

# Laurentian Regional Ministry Council Meeting

October 28, 2020

## MINUTES

**Present:** Hugh Mitchell (Chair), Bevin Boyd (Vice Chair), John Richard (Sec.), Rev. Nick Brotherwood, Rev. Tania Lesack, Andy Mason, Robert Percy, Quitterie Roques de Borda, Mike Tott, Dave Ward.

**Regrets:** Rev. Josée Lemoine.

- 1. Opening Prayer:** Nick opened our meeting with a prayer.
- 2. Approval of the Agenda:** Proposed by Robert and seconded by Dave.
- 3. Approval of the Minutes of September 23rd:** Proposed by Andy and seconded by Tania.
- 4. Business Arising from the Minutes:** Items will be covered on today's Agenda.
- 5. Tour de Table:**

Holy Trinity, Ste. A.- In-person Sunday services have been paused. A lack of participants and, hence, a small pool of volunteers were cited as reasons for the pause. Re-opening for Christmas will be discussed by the Parish Council. Annual appeal letter to be sent in November. Church Hall open for groups since Oct. 5.

St. Simeon's – Are continuing their phone chain. The target for re-opening is still November 15<sup>th</sup>. A Christmas food drive was held with proceeds going to both Centraide and Laurentia Elementary School. Copyright licenses have been purchased for the taped and rebroadcast Family service. Nick made three "drive-by" pastoral visits to parishioners which were much appreciated.

Grace Church, Arundel – In-Person services are continuing. The attendance is very encouraging. Appeal letter to be sent out.

P.L.L. – Holy Trinity, Lakefield re-opened on October 25<sup>th</sup> with ten people in attendance (COVID capacity is twenty). The next scheduled service will be November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Appeal letter to go out. The other PLL churches will remain closed at least for the rest of the year. St. Paul's and Mille-Isles finances are sound and are asking for Christmas time donations.

Trinity, Morin-Heights – Have had two in-person services, but are currently on pause. (COVID capacity is 18) Being located close to "red Zone" hasn't been helpful. Finances are in good shape; they have been receiving donations.

St. Francis – Their finances are good; their phone chain is working and many parishioners are participating on Zoom. A new roof is to be installed beginning tomorrow. Appeal letter is going out soon.

Tania – The numbers are encouraging at both Zoom services, and actually growing at 5 p.m. weekdays.

## **6. Covenant:**

Robert summarized for Hugh the discussion on this subject which took place while he was absent last month.

\*After this discussion, the Secretary was asked to compile the discussion points for going ahead with the timeline for the Covenant together and to compile the discussion points for waiting until the late Spring or Summer together.

*Going Ahead* – We are stronger and more committed if we are united together.

Being asked to use our wisdom and influence as elders implies being able to go forward and steer our own course within the framework of the Diocese.

Being joined together in the Covenant helps us to go forward regardless of the number of churches.

Can we not do it ourselves? The covenant can always be amended, changed or dissolved.

If the Covenant and Budget were in place and ratified, the Council members would be able to focus their talents and abilities on positive projects for the benefit of the LRM.

*Waiting until Later* – The Bishop has asked us to delay presenting the Covenant to the Parishes until Summer 2021 or later...

Are we forcing the Bishop's hand? Could we forge a "common law" arrangement, until we receive approval from the Parishes (at a later date)?

The Bishop's comments (in the email) are pointed toward the process and not the contents of the Covenant.

What if the Bishop disapproves of the content of the Covenant later and we have already moved forward with it?

The Bishop is under a lot of pressure. She may not wish to entertain any structural changes until the path ahead is clearer. Financial help from the Diocese has been welcome and appreciated.

Some aspects of the Covenant require the implicit approval of the Bishop. Some aspects do not. It may not be wise to go forward without the full engagement of the Diocese.

It may be an odd kind of presentation to the Parishes if all parties are not on board.

*A Possible Middle Ground Emerged* – Could we use the Covenant as a guideline until such time as formal approval is given? Then we could propose it to the Parishes.

*End Result* – With our reasons pro and con for continuing with the Covenant clarified, we propose that Hugh bring our concerns to the Bishop’s attention again. It would be helpful to know the reasons behind her asking us to pause our timeline and whether she approves of the Covenant as written.

## **7. Online Services:**

Trinity Morin Heights and the Clergy Team both presented documents to the Council with background information on this issue.

Since last month’s meeting, Trinity Morin Heights and the Clergy Team have agreed to test the plan to have live broadcasts of Sunday services from the church.

This also speaks to the broader question of the intra-dependent association between our churches. A conversation occasionally needs to take place to express our brotherly and sisterly concern over common issues. Tensions can develop as we come to terms with the partially centralized LRM and the partially de-centralized LRM.

Future issues of this nature should be discussed and resolved at the local level (Corporation and Clergy) first.

The question of Participatory and Non-Participatory models of online worship was also revisited. It was felt that proposed initiatives in this area should be dealt with on a case by case basis and not covered by a one size fits all policy.

## **8. Church Re-Opening:**

This subject was dealt with in the Tour de Table.

## **9. Pastoral Care:**

An online check in was done to Pastoral Care volunteers animated by Nick and Linda Cass-Jones.

A suggestion from the meeting resulted in the production of a one page communication targeted at those giving Pastoral Care, and particularly during the pandemic. This document is to be distributed by Wardens.

The document was well received by the Council.

Some “drive-by” front lawn pastoral visits have been initiated.

The focus of the committee is to focus on what we “can do” instead of what we “cannot do”.

**10. Varia:**

The retirement of Territorial Archdeacon Michael Robson was announced as well as the name of his successor, Victor-David Mbuyi. It was proposed to invite Victor-David to attend a future meeting to introduce him to the Council members and to the LRM.

The Council wished to send its best wishes for rest and refreshment to Josée Lemoine who is still on medical leave until Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>.

At the recent Deanery meeting Safe Church was one of the topics. Safety checks on Wardens and other volunteers (or personnel) are still required.

Diocese of Montreal Synod will be online on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

**11. Date of Next Meeting:** November 25<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

**12. Closing Prayer:** Tania closed our meeting with a prayer.