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PRESBYTERY OF ESSEX-KENT
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

REGULAR MEETING, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2022
6:30 pm
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHATHAM

The Presbytery of Essex-Kent was called to meet in Regular Session on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 6:30pm within First Presbyterian Church, Chatham.

WORSHIP –

Rev. Mike Maroney conducted worship, reading from Exodus 4: 1-17 and asking the question – “What is in your hand, Moses?”

CALL TO ORDER – Moderator Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal called the meeting to order at 6:57pm

PRAYER and CONSTITUTION – Moderator Shalini offered prayer and constituted the court, able and willing to deal with any matter that properly comes before it.

ATTENDANCE

Clergy present were Revs. Mike Maroney, Andrew Cornell, Shirley Murdock (Clerk), Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal (moderator), Lillian Wilton, Chuck Congram (Treasurer).

Elders Present were Barbara Sargent, Mark Labadie, Bonnie Pittock, Jayne Broughton, Alison Brown, Jane Lung, Sandra Smith, Kathy Parks and Wendy Streptak.

Others in attendance were Bob MacVicar of Paulin Memorial and Rev. Chris Little of Paris Presbytery.

SIT and CORRESPOND – That Rev. Chris Little be invited to Sit and Correspond for this meeting. (Voice without vote). Introduced by Andy

MOVED BY Maroney and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED

REGRETS – Carolyn Reid, Rev. Tim Reddish, Robert Ivison

GOOD NEWS and PRAYER REQUESTS

Jayne Broughton reported that Valetta will share with other community churches a carol sing to be held outside at St. Patrick’s Shrine, December 11 at 2:30pm

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Barba Sargent reported she had attended a retreat sponsored by Renewal Fellowship titled Come Away With Us. Although it was an intense few days, she found it very moving and appreciated the time to worship and reflect.

Jane Lung announced she and her husband had become grandparents to a second grandchild, a baby boy named Sylas.

MINUTES – Regular Meeting, September 20, 2022

MOTION: That the Minutes be adopted as presented. Moved by Clerk and Alison Brown.
MOTION CARRIED.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

It is understood all business has been or will be addressed by the Court

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Rev. Andrew Cornell, Convenor

Regular meeting Nov. 1, 2022 at the home of Shirley Murdock

Members present – Rev. Andy Cornell (convenor), Chuck Congram (treasurer), Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal (moderator), Rev. Shirley Murdock (clerk)

Prayer – Andy

RECOMMENDATION 1: THAT THE REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES BE RECEIVED AND CONSIDERED. Moved by Andy (all except rec 5) seconded by SFM

Correspondence –

1. First Church Brockville – Rev. Marianne Emig Carr - Request for church(s) in Windsor area to sponsor a Syrian Family. The Refugee Team advised Brockville to find a Presbyterian Church in the Windsor area willing to sponsor a family because the family already in Brockville is moving to the Windsor area and that family has agreed to provide housing, etc. Emailed to Presbyters

It was suggested that perhaps Presbytery consider sponsorship as a group. The family can lose their spot if a sponsorship is not accepted by the end of 2022. -they can lose a spot if not accepted by end of 2022.

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Alison Brown suggested that UCC might sponsor this family if funding would be made available from the Emergent Fund of Presbytery.

**MOTION: That University Community Church accept sponsorship of this Syrian Family with necessary funding coming from the Presbytery Emergent Fund as needed.
Moved by Brown and Maroney. MOTION CARRIED.**

2. Presbyterian College – Full time position of Director of Programs of the Leadership Centre. REFER: for the information of presbytery

**RECOMMENDATION 2: That the above correspondence be referred as indicated.
Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.**

3. First Church, Chatham – nominating Barbara Sargent as the elder Commissioner to the 2023 GA.

**RECOMMENDATION 3: That presbytery appoint Barbara Sargent as elder commissioner to 2023 General Assembly.
Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.**

4. Valetta Presbyterian Church – nominating Sarah Stockford as the YAR for 2023 GA

RECOMMENDATION 4: That presbytery appoint Sarah Stockford as the Young Adult Representative for 2023 General Assembly.

NOTE – It has been brought to the attention of the Clerk, that theological students are not permitted to be nominated as a Young Adult Representative. Recommendation 4 is withdrawn. The Court is open to receive another nomination.

5. Dresden request for funding – Emergent Support Fund

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

Box 93, Dresden, Ontario N0P 1M0
519-683-2442 standrewspcdresden@gmail.com
Rev. Andy Cornell

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To Presbytery of Essex-Kent
From Session of St. Andrew's Dresden
Date Oct. 27, 2022

Re Report on Gospel ads
Application for 2023 funding

BACKGROUND

In December 2021, St. Andrew's Dresden began publishing weekly ads in The Herald local newspaper and the Coffee Times. The content consisted of nothing more than a Bible verse, the name of the congregation and the website. The cost was shared by the congregation (approximately \$1,000) and a grant from the Presbytery of Essex Kent (\$2,700) from the Emergent Support Fund. As a condition of the grant, the session was asked to provide a report on the effectiveness of the ministry – see **IMPACT** below.

The idea is simple: publish key scripture verses regularly in non-church places in the prayerful hope that those who hunger and thirst for God will see and read and allow the words to settle into their hearts and minds. Here are samples:

<https://standrewsdresden.ca/files/2022/08/A-Gospel-Message-St.Andrews-Sept-7.22.pdf>

<https://standrewsdresden.ca/files/2022/08/St.-Andrews-MESSAGE-August2022.pdf>

We believe these ads need to continue in the current volume to maintain the impact. It's a fundamental rule of advertising to keep the ads going to maintain your presence in the market.

IMPACT

People are noticing the ads and they tell us they've seen them. And we strongly suspect that as a result, some readers are watching our live or recorded worship. Prior to COVID, we were getting 40-45 people in attendance. Now, we are getting 30-35 in person and an additional 15-30 views of our service on YouTube. No matter how you add it up, our numbers are higher and we suspect the ads are playing a significant role.

FUNDING NEED

The session of the congregation is eager to continue the ads. The 2023 estimated cost is \$3,828. A *Herald* ¼ page ad will cost \$150 + HST in 2023. Annual cost: \$2,034, tax in. *Coffee Times* is a weekly tri-fold newsletter distributed to restaurants – 2.5 x 2 inches ad costs \$30 + \$4.50 HST per insertion = \$1,794 per year tax in. Total cost of ads: \$3,828.00

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The Synod of Southwestern Ontario has granted \$1,000 towards this. We tried the national church (Canadian Ministries) for other sources for funding but this doesn't meet any criteria. We also applied to the Cooke's Fund (Presbytery of East Toronto). They require our application to be approved by our presbytery. They won't consider applications until sometime early in the new year.

The bottom line is that we have a funding shortfall of \$1,828. We could apply to the Cooke's Fund with presbytery's approval, but that's an unknown.

REQUEST TO PRESBYTERY

We are respectfully seeking a grant of \$1,828 from the Presbytery Emergent Support Fund. The request is made under item 2 in the fund's eligibility criteria: "To support a Mission Plan in the community or beyond." The Emergent Support Fund is not designed to be for one-time funding, unlike the presbytery's Congregation Support Fund.

At a meeting of session on October 4, 2022, the following motion was approved:

"That session of St. Andrew's Dresden requests funds from the Presbytery of Essex Kent for the 2023 Gospel Ad campaign."

Failing that, session requests that presbytery endorse its application to the Cooke's Fund.

Submitted for your prayerful consideration.

RECOMMENDATION 5: That the request in the amount of \$1.828.00 be granted from the Emergent Fund

Moved by Sargent and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED

Admin committee matters -- updates

1. Presbytery website – A. Cornell

Wayne Sankarlal (www.it4worship.com) has been contracted to set this up.

<https://pccweb.ca/essex-kent-presbytery/>

The original plan was to have the draft website ready for inspection and comments in time for our November presbytery meeting. However, Wayne has informed us that there are technical issues with the PCCWeb platform which IT people are trying to sort out. Stay tuned.

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2. General presbyter position – A. Cornell

A proposal to create this position was received by presbytery in September. It was referred to sessions for consideration. The committee has received no concerns. The committee is surveying clergy immediately to determine how this role would help them in order to develop a job description. The hope is to receive feedback and provide a report for presbytery. Only two responses received to date. Clergy encouraged to respond. Shalini will resend the form.

3. LSA special visitation –

Questionnaire was sent in early October and responses have been sent to the convenor. Sadly, one of the team members, Mike Currie, passed away unexpectedly in October. The convenor asked St. Andrew's Dresden clerk and rep elder Mark Labadie to join the visitation team to replace Mike Currie. Mark has kindly agreed to join the team.

RECOMMENDATION 6: That Mark Labadie be named to the Visitation Team into LSA, in place of the late Mr. Mike Currie.

Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.

4. LSA Interim Moderator

Admin was given power to issue in the spring. Rev. Chris Little from Paris Presbytery has agreed to take this on as of Nov. 1. Paris clerk/mod reached out for a meeting with Essex-Kent mod and clerk to take place prior to Nov. 1. Handover tentatively Nov. 2 at LSA Session. There's also a question of whether the new interim mod should be appointed to the roll of Essex-Kent.

There's an additional question as to whether he should or can be appointed as an assessor presbyter. The clerk is looking into that in consultation with the clerks of Assembly.

FYI – The Clerk corresponded with Deputy Clerk Don Muir who advised Synod needs to make the appointment across presbytery boundaries. The following motion was adopted by the Executive of the Synod of Southwestern Ontario.

The Executive of the Synod of Southwestern Ontario appoints the Rev. Chris Little as an assessor elder the Presbytery of Essex-Kent and sustain his appointment as Interim Moderator to Lakeshore-St. Andrews Presbyterian Church as of Nov. 2, 2022, with his name added to the

appendix of the Presbytery roll with voice but without vote moved by Curtis Bablitz,
seconded by Jon Van Den Berg

RECOMMENDATION 7: That presbytery affirm the actions of the Administration Committee in appointing Rev. Chris Little as Interim Moderator for Lakeshore St. Andrew's, effective Dec. 1, 2022 and renewable on an annual basis (each November).

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

RECOMMENDATION 8: That the name of Rev. Chris Little be added to the Appendix of the Roll of the Presbytery of Essex-Kent and that he be granted voice but no voting privileges.

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

Recommendation 9 – that Andy Cornell be relieved of his duties as Interim Moderator for LSA as of November 30, 2022.

Moved by Brown and Murdock. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. Review of standing orders –

The Administration Committee met for a special meeting Oct. 26 at the home of Barb Sargent. We worked through the first 4-5 sections. We will continue the discussion on Jan. 17 and take into consideration the input from existing committees. Also for discussion is the role of a deputy clerk.

RECOMMENDATION 9: That the standing orders be immediately revised to allow the past moderator to be named as a member of the Admin Committee effective immediately.

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

Examination of session records –

November 2022 – Amherstburg, Dresden

February 2022 – NSA Dover, LSA, Paulin

April 2023 – First Chatham, UCC

June 2023 – Mt. Zion, Valetta

To provide consistency, Administration Committee is proposing that the same two people review all session minutes in this current round of review.

RECOMMENDATION: 10: That Rev. Lisa Aide, Alison Brown and Bob MacVicar be named the

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Committee to Examine Session Records for the duration of the current schedule 2022-2023.
 Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.

TREASURER’S REPORT – Rev. Chuck Congram

INCOME	2022	2023	Notes
1. Synod Dues	22,013.00	21,437.28	Note 1
2. Presbytery Dues	6,100.00	16,226.92	Note 2
3. Offerings/Other Income	7,000.00	7,000.00	
Income Total	35,113.00	44,664.20	
Budgeted Expenses			
1. Synod Dues	22,013.00	21,443.00	
2. Presbytery Travel	5,000.00	5,000.00	Note 3
3. Committee Expenses			
a. Life and Mission	300.00	300.00	
b. Ministry and Doctrine	300.00	300.00	
c. Sexual Abuse/Harassment	300.00	300.00	
4. General Assembly Meals	1,300.00	1,900.00	
5. Honoraria			
a. Clerk	5,000.00	5,000.00	
b. Treasurer	1,000.00	1,000.00	
6. Other Expenses			
a. Clerk	700.00	1,300.00	
b. Treasurer	150.00	150.00	
c. PCC Insurance	1,600.00	1,800.00	
d. Police Checks	400.00	400.00	
7. Bank Service Charges	25.00	25.00	
BUDGETED EXPENSE TOTAL	38,113.00	38,918.00	

Notes for the 2023 Presbytery Budget.

Note 1: The Synod dues include Knox, Leamington. Without that the amount would be \$19,652.20. The options I see for our presbytery are as follows:

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- A. Appeal the amount to Synod.
- B. Pay the Synod dues minus the Knox amount.
- C. Pay the Knox share out of monies being received from the sale of their assets.
- D. Allocate the full amount among the remaining congregations. Some examples of the difference that would make are Amherstburg would go from \$887.77 to \$958.63, 1st Church Chatham would go from \$3220.20 to \$3473.76, New St. Andrew's would go from \$352.17 to \$378.50 and Lakeshore St. Andrews would go from \$8,694.26 to \$9,380.16

Note 2: We provided a one-year relief from full presbytery dues but this year will need to allocate the entire amount.

Note 3: For presbytery travel I recommend we pay \$.90 per kilometre one way instead of current \$1.

**RECOMMENDATION 11: That the Treasurer's Report be adopted as presented. –
Current balance – \$173,355.018.**

Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.

RECOMMENDATION 12: That Leamington Synod Dues for 2023 be paid from the funds received from the sale of the building and that the 2024 dues be appealed.

Moved by Sargent and Streptak. MOTION CARRIED.

RECOMMENDATION 13. That the reimbursement for mileage revert back to \$.90/km one way from \$1.00/km one way as agreed upon for 2022, as of January 1, 2023.

Moved by Murdock and Maroney. MOTION CARRIED.

**Rev. Chris Little thanked the court for confidence in his assigned task –
He commented that in his role as general presbytery of Paris Presbytery, he pastors to the pastors and that is a task that might be included in the job description for general presbyter for this presbytery.**

RECOMMENDATION 14: REPORT AS A WHOLE –

Moved by Cornell and Murdock. MOTION CARRIED.

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Ministry and Doctrine Report for Presbytery November 15th, 2022

M & D met via Zoom on November 1st, 2022, at 1pm.
(The contents of this report have been updated since that time.)

Report presented by Rev. Mike Maroney

1. Knox Leamington Update:

- Knox Leamington's sale was cash (\$1.5 Million and with no restrictions) was closed on October 6th.
- Tim and Bob MacVicar have stored archival/historical material temporarily at Paulin Memorial. This will be sorted soon.
- The general account of Knox is still open, and the Treasurer is still processing various outstanding bills. Therefore, do not expect the money at Presbytery for sometime yet!

2. Study Leave Updates.

- a. Rev. Mike Maroney Study Leave report is given below and Rev. *Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal's* Study Leave report will be presented orally at Presbytery.
 - i. Get report from Shalini
- b. No Study Leave requests have been received.

Recommendation 1: That Presbytery receive the above study leave reports.

Moved by Maroney and Streptak. MOTION CARRIED.

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Tim Reddish, Convener of Ministry and Doctrine Committee.

Study Leave Report by Rev. M. Maroney

I spent my study leave at Crieff Hills Community, and read the book "A Curious Faith," by Lore Ferguson Wilbert. It would be fair to categorize this book as an exercise in spiritual guidance. It is, to put it simply, a book of questions that gently guides readers in an exploration of their understanding of God. The author admits that she has left behind some of her conservative church background with its inclination to see things in rigid and unflinching

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categories. And yet, this is not an “anything goes” approach to God, but a sincere desire to understand God in the face of the ups and downs of life.

There are many reviews online for this book that will do a better job than I can, so I encourage you to read them should you consider buying this book. I started reading this book with some doubts. I thought it would be wishy-washy (the equally unpalatable opposite of the rigidity of some conservative thinking), but I found it spoke to me. In the middle of so much extremism, polarization, and name-calling in our world today, (of which I too easily do myself) it was a reminder that soft edges to life and faith abound, and that they are not devoid of God. On the contrary – it is in our vulnerability and openness that God can be found most visibly.

I also spent my time planning my message series through to June and walking the trails at Crieff Hills. The latter is usually an extended time of prayer, even if I am admiring the sunlight or the color of the leaves. I have gone to Crieff for study leaves for most of my ministry. In some ways there is no way to give a tangible report of what happens on my week away. I’ve come to understand it as a recalibration of heart, mind, and soul. These times away have helped me navigate the seasons of both joy and sorrow I have been through since my ordination in 2004. I am grateful for this time away, not just to rest, but to find God in the middle of my changing circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Maroney

Study Leave report – Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal

Brian McLaren about “Do I Stay Christian?”

Do I Stay Christian?

Comes in three parts.

In these first chapters McLaren honestly addresses the way in which Christianity has been and is harmful to human beings, societies, and the world in which we dwell. These are things we need to confess if we are to move toward being authentically Christ-like.

For example, of the history of Christian anti-Semitism (chapter 1), colonialism (chapter 3), patriarchy (chapter 6).

From a North American point of view and specifically American he cites an anti-intellectual streak that rejects science and encourages poisonous politics; and an aging demographic that trends toward regressive views. Other arguments could be added, including traditional theistic theology which no longer rings true for a growing number of people in the twenty-first century.

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In part two, McLaren lays out ten reasons for remaining Christian. In these chapters, McLaren seeks to carve out space for those who are inclined to remain a Christian, though never with a sense of triumphalism.

For example, he argues that leaving hurts the people who are trying to transform Christianity into something better, and they need our help, not our abandonment. And if we stay, we can fight for a better faith from the inside, providing critique and energy for reformation. Also, rather than going it alone, we need the help of a global network of like-minded people to make the world better. He also notes that Christianity is still young, historically speaking, and needs more time to mature and improve.

McLaren encourages us to stay Christian because of our love for Jesus and because all religions (like all humans) are imperfect.

My instinct is that most people struggling with faith will find part one (leave) more convincing than part two (stay). However, for those on the fence looking for more reasons to stay than to go, part two will prove helpful.

In Part 3, McLaren shifts to the third and final section of his book. He begins by asking, “Will we stay Christian? and Will Christianity survive? It has a humanist approach to it.

McLaren calls for a radical redefinition of Christianity.

He says, “I could not stay a Christian if my only option was the old way, the old way of white Christianity, the old way of patriarchal Christianity, the old way of theo-Capitalistic Christianity; the old way of violent, exclusive, and authoritarian Christianity with its suppressed but real history of cruelty.”

He notes things like “For most Christians I encounter today, beliefs are simply what Christianity is. If I point out that in its early years, Christianity was a way of life, not a set of beliefs, they will protest that it was both, and the beliefs had priority.

If I point out that the earliest Christians were widely divergent in their beliefs, they are surprised and doubtful; that’s not what they have been taught.” (p. 54)

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While McLaren is certainly correct to note that Christianity was and is a way of life, he does fail to acknowledge that way of life has always been centered on a relationship that is framed in terms of *specific beliefs*.

He then moves to vintage “new kind of Christian” Brian McLaren fare. He says “*I am learning to be content whatever I am called, as long as I remain passionately eager to embody a way of being human that is pro-justice, pro-kindness, and pro-humility. You have that permission too, if you would like it.*”

His closing words are, “*A new humanity—humble, just and kind—can be born. Can you imagine that, fellow human?*”

For so many people who are not looking for easy, black and white answers, with the just tell me what to believe perspective, this book will give them something to reflect on.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – REPORT AS A WHOLE – Mike and Wendy – carried

LIFE AND MISSION REPORT TO NOVEMBER 2022 PRESBYTERY
Barb Sargent - convenor

The Life and Mission Committee met on October 27, 2022 at Valetta Presbyterian Church. The meeting opened with prayer. Our first task was to review the Standing Orders for the committee. A few revisions were made and have been sent to the Administration Committee for their approval.

The committee discussed priorities for 2023 and we identified the following.

1. Refine the Presbytery Visitation Process developed by the former committee to meet the post-pandemic realities and setting up a schedule for Presbytery Visitations.
2. Assist Congregations in Creating Strategic Plans. As a result of the pandemic and the changes we are seeing in our Congregations, we hope to hold a Workshop to help with this process.

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The committee then reviewed the Visitation plans from the former committee. We made some revisions and then set out a schedule for regular Presbytery visits to congregations. Appendix A and B contain the information for the Congregations and the Visitation Teams.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the following schedule for Congregational Visits for 2023 be: -

- 1. The month of February – St Andrew’s Dresden.***

Team Members: Rev Lisa Aide, Jane Lung, Sandra Smith

- 2. The months of September – October***

First Presbyterian Chatham

Team Members: Rev Shirley Murdock, Jayne Broughton, Brian Stirling

Paulin Memorial

Team Members: Rev Mike Maroney, Carolyn Reid, Wendy Skreptak

Moved by Sargent and Smith. MOTION CARRIED.

Congregational Visits for 2024 and 2025 are tentatively set. Team members will be named at a later date.

2024 -Mount Zion, New St Andrew’s Dover, Valetta

2025 - Knox Wallaceburg, St Andrew’s Amherstburg, University Community Church

The meeting closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Barbara Sargent - Convenor

APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR REGULAR CONGREGATIONAL VISITATION WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY OF ESSEX KENT.

Preamble:

With the continuing side-lining of Christian practice from the mainstream and with the number of congregations going through hardships, it is important that the Presbytery reach out to and form relationships with its congregations in order to provide support and encouragement for ministry in contexts that are unique. We can act as islands in our uniqueness, but there is much to be said in sharing our success and our struggles and learning with and from one another. There is also much to be gained from the unity of Christians as we seek to live out and share the

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Gospel of Christ. Therefore, the Presbytery is seeking to strengthen its relationships with the congregations in its bounds and encouraging them to benefit from one another.

Goals

To strengthen the bonds between Presbytery and Congregations.

To re-establish a connection between the Presbytery and its congregations and, where necessary enact a healing process, {recognising that Presbytery has been absent for a long time except when there has been conflict or crisis}.

To identify and accommodate healing of conflicts where necessary.

To learn from one another and to share our congregational successes.

To celebrate positive events and ministry occurring in congregations.

To help identify congregational challenges, common and uncommon that are faced.

To help identify available resources to assist one another from all levels of our church, in addition to those outside our denomination.

To identify problems before they become a major crisis.

To help congregations identify their unique profile and culture and how it may enable or hinder their ministry.

Visitation

1. Each Congregation will be visited at least once within a three-year period.
2. The first visit to a congregation will, where necessary, focus on reconnecting with Presbytery. We will confess our negligence in this task and seek forgiveness.
3. We assure congregations that we are there to be of assistance.
4. We will introduce Presbytery and its role to congregations that may be oblivious and/or indifferent, seeking to listen as to how Presbytery can better support the congregations in its bounds.
5. The first visit is a benchmark to set the scene as a snapshot, from which further visits can discern change.
6. Visitation Team will ensure they have spoken with the Minister and {if applicable and mutually agreeable} his/her spouse and family; Session and Board of Management; Staff; Congregation; Youth {where applicable}.

Visitation Team Composition and Process

1. Visitation Teams will be composed of members of presbytery and willing elders from Congregations within the Presbytery; three persons consisting of at least one Minister and one ruling elder and will not be from their own congregations. Efforts will be made to ensure teams express diversity along lines of gender, age and geographic location.

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2. Ruling Ministers or Elders who are not Presbytery Representatives or who are on the “Appendix to the Roll” of Presbytery may be selected for this purpose.
3. The Life and Mission Committee will be responsible for maintaining a schedule of congregational visits each year, in addition to composition of the visitation teams.
4. Teams are responsible for contacting the congregation session to arrange the visit at a time that is mutually agreeable. Major Church events such as Advent, Lent, summer months and any other busy seasons need to be avoided.
5. The Visitation teams report will be submitted to the Minister and Session before being circulated to the presbytery through the Life and Mission Committee. Reports are to be submitted to Presbytery no later than the first meeting following the congregational visitation. i.e.) a visit occurs in June then the report is presented no later than the September Presbytery meeting; a visit in October, no later than the November meeting etc.

Visitation Content

1. Visitations seek the general sense of the health of the congregation, its leadership, its pastor and the relationships of the three.
2. Visitations are pastoral in nature, inviting honesty, truth telling and seeking to celebrate successes, share empathy and where possible counsel, {keeping in mind that the team is not a counsellor} for their struggles. Their role is to provide recommendation to Presbytery and for Presbytery to offer counsel.
3. Visits will focus on the Ministry of Congregation in five key areas:
 - a. Worship
 - b. Discipleship
 - c. Fellowship
 - d. Service
 - e. Evangelism
4. If necessary, the visitation highlights any concerns or potential issues that may impact the Congregation, so Presbytery may be aware in advance or propose aid.
5. A visitation team will also highlight the successes of a congregation and its efforts to impact the local community with the gospel of Christ.

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Dear Clerk of Session,

The Presbytery of Essex Kent, Life and Mission Committee will begin a new process of regular visitation to all the congregations within its boundary, over the next 3 years. The principal reason to begin regular visitations is to strengthen the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery and to get a deeper understanding of the dynamic ministry your congregation provides to its members and the community it serves.

The Spirit of God discerns within a community of believers. These bodies are interdependent relationships of responsibility and accountability to one another. This affirms the way we govern and that we are colleagues with equal voice and vote.

1. The goal of these visits, as approved by Presbytery, are as follows:
2. To re-establish a connection between the Presbytery and your congregations.
3. To learn from one another, sharing your unique congregational successes.
4. To help congregations identify their unique profile and culture, and how it enables or hinders their ministry.
5. To help identify challenges, common and uncommon.
6. To identify available resources to share with the church community.

The process for the Presbytery visits is as follows:

The Presbytery appoints a team of 3 Presbyters {not of your congregation/name the team} to visit. The team

The date will be mutually agreed with the visitation team and your session, taking place on a Sunday, beginning with worship service, followed by arranged meetings with the minister, session, congregation, board of managers, finance and/or property and any additional groups as suggested. To facilitate the visitation process and time sensitive to the one-day schedule for meetings, questionnaires are developed for each group to be completed prior to the visitation. Understanding your ministry will focus on key components, i.e.) worship, discipleship, fellowship, service and evangelism, in addition to any other components you may wish to include. This will help the visitation team to better understand the unique ways in which you have been called to the ministry work in your context.

Once the questionnaires have been distributed and collected, we request that they are returned to the convenor {name, address, email} and a copy of your annual report included if available. Following the visit, the Visitation Team will forward a report to the Life and Mission Committee for review and then forward the report to the Presbytery meeting closest to the date of the visitation. You will receive the report first to be allowed to comment before it is presented to the Presbytery.

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk

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Our hope and prayer is to establish regular visitations to develop greater communication, strengthen the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery, being responsible for one another and keeping us connected so we are not alone when we face challenges but also to celebrate your ministry to your unique community.

DATE OF THE VISITATION _____

VISITATION

TEAM _____

NAME OF THE CONVENOR _____

CONTACT INFORMATION OF
CONVENOR _____

DUE DATE FOR COMPLETION OF
SURVEYS _____



PRESBYTERY OF ESSEX-KENT

**FOR COMPLETION BY ALL MEMBERS AND ADHERENTS OF THE
CONGREGATION**

Part 1

A. Congregational Life

1. I am glad that I am part of this congregation.

Always Usually Seldom

2. I participate in a group or committee within the congregation. Yes

No

B. Mission

1. I am excited about what God is doing in and through this congregation.

Always Usually Seldom

2. I support Presbyterians Sharing Yes

No

3. I am well informed about Presbyterians Sharing Yes

No

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C. Pastoral Care

- 1. I am satisfied with the quality of pastoral care and the frequency of contacts and visits by the minister, elders or others of the congregation.
 Always Usually Seldom
- 2. I am confident that I can call on my elder for pastoral care. Yes No

D. Worship

- 1. God speaks to me through the sermons
 Always Usually Seldom
- 2. I find the music inspirational
 Always Usually Seldom
- 3. I find that there is a variety of music in our worship.
Always Usually Seldom
- 4. I think that the congregation is friendly and welcoming to newcomers.
Always Usually Seldom
- 5. My average attendance at worship is **1 2 3 4** times per month (circle one)

Part II

- 1. From what do you gain the most satisfaction from being a part of this congregation?

- 2. What do you find is least satisfying?

- 3. Identify any problem or need which you think should be addressed as a result of this visitation?

- 4. Identify any wish or dream that you have for this congregation.
-

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5. Use the space below or the reverse side for any additional comments.
-
-

You need not sign this survey

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE VISITATION TEAM

Worship

1. Does our worship allow people to encounter God corporately and in their day to day lives?
2. Do we express our dependence on God and our gratitude for all that God has done for us?
3. Is our membership (on the roll, including adherents) accurately reflected in those regularly attending worship? (How are those who are unable to attend worship included in the worship life of the community?)
4. What is the focus of our worship?
5. What are the biblical or theological bases for why we worship the way we do? (order of service, liturgy used, styles of music)?
6. Are our resources (people and finances) for worship internal or external to the church?
7. How is our worship supported?
8. How are we ensuring that we have ongoing faithful leadership in worship? (Not just the minister).

Discipleship

1. Does our church provide opportunities for all of its members to be equipped with practical guidance for living one's faith in the world during the week? (A helpful exercise here is to look at the various age groups in the congregation and ask the question for each group individually. Is there a group or demographic that is being left out?)
2. Are there areas of discipleship requiring further training or resources?
3. Are discipleship training opportunities happening on an ongoing or a sporadic basis? Why?
4. Listen to coffee hour conversations. How do people in our congregation talk about the role their faith has in their life during the week? What is different in these conversations from a year ago?

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5. Are our resources (people and finances) for discipleship and equipping disciples internal or external to the church?
6. How are our discipleship ministries supported?
7. How are we ensuring that we have ongoing faithful leadership in equipping disciples? (Not just the minister or the session).

Fellowship

1. How does our congregation share the love of God and God's grace in and through God's people?
2. What opportunities does a newcomer or an older member have to intentionally be in community to experience the love of God? (Please note: the intentionality of sharing GOD's love, not just a social time, is crucial to differentiating the church from other organizations).
3. How does our congregation integrate new members into the community of faith (from the time they walk through the door until they grow in faith to maturity)?
4. Are our resources (people and finances) for fellowship, internal or external to the church?
5. How are our fellowship ministries (including pastoral care) supported?
6. How are we ensuring that we have ongoing faithful leadership in creating and maintaining opportunities for fellowship? (Not just the minister or the session).

Service

1. What opportunities for service in Jesus' name is our congregation involved in? (List both those things to which you contribute monetarily and those things which involve people hours.)
2. Do people in the community (not regular members or adherents) know that our church meets needs and heals hurts in Jesus' name? Do our members and adherents know this?
3. How much of the church's purpose of service is done by members or adherents in the community outside of the church walls?
4. What needs exist in our community or on a wider scale for service in Jesus' name? (This may involve some door-knocking and looking at previous census data or community studies)

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5. What are the emerging needs in our community (things for which the congregation can start preparing for two or three years down the road)?
6. Are our resources (people and finances) for service internal or external to the church?
7. How are our service ministries supported?
8. How are we ensuring that we have ongoing faithful leadership in creating and maintaining opportunities for service in Jesus' name? (Not just the minister or the session).

Evangelism

1. How are those in leadership of our church witnesses to what they have seen and known to be true of God in their lives?
2. Where (or to what demographic) is our evangelism focus? How does this focus reflect the community environment in which God has placed us?
3. What are the primary means for evangelism we do (so that people can grow as disciples of Christ)?
4. How do we provide follow-up for the evangelism we do (so that people can grow as disciples of Christ)?
5. Are our resources (people and finances) for evangelism internal or external to the church?
6. How are our evangelism ministries supported?
7. How are we ensuring that we have ongoing faithful leadership for evangelism in our community? (Not just the minister or the session)

Recommendation 2

That the Revised Visitation Guidelines as outlined above be adopted as presented and included in the Appendix to the Standing Orders.

Moved by Sargent and Smith. MOTION CARRIED.

Recommendation 3 – REPORT AS A WHOLE

Moved by Sargent and Skreptak. MOTION CARRIED.

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk

CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM
Prepared by Andrew Templer
Presented by Rev. Mike Maroney

Funding Requests Received

We received an emailed request (23rd Oct. 2022) from Robert Ivison, Clerk of Session of Valetta Presbyterian Church for the funds to support a wireless system to support their worship service and other events in the life of their church. This equipment would provide a wireless supplement to the equipment already in place that the Congregational Support Team supported in 2018. The Clerk emphasized that the church continues to be grateful for this Presbytery financial support but requires the additional equipment as they no longer can use the personal equipment supplied by their previous worship leader, Rev. Jason Cartier. Their request and a quote from Musical Strings n' Things (Chatham) is attached.

Detailed Support Requested:

Total Cost: \$577.53 inc. HST \$66.44 Amt. Requested: (whatever we can give)

Note: They were willing to share the cost if required.

CST Deliberation

The CST discussed this request via several email exchanges on the 28th October. The request is similar to several received in the past year and based on a quote from the vendor, Musical Strings 'n Things used before.

Given the relatively small amount requested, the CST members decided to fully fund the request. We unanimously moved a motion* to bring forward the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1:

That Presbytery approve a grant of \$577.53 from the Congregational Support Fund to enable Valetta Presbyterian Church to add a wireless system to their worship technology. Within one year, Valetta shall provide a report to Presbytery to evaluate the use of this technology and include a financial statement confirming the total costs.

Moved by Maroney and Skreptak. MOTION CARRIED.

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock – Clerk

RECOMMENDATION 2 – REPORT AS A WHOLE

Moved by Maroney and Skreptak. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS OF INTERIM MODERATORS

a. Rev. A. Cornell – LSA

Final report from Rev. Andrew Cornell

I'm pleased to report that elder nominations this fall resulted in several prospects. Session is discerning. Lead pastor Brian McGuffin can speak to what's going on in the congregation. My time as interim moderator has come to an end. We are blessed that Rev. Chris Little of the Presbytery of Paris has agreed to step in. Chris is familiar with LSA and its history and until recently he pastored a similar-sized congregation. He is a man of great wisdom, faith and ability.

I am genuinely grateful for the experience of leading session the past four years. I worked with faithful and gifted people. We wrestled with significant challenges and remained standing. I have learned and grown. I pray that LSA will find peace and be a powerful Kingdom presence for a new generation.

RECOMMENDATION: That Travel Expenses with lodging as needed for Rev. Chris Little be paid by Presbytery.

Moved by Cornell and Skreptak. MOTION CARRIED

LSA Visitation – Rev. Mike Maroney reported that questionnaire responses have been received and are being reviewed. The Visitation Team is working with the IM and Session to arrange a meeting with the congregation and session. FYI

b. Rev. A. Cornell -- Ridgetown Mt. Zion

Pulpit supply continues from Rev. Colin Paterson, Rev. Lillian Wilton, Rev. Doug Cameron, Cathie Cameron and Mary Pat Elliot. Members of session lead worship and provide messages on occasion. Session continues to meet approximately every six weeks or as needed. It's a blessing to work with Clerk Phyllis May, rep elder Bryan Stirling and elder Renee Geluk. They are allowing a local agency which helps the homeless to use the kitchen and are consulting with the congregation on whether to expand that partnership.

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C. Rev. Mike Maroney - New St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church:

NSA continues to thrive with Services arranged for pulpit supply, Rev Ken Powell filling 3

Sunday's a month and, Marc Reid and Doug and Cathy Cameron supplying when needed. Rev Ken Powell is doing a Bible study, beginning Nov 10th on Thursday at 10 am. Attendance is still low but consistent with key members contributing offerings. Concern is growing over Covid increasing cases which may impact attendance and increased restrictions.

We had a successful "drive thru" Halloween party with 35 treat bags distributed. A take out only Broasted Chicken Dinner takes place on Nov 20th, again a drive through fund raiser. Our gratitude to Presbytery for granting funds for upgrading our tech media system by Musical Strings and things. We are awaiting held up back ordered parts to complete this needed project.

This advent we will celebrate our Sharing tree lighting and celebration for our members. It will be the 25th anniversary of this event with the tree planted by Don and Marie Parry in memory of their daughter Barbara, decorated each year for Barbara and relatives and friends of our church community.

Submitted
Sandra Smith

Rev. Mike Maroney - St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Amherstburg:

St. Andrew's is served well by the pulpit supply provided by Rev. Shirley Murdock and Rev. Olwyn Coughlin. A successful rummage sale took place – the first one since Covid began. The choir is singing again in the services.

The church's congregational profile was sent to head office. The search team has met a couple of times and has begun receiving profiles. We are in the process of reviewing them.

d. Rev. Lisa Aide -- Knox Wallaceburg – No Report.

Barb Sargent reported on the pantry advising the pantry was running out of food.

Organizers did not want to limit quantities to clients. Donations have been received from the municipality and other churches in town. Thanks to God.

e. Rev. Shirley Murdock – Valetta

Valetta Presbyterian Church continues to provide regular Sunday Worship with pulpit supply being arranged into April of 2023 when it is anticipated Sarah Stockford will return to them. Thanks is extended to Jason Cartier, Ward Armitage, Rev. Lillian. Wilton and Rev. Nancy Carle for agreeing to supply the pulpit. Rev. Nancy will do all of Advent. The Session has agreed not

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to host a Christmas Day Service. Christmas Eve Service will be at 10:30am. Session has attained more comfortable and secure arm chairs for use during worship. They have requested financial assistance from the Congregational Support Team to purchase a new remote mic system. During the month of November, the congregation will be gathering non-perishable food stuffs for both the Tilbury and Merlin Food Banks. On World Communion Sunday they welcomed Carolyn Reid as a new member. Sunday School, WMS and Church Help Group have resumed in-person meetings. Session is scheduled to meet Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 10:00am.

Card Ministry – Bonnie Pittock – NO REPORT

Synod of Southwestern Ontario
Friday, October 21, 2022
1:00pm via ZOOM

Call to Order and Constitution

The Synod of Southwestern Ontario was called to Order by Moderator Rev. Curtis Bablitz at 1:00pm on Friday, October 21, 2022. This meeting was held via Zoom.

Rev. Bablitz read from Isaiah 11 (A shoot shall come up from the stump of Jesse) and spoke on the Promise of Hope that is grounded in a Loving God who is able to transform His people into a church that continuously branches upward and outward according to God's master plan.

Roll Call as reported by the Clerk Rev. Mark McLennan registered 30+ attendees. Regrets were received from the Chair of the Kintail Board, Scott McGinnis. Margaret McGugan was welcomed as WMS President of Synodical.

ELECTION and INSTALLATION OF NEW MODERATOR

Rev. Gwen Ament was duly elected and installed as Moderator of the 149th Synod. Rev. Gwen has served St. Mary's Presbyterian Church for the last 13 years. She graciously expressed thanks and appreciation for the work of the out-going Moderator Rev. Bablitz.

SYNOD EXECUTIVE REPORT

- 1) Minutes of the 148th Synod were adopted as presented by the Clerk
- 2) A Consent Agenda was moved by Curtis and Van Den Berg
 - a) Receive and consider reports of Standing and Special Committees
 - b) Receive and consider reports of expenditures of Synod funds

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- c) Hours of meeting be as outlined in the agenda
 - d) Committee to Advise the Moderator be past Moderator and Clerk
 - e) Presbytery Minutes NOT be examined this year
 - f) Committee on Courtesies be set aside for this year
- 3) Approval of Grant to Canadian Ministries for Regional Resourcing be \$61,000 for 2023 and 2024 (due to deadlines for applications)
- 4) Correspondence
- a) APCE grants are available
 - b) Ministerial Assistance applications
 - c) GA Committee to Nominate – Rev. Mike Burns appointed Synod Clergy Rep.

CAMP KINTAIL REPORT

In the absence of the Chair of the Kintail Board, Rev. Theresa MacDonald reported that the Board had no recommendations for Synod this year and advised the Board does meet regularly.

Rev. Theresa presented a short video – one second for each day of summer camp.

In-person Summer Camps did happen this year, with a waiting list for most camps. There were 75 staff members, only five of which had experienced leadership in overnight camping. The camp sustained six cases of Covid but did not experience any spread of the virus.

Numerous school groups have taken advantage of the facilities in spring and fall.

Some weddings have been performed on-site.

Monthly Sunday Suppers resumed in July with approximately 250 people attending.

Kirk in the Cedars – the original name of the chapel – offers monthly worship events

A new Boat House on the beach now connects the previous boat houses and provides extended deck areas.

Rev. Theresa ended her report by writing ... *"It was a good and hard year at Camp Kintail.. It is going to take several more years until everything is running at full speed, and this is especially true as we work to recruit and retain staff. But the challenge is worth the work when we can hear the campers who come for fun, friendship and faith. Praise the Lord!"*

WMS REPORT – Margaret McGugan

The WMS celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2022.

In 2023, April 18/19, a gathering will take place at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Simcoe called Renew, Restore and Refresh.

Pocket Prayer Shawls with notes and prayers attached have become an updated project of the Society. 1,500 have been knit or crocheted to date. These are being sent to Cuba and the Ukraine, along with medical supplies. The prayers are translated in the appropriate languages.

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The Society notes the 150th Anniversary of the Rev. George Leslie MacKay as missionary to Taiwan.

Most auxiliaries continued to meet via Zoom during Covid and many are beginning to return to in-person meetings. The future of the organization is of great concern to members with general agreement that the Society continue as an organization of the PCC

CREATIVE MINISTRIES – Rev. John Van Den Berg

“This year has been another one of innovation and creativity. Covid-19 has both pushed and encouraged congregations to look outside the box and their walls. It has produced space to move away from the traditional and tried and true forms of ministry into a variety of exciting and original forms of mission.”

Five grants were provided for a total of \$23,000.00 in 2022

McNabb Street Church Cross Country Kids \$5,000.00 + \$2,000.00 Synod Exec.

LSA Summer Program \$5,000.00

St. Paul’s Carluke \$5,000.00

St. Andrews Dresden \$1,000.00

Dorchester TOTs and Caregivers Outreach and technical upgrades \$5,000.00

Congregations receiving Ukraine Refugees can apply for \$1,000.00

Recommendations for 2023:

Huron Feathers Ministry \$15,000.00

Brock University Chaplain \$5,000.00

MacMaster University Chaplain \$5,000.00 when a new Ecumenical Christian Chaplain has been hired.

Synod Workshop \$2,000.00 – Needs Against Wants and Desires – focusing on what Covid has taught us about technological needs for all aspects of ministry. Further information will be made available as plans are confirmed.

Committee Budget for travel/expenses \$400.00

Above recommendations duly moved, seconded and adopted.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Brad Knight

The 2022 Financial Statement and 2023 Proposed Budget were adopted as presented.

Presbytery Allocations remain at \$200,000.00. It was acknowledged there are fewer churches to pay up and the current shortfall is being absorbed by Synod reserve funds. Camp Kintail eats up 90% of the budget. Camp Kintail is the ministry and purpose of this Synod. The Executive will continue to watch carefully how funds are received and disbursed, understanding a change in formula might well need to be considered in the not-too-distant future. Total deficit for 2023 will be \$68,586.00. Assets total \$258,501.00

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COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE

It was duly moved, seconded and adopted that Rev. Mikal Schomburg of Simcoe be nominated as Moderator of Synod in 2023.

DATE OF NEXT SYNOD

Friday, October 20, 2023, yet to be determined if via Zoom or in-person.

The Synod of Southwestern Ontario was closed with prayer by Moderator Rev. Gwen Ament and dismissed at 2:47pm.

Comments from Paul Appler – Elder Commissioner UCC

From personal reflection, taking into account my past and current career life, I have experienced and endured slow drawn-out meetings which did not need to be so. I can clearly and honestly report that this was not the case for our Southwestern Ontario Synod meeting. I appreciated the efficiency of delivering detailed events in the timely manner as they were presented. There was an ambassador's sense of community and orderly conduct throughout the meeting and I was honored to be invited to the good work being carried out.

Our thanks to the Presbytery of Essex-Kent for the opportunity to attend and report on the 149th Synod of Southwestern Ontario.

Full reports are available from the clerk, if anyone is interested in further details.

Respectfully Submitted

Mr. Paul Appler, Elder Commissioner – University Community Church, Windsor
Rev. Shirley F. Murdock, Clergy Commissioner

OTHER BUSINESS

Committee to Examine Session Minutes

Alison Brown reported the following -
Dresden – neatly and correctly kept with notes –
Amherstburg – neatly and correctly kept with notes –

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MOTION: That three ring binders be acceptable for housing Session Minutes until permanent binding is arranged.

Moved by Maroney and Sargent. MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT MEETINGS

Committees – Week of January 29, 2023

Administration Committee – Tuesday, February 7, First Church Chatham – 1:00pm

Presbytery – Tuesday, February 21, 2023 within Paulin Memorial, Windsor

FURTHER MEETINGS of PRESBYTERY

April 18, 2023 at Valetta

June 20, 2023 at Lakeshore St. Andrew's

Rev. Chuck Congram announced he had been contacted by the new owners of Knox, Leamington advising they would soon provide a list of items available to other congregations. Rev. Congram will forward the list to the Clerk who will subsequently forward to Presbyters.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Moved by Maroney and Brown.

MOTION CARRIED.

The Court stands adjourned to meet next in Regular Session on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 within Paulin Memorial Presbyterian Church. Time and details will be provided in the Notice of Meeting.

Court was dismissed at 8:12m

PRAYER and BENEDICTION – MODERATOR

Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal, Moderator

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock, Clerk

Rev. Shirley F. Murdock - Clerk