

Holy Trinity Church Advisory Board Meeting

January 17, 2023 – 7:00pm AGENDA

We meet virtually here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83101082174?pwd=RTVrbkhwZjdzNjA3QmJTTmxvNWRLdz09>

Meeting ID: 831 0108 2174 Passcode: 1830 Phone in: +16475580588

Board Package: <http://www.holytrinity-thornhill.ca/advisory-board/>

We are a vibrant, welcoming Christian community flourishing in God’s love through fellowship, outreach, worship and spiritual growth, in an atmosphere of compassion and mutual respect. Good things are happening here.

	Issue/Action
7:00 1. Opening	a) Welcome and Roll Call b) Opening Prayer c) Devotion – Cathy Walker-Pilgrim (a) Volunteer for January? d) Agenda - Approval
7:10 2. For Consent	December Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation • Matters Arising
7:20 3. Deputations & Correspondence	
7:45 4. Items for Discussion	a) Reimagining: Bringing people together: b) Code of Conduct: Small group conversations – 3 completed with 14 people (total) c) Nominations for Advisory Board and Wardens d) Youth and church school leaders; How are we going to manage this, or are we going to tell those with children under the age of 11 that we cannot accommodate their children in a church program? e) 2023 Budget f) Non-disclosure Agreement g) Social Justice Motion for Vestry: do we want to add anything specific to HTC?
8:05 5. Reports & Discussion	(a) Churchwardens (b) Incumbent (c) Committees & Ministry Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACW
6. Other Business	
8:30 7. Closing	Adjournment & Closing Prayer

Protocol

- No surprises for leaders at the Board meeting.
- Don’t contradict or criticize others to the parish.
- When differences arise, commit to pray, interact and find resolution in healthy ways, and to keep such discussions confidential as much as possible.
- Take time to share your respective visions for the church’s ministry, with freedom to disagree and interact in love, without feeling defensive.
- When an offense, either real or perceived, is experienced, deal with it immediately, one to one.
- Have 1 conversation at a time – when meeting virtually stay on unmute
- Actively listen, rather than waiting to speak.
- Once you’ve spoken wait to be recognized until everyone has had the opportunity to speak before speaking again.

Meeting Dates: Additional Meeting: Feb 7, 2023 07:00 – 8:00PM

Social Justice Vestry Motion 2023: Raise the Rates

We, the parish of _____ call on the Province of Ontario to double social assistance rates for both Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program, and thereafter to index these rates to inflation, so as to provide a safety net that enables people to meet their most basic needs.

Since 1995, when the provincial government of the day cut social assistance rates by 21.6% for recipients considered employable (a program now called Ontario Works or OW), to live on social assistance in this province has been to live in increasingly deep poverty. The modest rate increases applied to both Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program between 2003 and 2018 did not even keep pace with inflation over that period, and after a 1.5% increase in fall of 2018, rates for both OW and ODSP were frozen for the next four years. Thus, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, single people receiving ODSP were 40% below the poverty line, while those receiving OW were more than 60% below the poverty line. Both rates fall well within what is considered “deep poverty”, or an income 75% of (25% below) the official poverty line.

As inflation has climbed, the poverty gap has only widened. In September 2022, the current provincial government followed through with its campaign promise to raise ODSP rates by 5%. While this is a welcome step after a four-year rate freeze, it is still far from adequate. The increase will only give single ODSP recipients \$59 more per month, nowhere near enough to lift them out of deep poverty.

Meanwhile, those on Ontario Works receive no increase at all. While people receiving Ontario Works are considered employable, the abysmally low rates of assistance drive them deeper into destitution, making it more and more difficult for them to lift themselves out of poverty. Nowhere in Ontario is the \$733 per month received by a single person on OW adequate to meet their needs for food, shelter, and clothing. It is hardly surprising that homelessness is increasing everywhere in our Diocese, with shelters overflowing from Peel to Peterborough and Collingwood to Cobourg, while food banks and other food security programs are reporting a huge spike in the numbers of people accessing their services for the first time. In 2019, the Daily Bread Food Bank, which distributes food to nearly 200 programs in Toronto served 60,000 clients per month across Toronto. That number doubled to 120,000 during the pandemic. Now, 182,000 clients use their services every month - and if current trends continue, the number is expected to rise to 225,000 by March 2023.¹

¹ <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2022/10/08/daily-bread-food-bank-ceo-says-2023-is-looking-grim.html?fbclid=IwAR3vNg8fsJLmGwd4zwMh1GumMsd5gXeY0iCON5p8Br-rJn6rhzSgAecp0zw>

Some ODSP recipients have even sought medical assistance in dying (MAiD) - not because they are dying of their disabilities, nor because they do not wish to live, but because their income is too meagre to allow them to live with their disabilities in dignity. For such people, the recently expanded access to MAiD may at least allow them to die with dignity.² We recognize that MAiD is meant to enhance personal agency and freedom of choice. However, when people who would rather live are put in a position where their lives are intolerable to them not because of their condition, but because society refuses to provide adequate levels of support, choosing assisted death in such circumstances is the opposite of a free decision. As Canon Douglas Graydon has noted, this is an indictment against a society that has "determined that [disabled people] are not worthy of sufficient resources to ensure a quality of life."³

This past summer, the Income Security Advocacy Centre (a branch of Legal Aid Ontario) released an open letter calling on the provincial government to double social assistance rates and index them to inflation.⁴ This letter has been endorsed by more than 250 community organizations and social service providers, including food banks and legal clinics across the province, faith communities such as the Salvation Army and Mennonite Central Committee - Ontario, and coalitions such as the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), of which our Diocese is a member. A number of our FaithWorks partner ministries, including the Orillia Christian Centre - Lighthouse and the Dam, have also endorsed the letter.

It is true that doubling the rates of social assistance would present a significant cost outlay. However, the provincial government is already in an advantageous financial position. Lower social assistance caseloads during the pandemic have resulted in a savings of nearly \$800 million for the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and the provincial government currently has a \$2.1 billion surplus.⁵ The province can thus readily afford a significant increase in social assistance rates, if not the full cost of doubling the rates. Moreover, a substantial increase in social assistance rates would reduce the externalized costs of poverty - the increased burdens on our healthcare, emergency services and criminal justice systems, which Ontarian taxpayers are already shouldering.

² Doctor-patient confidentiality means that we do not know how many social assistance recipients have sought MAiD due to a lack of adequate income and other supports, beyond those cases which have been reported in the news. However, the UN special rapporteur on the rights of people with disabilities has expressed "extreme concern" that disabled people seeking MAiD are not always able to access viable alternatives, including adequate social supports.

<https://www.thestar.com/2022/assisted-death.html>

³ <https://anglicanjournal.com/justice-and-the-new-assisted-death-maid-is-now-easier-to-get-should-anglicans-be-concerned/>

⁴ <https://incomesecurity.org/open-letter-premier-ford-double-social-assistance-rates-now/>

⁵ <https://budget.ontario.ca/2022/fallstatement/pdf/2022-fall-statement-en.pdf>.

Indeed, even before the pandemic it was conservatively estimated that poverty costs Ontario between 27 and 33 billion dollars per year.⁶

This year's Vestry Motion offers our parishes the chance to add our voice to this growing call for income support levels that allow people on social assistance to meet their most basic needs.

This is surely one of our most fundamental obligations as a society. Disabled people on social assistance should not be driven to seek "death with dignity" because we fail to provide them with enough to live life with dignity. Those who are down on their luck should be supported to rise out of poverty rather than pushed deeper into destitution.

More importantly, it is one of our obligations as followers of Jesus to care for the most vulnerable in our society. To fail to respond to the needs of the poor in our midst is to be like the rich man in Luke 16, who enjoyed the good things of life while ignoring Lazarus at his gate. We are called instead to recognize in our neighbour the face of Christ, and to work together to ensure all have enough.

⁶ <https://feedontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Feed-Ontario-Cost-of-Poverty-2019.pdf>

Holy Trinity Church Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 20, 2022 - 7:00pm

Meet here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83101082174?pwd=RTVrbkhwZjdzNjA3QmJTTmxvNWRLdz09>

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PRESENT: Rebecca Jones (Chair), Nancy Cutler, Canon Barbara Hammond, Cathy Walker-Pilgrim (Secretary), Leanda Kirwan, Princewill Uzoukwu, Reginald Crenshaw, Edmund Baumann, Pat Burton, Linda Robertson.

REGRETS: Ed Carter, Cassandra Culpepper, Ruth Staples.

1. OPENING

- a) Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. with welcome and roll call.
- b) Meeting opened with a prayer by Canon Barb.
- c) Devotion led by Cathy. Rebecca to lead devotion for January 2023 meeting.
- d) **On a motion duly moved, seconded, and carried, the agenda was confirmed as presented with the following addition:**
 - I. **Add: The Lift (Rebecca) under "Other Business."**

2. FOR CONSENT

a) November Minutes:

- **Confirmation:**

On a motion duly moved, seconded, and carried, the minutes of the meeting held on November 15, 2022, were confirmed as presented.

- **Matters Arising:**

Virtual Chapel update (Rebecca): Discussions still to be had with Ed regarding the need for someone to fill a paid role.

3. DEPUTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE

None

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Reimagining: Bringing people together:

Caravan (Linda): Scheduled for January 8th at 11:15am.

Parishioners and others from the community will be given the opportunity to talk with persons from invited Charitable organizations.

b) Code of Conduct: Small group conversations (Rebecca):

- Format for conversations drafted with the assistance of Carolyn Kennedy who has

been asked to join the Advisory Board and will also participate in leading one of the conversation groups.

- Discussed format outlining the questions to aid in conducting five conversation groups to help the Parish understand why there is a need for a Code and to build understanding and obtain input.
- Other useful tips for conducting a successful meeting:
 - i. Take five minutes to read the draft code prior to working through the six questions.
 - ii. Include Parking Lot to list new questions brought up during the meeting for later discussion.
 - iii. Dates & Times suggested with volunteers:

Friday January 6 12:00pm: Rebecca; Notetaker: Pat

Sunday January 8 9:00am: Rebecca; Notetaker: TBD

Tuesday January 10 4:00pm: TBD

Wednesday January 11 7:00pm: (time being offered to the Sarah group): Linda

Monday January 23 7:00pm: Nancy; Notetaker: Cathy

Rebecca to make changes and share updated schedule.

c) Nominations for Advisory Board and Wardens (Rebecca):

Nomination committee making progress with recruiting members for position of Warden, Endowment and Advisory Board committees.

d) Youth and Church School Leaders (Nancy):

Positions remain vacant. Searching for persons interested in working with younger kids.

5. REPORTS & DISCUSSION

a) Churchwardens (Nancy):

- **Staffing:** Staff appraisals to be completed.

- **Screenings – Police Checks and Sexual Harassment Training:** To be completed by Church leaders by end of February.

More information to follow on what is required and who needs to complete this.

- **Church Rentals and Charges:** Wardens working with Office Admin to establish good solid file on rentals and charges.

Approached by other congregations and groups interested in renting the Church space.

To standardize our response to rental rates, will be reaching out to the Diocesan Trust Committee for guidance as well as look at rental rates within the ministerial.

Nancy to review in January and start reaching out to other groups who have rented from us in the past to see if we can get some rentals going.

- **Church Files:** Laura/Wardens to work on getting church files in order.

Organize what needs to be kept in the archives at the Church and what needs to be

sent down to the Diocese.

- **Financials:** November YTD still in the black.

Ed starting to work on Financial Report.

Distribution of 2023 commitment letters to commence week of December 19th.

First draft of 2023 budget shows a deficit. Expectation that envelope receipts will be down. Will be looked at further when commitment cards are returned.

b) Incumbent (Canon Barb):

- **Planned speakers/events:** Any ideas/events are to be discussed with Canon Barb, Wardens, and Office three months in advance.
- **Youth Ministry:** In discussions with Brother Reg regarding Sunday School and the possibility of getting a confirmation class together.
- **Pastoral Care:** Continuing work in this ministry.

c) Committees & Ministry Areas:

ACW (Linda): Poinsettia Tea was a success. Made over \$7,000.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

a) The Lift (Rebecca):

- The Challenge is that people do not know where the key is.
- Suggestion under consideration is to bolt a key to the inside of the lift and another key on each of the floors at the entrance to the lift to increase its accessibility.
- It was noted that the key to operate the lift is separate from the key that opens the outside door to the building.

Action item: Nancy will take away on behalf of the Wardens, discuss with Ed, Ron, and report back to the board in January.

b) Youth – Reading of Lessons & Psalms (Pat):

- Discussed how we could assist the youth to get more expression into the readings.
- Canon Barb working on getting training programs in place and having a meeting with all readers to discuss.
- Will be added to list of items to be discussed in January.

7. CLOSING

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a prayer used by the volunteer core at their Advent series, the Grace said, and meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.