

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Executive of Toronto Conference
Wednesday, September 13, 2017**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at the presbytery office in South West Presbytery on Wednesday, September 13, 2017. The meeting began at 10:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

Members present

Audrey Brown (President), Bryan Ransom (Past-President), Jody Maltby (Executive Secretary), Sharon Aylsworth (Toronto Southeast), Terry Davies (Living Waters), Ed Elliotson (Northern Waters), Gail Hamblin (South West), Anne Hepburn (Toronto Southeast), Eiko Hosaka (diversity), Roger Hutchinson (Toronto Southeast), Angus MacLennan (Living Waters), Henry MacLeod (South West), Kristal McGee (Northern Waters), Betty Lou McNabb (Living Waters), Lawrence Nyarko (diversity), Thérèse Samuel (Northern Waters), Jessica Stevenson (diversity) – via phone

Absent

- (South West)

Community building, listening to God

Constituting the Court and introductions

President Audrey Brown welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ to conduct the business properly brought before it. She asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Worship/lighting the Christ candle/acknowledging the land

Henry MacLeod of South West lit the Christ candle and reminded us of God's presence always with us. He acknowledged that we are on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. The scripture reading was 1 Peter 3:8 followed by an autumn meditation from The Circle of Life by Joyce Rupp.

Questions for evaluating the meeting

For this meeting, the Executive focused on the following questions:
What voices have been heard? What voices have we not heard? What have we done or not done that's going to make a better church? What will be our legacy?

It was acknowledged that everyone is welcome, wherever they are at in their journey, to participate in respectful dialogue on our differences. It is likely though that some do not feel like they have a voice and it is our responsibility to create space for those voices to be heard while still making safe space for everyone.

Adoption of agenda

MOTION by Betty Lou McNabb / Lawrence Nyarko that the agenda be adopted.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Governance Training

The Executive Secretary led a brief training session on policy governance.

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.

Members had an opportunity to ask questions about the entire report.

Oversight – Presbyteries Policy

It was AGREED that the policy does not need to be changed, as we are in the third year of the General Council triennium and presbytery visits are to occur in the second year. It was also AGREED that no further presbytery oversight visits will occur in light of remits.

Embracing Diversity Policy

The Executive did not consider the Embracing Diversity Policy at this meeting but did acknowledge that the policy needs to be reviewed as the Conference lives into what it means to be an Affirming Ministry.

Policy Review Schedule Policy

It was AGREED that individual policy review may not be the best use of time in light of the remits. As the new structure is developed, it will be important that our values underscore the creation of regional policies. Prior to future meetings of the Executive, the Executive Secretary will consider if any policies need to be brought for review in light of being Affirming, so that they might inform the creation of new regions.

Business matters to be considered by the Executive**Minutes**

MOTION by Bryan Ransom/Eiko Hosaka that the Executive approve the minutes of the June 19, 2017 Executive meeting and receive for information the sub-Executive minutes from its meeting of June 26, 2017 and July 19, 2017.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Correspondence

MOTION by Anne Hepburn/Ed Elliotson that the correspondence report (Appendix G) be received and the recommended actions be taken.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Omnibus motion

MOTION by Bryan Ransom/Angus MacLennan that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

a) General Council Executive policy for incorporated ministries

...authorize, as of August 1, 2017, Executive Secretary Jody Maltby to finalize and sign the release agreements for the incorporated ministries as they are reviewed and approved by General Council staff/legal counsel.

b) Central King Seniors Residence

...approve the Central King Seniors Residence 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Mary Louise Ashbourne
Alex Gribben
Dave Hewitt
Ella Jackson
Joyce Klamer
Michael Kooiman
Jon Lee
Taye Maddison
Lang Moffat
Bob Putnam

c) Fred Victor Centre

...approve the Fred Victor Centre 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Deane Collinson
Phillip Dufresne
John Dynes
David Estabrooks
Dawnmarie Harriott
R. Scott Lawrence
Jennifer Manning
Claire McIntyre
Janet Mason
Wangari Muriuki
Karen O'Connor
Paulett Ramsey
Annette Warring
Lis Wigmore

d) Hope Seniors Centre – Danforth

...approve the Hope Seniors Centre – Danforth 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Pauline Campbell
Eunice Connell
Barry Hales
Sandra Madgett
Paul Sneyd

e) The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation

....approve The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Charles Donley
Evelyn Hill
Jamie Holtom
Mary McKeen
John Ostime
Harry Ramsaran
Nick Walker
Kent Ward

f) St. John's United Church Alliston Foundation

....approve St. John's United Church Alliston Foundation 2017-2018 Board of Directors

John Downey
John Lindayen
John McFarland
Nancy Mann
Wayne Noye
Herb Oliver
Heather Power
Gord Rintoul
Dennis Roughley
Robert Sinclair
Murray Valletta
Maureen Wilson

g) Thornccliffe Chapel Housing Corporation

....approve Thornccliffe Chapel Housing Corporation 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Brian Abner
Bill Burleigh
Adrian Clark
Russell English
Richard Hazzard
Jennifer Lukas
Linda Marsh
Mary Ellen Steele

h) Toronto Christian Resource Centre (CRC) and Toronto United Church Council (TUCC)

...grant permission to Toronto Christian Resource Centre (CRC) and Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) to renew mortgage of up to \$298,829 for a term of three years.

i) Toronto United Church Council

....approve Toronto United Church Council 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Barry Butwell
Wendy Jarvis
Bill Jermyn

Michael Kooiman
Ross Leckie
Hannah Lee
Ted Meyers
Norm Seli
Doug Smith
Wing-Haan Tam

j) Wilmar Heights United Church Non-Profit Homes Inc.

...approve Wilmar Heights United Church Non-Profit Homes Inc. 2017-2018 Board of Directors

David Almack
Marc Cengiz
Trevins Fonseka
Neil Harris
Bridie Lane
Bob Pomeroy
Dean Scoble
Patricia Shearer

k) Annual meeting

... that the 94th (2018) Toronto Conference annual meeting be a two-day meeting to be held May 25-26, 2018

l) Mission Support Consultation

...approve the request of the Mission Support Consultation for additional funds of \$18,750 for 2018 grants.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Affirming Ministry

Anne Hepburn spoke to the report from the Affirming Ministry Task Group (Appendix E). It was noted that the General Council has a resource: “Welcoming Intercultural Ministries and Engaging Difference” that might help in our work. It is available through Adele Halliday.

The Executive had a discussion about the use of the term ‘intersectionality with other areas of marginalization’.

Some of the comments included:

- It is important to remember that people who are not LGBTQ2 may also be marginalized so in creating just structures we can't just focus on where there is intersection.
- Our Affirming statement needs to focus on people who are LGBTQ2 but we need to have similar conversations around many areas of marginalization.
- We must not assume that we have had the conversation about other important areas of marginalization because they have been included peripherally in the discussion of sexual orientation.
- We use the general term "areas of marginalization" rather than specifically naming areas in recognition that we will never have an exhaustive list and desire not to exclude or limit the conversation. Our hope is always to broaden the conversation.
- Hovering in the background of our discussion we must also be mindful of how our decisions may impact policy.
- Is the term living into right relationship with our brothers and sisters a better term to develop the wider vision of the work of the Conference in all areas?
- Visually our work is like a flower with each issue as a petal and the centre is our shared value – the Gospel. We need to remind ourselves when we are looking down one petal that it is part of a larger flower.

MOTION by Terry Davies/Thérèse Samuel that the Executive approve the Mandate of the Affirming Ministry Task Group with the addition of a fifth item: 5. Remind the Conference that there are other areas of marginalization that need the same care and attention that is placed on the Affirming process.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Right Relations

It was noted that the Living Into Right Relations Circle will meet on October 3 at Midhurst United Church. Planning has begun for educational events in 2018.

Partnership with Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea – Seoul Presbytery (PROK)

The Executive discussed the Evaluation of PROK – Toronto Visit report (Appendix B) and the recommendations for continuing the partnership with Seoul Presbytery of PROK (Appendix I) from Jessica McCrae and Richard Choe.

The United Church as a whole is in partnership with the PROK and that makes this different than other exchanges we have done in past. Also Seoul Presbytery is explicitly asking for an ongoing relationship with Toronto Conference and its successor.

The Executive Secretary was asked to seek wisdom from other Conferences as to how they are going to continue their relationship with presbyteries in PROK. Is there a role

for the General Council to make this a denominational connection? We need to also be mindful of checking with our partner in PROK as to what we are considering.

The Executive is more interested in the ideas like twinning congregations and encouraging pulpit visits and youth connections, including possibility youth exchanges, than in trying to organize an exchange in the fall of 2018 when we will be focused on moving into a new structure.

Lunch

Gail Hamblin of South West Presbytery offered grace at 12:05 p.m. The meeting resumed at 1:14 p.m. Jessica Stevenson joined the meeting by phone.

Business matters to be considered by the Executive (cont'd)

Funding request from Conference Interview Committee

Kristal McGee provided some context for the funding request from the Conference Interview Committee (Appendix D) as a member of the committee. It was noted that standardizing this type of vocational work will normalize it for inquirers and presbyteries. Most people who are asked to do this work appreciate it and find it valuable.

MOTION by Angus MacLennan/Lawrence Nyarko that the Executive approve the request of Conference Interview Committee to fund \$1,800 for each inquirer who is put forward for candidacy, \$1,400 of which would be for Vocational Assessments with the other \$400 to be available as requested by the inquirer and approved by the presbytery Education and Students Committee.

MOTION

CARRIED.

The funds to cover this initiative will come from the Conference Fund.

General Council restructuring

The Executive reviewed the report of project manager, David Allen (Appendix H) and the request from Carol Hancock regarding consultation by the Boundaries Commission with Conferences and presbyteries.

Some comments included:

- An important consideration for Toronto Conference is not just boundaries but shared resources.
- Can we make a significant impact in Right Relations through sharing resources?
- The issue of boundaries is based in geography but the allocation of resources and how that happens may not be part of the boundaries conversation but is a separate conversation.

- Our legacy as the Conference with the pot of money could be to say that we believe that resources should be pooled nationally to be shared according to need.
- Access to resources should not be rooted in the territory on which we reside.
- If we advocate for shared resources, what are our expectations about how the funds would be used?

It would be helpful to receive information from the Boundaries Commission in advance of the November meeting so that we are prepared for the conversation with their representative.

The Executive Secretary will share the notes from the gathering of Ontario Conferences with the Executive and will get clarity on whether the can be shared with presbytery executives.

It was AGREED that the Executive will meet in person in November and will see if we can meet at the Conference Office.

Discussion items named by Executive members

There were no discussion items named in advance by members of the Executive. Terry Davies shared a new initiative in Living Waters to encourage congregations to begin to think about clusters and networks.

Upcoming dates of Executive meetings: November 8th, February 7th, April 11th, June 13th.

Evaluation

The Executive turned to the questions for evaluating the meeting. For this meeting, the Executive focused on what voices have been heard? What voices have we not heard? What have we done or not done that's going to make a better church? What will be our legacy?

The following comments were made:

- What is the legacy of the Conference as we move forward? We did a lot of talking about that, and as we think about building a better church we are also creating our legacy to make our time here as fruitful as possible for the new church.
- Our discussion on the boundaries and geography vs. finances has a very generous feel to it and will contribute to a better church.
- Would like a portion of our next agenda to specific conversation on our legacy and what we need to do as we move forward to create that legacy
- Appreciated being reminded that we need to check with Seoul presbytery about moving forward in the partnership.
- We hope that it will make a better church with the motion giving the CIC the funds they are seeking.

- Grateful for the robust conversation on being an Affirming ministry
- Appreciated the comment about body language – we are body language in the world – how will we live out that call?
- In the conversation around the table on all the topics we have been very aware of the voices that are not here and pushing ourselves to provide the spaces and think beyond ourselves, not coming to any conclusion before hearing the voices. Good meeting, sensitive to our space and our community.
- The recognition that we are a privileged Conference and part of the wider church was important and we need to remember that as we move forward and engage in conversation about sharing.
- The concept of legacy sounds like we are only concerned about what will be written in the history books – what we are trying to do is our part in sharing, but not assume that we know how it should be.
- Legacy as a word can be problematic – we also talk about the legacy of residential schools.
- Our ultimate legacy may not be what we intended it to be.
- Grateful for the ways in which we speak to one another in this meeting and the ways in which we bring people in.

Closing

With the business completed, the President declared the meeting ended at 2:45 p.m. Gail Hamblin of South West Presbytery offered a blessing.

Audrey Brown
President

Jody Maltby
Executive Secretary