



the **EMMAUS**
& COMMUNITY

February 7th 2026 meeting of abbeycouncil

In attendance: Phil Mills, Josh Ruberg, Joy Hunter, Nick Hunter, Jen Strohschein, Michelle Slater (Clergy), Kate Evans, Margot Spence, Lucy O'Brien (Secretary)

The council met from 10:00am to 12:00pm and discussed the following:

We began with reflections and discussion about where we've seen God in the world.

The meeting began with a **presentation from Izzy at GVAT** about the structure and benefits of the organization. They use the same consensus-based decision making model that abbeychurch does.

Call for consensus on becoming a member of GVAT. **Consensus not granted.** It was decided that the council needed more time to consider the impact of such a decision.

There was a **review of the time since Matt's leave** began. Through thorough discussion we deemed that we have been keeping up fairly well, although Lucy's workload has increased. We continue to monitor for anyone who may need pastoral care.

Action: Margot has agreed to take on the responsibility of filling the rota of scripture readers, prayer readers, and communion servers.

We then discussed the feedback received from the home church feedback forms and determined that there had not yet been enough responses to make a decisions about the future. Jen agreed to make an announcement about this at the next Sunday service, and Lucy agreed to print some paper forms to keep in the narthex.

We agreed to **revisit this decision at the next meeting.**

We next discussed the April 25th date for a Spring Fling festival and Lucy was given blessing to apply for a My Great Neighbourhood Grant on behalf of Abbeychurch to help offset costs of the event.

We agreed that **there is not enough capacity** for a Holy Week retreat this year.

We affirmed the decision to pause live-streaming for now, and Lucy was given license to respond to the email correspondence on behalf of the AbbeyCouncil. The compromise will be to capture and upload sermons to YouTube.

There was discussion around helpers for the soundboard, and Daniel Bergg has shown some interest in taking this on when he can.

Josh, Nick, and Joy expressed interest in offering a time to pray over others during the regular Sunday service. We will try this soon during communion and see how it feels.

Lucy and Nick and Jen agreed to be part of the fundraising group and Jen agreed to send out the email to schedule it. It was noted that Marilyn may be a good resource to draw on for fundraising ideas.

Donor thank-you cards were distributed with an expectation that they be brought to church the next day. Tax receipts have to go out ASAP.

There was discussion about how to express displeasure with the redevelopment of the building taking away the only green space within a large radius. Jen and Michelle will talk about this in future.

Jen was blessed to organize and lead a team of fundraisers for the Coldest Night of the Year walk on February 28th.

There was a discussion around budget spending and the need to set an expense reimbursement policy. There was no one assigned to do this work.

We adjourned the meeting at 12:06 PM.

Call for consensus on pausing our live-streaming while Matt is on leave. **Consensus granted.**

We discussed the need to create and distribute thank you cards for our donors to send out with the tax receipts. Jen and Lucy will work with Lynn on this.

We discussed creating a survey to collect **feedback** on the autumn home church program. Margot and Lucy will coordinate this. There was a concern about a lack of community social time if we don't gather in worship each week. Matt raised the idea of a post-service coffee social after every worship if we only worship every second week.

There was a discussion around our **capacity** to host extra events during Matt's leave, such as shrove Tuesday pancake supper and contradance. We decided the following:

1. We will not host the Shrove Tuesday event that we usually do.
2. We will not participate in the Easter Saturday Spring Fling event.

3. We will not organize a Holy Week retreat.

4. We will not host an Ash Wednesday service outside of the normal morning prayer gathering.

Meeting **adjourned** at 12:00 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 7th, 2026.