

February 19, 2020

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Communities of Faith Commission
Wednesday, February 19, 2020**

The Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 by video conference call. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

Present:

Ross Leckie (acting chairperson), Calin Lau, Amy Lee, Sandra Nottegar, Cindy Randall, Harry Ramsaran, Emma Pipes

Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Karen Hilfman Millson (Staff)

Regrets: Carolyn Harding, Kevin Logie, Christine Smaller, Gloria Tozek

Welcome, check in and prayer

As Christine Smaller was not present, Ross Leckie acted as chair. Ross led in worship around the theme of transfiguration. He gave an acknowledgement of the land, based on one used by the Halton School Board and acknowledged our commitment to being a safe place for all people to gather and participate in our Region.

The chairperson constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ.

Agenda

The commission agreed by consensus to accept the agenda with the addition of a report from Harry Ramsaran on the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC).

Minutes

MOTION by Harry Ramsaran/Calin Lau that the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council dated January 22, 2019 be approved as circulated

MOTION

CARRIED

Omnibus Motion

MOTION by Sandra Nottegar/Amy Lee that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council take the following actions:

a) Bethune United Church – proposed use of manse funds

... approves the request of Bethune United Church (Heart of Muskoka Pastoral Charge) to use its manse funds to purchase a stand-by 20kw generator;

b) Burton Avenue UC, Barrie – revised Plan of Organization

... approves the revised Plan of Organization of Burton Avenue United Church, Barrie, dated February 2020;

c) Jane Finch/Davenport Perth Community Ministry Governance Documents

... approves the revised Policies and Procedures document and Summary of Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members document of Jane Finch and Davenport Perth Community Ministry;

d) Regent Park Community Ministry – Governance Document

... approves the Policies and Procedures document of Regent Park Community Ministry;

e) Westway United Church, Toronto

... approves the request of Westway United Church, Toronto, to sever, list and sell a 45 foot residential lot from the south end of its parking lot

MOTION

CARRIED

It was noted that the Burton Avenue governance document could be a model for other mid-size congregations.

The commission recommends including in the role of regional representatives, the expectation that they will attend regional meeting with expenses paid by community of faith.

Updates:

West Hill United Church, Scarborough and East End United Church, Toronto continue with negotiations for use of their buildings. These are very different conversations but both can provide learning opportunities for the commission.

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Cummer Ave United Church, Toronto and Aurora United Church have ongoing construction projects and have asked if there are additional approvals required. Jody Maltby is looking into this.

In January, the Executive approved the extension of a five-year lease to Camp Couchiching for the use of the former Regent Park United Church building in Orillia. During this time, we will look at whether we can develop a partnership between the camp and local churches to provide programming for children and youth in an underserved area of Orillia and in the communities served by the churches.

A number of documents supporting Intentional Interim Ministries and a collaboration agreement may be coming to the commission within the next month. As these will be time sensitive, an email vote may be required.

- **Clusters and Networks**

Ross Leckie reported on an event hosted by Living Presence Ministry and Toronto United Church Council, featuring Shawn Loney, regarding social innovations that churches are doing. Are there opportunities we can create to share stories of innovation within and beyond the region?

Karen Hilfman Millson reported on the ongoing conversation regarding community ministry. There was a second gathering in January held by video conference. Many innovative ideas are sparking in these gatherings about innovative ways to engage the community around churches. Over 40 people have participated. Commission members may register if they wish to participate in future gatherings and/or receive notes.

A number of handbooks are being developed or revised to support regional work, including a handbook for clusters and networks, one for collaborative ministry, and updating of the handbook for Intentional Interim Ministry.

- **Staff**

Jody Maltby provided an update on the hiring process for three permanent full-time staff positions. Once these people are in place, a number of pieces of work that have been on the back burner will become a focus.

- **Mapping Conversation**

There was conversation towards the end of 2019, including at the November retreat, about a proposal the commission requested from the EDGE network to provide mapping information on communities of faith in the region. Jody Maltby reminded the commission of the details of the two options, a basic option that would include a report summarizing key findings and a process to engage the report for long-term planning, and a more in-depth study that would include an interactive demographic report.

MOTION by Sandra Nottegar/Amy Lee that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council approve a budget of up to \$10,000 for the higher-level mapping project in partnership with the EDGE Network.

MOTION

CARRIED

Policy Update: Sale of Property when a Congregation is neither amalgamating nor closing

Jody Maltby reported that the newest policy is not on the website yet as the Executive has not received it for information. The Executive met on the same day as the commission in January so this wasn't on their agenda, but will be added to the next meeting.

Other Business

- Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC)

Harry Ramsaran reported on the approval of all the grants submitted to PTCC through the Grants Review Committee and the Executive. These grants honoured commitments made by the presbyteries before they closed in 2018. He expressed the hope that there would be ongoing reporting and review of ministries receiving financial support. Jody Maltby confirmed that this is also a goal of the Grants Review Committee.

- Connecting with other Regions

Further to the conversation at the January meeting, Karen Hilfman Millson reported that staff from other regions and our staff are able to post events to our community events calendar. These events are included in a monthly newsletter to all communities of faith. There is ongoing conversation region to region and with the General Council as to how we can more effectively communicate information with communities of faith.

- St. Paul's Midland – Hub Funding

Karen Hilfman Millson reminded the commission of the possibilities offered by a hub ministry. St. Paul's United Church, Midland is taking the lead in this ministry, which could offer support to congregations with ministry personnel on sabbatical, where they are between calls or appointments, or that will be permanently lay-led. The General Council Executive has approved a grant to each region to support hub ministries. Due to the work of the former Northern Waters Presbytery, we are ahead of some regions in readiness. We are seeking two test sites, one in Shining Waters Regional Council and

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one in Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council. The cost of the test will be \$2,000 per site with funding shared by the two regions.

MOTION by Amy Lee/Cindy Randall that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council approve funding up to \$2,000 for test site purposes for hub ministry out of St. Paul's Midland

MOTION

CARRIED

- Clusters

Jody Maltby provided a history of our conversation on Clusters and Networks. The commission created a task group in the spring of 2019. The task group met once, after which the conversation was tabled pending the creation of the Social and Ecological Justice Commission, in recognition that a number of networks would relate to that commission as well. However, oversight of clusters remains primarily with our commission and we do receive requests for funding.

The commission agreed to form a new task group to take a fulsome look at many factors connected to clusters and in particular to funding considerations. The task group will include Calin Lau, Sandra Nottegar, and Emma Pipes with staff support from Karen Hilfman Millson. Karen will recruit additional members and input from existing clusters.

Closing

Harry Ramsaran closed in prayer and the meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m. with commission members expressing thanks to Ross Leckie for chairing.

Next Meeting: March 18, 2020, by video conference beginning at 9:30 a.m. Cindy Randall agreed to lead worship.