

May 20, 2020

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Communities of Faith Commission
Wednesday, May 20, 2020**

The Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 by video conference call. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

Present:

Christine Smaller (Chairperson), Carolyn Harding, Calin Lau, Ross Leckie, Amy Lee, Kevin Logie, Sandra Nottegar, Emma Pipes, Cindy Randall, Harry Ramsaran, Gloria Tozek,

Staff: Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Susie Henderson (Community Engagement & Partnership), Kim Uyede-Kai (Communities of Faith Support and Right Relations), Karen Hilfman Millson (Communities of Faith Support)

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson welcomed everyone. Christine Smaller offered a statement of centering. Susie Henderson gave an acknowledgement of the land, and acknowledged our commitment to being a safe place for all people to gather and participate in our Region. Gloria Tozek offered a reading from Embers by Richard Wagamese. Cindy Randall offered a prayer from Sojourners. Jody Maltby introduced Kim Uyede-Kai. Members checked in.

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

Agenda

MOTION by Cindy Randall/Amy Lee that the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

It was noted that on the first page under minutes, it should read March 2020 rather than March 2019.

MOTION by Gloria Tozek/Amy Lee that the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council dated April 15, 2020 be approved as amended.

MOTION

CARRIED

Omnibus Motion

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

a) Emmanuel United, Brampton

... approve the Permission to Enter Agreement between Trustees of Emmanuel United Church and The Corporation of the City of Brampton dated 2020, for the purpose of installing, operating and maintaining the Community Garden on the church property described as Block W, Plan 688 Chinguacousy, City of Brampton, Regional Municipality of Peel.

b) Islington United, Toronto

... approve the request of Islington United Church to obtain a loan from Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) in the amount of \$140,000 to complete the renovation of its main kitchen to correct major health and safety issues and provide for its active hospitality ministry.

c) Ghana Calvary Methodist United, Toronto

... approve the renewal of the loan of Ghana Calvary Methodist United Church with Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) on the following terms and conditions:

Date:	April 1, 2020
Amount:	up to \$600,320
Amortization:	22 years.
Term:	3 years.
Interest:	4% or the applicable mortgage rate of the Bank of Nova Scotia for the term, whichever is higher on the date of renewal.
Payment:	monthly payments, principal and interest.
Provisions:	the renewal fee be paid (\$1,500.80)
Security:	first mortgage is in place.
Approval:	Shining Waters Regional Council
Source of Funds:	Investing in Ministry Fund

d) East End United Regional Ministry, Toronto

... approve the final plan of disposition of East End United Regional Ministry regarding the proceeds of sale of the Cosburn Avenue church property.

MOTION

CARRIED

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Email votes

The Commission voted by email in favour of the following:

- a) Trinity, Huntsville
 - Agreed with the recommendation of the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee that the work of the intentional interim minister at Trinity, Huntsville is complete and that they are ready to call a minister.
- b) St. Mark's, Scarborough
 - Approved the loan for St. Mark's Scarborough with Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) in the amount of \$8,600 which is based on the amount St. Mark's has invested with TUCC; the loan is interest-free for twelve months after which it would become a regular TUCC loan with interest.
- c) West Hill, Scarborough
 - Approved the lease agreement between West Hill and the Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough

The Commission considered the following decision by email:

- a) CEBA government loans
 - Considered giving authority to Jody Maltby to approve requests from congregations to apply for a Canada Emergency Business Account loan of up to \$40,000 to assist with salary and other expenses while churches are closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Subsequent to this email vote, it was determined that churches do not qualify for the Canada Emergency Business account loan.

Staff Reports:

Collaborative Ministry and Intentional Interim Ministry Updates – *Karen Hilfman Millson*

Karen provided updates on seven churches south of Simcoe having conversations about collaboration amongst them.

We are expecting a report from the collaboration conversation between Caledon Village United Church and Caledon East United Church for our June 2 meeting.

Karen is continuing to work with Islay Scott on a handbook for collaboration for future approval by the commission.

Anne Hines will be the regional representative on the Transition Team for the Intentional Interim Ministry at College St. United Church, Toronto. The region anticipates two more requests coming forward soon. Staff will have a conversation about strategy and best practices for congregations in transition that may want the benefits of interim ministry without the paperwork and requirements of a formal intentional interim ministry.

Covid-19 Update – *Jody Maltby*

Jody reported on communities of faith that have applied for United Church emergency bridge financing and have sought approval to use restricted funds. The region is working on guidelines to assist congregations in planning to re-open buildings, when permitted by the provincial government and local health authorities.

Some congregations may be eligible for the Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program (CECRA) and the Emergency Community Support Fund. Camping Ministries should be eligible for the Canada Emergency Bank Account (CEBA) loan and for United Church emergency funding for fixed costs.

Ross Leckie reported on support to camps available through Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) and the exciting and creative camping ministry that is happening through Zoom and other platforms,

Mapping Projects – *Susie Henderson*

We are close to having a proposal from Edge for this work. They have asked us to offer key questions for the project. What would we like to know about the region as a whole? Are there assumptions we want to test out? What do we want to learn about the communities around us?

The following questions were offered:

- Is the population around a community of faith growing, or not?
What are the concentrations of United Church communities in particular areas -- what does it look like, how is it changing?
What do past, present, and possible future concentrations look like?
How many communities of faith don't have paid accountable ministry?
- What supports/supervision are going to be required into the future?
What are the financial circumstances of communities of faith?
- Who is moving into our neighbourhoods – are they members of protestant faith groups?
What do community ministries look like regionally?
- What services are available in the community external to the congregation, for example in the areas of domestic violence, mental health and children's services?
What services might be needed that aren't available?

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- Where are Indigenous populations located and what, if any, connections do we have with these populations?
- Where are significant LGBTQ constituencies and affirming churches and where are there supports, or lack thereof, for LGBTQ people?
- What do we know about our mission communities including Goodtree Korean, le Ministere Protestant Francophone, and the Filipino Christian Fellowship?

Decision-making best practices for email votes

The commission expressed a desire to be responsive to the needs of communities of faith, particularly with time-sensitive decisions (for example an Agreement of Purchase and Sale or a loan agreement). At the same time, many decisions can be complex with a large amount of background information to consider. We also need to be mindful of the effective use of the time of both staff and volunteers.

Our best practice continues to be that we receive and consider decisions at the regular meetings of the commission. We recognize that our decision-making is different when we gather as opposed to when we decide by email. We have better discussion when we are together and hear other opinions. Where needed, time-sensitive decisions may be considered by email.

If a congregation needs a regional decision for a congregational meeting, this usually is not time-sensitive. The commission meets monthly on a regularly scheduled date and congregations can plan their meetings to work with that schedule. If there are exceptional circumstances, this can be discussed with staff.

Commission Working Groups

In order to make the best use of resources and develop expertise in specific areas of commission work, we will create task groups to consider governance documents, leases, and loan applications. Each member of the commission will serve on one of these task groups. These groups will be approved at the meeting on June 2nd. Going forward, this will be an expectation of membership on the commission.

Jody Maltby suggested that we might also want to create a task group to focus on property development and this could include members from outside the commission.

Membership

Cindy Randall, Kevin Logie and Christine Smaller agreed to serve until June 2021. Sandra Nottegar agreed to serve for a three-year term beginning in June 2020. Ross Leckie and Emma Pipes are stepping down from the commission. Other members of the commission are mid-term.

Closing

Christine Smaller offered a blessing and closed in prayer and the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Next Meeting: June 2, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. (note: this is a joint meeting with the Pastoral Relations Commission).

