

Christ First Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 1900h
Merigold Room

Present: Carol Wilson, Al Hubbard, Nancy Hori, Richard Cranston, David Wheeler, Heather McGillis, Teresa Madeira, John McGillis, Joan Cobbold, Andy Choles, Clarke Grice, Pat Skinner, Louise Sinclair, Shawn Bausch, Steve Shaver, Mary Dowding-Paré, Christine Whiting

Regrets: John Anderson, Rick Donaldson, Jill Robinson

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

By Invitation: Janis Cowie –Office Administrator

Committee Reports:

Welcome & Fellowship, Spiritual Development, Real Estate Oversight Committee, Ministry & Personnel, Congregation Support, Stewardship, Trustees, Regional Rep. Report, Property Report & Trustees' Walk, Communications Report, Regional Council Report, Christian Outreach, Worship Report: Wedding Policy November 2023, Funeral Policy November 2023, Policy on Fees– Wedding & Funeral

Finance Reports: For the period ending August 31, 2023

1. Christ First Revised Balance Report –Aug. 31, 2023
2. Copy of August 2023 Financial Summary
3. Profit and Loss YTD Comparison - January- August 2023

For the period ending October 31, 2023

1. November 22, 2023 Financial Report to Council
2. Balance Sheet Report
3. Profit and Loss YTD Comparison January- October 2023

Other Reports:

Rev. Heather's Report
GS10 Living in Reconciliation Document, Report to RCMI, Fundraising Event-Metropolitan Silver Band - October 14, 2023, CF Treats 'n'Treasures Christmas Marketplace Report

Call to Order:

Chair of Christ First Council Carol Wilson, called the Council Meeting of November 22, 2023 to order. A quorum of 19 Council members were present.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz led the opening prayer.

Opening Remarks: Carol Wilson

Carol Wilson welcomed Council members, ministry team and Janis Cowie, office administrator, to the meeting.

New business added to the agenda: ONCA explanation – Louise Sinclair

Review & Approval of September 20, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes:

MOTION to Council by Al Hubbard that that Council minutes of September 20, 2023 be approved. SECONDED by Pat Skinner.

Correction to the September 20, 2023 Minutes

- Correction to the spelling of the name of the security system in the Ministry and Personnel verbal report to *Pasword Protection*, not Password Protect.

Motion CARRIED.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Hub & Spoke Report to RCMI

- It was agreed in the September meeting that a Council endorsed report about our Hub and Spoke experience should be sent to Regional Council via Shawn Bausch's contact Randy Boyd at the *Rural Connect Multi-site Initiative* (RCMI).
- Rev. Heather and Carol Wilson co-authored the report, which incorporated their adapted speaking notes from the meeting held in August with the team from Faith United. The report was reviewed by Louise Sinclair and Shawn and was circulated to Council members prior to this meeting for their review.

MOTION to Council, by Louise Sinclair to approve the November 2023 Draft Report on Hub & Spoke Project as presented, to be sent to Rural Connect Multi-site Initiative. SECONDED: Stephen Shaver Motion CARRIED.

Next Steps

- Report: Now that the report has been approved by Council, the next step is send it to Randy Boyd at RCMI. Shawn gave Randy a verbal report.
- Equipment:
 - Rural Connect has not yet asked for the equipment to be returned to Thunder Bay, however when it is needed at another site, it will have to be released.
 - Replacement equipment is budgeted in the 2024 Property budget.

Visioning Workshop & Follow-up

Carol Wilson gave the output from the October 1 visioning workshop which used as the basis for the Council retreat on November 4.

- The agenda for the Council Retreat was based on the following four questions:
 - As we think about attracting people to our organization, what is it that people are looking for that our church can provide?
 - What do we want to achieve over the next 3 to 5 years?
 - How will we achieve these goals?
 - How can we work together more effectively as a team to achieve our goals?
- Output from November 4 was a document reflecting a synthesis of discussions from both workshops. Many ideas were generated but not explored deeply enough for the purpose of prioritizing and refining our goals and strategies.
- The planning team met with Mark Ellwood on Nov 10 to debrief the meeting and determined that the collated goals and strategies arising from Nov 4 need to be further studied and distilled so that a clear action plan can be developed. An immediate next step will be a follow up 'retreat' on Wed Dec 6 from 7-9 pm in the Merigold Room. Mark's summary document will be distributed in advance.
- Council Members were asked for input on the strategic planning process. The following ideas were offered:
 - Increase the impact on community
 - Prioritize strategies with a view to feasibility
 - Leadership – how will we do this?
 - Focus on three target groups and develop action plan for them.

Stewardship Campaign – Louise Sinclair

- Louise Sinclair gave a status report of the Stewardship Campaign.
- Pledges at this time are less than last year, however estimated donations will be based on passed pattern for existing donors.
- Rev. Heather suggested that we re-examine the Stewardship Campaign in the New Year, in light of a strong PAR donor base.
- Louise is looking for someone to replace her as Stewardship Campaign Chair for 2024 as she will be Chair of the Council.

UCC Remit Vote

- An information package for Remit 1-Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization was distributed twice to Council members. It was supplemented by the Regional Council Representative and GS10 reports.
- Voting for Christ First is by Council members only.

- Discussion followed regarding autonomy and the direction the Indigenous community will take within the United Church structure.

MOTION by Richard Cranston that Council agrees to amend the Basis of Union to reflect:

1. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council*; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
2. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union**; and
3. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

SECONDED by Al Hubbard. Motion CARRIED.

Next Steps:

- Decision of the vote be sent to HFRC. Form to be submitted by Council Secretary.
- Communication to be sent to the congregation, describing the details of the remit and Council's decision. Article to also appear in Joyful News.

Reports form Ministerial Team

Rev. Heather

- Rev. Heather has a one week study leave in January.
- Council members congratulated Rev. Heather on her acceptance to the UCC *(Re)Generate: The Moderator's Leadership Program*.
- Rev. Heather gave an overview of the program.

Victoria Keane

- Community Network Ministry – most recent breakfast meeting featured a presentation from the “In from the Cold” program which is currently housing 30 people.
- Affirming Study Group
 - Keegan Lee-Guide is the lead of the group
 - As a study group appointed by Council, they will report directly to Council as needed.

Committee Reports

Worship – Andy Choles

Andy Choles highlighted the need for communion servers in the November/December time period. He suggested that perhaps committee members could serve.

An overview was requested on the role of a digital usher mentioned in the Worship report.

- Often there are as many online viewers of the service as there are in-person.

- How do we communicate and connect with the online viewer and allow them to be part of the worship service while managing our public space?
 - Worship's plan is to open up the chat line during livestreaming to have *real time* communication with the viewers.
 - Questions to stimulate to conversation will be developed by Rev. Heather, Ashley and Emily. A dry run was scheduled for November 26.

Transfer of Membership

Seven adherents have expressed interest in transferring their memberships to Christ First. The transfer of membership will take place on Anniversary Sunday.

MOTION to Council by Andy Choles, SECONDED by Steve Shaver, that the following persons be welcomed into full membership at Christ First: John Austen, Melissa Austen, Jennifer D'Agostino, Anne Lee-Guide, Keegan Lee-Guide and Michael Orosz. Motion CARRIED.

Revisions to the Wedding and Funeral Policy

Revisions were made to both the Wedding and Funeral policies approved at the September 2023 Council meeting. Andy highlighted the changes made to each policy and submitted the following motions.

MOTION by Andy Choles that the adjusted wording of the Christ First Policy for Weddings (approved September 20, 2023) be adopted by this Council. SECONDED by John McGillis Motion CARRIED.

MOTION by Andy Choles that the adjusted wording of the Christ First Policy for Funerals (approved September 20, 2023) be adopted by this Council. SECONDED by Joan Cobbold Motion CARRIED.

Wedding and Funeral Fees

A meeting was held with various stakeholders to discuss the CRA rules for Charitable Organizations regarding the use of building space and other fees pertaining to weddings and funerals. The resulting schedule of fees was presented to Council for review and approval.

MOTION by Andy Choles that the Christ First Policy on Fees for Weddings and Funerals be adopted by this Council. SECONDED by Clarke Grice Motion CARRIED.

Next Steps

- Andy will communicate the new policies to the congregation
- Al Hubbard will have the policies loaded to the website.

Communications – Al Hubbard

Church membership data management and ownership must be considered when moving from an in-house data storage unit to another platform such as a web-based online system. The following motion seeks permission to move data from the current platform to an online web-based system once suitable software is approved.

MOTION by Al Hubbard, SECONDED by Joan Cobbold, that all Church member/adherent records be moved to a modern on-line platform in 2024, as staff resources are available. Recommendation for vendor, implementation plan, and costs to be presented to Council for final approval. Motion CARRIED.

New software has been budgeted in the 2024 office budget.

Trustees – Joan Cobbold

It has been agreed in conjunction with Communications that the responsibility and ownership of the church business data be overseen by the church Trustees.

MOTION by Joan Cobbold and SECONDED by Al Hubbard, that the Christ First Trustees assume the overall ownership of all Church business data. This oversight will ensure all Church data records are appropriately managed and maintained. Motion CARRIED

Property – David Wheeler

- Carol Wilson gave an update on the issues that have recently occurred regarding “In from the Cold” program, held at the Port Credit Campus. Representatives from Christ First, Clarkson Community Church and Agape Place Peel met earlier today (Nov.22) to discuss key issues that have emerged and prepared an action plan for immediate implementation.
 - Property committee’s priority is the protection and safety of the building and the people using the facility.
 - Insurance and liability to the church is a concern. UCC pays director’s liability insurance.

Action item: Request that Stephen White attend the next Council meeting to address insurance and liability concerns.

Community Outreach, Congregation Support, Ministry & Personnel, Real Estate Oversight Committee, Spiritual Development, Welcoming & Fellowship

No additions to or discussion arising from submitted reports.

Recruitment & Succession Planning, UCW

No reports submitted from these committees or subsequent items arising.

Fundraising

Metropolitan Silver Band Concert – October 14, 2023 at the Port Credit Campus

- Raised \$1691.78 to be divided between Christ First and The Compass. The portion to go to The Compass has not been determined by the Finance Committee
- Thanks to the organizing committee and volunteers for putting on a successful event.

It’s About Time...Encore – Burlington Concert

- Bell Canto performed with five other handbell choirs in Burlington.

- Proceeds were divided between participating choirs. Christ First's portion of \$177 was donated to The Compass.

Christmas Marketplace – Treats 'n' Treasures

- Marketplace was held on November 18 at the Mazo Campus. The preliminary estimated profit was approximate \$7,000. The attached report indicates that \$7,150.93 was raised.

Thanks to Peggy Forde, the organizing committee and all the volunteers for putting on a successful event.

Finance Report

Ian MacDonald is now registered as *official administrator* of the QuickBooks contract and has the authority to back up Clarke Grice, Chair of Finance. See Clarke's finance report of November 22, 2023.

MOTION by Clarke Grice and SECONDED BY Joan Cobbold that Ian MacDonald be designated Vice Chair, Finance effective November 22, 2023 with authority to have access to the Christ First CRA account as an 'official administrator' as needed. Motion CARRIED.

Clarke submitted corrections to August 31 supporting documents.

MOTION by Clarke Grice, Chair of Finance, that due to some recording irregularities in the supporting information of the financial reports, as of August 31, 2023 presented at the September 20, 2023 Council meeting, require the necessity of preparing and submitting revised financial reports now for that period by accepted and approved as presented. SECONDED by Louise Sinclair. Motion CARRIED

Clarke reviewed the financial summary setting out the position of Christ First as of October 31, 2023 and discussed some aspects of the proposed budget for 2024.

MOTION by Clarke Grice that the financial statements of Christ First as of October 31, 2023 reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee be accepted as presented. SECONDED by Heather McGillis. Motion CARRIED.

Discussion followed re applying for a grant to repair the elevator at 151 Lakeshore Rd. East. Clarke stated that it would be possible to get audited statements for \$10,000 to help us meet the requirement for grant funding. There was consensus to go ahead with the audit.

Clarke commented that new bookkeeper, Andreea Vladescu, CPA is a great addition to the team.

New Business

ONCA Explanation – Louise Sinclair

ONCA is the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. ONCA provides Ontario not-for-profit corporations, including charitable corporations, with a legal framework for organizing and operating. The Act came into force in 2021, with an implementation deadline of 2024.

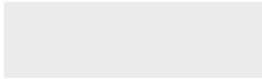
We have confirmed that ONCA requirements do not apply to Christ First. ONCA only applies to corporations and Christ First is not incorporated.

Closing Prayer Rev. Heather Weaver-Orosz led the closing prayer.

Adjournment MOTION to adjourn the meeting – Pat Skinner

Revised Meeting Dates:

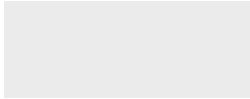
- Budget Review - January 10, 2024
- Council Meeting - February 7, 2024
 - Committee Reports due January 29, 2024
- Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting – February 18, 2024



Council Chair – Carol Wilson

February 7, 2024

Date



Secretary – Nancy Hori