



COLLIER STREET UNITED CHURCH
EMERGENCY OFFICIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, March 14, 2020 – 8:00 p.m.

Present: Jean Cooke, Sharon Crossley, Rev. Hewitt Holmes, Christy Manuel, Joyce Moore, Rob Murdock, Terry Oram, Lianne Patterson, Anne Snell, Terry Tizard and Marg Valad.

Regrets: Laurie Crosson, Dave Johnston, and David Karwacki.

Call to Order: Chair, Christy Manuel, opened the electronic meeting at 8:10 p.m. and thanked everyone for being available for this emergency board meeting.

Purpose of Meeting: Christy mentioned that given the nature of the Coronavirus and new developments daily we called this meeting. Having Sunday Worship Service would put people at undue risk. We will discuss cancelling March 15th worship as well as services for a further 2 weeks to April 5 as well as closing the building for this period. We want to be mindful of putting vulnerable people at risk. These closure dates match the current school shutdowns. Christy mentioned Coronavirus cases in Ontario and the death toll in Italy for a 24-hour period. It was further noted that the North Bay retirement community and nursing homes are all closed to the public and residents are quarantined in the building. The age demographic in a North Bay retirement community building is 75 to 80 years of age, which is similar to Collier's demographic. Closing the building would also impact others who use our building.

Rev. Hewitt Holmes shared a prayer written by the Moderator of the United Church based on the Coronavirus challenges of today.

Discussion: Several Board members commented on the proposal to close the building and cancel worship.

- The UCW, Vendors Marketplace was to be held on April 4, 2020 and has been cancelled. Communication to the Vendors indicated it was cancelled due to the coronavirus. All email responses from Vendors was in total agreement with the cancellation decision.
- The problem in Italy was due to not taking precautions. Taking precautions now may assist our health care system.
- Local churches, like Connexus, Willow Creek and Emmanuel Baptist have cancelled their services. The Anglican Church of Canada has cancelled all their services today.
- All functions in Masonic Lodges in Ontario have been cancelled; Scottish Rights functions have been cancelled as well as their learning centre.
- Closing Collier eliminates exposure to others and protects our staff from exposure. The decision to close is considered out of love, not fear. It is to act responsibly for the people we love in our congregation and community and allow this to come under control which will help the medical community.

- It was noted perhaps the service could be provided online. Prayers and other worship opportunities will be made available online.

One concern raised was with the late timing of making this closure decision given it's Saturday evening.

Motion: Moved by Joyce Moore, seconded by Anne Snell, that Sunday worship services will be temporarily suspended and the church building will be closed from Sunday, March 15 through to Sunday, April 5. **Carried with 8 affirmative votes; there was one abstention;**
Rev. Hewitt Holmes did not exercise his vote as normal.

Follow up:

- We will send another email tonight advising of our decision. Rev. Hewitt Holmes will return to the church building to place signs advising there are no services and we will place notice on our website. He will contact our interim organist; a Board Member will contact choir members and Board Members will contact others they know do not have email once the email communication has been distributed.

Rev. Hewitt Holmes closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 7 p.m. – via Zoom Meeting

Chair, Christy Manuel

Secretary, Lianne Patterson