

East Central Ontario Regional Council
Meeting of the Council of Elders
Thursday, October 24, 2024 – 9 AM

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

Strengthened by God's grace and refreshed by the Spirit,
We follow the way of Jesus in healing our world.

IN ATTENDANCE

Stephen Coles	Member
Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly	Member, Executive Minister
Brian James	Member, Financial Administration
Rev. David King	Member
Patricia Long	Member (joined at 9:30 AM)
Rev. Brian Nicholson	Member
Joyce Payne	Member
Sheila-Mae Young	Member
Rev. Edward (Ned) Wells	Member
Rev. Darren Liepold	Corresponding Member, Congregational Support Minister
Joel Miller	Corresponding Member, Program Assistant to Executive Minister, Recording Secretary

REGRETS/ABSENT

Rev. Kevin Fitzpatrick	Member
Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander	Member
Rev. Lynn Watson	Member

This meeting had quorum.

This special meeting of the Council of Elders of the East Central Ontario Regional Council (ECORC) considers a report from the evaluators at St. John's United Church (Campbellford).

Land Acknowledgement & Opening Prayer – Éric Hébert-Daly highlighted the importance of land-connection while recognizing that we gather on First People's territory. Eric opened the meeting with

Appointment of an Equity Monitor for this Meeting

2024-10-24-001 MOTION (B. James/D. King) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders appoint Rev. Ned Wells as Equity Monitor for this meeting. **CARRIED**

* The equity score card can be used following this meeting and submitted to the Equity Leadership Team:
<https://ecorcuccan.ca/resources/accessibility/>

Agenda

2024-10-24-002 MOTION (S-M Young/J. Payne) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders accept the agenda as circulated. **CARRIED**

Business arising

I. St. John's United Church (Campbellford)

- See *A Report on the Well-Being of St. John's United Church (Campbellford)* as **Appendix A**

Rev. Darren Liepold shared details that have led to the recommendation for a Commission at the church. Rev. David King highlighted items in the report. The pastoral relationship and the financial situation of the congregation are key issues.

It was emphasized that the minister and congregation should be supported during this process.

2024-10-24-003 MOTION (D. King/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders take decisive and timely action by establishing at its earliest opportunity, a Commission to assume all governance functions of St. John's United Church, Campbellford, for a period of up to one year. During that time, the Commission will make such decisions and take such actions as it deems necessary in safeguarding both St. John's people and the property held in trust by them on behalf of The United Church of Canada. **CARRIED**

2024-10-24-004 MOTION (J. Payne/N. Wells) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders appoint with thanks the following people to the Commission established for St-John's United Church (Campbellford): Rev. David King, Sheila-Mae Young, Brian James. **CARRIED** (*D. King Abstains*)

Equity Monitor Report – Rev. Ned Wells shared feedback as it relates to the Equity scorecard. All were reminded to remember to self identify when speaking.

The Speaker declared that all the business having come before this meeting of the Council of Elders was duly concluded at 9:41 AM.

Closing Prayer – Darren Liepold closed the meeting with a prayer.

Next Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, November 5, 2024 (1 PM) Zoom
- Tuesday, December 3, 2024 (1PM) Zoom
- Tuesday, January 7, 2025 (1PM) Zoom (if necessary)

Steve Coles
Speaker

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly
Executive Minister

ECORC Assembly of Elders - Participation Roster

	Opening worship/Land prayer	ack/closing	Equity Roles	Monitor
<i>Summer months - urgent decisions will usually be made via email</i>				
<i>November 5 2024</i>	Pat Long		Sheila-May Young	
<i>December 3, 2024</i>	Brian Nicholson		Steve Coles	
<i>January 7, 2025(if needed)</i>	Staff		Staff	
<i>February 4 2025</i>	Ned Wells		Joyce Payne	
<i>March 5, 2025</i>	Sheila-May Young		Lynn Watson	
<i>April 1 2025</i>	Joyce Payne		Brian Nicholson	
<i>May 6 2025</i>	Kaitlyn Ostrander		Kevin Fitzpatrick	
<i>June 3 2025</i>	Kevin Fitzpatrick		Pat Long	

Appendices

Appendix A

Evaluator's Report for St. John's United Church
(Campbellford)

Pages 4-5

Appendix A

To: The Council of Elders, ECORC
From: Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander, Mr. Brian James, Rev. David King
Re: *A Report on the Well-Being of St. John's United Church (Campbellford)*
Date: October 21, 2024

Having been informed that a measure of concern exists/existed within the St. John's (Campbellford) congregation about its current and future well-being, The United Church of Canada's East Central Ontario Regional Council (via its Council of Elders) appointed a team of evaluators (Mr. Brian James, Rev. David King, and Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander), to discern the details and assess the extent of the reported disquiet.

Intent on having a fulsome engagement with both the laity and the minister, the evaluators' team (hereinafter 'the Team') established a process that invited the participation of as many individuals as wished to add their voice to the deliberations. In all, 25 lay people spoke either directly to the Team (18) or submitted written responses (7) in answer to a set of questions communicated in both printed and email formats previously. The minister offered his input verbally.

The questions asked were:

- 1 - How are you feeling about St. John's life currently, and why?
- 2 - Where do you feel God is calling St. John's into the future, and why?

And when meeting with the minister, an additional question was put to, and answered by, them: "Where, and to what, is God calling you personally in your ministry now?"

Being satisfied that the number and nature of the responses offered is representative of the church community's disposition as-a-whole (and, at this time), we have identified a number of issues confounding this community of faith. Most obvious, and pressing, is their precarious financial circumstance.

While a summary review of financial information for the last 7 years identifies a deficit for all but one of them, the overarching concern lies in the fact that unfettered investments have been drawn down (on average ~ \$42,697 annually) such that that funding source will be depleted in the very near future. Additionally, other monies being held in trust have restrictions in place as to their specific use.

Bearing these issues in mind, and being cognisant that the governing body and the minister are reported to be conflicted with one another specifically, but not exclusively, concerning appropriate next steps in addressing the current financial challenge, we offer the following for consideration:

That the Council of Elders take decisive and timely action by establishing at its earliest opportunity, a Commission to assume all governance functions of St. John's United Church, Campbellford, for a period of up to one year. During that time, the Commission will make such decisions and take such actions as it deems necessary in safeguarding both St. John's people and the property held in trust by them on behalf of The United Church of Canada.

Respectfully submitted.