

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Executive of Toronto Conference
Wednesday, June 19, 2017**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at Collier Street United Church, Barrie in Living Waters Presbytery on Monday, June 19, 2017. The meeting began at 10:15 a.m. A quorum was present.

Members present

Bryan Ransom (Past-President), David Allen (Executive Secretary), Sharon Aylsworth (Toronto Southeast), Ed Elliotson (Northern Waters), Anne Hepburn (Toronto Southeast), Eiko Hosaka (diversity), Kristal McGee (Northern Waters), Angus MacLennan (Living Waters), Lawrence Nyarko (diversity), Thérèse Samuel (Northern Waters), Catherine Smith (South West), Marg Smith (Living Waters)

Regrets

Audrey Brown (President), Roger Hutchinson (Toronto Southeast), Sungmin Jung (South West), Betty Lou McNabb (Living Waters), Hans van Nie (South West), Martha Wood (diversity)

Corresponding members

Jessica Stevenson (diversity), Terry Davies (Living Waters), Gail Hamblin (South West), Henry MacLeod (South West)

Community building, listening to God

Constituting the Court and introductions

Past-President Bryan Ransom welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ to conduct the business properly brought before it. He asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Worship/lighting the Christ candle/acknowledging the land

Marg Smith of Living Waters Presbytery led the opening worship. Angus MacLennan lit the Christ candle and the four-directions candle, and read Matthew 10:24-29. Marg spoke about sadness, endings and beginnings, and the work of the Executive. Members shared some of their feelings about being on the Executive. Marg offered a blessing.

Questions for evaluating the meeting

For this meeting, the Executive focused on two questions for evaluating its work: What voices have been heard? What voices have we not heard?

Adoption of agenda

MOTION by Marg Smith/Angus MacLennan that the agenda be adopted with the addition of election of a sub-Executive and a Nominations Committee.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Corresponding members

MOTION by Sharon Aylsworth/Anne Hepburn that all non-voting persons present be made corresponding members of this meeting of the Executive.

MOTION

CARRIED.

General Council restructuring

The Executive Secretary gave a verbal report on matters related to the potential restructuring of the church.

Monitoring and Compliance with Policies**Executive Secretary's report**

The Executive Secretary's report (Appendix A) had a number of items where discussion was requested or up-dates given.

Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resources/AVEL: The Executive Secretary had been in touch with Grand River/AVEL, but no formal response had been received. A message will be sent to those pastoral charges that have been using AVEL letting them know that the Conference's universal membership will end on December 31, 2017.

Members had an opportunity to ask questions about the entire report. A question was asked about pastoral charges in arrears on their assessments in Living Waters Presbytery. Angus MacLennan explained that the arrears will be handled in the way that has been successful to date.

Business matters to be considered by the Executive

Minutes

MOTION by Catherine Smith/Anne Hepburn that the Executive approve the minutes of the May 4, 2017 Executive meeting and receive for information the sub-Executive minutes from its meeting of June 6, 2017.

MOTION

CARRIED.

One item of follow-up business was considered. See p. 16/17-539 regarding educational funding and see p. 16/17-808 for further information.

MOTION by Angus MacLennan/Catherine Smith that the guidelines for use of the Conference Fund be amended by adding:

9. Education: Support for groups, institutions or communities of faith offering educational events that focus on Toronto Conference priorities or that contribute to understanding United Church history, current or future challenges, or leadership development.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Correspondence

MOTION by Lawrence Nyarko/Sharon Aylsworth that the correspondence report be received (Appendix B) and the recommended actions be taken.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Omnibus motion

MOTION by Anne Hepburn/Kristal McGee that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

- a) Grace Place Community Resource Centre

....approve Grace Place Community Resource Centre 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Graham Avery
Daniel Clark
Stephen Rhodes
Cameron Welsh

b) Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc.

...approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Janet Adamson
Ken Andras
Karen Hamilton
Tanya Jemec
Jim Lilly
Shannon Lundquist
Tim Magwood
Sally Jo Martin
Melody Onuoto
Carol Rhynas
Miriam Theodule

c) Parkdale United Church Foundation Incorporated

...approve Parkdale United Church Foundation Incorporated 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Amanda Boyd
Allan Busch
Charles Ellsworth
Kate Harvey
Chris Henderson
Vibert Joshua
Doug McLeod
Allan Petrie
Noreen Simon
Lionel Smith

d) Residences at St. Andrew's Georgetown Corporation

...approve Residences at St. Andrew's Georgetown Corporation 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Paul Annabelle
Scott A. Brandt
Noel Duignan
Inga Lavoie
Jennifer McLaughlin
Bob Meads
Marilyn Mitton
Joe Oatman

Margaret Teasdale

MOTION

CARRIED.

Affirming Ministry

The Executive discussed a number of items arising from the annual meeting's decision to become an Affirming Ministry. The Executive discussed whether the Affirming Ministry follow-up should be done by a task group or by the full Executive.

MOTION by Thérèse Samuel/Marg Smith that the current Affirming Ministry task group be asked to continue its work on LGBT issues with an awareness of intersectionality with other areas of marginalisation, and that the task group prepare a draft mandate and recommendations to be presented at the September meeting of the Executive, and that the task group has power to add to its membership ensuring diversity.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Some of the questions/comments to be considered:

- How will non-LGBT issues be addressed as part of being an Affirming Ministry?
- Should the Executive hold onto the “and other marginalised groups” aspect of the statement?
- Who are the marginalised? What are we doing already?
- What needs to be done?
- What resources are available?
- What is specific Conference work?

These questions/comments will be part of the September Executive meeting.

The Executive Secretary will prepare a general budget.

The Past-President offered thanks to Anne Hepburn and the task group for the work they did on the affirming process.

Lunch

Angus MacLennan of Living Waters Presbytery offered grace at 12:12 p.m.; the meeting resumed at 1:02 p.m.

Affirming Ministry (cont'd)

Annual meeting feedback on the action plan: The Executive reviewed the written comments regarding the action plan that had been submitted at the annual meeting (see p.

16/17-802). The comments will be shared with the task group, and with whoever is planning the Executive's discussion in September.

Initial plans: The Executive reviewed initial plans that have been started to implement the plan of action. Members discussed additional actions to be taken (see p. 16/17-807).

The Executive talked about the kind of questions it would ask when reviewing Conference policies in light of being an Affirming Ministry.

- Whose voices have we heard and not heard?
- Consider the following: purpose, utility, necessity. Is it necessary? What is its purpose? Does it do what it's intended to do?
- Are there any unintended consequences of this policy?
- Who is impacted by this policy?
- Is the policy consistent with the vision statement adopted at the annual meeting? Is it consistent? Is it not consistent? In what ways?

Election of 2017/2018 sub-Executive

MOTION by Eiko Hosaka/Anne Hepburn that the 2017/2018 sub-Executive of Toronto Conference consist of:

President
Past-President
Executive Secretary

Angus MacLennan (Living Waters)
Thérèse Samuel (Northern Waters)
Sharon Aylsworth (Toronto Southeast)
Henry MacLeod (South West)
Lawrence Nyarko (diversity)

MOTION

CARRIED.

Election of 2017/2018 Nominations Committee

MOTION by Angus MacLennan/Anne Hepburn that the 2017/2018 Nominations Committee of Toronto Conference consist of:

Past-President

Terry Davies (Living Waters)
Kristal McGee (Northern Waters)
Roger Hutchinson (Toronto Southeast)
Henry MacLeod (South West)
Jessica Stevenson (diversity)

MOTION

CARRIED.

Lightening the load of Conference officers

The Executive reviewed some ideas for lightening the load of the Conference officers during this time of transition (Appendix C). The Executive AGREED with the suggestions in the report.

Policy review

Mission statement policy: The Executive reviewed the mission statement policy in light of becoming an Affirming Ministry.

- The statement is a fleshing out of some aspects of the vision statement
- They both do what they're supposed to do
- The vision statement should be added to the policy handbook, place to be determined, perhaps as mission and vision policy; as #4

MOTION by Marg Smith/ Thérèse Samuel that the Mission Statement policy be amended by adding the Affirming Ministry vision statement.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Embracing diversity policy: The Executive reviewed the embracing diversity policy in light of becoming an Affirming Ministry. It engaged in considerable discussion about the role of this policy and how it relates to the Affirming Ministry vision statement. Some suggestions:

- Add people with disabilities
- Add sexual orientation and gender identity
- Include race and ethnicity
- Take first line and put in mission statement

The Executive AGREED to put the discussion on this policy on hold until hearing back from the group bringing material to the September Executive meeting.

Presbytery reports

The Executive received the annual reports from the four presbyteries (Appendix D). In looking at the reports, the Executive noted...

- There are churches closing and amalgamating; we haven't considered the seriousness of the situation. We've come to accept that this is just going to happen? How is this affecting our United Church of Canada brand?
- There's a lot of good things happening in the Conference.
- A concern about part-time ministries.

- Are there sections/sites where we don't have a church anymore?
- Heartened to see movement toward amalgamation after years of thinking about it.

These comments generated a discussion about amalgamations and closure and the pros and cons and need for good leadership.

- May need to have a different question about Indigenous ministries.
- Youth ministries are supported by the presbyteries.

Report from investment advisor

The Executive received the report from the investment advisor (Appendix E) and reviewed the investment policy. No changes were made.

MOTION by Angus MacLennan/Ed Elliotson that RBC Dominion Securities be the investment advisor for Toronto Conference for the 2017/2018 Conference year.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Mission support criteria for 2018

The Executive reviewed the proposed criteria for 2018 mission support grants.

MOTION by Kristal McGee/Anne Hepburn that the Executive approve the criteria to be used for 2018 mission support grants (Appendix F).

MOTION

CARRIED.

The Executive Secretary noted that there may be a request for additional funding for mission support, as has happened in the last two years though with diminishing amounts. If a request comes in, it will be considered at the September Executive meeting.

Right Relations

There was no written report for this meeting.

Discussion items named by Executive members

There were no discussion items named in advance by members of the Executive. A couple of comments were made:

- There was disappointment that young people were at separate tables at the annual meeting.
- Five Oaks' plan for its future was optimistic.

Evaluation

The Executive turned to the questions for evaluating the meeting. The following comments were made:

- Didn't hear Indigenous voices
- Nice to hear new voices at the table
- Goodbye to some members with appreciation
- Missed Betty Lou

Closing

With the business completed, the Past-President declared the meeting ended at 2:41 p.m. Angus MacLennan of Living Waters Presbytery offered a blessing.

Bryan Ransom
Past-President

David W. Allen
Executive Secretary