

Approved Minutes: Meeting of Mt. Seymour United Church Council

Oct 15, 2025 – 7pm; Mount Seymour United Church

1. Opening & Land Acknowledgement

Kirsten opened the meeting at 7:05
Rev. Carla shared a reading.

In attendance: Kim Branch, Kirsten Harkins, Tierney Ness, Catherine Branch, Younes Skhissi, Doug Querns

Regrets: Steve Wellenbrink, Rev Deb Bowman, Jeffrey Smith

2. Approve Previous Council Meeting Minutes

- **Motion to approve September 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes, as amended Tierney/Catherine PASSED**

3. Minister's Report (attached as appendix A)

Rev. Carla sent the report in advance.
Scam warning will be added to the weekly newsletter.
Discussion of edits to website.
A list of members needing drives, and people willing to volunteer to drive will be created to promote accessibility to worship and events.

4. Financial Report

Jeff Smith not in attendance. Report was tabled.

Rev. Carla summarized the information regarding Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program Application.

5. Property Report

Steve Wellenbrink not in attendance. Report was tabled.

6. M & P Report

Catherine Branch led a discussion of the needs of the M&P committee.

7. New Business

- Sacred Garden Update – Rev. Carla shared an update from most recent meeting. Added plantings and mulch recently. Nature Play area is next phase. A winter solstice event will be organized for December 21st.
- Thrift Shop donation to First United – discuss Thrift Shop expenses as a percentage of overall church expenses and how to translate that information to broader MSUC faith

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community. A graphical report will be prepared showing the financial contributions of the church community, including the Thrift Shop.

8. Next Council meeting

- Wednesday, 12 November, 2025

9. Meeting Adjournment

Rev. Carla led a check-out.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Appendix A:

October 2025 Minister's Update to Council – Rev Carla

- This is my first minister's report to Council since returning from sabbatical and vacation. I did a bit of a report on parts of my sabbatical in worship on Sunday October 5 and also a little during my first worship back on Sep 28. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to have sabbatical time – grateful to the United Church for the policy, grateful to this congregation for supporting it and grateful to the many individuals and Rev. Julie and Rev. Deb who covered for me while I was gone. It was a time of rest and rejuvenation, of reconciliation work, of discernment and a renewed sense of call. Part of my time was spent attending my daughter's university graduation in Waterloo. Part of my time was spent working as a chaplain at Bold Eagle in Wainwright Alberta, a Canadian Armed Forces basic training course for Indigenous youth. I attended a Vancouver School of Theology course called Known and Unknown: Ministry Leadership in Liminal Time. I also had some time at home and reading part of my sabbatical book list. The sabbatical time away from MSUC allowed me some distance and reflection on the challenging year(s) we have been through and gave me renewed energy to return refreshed and ready.
- In my first week back, I got caught up on what I missed while I was away, and I attended the Council retreat and community workshop Saturday September 27.
- I participated in worship once and led worship and preached twice since I have been back. I have planned the upcoming worship series which will take us to Advent, and I am meeting with the worship team Thursday night to talk about themes for Advent.
- I met with Mardi Joughin's family and worked on planning her memorial. She was diagnosed at the very beginning of my sabbatical and died near the end. She had requested that I come and see her, so of course I did. I presided at her memorial which was the week after I returned.
- I visited a congregation member in hospital and caught up with several others by phone and in person who had pastoral situations to attend to. Several congregation members/thrift shop volunteers stopped by for visits to catch me up on their lives since I have been gone.
- A family from the wider community requested a visit in their home, as the husband is dying and would like his funeral here.
- I met with the café committee to work on the Job Description for the café coordinator and talk about café business.

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- I will meet with the Caring Connections Team (pastoral care team) Wednesday morning. Mardi was a big part of our team, and we will miss her around the circle.
- I led monthly meditation last Monday. There was a good turnout (in person and online) and two new people (in person).
- I met with the Sacred Garden Team to discuss next steps and then prepared an update article for the newsletter.
- I met with the Leadership Team of the Thrift Shop for our monthly meeting. I participated in two volunteer orientation meetings with new Thrift Shop Volunteers, and I was present and welcomed/thanked volunteers at the annual Halloween Blitz. I checked in with volunteers during their shift and during tea time, and with customers in the shop and café on shop days.
- I processed one new Mental Health Project applicant and processed payment for therapy appointments for 4 ongoing applicants. I referred two applicants who have completed their maximum sessions (16) with us, onto Trinity United Church in Port Coquitlam, who have been partnering with us over the last year and a half (to receive referrals for reactivation of their previously stagnant mental health fund)
- I met with and checked in with staff regularly. I spoke with Fouad about a few upcoming projects to work on, including putting some scrolling advertising onto the café TV again (we used to have it there pre-COVID).
- In wider church work, I coordinate the gatherings of the North Shore United Church Clergy, so I have organized one for next week.