

Minutes
Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday October 2, 2022 at 1400h
Clarkson Campus

Reports & Attachments for this meeting: Meeting agenda, Attendance List, Exploratory Committee Report, October 2, 2022 Slide Presentation

Opening Prayer:

The Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz led the congregation in prayer.

Call to Order:

Richard Cranston, Chair of Council, called the Special Congregational Meeting of October 2, 2022 to order.

Attendance was taken. Ninety-one (91) people were present. The meeting was recorded for administrative purposes, and the recording will be destroyed following approval of the minutes of this meeting. A slide presentation was shared on screen as a visual guide to the agenda and meeting content.

Opening Remarks:

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to receive the report and recommendations of the Exploratory Committee, and that he would be presenting them as Chair of the Committee. He introduced Carol Wilson, Council Secretary, as recording secretary for the meeting.

Introduction of Exploratory Committee:

Richard introduced the members of the Committee: Barb Abrams, Joan Cobbold, Dana Bryant-Giguere, Shawn Bausch and Mary Dowding-Paré. Richard expressed thanks to the team for their dedication and efforts over the past few months.

Voting Privileges for Adherents:

Richard read the following motion:

MOVED by Shawn Bausch, SECONDED by Carol Wilson: To allow Adherents to vote on any or all matters under consideration at this Special Congregational meeting of October 2, 2022. Motion CARRIED unanimously.

Presentation and Approval of Exploratory Committee Report and Recommendations:

Richard presented his report, encompassing the following topics:

- Mandate of the Exploratory Committee: to meet with a similar committee from St. Stephen's on-the-Hill (SSOTH) to assess whether it would be advisable and beneficial for Councils of both churches to recommend potential amalgamation.
- Reasons for doing this now:
 - Pressures facing both congregations
 - Opportunities
 - How the topic of amalgamation arose between Christ First and SSOTH
- Topics and tone of discussions at meetings held from June-August; priorities established
- Committee's Assessment:
 - Commonalities and key differences between SSOTH and Christ First
 - Key benefits of amalgamation
- Recommendations:
 - It would be advisable and beneficial to recommend potential amalgamation with SSOTH. A recommendation and decision on whether to amalgamate will not come until after the next phase of detailed work and discernment.
 - Next Steps: establish an Amalgamation Committee to work with SSOTH; committee to be comprised of up to seven (7) people, including any members of the Exploratory Committee who wish to continue.

Richard read the following motions:

1. MOVED by Mary Dowding-Paré, SECONDED by Barbara Abrams: That Christ First congregation receive and approve the report of the Exploratory Committee.

The following question was raised by a congregant following Richard's presentation: *You have said the congregation is no longer able to finance the costs of the church. We know that in the last 10 years, because we have given a fixed percentage to Mission & Service (M & S), we were creating an artificial deficit. If we were just to give our surplus to M & S at the end of the year, would that allow us to cover the cost of running the church?* Dana Bryant-Giguere, Treasurer, explained that M & S donation is a budget

matter. As per the 2022 budget, Christ First will donate 10% of identified givings to M&S, and this amount will be reviewed for the 2023 budget.

Motion CARRIED unanimously.

2. MOVED by Joan Cobbold, SECONDED by Dana Bryant-Giguere: That the congregation of Christ First approve the formation of an Amalgamation Committee working with a St. Stephen's on-the-Hill Amalgamation Committee to determine if mutually agreeable terms can be defined for an amalgamation with St. Stephen's on-the-Hill, and if so, recommend to their respective Councils, congregations and the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council to amalgamate the two churches. Members from Christ First to be appointed to this Committee are: Steve Shaver (Chair), Richard Cranston, Barb Abrams, Shawn Bausch, Dana Bryant-Giguere, Joan Cobbold, Mary Dowding-Paré. This committee will be responsible for reporting to Council and the congregation on a timely basis.

The following question was raised by a congregant: *Is there a potential target or timeframe?* Richard Cranston responded that there has been no discussion about a timeframe or potential deadline for a decision, but it would not be desirable for this to be a long-term process.

Motion CARRIED by overwhelming majority, with 1 abstention.

3. MOVED by Barb Abrams, SECONDED by Shawn Bausch: That the Exploratory Committee be disbanded, with our sincere thanks, following the October 2 congregational meeting. Motion CARRIED by overwhelming majority, with 1 abstention.

Richard concluded his presentation by stating that the Amalgamation Committees of both congregations will plan to meet soon and will provide periodic updates as the process unfolds. He expressed best wishes to them for successful discussions.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment:

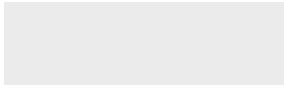
Richard thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and invited anyone with further questions to contact Steve Shaver or himself. He expressed appreciation to the following individuals:

- Carol Wilson, for organizing today's meeting
- Mary Dowding-Paré, for preparing the presentation materials
- Evan Hoffman, for managing the audio-visual technology and slide presentation

Having concluded all business, Richard Cranston declared the meeting closed.

Closing Prayer:

The Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz led the congregation in prayer.



Council Chair – Richard Cranston

February 12, 2023

Date



Council Secretary – Carol Wilson

Secretary: *CW*