

ST. MARK’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING DOCKET
May 30, 2024

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Attendance Record

Date: May 30, 2024	Location: St. Mark's Church
Time Started: 19:01	Time Ended: 20:55

Invited	Jan 25	Feb 29	Mar 21	Apr 25	May 30							
Nathan Cook (S)	P	P	P	P	P							
Lynda Joyal (T)	E	E	P	E	E							
Nels Kristenson	-	-	-	P	P							
Tom Lewis	P	P	P	E	E							
Jodi Pappel	P	E	P	P	P							
Cole Parsons (VC)	P	P	P	P	P							
Marijus Timmerman (C)	-	-	-	P	P							
Pastor Zsófi (ex officio)	P	P	P	P	P							
VACANT												
VACANT												
Guests												
Signe Jewett				P								
Brian Lorch					P							

Meeting Minutes

- 1) Opening Devotions
- 2) Approval of Agenda for May 30, 2024
MSC CC-2024-22 That the Agenda of May 30, 2024, be approved.
- 3) Approval of Minutes
 - a) **MSC CC-2024-23 That the Minutes of the Council Meeting dated March 21, 2024 be approved.**
 - b) **MSC CC-2024-24 That the Minutes of the AGM dated April 21, 2024 be approved.**
 - c) **MSC CC-2024-25 That the minutes of the Council Meeting dated April 25, 2024 be approved.**
- 4) Business arising from minutes
- 5) Finances
 - a) Presentation from Brian Lorch
 - b) Motion regarding benevolence remittance to the Synod
MSC CC-2024-26 That council authorize the Finance Committee to process benevolence remittances to the Synod at the rate of 75% of the budgeted monthly amount and seek advice from the Finance Committee as to whether the final contribution of 2024 can be increased to meet the full budgeted annual amount of \$21,000.
 - c) Motion regarding Designated Funds
MSC CC-2024-27 That the Designated Funds policy be amended to: (a) relocate the entries for Family to Camp and Focus on Mission to section at the end of the policy document reserved for Inactive / Discontinued Funds; (b) that a Refugee Sponsorship fund be created for the purpose of holding monies donated for refugee sponsorship related programming, that the congregational council be designated as having authority over disbursement of monies from this fund and, that any monies remaining in the fund following completion of the sponsorship project be donated to a charitable organization that supports the sponsorship of refugees; and (c) amend the Christmas Hampers fund description by deleting the sentence beginning with "At the end of each fiscal year..." and replacing it with "At the end of each fiscal year, all or a portion of surplus funds are donated to a

charitable organization with a mission similar to the Christmas Hamper Program.

- d) Motion for signing authority

MSC CC-2024-28 That Marijus Timmerman and Jodi Pappel be authorized to sign cheques on St. Mark's bank accounts, and Signe Jewitt and Inga Skundberg be removed as signing authority.

6) Continuing Business

- a) Refugee Sponsored Motion

MSC CC-2024-29 That St. Mark's Lutheran Church support and approve the private refugee sponsorship of Syrian refugee Abdulaziz Magribi and his family.

- b) Village Green Dancers Motion

MSC CC-2024-30 That a facility use contract renewal for the Village Green Dancers for 2024-2025 be approved.

- c) Committee Appointments Motions

Finance Committee

MSC CC-2024-31 That Cole Parsons, Lynda Joyal and Brian Lorch be appointed to the Finance Committee. *(Cole Parsons abstained)*

- d) Governance Committee

MSC CC-2024-32 That Marijus Timmerman and Nels Kristenson be appointed to the Governance Committee

7) Reports

- a) Chair

- b) Pastor

Motions:

MSC CC-2024-33 That council approve the use of ELCIC Summer Sermon Series for up to 7 days

MSC CC-2024-34 That Council approve sharing services hosted by Gloria Dei, St. Mark's and Messiah for three Sundays in July 2024.

8) Committee Reports

a) Youth and Young Adult Committee

i) Motion for congratulation gifts for St. Mark's grads

MSC CC-2024-35 That council approves the expenditure of 250 dollars, to be charged to the Youth Committee - Local Programming Budget line, for the purchase of congratulation gifts for the St. Mark's 2024 grade 12 graduates. (Nathan Cook abstained)

ii) Motion to renew / extend Youth Leader Contract

MSC CC-2024-36 That Wei An Lau's contract as Youth Leader be extended to June 30, 2025. (Nathan Cook abstained)

b) Congregational Care and Community Outreach

i) Motion to appoint chair

MSC CC-2024-37 That Signe Jewett be appointed Chair of the Congregational Care and Community Outreach Committee.

c) Committees Chairs

Children's Ministry, Social Ministry, Adult Education and Communion Ministry to Shut-ins are without a Chair at the time. Meeting of Children's Ministry Committee scheduled for June 2, 2024

9) New Business

a) Meeting went to in camera

b) Upcoming dates to note:

i) Next Council Meeting, June 20

Adjournment

Financial Update

General Offerings

- April generated the highest monthly offerings so far this year at \$21,029, likely the result of a modest increase in giving on Easter Sunday.
- Average giving in April over the past five years was \$24,874.
- YTD offerings to the end of April are down from last year by \$5,553.

Other Income

- YTD other income (interest and facility rentals) sits at \$4161, an increase of about \$1,100 over the same period last year.

Expenditures

- Property expenses are up compared to last year, but this is largely the result of an invoice from November 2023 related to the Parish Hall repairs (\$7400) that was not paid until February of this year.
- Payments for cleaning services are being charged to the Property Budget . As the year progresses, this will be another explanation for this segment's expenditures being over budget. Increases in this area will be somewhat offset by a decrease in wages as we no longer have a custodian on staff.

Bottom Line

- A net loss YTD. Operating expenses have exceeded income by \$3,202.
- No remittances were made to the MNO Synod during the first three months. A cheque was issued in May for \$3,937.50 to cover 75% of our budget commitment for the first quarter.
- Only one insurance payment has been made so far this year. Historically, invoices have never arrived in a predictable pattern. See below for good news though about our insurance premium for 2024.

Of note:

- Cleaning service is coming in at \$790 per month for March and April. On a full year basis, the cost will be \$9480 (slightly less this year as service did not start until mid-February). Budgeted amount for custodian in 2024 is \$8,778.
- The 2024 budget includes funds for a Sunday School coordinator for 36 weeks at 8 hours per week. Once Haiden's final timecard is submitted, an update on YTD expenses for this position will be prepared, hopefully in time for the June council meeting.
- We have been notified that our 2024 insurance premium will be \$11,856 which is considerably less than what we anticipated in the 2024 Budget (\$15,120).
- Unencumbered cash
 - Represents funds sitting in our accounts that are not committed to designated purposes. Consider this your rainy-day fund. It also allows us to fund operating deficits during much of the year prior to the traditional surge in giving in November and December.
 - As of April 30, 2024, unencumbered cash is \$94,394 (see details below).

UNENCUMBERED CASH ANALYSIS

Chequing Account + GST Owed	22,644.86
TD Direct Investing ISA (Money Mkt Fund)	68,056.24
TD CDN BOND FUND	25,666.15
TOTAL Assets	116,367.25
LESS: Designated Funds and Other Liabilities	21,972.57
Unencumbered Cash	94,394.68

Finance Committee Meeting Notes – May 6, 2024

Present: Lynda Joyal, Cole Parsons, Brian Lorch

1. Business Arising from Meeting Notes from December 28, 2023
 - (a) PayPal Link on website donation page is operational again.
 - (b) Bookkeeping duties. Rhonda Lorch has agreed to continue as bookkeeper until a replacement is found.
 - (c) Trading Authorizations on TD Direct Investing Account. Brian has made an appointment at the TD Kenaston Branch for Friday, May 10 at 1:30 PM. Lynda and Cole will also have to visit the branch to sign documents.
2. Business Arising from Council Minutes
 - (a) Cleaning contractor. Agreed that a Pre-Authorized Debit arrangement be entered with Anago Cleaners. Brian to follow up with the office staff.
 - (b) VISA cards. Discussion regarding supplying the office administrator with a VISA card. Noted that when Ms. Nelson's card was cancelled, the credit limit on that card was transferred over to the Pastor's card. It is thought that the bank would be reluctant to provide additional credit beyond the current \$3,000 limit (combined limits of Pastor and Music Director's cards).
Difficulty arises when office administrator needs to make a purchase off-site and must use his own cash and get reimbursed. It was thought that these are rare events and could likely be worked around. Stamp purchases: Brian will let office staff know that he is available to purchase stamps when supply is running low. It was also noted that stamps can be ordered online. Brian to speak to Pastor about

concerns expressed by the bookkeeper regarding submission of receipts for purchases made by staff using VISA cards.

3. Audit Committee Recommendations

Two recommendations.

(1) that all documentation pertaining to financial transactions in each month be filed in one location on Google Drive. This practice is now in place and has been since March 2023 when Rhonda Lorch took over the bookkeeping.

(2) that invoices be signed before cheques are issued. The need to sign invoices was questioned as the cheque requisition and cheques are signed by two people. Agreed that signing invoices was not an onerous requirement. Brian noted that he had sent a note to those with signing authority to remember to sign invoices when signing cheques.

4. 1st Quarter Financial Statements

Balance sheet and income statement as of March 31 were reviewed. Noted that general offerings for Q1 are down 4.7% from the same period last year. Operating deficit at the end of Q1 is \$7,225.

5. Bank reconciliation approval status.

There are two outstanding issues with the January bank reconciliation. One pertains to an uncashed cheque issued in 2023 (Cheque # 9778). The other related to JE 1702 – payment to Shaw. Brian to follow up with Rhonda to resolve.

Lynda to review March bank reconciliation. Agreed that once all issues are resolved, Lynda will send an email to Rhonda confirming that status.

6. Remittance to MNO Synod

We have yet to remit any funds to the Synod in 2024. Agreed that we follow the practice of the past two years and remit 75% of the budgeted amount which is \$1312.50 per month. Brian will prepare a cheque requisition to cover the first quarter remittance.

Agreed that council be asked to adopt the 75% remittance policy for 2024 on the understanding that, depending on giving in the 4th quarter, the remittance at year end may be topped up to meet the budgeted amount.

7. Refugee Sponsorship

The first donation towards the recently approved Refugee Sponsorship project has been received. Agreed that if the GL code used for the sponsorship undertaken in 2017 can't be reinstated, a new GL code be assigned to track donations.

Discussion around whether funds donated to the sponsorship project could be invested in short-term GICs as the funds will not be needed for at least one year. No decision taken. Will review again in the fall once the campaign for donations is fully underway.

8. Designated Funds Policy update

Agreed that discontinued funds for Family to Camp and Focus on Mission be moved to end of the Designated Funds policy document and listed under the heading “Discontinued / Inactive Funds”.

Agreed that the Refugee Sponsorship fund be reinstated (or created if the old fund is no longer in the QuickBooks system). Recommended that the congregational council be assigned authority over disbursements from the fund. Recommended that once the project is complete, any surplus funds be disbursed to a charitable organization that supports the sponsorship of refugees.

Brian to craft motions for presentation to council.

9. CRA Charitable Return

Brian will begin to compile the information necessary to file the 2023 return and create an initial draft. Lynda to review before return is filed with CRA.

PROPOSED MOTIONS

That council authorize the Finance Committee to process benevolence remittances to the Synod at the rate of 75% of the budgeted monthly amount and seek advice from the Finance Committee as to whether the final contribution of 2024 can be increased to meet the full budgeted annual amount of \$21,000.

That the Designated Funds policy be amended to: (a) relocate the entries for Family to Camp and Focus on Mission to section at the end of the policy document reserved for Inactive / Discontinued Funds; (b) that a Refugee Sponsorship fund be created for the purpose of holding monies donated for refugee sponsorship related programming, that the congregational council be designated as having authority over disbursement of monies from this fund and, that any monies remaining in the fund following completion of the sponsorship project be donated to a charitable organization that supports the sponsorship of refugees; and (c) amend the Christmas Hampers fund description by deleting the sentence beginning with “At the end of each fiscal year” and replacing it with “At the end of each fiscal year, all or a portion of surplus funds are donated to a charitable organization with a mission similar to the Christmas Hamper program.”

Property Committee Report

Chair: Perry Kohli (204-233-7771)

Members: Kurt Simonsen, Ed Mann, Fred Mann, Ken Charleson

Committee Work 2024:

- *Re-established operation of the doorbell camera system,*
- *serviced the kitchen dishwasher (Paramount Services),*
- *booked floor waxing for August,*
- *cleared entrance roof water drain.*
-

Planned work:

- *Level and clean north yard - Saturday May 25 (purchasing two yards of stone fill from Reimer Soils)*
- *Bury sump pump lines on the buildings west side*

Yard Equipment Update: *Toro mower is being replaced by another Honda mower (donated from Kurt)*

Perry Kohli

Youth and Young Adult Committee Report

To: St. Mark's Council

From: The Youth and Young Adult Committee

This is a request for funding in the amount of \$250 to purchase graduation gifts for the St. Mark's 2024 grade 12 graduates.

For the past few years there has been a tradition at St. Mark's of presenting a gift to our grade 12 graduates. Recently the gift has been a handmade quilt however this year there were not enough volunteers to provide quilts for the 12 graduates in the St. Mark's member's class of 2024

The Youth and Young Adult Committee is of the opinion that it is important for the congregation to express support and appreciation to these graduates and recognize this important milestone. An option that would be both economical and less labour intensive is a book titled We Rise Higher: Poems and Prayers for Graduates along with a custom sugar cookie with the St. Mark's window design and 'Congratulations class of 2024' on it.

We are requesting Council to provide funds of \$250 to purchase these gift items for the current 2024 class and to include a budget line item to support this initiative each year going forward.

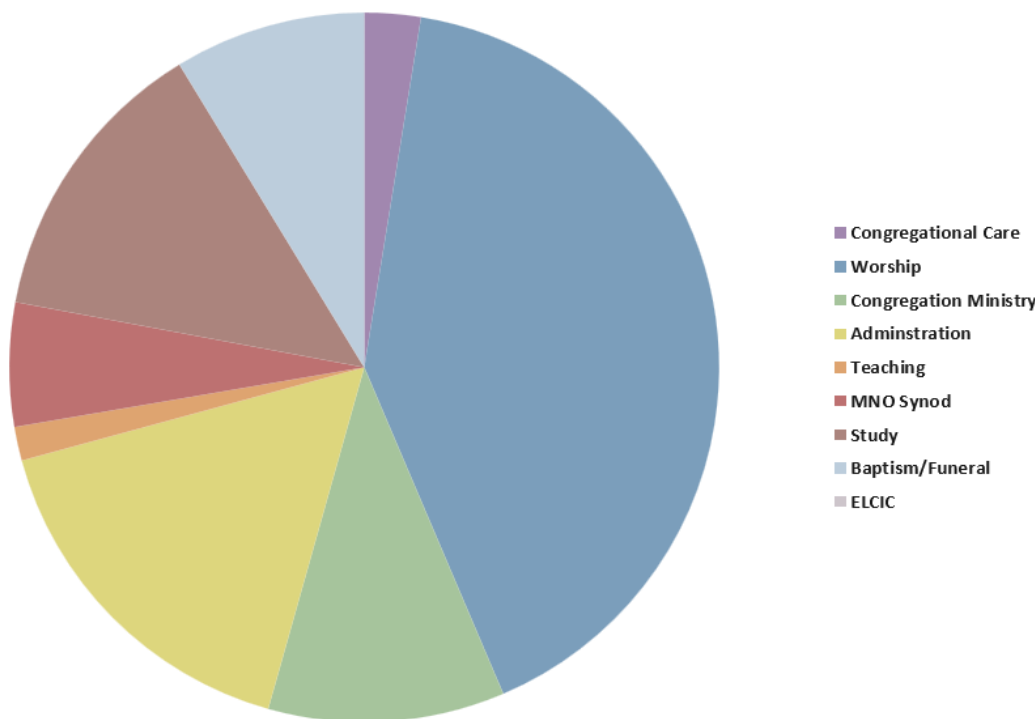
It should be noted that the amount will vary from year to year based on the number of graduates and the cost of a gift, with this year being one of the largest numbers.

Thank you for your consideration.

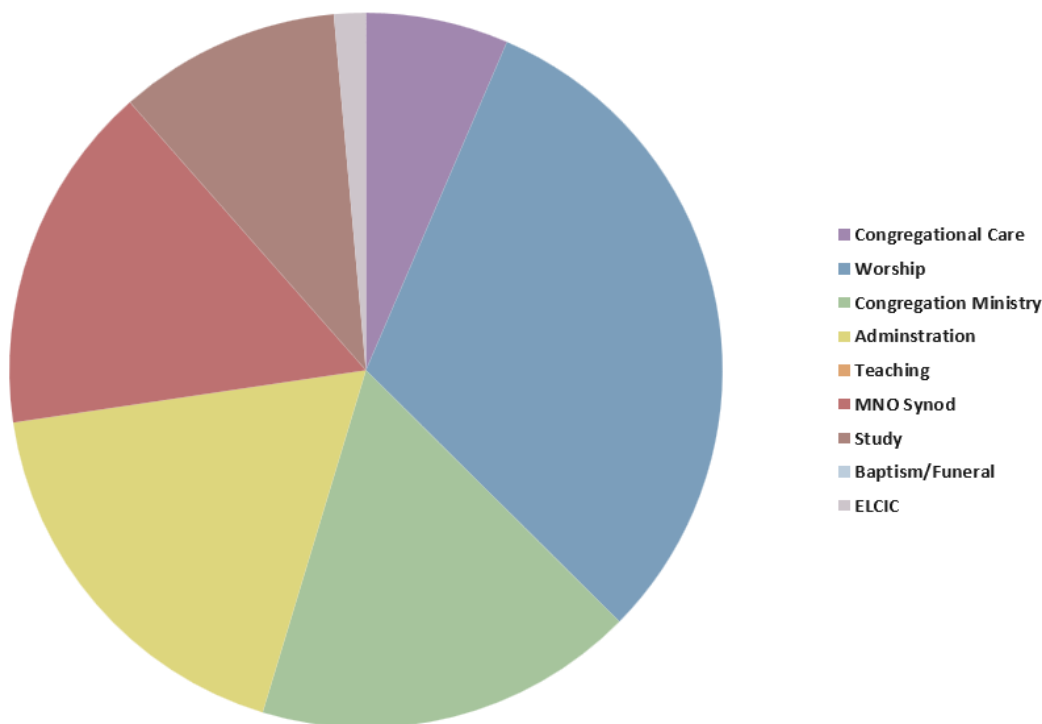
Regards,

Lawrence and Annette Gargol, co-chairs of the Youth and Young Adult Committee.

MARCH



APRIL



Where've We Been

Ministries of St Marks – It feels like Holy Week was a *very* long time ago at this point, but I think it is good to comment briefly on how well the worship services were received. We had good feedback from people worshipping online with us – which was helpful given that this year was the first time we've livestreamed Maudy Thursday or Good Friday's services. The Easter service was well attended, and many people stayed for pancakes after worship which is always a delight to me and for the youth. Most of my work in these past two months has been on connecting with committees to ensure a report was given to John, to assist with securing members for committees, as well as finding people for Council.

Office Management & Staff – John was handily able to get the AGM Bulletin of Reports together with a little help from others who had the experience and wisdom to share on compiling that information and distributing it to members. As a result of the communications work, we've had a few families ask to be removed from the active membership list at St Mark's, and this is reflected in my report. The 90-day review for John was conducted with Signe and myself in April. It was a rewarding experience and John has committed to moving forward with us. I do appreciate his work and partnership immensely. Haiden's last Sunday with us was May 19th, and we had a wrap-up party and potluck the same Sunday.

Wider Church – Installation of Council Members was held on April 28th. Queer Evening Prayer hosted at St Mark's was a successful event and I am ever grateful to the congregation for opening its doors to the community and church at large for such an event. There is interest at Wentworth United and St Peter's Anglican in sharing a quarterly rotating Queer Evening Prayer weeknight service and I am equally interested in making that happen.

Personally – My annual review was completed, and after taking some time to process the information received, I wrote an additional report for the AGM. I am thankful for those who have given me feedback since the AGM, who have sought answers to any of their questions, and have shared their own insights.

Where We Are

Ministries of St Marks – Ascension Festival was a resounding success and thanks to Melissa for the work she puts in to make that ministry SHINE! Children's Ministry survey has been generated and results compiled and shared with the Council Chair. Two training sessions for as many as 12 new Acolytes is set for May and June; the confirmation class list for the fall is prepared and there could be as many as 16 students in the confirmation program in the fall! There has been interest in the Visitation parties and John has made a list of people who are willing to host. I believe that everyone has asked for a list of people to be provided to them rather than making their own lists of guests. I have also taken some time after a meeting of the Home Communion group to begin a list of our membership at different levels of care, and I will be prioritizing a visit to those in the highest level of care group this summer. The additional time to spend with Children's Ministry and Congregational Care are coming from a plan of utilizing the ELCIC's Summer Sermon Series even while I am present to lead worship. With Council's approval, the Worship Committee and I have chosen a number of weeks in the summer where it is important for me to preach and the rest will be a video sermon from the series with a brief response from me.

Wider Church – MNO Synod Convention was May 24-26th in Selkirk and I was happy to have Cole in attendance as the member from St Mark's. We spent the business sessions seated at a table with ministry partners from Gloria Dei; Messiah; and St Stephen's/St Bede's which fosters good conversation and shared experiences. Bishop Jason was re-elected by majority on the first ballot, and the Synod reports proved to all that the wider church is experiencing exactly the same kinds of problems every church and council is experiencing. Bishop Jason gave interesting and interactive keynote presentations that had the delegates talking to each other about the 'why' of church – what are the deep values at the root of our fears, hopes, dreams, and desires for the church. It really was an opportunity for the members of the MNO Synod to become renewed and transformed. All of the Synod Staff offered themselves to congregations for further support in determining the future and finding where God

is calling a specific congregation. I am looking forward to further conversation about this with colleagues at the Study Conference in June.

Personally – After convention I took a brief 36 hours away with my family to reset and I have returned with renewed vigour. I know that the summer is usually a time of rest for many, but I have a feeling that I am going to be chasing a number of people down to get ahead of a number of different projects and ideas before September comes rolling along.

Where We're Going

Ministries of St Marks – Messiah, Gloria Dei, and St Mark's are going to worship share in July for three weeks to help with some of the vacation time of clergy and musicians. With Council approval, July 14th we will all be at Gloria Dei; July 21st, everyone will be here at St Mark's; and on July 28th everyone will be at Messiah. On June 2nd, I will be meeting with the current Children's Ministry committee to look at how we would like to structure the coming year for education and ministry opportunities at St Marks. I am excited about the possibilities that will come from this meeting. Summer plans for cleaning and organizing the basement spaces for better space usage and rentals are coming together. And I have begun planning and organizing the Pastor Parties with a number of hosts, having just attended the first one on the 29th of May. I would like to sit down with the chair of the Congregational Care and Community Outreach Committee and talk about the overlap of things happening at St Marks and how we can better facilitate cross-pollination of support and communication. I have also received a report from Adult Education group that they are planning to resume a study session in the fall, likely focused on the prophets of the Old Testament.

Office Management & Staff – Staff have discussed summer holiday plans with me, and I have approved requests in principle. John has plans to be away the week of August 13th-15th and the week of September 3rd-5th. Melissa has plans to be away the first three weeks of August (Sundays away: Aug 4, 11, 18). I plan to be away for two weeks sometime between July 28th and August 17th, but plans have not been firmed up yet.

Wider Church – The Synod/Diocese presence at the Pride parade is this June 2nd, and a number of our members will be there, and an RIC Pride worship will happen at St Mark's. I will be at the Synod/Diocesan Study Conference June 11th-14th in Gimli. I will be looking to further plans with Wentworth United and St Peters Anglican on a joint weeknight worship service that we can rotate through our spaces as I think this is important collaborative work.

Personally – For the month of June and most of July, our plans are to stick close to home. We're trying to make the most of the last non-school year that we can, while also getting used to the idea that one of us is starting school in the fall!

STATISTICS

HR Reporting

SYNOD GUIDELINES		MARCH (Guidelines)	APRIL (Guidelines)	YEAR TO DATE (Guidelines)
Days of the Year	366	31	30	121
Workdays (<i>5-day work week</i>)	251	23 (20)	17 (22)	74 (84)
Days Off	104	08 (10)	09 (08)	32 (34)
Statutory Holidays	011	00 (01)	01 (00)	03 (03)
Vacation Days	D-26	--	01	04
(<i>incl. days off + D-02 rollover</i>)	S-04	--	01	01
Study Days	014	--	--	05
(<i>incl. days off</i>)				
Sick Leave	018	01	--	02

Congregational Reporting

Baptism – n/a

Reception by Transfer, Confirmation/Affirmation – n/a

Death – n/a

Removal by Request - 10

MILLER, Troy [April 24, 2024]

MILLER, Colby [April 24, 2024]

MILLER, Brooks [April 24, 2024]

SMITH, Erik [April 24, 2024]

SMITH, Ella [April 24, 2024]

MILLER, Sara [April 24, 2024]

MILLER, Wyatt [April 24, 2024]

MILLER, Laila [April 24, 2024]

SMITH, Cathy [April 24, 2024]

SMITH, Everett [April 24, 2024]

Pastoral Acts(year to date)

Baptisms	00		Confirmations	00
Weddings	00		Funerals	01

Congregation Activities (year to date)

Worship Services	14 (24)	Communion Services	09 (16)
Baptismal Counselling	-- (--)	Wedding Counselling	-- (--)
Visitation/Family Prayer	04 (12)	Council Meetings	02 (04)
Meetings	04 (09)	"Home" Communion	01 (03)
Confirmation Classes	01 (08)	Other Events	02 (05)
Hospital Visits	-- (03)	Staff Meetings	-- (04)

Wider Church Responsibilities (year to date)

MNO Meetings/Events	06 (10)	Mentorship & Collegiality	03 (07)
Other Meetings/Events	04 (07)	MNO Synod Leadership Conference	--

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN TASK FORCE REPORT MAY 21, 2024

Members of Task Force: Jennifer Moroz (chairperson), Rhonda Lorch, Judy Grossman

This Report covers activities and plans since the report submitted to Council on April 22nd, 2024.

1. Indigenous Book Study: On April 23rd Rhonda and I led a study of the non-fiction book "Valley of the Birdtail", which recounts the history of Waywayseecapo Indian Reserve and its relationship to the nearby town of Rossburn, Manitoba. It is described as a story about how two communities in Manitoba became separate but unequal.

13 people registered for the study which is an increase in attendance since the Indigenous book study held in February. Due to the number of attendees, the study was structured to incorporate discussions among two smaller groups, as well as a discussion with the whole group. Feedback on the study was very positive.

2. Red Dress Day: On Sunday May 5th, the RAP Task Force published an educational article in the E-News about the history of Red Dress Day and the significance of the red dress. Rhonda and I arranged for the display of red dresses on the property of St. Mark's and in the sanctuary (assisted by Sarah Harrington), after consultation with Pastor Zsofi. Pastor Zsofi also supported this commemoration through special liturgical elements and by providing additional educational resources in the E-News.

3. Future Initiatives: Publication of educational articles in the E-News will continue as issues arise. Planning for Orange Shirt Sunday (Orange Shirt Day falls on Monday, September 30th) will begin in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Jennifer Moroz
Chairperson