

**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday January 25, 2023 at 1900h**  
**Via Videoconference**

**Present:** Al Hubbard (video conference host), Andy Choles, Carol Wilson, Dana Bryant-Giguere, David Wheeler, Elisabeth Evans, Louise Sinclair, Pat Skinner, Richard Cranston, Rick Donaldson, Shawn Bausch, Steve Shaver, Susan Gittings, Teresa Madeira

**Regrets:** Christine Whiting, Clarke Grice, Heather McGillis, Joanne Quennell

**Ministry Staff:** Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz, Victoria Keane

**Reports attached this month:** Lead Minister, Community Network Report, Communications, Ministry & Personnel, Property, Spiritual Development, Welcoming & Fellowship, Worship, Future Planning Group, Regional Council Representative, Financial Statements & Treasurer's Report, 2023 Budget Summary, 2022 Financial Statements,  
**Other documents attached:** A Covenant for Mutual Care & Growth, EDGE Network Moves to Central Role, Congregational Meeting Agenda, Church Calendar, 2022 Roll Report

**Call to Order**

Richard Cranston called the Council Meeting of **January 25, 2023** to order.

A quorum (16) of Council members were present.

**Opening Prayer** Rev. Heather

**Opening Remarks** Richard Cranston

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reviewed video conference courtesies and procedures, including voting by verbal response for opposition or abstention.

**Review & Approval of Council Meeting Minutes**

**November 30, 2022**

No errors or omissions were noted.

- MOTION to Council by Pat Skinner that the Council minutes of November 30, 2022 be approved. SECONDED by Andy Choles. Motion CARRIED.

**January 9, 2023**

The minutes were amended under New Business, second bullet point, to specify that Dana Bryant-Giguere will be taking on the role of Treasurer at the Compass.

- MOTION to Council by Rick Donaldson that the Council minutes of January 9, 2023 be approved as amended. SECONDED by Andy Choles. Motion CARRIED.

### **Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

#### **Accountants' statements – Dana Bryant-Giguere**

- Dana asked our external accountants about the options of review engagement vs full audit of financial statements and summarized her findings:
  - Switching to full audit process requires more lead time than review engagement. An audit of 2023 statements would require a decision by June 2023.
  - Audit costs in the first year after switching from review engagement would be \$10K+ and would decrease in the second year
  - Switching between both types of review from year to year is not recommended
- Christ First is a non-incorporated, not for profit organization. Because of United Church of Canada (UCC) registration under a special federal government act, we are not required to undergo full audit, regardless of our income. Eric Matheson at UCC has confirmed that a decision to do so is up to our Council.
- Dana recommended deferring further discussion and decision until after the February 12 congregational meeting

#### **Hospitality for Demonstrators – Richard Cranston**

- Discussions are underway with Outreach, for discussion at their next meeting.

### **Reports from Ministerial Team**

#### **Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz – Lead Minister**

Rev. Heather highlighted the following items her report:

- Book Study – Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations: Heather would like to use 1 chapter per month as a basis for Council discussion. There was support by Council for this idea, and it was proposed that several books be purchased using proceeds from the E. Eddy Library Fund, pending permission from the Trustees. David Wheeler will coordinate the book order through the office once Rick Donaldson has received approval from the Trustees.
  - MOTION to Council by David Wheeler to approve the purchase of twelve (12) copies of Robert Shnase's *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, to be funded by proceeds of the E. Eddy Library Fund through the Trustees. SECONDED by Elisabeth Evans. Motion CARRIED with one (1) abstention.
- Council Covenant: Rev. Heather provided background on the circulated draft document. The purpose of the Covenant is to foster proactive awareness of 'who we are' in our communication and actions as Council members. Rev. Heather asked Council to read the draft and provide feedback to her by February 8.

#### **Victoria Keane – Youth & Family Ministry, Community Engagement Coordinator**

Victoria highlighted the 'good energy' evident in all areas of her work. She shared the example of 3 new families representing 7 children, who have joined in on Sunday mornings and at mid-week programs.

Shawn Bausch will offer Victoria suggested contacts at UCC for sharing these news pieces. Teresa Medeira added her congratulations to Victoria for the success of her youth and family programs.

### **Financial Reports** – Dana Bryant-Giguere

#### **2023 Budget**

- Dana explained that the newly circulated budget reflects adjustments made to Actual 2022 figures (to match accountants' statements) since the January 9, 2023 meeting, as well as the consolidation of receipts for Covid Masks and Projects & Sundry into one line, and the notation "net of UCC grant" on the Ministry & Personnel expenses line.
- MOTION to Council by Dana Bryant-Giguere that the proposed Budget for 2023, as amended by the Treasurer with the updated Actual 2022 figures, be approved as presented and for further presentation and approval at the Semi-annual Congregational Meeting on February 12, 2023. SECONDED by Steve Shaver. Discussion and clarification points:
  - \$44,810 in funding for Extra Ordinary Expenses is \$20K from the Reserve Fund set up in 2021, with the balance from other undesignated funds held in various other accounts
  - Hub & Spoke project – net revenue at end of year goes towards payment for equipment; income and expenses will run through Outreach.
- Motion CARRIED.

#### **2023 Financial Update – December**

- Dana reviewed the financial statements setting out the position of Christ First as of December 31, 2022, noting that the Net Operating Income under Budget Year 2022 shown in the circulated Financial Summary will be corrected to read as (\$69,004). A revised financial summary will be circulated by Carol Wilson.
- Dana explained that any unused Special Funds shown on the Balance Sheet carry forward from year to year
- MOTION to Council by Dana Bryant-Giguere that the Financial Summary and Balance Sheet of Christ First as of December 31, 2022 that have been reviewed by the Finance Committee, be approved as presented. SECONDED by Carol Wilson. Motion CARRIED.

#### **2022 Financial Statements**

- Dana reviewed the circulated review engagement Financial Statements for Christ First as of December 31, 2022. She commented that the financial review went very well. Finance has requested a revision to Note 12 to include the year 2022 as having been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Final statements for distribution to the congregation will be page numbered.
- MOTION to Council by Dana Bryant-Giguere that the draft Financial Statements of Christ First as of December 31, 2022, prepared by the accounting firm of Capstick McCollum and that have been reviewed by the Finance Committee, be approved for presentation and approval at the Semi-annual Congregational Meeting on February 12, 2023, with the amendment to note 12 about the impact of Covid. SECONDED by Andy Choles. Discussion and clarification points:
  - Hub & Spoke equipment is not shown on the balance sheet as a) we don't capitalize our equipment and b) it is owned by UCC; we will send net revenue to UCC (until a total of \$30K has been paid).
  - Insurance requirements for H&S equipment to be investigated.
- Motion CARRIED.

### **Semi-annual Congregational Meeting – February 12, 2023**

- Richard Cranston referred to the agenda circulated for information purposes.
- Rev. Heather, with permission from Gail Fargey, will offer a reflection on John Fargey, with a focus on who he was as a leader and as a member of Council. She requested that Council members send her their input by February 8.
- Carol Wilson encouraged attendance by Council members. Logistics and communications are underway; those identified with roles will receive a first logistics email by the end of the week.

### **Committee Reports**

No issues or discussions arose from the committee reports submitted by Communications, Spiritual Development, Future Planning Group and Regional Council Representative.

### **Community Outreach**

- As per a recent update from Peggy Forde via eblast to the congregation, the Christmas Marketplace raised \$5,306.

### **Congregation Support – Carol Wilson**

- Carol presented the circulated 2022 Roll Report in the absence of a Committee chair
- MOTION to Council by Carol Wilson to approve the Report on History Roll Changes (January – December, 2022) as written. SECONDED by Sue Gittings.
  - Rev. Heather noted that UCC is recognizing a new era for membership definitions, given that there are many active adherents and generous contributors who attend remotely.

### **Ministry & Personnel – Susan Gittings**

- Sue provided contextual background for recent discussions between Andy Choles and herself regarding hiring of an additional technical person to support Evan's work with the H&S project:
  - Andy has been concerned about Evan's heavy workload with the H&S contract starting in February
  - Evan has indicated he is comfortable with the workload associated with 1 spoke. M&P have asked Evan to train a backup person and believe this is underway. He feels his workload will be manageable on his own until a second spoke is added, consistent with earlier projections by Future Planning Group (FPG) that suggest additional staff would be hired once 2 or more spokes are involved, to be funded by additional spoke revenue.
  - Sue and Andy feel that decision-making should happen with a clear understanding of the vision of Christ First as well as monetary considerations.
- Sue outlined M&P's considerations regarding hiring of additional staff:
  - Potential need to hire a Treasurer – a non-budgeted expense for 2023
  - Salary costs have increased significantly for 2023
  - We have a large staff to sustain and invest in with competitive salaries and volunteer resources.

- Concern over potential for 'staff creep' – due to circumstances, the hiring of additional staff for what are initially seen as temporary positions but that eventually become status quo.
- M&P want to encourage Evan to train additional backup people in February as a way to provide interim support without hiring extra staff before additional spokes are added.
- Sue acknowledged that the pressure and impact of H&S on staff, M&P and Worship have been greater than initially expected and believes we need to move forward in a measured fashion, examining the vision and impact of the H&S project. M&P is in favour of remaining with 1 spoke until it is felt 1 spoke connection is running smoothly, before contemplating expansion.
- Andy stated that Worship's main concern is to keep things running smoothly during worship. Despite Evan's confidence regarding current workload, there is a need for a contingency plan should he need to be absent. Andy also expressed concerns over the eventual expansion to additional spokes. He feels the increased remote church presence has the potential to become a distraction and have an impact on our congregation's involvement in the services.
- Shawn added the following clarifications:
  - Despite the great need in our Region, FPG recommends an incremental approach to H&S
  - Financial aspects: there is no liability for the equipment – it can be returned at any time. Our commitment to UCC is for the net revenue to cover their purchase cost. Net revenue is net of all variable expenses including staff.
  - 'additional hiring' would be on a contract basis, estimated by Evan at 3 hrs/Sunday (estimated total cost \$60) whenever there are 2 or more spoke connections
  - Our current commitment with Faith United in Milton is for 3 Sundays/month from Feb-June
- There was general agreement that further discussion is needed to explore the impact of the program on staff and finances and fill information gaps in order to move forward with clarity. Rick Donaldson recommended further discussion offline with interested Council members to look broadly at the financial and human resources issues. Shawn expressed support for this plan and offered to initiate the discussions. He asked interested Council members to contact him.
- M&P will work with Evan to arrange the training of an additional person as backup and to provide extra support on a short-term basis (month of February).

#### **Property – David Wheeler**

- Inn from the Cold program at Port Credit Campus is underway. Program runs from 9:30 pm – 7:30 am, with Options providing breakfast. There have been some issues with lineups as there are spaces available for 20 people on a first come, first served basis but 44 people identified as 'no fixed address' in Port Credit. Additional security will be needed to prevent interruption of other evening tenancies.
- Committee will be discussing a name change for rental income at their next meeting, to reflect the outreach aspect of tenancies. David wants to see this language communicated to the congregation.
- Rick Donaldson stated that Trustees are open to receiving a recommendation from Property to use funds available to the Trustees for the 2 accessibility project costs outlined in the Property report. David will initiate a request in consultation with Finance.

**Welcoming & Fellowship** – Elisabeth Evans/Joanne Quennell

- Carol Wilson will distribute the church calendar referenced in the Committee report.

**Worship** – Andy Choles

- Andy acknowledged the need for a communication plan for urgent notifications regarding changes to in person worship services, e.g., Christmas Eve
- Friction between 10:30 and 9:02 attendees re blended services continues to be a concern. Rev. Heather noted this is common to congregations with 2-track worship. This concern is being supported through ongoing smaller group discussions.

**New Business**

- February 23 Council meeting is cancelled in view of upcoming congregational meeting. Postponed December social gathering will be rescheduled to a date prior to the March business meeting.
- Rev. Heather hopes to confirm the name of a new chair for Congregation Support by the end of the week. This will be confirmed by email vote in advance of the congregational meeting on Feb. 12.
- Dana Bryant-Giguere hopes to confirm a new payroll volunteer in the near future. An email vote is not likely required as this individual will not be serving on Council.

**Closing Prayer** Rev. Heather

**Adjournment** Louise Sinclair

**Next Council Meeting** March 22, 2023

[Redacted Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Chair – Rick Cranston

March 22, 2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

[Redacted Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Secretary – Carol Wilson