

**EGLINTON ST GEORGE'S UNITED CHURCH
MINUTES OF GOVERNING COUNCIL (by Zoom)
December 15, 2020**

Present: John Blevins, Marilyn Blair, Caren Cate, Rev. Sarah Chapman, Hugh DesBrisay, Kathleen Hull, Rev. Paul Hutchison, Donna MacCandlish, Susan Moore, Heather Parker, Charlie Roden, Gord Thompson, Maggie Wilkinson,

Guests: Jennifer Thompson, Doug McWhirter, Peter Wilkins, Christine Lawson

Regrets: Rob Crabtree

Gord opened the meeting with prayer.

Priorities

Stewardship Campaign – Jennifer

The Stewardship Team is quite pleased with the progress of the campaign. The number of people using PAR has increased. The number of pledges has increased. Further updates will be available as the campaign is not yet finished.

Dewi Sant Welsh Congregation is looking to join with another congregation and ESG is one of the congregations with whom they wish to discuss the possibilities. Further meetings will be held in January.

Ontario Trillium Grant – Susan, Donna

An application has been submitted for a grant of \$148,000 which will be used largely for the lift making the gym accessible.

COVID-19 - Susan

Once Toronto emerges from lockdown the COVID-19 response team will review Toronto Public Health guidance for places of worship and make recommendations on changes.

January Townhall Meeting – Susan

January 31 or February 7 have been suggested for a townhall meeting.

Business Items

Minutes of November meeting

It was moved by Marilyn Blair and seconded by Heather Parker that the minutes of November 17 be accepted as written.

CARRIED

Finance - Gord

The financial situation is falling behind budget. Further study and analysis will be done in January.

Ministers Update

Paul and Sarah discussed the plans and progress for the Christmas services and the amazing progress of Project Flourish communications project. Paul complimented the staff for their incredible diligence in preparing for the year-end services and activities that have been made very challenging due to COVID-19.

M&P – no report

Trustees – The Trustees have approved an extension of \$5000 to the support of the doctoral student.

Property – no report

Committee report highlights – no report

Chair – Susan Moore

Secretary – Marilyn Blair

Meetings

Council Meeting January 19, 2021 via Zoom

Town Hall Meeting tbd

Children’s Ministry

Our Children’s Ministry zoom was compromised on Sunday November 29th.

Reverend Sarah and Kate contacted the parents with our apologies.

We now have new protocols for zoom links.

1. No actual zoom links will be posted on the website (in the calendar or elsewhere.)
2. People can access zoom links for broader church events/programs (I.e. coffee time, etc). through signing up for our MailChimp weekly emails.
3. For smaller groups, like Sunday School or Youth Group, an email of the coordinator of that program will be posted on the website and people can email for the zoom link. This will prevent anyone from being able to just click the link.

Caren Cate

ESG Church Community

Coffee Hour Hosting

Eight of us are half-way through our shared responsibility hosting coffee hours going forward, each taking on a couple of Sundays through till the end of January. As previously noted, we held a group tutorial to kick off the effort (with Peter Wilkins as 'Master Tutor') and teamed up participating hosts with experienced mentors who have been hosting sessions over the summer and fall. Having met with challenges in recent sessions, we have determined to simplify our process and eliminate the step whereby hosts logon to the Vimeo and then share their screen and sound for others to join in. We will instead encourage folks to link to the sessions via Esgunited.org or via Facebook and then logon to the coffee hour afterwards. No more than 2 individuals will need to change their mode of access as a result.

Nominating Committee Update

We are delighted that Cathy Nolan has agreed to join the Finance Committee bringing a wealth of leadership expertise from her career in Finance adding to the bench strength on Gord T's team. Disappointingly while we have had on-going discussions with potential candidates to fill our vacancies, we have not yet been able to attract folks to Vice Chair and Secretary positions. We have been approaching folks we believe might be able to move directly into roles as well as others who could fill support roles where they may eventually succeed leaders we would like to tap on the shoulder. It has been a challenging process. Key things we are coming up against: people have other priorities either in terms of lifestyle or have taken on other leadership roles outside of ESG; many prefer 'project' oriented versus 'committee' work. We have a fresh list of individuals that we will be seeking input on, then approaching. We welcome any suggestions from Council members.

Property Report for December 15th ESG Council meeting:

LED lighting project:

Installation is almost complete and a reconciliation of what was removed and what was installed has been made to support the claim of rebates from the IESO. A few spot lights in the sanctuary and some wall sconces have yet to be completed but should be finished by the end of December.

Building Automation System project:

The installation is complete and the invoice for \$10,200 + HST of \$1,326 has been processed for payment which once paid will permit application for the IESO rebate of \$5,100.

Driveway replacement:

Project completed with the exception of adding sand between eight pavers in the handicap parking area. The project came in \$11,720 under budget. There was a complaint by one of the neighbours regarding dust from cutting pavers. It has been resolved. The final invoice from Power Application Group Inc., in the amount of \$18,280 + HST of \$2,376 has been submitted for payment. Total cost \$38,280 + HST

AV IT installation:

Most of the equipment has been installed and tested. The hearing assist FM receivers and hearing buds equipment are functioning. The Bluetooth link to hearing aids requires adjustments to the network system in the church and will be attended to later.

AV IT task group:

A task group comprising: Gord Thompson, Peter Long, Doug Dicks, Rob Crabtree and John Blevins continues to meet biweekly in an effort to establish requirements, operational instructions, procedures, roles and responsibilities for the ESG Audio Visual and IT systems.

Parking at ESG:

In response to a request from Jennifer Thompson to explore options for additional parking at ESG in anticipation of the Dewi Snat congregation joining ESG, Property Committee has sought the council of the Director, Permits and Enforcement - Transportation Services of the City of Toronto who has agreed to review requests for additional parking.

Outreach Committee Report: Dec 15, 2020.

Peace with Justice

Peace with Justice launched an Amnesty International 'Write for Rights' action in time for Dec 10, Human Rights Day, offering a link to congregation members through the weekly email. There are 10 cases featuring people in a variety of countries along with online petitions for signing, some videos and case descriptions.

Out of the Cold

Members of the Out of the Cold Board have begun various initiatives to provide meals for those living in encampments or on the street, including food trucks and visiting safe injection sites with food. No coordinated effort from the group as a whole is happening at this time. ESG is exploring possible ways we can safely involve our volunteers.

St. Luke's United is going ahead with meals on Wed and Sundays beginning Dec 13th. ESG has sent a financial contribution of \$1500 to sponsor a meal using funds in the Out of the Cold account, but does not plan to send volunteers until possible in the new year if COVID conditions allow.

Advent Gifts

On Dec 2 and 4, we collected 77 warm winter coats and jackets and have distributed these to the Fred Victor Women's Drop In program and Toronto Urban Native Ministry, where they have been welcomed to help warm people in need. Additionally, we sent new socks donated by Marilyn and Bob Blair to these agencies as well as to Street Health.

We are also collecting financial donations and will distribute those to our partner agencies (primarily Massey Centre and Street Health, who were not accepting coats) later in December or early January.

Good Food Box Program

The program continues to run twice monthly out of Maggie's garage instead of ESG for this year. In December we were able to give out 24 boxes of produce to those in need. We added 3 new recipients this month including a family whose infant is in the NICU at Sunnybrook and who are in dire need.

DISMAS

We continue to support 2 Dismas members with food boxes on a monthly basis. Dismas continues to meet regularly on Zoom.



Little Free Pantry

The ESG Free Little Pantry is running well and is being used both by community members donating and those in need who are accessing items. The **Last Minutes** group has been monitoring and stocking the pantry to date. The plan is to stock the pantry with items that will not freeze easily in the cold once the weather turns icy. We will also be able to offer some winter wear items (hats / mitts / socks) in another month. Donations to the pantry of food and toiletry items are always welcome! the pantry is used very regularly and the community has begun to respond with donated items as well.

Anti-Racism Discussion Group

The original discussion group continues to meet regularly every second Thursday and is enjoying difficult and rich conversation. As well, the Peace with Justice Group has been doing some reading and discussion on this topic, and the WWIT group has also committed to a book study of “White Fragility” by Robin DiAngelo.

Fair Trade Fair

Kate Littler has developed and sent out in the weekly emails a list of fair trade vendors who are offering online ordering and in some cases, home delivery. We hope the congregation will take advantage of this opportunity in their Christmas shopping!

Fruit for Na Me Res

Donna Lang has been regularly taking fruit donated by a local grocer to the Na-Me-Res, a shelter for indigenous men. The shelter is grateful for the fresh produce and Donna is able to maintain a much-appreciated connection there between the shelter and ESG.

NT Cluster Work

Welcome Baskets Project – the Cluster has taken on this project to supply 15-20 baskets per month to Streets to Homes, an organization run by the city to help people transitioning from shelters and encampments to permanent housing.

ESG delivered 5 baskets to the Roehampton Hotel shelter on November 25th. Lawrence Park CC and Manor Road are also contributing baskets for November.

We were featured in the recent Roehampton Community Newsletter:

SPOTLIGHT...A Welcome Home Basket

(North Toronto United Churches)

How can faith groups help shelter residents? That's what a number of north Toronto churches were wondering, and the result....

A number of United Churches in North Toronto recently started sharing strategies and best practices through ad hoc meetings of the chairpersons of their corresponding committees. At a recent meeting for the chairs of Social Justice/Outreach Committees, they discussed the challenges faced by those previously homeless and shelter residents once they secure housing and move to their own home. They typically arrive with just the clothes/possessions that they can carry and often lack some of the basic items needed to start a home. This issue was top of mind for the committees because of the recent opening of the Roehampton Shelter in the neighbourhood. The churches were asked by one of their ministers, who sits on the Roehampton Shelter Community Liaison Committee (CLC), if this was something they could collectively help with.

The group unanimously agreed this would be a great project to share. In fact, the sentiment among the group was "of course we can do this!" A "Welcome Home Basket" content list was developed, which included things like dishes, cutlery, cooking utensils, pots, cleaning materials, sheets and a gift card for groceries etc. Each of the churches in the cluster has signed up for the month(s) that they will provide and deliver 15 baskets. With all of the respective churches/buildings closed due to the Coronavirus, there have been some challenges of course. But, the group preserves and share they are delighted to be able to channel their energies toward a project that is so impactful to others less fortunate.

On November 25th Roehampton received its first drop off of baskets...THANK YOU!

The participating churches are (alphabetically):

Eglinton St. George's United Church, Fairlawn Avenue United Church, Lawrence Park Community Church, Leaside United Church, Manor Road United Church, and Rosedale United



Church.

Here are our baskets!!! Photo Op for ESG!!

ESG will also supply baskets for the month of April. Each church involved in the project is taking a month. We hope to link this project to Lent, and will solicit donations of kitchen/ household items from the congregation in Feb / March. Possibly an opportunity to empty some shelves of rummage items in storage?!

Roehampton Hotel Shelter - There is a Community Liaison Committee (CLC) that has been formed that includes members from Manor Road and Lawrence Park churches on behalf of the cluster. A group of representatives from the Cluster and a few beyond the cluster are meeting on Zoom to determine ways in which churches can assist the shelter residents. The next meeting will be Dec 10th. One need that has been identified (beyond the welcome baskets mentioned above) is for some kind of drop in location near to the shelter where residents can gather safely to socialize and have a cup of coffee.

Worship, Sacraments and Music Committee Notes for Council Meeting of December 15, 2020

Committee News and Activities

- The final live streaming service for 2020 was Sunday, December 13 – Pageant Sunday. Christmas in a Minor Key (December 17), a Celtic Christmas service (December 20), the December 27th, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the January 3rd services, have been or are being pre-recorded. Pre-recording provides Bryan Estabrooks, the ministers and Shawn Grenke a much needed break after a very busy year.

- A special task force is currently reviewing our immediate and future AV needs and sorting out process for livestreaming.

- The second Love aLIVE, dinner church was held on November 22nd with special guest spoken word artist, **Heather Beamish** who provided personal insights into keeping love alive. Love aLIVE Christmas Edition is on December 20th and is being led by Sarah Chapman and members of Flourish House.

This year continues to be a year of firsts.

- The first virtual ESG Christmas sing-a-long was held on December 4th. Sarah Chapman acted as host, and Thomas Burton of Flourish House was the sing-a-long leader. Over 50 households zoomed in to sing their favourite carols and Christmas songs. It was a fun night for all. Special thanks to Janet Hardy for helping with this initiative.

- The first virtual Christmas Pageant was held on December 13th.

- ESG's first Virtual Christmas Concert was December 13th. The Concert included anthems, carols, and Christmas favourites old and new with the ESG Choir, the VOX Youth Choir, and special guests performing.

- Members of the WSMC are working to identify ESG members to assist with the Season of Easter - Artistry of God; God the Weaver, God the Potter, God the Quilter, God the Gardiner, God the Mosaic Artist and God the Graffiti Artist.

- Discussion and planning is underway for Black History Month (February) and Lent.