

**Executive Secretary Report from David Allen  
to Toronto Conference Executive  
October 31, 2016**

**This report provides highlights from the period from approximately September 1-October 31, 2016.**

General preamble: From p. 1-6 of the Toronto Conference Executive policy *Handbook*:

The Executive monitors the Executive Secretary regularly and rigorously but only against established policies.

- Are the Ends being met?
- Are the Executive Secretary Limitations being followed?

This report describes how the Executive Secretary is ensuring that the Ends policies are being met and how the Executive Secretary Limitations policies are being followed. In some cases, the wording will include “In compliance” which the Executive Secretary interprets as “everything required by the policy is being done”. In other cases, the words “generally in compliance” are used, which the Executive Secretary interprets as “to the best of my knowledge, there are no gaps, though progress can always be made”.

The Executive is responsible for monitoring how it is adhering to all other policies, i.e. Executive/Staff Relations and Executive Governance policies.

Executive members will need to follow the *Handbook* policy by policy to understand the comments which follow, since the comments relate directly to whether the Executive Secretary is in compliance with the direction given by the Executive through its policies. The Executive Secretary will indicate whether he is in compliance with the policies, what actions have taken place, and what actions need to be taken. The Executive will assess whether items have been missed, or whether actions taken have been acceptable.

Items marked with an asterisk (\*) contain a request for discussion and/or action.

**Mission/Ends policies**

p. 2-3 mission of Toronto Conference – generally in compliance

- The policy will be reviewed at this meeting.
  - Strengthening... to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ – generally in compliance
- a) annual meeting: The theme for the annual meeting will be “Here I Am” based on 1Samuel 3:1-18. The main focus will be on becoming an Affirming Ministry. There will be theological reflection and discussions about gender

- identify/sexuality issues and other forms of inclusion. A number of people have been asked to share their stories.
- b) exchange visit: The exchange with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea took place October 13-21 and everyone returned safely. We look forward to a similar-sized group coming to Toronto Conference in May, 2017. A debriefing session will be held November 11-12 for those who went to Korea. See p. 16/17-397 for additional information.
  - c) Affirming ministry planning: Members of the Affirming Ministry Task Group will attend the Executive meeting to help lead a discussion on the Conference's vision statement and action plan. See p. 16/17-405 for other Conference affirming ministry information and p. 16/17-397 for additional information.
  - d) Explorer project: Carol Hancock reports that there could be up to 12 Explorers in 2017 with participation from six Conferences. A matching meeting will take place by conference call on November 30.
  - e) Refugee sponsorship: See p. 16/17-397 for some information on this project.
    - Best use of human and financial resources – generally in compliance
  - a) staffing: i) Jody Maltby will be on sabbatical during November, December and January. Ruth McDonald has accepted a half-time contract to cover some of Jody's work while she is away. ii) Kerrie Perry will be on medical leave until approximately December 22. Back-up has been arranged for this time period. iii) social justice staff position – A meeting is taking place in early November to discuss further a proposal to hire a social justice staff person.
  - b) Grand River Spiritual and Education Resources. As requested by the Executive, a report from Grand River/AVEL is included in the packet of material for this meeting. See Appendix E.
  - c) property: There are a number of items to report.
    - i) Dunkerron (Northern Waters Presbytery): Work will be completed this fall for the fence and stone repairs.
    - ii) Living Waters office: A number of smaller repairs and renovations will be done this fall. Once the water at the office is hooked up to the adjacent arena a new dishwasher will be installed. Once the proof has been approved new signage on the building will be completed. The anticipated date of completion is the end of November.
    - iii) Toronto Southeast office: The property manager has prepared a preliminary report outlining recommendations on future capital projects. These projects will be prioritized as to the greatest need.

- iv) Conference/South West offices: Work to be completed by November 7 to have the doors to the Conference/presbytery office accessible with line painting in the parking lot to be completed by the end of November (weather permitting).
  - v) Telephone and computer systems: All of the work to upgrade the offices have been completed. General Council IT has assured staff that the new service provider and improved infrastructure will solve the problems. As of October 31 the IT department is still working on the servers and there may still be disruptions. The staff is monitoring the situation and problems are being reported to the IT department.
  - vi) Glen Ayr United Church (Toronto Southeast Presbytery): A meeting is being scheduled with the trustees and the realtor to discuss some of the potential offers that are in the works. This property should be sold this fall.
  - vii) Newton Robinson United Church (Northern Waters Presbytery): A meeting will be held in November with the trustees to get all the paperwork in order to list property.
  - viii) Lakeside United Church (Living Waters Presbytery): This property was just turned over to Conference as of October 31. The finance and property administrator will work with the trustees and the presbytery to get this matter resolved and the property sold as soon as possible.
- d) sabbatical funding: To date 22 grants to pastoral charges and 20 grants to ministry personnel have been provided for a total of \$93,580.50.
- e) mission support grants: The annual mission support consultation will take place November 8. If a report is ready, it will be handed out to the Executive for information. The Executive has delegated decision-making to the mission support consultation (see page 16/17-436).
- f) Moderator's visits: Moderator Jordan Cantwell spent a day with about 50 right relations witnesses on October 22, and then had an afternoon and evening in Living Waters Presbytery on October 27; approximately 50 attended the afternoon session and about 125 were present for evening worship. She will preach at Christian Island on November 27. Visits to Northern Waters and South West Presbyteries are scheduled. No dates have been proposed by Toronto Southeast Presbytery.
- Oversight and compliance – generally in compliance
  - Providing resources – generally in compliance
- p. 2-4 compliance – generally in compliance
- p. 2-5 oversight: Presbyteries – in compliance

- Reports from presbyteries: Presbyteries will be contacted in December or January to remind them to submit their annual reports to Conference.
- Oversight visits – The presbyteries have been informed that oversight visits by Conference will be suspended until the results of the remit on a three-council model are known.
- \*Review of records – Mary Gooley has reviewed the records of the four presbyteries. Her report is included in the packet of material for this meeting as Appendix C.

### **Executive Governance Policies**

One of the additions to the role of the Executive Secretary is to bring to your attention any areas where I believe you as an Executive are not in compliance with these policies. See p. 5-3, #7.

#### p. 3-3 – Duties of Executive members

- P. 3-4 re Presbytery representatives: Northern Waters Presbytery continues to be short two representatives to the Executive. I have been in touch with the chair and secretary of the presbytery.

#### p. 3-6 – Conflict of interest

- No non-compliance issues to mention

#### p. 3-9 – embracing diversity

- No non-compliance issues to mention. This policy will be reviewed at this Executive meeting.

#### p. 3-10 – Nominations

- Presbyteries have agreed to begin the process of nominating people to be commissioners to GC43. A search has begun for persons to serve as President-Elect; the election will take place at the 2017 annual meeting. The committee is aware of all up-coming vacancies.

#### p. 3-37 – Policy review schedule

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

#### p. 3-39 – Principles of conduct

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

- \*A previous Executive has decided that it wanted a portion of this policy to be included in all agendas for information. Does the Executive wish to continue that practice?

p. 3-41 – Property

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- There have been no property transactions during this reporting period.

p. 3-44 – Public statements

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- No public statements have been issued during this reporting period.

p. 3-45 – Signing officers

- In compliance.

p. 3-46 – Training and education

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

**Executive/staff relations policies**

p. 4-3 – Relationship to staff

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- P. 4-3 #8. Performance reviews have not been done recently, and regular supervision has happened less frequently than in the past. I plan to schedule performance reviews in the spring of 2017. Regular check-in will resume this fall.

p. 4-5 – Monitoring Executive Secretary performance

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- The last General Council review of me took place in late 2014.

**Executive Secretary Limitations Policies**

p. 5-3 – general constraints

- in compliance
- Re #8; Anne Shirley Sutherland and Jody Maltby have filled in as acting Executive Secretary from time to time and are familiar enough with the role of Executive Secretary to be able to act in an emergency.

p. 5-4 – accessibility

- in compliance; the operational policy is found at p. 7-3

p. 5-5 – budget and financial

- generally in compliance
- \*re 2(b) – I'll provide a verbal report on legal expenses incurred to date.
- Re 4(b) – The General Council has provided \$6,500 in a final year of learning fund grants. Last year the grants were given to support right relations work. In keeping with the Conference's process on becoming an Affirming Conference, the grants this year will be used for individuals, groups and ministries involved in affirming activities. Maximum grant is \$250. To date, there has been four grants totaling \$950 given out. Any unspent money at December 31 will be returned to General Council
- In accordance with the financial procedures policy (page 7-9) the presbytery is to inform Conference by October 31 how any outstanding assessments from the previous year is to be handled – either through their budget or by a special assessment. The only presbytery that this is applicable to is Living Waters and Conference has been instructed to charge their general budget with the amount of \$14,301. The presbytery will still be actively trying to collect the outstanding amounts from five pastoral charges.

p. 5-10 – communication

- in compliance; the operational policy is found at p. 7-12

p. 5-11 – correspondence

- In compliance

p. 5-12 Incorporated Ministries

- generally in compliance
- Housing corporations have been contacted about the removal of oversight requirements as per a new General Council policy. See p. 16/17-417 for the report on incorporated ministries

p. 5-13 – investment

- Through Rose Cambourne and Hans van Nie, I am working with the General Council to implement the Executive's decision to allow for impact investments through Oikocredit. Once an investment procedure is established with the General Council office, information will be distributed throughout the Conference.

p. 5-16 letters of good standing

- in compliance

p. 5-17 property

- in compliance

Operational policies

- General Council's legal counsel reviewed the Conference's Bill 168 policy to ensure it is still in compliance with provincial legislation. A number of changes have been made to the policy. This is a new addition to the operational policies. See p. 16/17-419.

