

Sylvan United Church – Council Highlights (January 12, 2026)

A friendly update from your Church Council

The Council met on January 12 to review year-end updates, celebrate recent accomplishments, and prepare for an exciting year ahead at Sylvan.

Celebrating Community Generosity

Sylvan continued its tradition of caring for neighbours:

- Angel Gifts supported about 20 families during Christmas.
- Volunteers contributed 46 hours to the Salvation Army Kettle Campaign, helping raise nearly \$145,000 region-wide.
- Our ongoing bottle-recycling project continues to support local charities.

Council also approved a small \$50 contribution to a national justice initiative while continuing to prioritize local needs.

Finances & Budget

The 2025 year-end report showed encouraging progress:

- The church repaid \$5,000 to designated funds.
- The overdraft was fully eliminated.
- Mortgage sits at approximately \$27,000.

Council approved the 2026 budget, which keeps expenses steady and plans for additional pulpit supply and a new laptop for our incoming minister.

Property & Safety Improvements

A recent building and electrical assessment identified several important upgrades:

- Repairs to the handicap parking area are underway.
- Outdoor lighting has been improved for safety and energy efficiency.
- Sanctuary pot lights have been replaced with long-lasting outdoor bulbs.
- Fire safety issues identified by Mill Bay Fire Department have been corrected, and a fire safety plan is being posted in both buildings.

Council directed the first 2026 Hand in Hand cheque toward repairing the driveway once weather allows.

Music & Worship

Music at Sylvan continues to flourish:

- Choir rehearsals resume in February, with music planned for the year.
- The piano was tuned and may need additional work later.
- Community music partnerships continue, including upcoming concerts and youth rehearsals.

Worship leadership is fully scheduled through April. Rev. Suzanna Bates begins her ministry with us on February 1 and will preside at Communion and Easter services.

Hospitality & Community Life

December was full of joyful gatherings supported by many volunteers. Council expressed gratitude for everyone who helped make Advent and Christmas meaningful.

Looking Ahead

- Planning for the Annual Congregational Meeting will begin once Rev. Bates arrives.
- Team leaders are preparing their annual reports.
- Council co-chairs announced they will step down after the ACM, and appreciation was expressed for their dedicated leadership.

Next Council Meeting

February 9, 2026 at 7 pm in the Fireside Room.