

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES – OCT 25, 2020

Prayer: Brian Toole started the meeting with a prayer.

Welcome of New Members: Chris Wiechnik introduced those who became members of Circle in the past year. Chris also introduced the Board of Elders members.

1. Call to Order. Chris Wiechnik called the meeting to order at 1:20 PM. Chris also provided an explanation of process for the AGM meeting and noted that the Annual Report is available on the church website.

2. Adoption of Agenda

a. Call for additions or changes to the agenda.

Daniel Fedrau requested to add under item #7 - *New Business*, a discussion on women elders.

Bev Toews requested more information about the new lead pastor and status of Pastor Paul's position at Circle. Interim Vice chair, Brent Trickett responded that he would be covering these items in his report on the search process.

Motion: To accept the agenda with changes. Chad Haaf/ Bob Neufeld... Carried

3. Adoption of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes.

Motion: to accept the minutes from the 2019 AGM as presented.

Scott Kohlenberg/Chuck Armstrong... Carried

4. Presentation of Annual Leadership Report

a. Greetings. Sherry Myhre thanked the members for participating in the AGM saying it showed our heart for Circle and commitment to the church body. She reminded members to view the Annual Report online for the ministry highlights from the past year.

b. Highlights.

Insurance and COVID-19 Report: Sherry shared about two major challenges this year. The water damage from a major storm in July 2019 resulting in over \$200,000 worth of damages noting the expense was covered by our insurance. She also shared the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on our ministries, finances, and staffing, and thanked people for their faithful and sacrificial giving during this season. **For further details please see the Annual Report.**

Milestone Celebrations: Sherry highlighted two major celebrations this past year; Circle's 40th anniversary at this location, and the 30 Year Celebration of Pastor Eldon's ministry at Circle as he stepped down from the position of Lead Pastor. She noted

that although COVID impacted the type of celebration we had planned for Pastor Eldon and Bev, it did not stop us from honoring them with both a video thank you and a parking lot party parade.

Transition Plan Report: Brent Trickett acknowledged and thanked Sherry Myhre for her excellent work during this challenging season. Brent provided an update on the search for a new lead pastor. He asked our members to be praying for Pastor Jon Cook and his family as they transition to Circle. He highlighted the process and work done by the Search Committee and the Board. **The Transition Plan report is included in the Annual Report online.**

Motion: To accept the report as presented. Brent Trickett/ Bert Harman... Carried

Questions to the motion:

- Derek Yaganiski voiced a concern about a lack of spiritual care from the Board towards Paul Morgun and his family, through the search process.
- Bev Toews voiced her support for the Board and their decision to hire Jon Cook, but also expressed concern for Paul, and her hope that he will choose to remain at Circle.
- Myranda Fong asked for clarification as to who ultimately made the decision regarding the new lead pastor. Brent stated that a Search Committee was formed, consisting of two members of the congregation, two of the Leadership Team, and three members of the Board. The Search Committee narrowed the candidates to three, and then handed it to the Board to make a final decision.
- Gloria Kaiser voiced disappointment regarding the amount of information that was communicated to the church during the search process.
- Tom Gordon expressed a desire for the Board to provide a plan to help both the new lead pastor and the congregation to successfully navigate this transition. Brent responded that this is currently being addressed and the congregation will receive more information about it in the days ahead.

5. Presentation of Financial report

- a. Audited Financial Statements for 2019-2020. Scott Kohlenberg presented the audited financial statements for review by the membership. Scott highlighted the work done by the Leadership Team in managing and making some difficult decisions. Those decisions included reducing staff and staff hours of work.

Motion: To accept the Audited Financial Statements for 2019-2020 as presented. Scott Kohlenberg/Lee Shepherd...Carried

- b. Appointment of Auditor [Heagy LLP] for 2020-2021.

Motion: to accept Heagy LLP as the auditors for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Scott Kohlenberg/ Kevin Kaiser... carried.

c. Budget 2020-2021. Scott presented the budget for 2020-2021.

Questions received about the budget:

- Kelsey Isbister asked about the amount spent on the search for a new lead pastor. Scott indicated the expense of \$50,000 for Slingshot was designated to be covered in the 2019/20 budget, and had been determined prior to Covid-19.
- Chad Haaf asked about where we are at in terms of giving for the current fiscal year as compared to previous years. Scott replied that we are somewhat lower compared to last year.
- Jess Wall asked how the decision was made to spend the money on the search, in light of staff cut-backs due to Covid-19, and where that money is coming from. Scott stated that the contract with the external search organization (Slingshot) was in place prior to Covid-19 and there was no option to change that agreement. These funds were designated in the 2019-2020 budget. Brent stated that payments to Slingshot were deferred in order to prioritize staff needs.

6. Presentation of Nominating Committee Report

Brent highlighted two items that arose from the Nominating Committee discussions this year. The first is a more defined leadership development process to identify who can serve on the Board of Elders, and secondly, the need for our Board to more accurately reflect the diversity of our membership, which includes the issue of women serving as elders. Brent stated that the Board unanimously hold the issue of women as elders as a high priority and invited participation from the members to work through this discussion.

Ron Goertzen from the C&MA Midwest District Office gave some history and recommendations regarding the issue of women elders. He indicated that the conversation of women elders has been ongoing for a long time in the C&MA. In 2000, the C&MA determined that individual churches could decide to allow women to serve as elders. This requires a duly called meeting of the membership with a 2/3 majority vote in favor. The process to prepare for this vote should include scriptural teaching and discussion on the complementarian and egalitarian views. He exhorted our church to engage with this process in order to fully understand both points of view.

A commitment by the Board was given to have this issue addressed and resolved, including significant teaching and discussion with the membership, and a meeting set for June 13, 2021 where a vote will be held on this issue.

- a. Board of Elders for 2020-2021. Brent Trickett presented the list of elders submitted by the Nominating Committee for the 2020-2021 year. Brent Trickett, Cam Kupper, Niels Witbraad, Scott Kohlenberg, Chad Haaf, Eric Krieg, Chris Wiechnik.

Questions from the floor:

- Deseree Wiebe voiced a concern that there is a lack of minorities represented on our Board and asked how that will be addressed. Brent responded that it is the Board's desire that all groups within the church have a voice and are listened to and represented.
- Kevin Kaiser, as a member of the current Nominating Committee, indicated that the desire to have diverse representation on the Board was a priority and discussion in their deliberations. In reviewing the current membership list, however, it was apparent that many of the individuals we would like to consider have not become active members of Circle. He encouraged the promotion of membership, by membership, to others in our congregation.
- Cindy Bayles asked how someone serving on the Nominating Committee ends up being nominated for the Board of Elders. Chris Wiechnik explained that it is a consistent part of the process for the two Board members serving on the Nominating Committee to put their own names forward, and similarly, qualified members of the congregation can be put forward, even if they are members of the Nominating Committee. Chris also gave details about how specifically Chad's nomination came about as someone who had been considered for the past few years. Roberts Rules of Order and historical precedence were considered and adhered to in the process.

Motion: To accept the list of names presented to serve on the Board of Elders for 2020-2021 year. Brent Trickett/ Chuck Armstrong....Carried.

- b. Nominating Committee for 2020-2021. Brent provided information addressing the Nominating Committee and the work they have done to select the candidates for the 2020-2021 Board of Elders.

Brent Trickett presented the Nominating Committee candidates for 2020-2021 year, as submitted by the Nominating Committee, which included Tim Abramoff and Shawn Windrem.

Motion: To accept the nomination of Tim Abramoff and Shawn Windrem to the Nominating Committee for the 2020-2021 term. Brent Trickett/Wayne Andrie

Questions from the floor:

- Derek Yaganiski asked how the Nominating Committee is formed. Brent responded that the Nominating Committee is comprised of two members of the

congregation, two board members, and the lead pastor. Individuals invited to serve on the Nominating Committee are typically ones being considered for eldership and therefore have qualifications in keeping with an elder.

- Andrea Rohrke asked for confirmation that nothing in our local church bylaws and constitution requires that only men serve on the Board of Elders or Nominating Committee. She also asked for confirmation that according to our local church bylaws and constitution, a Nominating Committee does not need to be appointed until three months prior to the next AGM. Brent confirmed both of these statements. Based on his response, she asked that the motion to accept the Nominating Committee members be deferred until after Pastor Jon Cook has arrived and the issue of women serving on Circle's Board is resolved.
- Bob Neufeld proposed that we vote on the motion regarding the Nominating Committee and if defeated, a new motion can be made to defer it until a later date.
- Church Armstrong proposed an alternate idea of tabling the existing motion.
- Keith Walker clarified the two remedies brought forward – to either vote on the motion on the floor, or to supersede it with another motion to table the existing motion.
- Grant Myhre voiced his concern that because an elder's main responsibility is to shepherd the body of Christ, this ability or giftedness should therefore be a main consideration in choosing elders.
- Victoria Johnson asked if we table the existing motion, what happens to the current nominees when this is revisited. Chris responded that the two names put forward in this motion would remain on the slate until we reconvene, and at that point the motion to nominate those individuals would need to be defeated in order for the nominating committee to bring forward new names.

Tabling of motion:

Motion: To table the motion to accept the Nominating Committee nominees until after Pastor Jon Cook arrives and discussion can take place on the issue of women serving on the Board and Nominating Committee.

Brent Trickett/ Myranda Fong....Carried.

7. New Business

- a. Discussion on Women Elders –
 - Daniel Fedrau indicated that his question on this issue had been sufficiently addressed.
 - Brian Toole asked that if the result of the June 13, 2021 vote required a bylaw change, would the District Office need to approve it and what would be the

timeline of that. Ron Goertzen responded that the District needs to approve any bylaw changes but he indicated that a change on this issue would just be a formality and would happen in a very expedient manner and would not delay the inclusion of women being considered for the Nominating Committee and Board of Elders for 2021-2022.

- Brian Toole also asked for a commitment from the Board to include women in the discussions on this issue. Brent stated that the Board is committed to including women in these discussions.
- David Fong encouraged the Board to be proactive in seeking out women's participation, prioritizing women's issues and including them in leadership.
- Victoria Johnson asked which bylaw (local church, denominational, other) is limiting the involvement of women on the Board. Brent responded that it is the constitution of the C&MA in Canada that guides this issue.
- Andrea Rohrke asked for clarification regarding the interpretation of our current constitution with regard to women elders. Pastor Wayne Andrie and Ron Goertzen explained that each church has their own bylaws which qualify the constitution of the C&MA.
- Tom Gordon asked if there is currently an active Women's Society at Circle. Brent responded that while we do have various women's ministries, we don't have a Women's Society such as was common in the past.

Information request about new lead pastor and status of Paul Morgun – Bev Toews indicated her questions had been sufficiently addressed.

8. Commission Elders. The new Board of Elders was commissioned to serve for the 2020-2021 year. Pastor Wayne Andrie prayed for the ministry of the new Board of Elders. He also asked members to pray for the elders and the staff on a regular basis.

Brent thanked Brian Toole for his service for the past years on the Board.

9. Adjournment: Moved by Chris Wiechnik.