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PRESBYTERY OF ESSEX-KENT
SPECIAL MEETING – January 30, 2022
Knox Presbyterian Church, Leamington
1:30pm

The Presbytery of Essex-Kent was called to a SPECIAL MEETING on Sunday, January 3, 2022 within the Sanctuary of Knox Presbyterian Church, Leamington at 1:30pm, by order of the Moderator Barbara Sargent.

CALL TO ORDER

The Moderator called the meeting to order at 1:57pm.

PRAYER and CONSTITUTION

The Moderator led the Court in prayer and Constituted the Court able and willing to deal the business before it.

ATTENDANCE

Clergy present were Revs. Mike Maroney, Andrew Cornell, Tim Reddish, Shirley Murdock (Clerk), Shalini Rajack-Snakarlal, Lillian Wilton and Chuck Congram.

Elders present were Barbara Sargent (Moderator), Jeri-lou Brown, Jane Lung, Wendy Streptak, WMS Representative Carolyn Reid

Assessor Elder for Knox Leamington Bob MacVicar

GUESTS

The Moderator welcomed guests from Knox Leamington.

Jane Toppi, Mary McKay, Carol James, Karen Boehm, Pam and Tom Graham, Glenna Lane (Clerk of Session)

REGRETS

Bonnie Pittock, Bryan Stirling, Alison Brown, Jayne Broughton, Rev. Lisa Aide, Kathy Parks.

SIT and CORRESPOND

MOTION: That visitors from Knox Leamington be invited to Sit and Correspond

Moved by Tim Reddish and Wendy Streptak. **MOTION CARRIED**

PURPOSE OF MEETING
TO CONSIDER THE STABILITY, VIABILITY and FUTURE of KNOX PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, LEAMINGTON

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MOTION: To Receive and Consider a Report from Knox Annual Meeting and the Report of the Ministry and Doctrine Committee.

Moved by Mike Maroney and Jane Lung. MOTION CARRIED

Response from Annual Meeting

The following two questions were posed to those present at the Annual Meeting that immediately preceded this Special Meeting of Presbytery

How does Knox see itself moving forward?

How can Presbytery help?

Interim Moderator Rev. Lillian Wilton responded on behalf of the Congregation

A number of people are needed to fill important positions on various committees. Unfortunately none of these spots were able to be filled at the Annual Meeting.

The Membership Roll has been updated and now shows about 65 active members but very few are attending worship or offering leadership. It was noted that at the present time there is no secretary, treasurer, organist. There is only one Trustee remaining. There are no members on the Property and Finance Committee.

Rev. Lillian has been able to secure two persons to sign cheques so bills can be paid – Jane Toppi and Karen Boehm.

She has also secured a person to make regular check-ins on the building and property.

The congregation will request permission of Presbytery for Knox Session to speak with others Session to discern if any are interested in forming any type of partnership in ministry.

Report of Ministry and Doctrine Committee with Recommendations to consider

Convenor Rev. Tim Reddish posed the questions to the congregation – What does Knox want Presbytery to do for them. Carolyn Reid responded – pulpit supply and pastoral care with some continuity provided.

Rev. Reddish reported that Lakeshore St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church has prepared a proposal to Knox, Leamington.

MOTION: That the LSA proposal be communicated to Knox Leamington. Moved by Reddish and Maroney MOTION CARRIED

The following excerpt was provided –

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“We see a future for Knox Leamington as a satellite ministry of LSA. It would have community pastors supervised by LSA leadership. Contemporary worship would take place in person on Sundays. There would be local midweek programming. The target would be families and young adults. The approach- small groups and fellowship, making connections in an increasingly fractured world. We see a vibrant community-centred church that’s busy seven days a week.

LSA is about to relaunch itself in the new year with a fresh vision, mission, logo, website and programming. All of that would be projected at Leamington, while being mindful of that community’s specific needs.

LSA would provide any needed technology (platform, lights, cameras), staff, programming, and overall management of the Leamington facility.

This is a generational opportunity to leverage a well-maintained facility in a prime location in a vibrant town and do something fresh. The will and energy are there.

LSA Staff and Session are willing to develop a specific plan to make it happen. LSA has the ministerial and entrepreneurial leadership in place which can carefully and prayerfully discern a Godly path. In addition, we are confident that additional partners are out there – committed believers who are looking for exactly this kind of fresh opportunity to put their talents, time and financial resources to work for the Kingdom.”

Rev. Andry Cornell – Interim Moderator of LSA was invited to speak to the proposal. He advised the Court of the unanimous agreement of LSA session to explore a fresh and new partnership for Knox.

Jane Toppi reminded the Court that Knox was a satellite of another church in its beginning

Bob MacVicar asked for an explanation of the Satellite concept – Andy Cornell responded there would be a central church (LSA) with a secondary congregation (Knox). Core leadership would come from LSA. Knox would be staffed by LSA and be held under the supervision of LSA Session. There would be the same ministry and ethos as LSA while maintaining the unique culture of Knox.

Jane Toppi inquired if Knox would need to turn its finances over to LSA. Tim Reddish responded that discussion would enter into the agreement process. He also stated all details of any agreement need to be agreed upon by LSA, Knox and the PCC.

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A description of LSA was requested. The following information was shared.

LSA currently welcomes approximately 400 people per Sunday with a combination of in-person attendance and Zoom participants. There are 7 or 8 full time and part time staff. There are 2 services each Sunday with approximately 60-100 in-person at each service.

The following Recommendations were moved and seconded by Revs. Tim Reddish and Mike Maroney.'

- A) Immediate further exploration by Knox and LSA's Session and Congregations.

MOTION CARRIED

- B) Presbytery grant the Session of Knox permission to communicate – via Knox's new Interim Moderator (below) – with other Sessions with in Presbytery to ascertain if any other congregation is willing to form a formal partnership or amalgamate with Knox.

MOTION CARRIED

- C) That M&D (i.e., Presbytery) be informed ASAP and no later than March 1st, 2022 – if (or not) another congregation seeks to pursue such a partnership with Knox.

MOTION CARRIED

- D) That Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal be appointed as the new Interim Moderator of Knox Leamington, with effect from February 15, 2022, and with authority to immediately work with the present IM (Rev. Lillian Wilton) and Knox's Session to create a smooth transition. M&D expresses its heartfelt thanks to Rev. Lillian Wilton for her diligent service and wisdom.

MOTION CARRIED

- E) That Rev. Shirley Murdock and Bob MacVicar, the two present Assessor Elders, continue in their role until Presbytery's June meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

- F) That Presbytery suspend all Knox's activities from February 1, 2022, until at least Presbytery's April meeting – with the option of Easter services. This break allows time to reflect and plan for the future.

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AMENDMENT: That allowance be made for the possibility of gathering within Knox Church for the purpose of livestream worship participation from other church.

Moved by Cornell and Streptak.

AMENDMENT ADOPTED

MOTION CARRIED

- G) That a provisional, viable amalgamation/partnership plan(s) be prepared (in discussion with the congregation and Session, Head Office and Presbytery) in time for Presbytery's April meeting (in practice, this means M&D receive such plan(s) by April 1, 2022.

MOTION CARRIED

- H) If an appropriate proposal cannot be agreed upon by all parties by Presbytery's June meeting, that we consider this avenue exhausted.

MOTION CARRIED

- I) As soon as a viable plan is approved by Presbytery, Presbytery would encourage and support the Sessions involved in applying for additional Synod/PCC funds – should that be helpful. We expect, however, that the viable plan is NOT contingent on the receipt of such finds.

MOTION CARRIED

- J) M&D, whose role is intended to be constructive, expects frequent progress reports from the IM to reassure us this initiative is progressing in a timely fashion.

MOTION CARRIED.

REPROT AS A WHOLE –

Moved by Reddish and Maroney.

MOTION CARRIED

THANKS

The Moderator offered thanks to Rev. Tim Reddish and the Ministry and Doctrine Committee for this detailed report.

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MOTION TO ADJOURN

Moved by Maroney and Cornell.

MOTION CARRIED

PRAYER and DISMISSAL

The Moderator offered prayer and dismissed the Court at 3:18pm

NEXT MEETING

Regular Meeting of Presbytery – Tuesday, February 15, 2022 with in Paulin Presbyterian Church at 6:00pm, in-person, with Covid Restrictions being upheld (masks, vaccines, distancing)

Barbara Sargent, Moderator

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock, Clerk

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock - Clerk