

VEGREVILLE UNITED CHURCH
Minutes of Church Council Meeting
January 8, 2025 at 2:00 pm, Auditorium

Present In-Person: Sharon Lashmar, Rev. Laureta Blondin, Georgina Baron, Holly Cependa, Heather Short, Pat Buehler, Bill Rowe, Ellen Johnstone, and Irene Sabados

Present In-Person: Lisa Topilko joined the meeting to discuss Handbells

Present On Zoom: Rev. Adam Hall, Robert Paul

Meeting was called to order by Georgina Baron at 2:00 pm - Quorum Present.

Devotion: Fellowship - Pat read a verse from the book “Wings of the Morning by Patience Strong” titled “Bad Spirit/Good Spirit”

Approval/Additions to Agenda: Ellen Johnstone made a motion and Heather Short seconded the motion to accept the agenda with a change to the order of business to move Rev. Adam Hall’s presentation to the beginning of the meeting right after the first item of New Correspondence. **CARRIED.**

Approval of Minutes for December 11, 2024: Pat Buehler made a motion and Bill Rowe seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. **CARRIED.**

New Correspondence: Email from other United Church Admins (Secretaries) - Irene let everyone know about an email that came out from other Office Administrators in regards to “who they report to”. There was only one reply to the email to say that they report to the Minister usually and M&P would only step in if there was a problem with how the office was running. With that in mind “who to report to?” Irene let the whole Council know that from February 3rd to March 14th (week days) she will be working at the Hospital from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm so office hours will be in the afternoon starting after 2:00 pm. (Messages and emails will still be checked daily as usual.) Rev. Laureta and Bill offered to have their phone numbers posted on the door in case there are any urgent inquiries. Pat will be on vacation for the month of February.

Rev. Adam Hall to share some information: Rev. Adam let our council know what is developing behind the scenes with our joint venture with the Anglican Church. With discussion with several representatives from both churches (Shannon McCarthy- Executive Minister from Northern Spirit, Living Skies, & Prairie to Pine; The Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman from the Anglican Diocese; Bishop Stephen London from the Anglican Diocese; Gail Allan-Coordinator of Ecumenical, Interchurch and Interfaith Relations of the United Church of Canada) it is the overall consensus that they all want to see this ecumenical merger work. What they are looking into is to get an agreement in place and to get a 3/4 time position for Rev. Laureta in place, with the Diocese contributing to this position (whether it is from the “New Ministries Fund” or another area of funding to cover six months of salary for Rev. Laureta). There is a strong commitment from the Diocese and this is the future of many other rural communities. We will be working with Growth Animators for support. The other question that Rev. Adam had was that we need a firm decision from Salem United, whether they will be joining us as a part of the ecumenical merger. Even though Rev. Laureta has not provided a service for Salem United yet, she will let Bishop Stephen know that it is not a problem for her to accommodate Salem’s congregation. We will be seeing Brent, from Salem, for our January 13th joint meeting.

VEGREVILLE UNITED CHURCH
Minutes of Church Council Meeting
January 8, 2025, Page 2

Old Business/Business arising:

- **Handbells** - Lisa Topilko let the council know that she is very interested in setting up a Handbell Choir. She already spoke with Debbie Dyer, who was involved with the handbells years ago, for more information. Lisa let us know that she is offering this for free, not a paid position. Discussion took place that we would need to service and polish the handbells before we start using them and this would be approximately \$750 or more if there are any repairs that need to be done to any of the handbells. Anyone that is interested in joining the choir can be asked for donations as we start up this first year. Letters can be sent out to our congregations as well asking for donations to the “start up” of this group. It was discussed that maybe we call it the “Community Bell Choir” so we can get more people interested in joining the group. We listed about 12 people who have played bells in previous years and it would be good to get a minimum of 6 ringers. Music can be purchased for \$75/piece and this allows you to make copies. Grants may be available from the Alberta Guild of Handbell Ringers. Our original discussion with the Cosmopolitan Music Society for borrowing out our handbells was cancelled now that we have interest in starting our own choir. Taina Lorenz from the Cosmopolitan Music Society has offered to help us get started and answer any questions Lisa may have. **Holly Cependa made a motion** that we spend up to \$1000 from our Vegreville United Church Memorial Fund to get all the handbells serviced and polished, **seconded by Heather Short**. **CARRIED.** Lisa commented that it is our “**hope**” that the handbell ringers will be ready to perform for our Centennial Celebration in June. Thank you to Lisa for her interest in the handbells and to our angel Terry Kubin as the voice of encouragement.
- **Fundraisers** - Our 3 Kings Chili Challenge is on January 15th and we have 6 people so far that are bringing a pot of chili. Not only do we have 2 pots of chili entered from our 4-H group but they are also providing volunteers to help us out. The cost is \$10 for three voting ballots and extras will be two for \$1 and three for \$5. Bill will be counting the ballots at the end of the night and Heather & Irene will work at the door. March 4th is Shrove Tuesday - we will have a Pancake Supper from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. March 12th will be our Pie Sale Fundraiser - a variety of pies will be made on March 11th and they will be sold on March 12th.
- **Refugee Sponsorship** - Holly commented that everything is going good. We are waiting for one last part for the car before it is ready for the family. We are still waiting for the family’s PR cards, so far Rama has her PR card. Rama is wanting the kids to be settled before she goes back to work.
- **100th Centennial Celebration** - After some discussion, a date was chosen for the celebration. We will have it on June 7th from 4:00 pm (supper) to 7:00 pm. Discussed that for entertainment we would have an old time gospel sing-along. Irene to check with the caterer from the Holy Trinity Church to see if she is available that day for the supper. Heather to get a banner done up for our special day. We decided that we need to have invitations going out with RSVP before May 24th. For advertising we will put an ad in the News Advertiser, on the Northern Spirit online website, and the local radio station.

VEGREVILLE UNITED CHURCH
Minutes of Church Council Meeting
January 8, 2025, Page 3

Committee Reports:

- **Treasurer's Report** - Cash Flow sheet for December was distributed to everyone. Irene went through some of the items listed. Sharon asked what the General Fund was (income of \$7,679.75) - some members make yearly donations instead of monthly donations and these are donations that come in the mail from people who may not attend Sunday services. Under Donation from Charitable Organization, we got a cheque from Atco Epic \$250 (they give out money to different charities every year). Under Fundraising \$2052.90 was our Purdy's Chocolate Sales and \$20 from our Tea & Bake Sale. Rental of facility \$650 (\$50 for rental of room for a meeting and \$600 was a yearly donation for the meetings held in the Multipurpose Room). Under Expenses Pulpit Supply \$494 was for Rev. Laureta for Dec. 1st and Dec. 24th Worship Service. Administration costs \$28.11 for paper and \$54.58 was Adobe Software License which was paid by our Visa Credit. Fundraising expenses \$2311.58 for payment of our Purdy's Order and \$93.13 was donated supplies for fundraisers. Under Repairs and Maintenance \$365 was for snow removal of our sidewalks and \$120 for parking lot snow removal, this cost was donated.

December Cash Flow Sheet:	Previous Balance:	\$ 5,316.65
	Total Inflows:	+ 15,023.90
	Total Outflows:	- 8,489.94
	Current Balance:	\$ 11,850.61

General Account	11,850.61
Memorial	1,109.43
Capital	0.91
Common Share (Profit Share)	487.00
	\$13,447.95

- **Finance** - At our Finance meeting today we discussed putting in more funds into the RSV account as January is a busy month with Annual Reports and financial reports, Irene usually has more hours at the beginning of the year. Also, we will need to start putting funds into that account for our next quarterly denominational assessment payment. **Ellen Johnstone** made a motion that we transfer \$2000 into our RSV account for the months of January and February, seconded by **Pat Buehler. CARRIED.**
- **Worship** - We took our donated items into the Christmas Bureau on December 6th and they were very pleased with our donation. We had 61 people attend our Christmas Eve Services. Jim and Lisa played some music for some pre-service carols. Irene ordered more candle oil and more communion wafers, these items already came in. Rev. Laureta mentioned that the Food Bank was very appreciative of our donation from the Nativity Festival. On January 19th will be our covenanting service for Holly Cependa - it will be a communion service with MaryAnn Pastuck doing the covenanting service and Georgina as the Worship Leader. The Annual Meeting will start right after the service (11:15 am).
- **Christian Education** - Holly reported that there will be no more Kids Klub as there were not enough kids attending. The next Day Camp is scheduled for January 29th (focusing on Epiphany). Bible Study will be started up again once Rev. Laureta is moved over to our building.

VEGREVILLE UNITED CHURCH
Minutes of Church Council Meeting
January 8, 2025, Page 4

- **Property & Maintenance** - Bill reported that he changed all the furnace filters, there is just one more furnace to do once all the chairs and piano are moved out of the way in the Auditorium.
- **Fellowship** - Heather and Pat to schedule more visits with members for this next month. Geri Tuck's funeral is January 25th and Rev. Laureta will be officiating with Ellen playing the music for the funeral. Pat to be sending a sympathy card to the Tuck family.
- **Ministry and Personnel** - Holly commented that they had their M&P meeting last night. Holly has resigned from being the M&P chair. If anyone is interested in joining the committee, contact one of the M&P members for information. Once we are merged with the Anglican Church we will need two representatives from their Vestry to join our M&P committee. A report on our janitor - Traci is at home now, she had her surgery on her shoulder but it is quite sore still. Linda will continue covering for Traci and her contract extended monthly as needed.
- **Regional Business News & Ministerial Meeting** - Sharon to find out when the National Meeting is. Our World Day of Prayer is on March 7th. All the information is online and we can download it for this service. Georgina and Rev. Laureta will be working on getting our Ministerial Meetings running again.
- **Pastoral Charge Supervisor** - Sharon commented that everything is going good. We are thankful to have her as our Pastoral Charge Supervisor.
- **St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church** - Rev. Laureta commented that she has a Funeral at Viking United Church next Tuesday (200 people). Geri Tuck's Funeral will be another big funeral on January 25th at the Social Centre. On March 2nd will be the last Sunday service at the Anglican church before they close their doors. This will be a communion service with Bishop Stephen in attendance. Discussion took place on having a Lent Quiet Day (on a Saturday from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm) - maybe Rev. Adam Hall can do this service later in March. Rev. Laureta supplies the lunch for this day. Rev. Laureta discussed that maybe we look into changing our name once we merge to "Draw the Circle Wider Ministries". Discussed that this will only be our new building name, not to affect our charitable organization names which will stay the same.
- **Motion to accept reports - Holly Cependa made a motion and Ellen Johnstone seconded** the motion to accept reports as presented. **CARRIED.**

New Business:

- **Key Request (Janitor)** - Linda requested to have a key so that she can come in and clean any time, even when Irene is not at the office. It was discussed that Linda and Dee can share an outside door key.
- **Social Media (Facebook)** - Discussion took place on posts that are put on Facebook and Irene commented that posts should be simple (posting of services and events) and we don't have to copy or share every post that the United Church or Northern Spirit shares on their page. Discussed that we should be careful on what we are posting, watching the language and content of all our posts. So far Reagan, Holly, and Val are the administrators of our Facebook page.
- **Room Rentals** - Discussed that our members of the congregation or council should pay for rental of rooms - there should be no free rentals or special consideration because we are on council.

VEGREVILLE UNITED CHURCH
Minutes of Church Council Meeting
January 8, 2025, Page 5

- **Updated Church Family Photos** - Holly brought up that we should get new photos taken to put up on our Board in the hallway. A lot of the photos are really old and some members are missing from the photos.

Devotions next meeting: Ministry & Personnel

Closing Prayer: Rev. Laureta Blondin

Next Meeting: February 12, 2025 at 2:00 pm

Adjournment: 4:50 pm

Georgina Baron, Chairperson

Irene Sabados, Secretary