing for our area
- what will bring in more people
- need to talk to other people who have gone through this e.g. Beaverton, Cannington, Queen Street.

The more information we have the better it will be.

-Queen Street has changed from a huge sanctuary to a storefront with chairs. Some people left but others came back and new people have come. They cannot afford full time ministry but they are also passionate about keeping their church alive.

-Andy responded to this that we have spoken with other communities of faith in this situation but our solution will be unique. He also is aware of 2 churches in Peterborough that are joining together.

-Zion church was built for the community for it to sit empty would be a sin

- Treasurer's response re renting just for renting would be a shame and will not cover costs

-There is a history with churches and their people. We know there will be a loss of people. Our only hope is that they will find a church home

- there are many church models
- 50 or 60% of the congregation are four score and ten – where do we find workers
- out of 8 churches in chat groups only one has full time ministry. They cannot afford many things they need
- Kawartha Highlands Presbytery wrote a proposal regarding supervised ministry. This would give a student a placement to work 60% for churches and 40% for Presbytery
- something has to be done as we have aging congregations – more people are getting interested
- we should control what is going to happen
- Ministry costs vary: 19 hours to prepare a 10 minute sermon
10 hours to prepare a whole order of service
- we are more than a Sunday morning church
- What church is:
 1. Worship – transcendent focus,
 2. Beloved community – where we belong,
 3. Service
- people of service care about other people (Pastoral Care) – social service for the community
- church was an event for him but is not for his children
- catch a new vision for what church is – imagine something new
- do we need a church building- daughter’s church rents a school gym – chairs in church
- 3 congregations shared one building and later went to 5 congregations sharing – each congregations had their events and the others attended
- there are different facilities to worship in – open your mind and you can move forward
- identify what you want and design a facility to suit
- a group of 15 youths shared about different religions - you can band together if you have the same purpose
- recognize our strengths – Maple Lake – intimacy, Zion – hall, Minden – acoustics - these are great features of each building how could we keep that
- people are coming from a distance to be part of this congregation but how much farther should they travel
- choir is a big attraction

Benefits we enjoy:

- music – Zion
- we don’t owe any money – Minden, Maple Lake and Zion
- we have 2 buildings we could sell, not sure about Maple Lake
- money at our disposal
- interested people
- full time minister
- Dr. Maurice Smith and Margaret moved to Kingston. Their church rented an auditorium in a school. They didn’t have to have fund raisers. They are very happy and there is a family feeling not a churchy one.
- Doesn’t matter where the building is. We want to worship together and keep the family feeling.
- finances will dwindle and expenses go up
- give up the building and join together all in one place
- if we rent where to keep all the things we need e.g. Communion, group equipment etc.
- new building may end up empty
- Queen Street sold their building but the church did not close so they got to keep all the funds
- United Church has no youth programs. Preaching to us but there are many young adults and youth and Sunday School age missing. Need to try something to bring them in.
- By combining we could free up the minister to try something else

- music – We listen to other types of music at home but we need to be willing to have it at our church
- form follows function – important to dream together what we want to do. We need to be passionate about what we want
- other types of worship could be tried such as Taize or meditation
- dream about possibilities to plan facilities
- concern about the impact on communities. Zion has business people who want to attend the information session to understand what is going to happen to this community.
- in another area businesses have gone and the churches are following
- when churches were established there were 3 churches because of travel. Now the stores and schools have gone but the churches remain
- other denominations are struggling should we be working with them?

What about the people who are not here tonight?

- there is some immediate resistance
 - share what we are learning in this group , quell rumours, listen to their thoughts
 - the 3 information meetings will help to inform that no decisions have been made and hopefully get more people involved
 - could try coffee and conversation with a question to be discussed on more than one Sunday
 - read the documents and share information
 - look at home page of the Highland Hills Pastoral Charge, in the centre of the page click on link for planning group
 - make information available in as many ways as you can
 - if people are prejudiced they need to think of the greater good
 - what is the number one priority of people in this year?
 - item by item must be decided
 - there has to be a plan
 - we have to talk as one congregation with the people that are not here
 - we need to decide in order that we get to make the decisions and not an outside party
 - the information meetings this next 3 weeks will be challenging
 - change is hard and most of us have been talking about this for a while. The more people hear it the easier it will be to change
 - when was the last time you invited someone to church and what do you say about it
 - a lot of time and effort is spent keeping a roof over our head instead of what we should be about as a church
 - Visioning** – a group to put ideas together – 2 or 3 from each church
 - Rev. Bob Root could be the facilitator of this
 - in a time of change people are not always kind to each other
 - work shop in Bobcaygeon
- An Opportunity Offers: Caring for Each other in a Changing Church Tues. Oct. 4, 2016 at Trinity Bobcaygeon*
See your church bulletin board for details
- more people involved in a decision the more they are willing to participate
 - Andy will call Rev. Bob Root tomorrow to try to get him here

Amalgamation

- those present voted by a show of hands that they were in favour of amalgamation
- we need to share that
- we need to make a plan to move forward

- the mandate of this committee was to put together a proposal to take to the congregations
- begin with a question of amalgamation and if they agree then we proceed
- originally interested in reducing costs at each church but when everything had been done there the next step was to work together to reduce costs
- now we have to get into the mechanics of it
- the advisory group to the Official Board could advise them that we recommend amalgamation vote to the congregations
- there is a desire to work with Presbytery (while they still exist) to move ahead
- it was explained that the Official Board started this process in December of 2014. Then in November of 2015 they authorized this groups formation to make recommendations to the Board
- Andy could approach the Official Board to ask them to have the congregations vote on amalgamation
- concern was raised about a clear statement of what we mean by amalgamation
- the vote would be to come together as a people willing to work together
- the congregational vote goes to Presbytery and then they would hold meetings with each congregation and make recommendations
- the buildings will be decided after that

The time for the meeting to close had passed. Debbie Sherwin closed the meeting with prayer.
We adjourned at 9:20 pm.