

East Central Ontario Regional Council
Meeting of the Assembly of Elders
Friday, October 2, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

Vision of the Assembly of Elders by which we evaluate progress based on:

- Supporting and enhancing the life of Communities of Faith where ministry takes place
- Nurturing Social Justice and Outreach programs
- Building Communications

IN ATTENDANCE

Rev. Paul Reed	Speaker
Rev. Jean Wilson	(outgoing) Past-Speaker
Rev. Lynn Watson	(incoming) Member
Rev. Don McLean	(incoming) Member
Rev. Ian Robb	(incoming) Member
Marilyn Fortin	Member
Ted Meyers	Member
Rev. Steve Spicer	(outgoing) Member
Nancy Sutherland	Member
Steve Coles	Member
Rev. Ryan McNally	(outgoing) Member
Rev. Phil Wilson	Member
Brian James	Member - Financial Administration
Rev. David Timpson	Corresponding Member, Pastoral Relations Minister
Rev. Rosemary Lambie	Member, Executive Minister
Joel Miller	Corresponding Member, Program Assistant to Executive Minister, Recording Secretary
Beth Symes	(corresponding member) Reviewer and from Chalmers
Bob Little	(corresponding member) - departed at 10:48 a.m.
Joan Simeon	(corresponding member) - departed at 10:48 a.m.
Al Fletcher	(corresponding member) - departed at 10:48 a.m.
Monika Holzschuh	(corresponding member) - departed at 10:48 a.m.
Lynne Clarke	(corresponding member) - departed at 10:48 a.m.

REGRETS/ABSENT

Kathleen Whyte	(incoming) Member
Shannon Marsellus	Member
Sharon Hull	Corresponding Member - Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages
Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley	Corresponding Member - Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice
Louise Slobodian	Corresponding Member - Communications and Administration Assistant

Acknowledge the Land and Opening Prayer

Paul Reed opened the meeting with prayer, acknowledged that members were gathering on First Nations territory, and gave thanks for indigenous people's stewardship of this land. Paul also acknowledged that this is an affirming space and all were welcome.

Purpose of Meeting

Receive and determine actions resulting from the Review of Chalmers United Church, Kingston, Ontario as ordered at the June 12, 2020 meeting of the Assembly of Elders (*Motion 2020-06-12-083*).

Equity Monitor

Phil Wilson volunteered to be equity monitor.

2020-10-02_115 MOTION (S. Coles/P. Wilson) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accepts the following participants as corresponding members: Beth Symes the Reviewer and from Chalmers, Bob Little, Joan Simeon, Al Fletcher, Monika Holzschuh, Lynne Clarke, and out-going members of the Assembly of Elders: Ryan McNally, Jean Wilson and Steve Spicer. **Carried**

Introductions

Paul acknowledged and welcomed new members onto the Assembly of Elders and past members for whom this would be their last meeting. Paul also acknowledged and welcomed corresponding members from Chalmers United Church as well as the reviewer.

Receiving the Review and Community of Faith Response

- a) 10 minutes for the Reviewer, Ms. Beth Symes to introduce the report,
- b) 20 minutes for members of the Assembly of Elders to ask questions of the Reviewer,
- c) 30 minutes for the Chalmers representatives to respond to the report.

Legal viewpoint: Appoint a Commission of one person (Administrator) – with same powers and functions of CCE currently chosen by Chalmers, and according to the Manual.

Corresponding Participants were dismissed from meeting

The Regional Council Speaker offered thanks as the Reviewer and corresponding participants from Chalmers left the meeting (10:48 a.m.) so that the Assembly of Elders could consider what action will be taken in response to the recommendations.

Discussion follows, leading to the following motions

Summary provided by Rev. Paul Reed, Speaker

Having received the Review of Chalmer's United and having heard from the reviewer and five members of the Chalmer's leadership team the Assembly of Elders reviewed the recommendations of the review.

In addition to the congregation division identified by the Review the Assembly of Elders also heard members of Chalmers identified a minority view that supported disbanding as a congregation.

The Assembly of Elders concluded that the proposal of a two-year exercise of restructuring and revisioning was too large of an investment of resources without first assessing whether the congregation was committed to the process.

The Assembly of Elders is proposing instead

Having found the congregation of Chalmers United in Kingston to be in an unsatisfactory state:

- 1) That the governing body consisting of the Coordinating Council of Elders and Standing Committees be dismissed with thanks.
- 2) That the Regional Council appoint:
 - a. a minister for pastoral care, continuing education and worship for a period of one year and potentially extended for a second year.

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- b. a Commission of one to serve as an administrator with responsibilities of the governing body during a period of facilitation/mediation [Item 3]. Such Commissioner may be eligible for continued work dependent on the outcome of the facilitation/mediation.
 - 3) That the congregation of Chalmer's United contract with Faith Talk, or similar facilitation/mediation service.
 - a. That the mandate of the facilitation/mediation service be to determine whether there is a congregation at Chalmers United of sufficient number and financial viability that is committed, flexible, and willing to accept the outcome of a restructuring and revisioning of the congregation without limit.
 - b. That the facilitation/mediation leadership report its conclusion to the Assembly of Elders within 6 months of initiating the work.
 - 4) That if the facilitation/mediation process **does not** identify the presence of a suitable congregation that a process of ending Chalmers United as a congregation that concludes by Dec 31, 2021 with the disbanding or amalgamation of the congregation and the distribution of assets.
 - 5) That if the facilitation/mediation process **does** identify the presence of a suitable congregation that a Commission of one be appointed as a congregation administrator with an 18-month to 24 month mandate to develop and implement a mission strategy and governance structure respectful of the past but relevant to the current and future context.. The authority of the administrator to not be limited and may include worship, building, relationship with other congregations etc. The Administrator to report at six-month intervals to the Covenant Support Team.
 - 6) That upon the successful completion of the redevelopment and revisioning of the Chalmers United Church congregation and upon the recommendation of the administrator the Covenant Support Team take necessary actions to obtain ongoing ministry.
 - 7) If the administrator concludes that a redevelopment and revisioning is unsuccessful or if the congregation identified in Item 2 above proves unwilling or unable to embrace the change the Assembly of Elders shall initiate the disbanding of the congregation and distribute the remaining assets of the congregation. [2019 Manual C.2.3 (g)]
 - 8) That Chalmers United be responsible for the remuneration of the appointed minister and administrators and for all costs associated with the remedial process.

2020-10-02_116 MOTION (R. Lambie/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders receives the Review Report prepared by Ms Beth Symes and verbal response of Chalmers United Church (Kingston). **Carried**

2020-10-02_117 MOTION (S. Coles/L Watson) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders appoint Rev. David King as Pastoral Charge Supervisor. **Carried**

2020-10-02_118 MOTION (D. McLean//I. Robbs) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders agree to meet on October 9th 2020 at 9 a.m. to further discuss and decide on the recommendation of the review of Chalmers United Church. **Carried**

Discussion

Rev. David Timpson will seek out a possible mediator, as a result of the suggestion that a mediator could work with Chalmers United Church for a six (6) month time-frame, to facilitate conversation between the topics of disbanding the church or moving forward with a new mission.

Rev. David Timpson will also seek out other staffing potentials: administrator as recommended, whose terms of reference will still need to be established, and a minister with the required skills as recommended.

Adjournment

The Speaker declared the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Closing Prayer

Paul Reed closed the meeting in prayer.

Next Meeting Dates: Friday, October 9 9 am - noon ZOOM – Chalmers Review part 2
Friday, October 23 9 am - noon ZOOM
Friday, November 27 9 am - noon ZOOM

Rev. Paul Reed
Speaker

Rev. Rosemary Lambie,
Executive Minister