

CPG News



A newsletter from the Council Planning Group, Shaughnessy Heights United Church

October 2004

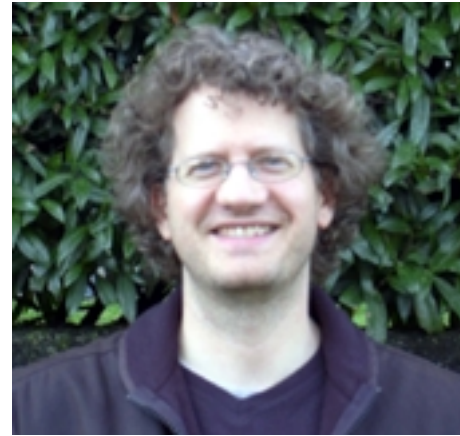
Council requests JNAC

At a special session on October 6th, attended by representatives of Vancouver South Presbytery, SHUC Council passed a motion requesting the Presbytery "to share in a Joint Needs Assessment in order to review our mission and resource needs as soon as possible" (see opposite). A congregational meeting has been called for Sunday 24th October, immediately following worship, to receive a report from Council and to appoint the congregational members of a Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC).

The United Church Manual requires a Joint Needs Assessment to be done by SHUC before a vacancy can be declared for a Minister for Children & Families, following Gord Robertson's tenure as Interim Minister. A JNA is an intentional, consultative process, conducted jointly with Vancouver South Presbytery, focusing on the "context of ministry" at the pastoral charge and the "ministry personnel needs". It typically involves a committee of 5 - 10 congregational members and two Presbytery representatives. The process is described more fully on page 2.

There have been many changes in ministry personnel at SHUC since the last full Joint Needs Assessment in 1998 and Council felt that we should take this opportunity to broaden the scope of the present JNAC to include a review of SHUC's mission goals and overall resource needs - "entire staff and budget". A lot of preparatory work has already been done, particularly by the Stepping Stones Team, and Council has requested the JNAC to submit its report by January 2005. This will allow the congregation to approve a 2005 budget in light of the recommendations emerging from the JNAC.

Council members and the staff are aware of the potential implications of a JNA and the scope and justification for holding a JNA at this time have been carefully considered. It involves a significant time commitment by its members and implies a willingness to try and discern where God is calling SHUC in its future mission. We do not know where a JNA will lead, or what it means for us individually, but we trust in God that we shall emerge from the process a stronger and more purposeful congregation with the resources, including staff and budget, to lead and support us in the years ahead. We enter the process with some humility but also with a great deal of hope. Please plan on attending the congregational meeting on 24th October to receive a report from Council and to elect the JNAC team.



Gord Robertson, Interim Minister for Children & Families

Council Motion on JNAC

A. The SHUC Congregation has undertaken extensive work in recent years in relation to mission, vision and values, and the resources required to support SHUC's mission in the world - including, inter alia, the JNAC report (April 1998), Town Hall meetings (2000 - 2003), JNAC report (May 2003), and the Stepping Stones Report (January 2004).

B. The resignation of Cathy Cryder as Minister for Children and Family Ministries, presents the congregation with an opportunity to carefully review its overall mission goals and resource needs - entire staff and budget

Therefore the CPG recommends (Manual section 050.1) that:

1. The Council request Vancouver South Presbytery to share in a Joint Needs Assessment in order to review our mission and resource needs as soon as possible with a view to reporting to the Council and congregation by January 2005
2. The Council call a meeting of the congregation to be held on Sunday, October 24th following worship in order to report this action to the congregation and to consider and appoint nominees to serve on the Joint Needs Assessment Committee
3. Council members forward to the Chair of the Nominating Committee (Dawna Claxton), by October 13th, their suggestions for congregational membership of the JNAC.

Job Vacancies

There continue to be a few vacancies within the SHUC governance structure and the CPG would encourage any who feel able to share their leadership gifts to “step up to the plate”. In addition to opportunities for service in each of the mission teams, the most pressing need is for a new Chair of the Ministry & Personnel Committee. This is an important role that provides a unique insight into SHUC’s life and work. Tom Beasley has led the Committee over the past two years and it is time for him to move on.

If you have experience or skills in HR issues, or just wish to offer leadership in this important area, please do consider serving on the M&P Committee and give your name to Dawna Claxton. One thing you can be sure of, it will be an interesting year ahead!

“Friends of the Daycare”

A renewed spirit of friendship was experienced among a group of 11 SHUC participants who met on October 5th as “Friends of the SHUC Daycare”. These included representatives of SHUC Council, CPG and Daycare Board members, as well as those who have provided leadership on Daycare issues over many years. The meeting opened in prayer and all of those attending affirmed their support for the Daycare as part of SHUC’s outreach ministry. The meeting, convened by Cathy Lew, Daycare Board Chair, considered a number of issues, including legal advice on the need for clarification of the constitutional relationships between SHUC and the Daycare, and the potential requirements for facilities upgrades. Various actions were decided upon and the group agreed to meet again in the first two weeks of November. Once all the necessary information has been assembled, a fuller report will be made to the congregation. These are complex issues, involving licensing, liability, financial and legal aspects, and the CPG expresses appreciation to the “Friends of the Daycare” for their willingness to work together to resolve them.

Facilities Visioning Team

Some excellent work is being done within the Facilities Visioning Team under the leadership of Bob McFarlane. The team has already met several times and has been thinking creatively about the use that SHUC is making of its facilities, including the Manse, and ways in which this use, and these facilities, could be improved in future. An interim report is expected early in the new year. Thanks are also due to the members of the team - Lu Tang, Mark Munroe, Allan Cunningham and Helen Cheung. Please feel free to mention your hopes and dreams for SHUC’s future facilities use to Bob McFarlane or a member of the team.

Joint Needs Assessment Committee needs you!

Are you willing for your name to be put forward as a congregational member of the JNAC team? Or do you know someone within the SHUC community who might be willing to serve? If so, please pass along any names as soon as possible to Dawna Claxton, Chair of the Nominating Committee, at djclaxton@shaw.ca or 737-6008. All of the nominations will be considered by the SHUC Council at a meeting on October 20th and a balanced “slate” will be brought forward for approval at the Congregational meeting on October 24th. Nominations will also be invited from the floor at that meeting.

The Council has emphasized the importance of balanced and representative membership of the JNAC to ensure that all ages and all voices are heard in the process, particularly from youth and young families. On the advice of Presbytery a “clear majority” of JNAC members should be members of SHUC but adherents may also be considered for participation. It is generally the case that the JNAC members will themselves select their table officers - Chair, Vice Chair and Recording Secretary. We are pleased to report that Rev. Bob Miller (a part-time minister at SHUC in 2001-2002 and before that the Lead Minister at Gilmore Park United Church) has agreed to be one of the two Presbytery representatives on the JNAC.

In view of all the preparatory work already completed, particularly in the Stepping Stones Report of January 2004, Council expressed the hope that a JNAC report would be submitted to the Council and then to the Congregation in January 2005. This is an ambitious timeframe but in the opinion of the Presbytery it is realistic. In considering whether to participate in the JNAC, you might therefore be sensitive to the possible need to meet on a weekly basis between the week of October 25th until before Christmas, with perhaps two more weekly meetings in January. The frequency and timing of JNAC meetings will be decided by the JNAC team members.

The format of the JNAC is prescribed in the Pastoral Relations Handbook of the United Church of Canada, copies will be made available to all JNAC members. It requires the completion of six profiles. The first three profiles - the Context of Ministry - cover such questions as “What is our Community?”, “What is our Pastoral Charge Ministry?” and “What are our resources, human and material, to support our work and ministry personnel?”. The third three profiles cover “Ministry Personnel Needs” - “what are the position descriptions?”, “what are the skills required to do the work?” and “what are the terms we can offer?”. The answers to these questions provide the basis for the JNAC’s recommendations.

Budget 2005 - a first look

A joint meeting between the CPG and the Chair of the Finance Committee and the Treasurer was held on 4th October. This was the second such meeting, reflecting a new approach to the preparation of next year's budget. In previous years the practice has been for the Treasurer and Finance Committee to prepare a budget for presentation to Council in December. This year, the budget assumptions will be prepared jointly between the Finance Committee and the CPG, in consultation with Committee chairs, so that when a draft budget is eventually presented to Council it reflects a consensus approach and is jointly owned. The aim of this consultative approach is to reduce the potential for conflict and to create a budget that receives support from all within the congregation.

It is already clear that the preparation of SHUC's 2005 budget, and the commitment to achieve a balanced budget, will be just as challenging - if not more so - in 2005 as in previous years. Many of SHUC's costs are "fixed" in the sense that they are predictable in the absence of other changes. The main variable in the revenue projections is the level of general offerings. A key assumption on which the 2004 balanced budget was based was that the congregation would maintain the same level of general offerings in 2004 as they had given in 2003. The Treasurer currently estimates that the level of offerings in 2004 are likely to be 10 - 15% below the 2003 level. The Chair of Finance has recently written to all members of the congregation to remind them of the assumptions on which the congregation approved a balanced budget in 2004.

For 2005, the Treasurer's initial budget assumption is that SHUC offerings will be lower than the currently forecast level in 2004. His preliminary estimates allow for a 5% increase in facilities-related income, a 5% increase in regular expenses for Property and Manse, and at this point no change in staff salaries. Based on the approved staffing model of 2.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTE), the Treasurer's preliminary estimates project a 2005 deficit of approximately \$50,000. They would also indicate an increased, rather than reduced, dependence of SHUC's mission-related activities on the income from facilities. The congregation has committed to reduce and remove this dependence over a 3 year period.

A lot more work will need to be done before a 2005 draft budget is brought to Council. Also, following the recent financial appeal, we are still hopeful that the Congregation will come through with the same level of offerings in 2004 as in 2003, if a deficit is to be avoided. But the preliminary 2005 budget numbers provide additional cause to look carefully at our overall resources in the context of a JNAC. They are also one reason why it is now necessary to launch a financial stewardship campaign.

New Format for Council

Meetings of the SHUC Council have a different look this year. No more late night sittings! The starting time of the meetings has been brought forward to 5.30 p.m. and the meetings commence with "soup and sandwiches". During this first 30 minutes of gathering time, one of the Council members leads a brief theological reflection on the upcoming Sunday lectionary text. Pastoral concerns are shared and reports are received from the Lead Minister and each of the main mission areas. At each meeting there is a 20 - 30 minute focus on one of the primary mission areas - on September 15th it was Worship and Music. At the meeting on October 20th, the focus will be Outreach. The meetings close by 8.30 p.m.

Council meetings are held in the Lounge and are "open" to all members of the congregation. If you are thinking of joining a SHUC committee or would be interested to become involved in the work of the SHUC Council, please feel free to drop by and see your lay and ministry leaders working together on SHUC's future agenda!

Presbytery Meeting - Oct 19th

The responsibility for hosting the monthly meetings of Vancouver South Presbytery rotates among Presbytery pastoral charges and it is SHUC's turn to welcome the Presbyters to dinner at SHUC on October 19th. Some 60 - 70 presbyters will be attending the dinner and worship in the Church Hall, starting at 6.00 p.m. The dinner is served by SHUC volunteers, under the direction of Dawna Claxton, and if you feel able to lend a hand in the serving or clearing away of dinner please contact Dawna as soon as possible. Additional help in welcoming our Presbyters to SHUC will be much appreciated!

A New Goal for 2005

At the Council Planning Retreat on September 11th, SHUC Council approved the following "over-arching" goal for the SHUC community in 2004/2005 -

"To nurture and deepen our relationship with God, working in love made real through the ministries of celebrating, learning and reaching out, in caring community."

This goal will inform the work of Council this year and has been communicated to each of SHUC's committees so that they may take it into account as they give thought to their specific objectives in the year ahead.

The CPG encourages all members of the SHUC community to reflect on what it means to "nurture and deepen" the relationship with God. In what ways can we individually commit ourselves in the year ahead to make this community goal a personal reality in the coming year?

Who's Who on Council?

Several of you have asked to be reminded of the membership of this year's Council and what is the difference between the CPG and the Council.

The CPG is the Council Planning Group and consists of the Chair of Council, Philip Francis, the two Vice Chairs - Dawna Claxton (Mission) and Ian Paterson (Resources) - and the Lead Minister, Harry Oussoren. The CPG meets once or twice a month. It acts as a de facto executive committee of the Council - tasked by Council to oversee the implementation of Council decisions and to plan the agenda for Council meetings in order to ensure the efficient conduct of meetings.

The Council consists of the four CPG members plus:

Past Chair - Noralyn Smiley (to June 2005) or the **Chair Designate** (from June 2005)

Secretary - Nina Matthews

Presbytery Representatives - Paul Saxon + 1 (vacant)

Chair of the Board of Trustees - Rudy Kerklaan.
New Chair sought from Dec. 31, 2004.

Treasurer - John Christie

Mission Chairs

Worship and Music - co-Chairs MaryLou Harrigan and Clif Prowse

Christian Education - Janet Pritchard

Outreach - co-Chairs David Ansley and Jennifer Lowry

Pastoral Care - Lois Saad

Congregational Life - Ann Moir

Resources Chairs

Ministry & Personnel - Tom Beasley (Acting Chair)

Operations - Norm Barr

Finance - Brad Hardie

Communications - Heather Clarke

Stewardship - Dawna Claxton (Acting Chair)

Nominations - Dawna Claxton

Coming Soon

October 24 - Congregational Meeting immediately following worship to consider the report of Council on a Joint Needs Assessment and to appoint members to the Committee. Philip Francis will deliver a sermon "*Purposeful Peace*" in Sunday worship.

October 30 - SHUC Fall Fair Extravaganza - 10 a.m - 3 p.m. handicrafts, art display, silent auction, bake sale, performances, book sale, basement sale - helpers and donations are still needed. Please call Phyllis Hayter 604-732-8442.

October 31 - All Saints' Sunday, "Making Disciples" - Confirmation of Youth. Come and celebrate the confirmation of eleven young SHUC people.

November 12/13. Reach Out 2004 - 2nd Annual Outreach and Social Justice Conference, sponsored by Shaughnessy Heights United Church and the Chalmers Institute. This year's theme is *Human Dignity and the Integrity of Creation*. Keynote speakers include Dr. Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa; and Dr. Sallie MacFague, Distinguished Theologian in Residence, VST. Attend any two of the five Micah workshops! Detailed program of events is posted on the SHUC website, together with registration details. Conference brochures are in the foyer and the hall. Registrations are filling up fast so please register early to avoid disappointment. Speak to David Ansley or Jennifer Lowry for further details.

Help Wanted

Please consider offering your time or support in one or more of the following roles:

1. **Joint Needs Assessment Committee.** Please contact Dawna Claxton as soon as possible.
2. **Ministry & Personnel Committee.** We are urgently in need of a new Chair and additional members.
3. **Presbytery Dinner (October 19th)** - can you help with the serving and clean-up after dinner? Please speak to Dawna Claxton.
4. As a donor or volunteer for the **Fall Fair Extravaganza** - speak to Phyllis Hayter - or at the **Outreach Conference** - speak to Jennifer Lowry.

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