



**First-St. Andrew's United Church
COUNCIL MEETING
January 21, 2025
7:00 pm
Zoom Video Conference**

Present: Linda Badke, Barb Dalrymple, Steve Elson, Glenna Hall, Kerry Hill, The Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence, Merran Neville, Barb Ridgewell, David Wardlaw, Allyson Watson, Katherine Wonfor, Laura Wood

Regrets: Paul Cooper, George Jolink, Laurel Kenney, Jo Ann Silcox, Jackie Williams

Guest Observer: Kathryn Skelly

The regular meeting of Council was called to order at 7:00 pm by David Wardlaw, Chair. A quorum was present.

1.0 Welcome: David Wardlaw welcomed members of Council to the January meeting. David reminded Council that while we were attending the meeting from our warm homes, many in our society are suffering the cruelty of living outdoors.

2.0 Invocation: Pastor Joshua opened the meeting with prayer.

3.0 Acknowledgement of the traditional territory on which we are meeting and reaffirmation of commitment to implementing decolonizing practices, reconciliation, and collaboration with indigenous peoples-- Pastor Joshua

4.0 Review and Approval of Agenda

An item was requested to be added to the circulated Agenda:
12E Session Based on Case Study of the Future of FSA

MOTION: That the Council Meeting Agenda of Tuesday, January 21, 2025 be approved with the above addition.

MOVED: By Linda Badke, seconded by Allyson Watson. MOTION CARRIED.

5.0 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

MOTION: That the Council Meeting Minutes of November 19, 2024 be approved.

MOVED: By Barb Ridgewell, seconded by Merran Neville. MOTION CARRIED.

7.0 Correspondence and FSA in the Community

Pastor Joshua informed Council that a letter was received from Ark Aid thanking FSA for our continued support.

Bridges of Canada, an organization dedicated to providing inclusive, multifaith spiritual mentorship and chaplaincy services to individuals who are incarcerated, contacted Pastor Joshua. A representative from Bridges of Canada would like to meet to discuss how FSA can partner with Bridges to support people transitioning back into society.

David Wardlaw reported that he attended a screening of Alterations. The film tells the story of a single mom who makes unlikely allies and turns to vigilantism when she doesn't get the help she needs to find her missing daughter. The FSA Chapel and exterior shots of the church are featured in the film.

Merran Neville told Council that she met a woman from Belize who attended a service at FSA. The woman learned about FSA from the website and was thankful for the warm welcome.

8.0 Staff Report – Joshua Lawrence

A staff report prepared by Pastor Joshua was circulated.

Council members were reminded that the church facility is well-used and this leads to scheduling challenges. Please book rooms in advance with Kathryn Skelly.

The Rev. Anne-Louise (Annie) Jannaway and Pastor Joshua are planning a workshop regarding MAID (medical assistance in dying). It will be an open event with members from other churches invited to attend. They are also considering holding grief support groups.

It was suggested that the Pratigya Nepali Church that worships at FSA Sunday afternoons be asked if they would like to be included on the outdoor sign and on the FSA website.

9.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

A Zoom session on church governance models facilitated by John Neff, Minister Congregational Support, Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council and Lynne Allin, Minister Congregational Support, Antler River Watershed Regional Council will be held February 18 at 7 pm.

10.0 New Items for Decision Making by Council

10A Budget 2025 –Laura Wood

A draft 2025 operating budget was circulated.

2024 results:

- The 2024 budget is reported to break even at December 31.
- The balanced budget is due to cost savings from a staff vacancy (Facilities Manager) and rental income being above budget.
- Property deferred some projects in 2024.

2025 budget:

- A 5% decrease in revenue is budgeted for in 2025 (there was a 7% decrease from 2023 to 2024).
- Rentals are at capacity and only a slight increase is budgeted for in 2025.
- Salary expense is budgeted to increase 5% over 2024.
- Deferred maintenance projects are included in the Property budget.

Revenue of \$493,500 is projected with total expenses of \$661,204. Trust fund support will be required to balance the budget.

11.0 Reports and Topics for Discussion by Council

11A The Five Strategic Priorities on the future of FSA adopted by Council – Steve Elson

A memo was circulated to Council providing an update on the Five Strategic Priorities on the future of FSA.

The Vulnerable Congregations Assessment Tool was introduced to the congregation at a Town Hall held on January 5.

An on-line survey regarding volunteer involvement has been launched.

A focused look at the HVAC system is required.

11B Preliminary discussion on a possible requirement of police background checks for volunteers interacting directly with vulnerable persons – Kerry Hill

Kerry Hill reported that the FSA Employee Handbook states that police background checks (Vulnerable Sector Check) are required for all staff.

In the past, the Faith Formation Committee has asked volunteers who work with children to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check.

Who should complete Vulnerable Sector Checks and who will undertake the administrative task to ensure checks occur and are up to date was discussed by Council.

11C Interim Council Leadership for 2025 in absence of chair-elect – David Wardlaw, Steve Elson

David Wardlaw, Chair and Steve Elson, Past Chair are stepping down at June 30, 2025. David will become Past Chair.

There is an opportunity for a serious look at governance structures which may better meet the needs of FSA.

- Can the responsibilities of Chair be taken on by different people?
- Can FSA function with a more streamlined organization?
- Could a trial governance structure be in place by fall 2025?

A governance workshop will be held on February 18.

Council thanked David and Steve for extending their terms.

12.0 Reports and Topics for the Information of Council

12A Nominations Report for 2025 – Steve Elson

A list of nominees for leadership and committee membership positions in 2025 was circulated.

At the Annual Congregational Meeting nominations from the floor will be solicited before the report is approved.

12B Multipoint plan for creating a sustainable operating budget – David Wardlaw

An update on the multipoint plan was circulated. Progress to date on each point in the plan is included.

The plan will be posted to the FSA website.

12C Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada – Linda Badke, Joshua Lawrence

Information on the United Church of Canada 100th Anniversary Legacy Campaign was received. Commitments to make a legacy gift are being solicited to ensure the work of the UCC continues for the next 100 years.

12D Afghan Refugee Project – Linda Badke

Linda Badke reported that the parents are still awaiting visas. The Committee is working to get support in place for the daughter.

12E Possible Session Based on Case Study of the Future of FSA – Steve Elson

In May 2024, a case study “Mission Survival: choosing a path forward for First-St. Andrew’s United Church” was circulated to Council. The case study was developed by Jeanette Eberhard for Western University business students.

Steve Elson is working with Jeanette Eberhard to plan a session to be held on a Saturday morning to discuss the study. If you are interested in attending, please let Steve know.

The January 21, 2025 Meeting of Council was adjourned at 8:56 pm.

David Wardlaw, Chair

Katherine Wonfor, Secretary