
Fairlawn Avenue United Church

Congregational Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: May 25, 2014

Meeting location: Sanctuary, Fairlawn Avenue United Church

1) Call to Order + Opening Prayer

Derek Wishart, Chair of Executive Council, called the meeting to order immediately following worship and lead an opening prayer.

2) Motion to appoint meeting chair and secretary and to adopt the agenda

Jim Pollock moved, seconded by Rosemary Pryde, that Derek Wishart be appointed meeting chair, Michelle Sparrow be appointed meeting secretary and to adopt the proposed agenda.

The motion was put to a vote and CARRIED.

3) Minister's remarks

Christopher White was unable to attend but sent a prepared statement which was read by Esther Ewing:

Dear Friends,

First of all thank you so much for all your cards and emails, they are deeply appreciated and I am much better and looking forward to being back with you next Sunday.

Today you are being asked to vote on the interim report of the Fairlawn Call. Over my ministry I have been involved in a number of congregational renewal projects, the ones that were most successful were not simply supported by the congregation, but were rooted in their identity, in who they were as a church. I believe that the Fairlawn Call is deeply rooted in who we are as a congregation; it reflects the work that we have been doing not only over this past year, but in the years since I came to Fairlawn. From my personal perspective the Fairlawn Call is the single most significant piece of work I have been a part of in my whole ministry and that includes when I was part of the team that built a new church building. Our project is of great significance, as it essentially reengineers and refocuses how we function as a church.

You have heard me speak on a number of occasions of the many challenges facing Fairlawn and the whole United Church of Canada. I truly believe that this project is an important part of the answer to those challenges and I hope that you can support this not only in spirit, but in how we live together as a congregation.

Respectfully,

Rev. Christopher White

Fairlawn Avenue United Church

4) Chair's remarks

Derek provided copies of the Interim Report of The Fairlawn Call Team and made a brief introductory statement about how we got here, where we are going and the need for a dialogue of love:

How we got here

You have received, the Interim Report of The Fairlawn Call Team which includes a description of how we got here. The main steps were

Gathering Input → we researched what other churches are doing and got your input culminating in our congregational meeting of November 17th.

Discerning our call → we developed the draft statement of the Fairlawn Call and discussed it during our congregational meeting on March 23rd.

After that meeting the team took your input and developed this short statement of our call.

Where are we going?

The Fairlawn Call will replace Fairlawn's current mission statement and will be used as the basis for all planning, strategies and programs at the church.

Everything we do should answer these questions:

- 1. Does this fit Fairlawn's purposes?*
- 2. Will it effectively get us towards the desired future?*
- 3. Are we acting each and every day in alignment with our core beliefs?*

Today we are here to adopt The Fairlawn Call as our new mission.

Dialogue of love

How many of you can finish this sentence "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will..."

You might have heard this first from someone who hoped to provide you with protection from schoolyard taunts. But it's a lie.

Words can inspire and inform; they can comfort and console; and they can, most certainly, hurt. In order for our journey of revitalization to be successful we need to be prepared to hear honest, often divergent opinions. We also need to challenge ourselves to share our personal perspective in a way that demonstrates care and respect for every other member of the community.

Part of the Fairlawn Call is the statement that we are connected to God and to each another by love. I ask all those who wish to speak, to speak with love and for those who listen, to listen with love too.

Building true community is hard, messy work. Let's ensure our work is a true labour of love.

Fairlawn Avenue United Church

5) Motion to adopt the Fairlawn Call

Morrey Ewing moved, seconded by Doug Knights, that Fairlawn Avenue United Church adopt as its mission The Fairlawn Call:

Desired Future

Fairlawn is a vibrant, growing and welcoming church community

Core Belief

We are not alone. We are connected to God and to each other by love.

Purposes

Explore Spirituality: *We provide a safe place for everyone to explore spirituality, wherever they are on their journey*

Experience Belonging: *We welcome everyone and help each other experience belonging*

Embrace Action: *We develop everyone's gifts and embrace action to make a difference in the world*

There was a discussion

- Tom Cullen asked for clarification. He wanted to know which part of the handout we were voting on.
- John Cowan suggested that we find a way to be clear that we are a Christian community
- June said that incorporating the words Christian community into our purposes could be exclusionary to some.

The motion was put to a vote and CARRIED.

6) Closing Prayer

Derek lead a closing prayer and terminated the meeting.

Signatures

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Derek Wishart

Secretary: _____ Date: _____

Michelle Sparrow