**Eastside United Church Leadership Team**

**Minutes of the March 10, 2021 Meeting**

**Attendees:** Sarah Tkachuk, Russell Mitchell-Walker, Bonnie Yake, Sam Baidoo, Bonny Manz, Cathie Henderson, Anita Tessier, Leanne Sudom, Linda Fowler, Maureen Hughes

**Regrets:** Doug Scheurwater, Jim Fallows

| **Agenda**  **#** |  | **Action** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. , | **Call to Order – Sarah**  Sarah called the meeting to order at 7:08. |  |
|  | **Opening Devotion – Russell**  Parable and prayer. |  |
|  | **Acceptance of the Agenda**  Item 7.1 added. Cathie moved acceptance. 2nd by Linda. Carried |  |
|  | **Minutes of the January 13, 2021 Leadership Team Meeting**  One minor spelling correction. Cathie moved acceptance. 2nd by Anita. Carried |  |
|  | **Reports**  **5.1 Minister’s – Russell**  Report attached.  There have been some requests for transfer of memberships to Eastside. Russell will be doing a “Faith Exploration” class with new people on Wednesday evenings. The Regina Cluster has had one small meeting of their Executive but Russell has not yet received a report.  **5.2 M&P - Cathie**  Harvey does not know when he will be taking his holidays, or coverage. He may take some when Russell takes his in the summer but wants most of them when moving into a new home which is happening soon. Russell will be speaking to him about it at their next meeting. Harvey also has to look into registration for his benefits and pension as it was overlooked when he started work. He is to receive a package about it from the national office so Cathie will follow up with him once received.    **5.3 Region - Doug (absent)**  Doug had asked Russell what he should do with the newsletter called “The Rambler” that he gets regularly from the Region. It was decided that it should be shared with all the Leadership Team.  **5.4 Finance – Jim (absent)**  Anita said the Finances are going okay. The $17K was set aside for mortgage, as requested. There is presently enough in the account to cover three months of Eastside’s operating expenses. There was a question about the lunch program grant for Glen Elm School which should have been sent to them. Also, an expense that was believed to be for audiovisual equipment that should be charged to the LSC account.  **5.5 Living Spirit Centre Committee – Bonnie**  $15K was taken out of revenue by LSCC to give a payment holiday which means a payment holiday for all three congregations. The 2021 budget was passed at the January LSCC meeting. Bonnie asked if the Leadership Team would support a request to the LSC to give some rent relief for a month or two to the Arcola Wellness Centre, as they have been paying their full rent even though they are not using the building much. A suggestion was made that they be asked if they received any rent relief from the government and, if not, we would be supportive.  ***Anita moved that the Leadership Team would support rent forgiveness by LSC for one or two months for Arcola Wellness Centre. 2nd by Sam. Carried.***  Donna Lindskog has volunteered to be an LSCC rep. One more person is still needed. The Anglican sub-committee to do with Immanuel will be meeting soon, but it is Bonnie’s understanding that they only want two reps. from Eastside; Russell being one and one other one.  **5.6 Faith Formation – Leanne**  Report attached.  More people are needed to help with Zoom and Facebook Live once back doing in-person, Amanda doing it right now but could use a second person. Barry has been helping BoL with the new equipment but it is quite complex so may need a paid professional to run it. We need to determine if we want a virtual dimension when in-person worship so that people can link in virtually for various reasons (eg. In another geographic location, illness, or weather. A strategic plan is needed although it will still be a few months before we are able to fully attend in-person. The Regina Cluster, as well as the Region, should likely be discussing this as well. It will take time, energy, and people to help to do multi-forms of worship. Harvey has been approached to see if he can assist but is not available on Sundays.  **5.7 Gratitude team – Maureen**  Maureen said Diana had been sent a card thanking her for her time on the team. Delia has now joined them. Money has been donated to the Hospital Chaplaincy Program. 14 thank you cards were sent over the last month to a number of volunteers and employees.  **5.8 Congregational Care - Linda**  Report attached. Russell added that there were two newcomers to our church this month.    **5.9 Chair – Sarah**  Sarah contacted Wesley and offered our support either through shared worship or joining our services. She received a query on how to link to our Zoom services. Russell said they have decided to go with an interim minister, which will allow them to do some exploration on their future.  Sarah will be asking for committee reports for the next Congregational meeting. The deadline will be before the next Leadership Team meeting and need to include a summary to be included in the Congregational program. The LT will want to know what is working, or not, and the needs now and in the future. Also, are more volunteers needed for committees and are particular skill sets required? | Sarah will contact Doug  Anita to follow up re. Glen Elm.  Bonnie will clarify further as both she and Jim had put their names forward.  Sarah will be sending out an email about reports, as well as last year’s as a reference document. |
|  | **Business arising from the Minutes (10 minutes)**  **6.1 COVID Reopen task force**  The draft Building re-opening plan was emailed to all team members for review and is fairly complex. It was based on both the national United Church template, as well as using a lot of St. Philip’s plan. It was reviewed by Tracy who asked some questions that Sarah incorporated. The plan would be for any events or meetings in the church, not just worship. It is unlikely in-person worship will be started in the near future and lots of prep work needed when we do resume, but perhaps some small groups could meet in the church in the meantime, such as Film and Faith.  ***Cathie moved that the current draft Building re-opening plan be approved. 2nd by Bonnie. Carried.***  **6.2 Strategic plan review - Sarah**  5 recommendations taken out of the JNAC review made into action items with a two-year plan. We have improved in the financial, as had a surplus in 2020 although some from exceptional circumstances, plus much more communication about it. The pandemic has slowed down or put a hold on some things, such as participation and decision making by the Regina Cluster, who were paused for a few months. Shared ministry with LSC’s next step will be as part of the Immanuel Task Force. M&P committee was to work with Russell on coordinating house groups, plus some spiritual support for Russell. When his work plan was reviewed there was both a bit of reorganization, plus the pandemic curtailed some activities Russell had been involved in, including travel. Immanuel joining LSC may also have an impact on joint activities, as they have a children and youth staff person (eg. Messy Church). Next steps will be when we are planning the return to in-person as Russell will determine what activities he will spend the majority of his time. Time/cost evaluations should be done as committees do their reports (evaluating what’s working? what’s not? what could we do?). Many committees do that when meeting now. Financial communication has been very good with help from Gratitude Team. The Leadership Team communication has improved overall, verbally in church, via email/newsletter, and minutes being posted on website. Cash flow is good and now have $17K in the mortgage fund. Activity costs, especially technology costs, will need to be determined. Intergenerational considerations, such as youth involvement, is continuous. Advent bags well received and Russell has been considering having a drive through Easter bag hand out or drop off at homes. Last item, balancing the need for spiritual nurturing service. Worship and reflection team is continuing. Although Russell being mentored has stalled, he has taken some training online. It’s believed we have done a fairly good job of achieving the goals. The congregation seems much more positive than two years ago. One thing that needs focus as the end of the plan says, at the end of 2021 we need to plan a new way of doing church. It was to be partly based on what the results wre from the cluster on how many United Churches remain in Regina. That may or may not be known by the end of 2021. Russell pointed out that we have already evolved how we do church as were forced to because of the pandemic.  **6.3 Committee reports – planning for programming update**  See item 5.9 as well. Reports must be submitted in order to be approved at the Leadership Team meeting and included in the package for the next Congregational Program meeting. | Deadline for reports – April 30th |
|  | **New Business (10 minutes)**  **7.1 Text in Church - Russell**  Russell has attended a couple of courses on using technology in church and both promoted the “text in church” which is free for 60 days. It allows automatic messaging to go out to people, based on them showing interest in getting more information on our Facebook page or via text. Text number for Eastside is 306-517-6797. By texting different words to this number, automated messages will be sent. As well, people can text their RSVPs for events. No texts will be sent to anyone without the person’s permission. There is a Basic and Pro version, estimated to cost between $300 and over $500 U.S. per year. | Russell suggested people from this committee try it out.  If going ahead after trial period, LT will need to approve, likely via email. |
|  | **Next Meeting**  May 5, 2021; 7:00 p.m. Tentative date for Congregational Meeting – May 30th. |  |
|  | **Closing Prayer - Russell** |  |
|  | **Adjournment**  Sam moved meeting be adjourned at 9:45 |  |

**Eastside United Church**

**Leadership Team Minster’s Report**

Russell Mitchell-Walker

March 2021

**Worship Feedback Team**

The worship Feedback Team met in February and came up with a few suggestions to work on for worship. We will revamp the welcome a bit, to change the words and share the same message. Also the Congregational Care Greeter will do the welcome to the newcomers section. We also decided to take out the LSC Prayer weekly and offer it once a month, and make it responsive. There was also a suggestion to have the mic closer to the musicians singing. There has been some comments of wanting more biblical content and request people to fill out a survey for their favourite hymns.

**Pandemic Response**

We are presently working toward preparing for being in person and livestreaming the service. Barry Sudom has been working with the equipment and using it with Bread of Life. He and I will set a time to test it with Zoom. We probably won’t be in person until much after Easter. We could zoom and Livestream from the Sanctuary before we are in person to get things working smoothly. We also need a roster of folk to help with the technical running on Sunday morning.

There was an issue raised in staff this week about contact tracing which the Lutheran synod clarified from the Faith Leaders group that should be done for everyone who comes into the building for more than 10 or 15 minutes. This should include screening. Brent Langenberger of Bread of Life has created a QR scan of a form for this. Stewart and Harvey have agreed to draft a process for how we might deal with this to present to the LSC Council.

**Regina Cluster**

There is a meeting March 4 and I have indicated my availability to work with them on next steps for getting congregations to think about working together.

**Parish Ministry/Outreach**

**Munch Lunch** is suspended during the pandemic. The support we started with Glen Elm school for lunch donations has been suspended when the schools went online. We will re-start it when schools are back in person.

The **Dog Park** is on hold until the City can hold a public meeting.

I have not met yet with Munch Café about the possibility of entering into partnership with them for the Community dinner and will need to look to the next round of applications for a Growth Grant from the UCC.

Alex Pelletier contracted Covid-19 and had to suspend his lunch program. He is better now and may be starting it up again soon.

Linda Fowler and Doug Scheurwater have been looking after coordinating **ICF support** of making sandwiches and cookies/muffins for their lunches. I have not had any volunteers come forward to help with grilling for breakfast or deliveries.

**Pastoral Care**

I have continued making regular calls to those who are living on their own and/or don’t have e-mail/internet. Linda Fowler Continues to take the printed announcements, weekly e-mail and bulletins to five of them each week. This past few months, I provided support to Alma Pockrand and her family when she died of cancer. They had a friend do her funeral. Sophie Sakundiak, a long time member of the church died in February and I did do her funeral at Speers. Lucille Henderson’s brother died as well and I will be doing an online service for them March 14, at 2:30pm. I have been supporting Mammin and Swithin as he recovers from surgery and has treatment for cancer. I have also been in touch with Doreen Hannah and Yvonne Hannah Potter both who have had health issues/surgery.

**Gratitude Team- Stewardship**

The Gratitude Team has developed a plan using minute for Mission time every few months to promote and highlight the outreach ministries. We will invite people with experience of the ministries to share their stories. Carol Hein shared about the South Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy this month and her experience with Lorna King, the Chaplain. Delia Baidoo has agreed to join the committee.

**Faith Formation**

The February Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras **Community Dinner** went very well with 33 attending, 5 of whom were children. Matt Epp was guest musician and was well received. This month will be March 18 with an Irish theme where I will share some of Irish Theologian Peter Rollin’s writings and videos and we will have Piper and Carson musical duo share some of their music and some Irish music. The **Craft/Study group** just continued with White Fragility and it is going very well. **Film and Faith** has continued online and has have moved to watching a movie from CBC Gem which is more accessible as not everyone has Netflix. This month we had a new person join us who will probably attend church. I didn’t get organized this Lent for a family bag but did send material through our weekly e-mails for our members, including families. **Prayer Services** have continued online three times a week. The **Courageous Faith** online speaker sessions continue have had 6 people participating which will wrap up March 9.

**Affirming Ministry**

Queen City for All is coordinating a movement to have gay conversion therapy banned in Regina. Saskatoon just passed a motion a few weeks ago to have it banned there. I have done two interviews about this from an Affirming Ministry perspective. I also am organizing a team from the Regina Affirming Ministries to work on this as it moves through council. We could face some organized opposition from the more conservative churches in the city.

**ICF Relationship**

No new developments in this area since our last meeting.

**Continuing Education & Wider Church**

I had a week of study leave from Jan 26-31. I watched many webinars I had registered for and not participated in live and finished two courses which I registered for following our last meeting, one on Digital Mission and one on Hybrid worship – how to offer worship to both online and in person congregations. Both were very good. I then participated in some sessions of an online conference about being church online as well a few weeks ago. Both this conference and the Hybrid worship course promoted a program called Text in Church and offered 2 months free. We agreed to test this out (Faith Formation and Sarah) and see if it is worth the cost of subscription (~$500/year). It provides us with a phone number for newcomers to text a key word and then automated messages are sent to the person as well as us for follow up and invitations. We can also have people sign up for the weekly e-mail by texting ‘connect’, can register folk for events, and ‘keep people in the loop’. If you want to receive texts about upcoming events and special services and give us permission to send you texts, please text “loop” to 306-517-6797 and make sure that number is in your contacts as Eastside.

**LSC/MAP**

The clergy of LSC are exploring if any services can be shared over Easter. Nancy was going to check with the four clergy of the Immanuel Parish. We are looking to have a meeting with all the staff in April. Nancy Yee, the priest from St. Philip has submitted her resignation for June 30. This is a great loss to the LSC. Donna Lindskog has just decided to join the LSC Council as an Eastside Rep.

**Faith Formation Report to Leadership Team - March 10, 2021**

Russell has attended workshops on Hybrid Worship and Digital Mission

A baptism was requested, however, it has been postponed until safe to hold it in person

The Craft Study group is reading White Fragility

FF has been trying to connect with the youth of Eastside, but has not had any success yet. We will keep working on this.

Film and Faith has been using CBC Gem so more people can join in.

Community dinners have resumed monthly in a virtual manner. There was a virtual Shrove Tuesday supper and service.

We are reaching out to connect more through Facebook live and Text Software. Amanda Benesch is hosting Facebook live right now.

February focused on Black History month and included Agbor Ndomo sharing his faith story and Micah Bournes as a guest preacher.

We have reached out to try to get volunteers to help with on-line service support, but have not been successful with this. We may need to consider looking beyond Eastside to provide this support once we have returned in person.

**Congregational Care Report March 2021**

1. There are no services at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre so there is nothing to report.

2.Grief Book / prayer shawl distribution: The committee continues to follow 9 people who have lost loved ones during the past year.

This past month there have been two new persons who either have been offered or have received the first grief book and prayer shawls.

Two additional people will be offered prayer shawls/grief books this upcoming week.

3. Follow-up monthly calls to people with shared/ known health concerns/ shut-ins :

Approximately 18 clearly identified people receive weekly- monthly support calls as well as innumerable others called regularly by committee members and others in the congregation

4. Prayer chain – 7 people have been added to the prayer chain.

5. Processes for welcoming newcomers is in transition .There is nothing to report for this month.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Fowler

On behalf of the Congregational Care committee:

Barb Rio, Diane Dopko, Delia Baidoo, Elaine Hill, Sheri Nupdal, Russell Mitchell-Walker ( advisor)

**Eastside Leadership Team**

**Chair’s Report**

March 10, 2021

* Conversations with Wesley

I connected with the Board of Wesley, Al Goudie is now the Chair as Dan has stepped down. Al indicted that they are in the process of discernment of their future as Cindy has resigned. Given their work on that process, they did not believe that now was a good time to have further conversations with Eastside.

I provided the support of the Eastside community and the leadership team, and also offered that we would be open to further conversations about how we can work together. I also offered our support in joint services or other means as they manage without a minister. He will take that back to the board.

* Programming reports

A reminder to all committees that they should provide the programming reports for the next leadership team meeting (late April). As part of the programming, we should consider:

* + What is currently working well? What do we need more of?
  + What needs of the community are not being met that we may need to address?
  + What programming may no longer be service the needs of a changing community that we may need to adjust?
  + How will our needs change as we transition back to in person worship?
  + What is the cost of the programming? Do we need to think of other ways to cover those costs?
  + What programming is suffering from virtual– what are the “first priorities” to return to in person? Can that be done safely? What are the programs that should remain virtual?
  + Are there other ways to work with other United Churches or the Living Spirit Centre?
* Return to in person Worship
  + With the promise of loosening of restrictions, we will continue to consider when it might be safe to return to in person worship