

James Bay United Church Board Meeting Minutes – Approved

Date: 2026/09/17

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Sanctuary

Chair: Scott Jantzen

Secretary: D'Arcy McPherson

In attendance: Scott Jantzen (Chair)
Gordon Miller (Treasurer)
André Fontaine (M&P)
Marg Lunam (Thrift Shop)
Diane Monteith (Member at large)
Colleen Nichol (Pastoral Care)
Rev. Greg Powell (Minister)
D'Arcy McPherson (Secretary)
Martin Stewart (Past-Chair)

Opening Prayer & Lighting Christ Candle: Greg

Personal Check-in: 1-2 minutes each to share where we are at this moment and to connect a little more deeply with each other, as we wish.

Covenant: We covenant together ... to listen and speak with respect ... to express our views ... to be aware of each other and ourselves ... to be mindful of time, making room for each person to contribute ... to ask for help as needed ... to pause for discernment when we are uncertain ... to remember that our work here is part of a larger church and a larger calling ... to ask whether this is truly the work of the Board ... to trust those doing the work ... to meet our commitments ... to speak with one voice once a decision is made.

Board Development – Colleen

Approval of Minutes – August 27, 2026 (André, Marg) Carried.

Minister's report (Greg) (Please see Appendix A)

Parking Lot event

Greg advised that Saturday's Parking Lot event will proceed as planned and that preparations are well underway. He also highlighted tomorrow evening's concert featuring West My Friend.

Heritage BC

It was also noted that Heritage BC has requested to hold a significant event at the church for May 14 and 15, 2027. This event would require the use of various areas and would require some flexibility on programming scheduled for the period.

2.) Affirming Ministry Process (Please see Appendix C)

Greg introduced the proposed Affirming Ministry motion, noting that the Affirming Team first met on September 1. The motion would be considered later in the meeting under Motions.

The proposed two-year process would include educational events and opportunities for discussion and discernment, culminating in a congregational vote on whether to become an Affirming Ministry. While Affirm United's process traditionally focuses on sexual orientation and gender identity, the team has discussed whether its work should also examine other forms of exclusion, including those related to race, class and ability.

Board members discussed the relative merits of a focused process that would allow for greater depth and a broader process that would explore several dimensions of inclusion. It was noted that some issues may involve distinct theological and biblical considerations and may therefore require more detailed study.

Members generally agreed that the Affirming Team should be trusted to discern the appropriate scope of its work. The Board could identify any particular areas of concern or interest, while otherwise allowing the team to develop its approach and proposed activities. The team sought confirmation that it had the Board's support to proceed.

A question was raised regarding funding for the Affirming process. It was confirmed that some funding is available under the Pride budget allocation. The team may also prepare a budget request for the coming year, potentially drawing on the Community Engagement or Social Justice budget areas. It was agreed to move the following motion without the inclusion of the budget amount.

MOVED: That the Board of James Bay United Church:

- 1. Approve the initiation of a congregation-wide process of study, learning, discernment and reflection regarding becoming an Affirming Ministry;**
- 2. Authorize the formation of an Affirming Ministry Team to lead and coordinate the process, with guidance and support from Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble; and**

3. Request that the Affirming Ministry Team provide regular updates to the Board on its progress, key learnings and proposed next steps throughout the process. (Diane, Colleen) carried.

Board Chair's report (Scott) (Please see Appendix B)

The Chair's report addressed three interrelated governance proposals and the consultation process planned for the congregation.

The Chair presented the revised organizational structure, Ministry Steward role description and selection policy, and governance model. The documents were developed as interrelated components intended to clarify relationships, reporting and accountability among the Board, staff, ministry and program leads, and the wider congregation.

Organizational Structure

Board members responded positively to the proposed organizational chart, noting that it provides a clear and visually engaging overview of the church's ministries and activities. The groupings and proposed reporting relationships were generally considered logical and manageable.

It was clarified that Ministry Stewards would maintain relationships with ministry and program leads and provide reports to the Board. Certain significant initiatives would continue to report directly to the Board. Reports should be staggered throughout the year to avoid placing an unnecessary burden on meeting agendas.

Members discussed whether paid positions should be identified on the chart and whether individual names should be included. While names could make the chart useful as a directory, doing so would require frequent updates. It was suggested that a large-format version could be displayed in the church.

The chart remains a draft and will be shared with staff, ministry and program leads, and the congregation before being brought forward for final approval.

Ministry Steward Role and Selection Policy

The proposed role description is intended to serve as both a public information document and a recruitment tool. Members agreed that the organizational chart should accompany it to provide appropriate context.

Discussion focused on the Ministry Steward's role when a ministry encounters a challenge. Members agreed that Stewards should listen, help leads consider possible solutions and refer matters to the Board when assistance or authorization is required. The wording will be revised to make clear that routine matters need not come to the Board and that Stewards are not expected to solve every problem or micromanage ministry activities.

Monthly contact with ministry leads is intended to be a brief relational check-in rather than a formal meeting. The frequency may vary according to the

needs and activity level of each ministry. Quarterly reports to the Board should be concise and identify what is going well, any challenges and whether Board assistance is required. Providing Stewards with a sample report was suggested.

The importance of confidentiality, orientation and clear role boundaries was emphasized. It was also suggested that the new model be reviewed after approximately six months, with feedback from both the Board and the Ministry Stewards.

Members noted that recruiting suitable Stewards will require a careful and strategic process. Prospective candidates should not yet be approached, as the role and governance model may change following consultation. Candidates would be interviewed as part of the selection and approval process.

Governance Model and Accountability

Members supported describing Ministry Stewards as the “connective tissue” between ministries and the Board. Further revisions will clarify when challenges or proposed solutions should be referred to the Board.

Urgent or serious matters involving safety, personnel, finances, property damage, abuse or significant conflict must be reported immediately rather than held for a quarterly report. This expectation should be clearly communicated to Stewards and ministry leads. Separate rental or facility-use policies may also need to address reporting, investigation and responsibility for property damage.

Consultation and Next Steps

The Board agreed that the proposals should move through a consultation process before final approval. The documents will be made available in advance so participants have time to review them.

The following meetings were scheduled:

- **October 18:** Consultation with staff and ministry and program leads.
- **November 8:** Congregational presentation and discussion following worship, with lunch provided.
- **November 29:** Congregational meeting to consider ratification.

The Board will coordinate space, hospitality and lunch arrangements for the November 8 meeting.

Treasurer's Report (Gordon)

The third-quarter financial report will be presented at the October meeting.

Gordon reported having met with the owner of Cheques & Balances to advise that the current fees are not considered sustainable. The possibility of bringing the function in-house was also discussed. Cheques & Balances will review its pricing and return with a revised proposal. A further update will be provided.

M&P (André)

There were no staffing updates from M&P.

Other – none

Closing Prayer: Greg

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2026

APPENDIX A

James Bay United Church | Minister's Report

September 2026 | Rev. Greg Powell

September is off to a great start and I feel really good about what we've been doing and what's ahead.

Here is some of what's worth highlighting:

1. Things are moving along for the fall open house from Friday, September 18 through the 26th. Most of our ministries and programs are participating at some point or another. Those that are not taking part in the open house look forward to a volunteer fair, whenever that takes place (maybe November or January).
2. Our affirming team met on Sep 1 for the first time and had a productive meeting. The team (by way of Colleen Adair) has requested formal approval from the board to proceed with the initiative, which would include hosting educational events, discussions, and the like. (Please see Appendix D)
3. I look forward to hearing the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust's decision regarding our application for \$150,000 toward the painting project after their meeting on Sep 21.
4. I have been enjoying working with Scott, Gordon, and Deborah to advance our new governance model. The proposed model would formalize my relationship to several programs/activities/teams, which sits well with me.
5. Our new process of inviting leadership for services from which I will be absent has been 'so-so'. I appreciate that many are still offering their leadership. Candis and I have it in hand even if we didn't hit the bullseye on the first attempt.
6. I met with a few of our young adults on Sep 6. They are interested in more leadership from me to help get the group going and growing. I look forward to developing this further over the coming months.
7. Still in the works or on the horizon:
 - i. Church directory (digital or print) – need to draft a privacy policy
 - ii. Policies and procedures
 - iii. Joint initiatives with other United Churches (Fairfield and Oak Bay)
8. I have been enjoying the Creation Time theme of Water and hosting the art installation by Bisia.

With much gratitude,
Greg

APPENDIX B

James Bay United Church | Board Chair Discussion items

Report to Congregation:

On September 13 I delivered a community report closing the loop on the spring feedback (the May lunch meeting, the online form, and our mid-week programs). It reported back on the three themes members raised most strongly — a clearer sense of direction, more frequent communication, and pressures on our finances and building — and what the board has done on each since June:

- **Direction:** A first draft of the governance model is in hand, and we are proposing to group our ~40 ministries into clusters, each linked to the board through a Ministry Steward.
- **Communication:** I announced three fall gatherings — an information session for staff and leads, a whole-church discussion meeting, and a decision meeting to ratify the governance model and new structure and to present the draft 2027 budget.
- **Finances and building:** The QuickBooks migration is complete, we've applied to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust for a painting grant, Thrift Shop painting begins shortly, and a major building fundraising campaign is in early development.

I also flagged volunteer sustainability and outreach to younger people as continuing priorities.

The full text of the report is available [here](#).

Feedback on latest versions of documents::

- Three interlocking pieces
 - Revised Organizational Structure - DRAFT 7
 - Revised Ministry Steward Role Description DRAFT 7 and accompanying Ministry Steward Selection and Approval Policy DRAFT 2
 - Revised Governance Model DRAFT 2

Dates for upcoming meetings:

- Meeting 1 - Staff, Ministry and Program leads, and Board
 - The first will be an opportunity for board members, staff and ministry and program leads to meet, listen to concerns, and to share our thinking on the governance model and the revised picture of our organizational structure which includes ministry/program clusters and Ministry Stewards.

- Meeting 2 - JBUC Community
 - We will invite the entire church to the second meeting. During this time we will bring forward the draft governance model, the draft organizational structure, and the budget process for discussion. This is a meeting for questions and conversation, not for decisions.
- Meeting 3 - JBUC Community
 - The third meeting will focus on making decisions. Again, using the same process as with our AGM, we will ask attendees to ratify the governance model and the new organizational structure. Our treasurer, Gordon Miller will also present the draft 2027 budget.
- Dates:
 - Meeting 1 -
 - Meeting 2 -
 - Meeting 3 -

APPENDIX C

James Bay United Church | Affirming Committee Report

September 6, 2026

Dear members of the Board at James Bay United Church,

A group of committed people who are passionate about becoming an Affirming community gathered this past week to initiate conversation about our church becoming an Affirming Congregation. We realize the Board has already requested this process begin, via Rev. Greg Powell, earlier this year. In keeping with Affirm United guidelines, this email serves to advise the Board of this Team and our intention of beginning the process. We are certain we have the Board's support.

After our initial meeting on September 1, 2026, we have been in touch with AUSE (affirmingministries@ause.ca) to get connected with an Affirm Program Coordinator to:

- Advise and support
- Help locate resources and resource people
- Provide information on the process and criteria for becoming Affirming
- Help avoid some common pitfalls and minefields

We are asking for the Board's permission to begin a thoughtful process of learning and discernment.

We respectfully request a Board motion to:

- Approve the initiation of a process of study, discernment, and reflection on becoming an Affirming Ministry
- Authorize the formation of a Committee or Steering Group (we prefer the term 'Team'), possibly the working group members, to lead and coordinate this work
- Approve a budget to cover the costs of events, educational opportunities, and related resources needed throughout the process

It is important that our governing body clearly supports the process from the outset. The Team will provide regular updates to keep the Board informed of progress, key learnings, and next steps as the work unfolds.

In faith,

Colleen Adair, Anne Manikel, Rev. Greg Powell, Milt Papageorge, Gwenna Moss, Jennifer Turner, Diane Monteith