ESG Governing Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Time: 7:00 PM – 8:45 PM

Location: Hybrid (In-person + Teams)

Chair: Hugh DesBrisay

1. Attendance

Present: Marion Axmith, John Blevins, Bob Blair, Caren Cate, Rev. Sarah Chapman, Hugh DesBrisay, Gord Brookes, Rev. Paul Hutchison, Kathleen Hull, Donna MacCandlish, Susan Moore, Gord Thompson, Peter Wilkins, Maggie Wilkinson

2. Opening

Call to Order: Chair Hugh DesBrisay called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Spiritual Reflection: Sarah led a ritual with candles where we were invited to share something that sparked in us this September. Sarah then read a blessing of Hope written by Jan Richardson.

Chair's Opening Remarks: Hugh introduced a new approach to Council meetings emphasizing bravery, expansiveness, and adaptability. He proposed streamlining meeting architecture and report handling.

3. Accountability Reports

Rev. Paul Hutchison

Paul presented his Fall Accountability Report, highlighting strategic alignment with Faith Journey Sundays and Even Song series, digital and livestream goals, worship planning, and the launch of the 'Care in Action' Roundtable scheduled for October 30. The Roundtable will be his strategic focus for the next two months.

Rev. Sarah Chapman

Sarah shared updates on summer staff leadership, food justice initiatives, and transition planning for parental leave. Marnie has resigned due to starting a new job, but will be staying on for a couple of hours weekly to oversee the Community Gardens. She will also continue to be a resident at Flourish House. The search for a new staff person to support Sarah will begin in January, with some ground work being done now to streamline the process.

Sarah outlined a coverage plan for fall programs and emphasized strategic experimentation with the participant journey and welcome experience.

4. Business Items

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2025 special meeting of Council was carried unanimously with the addition of Kathleen Hull's regrets being added for that meeting. (Marion, Gord T) Carried.

Ministerial Roles and Responsibilities: A revised draft is being reviewed and will be submitted to M&P and brought to Council for approval at the October meeting.

Ministry & Personnel (M&P):

Motion: Resolved that ESG engage Julia Walsh as Youth Leader/Minister for the period September 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 on terms and conditions similar to those relating to the previous Youth Leader/Minister, Rowena Heatherington-Wilson, and to be finalized by the Ministry & Personnel Committee. (Bob, Caren) Carried.

5. Property Committee Updates
Boiler and Hot Water Tank Replacement:

Motion: Resolved that ESG retain Power Application Group Inc. to replace the church's existing boiler with two new high-efficiency units and to replace the existing hot water tank with a new 50-gallon stand alone or indirect unit for a total price of $67,900.00 plus HST to be funded from the Property Maintenance Fund. (John, Gord T)

Post-project Property Maintenance Fund balance is approximately $100,000.

Sound System Update: Equipment ordered; cable routing begins mid-November. Design phase and work schedule creation underway.

6. Finance Update

Gord Thompson reported that July/August operating results are on budget. Fiscal year end audit adjustments will result in a small loss (~$5,000) for 2024-25. Draft audited financial statements pending resolution of outstanding items.

Trustee Update: Portfolio returns for the year are approximately 14%, equating to ~$600,000 in capital growth.

7. Operational Issues: Live Streaming and Sound

Concerns raised about live streaming and sanctuary sound operations. Recommendation to form a task group to address personnel and operational issues. Aligned Vision to provide training and support. Clear protocols and expectations need to be established and

communicated. It was decided that Bob (M&P) and Gord B (Worship) would meet to determine next steps with support from Paul and Property Team.

8. Other Business

Kathleen Hull announced her new role as Chair of the Pastoral Care Team.

Maggie Wilkinson to join the volunteer leadership team and assume the role of Member-at-Large for Nominating/ Volunteer Engagement. Maggie recognized Donna's positive contribution as a Council member for many years.

There will be no Past Chair due to the co-chair model for Council leadership.

9. Closing

Prayer led by Gord Thompson.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2025 – In-person + Teams

Chair – Hugh DesBrisay

Notetaker – Maggie Wilkinson