

# RICHMOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Session Notes – March 2022

No prizes for guessing the first item on our agenda this past week! Session heard from Victor what led up to his nomination as Principal Clerk and his thoughts around it, and we also discussed timing options for his last few weeks at RPC. I'll leave you to read Victor's letter for his own words on this new calling.

In other business, the Educational Ministries team has been busy for several months revising Ann-Marie's designation and job description. The reality is that she has been using her gifts in planning and organising many initiatives beyond Children and Youth ministries. These changes will be reviewed and confirmed at the June congregational meeting and we look forward to her officially-recognised expanded role.



The Provincial Health Office (PHO) is on a path of relaxing pandemic restrictions, with further announcements expected in early April. One wrinkle for RPC is that guidance for worship gatherings is different from indoor social gatherings, but our Sunday routine involves both: our service (worship) is immediately followed by a time of fellowship (social). So, on Sunday mornings we have to keep in mind *both* sets of guidance. For now, we will continue to request proof of vaccination (social gathering requirement), but rather than mandating masks, will recommend masking. Protocols are changing quickly, please check our Sunday bulletin & announcement package each week.



The new Session committees, Finance, Personnel, Use of Facilities, and Church Property & Maintenance are getting up to speed. Conveners (who are elders) are recruiting volunteer members to fill out their teams, terms of reference are being updated, and meetings are being held. Year-end tasks of budgeting and preparing for the Annual Congregational Meeting have taken up much committee attention over the first part of the year, so time is now available for the ongoing work of these groups. Look for announcements from teams like Care & Fellowship, Educational Ministries, Outreach, and others over the next weeks.



We look forward to a visit from the Moderator of the 2021 General Assembly, the Rev Dr Daniel Scott, on Sunday, May 15. We will also mark Anniversary Sunday (62<sup>nd</sup>) on this week, as Victor will be away on our usual date of the last Sunday in May.

RPC has been offering a community meal since last summer, initially as a fill-in to allow another congregation to take a break, then since last September, as our own program. Due to the pandemic, it has been take-out, but these ministries started as sit-down meals; the fellowship and decorum of eating at a table off a plate, rather than the rough, solo experience of eating from a box, is almost as important as the food itself. The Outreach team is working on moving to a sit-down meal, which has already happened at many other such programs. They will need more volunteers for this format and will be reaching out to the community & schools as well as our congregation for additional support.



VST Student Intern Jacqueline Cleland's term is ending, and we will be marking that on Sunday, Apr 10. Jacqueline began her time with us as a summer student, and last summer she moved directly from that paid position to her student internship. We have been blessed in so many ways from her presence, from setting up a vibrant weekly extreme frisbee game to organising our Indigenous Wisdom events. We will keep her in our prayers as she continues her journey, wherever God may lead.

While many of us will feel Victor's transition is too soon, we must trust the work of the Holy Spirit through our denomination's call process. The wider church has discerned a role for him in a key office at a time of some turbulence. His departure means a disruption for us, but also an opportunity for self-assessment, and a re-commitment to our ministry here in Richmond. Our strong staff of Anne-Marie, Jannie, and Maureen, together with Session and other church leaders, and under Richard Topping's sure guidance will ensure that although our minister may change, our ministry doesn't falter.

Faithfully,  
*Graeme Stager, Session Clerk*