

December 8, 2020

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Social and Ecological Justice Commission  
Tuesday, December 8, 2020**

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on December 8, 2020 by video conference. The meeting began at 11:00 a.m.

**Members Present**

Susan Eagle (Chairperson), Lois Brown, Tina Conlon, Elizabeth Cunningham, Donna Lang, Alana Martin, Moon-Ja Park, Eleanor Scarlett, Cameron Watts

Staff: Bri-anne Swan

**Welcome, check in and prayer**

Lois Brown welcomed everyone, opened with prayer, 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.

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

There was a time of check-in.

**Agenda**

**MOTION** by Moon-Ja Park, seconded by Tina Conlon that the agenda, be approved with some deferrals.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**Minutes**

**MOTION** by Elizabeth Cunningham, seconded by Alana Martin that the Minutes of the meeting of the Shining Waters Social and Ecological Justice Commission held November 3, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**BUSINESS ARISING**

**• Proposal for identifying Priorities and Passions Small Groups**

Susan Eagle proposed the Commission try a model of working in small groups to identify areas of need for the Social and Ecological Justice Commission. Because the Commission

only meets monthly, the Commission can't possibly cover every issue and cover it well. There is hope that by assigning people on the Commission to research and build networks in small groups, and then bring items forward to the Commission when something needs approval or action, more work can be done. Commission members were invited to identify areas they have interest and energy in working on and small groups were formed. These groups were also encouraged to identify ally organizations the Commission may be able to partner with. There will be space and time to evaluate whether this approach is useful.

Bri-anne Swan will offer support in identifying current United Church policy and any previous work that has been done in specific areas. It was noted that we often work from scratch, as if the United Church has never done any work on specific social/ecological issues before. There is already a breadth of resources available for the Commission to build upon.

### ***Priorities and Passions Small Groups 2021***

#### **Anti-Racism**

Eleanor Scarlett (Anti-Black and Anti-Indigenous racism)

Elizabeth Cunningham

Moon-Ja Park

Lois Brown

#### **Poverty/Income Inequality**

Susan Eagle

Moon-Ja Park

Tina Conlon

Elizabeth Cunningham (liveable income)

#### **Homelessness**

Elizabeth Cunningham (York Region, encampments)

Eleanor Scarlett (Peel Region)

Cameron Watts

Susan Eagle

#### **Israel / Palestine**

Alana Martin

Tina Conlon

Lois Brown

#### **Environment**

Moon-Ja Park

Alana Martin

Donna Lang

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## **Right Relations**

Lois Brown

Cameron Watts

Tina Conlon

- **Upper York Sewage Solution** - Bri-anne Swan

Bri-anne provided a brief update on the Upper York Sewage Solution (UYSS). Brandon Stiles, Environmental Coordinator for the Chippewas of Georgina Island, has been approached to speak to the Commission and the Living Into Right Relations Circle. The town of Georgina has voted to cancel the UYSS. They are not able to do this unilaterally, but they are a voice at the table and it is an important demonstration of solidarity.

- **Christian University** – Susan Eagle and Bri-anne Swan

Bri-anne has researched the provincial government voting to grant Canada Christian College (a private Christian college in Whitby) university status with the ability to award degrees in arts and sciences. There was concern expressed about the college, and its president's homophobic and anti-Islamic comments, as well as the fast tracking of normal process for a political ally of the premier. Although the Omnibus bill containing the relevant legislation has passed, Bri-anne will write a letter on behalf of the Regional Council for the President to sign after approval from the Commission.

- **Living into Right Relations (LIRR)** – Lois Brown

Lois gave an update on the work of LIRR. There was affirmation expressed about seeking ways in which this Commission and LIRR might become more aware of each other's work.

- **Green Belt Conservation**

Bri-anne Swann gave an update on Schedule 6 of Bill 229, which provides for the expansion of Ministerial Zoning orders, overriding local conservation authorities.

- **Safe consumption sites** (deferred)

Bri-anne Swan offered a report from Jeffrey Dale for information about his work around harm reduction and safe consumption sites. Bri-anne will invite Jeffrey Dale to come and speak with the Commission at the next meeting.

- **Post-Covid Recovery** (deferred)

- **Anti-Racism** (deferred)

- **Livable Income** (Susan Eagle)

ISARC focused on liveable income during a recent online forum. It has been recorded and will be posted to YouTube, available to all who participated and beyond. It includes a reflection from Lois Wilson.

A national committee within the United Church is continuing to meet to develop a strategy around Guaranteed Liveable Income.

- **Advent resources**

Bri-anne Swan gave an update on how the justice-focused Advent resources she developed had been used throughout the Regional Council and country. Many congregations were grateful for access to music and videos for their services.

- **May workshop** - This item was deferred to the next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION** by Elizabeth Cunningham, seconded by Eleanor Scarlett that, for 2021, the Social and Ecological Justice Commission will meet the third Tuesday of the month at 1 p.m. until June 2021

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

Meeting dates for January to June 2021:

January 19th

February 16

March 16

April 20

May 18

June 15

## **Deferred Items**

- Finances – what are our plans, what do we want to do?

- Correspondence

- Brian Macintosh

Letter requesting consideration that the forming UNJPPI network be connected to the Social and Ecological Justice Commission. Commission members will take time to read and consider in time for the next meeting.

- Donna Lang

ESG Energy Retrofit Summary was received for information.

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**Closing:**

The Chairperson closed the meeting with a prayer and the meeting adjourned at 2:05p.m.

Next Meeting: January 19, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. by video conference.

