

RICHMOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Deep with God, Wide with the World

January 2021 Session Notes

Session met on our regular 4th Tuesday this month, Jan 26, the first meeting on our traditional schedule since last May. Keeping pace with pandemic-driven changes demanded earlier and more frequent meetings for most of last year. Of course, this may continue, but for now our next meeting is planned for the customary Feb 23.

Not directly Session news, but we are happy to announce that elder and long-time Representative Elder to Presbytery, Isabel Evans, will be installed as Moderator of the Presbytery of Westminster at the June Presbytery meeting, for a term of 1 year. Interestingly, any court of the church *except* Session can be moderated (chaired) by a lay person. Long-time RPCers may remember that Lorraine Swaile, former elder and church admin assistant, was Moderator of the Presbytery many years ago. Please keep Isabel in your prayers.



The Community Engagement Committee of Presbytery has circulated a document recommending that a Guaranteed Basic Livable Income be adopted in Canada and is inviting Sessions to consider this policy. We have decided to pass the information on to the congregation for individuals to consider and respond as they wish. You will be receiving more information soon on this topic.



A number of elders will be attending a virtual workshop this Saturday, Jan 30, on connecting with the community, given by The Rev. Dr. Glenn Smith. This workshop was organised by the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods who is Presbyter for Mission and Vision with the Presbytery.

To succeed as a missional congregation, it is essential to engage with our community and to initiate connection to it. The old 'attractional' model of churchwork (strong preaching and programs will bring them in) has long since become obsolete.

The elders' book study, interrupted by the pandemic, will resume on the mornings of the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. We will start by considering a document on Congregational Transformation authored by Dale Woods.



Director of Children and Youth Ministries Anne-Marie had some good news for us. Part-time Program Planners Jacqueline Cleland and James Lolong were hired as our 'summer students' last year under the Canada Summer Jobs program. They are interested in returning this year, and we would love to have them back. Anne-Marie has

done some thinking and researching around this whole program, and we could hire a third student for a net cost (after grant) of only about \$275, which we can cover under the proposed budget. Anne-Marie has carefully planned complementary job descriptions for the 3 positions, to benefit RPC ministries and the wider community. She also reported that Kerrisdale Presbyterian is interested in joining our Faith Formation group of elementary school age kids, which meets virtually Sunday after worship. They would contribute leadership help, and all participants would benefit from being in a larger group with new faces.

ACM

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



Finally, we would remind you about the Annual Congregational Meeting, set for Sunday, Feb 21 after worship. This will of necessity be a virtual meeting over Zoom. We know this medium is a deterrent to some, but it should not be a barrier, as participants may simply phone into the meeting on their land-lines. Much work by Board, Teams, and Session has been put into ministry plans and the resulting budget, shaped by these constrained times. But as well as being leaders of, we want to be heeders of the congregation. While you are always welcome to contact your elder or Victor, this is one occasion where we discuss issues together, interactively, as a group. And it is in our Presbyterian DNA that the Holy Spirit speaks through God's people gathered. This is a particularly good year to be a part of this important planning event.

While the pandemic has put many of our familiar activities on pause, Session is looking to make this not a time of hiatus but a time for re-imagining. Elders and church leaders have been and will be attending workshops and seminars on mission and renewal. We want to learn about ourselves and about God's work during this forced but temporary stand-down, so that we can emerge with a stronger and more faithful witness. As we move into spring, our ACM is imminent, we have our leadership retreat coming, and we are blessed with capable new staff. God is not on lockdown, how exciting is that?



Faithfully,

*Graeme Stager
Clerk of Session*