

June 18, 2019

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Communities of Faith Commission
Tuesday, June 18, 2019**

The Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at New Hope United Church. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present

Christine Smaller (Chairperson) Ross Leckie, Emma Pipes, Kevin Logie, Cindy Randall, Calin Lau, Gloria Tozek, Sandra Nottegar, Harry Ramsaran, Amy Lee, Carolyn Harding, Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Karen Hilfman Millson (Staff), Susie Henderson (Staff)

Welcome, check in and prayer

The commission joined with the Pastoral Relations Commission for worship, led by Christine Smaller.

The chairperson welcomed the members of the commission and shared some of the history of the commission over the past six months. The mandate of this commission is wide and deep and impacts every single aspects of the life of communities of faith.

The members of the commission introduced themselves and shared why they are here.

Agenda

MOTION by Ross Leckie/Cindy Randall that the agenda as circulated be approved.

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION by Cindy Randall/Calin Lau that the minutes of the meeting of May 1, 2019 be approved.

MOTION

CARRIED

Governance Structure

The Staff Lead presented a brief outline of the governance structure of Shining Waters Regional Council.

Omnibus Motion

MOTION by Carolyn Harding/Kevin Logie that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council take the following actions:

a) **St. Matthew's United Church, Richmond Hill – Constitution**

Approves the constitution of St. Matthew's United Church, Richmond Hill;

b) **Northlea United Church, Toronto – Governance Model**

Approves the governance model of Northlea United Church, Toronto;

c) **Dewi Sant Welsh Pastoral Charge – Intentional Interim Ministry**

Approves the request of Dewi Sant Welsh Pastoral Charge, Toronto for an Intentional Interim Ministry beginning on March 1, 2019 and ending not earlier than June 30, 2022 and refers this matter for follow up to the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee and the Minister for Support to Communities of Faith;

Rev. Elizabeth Mackenzie has been in an appointment with the congregation since March 1, 2019. She is an approved Intentional Interim Minister. The congregation is requesting that the appointment be recognized formally as an Intentional Interim Ministry.

d) **Wexford Heights United Church and Cemetery, Scarborough – Trustees**

Appoints Diane Bennet-Jones, Christine Smaller and Jody Maltby as Trustees for Wexford Heights United Church, 2102 Lawrence Ave East, Scarborough and appoints Kelly Cook, Christine Smaller and Jody Maltby as Trustees for the Wexford Heights United Church Cemetery, both effective July 1, 2019.

e) **East End United Regional Ministry, Toronto – sale of Cosburn United Church**

Approve and consent to the sale of the congregational lands at 1108 Greenwood Avenue, with the legal description of PT. LT. 12 PL. 310, Twp. Of York, PT. 1 , PL. 64R9167, Toronto (E. York), City of Toronto, pursuant to the Agreement of Purchase and Sale dated May 31 ,2019, the terms of which include:

- a. A sale price of \$3,000,000, and
- b. A Shining Waters Regional Council approval no later than July 6, 2019, and
- c. A closing/completion date of July 20, 2019; and

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Approve and consent to the Preliminary Plan of Disposition of the proceeds arising from the sale of 1108 Greenwood Avenue, Toronto, attached.

Toronto Southeast Presbytery gave approval to list this property in December 2018. A previous Agreement of Purchase and Sale, dated March 4, 2019 and approved by the Communities of Faith Commission on May 1, 2019 was withdrawn on May 21, 2019. East End has received a new offer. The paperwork provided demonstrates the due diligence of the community of faith in selling this property

f) **King City United Church, King City – sale of a strip of land next to the parking lot**

Approve and consent to the sale of the congregational lands identified as Parts 1, 2 and 3 of 50 Elizabeth Grove, King City with the legal description of Lot 2, Registered Plan 85, Township of King, pursuant to the Agreement of Purchase and Sale, the terms of which include:

- a. A sale price of \$162,000, and
- b. A Shining Waters Regional Council approval no later than 10:00 p.m. on the 14th business day following acceptance of this agreement, and
- c. A closing date of September 1, 2019; and

Approve and consent to the Preliminary Plan of Disposition of the proceeds arising from the sale of Parts 1, 2 and 3 of 50 Elizabeth Grove, attached.

The Agreement of Purchase and Sale will be signed following a meeting on Sunday, June 16, 2019. This item is dependent on receiving confirmation that the offer has been accepted. The motion will be updated to reflect that acceptance prior to the meeting of the commission.

King City has been engaged in both an internal visioning process that has resulted in a consensus document and Living Faith story (attached) and a cluster conversation with York Pines United Church, Kettleby and New Hope United Church, Vaughan that has resulted in a collaboration agreement that was approved by the Communities of Faith Commission on March 28, 2019. The paperwork provided demonstrates the due diligence of the community of faith in selling this property.

g) **Don Mills United Church, Toronto – request to use funds from Manse Fund**

Approve the request from Don Mills United Church, Toronto for the use of up to \$35,000 from their manse fund for a repair to the roof of their building.

As per the CFC Manse Funds Policy, requests over \$25,000 come to the commission for approval. This is a capital expense that meets the requirement of

section 2.iv of the policy: Capital renovation projects within the community of faith's property. The current balance in the fund is \$189,100.00, which means there will be sufficient funds remaining to meet the minimum manse fund reserve.

MOTION

CARRIED

Humber Valley United Church, Toronto – Intentional Interim Ministry

At the request of the commission, this item was removed from the Omnibus Motion. The commission considered the request to allow Humber Valley United Church, Toronto to seek a call or appointment.

MOTION by Kevin Logie/Amy Lee that Shining Waters Regional Council approves the request of Humber Valley United Church, Toronto to be eligible for a call or appointment as of August 11, 2019, having demonstrated to the satisfaction of Shining Waters Regional Council that the congregation and staff have worked on the requirements that emerged from the review decisions of the sub-Executive of Toronto Conference dated November 22, 2017;

MOTION

CARRIED

The sub-Executive of Toronto Conference directed that the Intentional Interim Ministry continue for a minimum of 2 years. Rev. Ian Manson has been with the congregation since May 1, 2018, and has given notice effective August 11, 2019. The report provided by Rev. Manson outlines the work that has been completed. The decisions of the sub-Executive of Toronto Conference are included in the report as Appendix 1.

The commission recommends that we ask a couple of people to review governance documents and make recommendations rather than expecting the commission as a whole to review all documents.

Vision and Mapping

Susie Henderson spoke about the process of mapping communities of faith for the work of the region. She noted that there are a number of sources of data already available that can help us to orient ourselves to the communities in the region including four tools – Church Hub, Living Faith Story, Self-assessments, and Edge research.

The chair shared the working vision of this commission, which is to create a healthy network of thriving communities of faith across this region. We need a concrete strategic plan of what we want the region to look like in 1, 3, 5 and 10 years and how we will get there.

If there is no intervention, we will have large areas with no UCC presence. The reality is that some churches do need to close and their resources may support the work of other communities and the region. Also a UCC presence does not necessarily mean the building that is currently there, or even a building at all. There is great ministry

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happening around the region, we want to find that ministry and see how we can share it with others.

As a commission, we support all theological expressions in the church. We are inclusive of all theological perspectives. We are intercultural. We support congregations to be intentional in connecting to, and partnering with, the community around them.

We want to provide resources to help congregations learn how to partner with the community – important to train liaisons to support this work.

We want to inspire inclusive design – buildings and communities – space that attends to inclusion is better space. We have a partner in the Equity Committee that can help us resource communities.

How do we offer pastoral support to communities of faith in this time of transition – both at a regional level and at a local level?

How do we encourage the health, joy and excellence of lay leaders in congregations?

Where does reconciliation fit with our work? How do we support communities of faith to take steps related to reconciliation?

Everything we do needs to support the vision of a healthy network of thriving communities of faith across the region.

Draft Policies

Finance and Property

Moved by Harry Ramsaran/Emma Pipes that the Finance and Property Policy be adopted as an interim policy with understanding it is a living document that will be reviewed in the fall.

MOTION

CARRIED

Harry Ramsaran and Jody Maltby will work on refining the policy with particular attention to need for clarification around the difference between leases and rentals.

Listening Teams Guidelines

Ross Leckie presented the proposed guidelines for Listening Teams. There were a couple of suggested changes.

Moved by Carolyn Harding/Amy Lee that the Listening Team Guidelines be adopted as amended with the understanding that it will be reviewed in the fall.

MOTION

CARRIED

Service, Support and Oversight

Cindy Randall and Christine Smaller will review the Policy on Service, Support and Oversight for Communities of Faith.

Next Meeting

The Chair will send out a doodle poll for a fall retreat from a Wednesday to Friday.

Meetings of the commission will occur by zoom on third Wednesday of each month from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. beginning on September 18th.

Lunch

The Pastoral Relations Commission broke for lunch at 12:30 p.m. and then reconvened for a joint session with the Communities of Faith Commission at 1:15 p.m.

Understanding Each Other's Work

Christine Smaller spoke about the Communities of Faith Commission (CFC) mandate – support and oversight of everything that is not ministry personnel.

Andy Comar spoke about the Pastoral Relations Commission mandate which covers appointments, calls, liaisons, retirees, and LLWLs.

Areas of Overlap

Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) areas. How is it flagged that a community of faith (CoF) needs IIM? It could be requested by the pastoral charge. CFC could also direct it.

PRC liaisons help CoFs create their profile.

The breakdown of a pastoral relationship could be a situation where both commissions might need to be involved. CFC might establish a listening team—preference is go that route rather jumping to a review of congregation.

Staff would need to support the minister when a relationship breaks down or is ended by the Regional Council.

In terms of reviews, CFC has authority over CoFs, but the PRC does not have authority to order reviews of ministry personnel—that is the responsibility of Office of Vocation (OV).

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Issue of reappointments: CFC will discuss at their next meeting. We are talking about situations where a CoF is at the end of their life, or in financial trouble, and reappointment is a way to keep going for the time being.

It was noted that at the form checker level, the reviewer of the appointment/call form might raise some flags that could result in some queries for the liaison and the staff about the viability of the congregation, or about what is going on in the pastoral charge.

The form doesn't have a place to indicate when the appointment first took place. Perhaps that could be added.

The CFC wants to hear about concerns in a CoF, but are not looking to add to their agenda. They want to be proactive in terms of health, joy and excellence of CoFs.

Liaisons who see the financial viability form can raise issues of viability.

What about the practice of oversight visits? Will this be continuing? CFC is working on a policy of self-assessments by CoFs. CFC is going to have to triage CoFs: a) those that are in need b) those that have a lot of potential to be innovative thriving ministry but need some support from the region.

In terms of self-assessments of congregation and assessment of minister, if those two are not in sync, it is difficult to evaluate the ministry. Could we give CoFs and ministers some tools to make these two processes the best they can be?

When a Pastoral Relationship Ends

Jody Maltby has compiled a checklist for when a congregation closes.

How do we know when a congregation is closing so that support could be given to that congregation? It hasn't been our practice to issue a public invitation to closing services. We would want to liaise with the CoF if we were to do that.

How does a pastoral relationship end?

The minister can end it. OV could end a pastoral relationship rising from a review. Congregation could end it.

What about exit interviews? They were done in the past by presbytery Pastoral Relation Committees, but they are not in the mandate of either the PRC or CFC. Do we want to continue them?

What support can we offer a CoF at the time of an ending of a pastoral relationship? Is there something that the minister leaving can do? It would depend on what the nature of the pastoral relationship is at the end. We could do some education with the CoF, but might also guide them.

A video resource would be great for CoFs. What about doing exit interviews by Zoom? The exit interview should be done for both the minister and the CoF—that can feed into the next steps for the CoF in terms of profile, etc.

Migrant/ethno-cultural Communities of Faith

Cindy Randall referred to some of the experience of South West Presbytery, where many of these CoFs were located. There are issues around governance, interaction, pastoral relations processes, that have taken considerable time of staff and volunteers.

Issues:

- Difficulty in finding ministers to lead these congregations – language and cultural issues
- Different approaches in how conflict was handled. Minister often assumed a very authoritative role. Standing from another country was recognized but not in the UCC.
- Different roles for lay people – they often don't have the opportunity to speak, and this allowed issues to fester.

What about indigenous CoFs? They are still meeting to discern their relationship with the region. A meeting is taking place in August of indigenous CoFs from across the country.

There is a lack of connection with the wider church in general with ethno-cultural churches. How do we provide opportunities to connect? The staff team has also been talking about support to these CoFs. A meeting is taking place in the summer to talk about this.

In the former South West Presbytery, there was an intercultural committee, and it is continuing to meet. It is a cluster.

The Equity Committee has some responsibility for our “inter-cultural commitments.”

Health, Joy, and Excellence of Ministers and CoFs

The PRC has done some work on this. An advisory group has been set up to help develop some programming in this area.

CFC has talked about support for lay leadership in times of transition, but we really don't put much time in the UCC to resources for lay leadership development. How can we do that? There has been some discussion around retreats, workshops, events for congregations that are fun, etc. CFC will continue to work on this.

It was noted how many people came to the regional Annual Meeting, but not a greater involvement by ministry personnel.

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A question about United Fresh Start was raised: this is a program with many modules for training in CoFs. Four of them are related to starting up a new pastoral relationship. Fresh Start hasn't been promoted widely, and we want to work on that. The first module is free, then same rate as pulpit supply for subsequent modules. There are trained facilitators in place. Liaisons are aware of it to promote with CoFs. This is a national program.

Closing, Blessing and Farewell

Andy Comar thanked everyone for coming and for the opportunity to meet as two commissions. We are still working on new beginnings and this is evolving work. Appreciation was expressed for the food and hospitality offered at the meeting by New Hope United.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m. Andy Comar closed the meeting with a reflection from Joyce Rupp.