

Trinity United Church, Brandon
“To Grow in Faith, Fellowship, and Service through Christ Jesus.”

Official Board Meeting
Tuesday January 12th, 2021 @ 7:00pm

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome - Jason
- 2) Covenant of Leadership and Prayer - Jason
- 3) Approval of Agenda as presented (amended)
- 4) Approval of Minutes December 8th, 2020
- 5) Motions from Dec 18th email:
 1. Motion to accept the Pastoral Care report as submitted – Carried
 2. Motion for extra recognition for Covid-19 activities - Defeated
- 6) Correspondence
- 7) Finance report - Reg
- 8) Ministers report – Doug
- 9) Committee updates:
 1. Equity and Diversity - Al
- 10) Additions to Agenda:
 1. Code Level and the Church
 2. Congregational Meeting
 3. Board Secretary Position
 4. Secure Mailbox
 5. Remuneration for Pianist for 2021
- 11) Covenant of Leadership and closing prayer - Jason

Next Board Meeting – Tuesday February 9th, 2021 @ 7:00pm

ZOOM MEETING TRINITY UNITED CHURCH TUESDAY JANUARY 12th, 2021

Mission: To Grow in Faith, Fellowship and Service through Christ Jesus

Present: Jason Splett(Chair), Rev. Doug Neufeld, Reg. Atkinson, Miranda Edwards, Gloria and Murray McMillan, Darlynn Smith, Al and Linda Friesen, Alan Silvius, Dave and Irene Thompson, Alison Murray, Lois Riley and Shirley Kernaghan(Secretary)

01/02. Jason called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. Jason thanked us for joining our ZOOM meeting and welcomed all of us to our first meeting of 2021. Jason read the Covenant of Leadership and Prayer. Jason sent us a note re meetings for the next couple of months so everyone has lots of time to plan. They are as follows:

January 15th Committee Reports due for 2020 to Rev. Doug for the Annual Report, February 9th Monthly Meeting via ZOOM and February 21st AGM via ZOOM.

03. Motion#1 Alan Silvius made the motion that we accept the agenda as presented. Seconded by Al Friesen. CARRIED

04. Motion #2 Darlynn Smith made the motion to approve the minutes of December 8th, 2020. Seconded by Dave Thompson. CARRIED

05. Jason informed us about the two motions from December 18th e-mail as follows: #1. Acceptance of the Pastoral Care Report as submitted was accepted and carried. #2. Motion for extra recognition for Covid-19 activities was defeated.

06. There was no correspondence.

07. Finance Report: Reg. Atkinson reported that he did not collapse the Financial Statement and therefore there is more information for people to read and understand. Trinity United owes Alexander a refund for Continuing Education for Rev. Doug. Reg. will date the refund 2020 because it was for the year 2020. Alan Silvius thanked Reg. for the report and it was very thorough. Alan liked the idea of putting the \$40,000.00 that we owe into installments for this year and it will be taken care of. We would make the last payment on September 30th, 2021 and it would clear everything in 2021. It would bring \$20,000 income into 2021. We did not receive the \$5000.00 as was given to some as we were not in Code Red at the time. We had to be operating differentially on the 12th than what we were on the 9th to receive the \$5000.00.

Gloria mentioned that we owe Rev. Doug \$60.00 for telephone calls. Reg. will check into this.

Murray McMillan reported that RCCG church will pay \$800.00 a month rent to Trinity and that he will check with RCCG every month if needed.

Motion #3 Reg. Atkinson made the motion to accept his report. Gloria McMillan seconded the motion. CARRIED

08. Ministers Report: Rev. Doug informed us that we are in the black with our expenses. We should be celebrating this. He thanked Reg. for doing all the work to keep us in the black. December is usually a crazy month but this year Rev. Doug had time to spend with his family which he thoroughly enjoyed. There was great participation from families to help with the Christmas services. The people who viewed the services were so pleased to see all the families that participated. There were 253 views of the Christmas Eve Service on ZOOM and it was #1 and the 4th Sunday of Advent was #2nd. Rev. Doug received fantastic feedback on the services. Katie Trussler and Holly Walker are great assets to provide us with singing and music in our services. Rev. Doug will try to get more people involved in the services.

Lois Riley from Christian Education mentioned that the ZOOM call with the Sunday School worked great. The children liked being on ZOOM.

Alison Murray mentioned that the sanctuary looked beautiful and lots of people commented on how lovely it was.

09. Committee Updates: Equity and Diversity-Al Friesen Al informed us that Affirm United approved the Marriage Policy that we submitted. The Vision Statement needed to have some different wording as follows:

At Trinity United Church our vision is to grow in faith, fellowship, and service through Christ Jesus. We believe that all people are children of God and we embrace the fullness of our diversity in ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other human division, as we unite in worship and full participation in all aspects of our ministry. As a congregation we are committed to surroundings that reflect safety and support in respect of social justice and human rights. Al re-submitted the changes on the revisions and **Affirm United agreed to the changes and it has been accepted. We are good to vote.**

Motion #4 Al Friesen made the motion that the Board accept the revised vision statement and action plan as circulated. Seconded by Lois Riley. CARRIED

Lois asked what are the Annual Fees for Affirming United? Al informed us that the Annual Fee for a year is based on the income of the church. We are small enough that it would not affect the \$100.00 a year. The Annual Meetings switch from East to West and some churches may not be able to pay the price to go to the meetings that are further away.

Rev. Doug suggested that we send the Vision Statement, Marriage Policy and Action Plan to the congregation with the Newsletter that Darlynnne sends out. Al. will send the information to Darlynnne.

It was discussed and decided that a Cover Letter, with the three documents, will go out to all Trinity Members and it will be discussed and voted on at the AGM on Sunday February 21st via ZOOM. Miranda suggested that we send the Cover Letter and revised documents as soon as possible while people are at home and have time to read. Al and Gloria will help deliver this information if needed. Darlynnne and Tina will send this information out on Thursday or Friday, January 14th or 15th. Jason will be the contact person if anyone has questions on the topic. Other people offered to help but it may be easier for Darlynnne and Tina to deliver the information.

If people have questions or comments to make please send to Jason and he can send them to Reverend Doug or Al. if need be. Jason said he would do that if he needed help to decide what to do.

Al and his Committee have done a lot of work with the Equity and Diversity Document Changes and approval. Thank you, Al.

The regular Newsletter will go out to all the following week after January 14th, 2021.

10. Additions to Agenda

1. Code Level and Trinity- We will be in Code Red until January 22nd, 2021. There will be no in-person services. Jason does not think we will be able to congregate inside the church for services until later on in February.

Alan suggested that maybe **later** on in February we may be able to have the congregation in the Church.

2. Congregational Meeting- Rev. Doug has asked for Committee Reports to be into his office by the end of the week (January 15th). We do have over half of the reports in already. Thanks to those who sent them in. Some need to be done and sent in as soon as possible. Murray and Property were the first ones that had their Committee Reports in. Jason suggested that we could have the meeting on February 21st. The meeting will be on ZOOM. We don't know when we will be able to meet in person. We have the availability to set it up so we can vote by ZOOM. Miranda suggested to encourage people to try to do a test using ZOOM and then do a practise test to vote. ZOOM tabulates for and against. **Some people could call in and vote by phone.** The Moderator could set up for a vote and the voter selects a **check mark** for **YES** or **X** for **NO**. It is tabulated and gives us a total of votes **for** or **against**.

Sunday February 21, 2021 will be the day to have the Congregational Meeting on ZOOM. We will be asked to sign in at 1:30pm and the Meeting will start at 2:00pm. Jason suggests that we get our reports in as soon as possible. Hard copies can be printed and left in the mail box at the church.

3. Board Secretary Position- Jason explained that Trinity United needs to have four filled positions - Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and M & P Chair. We can change the Board Structure if we have to do so. Darlyne asked if we could put this in the Newsletter to see if we could get a person to act as Board Secretary. Shirley had time to think and she decided to be the Secretary for Trinity United Church. She was accepted by the Board.

4. Secure Mailbox- Jason wondered if there was something we could put on the outside of the church to be used for drop offs. There may be something that we can ask the Lock Smith about to see what we can use.

5. Remuneration for Pianist for 2021: Gloria explained that the money that was paid to Holly came from Worship Committee/Guest Musician. The amount that was paid to Holly was \$50.00 per service. She received 9 x \$50.00 for 9 services which amounted to \$450.00. Worship cannot offer paying \$50.00 to Holly for her services. Holly was placed on ADP. **Gloria made the motion that Holly is rehired for three hours per week at \$20.08 an hour on going until more hours are needed. Darlyne seconded it. CARRIED** Gloria will let Holly know.

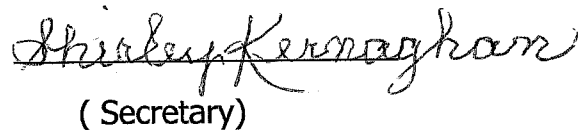
Gloria mentioned that Ken Knight has reached out to the Trustees and he has done some searching on what to do with donations/bequests from an estate. We need to make a recommendation to the Board. How can we make it more useful to the church? It will come to the Board and the Board will decide of what needs to be done with the money

Reg. will make some changes to the financial reports and have it ready for AGM.

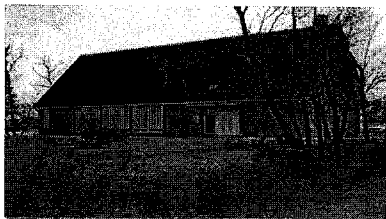
11. Jason recited the Covenant of Leadership and led us in the closing prayer at 8:56pm.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 9th, 2021 on ZOOM at 7:00.


(Chair of Trinity United Church Board)


(Secretary)

S. K. Burdick



Trinity United Church

1515 Sixth Street, Brandon, MB. R7A 6B3
Phone: (204) 728-4796 Fax: (204) 728-4796

January 14, 2021

Dear Members & Adherents, Trinity United Church, Brandon

Please find attached four documents prepared by the Equity & Diversity Committee as part of Trinity's explorations for becoming an Affirming Ministry:

- Preamble
- Affirming Vision Statement
- Affirming Marriage Policy
- Affirming Action Plan

The *Preamble* provides background and context, identifies the three documents required for becoming an Affirming Ministry, and provides brief notes on each.

The *Affirming Vision Statement*, *Marriage Policy* and *Action Plan* documents are requirements for becoming an Affirming Ministry and have been approved by the Official Board and by Affirm United. The next step is for you, as members and adherents of Trinity, to review the documents and to prepare to vote on their acceptance.

The Official Board will provide opportunity for a vote on approving these documents at the upcoming Annual General Meeting scheduled for February 21, 2021 (further meeting details to be distributed separately). In the meantime, we invite you to peruse the drafts attached and to respond with comments, suggestions, or questions that you might have.

This vote is to approve the three documents only and is not a vote on Trinity becoming an Affirming Ministry. Affirm United requires a separate vote on this question. Taking into consideration feedback from the congregation and the current realities of the pandemic, the Official Board is working with the Equity & Diversity Committee to plan the format and timing of this important vote.

I welcome any comments or questions that you might have, via email jsplett@mymts.net or telephone 204-727-0046.

Thank you for your engagement in seeking ways to live out our beliefs that all persons are children of God and that God loves us all without exception. Thank you also for joining us as we "grow in faith, fellowship, and service through Christ Jesus".

Blessings,

Jason Splett
Chair, Official Board



To Grow in Faith, Fellowship, and Service in Christ Jesus

Equity & Diversity – Exploring Becoming an Affirming Ministry

Preamble

Formation:

The formation of the **Equity & Diversity Committee** was proposed at the meeting of the Official Board on October 9, 2018 and a motion was passed to recommend to the congregation the formation of the committee. The recommendation was approved at the congregational meeting on November 25, 2018.

Role:

The role of the committee is to provide guidance in exploring becoming an Affirming Ministry. Over the past two years the committee has collaborated with church leadership and the congregation in a journey of education, discernment, and reflection, through a variety of initiatives, to learn what it means to be an Affirming Ministry and why it is important in living out our faith.

Requirements of becoming an Affirming Ministry:

In addition to these initiatives, an important and necessary requirement of becoming an Affirming Ministry is to develop and approve Affirming **Vision Statement**, **Marriage Policy** and **Action Plan** that align with the aims and goals of Affirm United (i.e. declaring commitment to inclusion and justice for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, working for justice for all, and declaring in words and actions that God loves and celebrates all people) and reflect the vocabulary of Affirming Ministry.

Document Preparation:

In preparation of these documents, the Equity & Diversity Committee reviewed samples from many United Churches that are already Affirming Ministries, and incorporated specific guidelines and terminology required by Affirm United.

Recommendation:

The Affirming Vision Statement, Marriage Policy and Action Plan were submitted to the Official Board for their consideration, and at their regular meeting on January 12, 2021, the Official Board passed a motion to “approve the documents and recommend their distribution to the congregation”.

Notes:

Affirming Vision Statement: Combines the current vision statement of Trinity with additions that specifically reflect the aims and goals central to Affirming Ministries.

Affirming Marriage Policy: Only minor changes in wording were required, existing policy already refers to couples of all sexual orientations, gender identities and other human divisions.

Affirming Action Plan: Is a living document suggesting future initiatives for addressing how the congregation will live out its commitment to justice and inclusion upon achieving Affirming Ministry status.



Affirming Vision Statement

Trinity United Church, Brandon, MB

At Trinity United Church our vision is to grow in faith, fellowship, and service through Christ Jesus. We believe that all people are children of God and we embrace the fullness of our diversity in ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other human division, as we unite in worship and full participation in all aspects of our ministry. As a congregation we are committed to surroundings that reflect safety and support in respect of social justice and human rights.

Affirming Marriage Policy

Trinity United Church, Brandon, MB

A church wedding is a legal ceremony, but it is also an act of worship. To be married in the church is to affirm that the marriage is a gift of God through which the participants make a covenant with one another and with God.

In marriage we offer one another the promise of a lifelong companionship and commitment that needs to be cherished and nurtured. At Trinity United Brandon, we celebrate the choice to be married in our community. We see God present in our relationships with one another, to the community of the church, and the community of family and friends that will be present when people share vows and commitments to one another.

We believe that in Christian marriage the vows that we make are strengthened by God's grace and presence in that relationship. We believe that Christian marriage offers a foundation into their future that is not offered in civil marriage – the foundation found in the support, the love, the commitment of family, friends, and church to support the couple as they begin this new life together.

In the United Church, we see each person as a unique, loved creation of God and welcome all people to the full life of Christian community, including marriage. Trinity United Brandon will perform weddings of couples of all genders and orientations and no person will be refused marriage because of their; ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other human division.



Affirming Action Plan

Trinity United Church, Brandon, MB

The Action Plan for Trinity United Church addresses how we as a congregation might continue to live out our commitment to justice and affirmation over the next three to five years with annual review and revisions as required. Implementation of the Action Plan may include, but is not limited to, the following initiatives:

Proclaim

- Plan worship service to proclaim and celebrate becoming an Affirming Ministry
- Place Affirm notices/logo in narthex, sanctuary, and church exterior e.g. banner, signs of welcome, safe space, etc.
- Change letterhead/website/Facebook pages to reflect Affirm status (use Affirm logo)
- Place notices about becoming an Affirming Ministry in church bulletin, newsletters and local media, use Affirm logo
- Change building use/rental policies as required to reflect Affirming Ministry

Celebrate

- Celebrate anniversaries of becoming an Affirming Ministry
- Observe annual United Church Pride Sunday (using suggested lectionary)
- Plan and/or participate in annual P.I.E. and Pride events in congregation/community
- Promote inclusion of hymns/anthems in congregation/choir reflecting Affirming Ministry
- Support/attend/plan annual Trans Day of Remembrance (November 20)
- Create an annual calendar of proposed activities

Learn

- Form a study group or workshop to explore aspects of ministry with marginalized peoples
- Include Affirming Minute as part of Sunday worship services, articles in church newsletters
- Tell personal stories of LGBTQIA2S+ people, family members and allies
- Plan age-appropriate and ongoing activities/stories for youth/children in the congregation
- Collaborate with other church committees/groups to learn about/promote acceptance of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations
- Plan movie nights followed by discussion of related themes
- Make educational materials available for congregation through displays and church library
- Attend local equity & diversity conferences and report to church groups/congregation
- Provide support, including financial, for church representative(s) to attend the national gathering of Affirm United/S' Affirmer Ensemble and report to church groups/congregation

(Over for Page 2)

(Affirming Action Plan Page 2)

Act

- Encourage congregational participation in community events that support the full inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities e.g. Pride Day, needs of local/senior LGBTQIA2S+ people, Trans Day of Remembrance
- Connect with/volunteer for community groups addressing poverty and food security issues (e.g. City Poverty Committee, Brandon Urban People's Council, Bear Clan, Samaritan House, Helping Hands, etc.)
- Speak out against injustices, pressure politicians to ban conversion therapy
- Create a refugee sponsorship committee, raise funds to support refugees/immigrants including LGBTQIA2S+
- Articulate and plan ways to protect the environment and to live in harmony with it
- Participate in a local Indigenous/First Nations cultural/commemoration event (e.g. Dakota Winter Fest, pow wow, MMIWG vigil)
- Plan workshop on Reconciliation/Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls/Blanket Exercise/Indigenous spirituality; what it means, why it is important, and what you can do
- Plan field excursion to a local First Nation

Review

- Continue Equity & Diversity/Affirm committee to plan and implement educational and action initiatives, representation on church Board, maintain budget line for Affirm initiatives
- Provide opportunity for congregational feedback on inclusiveness and commitment to full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities on an ongoing basis
- Liaise with and maintain membership in Affirm United/S'Affirmer Ensemble, including payment of annual dues as required
- Reflect, on ongoing/annual basis, on past actions and consideration of future actions to make the Action Plan a living document

Note: See Open Hearts pages 9 – 15 for Action Plan implementation ideas and resources

