

BRIDGEWATER UNITED CHURCH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 24, 2021

WELCOME:

The regular meeting of the Bridgewater United Church Council was held in the Church Sanctuary on Wednesday, November 24, 2021. David Walker, Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE-REGRETS:Council Members (Voting Delegates) Present:

David Walker	Chair
Elizabeth Burridge	Vice Chair
Blake Hirtle	Treasurer
Edna Matheson	Secretary
Ewart Morse	Past Chair
Rev. Jeff Chant	Minister
Bev Burgess	Member at Large
Brian Buck	Trustees
Jack Logan	Regional Council 15 rep
Richard Greek	Finance and Stewardship
Ruth Rudderham	UCW
Sam Elsworth	Ministry and Personnel
Tracy Rafuse	Faith Formation

Committee/Ministry Members/Guests Present (Non-voting):

Bob Forbes Designate for Property and Grounds
Corrine Zinck

Regrets:

Karen Crouse Member at large
Randall Knox Property
Rev. Neil McEwen Minister
Marion Brown

It was determined that a quorum was present.

OPENING WORSHIP/PRAYER: David Walker read a message from Jane McDonald, President of Region 15.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS:

Motion: Sam Elsworth/Jack Logan that those persons present who are not Council members or designates can participate in discussion but will not have a vote. **Motion Carried.**



APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion: Ewart Morse/Bev Burgess that the Agenda be approved as circulated.
Motion Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: A letter received from Brian Buck on behalf of Trustees to be addressed at this meeting.

MINUTES - September 22, 2021

Motion: Richard Greek/Blake Hirtle to approve the draft Minutes of the September 22, 2021 regular Council Meeting with a typographical correction on page 37, last bullet point - 'seat' corrected to 'sit'. **Motion Carried.**

MINUTES of the Executive meetings from September 8 and November 2, 2021 were circulated for information.

OLD BUSINESS:

Proof of Vaccination Status

Decision from Sept. 22nd meeting was to fully support and promote Public Health's recommendations to be fully vaccinated with worship services deemed essential be exempt from determining proof of vaccination.

Discussion points:

- Individuals have expressed concern or have declined from volunteer activities (e.g. greeters) because proof of vaccination is not being required to attend worship services.
- Is asking for proof of vaccination in align with "all are welcome"?
- The covenanting service, although not during our regular service is a worship service and would not require proof of vaccination.
- General Council legal counsel and Region 15 advise that spiritual worship and support is offered to those who would not be able to attend in-person, achieved by BUC via digital/online services.
- The discrepancy of not asking for proof of vaccination for worship but then going to a social after worship in the gym and asking for proof of vaccination is confusing.
- Impact on administrative functions
- Surveying other United Church of Canada Communities of Faith revealed that local congregations are not asking for proof of vaccination, but two churches in the HRM have started. Other denominations were not surveyed.

Motion: Richard Greek/Ewart Morse for any and all church activities and events, including worship services, identification and proof of vaccination or proper medical

exemption pursuant to the provincial proof of full vaccination protocols will be required, effective December 5, 2021. **Motion carried.**

Formal agreement with New West Pine

Rev. Jeff Chant read the agreement to formalize the ongoing collaborative relationship with New West Pine.

West Side United Agreement Evaluation

The pilot with West Side of pastoral care provided by Rev. Neil McEwen expires the end of December. The proposal included the plan to review the position to decide whether to continue. Rev. Neil McEwen's report distributed to Council for this meeting was acknowledged. Discussion occurred regarding what criteria to use and how to evaluate the agreement. It was agreed since nothing negative has been brought forward to cancel the agreement that the time frame is too short for an evaluation.

Motion: Jack Logan/Ruth Rudderham to extend the current terms of the pilot to the end of March, 2022. **Motion carried.**

Lennie Gallant Concert resulted in a profit of \$400.00.

Digital Ministry

The recorded services are a shorter format of 20 minutes to appeal to a wider group and entice those who would prefer a longer format to attend in-person services. Equipment is being procured to facilitate recording. The group includes a student who is volunteering as part of a school course. The attempts at recording in-person services identified issues such as lighting in the sanctuary and avoiding filming individuals worshipping. The quality of those recordings was not satisfactory and more cameras and lighting would be needed to improve quality.

The numbers of views remain consistent, approximately 160 between Facebook and YouTube. Part of the funding proposal was to figure out the analytics of YouTube. Our services have been shared with the wider church community as an example. Jeff's time has decreased in producing the online services.

Covenanting Service

The Covenanting Service for Rev. Jeff Chant is scheduled for December 5, 2021. Guidelines were shared that proof of vaccination will be required. Rev. Neil McEwen will be participating and Rev. Heather Ferrier will represent Region 15. The committee organizing the service is meeting tomorrow night.

Senior Friendly Accessibility Audit

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Prior to Covid, it had been arranged to participate in an accessibility audit which was deferred as a result of the pandemic. The audit has been completed and the report received which will be addressed at the next Council executive meeting.

There has also been an individual offering financial support to address accessibility. The process of the funds being directed to the Memorial Committee was identified.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & MOTIONS:

Memorial Committee. Richard Greek spoke of the offer for committees and church groups to submit requests for use of Memorial funds as long as they are not used for operational expenses.

Board of Trustees. Brian Buck described the current financial status from the perspective of the Board of Trustees. The amounts of available funds is being depleted and if ongoing will require investments being cashed.

Discussion points:

- Financial reports show a deficit
- Expenses have increased over the last five years
- Donations are not matching expenses
- Revenue sources are a challenge
- Utilization of the facility is an opportunity for revenue (rentals)
- Need goals for 2022 to increase revenue (targets for fundraising and increasing givings, including other congregations)

Finance and Stewardship Committee. Richard Greek reported that the committee is planning on exploring a stewardship campaign in 2022.

Discussion points:

- A proper stewardship campaign was researched prior to Covid but plans were interrupted. Ewart Morse shared what he learned about stewardship campaigns.

Redevelopment Committee

The committee is soliciting information from other churches and the UCC to redevelop BUC's property (2.3 acres) for potential revenue source but is a five year or longer plan.

MINISTER'S REPORT:

Rev. Jeff reported he is assigned supervisor of Liverpool and Caledonia churches.

Other items to report:

- Celebrated Wendy Fraser's retirement
- Welcomed Barb Pate as Music Director
- Organ is to be tuned on December 1 and asked for volunteers
- Working with the Redevelopment Committee

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NEW BUSINESS:**Advent Christmas Eve Service**

The service will start at 6 pm. At the end of the service, those who wish to leave can do so during singing of carols which will be followed by a communion service. Discussion occurred about the logistics of serving communion. It was decided to request attendees bring their own communion but will have spares for those who may need it.

December 26th service

Rev. Jeff Chant is off December 26th.

Motion: Blake Hirtle/Bob Forbes to not have a worship service December 26, 2021.

Motion carried.

Sabbatical

David Walker explained that a sabbatical has been pending and was clearly articulated in the expression of call and apologized for a lack of communication regarding the timing of a sabbatical. The United Church of Canada strongly support sabbaticals as beneficial and enhancements to congregations.

Sam Elsworth explained that sabbaticals are embraced as happy occasions and a token of gratitude for the service provided by the minister. The requirements were researched and have been met for a three month sabbatical to be granted in 2022. It can be combined with the annual three week study leave and vacation. It was the unanimous decision of Ministry and Personnel Committee to fully support a sabbatical after the Easter season in 2022.

Motion: Sam Elsworth/Ewart Morse to approve the recommendation from Ministry and Personnel Committee to grant Rev. Jeff Chant a three month sabbatical after the Easter season in 2022.

Discussed projected costs. Includes salary and other costs determined by how much pulpit supply will be paid.

Motion carried.

Motion: Blake Hirtle/Jack Logan for a committee consisting of the Vice Chair of Council, a representative from Ministry and Personnel, and one other person to work with Rev. Jeff Chant to plan for coverage during the sabbatical. **Motion carried.**

Council decisions and support

David Walker talked about supporting Council decisions. Council deals with complex issues and meetings are for open discussion. Council members and congregants are welcome to voice their opinion, even when controversial. Once Council makes a

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decision, it is the responsibility of Council members to do our best to ensure they are successful.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Wednesday, January 26, 2021 in the Chapel

CLOSING MOTIONS AND CLOSING PRAYER:

Motion: Ewart Morse/Jack Logan that powers be given to the Church Council Executive to deal with all such business that may come before it until the next Council meeting. **Motion Carried.**

The meeting closed at 9:12 p.m. upon motion of adjournment by Ewart Morse/Jack Logan

David Walker gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Matheson

Edna Matheson, Secretary

David Walker PER

David Walker, Chair



BRIDGEWATER UNITED CHURCH

MINISTRY TEAM:

Reverend Jeff Chant; *Lead Minister* jeff@bridgewaterunited.ca
Angela Clifton; *Pastoral Care Coordinator and Parish Nurse* aclifton@eastlink.ca

18 November 2021

David Walker, Chair
Bridgewater United Church Council

Dear David,

Bridgewater United Church Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, 17 November 2021. During our discussion regarding the current financial status of Bridgewater United Church, we felt that we needed to address the following with Council:

- We are very concerned about the frequency and level of financial requests coming to the Trustees,
- The amount of financial support being sought annually will not be sustainable in the long term as our funds will be depleted,
- We would encourage Council to consider alternate routes to meet its financial obligations other than its regular dependence on the Trustees.

We look forward to your attention to this matter and would be pleased to discuss the issue if needed.

Sincerely,

Brian Buck, Chair
BUC Board of Trustees



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Church Office: (902) 543-4833 Ministers' Private Office Phone: (902) 543-6854
info@bridgewaterunited.ca www.bridgewaterunited.ca
Worship videos can be found on our Facebook page, our Website, or our YouTube Channel
Church Office Hours are Monday – Friday 9:30am – 1:00pm
Our Church is a Nut-Free and Scent-Free Church

Note 2: THE CHURCH OWES THE TRUSTEES \$45,000.00. AT PRESENT, A GOOD PART OF IT PAYS THE EVERYDAY OPERATING EXPENSES. THIS IS OF GRAVE CONCERN TO MYSELF AND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS ~ Diane Barry

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

- The Sunday School picnic that was held on Sunday, September 12, 2021, was enjoyed by all in attendance. The committee would like to thank you for your participation in this event.
- Sunday School started up on Sunday, September 19, 2021, with a small group of children in attendance. The group's focus currently is on "Every Child Matters".
- B-United Youth Group will get activities started on Friday, October 22, 2021.
- Look for Faith Formation envelopes in the church sanctuary on Sunday, November 14, 2021, as part of Children's Sunday.
- Angel Tree Sunday will take place on Sunday, December 5, 2021.
- Sunday School Christmas Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 12, 2021.
- 15 Christmas Blessing Bags will be packed for Soul Harbour this December.
- All phase 5 protocols continue to be followed with all groups that enter the church building.

The next committee meeting will be held Wednesday, December 1, 2021 @ 4pm.

MISSION TRIP ~ Bev Burgess

The BUC Mission Team had a table at the UCW Xmas Bazaar and raised \$309.00 through sales and a donation. Thank you to the UCW for sharing this event. Our fund raising is completed for this year and early next year, we will hold a meeting to determine what fund raising is feasible. With funds in the amount of \$5,000.00 previously sent to Servants Heart to assist with the construction of the Community Centre, the total funds raised to date is approximately \$16,400.00. Thank you again to the congregation for your continued support of this Mission.

PROPERTY AND GROUNDS ~ Randall Knox

From meeting held on October 14, 2021

Tracy's report was read and filed

Blake gave his report

Looking into false alarms, both fire and security

Roof upgrades over stairwells and kitchen complete

Piece of stained glass repaired in sanctuary

General maintenance was completed as required

From meeting held November 10, 2021

Tracy's report read and recorded

Blake's report received

Discussion on the some of the building's issues from the annual inspection have resulted in no action until Repurposing Committee's findings are received

Lawnmower is on its last wheels, Kirk B. offered to donate a lawnmower

New vacuum was purchased for the custodian

Security/fire alarm discussions (false alarms) resulted with no solution. CSD was contacted with same, no guaranteed solution.

Kirk B. agreed to try to adjust CEC door closers and outside door closers by office

Safety issues discussed, reappearing cords in front of sanctuary. Appropriate committees to be contacted.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ~ Rev. Jeff Chant

The Redevelopment Committee has had two meetings and is actively exploring what the possibilities and path forward may be for our congregation. Members have been collecting information, seeking out other examples with other churches and have decided as a first step to possibly engage a United Church of Canada resource/consultant to guide us the many steps and challenges.

UCW ~ Ruth Rudderham

Our UCW was finally able to hold a General meeting on October 27 to which unit members were also encouraged to attend. It was a "Come back to UCW" day and twenty-two women were there, all checked before entering for vaccination passes. It was a special day because two life membership pins were presented, one to Marg Forbes and one to Brenda Greek honoring their service to UCW and to Bridgewater United Church.

We are continuing to host the morning "Coffee and Conversation" time, and placed fall produce in the Church for decorations at Thanksgiving. Our Arts and Crafts Unit once again collected new items to be used as Christmas gifts at Harbour House which have been delivered and received with much appreciation.

Again this year we have had a successful response to our "No-bake" sale, and the \$3160.00 received will be dispersed to our outreach projects. Likewise knitters have been busy and 149 pairs of mittens, 18 toques and one pair of knitted socks have been donated to the Schools Plus program of Lunenburg and Queens County Schools. Our honorary knitter is one hundred years old and she did her part in contributing. Thank you Gladys!

The Christmas Bazaar was held on November 20th and contributions to our sale tables were much appreciated. It was a successful day and profits received will help us to meet our financial obligations.

Pastoral Care Minister ~ Rev. Neil McEwen

We are almost 2 months into our relationship where eight hours of my time per week are dedicated to the ministry of Bridgewater United Church for the purpose of Pastoral Care.

As with any new position it takes a little bit of time to adjust and transition into a new community. Even though I am familiar with many of the people who comprise the family of Bridgewater United I have come to realize that there are many more that I do not know nor have yet had the privilege of meeting. Becoming familiar with the faces, names, and their various life experiences (past and present) is a steep learning curve. I express gratitude for a binder full of information that has been supplied to me by Tracy Rafuse which is beneficial in my learning and in my adjustment into this role as Minister of Pastoral Care for the Congregation.

For the past 9 weeks I have been participating in an online course through the Ottawa Pastoral Care Training Program (OPCTP) which is a two-hour in duration course each Monday afternoon. This course concluded this past Monday and has been a rich time of learning and re-learning skills to enhance my ministry of Pastoral Care. It has also been a beneficial time as a support to the re-developed Pastoral Care Team here at Bridgewater United. I look forward to participating in the “Blessings of the Pastoral Care Team” within worship on November 28th and supporting the team as they fulfil this vital and important ministry within the congregation. It would be beneficial if the OPCTP would continue to offer their course online so that future individuals interested in becoming part of the team could participate in the same learning/training experience we enjoyed prior to becoming a member of the Pastoral Care Team of Bridgewater United.

So what have I been doing for my 8 hours per week?

Participating in the weekly On-Line Training with the Ottawa Pastoral Care Training Program
Receiving messages from Rev. Jeff and Tracy Rafuse about arising pastoral care needs or from some individuals within the congregation who are in regular “care contact” with various members. Not being on-site for worship or each day is a barrier to hearing the last pieces of news, concerns, expressions of care shared – so I am thankful for their maintenance of an avenue of connection for me with the community.

Becoming familiar with the individuals and families within the congregation.

Weekly check-in visits to the South Shore Regional Hospital. I have always found that the “United Church of Canada” list is a difficult list to decipher and to which congregation/pastoral charge those individuals are actually connected to as they come from many locations along the South Shore. The “United Church” list is never very long and is the only list that I have access to when I visit. Not everyone admitted actually state they are UCC. This is when it is most beneficial to remind everyone if you know someone is in hospital let Tracy in the Office or Rev. Jeff or myself know and even more so when it is an urgent/emergency hospitalization. We/I can only visit if we know someone is in hospital. Even if, due to visitation restrictions, we cannot get in to visit we can make contact with family members to know we offer support in a variety of ways.

Working my way through and familiarizing myself with the list of individuals/families within “The Book” that Tracy supplied me with and their contact information. Putting some faces and names together and discovering the stories of life and faith they bring into this community of faith.

Met with those members of the congregation who are participating in the online training course. Doing mostly phone call check-ins with those who have been ill, experiencing current medical concerns, experienced recent losses, and those who are not able to get out and around as much as in previous years and some are just a call to chat and check-in. I express gratitude to those who have been phoning and keeping an avenue of connection open with several members of the congregation. I hear from them that they have appreciated the continued connections. Not everyone is open yet to having a visit in their homes – which I respect and honour – so only a couple of home visits have taken place. Connecting with those in Care Homes is not as easy as it once was, it takes planning and scheduling. I have done one visit to a local care home – and had a delightful visit. There are a variety of protocols in place in each location – which requires adaption and adjustment from the former normalcy of “dropping by for a visit”.

There has only been one funeral during the past two months that I have been actively involved with for an individual connected to this Community of Faith.

Starting in November I felt it was needed for me to make a distinct separation from my ministry duties at West Side United and specifically designate time to be intentionally focused on the role and duties for the ministry which I have covenanted to offer Bridgewater United Church. Tuesday mornings (usually 10 AM to 1 PM – but can be longer into the afternoon) I will be in the building and found in the office down the hall way or just behind the front of the sanctuary. This is a valuable time to be present FOR the congregation and FOR me as well. I get to pop into the Tuesday morning time in the Chapel, I get to make phone calls and schedule visits for the rest of the week and welcome those who wish to come and sit down with me face-to-face to chat, say “HELLO” and provide a neutral safe space to offer conversation and care.

Drop in to the church building for conversation & meetings times with Rev. Jeff – sometimes about pastoral care items, visioning for future worship or discussions on the Pastoral Care Team. One drop-in time included spending a portion of the afternoon with UCW as they presented the Life Membership Pins to two well-deserving recipients.

Plans for the future days of my ministry among you:

Now that we “graduated” from the Pastoral Care Training get this group established and prepared to offer them continual support and encouragement in their ministry by meeting on a regular basis to check-in and grow even more from their experiences.

Organize “group visits” as a few locations around town in buildings or complexes where we know that several people from the congregation live (for example ... Drumlin Hills and a couple of other buildings). Continue to increase my presence and availability and accessibility to the congregation.

The first two months have gone by rapidly for me and I hope that this is just the beginning of our congregations/pastoral charges discovering how we can work more closely together in the ministry we offer to our communities. It is also my hope that what we are doing shines as a beacon of hope and possibilities for others around us to see what can be possible when we work together. Everything is possible. Nothing is impossible.

Blessings,
Rev. Neil A. McEwen