

**TOWN OF ORFORD  
CHURCH STUDY COMMITTEE  
MEETING JULY 24 ,2023  
Orford United Congregational Church  
APPROVED**

**Attended by: Sylvia Paxton (Chair), Heid Peyton, Eva Daniels, Jenny Littlewood, Dave Smith and Ann Green. Guests: Betty and Paul Messer**

**Minutes:**

Sylvia opened the meeting at 2:03PM. Eva made a motion to accept the Minutes of July 10 and seconded by Jenny. There were no corrections and Minutes were approved unanimously.

As initiated by Paul Messer's question of "what will happen to the meeting," and his interest in how to use the church space, Heidi gave a summary of the Committee's ideas that would involve the entire community in a discussion and suggestions of possible use. This includes mailing a letter introducing the Committee and informing of a plan to hold two Open Houses and mailing a community -wide survey.

The Committee reviewed two documents Sylvia prepared and shared for discussion. The first was "Possible Uses of the Congregational Church; "What Can you Imagine." Members made some additions to the list of past activities that used the space some of which were income producing. The second document "Expenses for the Congregational Church for years 2018. 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023." Eva suggested that Janitorial expense should be added. Dave advised that he is donating time to wind the clock and therefore should not be shown as an expense. Although the septic service is a one-time charge every three years, members thought the expense should be prorated across a three-year period.

Eva reported that the Certificate of Occupancy was renewed following a recent visit by Orford Fire Chief Terry Straight. The total capacity of the Fellowship room is 60 and the Sanctuary was estimated at 250-300 capacity. Chief Straight will make a return visit to issue a Certificate for the Sanctuary.

At Heidi's request, Committee members gave suggestions for content of the introductory letter which she will draft and present at next meeting. She also asked for catchy language for the posters. Eva will provide a list of sites for posters. Also, the Open House dates should be entered on the Valley News calendar, Journal Opinion and perhaps the September issue of the Friend's newsletter. Ann agreed to contact the Executive Board of the Friends to see if this might be a possibility.

There was a brief discussion of the Open House presentation and serving food...sweets for Friday and perhaps sandwiches for Saturday. No decision was made.

Paul suggested that there are others who might have an interest in the future of the Church building and suggested that the committee may want to reach out to them. Larry Coffin was mentioned due to his relationship with the church when a youngster and growing up in Orford. Dave agreed to contact him.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:14pm. Next meeting will be at 1pm at the Church on July 31.

Submitted by Ann Green