

**DIOCESE OF ONTARIO
SYNOD COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023 @ 6 PM
St. Mark's Church, Barriefield
In person and via Teams**

Present: Bishop William Cliff, Alex Pierson, David Selzer, Douglas Michael, Noel Henry Sandra Hounsell-Drover, Richard Hetke, Robert Porter, Susan Withers, Tony Ashworth, Susan Orgill, Cathy Seymour, Jeff O'Hare, Rebecca Michael, Wayne Varley, Barb Gilbert, Elizabeth Matthews, Aveleigh Kyle (at 7 pm)
Jane Kirkpatrick, Synod Lay Secretary

Regrets: Angela Kelman, Brad Beale, Margaret Johnson-Jones Synod Clerical Secretary), Mary Haigh, Anne Striker

Opening Devotion: Sandra Hounsell-Drover
After giving a brief history of the Corrymeela Community, she led with a daily prayer from the Community in Ireland.

Agenda Review and Bishop's Update: Bishop/Chair
The Bishop thanked everyone for the wonderful service of his installation. He has been in parishes every Sunday since he started. He's been attending Clericus meetings, amongst many outings.

Approval of the Minutes of Sept 19, 2023:

MOTION: moved and seconded by Sue Orgill and Doug Michael that the minutes of Sept 19, 2023 be approved as amended (correction to spelling of Sue Orgill's name). CARRIED

MOTION: moved and seconded by Tony Ashworth and Doug Michael that the minutes of the Executive Board dated November 10, 2023 be accepted as presented. CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes: None

2024 Budget Review: Alex Pierson
The budget documents are in the Share folder. In summary, income is down by 1%, expenses up by 6%. The DFO reviewed the major variances to date. He explained that the budget is created through a financial lens rather than a missional lens. The goal is to create a responsible budget to forward the work of the diocese. He reviewed the efficiencies and cost cutting from 2010 to 2023. Our current deficit is \$250,000. He then presented the building blocks for the 2024 budget. There are significant reductions in expenses. New revenue streams are needed, and the Bishop committed to development of those.

Synod did not command a balanced budget, we have created one that is humane, and saves jobs.

MOTION: moved and seconded by Alex Pierson and David Selzer that the 2024 budget be approved as presented. CARRIED

MOTION: moved and seconded by Tony Ashworth and Richard Hetke that Synod Council approves the 2024 Stipend and Salary grids (3.3% increase for COLA). CARRIED

MOTION: moved and seconded by Noel Henry and Tony Ashworth that Synod Council approves the 2024 Housing Allowance Guidelines (5.7%) (the baseline will now be \$29,995 per annum, up from \$28,378). CARRIED

MOTION: moved and seconded by Doug Michael and Tony Ashworth that Synod Council approves the 2024 Mileage Reimbursement Rate be moved to \$0.68 for the first 5K and \$0.62 thereafter. CARRIED

MOTION: moved and seconded by Robert Porter and Tony Ashworth that \$50,000 be set aside and authorized for Reach and Stretch grants in 2024 (Reach at up to \$5k and Stretch up to \$20k per request). These funds to be provided from the income in the Ministry Allocation Fund. CARRIED

Covid 19 Pandemic Status:

David Selzer

Covid cases are increasing, more and more clerics coming down with it. There are currently no guidelines issued by the Diocese. Everyone is urged to get the vaccines for Covid, influenza and RVS.

Property Update:

Alex Pierson

The Bishop has received a delegation from St. Paul's Sydenham about selling their rectory. They are exploring various avenues and doing due diligence. We can expect a delegation to come before Synod Council in the future.

We continue in negotiations with our carriers to try to keep the increases to our insurance coverage down in 2024. Keep to a single digit is the goal.

There are a couple of outstanding legal issues, one a discovery hearing in October, and the other a proposed settlement in Prince Edward County land issue.

Ministry and Program Update:

Wayne Varley

A review of Reach and Stretch grants will come to the January meeting.

DOORS: AD Varley has signed a renewal of the partnership agreement.

AD Varley is meeting weekly with Rev. Ryan Deyo as his mentor.

AD Varley recommends the practice of inviting parishes to come to Council and report on their ministry. He has asked Mark Hauser to invite stories for the weekly newsletter.

St. Paul Administrator Report:

David Selzer

MOTION: moved and seconded by Tony Ashworth and Aveleigh Kyle, that in consideration of the work done and its ongoing ministry, St. Paul's Church, Kingston, upon the advice of the Executive Board, be removed from Administration oversight effective December 31, 2023. CARRIED

Consent Agenda: Nothing to come forward.

Other Business: Nothing brought forward.

Next Meeting: January 23, 2024 @ 6 pm

Adjournment on motion of Aveleigh Kyle at 8:20 pm

The meeting closed with the Grace.

Rt. Rev. William G Cliff, Chair

Jane E. Kirkpatrick, Lay Secretary