**St George’s of Forest Hill**

**Parish Council Minutes, September 26, 2023**

Attendance:

Fr Stephen Valerie Clarke Deb Barclay Adriana Cronin

Nelson Cuthbert Ann-Marie Shaw Dulcie Tapp Catherine Carlson

Morley King John Dale Ericka Babb John Shaw

Guest: Lynda Hill

Absent: John Shaw, Cindy Kellett, Tim Goodison, MaryLynn Forrest, Murray Gamble, Susan Hipperson

1. Stephen opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. Acceptance of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda as amended:

Lynda Hill will speak about the Memorial Garden

moved: Catherine Carlson seconded: Nelson Cuthbert Carried

1. Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Motion to approve minutes from August 29, 2023 as amended:

moved: Dulcie Tapp seconded: Ann-Marie Shaw Carried

Memorial Garden Proposal: Lynda Hill was at the meeting to update council about the memorial garden finances. The Memorial Garden has its own bank account. It will cost $17000 to install another pillar. Lynda is waiting to order it until permission is granted from council and the congregation. The Memorial Garden committee suggested raising the price from $600 to $900 and install the pillar separate from the fees. Council would like to increase the fees to $1325 to cover the cost of the pillar as well as interment. There is room for 5 pillars eventually. This is the 3rd. Lynda has arranged for Superior Monuments to see the site to decide where to put the new pillar. Some clearing of flora will be needed.

See Memorial Garden Preamble appendix at end of Minutes

Motion: BIRT the price for interment in St. George’s Memorial Garden increase from $600 to $1,325 effective immediately to reflect both increased costs over the last ten years as well as the purchase and installation of a third Memorial Pillar for future inscriptions.

Motion: BIRT council will recommend at Vestry in January 2024 that the Memorial Garden Committee purchase and install a Memorial Pillar at a cost of $17000; $10000 of which will come from the Memorial Garden account and $7000 to be fundraised by the congregation.

moved: Nelson Cuthbert seconded: John Shaw Carried

A Deanery Youth event is planned for November 4 and 5 at Trinity Cambridge. Adriana reported that registration forms and a poster will be ready to present to Deanery Council on October 4. The Theme is “Forged by Fire” They are exploring outreach projects for the event.

1. Financial Report: The financial report was sent to council ahead of the meeting. As of August we are $8000 behind the budget. Catherine reported that WRDSB asked to rent some the parking lot again this year. Nelson asked why the cost of copying was low for August. We copy fewer bulletins and use the copier less during the summer. We are 14 months into a 36 month contract with Bell’s lower priced contract. Choir Gowns will be purchased this fall at a cost of $4410 for 21 gowns. We have $3500 allocated already and are asking the congregation to fund the remaining $910. $125 has been given toward that so far. The question was raised as to why the August givings were so low. Summer givings are traditionally down. $1500 was in the safe that got deposited in September. Are the givings down compared to August 2023? Are less people giving or are people giving less? Valerie did some digging and rough numbers are as follows: August 2022 $6268 and $10088 from auto debit with 277 donors; August 2023 $5620 and $9567 from auto debit with 254 donors.

Motion to approve report as presented:

moved: Nelson Cuthbert seconded: John Dale Carried

1. Rector’s Report:
   1. The September 17 BBQ was well attended. Thank you to all who helped and participated.
   2. The next Deanery Council meeting is October 4 at St George's of Forest Hill. All are welcome.
   3. Deanery Messy Church will be held on October 14 at St George's of Forest Hill and at Trinity Cambridge. Planning is ongoing and organized. Ericka Babb and Dulcie Tapp offered to help at St George’s.
   4. Pastoral Care visits are ongoing. Canon Stephen celebrates a service monthly at Westmount LTC and Forest Heights LTC with an average attendance of 25-30.
   5. Thanksgiving services will be at 8:15 and 10:00. The worship Committee will meet soon to discuss Advent and Christmas.

Motion to approve this report as presented:

move: Ann-Marie Shaw seconded: Morley King Carried

1. Wardens’ Report:
   1. Catherine told council that the Dragon Flyer has been distributed. Save the Date postcards are ready for distribution to anyone entering the church. Facebook numbers are good. The Communications committee is working hard to present advertising. Nelson thanked Catherine for her work on the Dragon Flyer. Messy Church was advertised in the Kitchener Citizen. The Photo Directory photos will be taken Nov 7-11. Contact Mary Ann Millar to book an appointment.
   2. Ann-Marie told us there will be a Turkey Dinner on Friday October 6 with seatings at 5:30 and 6:30. Tickets will be $25 and $10 for children. We have ordered 62 meals with 44 tickets sold and 8 from Outreach plus 10 for last minutes sales.

Purdy’s Chocolate will be a Christmas fundraiser. Posters are in the Narthex. A notice will go in the bulletin.

* 1. There is an Evangelism event on November 4 from 9am to 11:30. Coffee and treats will be served. This is a chance to learn what evangelism and prayer means to us at St George’s.

1. Committee Reports
   1. Building and Property: A report was handed out. Murray will prepare a motion to take to Vestry 2024 to proceed with consulting, design, preparation and pricing for property improvements.
   2. Nelson reported average numbers for June 57.3, July 56, August 58, September 54. The average number of people signing into Livestream is 60.6 for 2023. Tim has decided to join the Livestream team so Nelson, John and Tim will rotate duties.
   3. Facebook – no report
   4. Debra gave an overview of the activities of the Outreach Committee. Innisfree collection in June, St John’s Holiday from Hunger saw $705 distributed, Ice cream was served at St John’s over 10 Fridays with great appreciation, the Turkey dinner is coming up and Outreach is contributing $200 toward 8 dinners, Bagel Sunday will now accept a free will offering instead of a set charge and Outreach will cover any shortfall. A new initiative will be to support St Andrews Memorial church cupboard by collecting non-perishables one time per month. Upcoming events: Community Clothes Closet October 21, volunteers are needed for set up; St John’s ground beef collection starts October 15; Share the Warmth will run October to December where we collect gently used outerwear; the Angel Tree and Bells of Christmas will be in December with the Angel Tree deadline of December 11 and Bells of Christmas deadline of December 17; A St John’s Christmas Fundraiser will happen in December, more details to follow; we will have periodic collections of baby items for Grand River Hospital’s pediatrics department. The next Outreach Committee meeting is November 9 via zoom.
   5. The Social committee will make bagel Sunday a free will offering instead of a set charge. There is a Potluck Halloween event on October 28, 4-8pm. The next meeting is October 1. They are always looking for new members.
2. The announcements had been moved to the beginning of the service and then the Livestream congregation has been missing them. Could we put slides at the end of the Livestream service? Should announcements be done at the end of the service again? Only highlights will be given and the rest is in the bulletin.

Motion: Start announcements at 10am until 10:07 for key announcements so they will be on Livestream.

moved: Dulcie Tapp seconded: Catherine Carlson Carried

1. Next Parish Council meeting October 24 2023 7:30 pm
2. Closing Prayer and adjournment at 9:45pm

Memorial Garden Preamble:

* The cost per interment has been $600 for the past 10 years and is not reflective of the current and significantly higher costs for etching of new names on the existing Memorial Monuments.
* We have two existing Memorial Monuments and room for another three although significant excavation will be needed to open up the needed space to install same.
* There are four vertical panels per Memorial Monument with about 10 names possible per panel.  All panels but one have been filled on the two existing Monuments thus far and some of the spots on the remaining panel have been purchased already and are awaiting future engraving.
* Parish Council feels that the cost for internments should be borne by those families wanting such services just like families of deceased persons bear the cost of plots and monuments in existing cemeteries which are considerably higher than our costs.
* A third Memorial Monument will be required soon as our two existing Memorial Monuments are almost full.  The approximate cost for a third Monument matching the two existing ones is $17,000.  Given that 4 panels x 10 names per panel = 40 names can be engraved on each Monument, then Parish Council feels that that cost $17,000 / 40 = $425 should be borne per family wanting such services for their loved one who has passed.
* As a result of the above statements, the old pricing of $600 should now be $900 + $425 = $1,325 per deceased person.  Otherwise, the congregation will bear part of the cost for each burial as is happening currently.
* Since this new monument is required sooner than later and given that the Memorial Garden Committee is willing to advance $10,000 through existing Memorial Garden accounts towards the $17,000 purchase, Parish Council will recommend for consideration at Vestry, 2024, that a new Memorial Pillar be purchased and installed in Spring, 2024 with $10,000 coming from the Memorial Garden Committee Accounts and the remaining $7,000 raised through fundraising.
* The hope is that over the next several years, the $17,000 in direct and immediate funding at Vestry, 2024 can be recouped through the increased pricing per burial ($425 of the $1,325 new price).  The new pricing will ensure that the Memorial Garden expenses are self-sustaining.

Nelson Cuthbert

Building and Property Report to PC – Sept 2023

* At our last PC Mtg, we discussed the accessibility upgrades in some detail. Those upgrades are as follows:
  + 1. Making the front and back doors accessible ($25,000);
  + 2. Repair back outside stairs ($25,000);
  + 3. Driveway repair ($25,000);
  + 4. Front garden curb renewal ($4,500).
  + Murray will prepare a report for the entire project for Vestry in 2023.
  + A motion was passed to proceed with consulting, design, preparation and pricing primarily for item # 1 above, at a cost of $3,200. Nelson will meet the consultants here on site next week to proceed.
* The old and heavy A/C units in the Office have been replaced with new portable floor models which are easy to manoeuvre and connect/disconnect to the outside for venting purposes. One of the old ones has been cleaned up and is still functional. It is available in the Narthex and is free!
* The outside lighting timers have been adjusted for the fall/winter.
* The main heating unit for the original church has been repaired and has been turned on for the fall/winter season. It required about $2,000 worth of repairs a couple of months ago to replace corroded internal parts.
* The side strip of soil was roto-tilled in preparation for “the planting of the hostas”.
* Our “new” John Deere lawn mower is four years old now and the manufacturer’s warranty is ending. We have had regular annual maintenance through the dealership over the last four years and are looking forward to good service from it in the future!
* The bottom third of the doors to the garden shed at the rear of the property are corroding badly and will be updated. The rest of the garden shed is still in good condition.
* Please encourage our parishioners to close the steel “fire” doors within the building especially when exiting the building for the last time in the day or the evening after a meeting or similar.
* Please also encourage our parishioners not to use a rock to prop open the doors to the outside as that weakens the door itself over time. It also causes the door locks to be mis-aligned with the frame and produces a situation where the door does not shut and lock properly over time as well.
* All other regular maintenance is occurring as needed.