St. George’s of Forest Hill Anglican Church

Kitchener, Ontario

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Vestry

Sunday January 24, 2016

Recorded Attendance: Don Davidson, Mary Ann Millar, Mike Stredwick, Charlotte Cromarty, Wendy Williston,

Anne Taylor, Tim Taylor, Marg Ryrie, Lesley Burland-Prong, Keith Cronin, Adriana Cronin, John Shaw, Mary Shaw, Marc Mennel, Sheila McKee-Protopapas, Les Protopapas, Jim Stirling, Susan Hipperson, Jack Nahrgang,

Katherine MacLean, George Green, Lorena Coleman, John Coleman, Morley King, David Harris,

Betty Ukrainitz, Marcia Condon, Brian McMullen, Ruth-Ann Boos, Pierre Auger, Brother Mark, Jan Melega, Gladys Grant, Murray Gamble, Valerie Cuthbert, Gilda Masters, Ruth Pearce, Marg Wheeler, John Dale,

Kathy Glaser, April Couzens, Alison Olmsted, Bob Berti, Emily Berti, Dulcie Tapp, Becky Heck, Fran Rothenberg, Lynda Hill, Matt Brown, Jim Fox, Cheryl Fox, Terry McCoy, Connie McCoy, Valerie O’Reilly, Brian Ledbury,

Paul Thomas, Janet McCoy, Donna McIntosh, Eva Vassell, Donna Aram, Lynne Skanes-Bannon, Janet Hartry, Catherine Carlson, Nelson Cuthbert, MaryLynn Forrest, Reta Risto, John Ryrie

Additional noted attendance: Wendy Sherlock, Susan Butt

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer – 10:15 a.m. **Fr. Don Davidson**
2. Memorial to deceased members

Janice Hewton

Robert Stirling

Marita Boyd

John Purvis

Heather Coburn (post-meeting addition)

1. Election of Vestry Clerk (John Ryrie, as per the Report of the Nominating Committee for 2016)

**MOTION: (**Lesley Burland-Prong/John Shaw) BIRT nominations be closed. **Carried.**

1. Adoption of Agenda

**MOTION:** (George Green/Matt Brown) BIRT the agenda for the 2016 annual meeting of the Vestry of St. George’s of Forest Hill be adopted as presented. **Carried.**

Note: Subsequent to the meeting, it was recognized that “Leslie Burland Prong” as a Delegate to Synod should have been rendered as “**Lesley** Burland Prong”

1. Reading and Acceptance of Previous Minutes

**MOTION: (**John Ryrie/John Shaw) BIRT the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Vestry held on January 25th, 2015 be accepted as presented. **Carried**

1. Business arising from the minutes.
   1. Diaconal Ministry Update **Fr. Don**
      * + - MaryLynn Forrest has successfully completed her training and program and has been ordained as a Deacon.
   2. Sabbatical Update **Fr. Don**
      * + - The sabbatical was a phenomenal learning experience. More was learnt in a few weeks than in three years of seminary. Other parishes should encourage their own clergy to take advantage of such opportunities.
   3. Roof Update **N. Cuthbert**
      * + - “It’s on!” The initial quote was over $50,000. Because the roofers accidentally and unintentionally put nails through the roof of the chapel (the old structure), the company made up for this mistake by doing some of the roof repairs for free. Consequently, the eventual bill for the reroofing came in at $46,500, significantly below budget. Now that it is done, the new roof should last for a considerable length of time.
2. Election of Officers for 2016
   * + - * There is room for 3 or 4 members on Parish Council, 1 more Delegate to Synod, and 1 more Alternate

**MOTION:** (Terry McCoy/Donna McIntosh) BIRT Connie McCoy be appointed as an alternate to Synod. **Carried.**

**MOTION:** (John Ryrie/Catherine Carlson) BIRT nominations for 2016 be closed. **Carried**

**Election of Officers**

***Rector’s Appointments***

Rector’s Warden MaryAnn Millar

Deputy Rector’s Warden Charlotte Cromarty

***People’s Nominations***

People’s Warden Mike Stredwick

Deputy People’s Warden Wendy Williston

Treasurer Anne Taylor

Parish Council Secretary John Dale

Other Members of Parish Council April Couzens Cheryl Fox Lynn Skanes-Bannon

Nelson Cuthbert Vivian Harris John Shaw

Murray Gamble Reta Risto Valerie Cuthbert

Mary Shaw

Lay Delegates to Synod John Ryrie

Lesley Burland-Prong

Terry McCoy

Matthew Brown

Alternate Delegates to Synod John Coleman

Connie McCoy

Vestry Clerk John Ryrie

Envelope Secretary Nelson Cuthbert

Memorial Garden Trustee Jan Melega

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Rep. MaryAnn Millar

Huron Hunger Fund Rep. Wendy Sherlock

Safe Church Co-ordinator Anne Taylor

1. Reception of Reports contained in the Convening Circular

***Rector’s Charge to Vestry Brother Mark’s Report Deacon’s Report***

***Wardens’ Vestry Message Annual Statistical Report Ascend/Renew***

***Worship Committee Servers’ Guild Altar Guild***

***Readers’ Guild Sidespeople Greeters***

***Intercessors Lay Readers Vergers***

***Bible Study Pastoral Care (5 institutions) Music Director***

***Property & Maintenance Garden Guild Sunday School***

***Youth Group Outreach Committee (20 items) Summer Ice Cream***

***Camp Little Dragon St. John’s Kitchen Memorial Garden***

***Christmas Market Habitat for Humanity Lunch Messy Church***

***Knitting for Central and S. America 38th Kitchener Scout Group Men’s Breakfasts***

***Grocery Gift Cards Envelope Secretary World Day of Prayer***

Miscellaneous notes and comments:

We now have two strong Bible Study groups going.

On Monday nights we hold a Prayer Chain get-together at Brian and Christine Ledbury’s house. It’s an ideal size. Since it cannot readily be expanded, it would be great to establish a second group. Cheryl Fox has offered her house for this purpose, if there is sufficient interest.

Brother Mark thanked everyone for their support of his Ministry.

MaryLynn (Forrest) expressed appreciation for the support of her Deaconate Ministry that focuses on palliative patients and their families, and noted that she is really busy!

MaryAnn (Millar), on behalf of the Wardens, thanked parishioners for all that they do to make St. George’s a welcoming spiritual home.

The Statistical Report included an estimate of Easter Services attendance that was done after the fact by scanning the video recordings made for our video broadcasts – a somewhat novel method!

We have experienced quite a drop in some of the numbers, partly because we have ‘cleaned up’ the records and made them more accurate

ASCEND – Nelson noted that when he reviewed the data two weeks ago, he determined that the church had received 11 more contributions to the campaign than had been anticipated through pledges made during the fall, which increased the amount we are receiving (yahoo!). There are three goals for 2016, as noted in the report. We are particularly interested in finding out what our young people need. Parishioners need to remember that we have completed only the first of a five year campaign.

Altar Guild – This group is always looking for new members. Its finances have been moved into the church’s overall budget.

Intercessors – Claire Prong will be joining as a new youth Intercessor.

Vergers – We only have three right now – we could use more people in this group.

Bible Study – If the two weekly times and opportunities don’t work, parishioners should let Fr. Don know.

Pastoral Care - Brother Mark noted that the Vestry Report now includes a detailed outline of the services that are held by our church ‘behind the scenes’. The seniors who are served really appreciate this work. We are the only church that offers Communion to all who attend (the communicants do not need to be Anglican), so our contribution here is very valuable. We keep the services short to accommodate the limitations of some of the participants. More nursing homes are being built, so we can expect more need in this area. Currently, we have 7 lay-pastoral teams who go out and visit. The various cards we sign in the narthex are exceedingly well received and appreciated by the people who get them.

Choirs – John (Shaw) would love to increase the junior choir from 9 to 12 or 15. We seem to have enough young people in our parish family to do this, but busy family lives and transportation obstacles appear to be getting in the way. Lesley (Burland-Prong) noted that Ted Appleyard as of Christmas finished a remarkable tenure of 50 years in our Senior Choir.

Property – Murray (Gamble) conveyed a big thank you to Nelson for his work in overseeing the restoration of the roof and to John Shaw for heading up the grass-cutting brigade. He also noted that Charlotte Cromarty’s entry onto the Committee has improved the gender diversity by 1000%! More new members would be more than welcome!

Garden Guild – Jan Melega: “We kept it going! We’re going to try a new method of looking after the gardens this summer.”

Sunday School – Susan (Hipperson): We are still looking for some teachers. Kate Durdan would appreciate if another member of our parish could take over as coordinator.

Youth Group – CLAY (this summer in PEI) is a really big deal! Fund-raising has been proceeding very vigorously. 11 from our parish are planning to go – 9 young people and 2 leaders. About $3,000 has been raised so far.

Little Dragon Camp – MaryLynn (Forrest): Every year we have more requests for bursaries, so there is clearly an on-going need to provide this kind of outreach. The costs are going to remain at $150 for 2016, notwithstanding that it is harder each year to break even. The camp may need to use up its stabilization fund this summer. Debra Barclay stood up to enthusiastically convey that her two boys consider the church’s camp to be their ‘favourite camp’; she passed on heart-felt kudos to the crew who put it on.

Memorial Garden – John (Ryrie) noted that, separate from the tabled financial report, the Garden Trustees have brought forward some revisions to the Garden’s by-laws, which were recently considered and passed at Parish Council.

**MOTION:** (John Ryrie/Mary Shaw) BIRT $2,000 be transferred from the Memorial Garden Operating Account to the Memorial Garden Trust Account held by the Diocese. **Carried.**

Knitting – Lilian (Cressman) is keen to find new knitters – there is lots of available wool for those who would like to try contributing to this outreach.

Messy Church – Valerie (Cuthbert) noted that our Messy Church events (which have been quite well attended) fit in with the goals of ASCEND. She would love to see kids or families show up who do not usually go to church.

Scouts – Br. Mark: our Scout troop is the largest youth group in the parish – 26 leaders! We need to extend a big thank you to George Mudryfor all of his leadership.

Men’s Breakfast – on-going, and very successful. Usually 12 or more show up.

Grocery Cards – We are up in sales from last year. Wendy (Sherlock) reminded everyone that the cards are great as gifts as well as for on-going family shopping needs.

World Day of Prayer – was held on March 6, 2015. 49 people attended. $419.30 was raised. This year the event is scheduled for March 4th at Westheights Brethren Church.

Mary’s Place – Janet Hartry noted that we are the No. 1 giver to this organization.

Update on our local Anglican churches – Fr. Don: We are trying to get to know each other to build relationships, so that if any churches need to make the difficult decision to close their parish, the parishioners will have a sense of the other parishes as possible spiritual homes. What typically happens to Anglican churches that close is that the congregations simply disappear. St. Andrew’s on Mill St. may not get through the year. John Ryrie noted that the 13 deanery churches are getting to know each other a bit through the joint-work being done on the Deanery’s Refugee Committee.

Question – Jim Fox: Can we publicize our fundraising initiatives and events amongst all of the churches? (e.g., our up-coming auction)

**MOTION:** (Murray Gamble/Matt Brown) BIRT that the Reports contained in the Convening Circular for Vestry be adopted as presented. **Carried.**

1. Acceptance of the 2014 Financial Statement **A. Taylor**
   * + - * Anne took time to write up a brief narrative to explain our year’s financial history.
         * The treasurer reviewed the financial documents to show how we ended up with a $12,000 surplus, despite a shortfall in anticipated regular parishioner donations. Various factors came into play – a very warm fall (lower utility bills,), unexpected revenue (rent for space for music lessons), lower expenditures (maintenance) and no snowed-out services. Regular donations were behind all year and never did catch up ($8,000 shortfall) – in fact, we took in $1,500 less in actual monies received as regular donations compared to 2014, which is of some concern.
         * We want to continue to build a surplus to cushion our expenditures. A key point: we cannot always rely on good weather, extra rent money, etc.
         * Our retained surplus now stands at slightly over $19,000.
         * John Shaw thanked Anne for the terrific work done to clearly present and explain our year’s financial history – “really well done!”

**MOTION:**  (Anne Taylor/Connie McCoy) BIRTthe Financial Statement for the St. George’s operating account for the year 2015 be accepted as presented. **Carried.**

1. Adoption of the 2016 operating budget **A. Taylor**
   * + - * the 2016 budget – the one tabled is the minimum operating budget to keep us going. Revenue from donations is expected to be up 2% (a bit more than inflation). We need to ask, or remind, parishioners on automatic debit to consider making such an adjustment to their regular contributions. Salaries for church employees employed more than two years will be increased 2%, as recommended by the Diocese.
         * We are budgeting for a very small surplus
         * ASCEND can proceed with its planned expenditures, beyond specified monies taken in, as long as we don’t have to take out a loan

**MOTION:** (Anne Taylor/Matt Brown) BIRTthat the operating budget for St. George’s of Forest Hill for 2016 be adopted as presented. **Carried.**

1. New Business
   1. Deanery Refugee Sponsorship

Father Don, John Ryrie and Wendy Sherlock answered various questions about the status of this committee and the anticipated refugee family, particularly with respect to anticipated family needs, translation services, and social supports. The 13 churches are doing a remarkable job of quickly finding specific items identified by various sub-committees such as housing, furniture, clothing, household items, basic foods to stock the apartment, etc. Five meetings of the Committee have taken place so far to problem solve and plan.

**MOTION:** (Lesley Burland-Prong/Catherine Carlson)BIRT Vestry approve a donation of $2,000 to the Waterloo Deanery Refugee Committee.  **Carried.**

* 1. Police Checks / Safe Churches

Fr. Don: All of our key people at St. George’s need to be reviewed and confirmed through ‘Express Checks,’ which is now the process approved by the Diocese. Regular current and straightforward police checks are no longer acceptable as a substitute or alternative, at least in part because police checks are relatively expensive, sometimes time-consuming to procure, and no longer recognized in the way they used to be by the insurance company that covers our Diocese. If we follow our own church policies, we can keep our insurance costs down. Don or Anne (Taylor) will be contacting parishioners who need to fill out the appropriate forms.

* 1. Questions from the Floor

Jim Fox – Can we publicize or set up a St. George’s Trust Fund into which parishioners can bequest monies from their estates or make donations?

Fr. Don – We are one of the few churches he knows that does not have an endowment fund, arguably at least in part because we are a relatively ‘young’ church.

Paul Thomas thought that maybe we should consider redoing the workshop we offered a while back that outlined how to include our church in anticipated wills.

Connie McCoy – 1) Are there any audio Sunday School programs available that we could use?

2) Should we not be charging more for altar flowers? The cost seems to be what it was 10 or 15 years ago.

3) Can our parishioners on auto-debit be asked to consider increasing their regular donations by the 2% we have anticipated in our budget?

1. Old Business – none was tabled or brought forward
2. Correspondence
   1. Letter of Thanks from the Bishop Bob regarding payment of our Apportionment to the Diocese
      * + - The Bishop went out of his way to note that 2016 marked the second time in St. George’s history that we had actually followed the canons and provided all of our apportionment payments regularly and on time!!
3. Votes of Thanks
   * + - * Fr. Don expressed a wide blanket of thanks for the wide range of parishioners who do an astounding amount of work, both inside and outside the church, and make St. George’s the kind of church that it is.
4. **MOTION:** (Marc Mennel) Motion to Adjourn. 12:20 p.m. **Carried.**