Regular Meeting of St. Paul’s United Church Council

303 Jackson Street, Walkerton, Ontario N0G 2V0

4 August 2020

**MINUTES**

In Attendance: **Chair**: Deb Sutherland **Vice Chair**: David Inglis

Randy Willick (Trustee)

Gary Munro (Treasurer)

Shelley Crummer (Stewardship)

Margaret Elliott-Niesen (Regional Rep)

Anita McNeil (Secretary)

Nina McTeer (Pastoral Relations)

Rev. Cathy Paul (Minister)

Regrets: Bev Cameron (Ministry & Personnel)

Tom Traversy

1. Welcome and Call to Order at 7:00 PM

* Chair, Deb Sutherland, welcomed all, and expressed how good it was to be together.
* The congregation of St. Paul’s have fared well during the pandemic, with no one falling ill
* Chair celebrated Margaret Elliott-Niesen’s time as music director.

2. Spiritual Sharing – Rev. Cathy Paul

* Rev. Cathy spoke of the spiritual aspect of camping, and monastic life. Finding peace in the presence of nature.
* Shared a prayer seeking hope and comfort in each other and in our faith, during these difficult times.

3. Behavioural Covenant – recited by David Inglis on behalf of Council

4. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by:** Randy Willick

**Seconded by:** Nina McTeer

That the Agenda be approved as submitted

**CARRIED**

5. Approval of Minutes of March 3rd, 2020

**Note:** These minutes were not available,

and will be approved at the next meeting of Council

6. Business Arising from Minutes

- none -

7. Reports

7.1 Treasurer’s Report – Gary Munro

* Canada Helps has provided close to $1,900.00 in donations
* Donations being made by drop off and pick up
* A great sign of faith, donations are holding up
* Emergency measures have been taken regarding COVID
* $8,580.00 banked through government subsidy assistance
* Cash reserves are healthy

7.2 **NOTE**: No further reports submitted at this meeting

8.0 Business

8.1 Reopening of Church Services

* Chair invited comments from Council on what it would take to feel safe about reopening for Sunday Service
* Rev. Cathy reminded us of our responsibility for the well-being of members of our congregation and our families. What is the wisest course of action?
* First step may be to form a committee, who will need to comply with the checklist for reopening.
* Where do we find the money to pay for cleaning/custodial services, which are required to meet the checklist.
* We cannot sing, have a choir, communal responses, passing the peace or the offering plate. – when is it worthwhile to open?
* Rev. Cathy reminded us all of our responsibilities for the safety of our family members who may be more vulnerable. Reopening is the decision of Council.
* Chair commented on the many facets of worship that will need to be changed, the new responsibilities of ushers regarding wearing of masks and sanitizing hands, as well as distancing in the sanctuary.
* Laurel asked for plexiglass shield for her office, which is being arranged
* KitSupply has been the source of cleaning products and hand sanitizers
* Bruce Power provided 160 masks, and smaller hand sanitizer bottles.
* Rev Cathy suggested a sign for her door indicating the need for masks. Also commented on the state of uncleanliness of the church washrooms. Bob Weber cleans as a volunteer.
* Discussion about hiring Weiler’s to do an initial disinfecting/sanitization of the sanctuary. Volunteers can move things like the hymnbooks prior to cleaning.
* David Inglis commented that we need to come up with a plan. Need to choose a date for reopening so we have a date to work towards. Confident that, with a plan, we can safely reopen.
* Shelley commented on the need to offer something social, people are missing conversations
* Women Together have been meeting in the parking lot – when asked if they were comfortable with reopening, it was unanimous that they are comfortable with it.
* Summer provided a lull. Seniors are missing the social part of worship, which will not be the way it was before. Seniors must be assured that all the guidelines for safe reopening are being followed.
* Chair will provide information to the congregation about what to expect with a different form of worship.
* Ushers will have much more responsibility for the safety of those attending. Training will be needed.
* Margaret Elliott-Niesen suggested a master checklist of congregation members be at the door in order to take note of who is here and their contact information. Usher at the door can check off next to the name.
* Ushers need to be escorted to their seat.
* Discussion regarding music during service. Wendy would still be able to play for us. Margaret suggested she could provide recordings of the hymns. Wendy is keen to return. Rev. Cathy will keep in touch with Wendy.
* Shelley commented regarding the return to school in September – that will provide a gauge to the public about their comfort and safety. Chair suggested being mindful of the trends.
* Consensus on the need to reopen. Not necessary to return in September. Return could be delayed if we’re not ready. There is a need to weigh the stress of being apart against the stress of returning safely.
* It was suggested that the return to Sunday worship will not be crowded at the beginning, while people become more comfortable.
* Important to look at the substance of our worship – this is an opportunity for St. Paul’s to create something new and different. What is the relevance of old traditions in the new world?
* Sports are not going on for the young people, is there a role St. Paul’s could play?
* We must remain mindful of COVID-19 in all of our plans. Baby steps.
* Council discussed choosing a date for reopening – conversation around the weekend of Thanksgiving. Council, with a show of hands, agreed to choose **October 11th as our first Sunday to return to worship.**
* Further discussion regarding social distancing requirements in the sanctuary, and the requirements for sanitization prior to resuming Sunday worship.
* A letter from the Chair will help to prepare members of the congregation for how different worship will be
* David Inglis commented that areas of the church will need to have their entry blocked, restricting the use of the hall. Floor arrows will assist.
* Chair asked about other rental groups and their hopes for reconvening at their previous space in the church. Council will work with the various groups.
* Suggested that we get a price from Weiler’s for cleaning the sanctuary. We will also need regular cleaning done before and after Sunday worship.
* Chair commented that we’re not yet ready for the coffee groups to resume, until we see how well we’re doing with reopening the sanctuary. Comments are that there is no COVID in the sanctuary, as it has not been occupied for several weeks.
* We need a regular cleaner – congregation may be comforted with having the initial “clean” done by professionals.
* Chair will investigate professional cleaning costs.
* Discussion followed regarding the need to regularly clean the sanctuary and bathroom at the church, possibly three times a week. Suggestion to speak with the cleaning person who looks after Riverside condo’s, to see what the cost would be through Weiler’s to hire her for three days/week.

9.0. Correspondence –

- none -

10. General Discussion

- none -

11. Spiritual sharing for next meeting (not determined)

Chair moves that meeting be adjourned at 8:08 P.M.

Council will meet next on **Tuesday, 25 August, 2020** **at 7:00 PM**

Respectfully Submitted:

Anita McNeil

Secretary