First United Church – Hanna, Alberta

Council Meeting, Church Lounge

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Winona Gutsche

Secretary – Rhonda Lund

Rev Jan Richardson, Stettler United Church – through Videoconference.

Lynette Barker Ron Lowther

Laura Creasy Jean Lypka

Liz Gourlay Linda Quaschnick

CALL TO ORDER Chair Winona Gutsche called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. WELCOME & OPENING WORSHIP

Chair Winona Gutsche welcomed everyone to the meeting in the fellowship room to allow everyone to be at a safe distance, but still be together. She thanked everyone for attending as the March meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 virus and the recommendation from the Provincial Government that people stay home.

Rev. Richardson read a prayer regarding Palm Sunday and how this year we are not able to gather in church due to the COVID 19 pandemic. She noted that she is holding us in cyber space and spiritual space.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion No.** **16** Moved by Laura Creasy that the Agenda for April 08, 2020 be adopted as presented.

Motion seconded by Jean Lypka. **Carried.**

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

**Motion No.** **17** Moved by Linda Quaschnick that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held February 12, 2020 be adopted as presented.

Motion seconded by Lynette Barker. **Carried.**

1. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Liz Gourlay asked whether the “Leaning into the Future without Fear” Leadership Conference was held in March. Rev. Richardson advised that it was cancelled due to Covid. It is questionable whether the Chinook Winds Regional meeting will go on as scheduled in June.

1. CORRESPONDENCE
   1. United Church of Canada – Effective March 15, 2020 services and gatherings in United Churches were cancelled in an effort to stop the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. COMMITTEE REPORTS
   1. Finance Committee – Written Reports

Laura Creasy reviewed her report and recommendations regarding individual employment situations that will be affected by the closure of the church and thrift store due to Covid-19.

**Motion No.** **18** Moved by Ron Lowther that in response to the closure of Hanna First United Church and the Centre Street Thrift Store due to Covid-19, Laura Creasy be authorized to proceed as follows with regard to salaries, contracts and honorariums:

1. Office Administrator – continue employment and treasurer to apply for wage subsidy through the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program.
2. Thrift Store Administrator – suspend her contract and she will apply for the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit.
3. Caretaker – continue her contract at present level, as she does not qualify for CERB.
4. Bookkeeper – continue her contract as her work continues.
5. Pulpit Supply and Organist – paid an honorarium only when they work.

Motion seconded by Linda Quaschnick. **Carried.**

Linda Quaschnick reviewed the financial reports, noting that revenue is up over this period last year and expenses were lower as we are not having services due to Covid-19.

Laura Creasy noted that she removed the JC Charyk Investment account and included the Ray Hickle memorial donation in the reports.

Winona Gutsche advised that she was approached with the opportunity to rent the manse for three weeks in March. After an email consultation with members of Council, she signed a lease. The funds were deposited to general revenues.

* 1. Board of Trustees – No Report

Discussion was held regarding the success of the World Day of Prayer held in the church on March 5. There were 20 people involved and 34 people attended. Everyone was very grateful for all the assistance provided on the day as well as the preparation beforehand, particularly by Liz Gourlay and Jean Lypka.

* 1. Worship, Mission & Service – Verbal Report

Jean Lypka advised that worship services and gatherings in the church were suspended on March 15. Jennifer Laux has put links on the website for online services for the congregation.

* 1. Christian Education – No Report
  2. Pastoral Care – Verbal report

Linda Quaschnick advised that she had a meeting set up with Dean Sutherland regarding pastoral care at the hospital and nursing home, however he did not come to the meeting. This is the second time she has tried to meet with him. It was mentioned that Mr. Sutherland attended the World Day of Prayer and that his position is part time.

Discussion was held about making posters to advise that United Church members are available for pastoral care so people could phone the church and ask for visits. The consensus was that posters be put up at the hospital, nursing home, lodge and manors.

Discussion was also held about ways to contact members during this time of isolation due to Covid-19 to let them know we are not holding services, but pastoral care is here for telephone visits. Consensus was to ask Tricia to do a letter to be sent out to all members to let them know what is happening and to assure them that someone is check the mail and answering phones.

* 1. Memorial Park – No Report
  2. Ministry & Personnel – Verbal Report

The office administrator will be back on April 10th but her hours will be reduced. The church will still not be opened, but Tricia will be the contact for phone calls, emails and mail.

* 1. Property – Verbal Report

Winona Gutsche advised that Gwen Snell is planning to have Sheldon Morgan refinish the floor in the fellowship room and downstairs.

She also noted that Ira & Lana Ross are back so Ira will be replacing the sinks and changing the stall in the ladies washroom so people can try on clothes at the thrift store.

Rhonda Lund mentioned that Alan received a call about water in the basement of the church. Sinclair Plumbing was called, and it turned out that the sump pump had become stuck and was not working. Also, she and Alan developed a maintenance schedule to check on the church and manse so we have a record of what was done and when.

* 1. Thrift Store – Written Report

Laura Creasy reviewed the Thrift Store reports, confirming the following:

* February Statistics: $6,261.20 in sales, 445 customers and 269.50 volunteer hours
* March Statistics: $1,955.40 in sales, 124 customers and 113 volunteer hours.
* Closed effective March 17th due to Covid-19. Signs were put up asking people not to drop off items at the present time.

* 1. Search Committee – Verbal Report

Winona Gutsche updated Council as follows:

* We have two applicants. One is a teaching situation so she would not be able to work full time. The other is looking for a full time position. Neither person is available until September.
* The Search Committee has not interviewed either person at this time. Winona has talked with the student and has emailed the other applicant about setting up interviews.

1. CHINOOK WINDS REGIONAL COUNCIL – Verbal Report

Rev. Richardson reported on the following:

* Chinook Winds is having weekly zoom gatherings with 80 to 100 people participating. It seems to be working well.
* The General Meeting is scheduled for June 11-14 at Gaetz United Church in Red Deer, but not sure at this point whether it will be cancelled, postponed or held virtually.
* Bar Harbour Camp has not cancelled camps yet, as they are hoping to be able to hold them.
* She is still allowed to go the hospital if requested. She has been making phone calls, as has the pastoral care committee as they are not able to visit in person.

Rev. Richardson encouraged Council to reach out to our members in whatever way we can, to let people know the church is here for them.

1. MINISTER’S REPORT – No Report

**Motion No. 19** Moved by Ron Lowther that the Reports be accepted as presented at the meeting tonight.

Motion seconded by Jean Lypka. **Carried.**

1. NEW BUSINESS

9.01 Closure for July & August.

Chair Winona Gutsche advised that she put this item on the agenda, but we don’t need to make a decision right now. Depending on the Covid 19 pandemic, we may not be allowed to open.

1. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting: Wednesday May 13th, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

It was the consensus that we hold the May 13th meeting in the fellowship room which allows social distancing.

1. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Winona Gutsche thanked everyone for attending and stated that business being concluded, the meeting is adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

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Chair

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Secretary