

Deacon Board Report

The individuals serving on the Board during this period were Lenore Nordlund, Judy Palmer, Juri Parnoja, Cathie Salter and Chair, Bonnie Hartley. We were pleased to have Ethan Hurlburt join us mid-way through the year as a sort of “Deacon in Training.” He has since joined us officially. Meetings were held each month over Zoom, with a break in July and August. Each meeting starts with a devotional, and we always begin and end with prayer. This is God’s church, we are His servants, and each deacon tries to be a good servant.

This has been a rather different year in the history of Blythwood Road Baptist Church as the entire period of the report has been under the cloud of the Covid-19 Pandemic. As a result of this and the ensuing public health directives, the entire pattern of church activities has been altered.

Starting in March, we began to record our Sunday worship services and post them to YouTube. Each month, we celebrate the Lord’s Supper over Zoom to foster a sense of community. Small group Bible Studies have continued over Zoom and by teleconference. Each Friday, we have an opportunity for people to connect and pray on the telephone. The Connection has continued to meet monthly over Zoom.

For approximately six weeks last fall, we were able to hold in-person services, with an average of 15 people present. For those who were unable to join us, our services continued to be posted online. Prior to opening the sanctuary, a committee formed of medical doctors, nurses, and the Office Manager set up very strict guidelines to maintain social distancing and hand cleansing. Masks were worn at all times. While the congregation were unable to sing due to Public Health restrictions, we were thankful for the opportunity to worship together in person. With Public Health restrictions being eased in the summer, we were able to have a “take out” barbecue and enjoy socially distanced cupcakes and fellowship in July and August.

Both the Out of the Cold and Wednesday Drop-in ministries were suspended. The church endeavoured to financially support other ministries in our city who were able to continue to provide front-line help to the marginalized.

We entered into a joint ministry agreement with the Pregnancy Care Centre, which provides assistance and support for women wanting to maintain their pregnancy. Two of the women in the congregation volunteer their time to provide phone support to these families.

The Planning Committee continues to meet and a status report will be given shortly.

While we face the challenge of both financial deficits and people deficits, we are thankful for the continued support of the congregation in all the ways you have been participants in the Lord’s work at Blythwood. As our congregational numbers dwindle, and many people who have served the Lord age and are no longer able to manage this service, it becomes more and more difficult to find people who are willing to serve in our various committees and Boards. At the same time, this presents opportunities for those who feel called to step into leadership roles. We



would urge you to consider this prayerfully, and please don't hesitate to speak to your deacon or pastor with regards to ways you might serve.

As I close this report, I would like each of us to remember

We are the people He watches over, the flock under His care. (Ps 95:7 NLV)

As we face the future, so unknown both in terms of Covid-19 and our church, we can trust the shepherd.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Hartley,
Chairman of the Board of Deacons