

EGLINTON ST GEORGE'S UNITED CHURCH
MINUTES OF GOVERNING COUNCIL (by Zoom)

Oct 19, 2021

Present: Christine Lawson, Rev. Dr. Paul Hutchison, Rev. Sarah Chapman, Caren Cate, Charlie Roden, Donna MacCandlish, Doug McWhirter, Gord Thompson, Hugh Desbrisay, Heather Parker, John Blevins, Marion Axmith, Peter Wilkins, Susan Moore, Maggie Wilkinson, Kristen Ede, Marilyn Piotrowski.

Regrets: Kathleen Hull.

Marian opened the meeting with prayer.

Priorities

Stewardship (Maggie)

Mailing being prepared for 2021/2022, aiming to be mailed out by Nov 12. Consists of letter with specific info on back plus a brochure.

Dewi Sant Proposal (Susan)

Timeline for response from Dewi Sant is end of October but this may be delayed. We will be informed after their presentation to their board.

Vaccination Policy (Heather)

Covid response team have drawn up 5 principles for implementing a vaccination policy. Discussion ensued around whether we should be asking attendees to *affirm* that they are double-vaccinated or to provide *proof*. Heather proposed the following motion, seconded by Maggie:

ESG has a duty of care to its members and staff. We require the following:

1. Every person entering ESG **must** be dual vaccinated, unless they are ineligible for vaccination.
2. Persons attending worship services, weddings and funerals performed by ESG will be **required** to be dual vaccinated.
3. Any person entering the church for any reason other than those listed in paragraph 2 must provide **proof** of dual vaccination.
4. Staff employed by ESG, and those independently contracted, must provide **proof** of dual vaccination by November 30, 2021 or ESG will cease to retain their services. In the interim, such persons may not enter ESG unless they provide **proof** of dual vaccination.

5. The current policies on masking and physical distancing remain in place.
6. Effective date of the policy is November 1st, 2021; the first Sunday that this policy will be in place is Sunday November 7th, 2021.

CARRIED

Strategic Goals Revisited

This agenda item will be postponed until November Council meeting as time ran short.

Outreach: Proposed Syrian Family Education Fund (Kristen)

Kristen presented a proposal to start a fundraising campaign to help support the post-secondary education of the children of the two Syrian families sponsored by ESG five or six years ago. There is a pre-existing committee and banking arrangements so this is not a new endeavour but an expansion of the pre-existing Syrian Family mandate. The campaign would start immediately to benefit from the Christmas season with reminders going out in January.

Motion proposed by Kristen, seconded by Marion:

To approve 1) the formation of the Syrian Education Fund, 2) the changes to the Canada Helps tab on the ESG website to include "Syrian Education Fund" and 3) the communication strategy timing as soon as reasonably possible.

CARRIED

Business Items

Minutes of Sept 21st and Oct 4th meetings (Marilyn)

Approval of minutes of Sept 21st and Oct 4th meetings proposed by Marilyn, seconded by Charlie. Change requested by John to Property report to be included in final copy:

"Some serious issues have been raised by insurance underwriters; **The ceiling slab in the coal storage room needs repair or replacement (Estimate \$45,000 +)**. He is formulating a response to the underwriters. Top priority is to put together a group in October to investigate further. This may fit the criteria for emergency funding from South-East Presbytery."

CARRIED

Finance (Charlie)

Finance presented operating statements for September 2021.

Irena has been delayed in Russia until perhaps mid-November, but is able to work remotely.

Paul and Sarah's Update (Paul, Sarah)

Sarah – Love ALive planned for Sunday Oct 24th with pianist, breakout rooms including one for children. Food Ministry going well, CEO of 2nd Harvest speaking over Zoom on Tuesday Oct 26th at 12 – 1pm. Work continues in the Community garden preparing for winter.

Paul – Plans are in place for Christmas services:

- Advent 4 Dec 19th, Carols and special music program;

- Christmas Eve at 5pm, family-oriented;
- Christmas Day, a 25-minute pre-recorded service;
- Boxing Day, regular service.

Nominating (Donna)

Difficulties finding replacements so some suggestions may help:

- Mandates for lay leader roles need to be updated to reflect our ESG vision, goals and the great work done over the last several years.
- Succession planning to be part of each team lead's responsibilities;
- Change 'committee' to 'team' to avoid negative, out-dated association with that term;
- Rethink format of or need for monthly meetings.

Property (John)

Bryan Hyodo is joining the Property team.

The Insurance Underwriters Risk Assessment report has been received outlining 11 items requiring attention. ESG is preparing its responses to the Underwriter. The most expensive item will be resolution of the issues pertaining to the storage room ceiling slab.

Regional report (Peter)

The Annual Meeting of the Shining Waters region will take place on Nov 13th.

Closing prayer - Paul

Chair – Maggie Wilkinson

Secretary – Marilyn Piotrowski

CMWG & Youth October 19, 2021

I am happy to report we are making progress with the renovations to the Sunday School room and Nursery.

The cupboards and counters have been ordered and we are waiting for installation. We are making adjustments to the size of the Children's Library and hope to have it completed soon.

Children's Ministry is having an outdoor event on October 31st. on the front lawn. Our last event was well attended and very successful. We are hoping to have a special event once a month to keep parents and children engaged.

The Youth are meeting (weather permitting) outside and utilizing the back yard at Craighurst.

They are having a special Zoom event (Spooky Halloween) this Friday October 22nd.

Caren Cate CMWG

Church Community Engagement - October 2021

Lay Leader Mandates / Recruiting Candidates

In endeavouring to fill various lay leader roles, it has come to our attention that many related mandates need to be updated with input from the appropriate experts. With the help of Jennifer Thompson and Gord Thompson, we recently updated the Treasurer role which Charlie is now reviewing.

It will be useful to 'contemporize' mandates to reflect our ESG vision, goals and the great work done over the last several years. Some mandates pre-date our MAP work; others pre-date what we learned through our Flourish research, subsequent learning and offer formation; no mandates reflect COVID realities and considerations. It will also be useful to build responsibility for future resourcing into team mandates, expanded beyond leaving the task to the Nominating Committee. Here are a few early thoughts:

- Incorporate language which reflects our ESG strategy/priorities – e.g., “Extravagant Welcome”, “Growth”, “Leadership” and brand messaging: “Fuel your Growth”, “Discover – Your Way”, etc.
- Introduce, to each mandate, the added responsibility for incoming leaders and their teams, to create succession plans for the leader/members.
- Re-frame elements to reflect what we've learned regarding current sentiments (e.g., replacing 'committee' with 'team' – our experience is that those approached recoil when they hear the word “committee” given associated obligations such as monthly meetings).
- Consider whether monthly meetings are necessary or better on an 'as needed' basis and determining new formats for meeting – in-person, virtual, hybrid, etc.).

It would be useful to have each of the current committee heads weigh in on these and offer their suggestions. Council members input will also be of value - more than welcome!

On the heels of updating the mandates, it would be great to proactively inform congregants about the various ways in which folks can contribute/join teams. Refreshed team mandates could help with that process. Perhaps we could implement weekly communications through our Thursday bulletin profiling individual areas (e.g., Worship, Sanctuary and Music) each week with a link to a wider library of team mandates (perhaps stored somewhere on the ESG website). This would be a bit of work to pull together but perhaps would (1) strengthen congregants knowledge about how they can become more involved, and (2) widen our net when it comes to sourcing candidates.

The Nominating team has, in the past, ruminated on the downsides of 'advertising' opportunities but, given the challenges we've been facing finding replacements for lay leaders, we need to explore new proactive ways to reach out.

Very eager to learn from your thoughts and suggestions...

Recent Placements / Opportunities

We're delighted to report that Brian Hyodo is joining the Property Team. As mentioned at the ACM, we are looking to fill GC positions: M&P Chair, Treasurer, Property Chair – thank again to Heather, Charlie and John for hanging in as discussions are in progress.

Christine Lawson has fulfilled her two terms as the Ministry, Worship and Sacraments Committee Chair. We're collaborating to identify a succession plan and are working hard to identify candidates that we would like to invite to join the team. Would be great to find some 'younger generation' folks to become involved! All suggestions more than welcome!

Outreach Committee Report: October 19, 2021

Peace with Justice

Peace with Justice continues monthly meetings on zoom to discuss concerns regarding human rights, peace and justice. There is no longer a Chair of this Group, with each meeting chaired by a different member. This group also arranges Amnesty International letter writing at ESG.

Good Food Box Program

In both September & October, 23 boxes were delivered to Outreach clients. Anyone interested in purchasing a Good Food Box or donating a box to our outreach participants, please contact Heather Parker.

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 (LFP)

The Little Free Pantry continues to be stocked on a daily basis with ESG custodians stocking the Pantry three days a week and the “Bag Ladies” from the ESG Last Minutes stocking it the other four days.

Fruit for Na-Me-Res Shelter

Donna Lang continues to take fruit donated by a local Grocer to the Na-Me-Res Shelter for indigenous men, on a weekly basis.

NT Cluster Work – Welcome Baskets Project

The Cluster has taken on a project to supply 15-20 Welcome Baskets per month to Streets to Homes, an organization run by the city to help people transitioning from shelters and encampments to permanent housing. On behalf of ESG, Connie Roden & Marion Axmith delivered ten Welcome Baskets on October 6 to a Toronto Shelter at Markham Road and Hwy 401. Similar to the Roehampton, this shelter is in a Travel Lodge. The Roehampton did not require baskets at this time but the Travel Lodge was definitely in need and our Welcome Baskets were gratefully received and secured by the Staff at the Markham Road location. The baskets represent the collective hope of ESG that the recipients will succeed as they take their first steps towards independent living.

Proposed Syrian Education Fund

This document has been circulated to Council separately as a pre-read for Oct. 19 meeting.

MEA 10/15/21

Worship, Sacraments and Music Committee
Notes for Council Meeting of October 19, 2021

Committee News and Activities

- In-person live streaming services began on September 12th. All Covid-19 protocols are being observed with the assistance of a dedicated group of Greeters. The attendance so far has been between 20 to 25, including the Greeters, plus the Ministers, soloist and music accompaniment (Claire or Shawn).
- New Expressions started up this fall with Lyla Miklos. This past Sunday's service featured Jeremy Carver James, November VC2 Cello Duo and December will feature Embodiment Trio and a possible string quarter (Covid pending).
- Shawn is hoping to have a live Christmas Concert, with elements of pre-recorded.
- Worship themes to the end of 2021
 - A Bigger Table – food justice/Food Ministry – September/October. This series has been great at building a theological foundation for ESG's new food ministry as well as connecting people to different aspects of food and food justice.
 - Comfort and Joy – Advent
 - All is Well – Christmas
- Zoom Coffee Hour continues to follow the service at a new time 11:30 am.
- The first LoveaLIVE online Dinner Church is October 24th at 5 pm with special guest Jeffrey Straker, a singer, songwriter and pianist, who will be sharing where he sees love alive in his life.
- The first Evensong service, on the theme "Thanksgiving for Autumn", will be Thursday, October 21st, available online at 6 p.m. or anytime thereafter. Rev. Don Parsons and Christine Lawson will lead the service, enhanced with music by Ariane Meredith (alto), and Claire Harris (piano).

Other Updates

- The first WSM Committee meeting for 2021-22 was held on October 5th via Zoom, and included updates from Music and Next Generation and Growth as well as an overview of the fall worship programme. Worship plans for Christmas were also discussed. Full details to follow at a later date. Our next meeting will be held at the end of November.

ESG Vaccination Policy

Preamble:

The COVID Response team has been reviewing requirements and advice from several organizations including Toronto Public Health and Shining Waters Region, as well as researching what other churches in the North Toronto Cluster are doing as far as their vaccination policies for staff and for worship participants. In addition, the ESG COVID Survey of the congregation had 103 respondents who indicated a 98% rate of full vaccination (as compared to the neighbourhood average of 82% currently) and a strong desire to see full vaccination as a requirement for worship attendance (87%) .

We know that the question of requiring vaccination is complex, and we definitely want to be as inclusive as possible while providing a safe environment to the best of our ability. Even when fully vaccinated, it is possible for people to contract COVID-19, which is why ESG will continue to require practices such as masking, distancing and hand hygiene as we welcome people into our physical space. We are very fortunate in that we are able to offer an excellent online alternative to our in-person worship experience.

Effective October 2021

ESG has a duty of care to its members and staff. We require the following:

1. Every person entering ESG **must** be dual vaccinated, unless they are ineligible for vaccination or have a medical exemption.
2. Persons attending worship services, weddings and funerals performed by ESG (**and by its tenant churches?**) will be required to **affirm** that they are dual vaccinated.
3. Any person entering the church for any reason other than those listed in paragraph 2 must provide **proof** of dual vaccination.
4. Staff/independent contractors who work regularly at ESG must provide **proof** of dual vaccination by November 30, 2021 or ESG will cease to retain their services. In the interim, such persons may not enter ESG unless they provide **proof** of dual vaccination.
5. The current policies on masking and physical distancing remain in place.

Property Report to ESG Governing Council October 19, 2021

Audio/Video/IT task group

- * The AV system has been fine tuned by the supplier/installer Aligned Vision to resolve some glitches.
- * Revising flow diagrams for the Live Streaming system incorporating changes made to overcome video related issues.
- * Consulted other churches on their use of Live streaming and infrastructure and what they charge for live streaming events such as weddings to assist the Administrator in setting an ESG charge out rate
- * Preparing proposals for implementing remotely activated access control for the Lytton Hub door

Lift to gym

- * The Lift installation has undergone a hiccup and the door at the lower station requires adjustment before inspection and licensing by the Technical Standards & Safety Association (TSSA) can take place.

Family Ministry projects

- * Cabinets and counters for the Family Ministry have been ordered and installation is scheduled for mid November.

Replace lighting with LEDs

- * Work complete. The remaining discarded lights in the family nursery room and in the gym kitchen have been pickup for disposal.
- * We issued an invoice to the IESO for \$17,833.72. I expect that ESG has received the cheque

Insurance Underwriters Risk Assessment report

- * Received a report outlining 11 items requiring attention. ESG is preparing it's responses to the Underwriter. The expensive item will be resolution of the issues pertaining to the storage room ceiling slab. We have met with a structural engineer who is now preparing 3 options with cost estimates for our review. Once we have decided on the solution and received Council approval we expect to start construction work next spring.

Craighurst repairs

- * Invoices totaling \$836 submitted for the porch repairs completed in September.

Syrian Children Education Fund

October 12, 2021

Submitted by Kristen Ede

Purpose:

To establish an Education Fund to help cover the costs of post-secondary tuition and related expenses for the 9 children of the two Syrian Families that ESG sponsored. Both Rajab families have now fully settled and integrated into Canadian society; the 2nd generation's future success will be impacted by their ability to achieve an education, independence (particularly important for the females) and meaningful employment.

I would like to set up an Education Fund, that upon graduation of a post-secondary program, will pay off the children's student debt (tuition and some living expenses) for all 9 children and if fundraising allowed, any future spouse of any of the children.

The Education Fund's objective is two-fold: 1) to encourage the children to attend post-secondary education and 2) upon graduation, allow the children to be student-debt free to start their careers and adult life. Both objectives will help set them up for independence and future success in Canada.

Process:

The student will be required to apply for Student loans, grants etc on their own, and the reimbursement will only come after successful completion of a program, and receipt of the official OSAP or equivalent student loan information. The payment would be made directly to OSAP or equivalent.

The Education Fund would primarily be for the student's first degree/diploma of the initial 9 children, although to the extent possible and when supported by fundraising, could be for multiple or successive degrees/diplomas (discretion would be applied). For example, Wiam is attending a 1 year Dental Assistant program, but would like to also take a Dental Hygienist program upon its completion to increase her skill sets and job prospects. To the extent possible and reasonable, I would like the Education Fund to support the children in their efforts to achieve as much higher education as possible.

As well, if fundraising allowed, any future spouse of any of the children would also be eligible to apply for funding (discretion would be applied here as well). For example, Hanane is to be married next year and it would aid her future success if her husband, Fayeze also achieves an education, so if funds are available, I would like the Education Fund to extend to spouses as well. This would really depend on the success of the fundraising.

It would be clear to the families, that ALL of this funding would be discretionary and would be dependent on our success and ability to raise funds. We would be under no obligation in this regard to any of the children, despite our best intentions.

Fundraising Timing:

There has already been several members of ESG that have already contacted me with offers to donate after reading the recent ESG newsletter. As well as significant donors outside of the church through personal connections that have previously donated generously to the Rajab's resettlement, that are interested in donating to the Education Fund for the children. I think it is important to keep the momentum and receive these donations as soon as possible and critically before year end. There is an existing Syrian Refugee bank account, with less than \$2K balance

that could be utilized for this initiative now that the Syrian Refugee resettlement program has completed. The ESG website would have to be updated to add "Syrian Education Fund" as a tab on the dropdown menu under the Canada Helps tab on the website. Once that is completed, an email blast (either in the newsletter or separate) can be sent out that outlines the general program and request for donations.

While mindful of overlapping requests for funding from the ESG Community, and the planned Annual Stewardship ask in November, it was our experience from the original fundraising that these types of initiatives generate energy and enthusiasm within the ESG community and I think that only positively increases the donors desire to donate to ESG more broadly. The profile of these Donors were typically those of folks that had the funds to support both, not either/ or. Ideally, the Education Fund request would go out immediately (in October), however if it had to wait until December that would be fine as long as those folks that already expressed interest to donate could do so, as well as those outside of ESG. December is somewhat of a difficult time to request funds as many charities push at the end of the year, but it is doable if need be.

Fundraising Target Amount:

It's difficult to predict the total cost of the program if all 9 children attended some form of post-secondary education. Trade School or College is significantly cheaper than University, 1 year programs significantly cheaper than 3 years programs, etc etc, so many variables at play.

The initial goal of the Fund raising would be at least \$50,000 to fund the children currently enrolled in programs with graduations over the next year to two. There are 9 children, 4 of which (as outlined below) are currently enrolled in post-secondary education, 2 more (Abdul-Hamid & Yahya) that may be attending in the near term, and the younger 3 children (the younger Mohammed (14), Mouna (10) and Baby Mostafa (3)) are still in public school and will be some time (4-15 years) before they attend.

The 4 children currently enrolled and expected graduation are as follows:

Mohammed: Business Admin/Project Mgmt Diploma, George Brown College: expected completion Spring 2022

Hala: Early Child Care & Youth Worker diploma, Centennial College: expected completion 2023+

Hanane: Accounting Program, Centennial College: expected completion Fall 2022

Wiam: Dental Administration, George Brown College: expected completion Spring 2022 and then she would like to attend a Dental Hygienist program.

I am estimating that the initial \$50,000 will be needed for the first 4 children. It is possible that up to another \$50,000-\$100,000 be needed if all the remaining 5 children and some spouses participate. It would be wonderful if all 9 children attend post-secondary education, but statistically probably not. If there are funds left over after the majority of kids have finished school, the funds could be added to a RESP for some of the younger children like Baby Mostafa, or donated to other Syrian children graduating from post-secondary education. The funds will be used for no other use other than Education and related expenses for the Syrian children.

Final Recommendation/Request to Governing Council: To approve 1) the formation of the Syrian Education Fund, 2) the changes to the Canada Helps tab on the ESG website to include “Syrian Education Fund” and 3) the communication strategy timing as soon as reasonably possible. **Thanks for your support!**