

**First Baptist Church Regina**  
Annual General Meeting Minutes  
Via Zoom and live in the FBC Sanctuary  
March 21, 2021

1. Call to Order – Ron Phillips; Time: 12:13 pm
2. Church Covenant and Prayer – Joel Russell-MacLean
3. **MOTION** – Consent Agenda
  - a) Approve today’s meeting agenda
  - b) Approve the November 22, 2020 congregational meeting minutesMoved: Hilary Ryan; Seconded: Jim Ellemers; Carried.
4. Board Chair Report – Ron Phillips (See Annual Report p. 4.)
  - Music at First Baptist (FBC)
    - John Nelson will still be with us half time until the end of June. He will have music and musicians lined up through the summer. Mark Anderson has indicated his intention to continue at the organ.
    - Fall 2021 – an interim period will be determined as we see where Covid restrictions take us, but a Music Futures Committee, will need to be set up. Their purpose is two-fold: 1) To oversee the continuity of worship music in FBC for the duration of the interim period and 2) To seek leadership in developing vision.
    - Anyone wanting to work with this committee is encouraged to speak to Ron or other members of the Board or one of the pastors.
    - We should not be surprised if we find a mix of discontinuity with the continuity of this process, as we go forward with it.
  - Our Board
    - Currently consists of 6 members plus treasurer, Kevin Rich.
    - We will be recruiting in the course of this year. Suggestions are welcome.
  - Vision Post-Covid?
    - What will FBC look like after the pandemic is over?
  - CBWC Virtual Assembly – May 27, 2021 on Zoom
    - Interested delegates are appointed for this event. Speak to Ron or Joel if interested.

5. Treasurer's Report – Kevin Rich (see Annual Report p. 5.)

**Motion:** That we receive the 2020 audited church financial statements

Moved: Kevin Rich; Seconded: Laureen Snook; Carried.

Kevin spoke of the uncertain financial situation that First Baptist and the rest of the world found ourselves in, in 2020. It was difficult to know just how the pandemic would play out. But the good news is, thanks in large part to the steady giving of our members, we have emerged with an Operating Surplus of some \$26.3K.

Current Cash Resources:	\$277.0 K
Operating Account:	\$177.1 K (includes the Legacy Fund)
Organ Fund:	\$69.8 K
Benevolent Fund:	\$2.8 K
Building Fund:	\$27.3 K

Operating Revenue: \$417,146 (donations, rentals, chaplaincy services, interest)

Operating Expenses: \$390,775 (personnel, property, admin, CE, Missions...)

The Board is considering how the \$26.3K surplus can best be used, considering both property maintenance projects as well as ministry and outreach projects.

It was noted that our Operating Revenue, in spite of these uncertain times, was only 2% under budget, in part thanks to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), as well as reduced personnel costs due to a maternity leave. Offerings were 7% less than last year, but Operating Expenses were 9% below budget.

A detailed description of our debt situation indicated that last year we paid off a loan we carried with the CBWC, using \$189.8K (at 2% interest) from our Organ Fund. By doing this, we are borrowing from ourselves at a more favourable interest rate (than a bank loan would incur), for a saving of \$55K in interest, while still keeping the Organ Fund solvent. The Board, in light of the uncertainty of giving over the year, chose to pay it back at \$1000/month for the time being, to ensure our operational needs are covered. This loan should be repaid by 2028.

Last year, FBC applied to the Government of Canada for a Covid relief loan, namely, the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA), which is an interest-free loan of \$40K. There is no tax on this loan, and \$10K of the proceeds will be forgiven if the remaining \$30K is paid back by December 31, 2022. These monies were used to bolster the loan from the organ fund, allowing the \$55K saving in interest charges.

In conclusion, Kevin commented that our finances are – all things considered – in pretty good shape. He thanked the people of FBC for the trust they have placed in him to handle the treasurer’s job with diligence and integrity. Kevin credits the rest of the committee, Murray Wolf, Gloria Toews, Derrick Bellows and Marvin Fuller, for the effectiveness of their labours.

#### 6. Missions Commission – Bryan Orthner/Marilyn Phillips (See Annual Report p. 14.)

This Commission is mandated to provide vision and direction for our missions projects. They work to facilitate involvement in missions, both local and globally.

- CBM Partnership with the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development.
- The Commission has completed a 3-year partnership that focused on supporting the Botros Team at the Arab Baptist Seminary in Beirut, funding Middle East Consultation Bursaries, and supporting Syrian refugees through camp ministries. A well supported “Lebanon Live” Virtual Fundraiser, held on May 24, raised \$9633 in addition to the \$8,500 CBM project budget.
- Refugee Sponsorship – Covid restrictions have slowed the possible establishment of a Refugee Fund. We have submitted an application to sponsor a Syrian family, with FBC providing access to the necessary Sponsorship Agreement Holder. It is hoped the family will arrive some time in 2021. This project is not formally part of the work of the Commission.
- IVCF – Local leaders of the Regina chapter have been approached asking how we can support them. No answer.
- Local outreach activities – The Indigenous community is looking to hosting a conference which the Commission will support. Under the leadership of Barb Ziolkowski, FBC cooks provided baking through April and May 2020 to organizations in the city who work to distribute regular lunches.
- Of Special Note: Joel announced a special guest in the pulpit on Sunday, April 18, 2021. Emad Botros will be live-streamed in the sanctuary from Lebanon, over Zoom.

#### 7. Associate Pastors’ Reports

- a) Richard Hovey – Learning for Life and Small Groups, “Spiritual Disciplines” series on line (see Annual Report p. 10.)

Richard thanked the people who have become regular participants in the Small Group and Learning for Life classes that he leads. He has plans to continue meeting with them throughout the summer months. People have expressed interest in meeting outside of the church “in person.” The

progress of the pandemic will dictate that, but Richard will watch for the first possible opportunity to meet in person.

It was noted that there is an extensive series on our website, presented by Richard, that offers thoughts, reading recommendations, and talks around the spiritual disciplines.

b) Kayely Rich – Family and Children’s Ministry (See Annual Report p. 15.)

Kayely was on maternity leave with her son for the first part of 2020. In March, the children’s ministries moved online, with help from Pastor Joel and Julie Hovey, our children’s ministries intern. In the fall, when the church opened, a few of the children joined in-person activities during the adult worship service, but as Covid case numbers increased, Godly Play and Oasis moved online. During Advent, “Jesse Tree” activity kits were distributed to families. Now during Lent, families have “Psalms for Lent” colouring projects to do together.

The Alpha Marriage Course is currently drawing to a close. A nice advantage of working through this course online is the privacy it affords couples during the private conversation periods each evening. Thank you, Kayely, for facilitating this.

Professionally, Kayely has recently attended an online “KidMin” conference.

Kayely closed by expressing her concern for the mental well-being of our church family. A reminder: She is a qualified counsellor who would gladly offer support to anyone suffering with mental health issues.

We offer a profound “Thank You” to Julie Hovey as she finishes her internship here in our midst. We have enjoyed your imaginative Children’s Moments. Balloons are ALWAYS a good thing. It is obvious you have a gift for engaging with small people. And they seem very comfortable with you. Our best wishes as you continue with your academic program.

c) Chris Senger – Youth (See Annual Report p. 16.)

Youth activities have been online most of the year, with some respite during summer when they could gather safely outdoors for games and campfires. “Zoom Fatigue” is setting in with the kids, with so much of their life now happening on-line, and they yearn to be together but struggle to maintain social distancing. Because of that screen fatigue, activities since October have been biweekly Bible studies with occasional individual visits. Their

evenings include visiting, playing games, describing high and low points of their days, devotional time and prayer together.

Chris does a lot of his work online, so more online time is sometimes hard to anticipate with pleasure. However, Chris reports that after an evening with the youth, he feels uplifted and glad for the company he's been in.

Chris was commended for "hanging in" with the young generation of our church family. Because of the relationships he has worked to develop, he is making this difficult time count in the lives of these young ones. He credits his family for their support and his colleagues for their encouragement.

d) John Nelson – Associate Minister of Music (See Annual Report p. 8.) Tabled.

e) Norma Holtslander – First Baptist Place Chaplain (See Annual Report p. 11.) Tabled.

#### 8. Lead Pastor's Report – Joel Russell-MacLean (See Annual Report p. 7.)

Joel told us he contemplates FBC and sees a parallel with a set of Russian nesting dolls. Every issue he contemplates, opens to reveal another issue... our vision, our music future, Covid restrictions...

He talked about a gardening parallel, too. The plant that grows from the seed is NOT the work of the garden. The work comes in the preparation before the seed is planted. And it takes years to get the soil just perfect, to know the right place to give the right light for that seed, and to accumulate the knowledge involved in providing what it needs to thrive.

He reminded us of the many tasks that have to be done before you paint a wall. To get a beautiful result, there first needs to be scraping, sanding, repairing, washing, priming, taping, floors covered, and THEN... paint.

We, the people of First Baptist have a goodly supply of resources in our hospitality, our financial resources, our creativity, our compassion, and our prayers. And we live in a community with needs – poverty, loneliness, mental illness, addiction...

In order for us to minister to our community we need to be constantly "preparing the soil". How are we doing that? There are ways we can work to hone our gifts. Prayer, whether we engage in an online prayer group, or around our tables, or privately is never wasted. Pray "without ceasing". We can be

discipling one another in our small groups and building relationships with each other. Engage with courage! Participate! Prepare your soil!

Increased anxiety in the face of the health, economic and employment uncertainty of this pandemic is increasingly obvious. Historically, people have turned to magic and rituals or conspiracy theories and finger pointing when they want a quick fix or someone to blame. Abuse and persecution of minorities is the product. We have to remember, God is in control. Even of this virus. God is in control.

What are we being asked to do? Prepare our soil. Be nimble and ready to serve as demanded.

9. Other Business – None.

10. Adjournment

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 1:40 pm.

Moved: Marilyn Phillips; Carried.