

**Minutes of the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**Trinity United Church in person and online**  
**Sunday, March 19, 2023**

**Attendance:** Mikayla-Aimee, Diane Best, Vicki Bellan, Giceline Beaudet, Delores Best, Diane Best, John Boone, Irma Brathwaite, Jennifer Bridgman, John Bridgman, John Brosseau, Julia Budd, Sheri Cameron, Sheila Cannon, Jenn Carroll, Shirley Cartmill, Judy Ciciola, Stacey Ciciola, Carol Cunningham, Norman Doré, Eric Garçeau, Sarah Garçeau, David Garland, Garry Garland, Sabz Heffernan, Veronica Heffernan, Patrice Laporte, Dolton Lucas, Philip Massarelli, Gail Pallente, Claudette Petrauskas, Heather Purcell, Warren Purcell, Murray Rainier, Lala Razanaharinjara, Michelle Richard, Ivylin Scott, Natalya Scott-Sandy, Rev. Read Sherman, Rosemary Snelgrove, Gary Tompkins, Rev. Stéphane Vermette, Rosemary Warren, Kim Wildenmann

**1. Welcome**

Meeting Chair Rosemary Warren welcomed everyone in person and online to a continuation of the March 12 meeting. The meeting was reconstituted at 12:17 p.m. in the sanctuary. Continuing from March 12, adherents may vote. Gary Tompkins and Rev. Read Sherman confirmed our quorum of full members for this meeting. The purpose of today's meeting was to review the 2022 Financials and vote on the 2023 proposed budget. Questions about other topics should be kept to our next follow-up meeting on Sunday, March 26.

**2. Opening Prayer**

The Rev. Read Sherman offered a prayer to open the meeting and reviewed former Moderator the Rt. Rev. Marion Pardy's guidelines around Holy Manners. Rev. Read asked that we all take great care with and for each other in the ways we speak and share together.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION Moved by David Garland, and seconded by Eric Garceau to approve the agenda as submitted. CARRIED**

**4. Financial Report**

Director of Financial Affairs Philip Massarelli reported that at the March 12 meeting we had approved the 2023 Reserve Fund budget in order to take care of needed exterior brick work. Today we would be looking at the 2022 Financial Statements and the 2023 Congregational Operational budget. Trinity Council had since taken the opportunity on March 15 to review the numbers and had made some changes to the previously distributed handouts, which Philip outlined as follows:

On (handwritten) page 3 titled Congregational Supported Fund, line item 40110 PAR Offering – Local via PAR, in 2023 Budget column, instead of \$27,000 it has been changed to read \$24,500. (This, a more realistic number according to our Envelope Secretary Shirley Cartmill). Because of this change, the number for total revenue on the next page now reads \$82,320 instead of \$84,820.

On (handwritten) page 6, 2023 Expense Budget line item 53050 Total Salaries the original number \$38,600 had been changed to read \$39,904. This number covered salary and levies for work involving music, cleaning and office administration.

On (handwritten) page 6, bottom of 2023 Budget column, Net Income line changed from -\$91,650 to -97,704.

Rosemary thanked Philip for walking us through the changes. She had only received one written comment since Sunday responding to the proposed budget. The commenter was alarmed by the size of the operational deficit, but saw little possibility that the numbers could be changed significantly enough to make a difference. They expressed a view that the rents received from congregations renting space were keeping us afloat financially. They thought we had always put off making hard decisions, but hoped this meeting would go well.

Philip responded that in fact the three congregations that rent space from us don't bring in that significant a portion of revenue. During COVID, we even had given them a break on rents as they (and we) were not using the premises!

The floor was opened for other comments or questions.

Carol Cunningham commented that Trinity's low rents to the congregations renting space from us was doing a lot of mission outreach by financially subsidizing their operations. But given a near \$100,000 projected deficit, she strongly urged we ask them to pitch in more to help us because these kinds of deficits were not sustainable nor responsible.

Rev. Read commented that in his 9 years as minister, every year had necessitated passing a deficit budget. But as the number had begun to rise, he agreed it had become alarming. Council at their meeting on March 15 had agreed such deficits were not sustainable. In fact, it was Rev. Stéphane Vermette who said "the status quo isn't working." Given this, Rev. Read saw voting for this budget as a both/and. Both we needed to keep doing what we do as Trinity, and we need to look for a good mechanism to engage in the serious but hope-full discussion about our sustainability. He expressed the hope that by next year's Annual Meeting we would have begun that discussion.

Mikayla-Aimee commented that she would support the proposed budget, realizing that the numbers were what they were. She hoped over the next year she could help engage the congregation to do new things, create new programs, look for loans and grants. She hoped we could increase rentals and activity in the building to help turn things around.

Eric Garçeau asked what would happen if the budget wasn't approved. Philip responded that we'd still have to cover our bills. To not pass the budget would require "going back to the drawing board" and starting again. Most of our expenses are fixed – especially salaries. Unless we looked at laying off staff, we'd have to look at raising revenue to address the deficit. The status quo isn't working.

Rosemary Snelgrove suggested looking into whether local businesses (grocery or pharmacy chains) offer a group loyalty card whereby a percentage of purchases made by participating church members would go back to the church. This brought in quite a revenue stream for her former congregation in St. Catherines, ON. In addition, raising rentals and therefore rental income had made a big difference as well.

Kim Wildenmann suggested approving this budget but also to use it as a challenge to get past the COVID years and get back to holding fundraisers.

Philip responded that he was aware of a company in Montreal offering a type of credit card that offers a percentage of sales back. He would pass the information on to Fund Development Ministry lead Diane Best. He thought it could be a worthwhile idea to pursue even though our congregation wasn't large.

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**MOTION Moved by Mikayla-Aimee, and seconded by Diane Best, to approve the 2023 Budget as presented. CARRIED**

Rosemary thanked Philip for all the work required to bring us this budget. She asked everyone to plan to attend the final continuation of the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting set to reconvene on Sunday, March 26, 2023, 1:30 p.m. It would begin with a special meeting called to amend the Trinity Handbook. There may also be a need to discuss a Trustee resignation. Please come and be part of the quorum!

Rev. Read offered a prayer of thanks for a productive meeting.

**MOTION Moved by Jennifer Bridgman, seconded by David Garland, to adjourn. CARRIED**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Secretary of the Congregation Diane Best,

Read Sherman