



ROWANDALE

BAPTIST CHURCH

Dear Rowandale,

I hope that you are doing reasonably well, under the circumstances, and that you were encouraged this Christmas as our thoughts turned to the birth of Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, over 2000 years ago. He is with us in our hearts today, and He knows everything we are going through. He intercedes for us to the Father and the Holy Spirit provides us with comfort and help. We are not walking alone.

When I last wrote to you at the beginning of November, I mentioned that our usual membership meeting in November would need to be postponed due to restrictions on gatherings due to Covid. We are still in the same situation now, and will need to wait a bit longer to meet; hopefully restrictions will ease soon in 2021. I know that all of us are missing the fellowship of being with each other very much.

In the meantime, though, the term of five of our Council members ends as of today (Cheryl, Andrea, Shannon, Holger and Jason Nickel), which would leave only four voting Council members. Two of these five are willing to continue for a second term (Andrea and Jason), and through the nominating process, we have three new people who are willing to serve on Council in 2021, but we need a membership meeting to approve them to serve. We had considered a mailed out ballot to get an approval that way, but it gets complicated and there are security and confidentiality concerns with trying to do that. Then, when reading our Bylaws more closely, I discovered a clause in Article IV, Section 1, Item 1 that was helpful. It reads:

“The Church delegates to the Church Council the responsibility respecting programming, nominating, recruiting and appointing workers. This shall include temporary appointments to elected positions when required.”

That means that Council is able make a temporary appointment of Council members. We felt that this would be the best way to accommodate our unusual situation. The five current Council members whose terms were ending today were all willing to stay on for a while longer, until we could have a Membership meeting. So, Council passed a motion earlier this month to extend the terms of these five until new and renewing Council members are elected by the Church membership. This will give the Church continuity of leadership as we enter 2021, and these five have already been approved by the membership when they were voted in 2 years ago. [We could have appointed the newly nominated individuals instead, but we felt it would be best to leave that for the membership to decide when we are able to meet again.]

The other thing that is usually done in the November membership meeting is the approval of a budget for the following year. The Finance Committee has already prepared a budget, and the Council has approved it, but we are not able to get an approval from the Church membership at this time. What we have decided to do is to continue using the 2020 budget as our guide in terms of maintaining the operation of the Church – e.g. staff salaries, building upkeep, utilities, etc. without spending anything new or that is unnecessary until such time as we meet and the 2021 budget can be approved. This seems reasonable, and actually was how things used to be done in prior years when the annual budget was approved in February, rather than in November like we have been doing more recently.

We trust that you will understand and approve of these decisions by Council. Our goal has been to keep things going as normally as possible while we are under Covid restrictions, and we hope that things will open up again in the near future.

Please continue to pray for our Pastors as they serve the church faithfully, for our staff and others in leadership roles (e.g. Council) – that we will have God’s wisdom and guidance as we try to adapt and find the best way through these times.

Please also pray for one another, and make it a point to reach out to others in the Church – who knows what encouragement or blessing you can bring to someone else, even if it is just a phone call. Who could you contact?

Thank you for your faithfulness in supporting the Church financially as well – it has been amazing to see! Who would have expected our offerings to come in pretty well on budget, when we have not been able to meet in person for months? Rowandale is an amazing Church, with wonderful people! What a blessing to be a part of it!

On behalf of Council, I want to wish everyone a very blessed and wonderful new year! May it be a year of refreshing and new things! (Isaiah 43:19)

Leo Jansens

Moderator