

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Executive of Toronto Conference  
Wednesday, November 8, 2017**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at the Conference office on Wednesday, November 8, 2017. The meeting began at 10:03 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), Eiko Hosaka (diversity), Roger Hutchinson (Toronto Southeast), Angus MacLennan (Living Waters), Henry MacLeod (South West), Betty Lou McNabb (Living Waters), Lawrence Nyarko (diversity), Jessica Stevenson (diversity) – via phone

**Regrets**

Anne Hepburn (Toronto Southeast), Kristal McGee (Northern Waters), Thérèse Samuel (Northern Waters)

**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.

**Worship/lighting the Christ candle/acknowledging the land**

Roger Hutchinson lit the Christ candle and the four direction candles and Sharon Aylsworth acknowledged the land and offered a reflection on the blessing of building relationships in this group and as we are in a week of remembrance, the relationships built between soldiers.

**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?

### **Adoption of agenda**

MOTION by Roger Hutchinson/Lawrence Nyarko that the agenda be adopted.

MOTION

CARRIED

### **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.

- Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea – Seoul Presbytery (PROK) – the Executive Secretary confirmed the steps taken from the last meeting and that she and Richard Choe will meet next week after which Richard will be in touch with our partners in PROK. The Executive confirmed that this is still a priority for our Conference and we want to ensure this is carried forward into the new region, recognizing that it will remain Toronto-centric due to the large Korean population in Toronto.
- Right Relations – We have had a request for significant funding in support of the Anishnawbe Health Centre. The Executive Secretary will consult with the Living into Right Relations Circle and Toronto Urban Native Ministries to see if this is a project that our Indigenous communities would like us to support and will bring a recommendation to the meeting in February. A request has also gone to the national church for funds from the Healing Fund.

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

#### **Minutes**

MOTION by Betty Lou McNabb/Eiko Hosaka that the Executive approve the minutes of the September 13, 2017 Executive meeting and receive for information the sub-Executive minutes from its meeting of September 27, 2017.

MOTION

CARRIED

**Correspondence**

MOTION by Bryan Ransom/Angus MacLennan that the correspondence report (Appendix B) be received and the recommended actions be taken.

MOTION

CARRIED

**Omnibus motion**

MOTION by Terry Davies/Henry MacLeod that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

a) Suitability for Ministry of Applicant for Admission

...on the advice of its Conference Interview Committee, which has reviewed the application and references from the applicant and has met and interviewed the applicant for admission, hereby recognize the Rev. Woong (Chris) Youm as suitable to proceed in the admission process to the order of ministry of The United Church of Canada as an ordained minister.

b) Interim Ministry

... on the advice of its Conference Interview Committee, which has reviewed the application (IM) and references from the applicant; met and interviewed the applicant's request for initial designation as an Interim Minister hereby designate Rev. Michael Kooiman as eligible to serve as an intentional interim minister with the following conditions: that when Michael Kooiman begins his first interim ministry, the relevant presbytery assign a trained, experienced intentional interim minister as a mentor during this first intentional interim ministry to meet with him on a regular basis during the term of appointment and;

that quarterly reports from Rev. Michael Kooiman and the mentor be sent to the relevant commission/committee of the presbytery and;

that the mentor should be assigned in discussion with Rev. Michael Kooiman and the presbytery.

c) Alpha Korean United Church to remain as pastoral charge within Toronto Southeast Presbytery

...at the request of the pastoral charge and with the agreement of South West and Toronto Southeast Presbyteries, allow Alpha Korean United Church to remain as a pastoral charge within Toronto Southeast

Presbytery as of its relocation to Lansing United Church effective October 1, 2017.

d) Iondale United Church Trustees

...that the Executive acknowledge Dorothy Benson, Rosemary Dennis, Margaret Whitehead, Amy Thornton and Mary Woolford, trustees of the former Iondale United Church and discharge them with thanks for their work.

e) Glen Ayr United Church Trustees

...that the Executive acknowledge Murray Campbell, Isabelle Campbell and Jake Doehler, Trustees of the former Glen Ayr United Church and discharge them with thanks for their work.

f) Bedford Park Seniors Residence

...based on advice received from the General Council lawyer and staff acknowledges the dissolution order dated March 24, 2017 of Bedford Park Seniors Residence that was an incorporated ministry of The United Church of Canada

g) The Massey Centre for Women

....approve The Massey Centre for Women 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Omo Akintan  
Oliver Blunn  
Sarah Charters  
Amy Davies  
Jennifer Dockery  
Silke Dorego  
Kris Hollenberg  
Justine Humphries  
Eddy Popp  
Rachel Solomon  
Stephanie Wang

... based on advice received from the lawyer retained by Toronto Conference to review by-laws, and from General Council Staff, approve the by-law no. 2017-1 of the incorporated ministry known as The Massey Centre for Women.

h) Thorncliffe Chapel Housing Corporation

... based on advice received from the General Council lawyer and staff approve the legacy agreement to recognize Thorncliffe Chapel Housing Corporation as a legacy incorporated ministry effective March 26, 2014.

i) Toronto Christian Resource Centre

...approve Toronto Christian Resource Centre 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Peter Adamson  
Joy Connelly  
Bill Dines  
Debbie Drewett  
Nancy Easton  
Andrew Gray  
Leanne Herbert  
Mary Morison  
John O'Leary  
Gary Schlee

j) Weston King Neighbourhood Centre

... approve the Weston King Neighbourhood Centre 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Timothy Barlow  
Jean-Marie Boutot  
Al Farrington  
Tim Gernstein  
Sylvia Hampton  
Katherine Joseph  
Michael Kooiman  
Doreen Miller  
Lang Moffat  
Dolly Ongkek  
Ken Stier  
Barbara Stone  
Wendy Whiteley

...approve the addition of Vince Padovani to the Weston-King Neighbourhood Centre 2016-2017 Board of Directors

k) 2018 Toronto Conference Executive Meeting Dates and Locations/Hosts

... approve the following 2018 meeting dates and locations/hosts

September 12, 2018 – South West Presbytery

November 14, 2018 – Toronto Southeast Presbytery

MOTION

CARRIED

**Mission Support Consultation**

The Executive received for information the decisions from the Mission Support Consultation (Appendix C).

**Proposal from Settlement and Pastoral Relations Committee**

The Executive considered the request from the Settlement and Pastoral Relations Commission (Appendix D)

MOTION by Terry Davies/Bryan Ransom that the Executive of Toronto Conference approve the funding to provide coaching and training to ministry personnel who are entering a team ministry situation, funding to come from the Conference Fund.

MOTION

CARRIED

General Council Restructuring – The Executive is committed to ensuring that all staff not moving into the new structure receive their severance. The Executive asked the Executive Secretary to lift up the importance of severance and education for all staff in all Conferences. The Executive asked the Executive Secretary to request a list of those who have not yet voted on remit 6.

Jessica Stevenson left the meeting.

**Lunch**

Roger Hutchinson of Toronto Southeast Presbytery offered grace at 12:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 1:05 p.m. The Executive was joined by Lorraine Stewart, a member of the Boundaries Commission.

**Corresponding Member**

MOTION by Betty Lou McNabb/Sharon Aylsworth that Lorraine Stewart be made a corresponding member for this meeting.

MOTION

CARRIED

## **Boundaries Commission**

The President welcomed Lorraine Stewart to the meeting. Lorraine shared her background in education and the church. The members of the Executive introduced themselves. The Executive shared a prayer to open the conversation about regional boundaries.

Lorraine explained who the Boundaries Commission are and what their mandate is. She facilitated a conversation around four questions:

1. How do Boundaries/Borders shape how you live out the mission of the church?
2. What is needed within the boundaries of an effective regional council?
3. Are there any unique situations of which the Boundaries Commission should be made aware?
4. Are there any other criteria of which the Boundaries Commission should be made aware?

### **General Comments:**

Toronto Conference is fairly open to exploring different regional options. Some feel that a greater number of smaller regions will be more effective and better able to relate to communities of faith. On the other hand, fewer regions will allow us to use the resources we have more effectively. Some hope that the Conference will remain intact within a new region while others are open to the possibility that our congregations may be divided among more than one region.

There is a perception that the Conferences will become the new regions and that only the presbyteries are ending. The regions need to look different than the current Conferences.

This may be an opportunity to look at how other denominations, including the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches, have divided the country. Are there opportunities for sharing resources?

**Question 1: How do Boundaries/Borders shape how you live out the mission of the church?**

Regions should be administrative structures, but ministry and mission should move across regional boundaries. If regions are administrative, then it becomes about population more than geography.

Do not create boundaries on assumption of churches closing but on potential for growth and maintenance.

2. What is needed within the boundaries of an effective regional council?

This is not the right question; we should ask “what makes an effective regional council?” The boundaries won’t matter if the regional council is not effective. If there isn’t clarity on how the regional council will operate it will put stress on those implementing the new structure. If the regions don’t work due to lack of clarity, the blame may be placed on the decisions of the Boundaries Commission.

What is needed is effective decision making, sufficient staff, pastoral support to communities of faith, and sharing of resources.

3. Are there any unique situations of which the Boundaries Commission should be made aware?

In Toronto Conference, two of the presbyteries cover large rural areas while the other two are almost entirely urban. The population density in an urban area leads to more opportunities for new ministries. Urban areas often have more volunteers than rural areas and travel can be easier because of public transit systems. Land is more valuable in urban areas.

Toronto is the largest city in Canada. We have the General Council office within our bounds, we have the largest theological college within our bounds, we have a large number of incorporated ministries and access to financial resources. There may be concern across the country about Toronto dominating in regional considerations. We have heard it suggested that the city of Toronto could be broken up into various regions. We encourage the commission to recognize that the city of Toronto is a community and should stay in one region.

There is great ethnic diversity in the city of Toronto and ethnic ministries seem to be growing. Members of migrant communities in Toronto travel from all over the city to worship together in a congregation that is reflective of their ethnic community.

Toronto Conference has two First Nations Communities that are members of the Conference and others that are within the bounds of the Conference but are members of ANCC. We want opportunities to build stronger relationships with all the First Nations Communities in the new structure.

4. Are there any other criteria of which the Boundaries Commission should be made aware?

Boundaries are arbitrary and confine us artificially. We have natural affinity with communities that are in different Conferences. There needs to be some flexibility so that communities of faith that may be better served by a different region can choose to be in that region. We should be divided by our natural affinity, not by roads or time zones.



Boundaries is a colonial style of language. If we are trying to be more inclusive and expressive, we might look at the territorial situations of the past. How did First Nations create their territorial system and is there a possibility that this might give us a framework? Boundaries keep people out. Territories are porous and there is fluidity across territories. We might also look at the watersheds.

When we talk about boundaries we tend to talk about geography. We are a middle class church and we expect people to be able to travel. We don't think about the technology we could be using to eliminate issues of distance and geography and the cost of bringing people together. We need to be thinking about how we do our business differently to address issues of distance and cost.

Although there are practical considerations about technology and geography, it comes back to considering the affinity of a group you are putting together.

Closing thoughts:

The Executive expressed faith in the Commission, trust in the process and hope for the future that will be created.

The Executive thanked Lorraine for her leadership. Lorraine left the meeting.

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

#### **General Council restructuring**

Terry Davies shared information with the Executive regarding the work on clustering that is happening in Living Waters Presbytery. Living Waters has just completed its third conversation of four about clustering and they have realized that instead of focusing on clusters, they need to be focusing on networking around shared topics of interest which may lead to clustering. They are also focusing on how they can be innovators and help their congregations to move forward.

### **Discussion items named by Executive members**

There were no discussion items named in advance by members of the Executive.

Upcoming dates of Executive meetings: February 7<sup>th</sup>, April 11<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>. The question was raised whether the Executive would try to gather in January to give feedback on the initial report of the Boundaries Commission.

#### **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:

- If everything we talked about around this table this afternoon were to happen, it would make for a better church.
- Concern that Jessica was removed from the conversation. We did not invite her to speak or make space for her to speak and did not identify ourselves when speaking. We value her presence and it is important to improve our inclusion.
- Could we elevate the phone and the candles to help us stay focused?
- This morning was low level business as usual, but this afternoon was exciting and the voices around the table were important and heard and focused on the future.
- From the Roxborough session there was a question about how to be a guest in your own space. The afternoon was Lorraine's space, not ours and I'm not sure we let go of control.
- One voice that I heard was how people in Toronto perceive themselves as being seen by the rest of the country.
- Appreciated Lorraine taking the time to ask us each for our final thoughts, to make sure each voice was heard.

### **Closing**

With the business completed, the President declared the meeting ended at 3:00 p.m. Roger Hutchinson of Toronto Southeast Presbytery offered a blessing.

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Audrey Brown  
President

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Jody Maltby  
Executive Secretary