**Eastside United Church Leadership Team**

**Minutes of the October 25, 2023 Meeting**

**Attendees:** Janet Bjorndahl (Chair), Russell Mitchell-Walker, Sam Baidoo, Delia Baidoo, Bonny Manz, Cathie Henderson, Teresa Strachan, Amanda Benesh, Jim Fallows, Ron Brandow, Doug Scheurwater, Hazel Arbon

**Regrets:**  Sarah Tkachuk

| **Agenda**  **#** | **Discussion** | **Action** |
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| **1.** | **Call to Order – Jane**  Called to order at 7:05 |  |
| **2.** | **Opening Devotion - Russell** |  |
| **3.** | **Acceptance of the Agenda**  *Doug moved that agenda be accepted, 2nd by Cathie. Carried.* |  |
| **4.** | **Disclosure of any Conflict of Interest**  Standing item to remind us of our responsibility under the United Church’s [Conflict of Interest Policy](https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/conflict-of-interest-policy.pdf#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20this%20policy%20is%20to%20give,in%20the%20best%20interests%20of%20the%20United%20Church.)  ***No conflicts.*** |  |
| **5.** | **Minutes of the May 10, 2023 Leadership Team meeting**  **Minutes of the Sep 13, 2023 Leadership Team meeting**  *Teresa moved that both minutes be accepted, 2nd by Cathie. Carried.* |  |
| **6.** | **Business arising from the Minutes**  **6.1 United Church of Canada Remit 3**  [Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization | The United Church of Canada](https://united-church.ca/news/establishing-autonomous-national-indigenous-organization)  ***See report following the minutes.***  The video was viewed and there was some discussion after the video. The process has actually been in the works since as early as the 1960’s. But, whenever a change like this is made within the UC structure, a remit vote is required.  There is one question to be voted on, as follows. Does the regional council/pastoral charge agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect: a. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council\*; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and b. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union\*\*; and c. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.  ***The Leadership Team voted in favour of the Remit.***  **6.2 Designation of income from Community Dinner**  Doug moved that anonymous cash donations be directed back into the Community Dinner fund while donations from identifiable givers (ones in envelopes) be treated like offering for local church; a receipt for the donation will be issued to the giver. 2nd by Teresa. Carried.  Amanda moved that this be retroactive for any trackable donations made so far in 2023. 2nd by Cathie. Carried.  **6.3 Planning for Russell’s sabbatical**  Russell’s initial plans (subject to change) have been shared with M&P and the LT.  Amanda said Faith Formation has been checking into free resources, with Jim Fallows and others willing to share information and Faith Stories during services. They are still looking for some people to lead some services. A suggestion was made to have a sermon from another church played during our service. As well, that a group be formed to choose hymns for the services. As well, Russell will share some resources with Faith Formation that can be shared with others, as needed.  Most of the other activities have been taken care of (ie. Messy Church). Community Dinners will be put on hiatus for the months of December, January and February.    **6.4 Emergency/Reconciliation Fund**  How to address requests for assistance (e.g., from Regina Native Outreach Ministry)?  **6.5 Policy Development**  Still looking for a volunteer to draft a policy regarding Memorial donations.  Donations have been made in memory of 5 people since first tracked in 2019:  2019: $85  2020: $670 (an obituary suggested donations to Eastside or another organization)  2021: $1,000 (a single donation for someone who died a year earlier)  2022: $145  2023: $0  Total: $1,900  No volunteers so far.  Will need to approve other draft policies at some point. Janet has yet to clarify Records Retention practices with Becca.  **6.6 Regional Rep Check-in**  Agenda placeholder to check if regional rep wishes to continue. | The national church will be advised.  To be discussed at budget meeting  Next check: 2024 |
| **7.** | **New Business**  **7.1 Discernment Retreat (Becca)**  Becca is looking for financial support for travel to attend a discernment retreat in Calgary Nov 17-19. She will pay the registration fee. A subsidy for travel is available, but they encouraged Becca to ask the congregation for support first. Options include making a special appeal (there would be a response), or to see if anyone has travel points they would donate.  NOTE: After the meeting, Becca informed Janet that she decided not to attend the retreat due to it needing more preparation than she had time for.  **7.2 UCC Strategic Plan**  The national church wants to start a number of new communities of faith.  Jordan Cantwell is the Saskatchewan animator, beginning on November 1st, for the UCC vision of generating growth by targeting under-represented (e.g., migrant, young) populations. Do we want to talk to her about how we might be engaged in this conversation (Eastside and/or LSC)? | Janet will approach LT and other Committees/Teams  Re. donations  Janet will follow up with Jordan in mid-November. |
| **8.** | **Reports**  **8.1 Minister’s – Russell**  - Open Books is beginning a new book shortly  - Queries from others on renting our facility (Catholic Inclusive Community?)  - The Small Business Fair did not have a lot of people attending but Russell met a few people from the neighbourhood. including one person who said he and some of his friends may be interested in renting so they can use our piano.  - There are a number of people Russell wants to follow up with from information provided from the Stewardship Campaign. Teresa and Maureen deserve huge gratitude for all the work they did for this.  - The current caseload of COVID is quite high  - Russell met with some houseless helpers and some churches on how they can help people on the streets during the nights, especially with cooler temperatures. Carmichel Outreach may be offering its facility as a warming center, pending further approval and discussion. They would need volunteers so it was suggested that various churches each take one night and provide food, beverages, and possibly volunteers.  - The next INI café is November 17. Russell still looking for someone to take Eastside’s role when he is on sabbatical.  - Eastside attended rallies to be visible as a church supporting those against the pronoun policy for schools.  - Work is being done on picking up discussions with the cluster on shared facilities. ES has been reaching out to specific churches about this; St. James and Westminster. They are trying for a November meeting. Perhaps the Anglicans could be approached to share their experience on how it worked for them, and how it is currently working. If sharing a facility, could share ministers and use their different strengths for various programs. It was suggested that it should be mentioned that it is not “good stewardship” trying to maintain multiple buildings. Broadway has recently surveyed their congregation about their building, etc. but ES has not been advised of the results. The offer has been made to them to come check out our building.  - Janet has spoken to Tracy Murton about steps that need to be taken in order to bring about an amalgamation, shared ministry, or other change.  **8.2 M&P – Cathie**  She met with Becca and Russell recently. Stewart drafted a job description for Becca to review.  Becca has done a spreadsheet to streamline the process for sick leave, vacation, ConEd, etc. on a yearly basis.  Becca’s goal is determining what it means doing and managing the work for both congregations.  Russell leaving for sabbatical soon.  Plans sounded fine to Leadership Team.    **8.3 Region – Ron**  He has lots of experience with the region, being on the executive for many years. He will be vacating that position soon but is willing to continue being the LT’s liaison as still has lots of interest in it. There is a shortage of people on some of the regional committees, which makes it difficult. The good news is the Living Skies Executive currently has a full slate of officers, including a volunteer Treasurer. The few paid staff are spread fairly thin. With pastoral charges closing, it adds to the workload. The Executive meets once a month, plus does additional business between meetings. In the 2024 budget, M&S grants are being reduced.  The 2024 AGM will be held in-person in Saskatoon.  **8.4 Finance – Jim**  No recent updates  **8.5 Living Spirit Centre Committee – Russell**  Partnerships are being looked into, including possibly with the Filipino congregation.  **8.6 Faith Formation – Amanda**  The committee has two goals:   1. Engaging the congregation for feedback after Russell’s sabbatical; 2. Continue looking into opportunities for people to engage with others in the congregation in activities such as the Small Business Fair. One plan so far is a games afternoon on January 27th.   Rainbow Youth will once again be where our Christmas appeal donations will be given.  **8.7 Gratitude team – Teresa**  Teresa thanked the LT for all the help. A few responses have been opened and they will be tracking them as they come in. There were still a few packages that had to be delivered or mailed, and people they had to contact for follow up.  **8.8 Congregational care – Delia**  They would like to have the last word in their name changed from “Committee” to “Team”. There have been personal issues happening for team members so have been supporting each other. They continue to contact the congregation’s members. They currently have a nice variety of people on the team.  **8.9 Chair – Janet**  See the report at the end of the minutes. |  |
| **9.** | **Forward Looking**  Russell and Janet are both reaching out to gather information for the budget/next steps meeting (opportunities within the Cluster, rules and process for making change). | Defer to budget/next steps meeting  Janet to send info. from Tracy to LT. |
| **10.** | **Next Meeting**  **Proposed:**  Budget/next steps meeting: Wed Nov 15 at 7:00 pm   * Reviewing pledges * Jim’s budget estimate * Where do we go from here? |  |
| **11.** | **Closing Prayer - Russell** |  |
| **12.** | **Adjournment**  Amanda moved meeting be adjourned at 9:15 |  |

**Leadership Team Chair’s Report**

Janet Bjorndahl

October 24, 2023

**Regina Cluster**

Russell and I talked about which Regina UCC congregations might be interested in sharing ministry with us. Russell said he would approach their ministers. I plan to go to the next Cluster planning meeting.

I approached Tracy Murton from the Regional office to clarify rules about making changes. Do we need to update our Faith Profile if we want to share ministry? To amalgamate? Can we start it while Russell is on sabbatical? **Updated Oct 25:** The answer to all of these is “yes”. Russell would not be expected to participate because this is the work of the congregation.

I also sought clarification about the rule that we can’t reduce ministry hours within a year of the end of sabbatical – are there exceptions? **Updated Oct 25:** Yes, if mutually agreed upon.

**Stewardship/Budget**

I assisted with the Stewardship Campaign.

Russell and I suggest the following approach to budgeting for 2024 (as sent to the LT by email 19 Oct):

The Leadership Team meets mid-November to:

1. Review the result of the Stewardship Campaign.
2. Review the “status quo” 2024 budget planning document from Jim.
3. Receive latest information on Russell’s conversations with other Regina UCC ministers.
4. Receive latest information on discussions with potential renters/partners.
5. Receive information from Tracy on rules.
6. Decide next steps. Some suggestions:
   1. Initiate the Community of Faith Profile process, necessary to make a change in ministry personnel hours.
   2. Pursue discussions with another congregation(s).
   3. Set a budget for only the first 4-6 months of 2024, with the budget for the remainder of the year to be set when we have a more concrete plan for the future.
   4. Ask a few key donors to give all or the majority of their annual donation in the first few months of 2024, to ensure cash flow. This has been done in the past and I am able and willing to be one of those donors.
7. Assign responsibility to ensure that “next steps“ (including drafting the budget) are taken.

The Leadership Team meets in January to review/confirm the budget (as developed in “next steps”) to be put in front of the congregation for approval.

**Clarifying Bread of Life’s relationship with Becca**

I met with Stewart and Valerie (BofL Chair) to discuss questions and concerns arising from previous communications about the agreement under which Becca works for Bread of Life. It was a good meeting – several things were clarified. I have some things to work on, including formalizing the agreement.