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**Presbytery of Essex-Kent**  
**The Presbyterian Church in Canada**  
**Regular Meeting – Tuesday, April 18, 2023**  
**Valetta Presbyterian Church, Merlin, Ontario**

**MINUTES**

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**The Presbytery of Essex-Kent was called to meet in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 within Valetta Presbyterian Church, Merlin, Ontario**

**Dinner was served at 5:30pm, hosted by the Church Help Society of Valetta.**

**Worship was conducted by the Interim Moderator Rev. Shirley Murdock who shared some thoughts from Rev. Jean Morris, former Moderator of General Assembly, based on. John 21: 1-17 Children, you have no fish, have you?**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal called the meeting to Order at 6:40pm.

**CONSTITUTION**

The Moderator lead the Court in prayer and Constituted the Court able and willing to deal with any matter that properly comes before it.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present in the Court were –

Revs. Mike Maroney, Andrew Cornell, Lisa Aide, Shirley Murdock (clerk), Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal (Moderator) Chuck Congram (Treasurer) and Tim Reddish.

Also in attendance was Lead Minister for LSA Brian McGuffin, WMS Representative Carolyn Reid, Convenor of Congregational Support Team Andrew Templer as well as Bob MacVicar and Rev. Nancy Carley and Student Sarah Stockford

Representative Elders present were –

Barb Sargent, Mark Labadie Jayne Broughton, Alison Brown, Jane Lung, Sandra Smith, Bryan Stirling, and Kathy Parks.

Alternate Elders present were –

Kathy Dupuis, Robert Ivison and Audrey Landon.

**REGRETS** were received from elders Wendy Streptak and Bonnie Pittock

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**GOOD NEWS MOMENTS and PRAYER REQUESTS**

**Carolyn Reid** shared a picture of milk bag sleep mat she made with the help of some children. The mat used 759 bags. She will gladly receive donations of bags.

**Rev. Lisa Aide** introduced Audrey Landon as the possible new Representative Elder for Paulin. She also reported that twelve new members placed their membership in Paulin Memorial on Palm Sunday.

Rev. Andy Cornell reported that Mt. Zion held a Good Friday Service, a Sunrise Service and Breakfast and Easter Sunday worship that were all well attended.

**Jane lung** reported that Knox, Wallaceburg is welcoming new families to Sunday Worship and the nursery has started up after three years without any need for it. The new ministry with Jason Cartier has begun.

**Jayne Broughton** announced that the former treasurer of Valetta died on Sunday, April 15. A Celebration of Life was scheduled for Monday, April 24. Elder Jill Nussey was in Hospice at the time of Presbytery and died on Thursday, April 20 with a Memorial Service planned for Wednesday, April 25.

**ADOPTION OF DOCKET**

**Moved by Aide and Maroney that the Docket be adopted as presented. MOTION CARRIED**

**MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2023 ( pages 4722 – 4761 ) were adopted as presented on motion of Brown and Murdock. **MOTION CARRIED**

**BUSINESS ARISING from Minutes**

No outstanding business

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**RERORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

**Rev. Andrew Cornell**

**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** met April 4, 2023 at 1 p.m. at the home of Shirley Murdock Present – Rev. Andy Cornell (convenor), Chuck Congram (treasurer), Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal (moderator and assistant treasurer), Rev. Shirley Murdock (clerk), Barb Sargent (past mod)

**Recommendation 1 – That the Reports of Standing Committees be received and recommendations considered. – Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**Recommendation 2 – That the Correspondence be received as listed. Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

1. GA Office – Guide for Statistical Forms – emailed to Presbyters
2. Request for contact in for GA Commissioners – emailed to Office
3. Holy Land Tour – Emailed to Presbyters
4. Changes to the Roll – Emailed to Presbyters
5. Archives – returning items
  - a. Final Report of the Visitation Team to Knox, Leamington (2016)
  - b. Search Committee file for Rev. Leslie Walker (2017-2018)
  - c. Letter of Complaint re: Rev. Kay (w/ correspondence) (2016-2017)
  - d. Paulin Memorial Fund Records for multiple congregations within presbytery (1956-1999)

**These items have been returned to the Presbytery Cabinet at Paulin Memorial.** Regarding the archival information returned, the committee will investigate digitizing documents and arranging virtual storage. Regarding financial ledgers from the 1950s, the treasurer will investigate shredding or burning.

6. GA Office – Moderator Elect – Rev. Mary Fontaine
7. Rev. Andy Cornell – Bursary application – to M&D
8. UCC – Application for funding – to CST
9. UCC - Application to the Duart Trust Fund – to Administration Committee

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10. Rev. Shalini – request for Bursary Funding for travel to May conference \$550.00 – to M&D.

**UPDATES**

- 1. Presbytery website** – Andy. It's live. Looking for any feedback. Next step is to upload past minutes. I hand this issue off to Shalini as the webmaster. The committee is recommending that it will store minutes moving forward rather than uploading old minutes. Address is [essexkentpresbytery.ca](http://essexkentpresbytery.ca)  
**Received for information –**

**2. General presbyter position** – In June 2022, presbytery gave the Administration Committee the OK to research creating a GP position. Andy surveyed other presbyteries to see what they're doing. This was shared with presbytery in September 2022. We were asked to consult with sessions, but no response. We then surveyed ministers and pastors and received three responses. During February 2023 presbytery, ministers and pastors shared their thoughts during a committee of the whole discussion, summarized below, followed by a revised job description based on those comments.

**Minutes of the Committee of the Whole discussion Feb. 21 at Paulin Memorial Church.**

Presbytery adjourned its meeting on this date to allow discussion of the discussion paper and draft job description for the proposed position of General Presbyter (GP). See Feb. 21 docket for details.

Andy Cornell presented the paper and stressed that it's designed to be a discussion starter and get an idea of what's desired rather than a firm job description.

General – no comments

Terms – no comments

Qualifications – no comments

Responsibilities prompted several comments.

- Barb Sargent: Presbytery needs to narrow it down and discern which of the responsibilities is most important. the plan to hold a gathering in May to talk about visioning would fall under the GP's job.
- Shirley Murdock: the proposed number of responsibilities as stated are overwhelming and should be narrowed down to two or three rather than six.
- Chris Little: has recently completed a term as GP in Presbytery of Paris. Job description is extensive. Focus should be on care for ministers/pastors, as many feel isolated. Thriving congregations need thriving pastors.

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- Lisa Aide: whatever the job turns out to be, it needs to help us work together as a team.
- Tim Reddish: six responsibilities are onerous for a half time position. Specifically, items 3 (taking the lead on regular visitations), 4 (acting as interim mod as required) and 5 (first responder in emergent situation) is asking a lot.
- Mike Maroney: In addition to what Tim said, priority should be helping with administrative matters first, followed by working with pastors and elders to build on their strengths.
- Brian McGuffin: If presbytery wants to hire a planter (item 1) then we need someone with those specific skills, which might be found within the PCC. If it's more of a pastoral/admin role, then a PCC minister would qualify. As proposed, position would need to be at least .75 FTE not .5 FTE.
- Shalini Sankarlal: position should be focused on administrative duties first, followed by first responder, which would free called ministers to focus on their congregations.

Andy Cornell: thanked the ministers and pastors for their input and will amend the job description in response and present it to the April meeting in a separate report.

End of committee discussion.

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**Here is a revised job description:**

**General**

The need for a General Presbyter (GP) is a response to the reality that while the spiritual needs in our world are greater, we have fewer human resources. At the same time, we are endowed with significant funds which must be used in mission. The intent is for a GP to reduce the workload of ministers and pastors with the hope that they will be able to spend more time actively discerning new ministry opportunities.

**Terms**

1. Half time on employment agreement. First incumbent would be hired for two years to allow position to be established.
2. A member of the constituent roll with active participation in the court and its committees.
3. A stipend significantly above the minimum in order to reflect the qualifications and experience, and a housing allowance which reflect their community.
4. Residence in Essex-Kent preferred but not required. Able to commute from a reasonable distance.

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5. Mileage to be negotiated, to reflect their place of residence.
6. A generous budget for resources and expenses.

**Qualifications**

1. Several years experience in ministry
2. Ordained in the PCC as a teaching elder

**Responsibilities**

1. To work in confidence with each minister and pastor to ensure they are caring for their mental, emotional and spiritual health.
2. To take the lead on regular congregation visitations, in cooperation with L&D Committee
3. To assist the clerk and other ministers in presbytery administrative matters as directed by the court.

**MOTION - That presbytery create a General Presbyter position with the job description as presented.**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION - That presbytery appoints a special committee to propose financial details in consultation with the treasurer and assistant treasurer and to oversee the search process and report to the next regular meeting.**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION - That the Administration Committee be given Power to Issue to name members to this Special Committee and advise the Court at it's next regular meeting**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED.**

3. **LSA special visitation** – report reviewed by Admin and sent to LSA's interim moderator on March 14. Report presented by Convenor Rev. Mike Maroney

**Report of the Visitation Team to  
Lakeshore St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church**

Following a report by Rev. Andy Cornell, former Interim Moderator (IM) to Lakeshore St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and by request of the Presbytery of Essex-Kent, a Visitation Team (VT) was commissioned on November 21, 2022. The members of the VT are: Rev. Mike Maroney (Convener), Rev. Tim Reddish, Phyllis May, and Mark Labadie.

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The Visitation Team's (VT) Terms of Reference (ToR) are as follows:

1. Acknowledge the positive ministries of Lakeshore St. Andrew's and learn of their future visions and plans.
2. Ensure that Session, Lead Pastor, and Staff are knowledgeable of and adhering to the Polity and Procedures of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.
3. Review the Agreement of Employment with Rev. Brian McGuffin (i.e. Schedule B) to ensure that terms are being following by all parties – including Session and the Presbytery of Essex-Kent.
4. Review the manner in which decisions are made by the Leadership of LSA – for example – the decisions that resulted in the resignation of the HR Committee and the subsequent tensions between Session and the Finance Committee.
5. Promote an understanding of the working relationships and the lines of communication among Session, all of its committees, Lead Pastor, Staff and Congregation.

The VT met with the Lead Pastor, Brian McGuffin for over an hour, and then held individual meetings (each lasting about 20 minutes) with five of the eight staff members who were available on the day we visited LSA. We also met with three of the four Session members as a group for well over an hour. On a different day, we met with the Congregation for two hours, although only nine members were present. We have also held zoom meetings with former IM Rev. Andy Cornell, Rev. Chris Little (IM), the current Finance Committee, and former members of the previous HR Committee, Finance Committee, and Session (as required by ToR #4 above). In addition, the VT sent out a detailed questionnaire to all at LSA and processed the responses received.

Before presenting the VT's recommendations to Presbytery, a preamble is necessary to provide LSA-specific context. From our conversations as outlined above, we find that LSA has experienced a "perfect storm" consisting of (a) the departure of Rev. Brad Watson and the exodus of many from LSA, (b) COVID, and (c) the human sexuality remits of the PCC. (We will come back to these factors later in the Report.)

In September 2020 LSA's new Lead Pastor, Brian McGuffin, started work during the first year of COVID.

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- As a VT we can readily appreciate that the above timing was far from ideal and must have been challenging for all concerned. Even so, having a new Lead Minister in place would end one uncertainty and provide hope and direction for LSA moving forward.
- As a VT we also acknowledge that role of the Interim Moderator (IM) was – and continues to be - vital to satisfy PCC polity, given Brian is not yet ordained within the PCC. We have great confidence in Rev. Chris Little (IM) and sense LSA respects his leadership and background.
- As a VT we realise that Presbytery has given latitude to LSA for decades, something that most people (including staff) in LSA probably don't appreciate, and that in itself can be a cause of confusion and even tension. Many people within LSA are unaware that it is a Presbyterian church and is thus subject to PCC polity.
- As a VT we appreciate there can be some flexibility in interpretation of PCC Polity, nevertheless, it is there to provide important safeguards, accountability structures, and formal processes that cannot simply be ignored. Indeed, it was concerns over a lack of the application of polity that resulted in tensions within the leadership of LSA, ultimately leading to the present Presbytery Visitation.
- As a VT, we fully understand the impact of COVID on church life. Moreover, we appreciate that the “new normal,” if one can dare use that phrase (in that it belittles the pain, suffering, and loss of many), will *not* simply be a return to the ‘good old days.’ All churches therefore anticipate a loss in numbers (and finances), the lingering question is, “How much of a loss?”
- As a VT, we fully appreciate the tensions within the PCC over the human sexuality remits, which is reflected, to some degree, in every congregation (and it's not unique to our denomination). Our PCC polity is clear; how it is applied depends on each church's Session. If that is not managed well, it could result in further loss of people for one reason or another.

The “perfect storm” described above has resulted in dramatic changes, in varying degrees, to LSA's numerical size and finances. While the fallout from the second two factors is still unclear to us, the present leadership projects a hopeful image of the future. For example, it sees more people coming/returning to LSA and sense the “energy level” is higher within the congregation, especially in recent months. As well, one of the goals stated by many in leadership at LSA is the desire to work toward “stability” following the difficulties experienced in the last few years.

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Even so, as a VT we have sensed a lingering pain, even heartbreak and confusion, among some people over the impact of Rev. Brad Watson's departure on LSA. Although Rev. Brad's departure is "water under the bridge," we heard members speak of the loss of the glory days and LSA's stature of a decade ago, and more (under Rev. Chuck Congram), is keenly felt. Although we heard from some members that the split that occurred under Rev. Brad is a "footnote, and not a factor anymore" the VT believes this "looking back to former days" exacerbates the situation at LSA.

In addition to those factors, the VT understands (See ToR#4) that there has also been additional significant hemorrhaging of people from LSA due to Brian McGuffin's leadership style. That includes some former Session members and those on certain committees, such as HR. It also includes the fallout from the departure of long-term staff members, such as Dave Francis (LSA's former Family Pastor). Our understanding is that it is not just a few individuals who have left, but many of their family and friends. Moreover, some were long-term (20+ years) members of LSA and significant donors. Some of those who remain within LSA also feel the loss, and some others no longer feel welcome or wanted at LSA. For those formerly in leadership, but no longer actively worshiping at LSA, there is a sense that they have been purposely ignored in a way that feels like they have been pushed out of their former roles. In their view, there is continued disrespect shown to people who served at LSA prior to Rev. Brian, and whose advice and contributions are ignored, because they don't fit the minister's vision for LSA.

The VT heard many times that communication at LSA has been poor, even non-existent at times. The VT heard this from both members and staff, though many claimed that this has been improving. Even so, the VT finds there is confusion about decisions that have been made and not communicated properly. A recent example is the formation of a Strategic Planning Team and its relation to the Session. There is a sense that communication is done "ad hoc," and done for the benefit, or wishes of, the Lead Pastor.

While such friction, especially if it can't be reconciled and results in an exodus from any church, is always lamentable in the Body of Christ. It is also an aspect of LSA's history - even very recent history, that the VT can do nothing to address other than acknowledge our deep sadness that it has occurred.

The VT notes that Brian McGuffin has the 100% backing of current Session, Staff, and the new Finance Committee (4 months in existence). An analysis of the approximately sixty questionnaires returned reveal  $\frac{2}{3}$  in full support of Brian and the present direction of LSA, with  $\frac{1}{3}$  expressing the

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polarized opposite perspective. Obviously, a clearer picture would have emerged with a higher participation rate. Even so, the outcome may still have resulted in up to ⅓ of the congregation expressing serious concerns. Regardless, Session's ongoing support is the critically important factor in the context of PCC polity.

**Our recommendations to Presbytery are as follows:**

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie**

- 1. Given this is a multi—staffed church, we recommend the (re)formation of an HR Committee as soon as possible.**

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED**

- 2. Our firm impression is that Session is inexperienced and the Finance Committee, in comparison, is strong. The importance of Session in a Presbyterian Church (i.e., Polity) cannot be understated. We strongly encourage LSA to increase its Session to 9 members in such a way that the congregation's (including committees' and staff members') confidence in Session is enhanced.** The present lack of confidence is illustrated by the very recent formation of a Strategic Planning Committee. (Again, how that body arose and was populated is far from clear.) We **recommend** that all committees have a well-defined and understood role and that responsibilities and lines of communication to Session are in place and respected. We also think it prudent, not least for reasons of communication, and therefore **advise** that at least one member of Session be on the each of the other Committees.

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED**

- 3. As a VT (and Presbytery), we have great confidence in the new IM, Rev. Chris Little, and it seems that his presence and wisdom is welcomed by the Lead Pastor and Session. We strongly encourage LSA to listen to and value the IM. We recommend that the Session, Staff, committee members, and Lead Pastor attend a workshop, led by the IM and supported by Presbytery (if deemed helpful), so that all parties have a better understanding of Presbyterian polity and how that is applied to LSA.** In particular, given the nature of LSA's multi-staff and multi-committees, special attention needs to be made on reporting avenues and accountability processes/mechanisms such that they adhere to guidelines and safeguards with polity.

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED.**

- 4. Given the nature of the Lead Pastor's employment agreement, we require Brian to finish E & R as a matter of great urgency and become ordained in the PCC.** This is in the interest

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of all parties, especially LSA. (This is simply a fulfillment of promises made when Brian was first appointed.) We therefore **recommend** that the next time the Lead Pastor's employment agreement is reviewed, it is only renewed if substantial progress has been demonstrated with his E & R courses. Moreover, we **require** Brian, Session, and the IM to regularly inform Presbytery of progress. (It is important to remember that, according to our polity, until Brian becomes formally ordained within the PCC, it is the Interim Moderator and Session that have prime leadership roles/responsibilities within LSA.)

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED**

**Brian McGuffin reported that of the ten courses required, he has completed six with four remaining.**

5. **We recommend the lines of communication among Session, all of LSA's committees, Lead Pastor, Staff and Congregation are improved.** Especially the latter, as it is clear to the VT that lines of communication to (and from) the congregation are poor or patchy. Once No. 3 has been completed, we **recommend** the leadership inform/educate the congregation as a whole via Town Hall/Congregational Meeting.

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED**

6. Given the present financial status of LSA (making a loss of approximately \$10k per month, say \$100k per year), **we recommend prudence going forward with a mind to stabilize loss of people/income and to prioritize the enhancement of financial, numerical, and spiritual growth.**

**Moved by Maroney and Labadie. MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION - That presbytery receive the report of the LSA special visitation team with its recommendations and that the interim moderator report on specific progress on those recommendations in June, 2023**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**Administration Committee to ensure the Interim Moderator will report regularly.**

**MOTION: That the Visitation Team into Lakeshore St. Andrew's be dismissed with the thanks and appreciation of the Court.**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED.**

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4. **Review of standing orders** – work is continuing. The committee’s intent is to have a draft of the revised orders ready in June.

**Received for Information**

**5.Examination of session records –**

Appointed Examiners – Rev. Lisa Aide, Alison Brown and Bob MacVicar.  
Session minutes examined from UCC Windsor.

**MOTION: That Session Minutes for First Church Chatham were not available**

**That Session Minutes for UCC Windsor be attested as: neatly and correctly kept.  
That Session Minutes from First Church Chatham be presented for examination at the June 20, 2023 meeting of Presbytery.**

**Moved by Aide and Maroney. MOTION CARRIED**

**Minutes to be examined in June 20, 2023 are Mt. Zion, Valetta and First Church Chatham.**

**5. TREASURER’S REPORT – Chuck Congram**

**Presbytery of Essex-Kent  
2023 Budget**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>to date</b>
1. Synod Dues	22,013.00	21,437.28	7,407.34
2. Presbytery Des	6,100.00	16,226.92	2,809.02
3. Offerings/Other Income	7,000.00	7,000.00	0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>35,113.00</b>	<b>44,664.20</b>	<b>10,216.36</b>
<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>			
1. Synod Dues	22,013.00	21,443.00	6,000.00
2. Presbytery Travel	5,000.00	5,000.00	1,332.40
3. Committee Expenses			
A. Life and Mission	300.00	300.00	0
B. Ministry and Doctrine	300.00	300.00	0
C. Sexual Assault/Harassment	300.00	300.00	0
4. General Assembly Meals	1,300.00	1,300.00	0

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5. Honoraria			
A. Clerk	5,000.00	5,000.00	1,250.00
B. Treasurer	1,000.00	1,000.00	250.00
6. Other Expenses			
A. Clerk	700.00	700.00	0
B. Treasurer	150.00	150.00	144.28
C. PCC Insurance	1,600.00	1,800.00	0
D. Police Checks	400.00	400.00	0
7. Bank Charges	25.00	25.00	0
<b>TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES</b>	<b>38,113.00</b>	<b>37,743.00</b>	<b>8,976.68</b>

**Unbudgeted Expenses**

Leadership Roundtable	70.98
Emergent Fund	20,000.00
Congregational Support	1,000.00
Clerk Consultation	550.00
YAR	175.00
Website	923.25
Bursaries	7,150.00
Card Ministry	25.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,903.54</b>

**MOTION: That the Treasurer's Report be adopted as presented.  
Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**FYI – Rev. Chuck Congram was appointed Presbytery Treasurer in 1974. We will celebrate 50 years in 2024!!!**

**7. NEW BUSINESS –  
Funding Request from UCC to Duart Fund**

**University Community Church, Windsor, Ontario  
Worship Ministry Proposal**

We at UCC are seeking to build our mission of providing a Jesus centered, safe, welcoming space to all. The community surrounding us is the University of Windsor, including its students, faculty and staff of multiple faiths. As such, part of our mission is to allow people from any background or faith journey to

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connect and build relationships with our community. We also seek to help Christians continue to develop their relationship with Christ and with each other in a safer accessible place.

In the past years, COVID and society have challenged and changed the way we do church. We have expanded our services to include the congregation both virtually and in the building, ensuring we are reaching a wide variety of people.

Currently, the sound board we are using for worship is restricted in channels and functions. This limits the number of people who can volunteer in the way of singers, musical instruments and speakers, readers and so on. We are also limited by the number of microphones available at any one time. UCC would like to purchase a new larger sound board and 3 new microphones.

This would allow the opportunity to provide all sorts of possibilities to support our services in ways that are relevant to the teaching and communicating of the Word of God. Once this work is completed, the sound system will be vibrant and engaging as more voices will be heard. Those congregants with hearing issues will be served better. This upgrade will mean opportunities for greater participation by multiple members of the congregation in a variety of services, dramatic presentations, karaoke and other fun nights for students and conferences to further enhance UCC's mission to be the "third place" and home for all who attend.

We consider providing these experiences a ministry which supports creative forms of contemporary worship which will help spread the message of Jesus Christ, and further the Kingdom of God.

Equipment	Number	Price
Behringer QX2242USB Mixer (24 channel)	1	\$1,023.40
Shure sm58 microphone	3	\$ 336.00
15 ft XLR cable	1	\$ 23.72
10 ft XLR cable	2	\$ 34.52
	Total	<b>\$1,417.64</b>

The above listed equipment needed to provide a better audio experience for our worship ministry in the amount of **\$1,400**. UCC commits to providing the installation required.

**University Community Church requests of the Duart Trust Fund/Presbytery the following:**

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**MOTION - That University Community church's request for a grant \$1,400 from the Duart Fund be approved by Presbytery.**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**8. .RECOMMENDATION – REPORT AS A WHOLE.**

**Moved by Cornell and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED**

**MINISTRY and DOCTRINE REPORT  
Rev. Tim Reddish**

**M & D met via Zoom on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 4pm via Zoom.**

**1. Study Leave Updates.**

- a. Rev. Mike Maroney took a productive study leave from March 20 to 26. To read Brian McLaren's book "*Do I Stay Christian?*", as well as planned his upcoming sermon series. A written report is forthcoming.
- b. Rev. Andy Cornell's Study Leave report is given below.

***Recommendation: That Presbytery receive these two Study Leave Reports.***

***Moved by Lung and Stirling. MOTION CARRIED***

**2. Financial Request.**

We received a request for \$550 from Rev. Shalini Sankarlal (forwarded from Admin Committee) for funding for her to fly to Montreal for the Encouragement Conference in May.<sup>1</sup> This is part of a transitional ministry group she is in and considers it overall

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beneficial for ministry.

We considered this request and were sympathetic toward such initiatives for ministers and their wellbeing. However, we don't have a mechanism within Presbytery to provide financial support for this request. In a sense, this comes on the umbrella of "Study Leave" and the sending church is at liberty to provide more than the \$600 required per year, should the Session approve it.

***We have no recommendation for Presbytery to consider on this matter.***

**3. Recommendation from the Court**

***That presbytery provide \$550.00 from bursary fund to Rev. Shalini to attend conference in Montreal in May, 2023. Moved by Maroney and Lung. MOTION CARRIED.***

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**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**



4. **Student Bursary Requests.** We have received requests from Rev. Andy Cornell (2 courses) and Sarah Stockford (4 courses) for the summer session.
5. **Recommendation: That Presbytery approve Bursary applications for the above two applicants @ \$650 per course.**  
***Moved by Maroney and Lung. MOTION CARRIED.***

**Study leave report – Mike Maroney**

I spent my study leave reading “Do I Stay Christian?” by Brian McLaren, and planning my sermon series until the end of December.

I approached McLaren’s book with some skepticism, thinking it would chronicle more disillusionment with the Christian Church than hope. McLaren laid out his argument for and against remaining in the faith in three sections of the book: No, Yes, and How To. Certainly, McLaren did not hold back on his damning criticisms of the Christian Church – institutionalism, antisemitism, suppression of dissent and colonialism; to name a few. For all that, McLaren does not toss the baby out with the bathwater. The two following sections

outline his hope for a way to stay in the faith while asking important questions brought about by our growing understanding of our place in the universe, and with one another.

Although not an overly-revelatory book, I was struck by McLaren’s reminder that most of us (Conservatives or Liberals!) tend to gravitate toward groups that hold beliefs in common. This creates an “us vs. them” mentality that assumes “our side” is the authentic Christianity. I can be guilty of this! Truth is, we are all so far from what Jesus modelled that any claim to exclusivity is a stretch at best. McLaren encourages his readers to see the common humanity in all people, and to work together for a better world, without the need to subjectively label others as right or wrong; winners and losers.

Respectfully submitted,  
March 29, 2023.

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

**Study Leave Report from Rev. Andy Cornell**

Work in the Master of Pastoral Studies program continued in the Winter semester with two courses: “Psychotherapeutic Theories for Spiritual Care and Counselling” and “Psycho-spiritual Assessment Theory.” Thankfully, both are online. I am applying for a practicum to be taken during the fall 2023 and winter 2024 semesters. I also plan to take two more online courses in the spring 2023 semester. I plan to apply for the spiritual care and psychotherapy certificate program this spring. If all goes to plan, I will have completed six of the 12 required courses by summer. My goal is to complete all MPS (Psychotherapy Certificate) requirements by December 2024.

I began the program with the maximum 10 weeks of study leave banked. I took one official week of study time in the fall and one in winter. (The rest of the time devoted to studies was taken from personal time.) Practicum (two days per week out of town) may eat up an estimated six weeks of study time per semester. I will have enough banked to see me through studies to this time in 2024. Any studies after that will come from personal time.

**MOTION: Report as a Whole – Mike and Jane - Carried**

**LIFE and MISSION COMMITTEE  
Barbara Sargent**

The Life and Mission Committee has received the report from the Visitation Team to St Andrew’s, Dresden. The report is attached. We would like to thank Rev Lisa Aide, Sandra Smith and Jane Lung for their comprehensive report and for leading us through the first visitation to a congregation in this presbytery for a number of years.

These are the recommendations from the report.

***1. That Rev. Andy be strongly recommended to use all of his vacation time and some of his study leave to allow himself time to unplug from ministry so that he may rest and renew his spirit.***

***Moved by Sargent and Aide. MOTION CARRIED***

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

*2. That a new position of board and session liaison be created, this will allow for better communication between the two groups. It is also suggested that all meetings must send out an agenda for the meeting no later than 24 hour before the meeting and all members must be given the same information rather than it only being given to select members.*

*Moved by Sargent and Aide. MOTION CARRIED.*

3

*Admin Co. send someone to St. Andrew's, Dresden, to meet with leadership team (board, session and minister) to assist with conflict management*

*Moved by Sargent and Aide. MOTION CARRIED.*

*4. That the presbytery set up a workshop for treasurers, board and session members going over good practices in regards to dealing with all types of donation that are given to the church, from e-transfers, planned giving and any other changes that have happened in the last five year.*

*Referred to Life and Mission Committee*

*Moved by Maroney and Lung. REFERRAL ADOPTED*

*4. That part of Presbytery's role in oversight of the congregations in its care should be that at least every five years, there should be a workshop, or someone sent to help each congregation understand what Presbytery is and also the roles between the courts and the board and session*

*Referred to Life and Mission Committee.*

*Moved by Maroney and Lung. REFERRAL ADOPTED*

*5. That presbytery provide all ministers with a separate cell phone, other than their personal one, for use of church business*

*Moved by Sargent and Aide. MOTION DEFEATED.*

6. *That the Visitation Team be dismissed with the thanks of the Court. Moved by Sargent and Maroney. MOTION CARRIED.*

### ***STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP***

We are also planning for the May 6, 2023, Strategic Planning Workshop to be held at New St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Dover. Details have been finalized with Victor Kim who will lead the workshop. All congregations are urged to send their leadership teams. A poster will be given out at the Presbytery meeting. Please RSVP to Barbara Sargent by May 1, 2023

Presbyters were directed to the Visioning Section of the report from Clerks Consultation.

### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **VISITATION TO ST ANDREWS DRESDEN MARCH 2023**

A visitation team consisting of Rev. Lisa Aide, Sandra Smith and Jane Lung went to St. Andrews Dresden on March 11<sup>th</sup> in order to meet with the session, board of managers, minister and with any members of the congregation who wanted to meet with the visitation team. Sandra was also able to attend worship on March the 12th to get a first-hand experience of the worship life of the church. Before we went up to Dresden a questionnaire and a letter of intent that the mission and outreach committee of Presbytery had put together for visitation teams.

As we met with each group of people we started by introducing ourselves and letting them know what to expect from a presbytery visit as these visits have not happened in several years. The groups seemed happy to hear that Presbytery wanted to know more about their life and mission. We also let them know that part of the reason for the visit was to also find out if there was anything that our Presbytery could do to help them in any way as they seek to serve as Jesus hands

and feet in the community around them. All in all it was a wonderful visit and we were blessed to be able to meet with people who have a true passion for the Lord and overall the majority of those who we met were satisfied with the mission and ministry under Rev. Andy. However, there were a few voices of discontent that are often found in every church, but overall we received a positive response to what is happening in Dresden.

*Meeting with the Elders:*

The first group that we were able to meet with was the session. There was a good turn out of the members, and they were eager to share with us what has been going on at St Andrews these past few years. When we spoke about worship at the church they were quick to praise Andy's preaching as he preaches right out of the gospel and his sermons challenge people to not only hear the good news but to put it into action. They love the fact that they are able to come together as a community to pray and have even noticed that there has been some growth in the church as members of other denominations have started to attend St. Andrews. They have even started to have some younger families joining them for worship, their Sunday school has around 6-8 kids each week although all the elders wish that more would come.

When talking about their outreach into the community they were quick to bring up their ads in the paper and the coffee times and how it is reaching out to the unchurched in their community, they have even had people come to a service after reading the ads. Many of their ongoing mission projects were shut down due to Covid but they are looking forward to bringing them back in the near future, like their roast beef dinner and the after-school programs. But even during Covid St Andrews found a way to remind the community that God was still with them with the lighting up of the church for special community events. The session was quick to point out that there is good pastoral care at St. Andrews and that it tends to happen more naturally than planned, as the congregation is actively seeking to look out for each other. Their card ministry is also going strong as people are quick to send cards to those who might need one, and the elders are working hard to let the congregation know who their elders are if they are in need of help.

The elders confessed that they are in need of more people to step up to become new elders, but at times it is hard to find those who are gifted and willing to serve. There has been some conflict between the board and the session over who has the final say in things like the budget or other decisions in regards to the church. This is such a common challenge that many churches face as when you have two different groups there can often be a struggle for power, please see the recommendation section for our suggestions.

The final question that we asked the session was how would they feel about asking Presbytery for help in dealing with a future problem and they were honest in answering that before the visitation they would have been hesitant, but after meeting with us they would feel more inclined to ask for help when needed.

***Meeting with the Board:***

Meeting with the Board went very similar to the meeting with the session, However, the majority of the speaking was done by two people, who seemed to be doing all of the talking and they both seemed to do the majority of the disagreeing. Most of the complaints were centered on their frustration with both the session and with Andy's leadership. I would like to point out that other than the two people who were doing most of the speaking, a few board members stated that they were happy with the worship although they would like to see more new people coming to the church. One of the main complaints that came from the board was that Andy does not deal well with criticism and that the problem is often forgotten soon after it is spoken about. When we asked the board what they would like to see in the future they again would like more people in the pews and perhaps the return of some of the more traditional hymns to be put into the worship service. The board feels as if they have too little power in making things like mission projects happen in the church because the session has the final say. There are certain members of the board who also believe that Andy dictates to the session what he wants to happen rather than allowing the session to have the power. There was also a complaint that information is not always given in a timely manner, but this seems to be the fault of the head of the board and not from the session. The board doesn't

always have an agenda before their meetings and so some members feel as if they are not given enough time to think about what they are going to discuss. They would also like to see the worship being a little less academic and a bit lighter and relating to life as it is now, and yet, another said that Andy shares his struggle with his faith and inspires others in their own faith journey. All and all it seems like the board is headed by two strong willed people who believe that they know what is best and their ideas are the only correct ones. This could lead to conflict down the road as one of the people who has issues with how things are being run holds other jobs in the church and he seemed to be quick to take offence at little things, see recommendations for possible solutions.

***Member of the Congregation:***

There was one member of the congregation who met with the visitation team, she was newer to St Andrews, and she told us that she has felt welcome and accepted by their new church family. She found that Andy teaching refreshed her soul and inspired her to once again be active in their community in the name of the Lord. She is now taking a leadership role in sharing the children's ministry on Sundays and she is grateful that they have made space for her and her husband to work for the Lord in their new church family.

***Meeting with Andy:***

The last person that we met with was Andy. It is important to note that he was not present when meeting with the board and that he is fully aware of certain members of the board's dislike for himself and his leadership style. When we asked Andy how he is feeling he confessed that he is feeling exhausted, not because of his ministry at St, Andrews but with the juggling it is taking him to keep all of the balls up in the air, with the church, renewal fellowship as well as his own classes that he is taking on Christian Counselling. When asked he confessed that last year he did not take off all five of his weeks for vacation, but he has promised to do that this year as well as the extra week that carried over from the last. Andy has also not taken any time off for study leave as he still has the max amount banks, and it

is our suggestion that he takes the time soon to allow himself to recharge before he burns himself out. Andy finds that he is hopeful about the ministry and mission at St. Andrews as he sees new people joining the congregation and the young families coming to know the Lord is a wonderful thing to see. He knows that he is working more than 3 days a week at St. Andrews, and he knows that in the future his call to Renewal Fellowship may be cut down in the future and if that happens, he would like to work for St. Andrews.

Andy is struggling a bit with the conflict with the certain strong willed members on the board as they seem to be quick to point out mistakes and at times try to make a mountain out of a molehill. One example that we heard from both groups was that Andy was wrong according to the board member to not say in the blessing over the offering that he also meant to bless the money that was dedicated via e-transfers. One thing that came to our attention during our meeting with Andy was that their treasurer was using his own personal email to accept e-transfers for the church, this was alarming to hear. Andy is also struggling to find new elders because as soon as he finds someone and is about to ask them to think about joining the session the board reaches out and gets them to join the board instead.

But overall Andy still feels as if he is being called to minister at St. Andrews and he is excited to see what great things that God has planned for St. Andrews as they continue in their worship and outreach.

***MOTION: REPORT AS A WHOLE***

***Moved by Sargent and Aide. MOTION CARRIED.***



**CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM**

**Andrew Templer**

**Membership**

Andrew Templer: (UCC): Convenor  
Mike Maroney: (First Church): Clergy member  
Wendy Skreptak (LSA)  
Robert (Bob) MacVicar (Paulin)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Funding Requests Received*

We received an emailed request (23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2023) from Alison Brown, Clerk of Session of University Community Church for the funds to support the purchase of large screen monitors to facilitate their worship and as part of their outreach ministry to the wider community. As UCC put it: *“This recent request seeks to expand our outreach as well as enhance our worship service. Our outdated equipment falls very short of allowing that as it is limited in its capabilities and is rapidly deteriorating. Just recently at a seminar we held, the keynote speaker had to redo all her slides and reduce what she hoped to present because of the state of the equipment. Every Sunday our minister and other leaders are unable to visually enhance worship as desired for the same reasons. Worship services are currently held using screens that are barely visible to the people.*

*As an increasing number of students become aware of our church as one that seeks to be oriented to them, we believe we are being called to offer other forms of connections in addition to our such as those mentioned in our proposal i.e movie nights and bible studies using livestream videos. This requires new equipment that will rely to some degree on the infrastructure the first grant provided.”.*

Attached is a copy of the request”.

*Note: We did note that the proposal was also copied to the Chisolm Fund and assume if the CST motion is approved, this proposal will not now need to be considered there.*

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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**Detailed Support Requested:**

Total Cost: \$7,127.00.00  
(Mostly for two large screen monitors and the installation labour cost.)  
Amt. Requested:       \$5,000.00

*CST Deliberation*

The proposal arrived while some CST members were out of town and some further delay resulted from a request for more information on cost estimates in the proposal. The CST discussed this request via several email exchanges from April 1-13. We are satisfied with the clarification and vendor information given and that the new proposal is significantly different from our earlier support (2020) of IT infrastructure at UCC.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> April, we unanimously moved a motion\* to bring forward the following recommendation:

*Recommendation:*

**That Presbytery approve a grant of \$5,000.00 from the Congregational Support Fund to enable University Community Church to purchase and install large screen monitors as part of their worship and outreach ministry.**

**Within one year, UCC shall provide a report to Presbytery to evaluate their seminar and include a financial statement confirming the total costs.**

**Moved by Maroney and Lung. MOTION CARRIED.**

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\* Motion : Moved Bob, Seconded Mike. Vote unanimous.

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

**CHISHOLM FUND**

Representative Elder Alison Brown from UCC requested permission for UCC to apply to the Chisholm Fund of the PCC for further funding.

Moved by Maroney and Aide that permission be grant. MOTION CARRIED

**EXTRACT OF MINUTES**

Representative Elder Alison Brown from UCC asked if the Clerk would provide an extract of minutes in order for UCC to apply to the Chisholm Fund of the PCC for further funding.

AGREED

**CARD MINISTRY**

Bonnie Pittock

Get Well/Thinking About You – Wendy Streptak

**REPORTS OF INTERIM MODERATORS**

**New St. Andrew's Dover -- Mike Maroney**

New St Andrew's continues to have guest Ministers for pulpit supply each Sunday with an average attendance of 18-20. A Pancake Breakfast was held for Shrove Tuesday. Rev Ken Powell has led us in Bible Study on "How to Pray" - a 6 week course that 7 members have attended. We are joining other area churches at an Easter Sunrise Service at Mitchell's Bay Wharf. Great Community effort.

**St. Andrew's, Amherstburg -- Mike Maroney**

Rev. Olwyn Coughlin and Rev. Shirley Murdock take turns preaching at St. Andrew's. We continue our search for a new minister, though we have not received any new profiles since the start of the year.

**LSA – Chris Little**

I am happy to report that two new Elders were ordained to the LSA Session on Sunday, Mar. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Each new Elder brings strength and distinctive skills to the court. The addition of these two men, plus the four existing women Elders, brings the total number of Elders to six.

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A meeting took place between representatives of the Finance Committee and the Pension Board on Feb 8, 2023, to address the debt owed to the Pension Board by LSA. The conversation was cordial and appreciated by both parties, with the Finance Committee representatives coming to appreciate that it is not legally possible for the Pension Board to forgive the debt, in full or in part. Discussions will continue at the Session level to find a way forward to fulfil the Session's stated goal of repaying the debt when it is possible to do so.

Pastor Brain McGuffin continues to work hard to complete the requirements of the Education and Reception Committee. This is a demanding challenge but is being faithfully perused.

The Visitation Report has been distributed to the Elders and they will, upon the approval of the Presbytery, begin to process its recommendations immediately.

**Knox, Wallaceburg – Lisa Aide**

**No Report provided**

**Valetta – Shirley Murdock**

Valetta Presbyterian Church continues to gather weekly for worship and mid-week groups are gathering in-person

Worship numbers remain constant. Sunday School is offered each week the children are present.

Pulpit Supply has been maintained throughout the winter by Revs. Lillian Wilton, Nancy Carle, Tim Reddish and Shirley Murdock. The congregation is excited to welcome our student, Sarah Stockford, back to the pulpit for most Sundays in May, June and July.

The congregation has been saddened by the ill health of former treasurer David McGuire and continue to hold he and his family in prayer, as well as Jill Nussey who has had surgery and is now in Hospice. Dave McGuire died Sunday, April 16, 2023. Funeral will be Monday, April 24, 2023.

Kathy Dupuis has accepted to role of our new treasurer. Statistical Forms and Charitable Status Reports have been completed and submitted. Synod and Presbytery Dues have been paid in full.

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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Mission Awareness Sunday will be observed April 30.

Session will meet Thursday, April 20 at 10:00am.

**Ridgetown Mt. Zion – Rev. Andy Cornell**

The congregation hosted the Chatham Centre of the Royal Canadian College of Organists for a concert with good attendance on Saturday March 25. What a blessing that our pipe organ has an audience. Our three students from University of Guelph's Ridgetown Campus were back in church in late March after being absent for a few weeks. The sale of 256 turkey pies was a great fundraiser for Mt Zion. The ROCK, which serves the homeless, continues to use the kitchen weekly to make lunches for the homeless. Pulpit supply continues from Rev. Colin Paterson, Rev. Lillian Wilton, Rev. Doug and Cathi Cameron and Mary Pat Elliot. Members of session provide messages on occasion. Session (Clerk Phyllis May, rep elder Bryan Stirling and elder Renee Geluk) meets approximately every six weeks or as needed.

**REPORT OF CLERKS CONSULTATION – Rev. Shirley – FYI**

**Clerks Consultation**  
**April 14-17, 2023**

Clerks' Consultation is a regular gathering of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly Clerks, usually every two years except in Pandemic. In 2023 there were 32 clerks present along with special session speakers and our Chaplain Rev. Jean Morris, former Moderator of the PCC.

The purpose of CC is to keep the clerks up-to-date on areas of concern across the church and help them understand the governance that applies to each item.

The general theme of this 2023 gather was TRANSITIONAL MINISTRIES and the response of the congregations, presbyteries and synods to the process and procedures of accomplishing newness in ministry while maintaining our identity, theology, doctrine and polity.

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

**Session One – Friday evening –**

A warm welcome from Deputy Clerk Don Muir

An overview of the Agenda

Some ice breakers to allow you to renew old friendships and develop acquaintances with new clerks.

Worship in the Chapel lead by Rev. Jean Morris – Jesus in the Evening.

**Session 1 -11 began Saturday morning at 9:30am**

**Interim Moderators are overworked!**

Requires Terms of Reference

Ruling Elders CANNOT be appointed as IMs

Retired Minister who become IM are placed on Constituent Roll as Equalizing Ministers

Delegating responsibilities for congregations not able to call a minister

Mental Health of all clergy, dealing with stress, securing downtime

**Intentional Interim Ministry –**

1960-1970 - Prepare congregations for the next minister

Happens after a lengthy ministry or where there has been conflict

Currently - prepare a congregation for a new ministry

Help the transition to newness

What do you need to learn to go forward

Focus on what works well, not on what went wrong

Build upon things that bring you joy

Choose a Maze or a Labyrinth

A Maze starts at one point with the goal to reach another point

How do you get there?

A Labyrinth has no pre-determined goal. It is a time for discernment.

The process of getting there is the journey

It is ok not to know the outcome

Discern- listen – discuss – grow – determine

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

### **Transitional Ministry**

- 1-2 year maximum term
- Minister appointed - is not eligible for a Call
- Specific Assigned Duties
- IM can be appointed Stated Supply

- What have we learned post Covid?
- What adjustments should continue – what should stop
- Reaching out to those not-yet-returned
- Assess the strengths of your congregation – now

### **Options for congregations not likely to call a minister**

- Multiple points – clusters – amalgamation – ecumenical shared ministries – Sunday Supply and Pastoral Care – Stated Supply – Dissolution
- Separate Part Time – two congregations each calling the same minister
- Ecumenical Shared Ministries – currently affiliated with Anglican, United and Luther Churches
  - Tenant Congregations – rent worship space in another facility – no upkeep of building.
  - Home Church – focus on worship and fellowship. No buildings involved.
  - Preaching Points – a Presbytery-established location, no established session or congregation, Regular worship for Special Occasions, offering received goes to maintain the building. IE historical locations
  - Satellite Congregations – Minister leads worship in one location. Other congregations join in online. Locations rotates. 1 session
- Lay Missionaries -
  - Appointed by Presbytery, under supervision of Ordained Minister
  - CANNOT MODERATE SESSION
  - Presbytery may grant permission to perform Sacraments
  - Annual evaluation with possible re-appointment
  - Guidelines are available

- Assessor Presbyters –
  - Can be appointed IM
  - Can cross borders between presbyteries
  - Synod appointment

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**General Presbyters –**

Presbytery Appointment

Oversees life of congregations,

Works with multiple congregations unable to call a minister

Can be appointed IM

Consider online session meetings and bible studies and Sunday Worship – Minister preaches in one congregation, others watch online – circulate location – named IM for numerous congregations

Presbytery Assistance to Die – what are the challenges to journey with congregations who choose to close

**End of life Cycle** – care for the dying congregation. How to live well and faithfully to the end. What will you leave behind? How can people continue to serve after the church is gone? What will happen to the members and community when the church is no longer there?

Updates coming on Policy for Amalgamations – Dissolutions, Lay Missionaries

**PANDEMIC**

What did we learn

What can we continue

What should we stop

Zoom allowed for persons at a distance to conduct worship/pulpit supply

An option to still be used on occasion

**Allyson Carr – Associate Secretary for Justice Ministries**

3 priorities – Healing and Reconciliation, Anti Racism, Ecological Issues.

The Social Action Handbook that had grown to 400 pages is now online and is regularly updated.

**Callie Long – Communications**

“if you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there”

Three-fold action

Inform – share knowledge and information – teach and educate

Inspire – encourage, enthuse

Invite – come and see and do

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**



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**Polity Bits and Pieces – Don Muir**

All clerks need designated emails – not personal emails  
Lobby Correspondence – mailings that come from complaining elders that have not gone through their Session – not acceptable!

Intermission – began in the 1990's  
10 weeks – full time extended Sabbath for personal and spiritual self care  
This is not stress leave  
Minister is responsible for cost of pulpit suppl with mileage and hospitality  
1 year to prepare  
Consult with Session  
Prepare a proposal to be approved by Presbytery  
Study Leave can be added to the end ( accumulated up to 5 years/10 weeks)  
Allowance for Intermission can be added to a Call Document

**Voluntary Withdrawal – Victor Kim**

FIRM DEADLINE TO APPLY – May 2024  
Only reason to withdraw is in response to Remits B & C  
Must have 80% agreement from first Congregational Meeting  
No proxy votes are permitted  
Congregation is Dissolved. Assets revert to Trustee Board who dispurses funds accordingly.

**Presbyterian Church Building Corporation**

Helps congregations secure loans  
Helps retired clergy secure living accomodations  
Maximun \$1 million with a 15 year term  
**Lending Fund - \$100,000.00 with 10 year term, 6 years interest free**

**VISIONING – Victor Kim**

From Story to Structure  
What is our Church's Story?  
1925 Union  
1970-1990 – growth, abundance, overflowing  
2000's – decline  
What is our future?

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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God is calling us back to faith with passion

Past – traditions and methods unravelling

How we did things no longer gets the same response

Slow to respond to social issues

Trapped in decline

Present – clergy are tired!

There is a disconnect through the church

We are not coping well

“ Being” the Church is now more important than “doing” Church

Future – faith lived out in community

Trust and dependence upon the Holy Spirit

Commitment to study options

Learning how to share our faith

If people are sick and weary, the church cannot be healthy!

A healthy church does not necessarily mean numbers

How can an ending give way to new life?

We are rooted – Jeremiah 17:8

Do you love me – John 21

We cannot accomplish good if we are not focused on Jesus

It takes time to move out of decline. It can happen

Go and Make disciples

You have no fish, have you?

Do something different, in a new location

Fewer, stronger congregations who are sure about their story

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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2021 Canadian Census  
53% identify as Christians  
35% have no church affiliation  
The Pandemic gave us permission to stay away

PCC has less than 800 congregations.  
300 are vacant  
100 not seeking full time ministry

VISION – every congregation is resourced and staff to BE the Church

Purpose-built structures

Discern what strategic structures need to be  
You have no courage, have you?

**HARASSMENT – Tim Purvis**

**Harassment Policy adopted 2021**

Changes are coming to GA 2023  
Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Policy remains  
Improvements suggested in 2008 Growing in Christ Policy

A thirty-day process  
Resolve the conflict or proceed to Judicial Process

**Review of Ministry and**

**Resourcing Healthy Relationships – Don Muir**

Based on search process profiles (congregation and candidate)  
6-12 month review and vision  
Regular accountability and expectations between minister and session  
Job descriptions for ministry – Leading With Care  
Transparency between minister and session  
Honest discussion and feedback on activities and plans  
Not restrictive but permissive  
Preventative measure to stop trouble before it happens  
Develop a cohesive unit that supports rather than divides.

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**NEW BEGINNINGS – Ian Fraser**

Do you play to win or play not to lose  
Work as a team take the lead  
Let go of self do it my way

Are you willing to consider a bold decision about the future of your congregation  
Can you give up pre-conceived notions and methods  
Currently 22 congregations in the program, 8 are complete, 14 are active

**TRUST DEEDS**

**Every congregation is to forward a list of current trustees to the Clerk**

**Ensure your property deed is properly registered in the name of your congregation**

**Every congregation is requested to complete a TRUST DEED and forward a copy to the Clerk and update every time Trustees change.**

**The Current Template (Appendix C) adheres to Ontario Laws, so not each one needs to be reviewed by a lawyer.**

**LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE**

**Guidelines for clarity coming to GA 2023.**

**A Minister not supporting Remits B&C cannot be censured**

**May refrain/abstain from voting in favour of ordination, etc., but cannot voice that as the reason –**

**May send regrets not to attend a Service of Ordination, Induction, Installation.**

**If you voice your dissension - you are speaking against our adopted theology and can be ruled Out of Order**

**Presbyterians Sharing – Karen Plater**

Statistical Forms due April 15, 2023

Monthly updates to Presbyterian Sharing are sent electronically to Life and Mission Convenors who share with Presbytery

New Data Base will permit each congregation to access information on contributions.

Presbyterians Sharing is the PCC Budget.

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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Submit accepted allocations through Presbytery Committee or directly to PS  
If you fail to meet your allocation, please send an explanation why.

Current Formula, 10% of Dollar Base

To date, PS receives approximately half of suggested allocations

If decreased to 5%, that means even less funding for ministries.

Currently merging jobs and positions, sharing and decreasing staff

PCC is working to reduce deficit by using other designated funds and drawing down from investments.

Webinar Coming Soon

Education Events can be arranged for Presbyteries and Congregations

**The Clerks Consultation for 2023 ended with Worship and Communion on Monday, April 17. Thank you for the opportunity to attend, to learn, to share, to grow, all to help this Presbytery better BE the Church.**

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock - Clerk**

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR OF THE COURT**

**No further business was offered.**

**REMINDERS:**

**EXAMINATION OF SESSION MINUTES**

**June 20, 2023 – Mt. Zion and Valetta and First Chatham**

**NEXT MEETING**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023 – hosted by LSA**

**Standing Committees** will meet the week of May 29, 2023

**Administration Committee** is scheduled to meet June 6. Due to members attending General Assembly, this meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 13.

**September 19, 2023** – hosted by Knox, Wallaceburg

**November 21, 2023** – hosted by First Church, Chatham

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk**

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**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Moved by Maroney and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED.**

**DECLARATION**

The Presbytery of Essex-Kent stands adjourned, to meet next in Regular Session on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 with in Lakeshore St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 5:30pm.

**CLOSING PRAYER and BENEDICTION – THE MODERATOR Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal**

**Dismissed at 8:46pm**

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**Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal, Moderator**

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock, Clerk**

**Rev. Shirley F. Murdock - Clerk**