

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Pastoral Relations Commission  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021**

The Pastoral Relations Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 by video conference. The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

**Members Present**

Andrew Comar (chair); Dale Hildebrand (staff); Todd McDonald (staff); Donna Bowman-Woodall (ordered); William Haughton (ordered); Barbara Hendren (lay); Liz Mackenzie (ordered); Beth Moore (lay); Lawrence Nyarko (ordered); Robin Pilkey (lay); James Ravenscroft (ordered); Paul Stott (lay);

**Regrets:** None

**Welcome, constituting the meeting and prayer**

Andrew Comar, chair, welcomed everyone, acknowledged the indigenous territory we find ourselves on, led the opening prayer, and called the meeting to order.

**Agenda**

**MOTION** by Beth Moore / James Ravenscroft  
that the agenda consisting of items that had been circulated to the commission in advance of this meeting be approved.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**Minutes**

**MOTION** by Lawrence Nyarko / Liz Mackenzie  
that the minutes of the January 26, 2021 meeting of the commission be approved.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

## Omnibus Motion

**MOTION** by James Ravenscroft / Barbara Hendren  
that the Pastoral Relations Commission take the following actions:

a) **Calls**

... concurs with the request of **Heart Lake Pastoral Charge (Brampton)** and approves the call to **Margaret MacDonald**, ordained minister, beginning March 1, 2021, part time based on 16 hours per week with the following terms for Category F and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$72,354 (pro-rated \$28,941.60) per annum, basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1474 (pro-rated \$589.60) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this call does require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **York Pines Pastoral Charge (Kettleby)** and approves the call to **Kun Young (Andrew) Lee**, ordained minister, beginning January 14, 2021, part time based on 16 hours per week with the following terms for Category E and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$70,632 (pro-rated \$28,252.80) per annum, basic telephone \$800 pro-rated to \$320 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1474 (pro-rated \$589.60) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this call does require an act of covenant.

b) **Appointments**

... concurs with the request of **Rosedale Pastoral Charge (Toronto)** and re-appoints **Roberta Howey**, ordained minister, beginning February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022, full time based on 40 hours per week with the following terms for Category B and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$65,461 per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at 11.8% which equals \$7724 for a total salary of \$73185, basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1474 per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this re-appointment does not require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **Severn Bridge Pastoral Charge (Severn Bridge)** and appoints **James McKean**, retired ordained minister, beginning February 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, part time based on 20 hours per week with the following terms for Category E and Cost of Living Group Assignment 4: Salary \$65984 (pro-rated \$32992) per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at 9.12% which equals \$6016 (pro-rated \$3008) for a total salary of \$72000 (pro-rated \$36000), basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning

Amount \$1474 (pro-rated \$737) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this appointment does require an act of covenant.

c) **Request for Change in Relationship**

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of Henry Poutiainen, ordained minister at Thornhill Pastoral Charge effective September 30, 2021 and give thanks for his ministry.

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of Christine Smaller, ordained minister at Glebe Road Pastoral Charge effective April 30, 2021 and give thanks for her ministry.

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of John Suk, ordained minister at Lawrence Park Community Pastoral Charge effective July 1, 2021 and give thanks for his ministry.

**Discussion:**

A question was raised about the telephone amount for Andrew Lee as it does not meet the new policy of \$800 minimum. Staff explained that this is a collaborative ministry agreement and therefore telephone costs are shared. The total will add up to \$800 per year.

Concerns were raised about Roberta Howey's appointment given that Rosedale has reappointed her a number of times since May 2019. Why have they not moved to a call? It was made clear that the commission will not approve another appointment for Roberta after this one. The pastoral charge needs to decide on a call. Concern was also raised about salary equity in team ministry situations (% of salary above minimum). It was decided to wait until the Equity Research Project is completed before the commission gives any directives or creates policy in this area. The hope is that the project will include these kinds of situations in the research.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**Report from staff**

**a) Liaisons**

The following liaisons have been appointed by staff:

Barbara Hendren appointed to Thornhill Pastoral Charge (Thornhill) in search for a call.



conducted in Shining Waters will likely be replicated nationally in the denomination and that the United Church of Christ (USA) is also interested in this area.

The PowerPoint presentation she used is provided as an appendix to these minutes.

**Discussion questions:**

When will some of the materials be ready for pastoral charges to use?

In a couple of months.

Is the Black Clergy Network being tapped into in the anti-racism and equity work?

Yes, some members are represented on the Anti-racism Committee and in other areas.

A question was raised about how some the resources could be made available to our pastoral relations liaisons. Todd explained that we will be recruiting five new liaisons to replace outgoing liaisons. A training for all liaisons will take place in February 2022 that will incorporate the results of the equity research.

Andy thanked Adele for her presentation and expressed the hope that this work will be fruitful in moving our denomination towards being an anti-racist church.

Staff asked the commission for other ideas in terms of equity training for upcoming meetings. Suggestions included:

- A representative from the Indigenous Church to talk about our work around right relations and equity issues faced by the Indigenous Church.
- Hear from our own Regional Council Equity Commission to hear about other work being done in other parts of the regional council's work.

**Health Joy and Excellence**

- Flourish Event: March 23 and 24 "Becoming a Post Covid Church" with Betty Pries and Bruce Harding
- Flourish Event: Mental Health First Aid Training for Ministry Personnel. Two training sessions will be offered in April, 2021.

It was suggested that we advertise the fact that the Mental Health First Aid Training will result in a certificate as that may be a drawing card for clergy.

**Ministry and Personnel Committee Training**

Todd and Dale are working on a M&P 101 online course in May 2021. This course is designed to train new M&P Committee members who have been elected at annual meetings.

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**Licensed Lay Worship Leader Committee:** no report

**Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Pastoral Relations Commission will be held by Zoom video conference on March 30, 2021 beginning at 9:00 a.m.

**End of meeting**

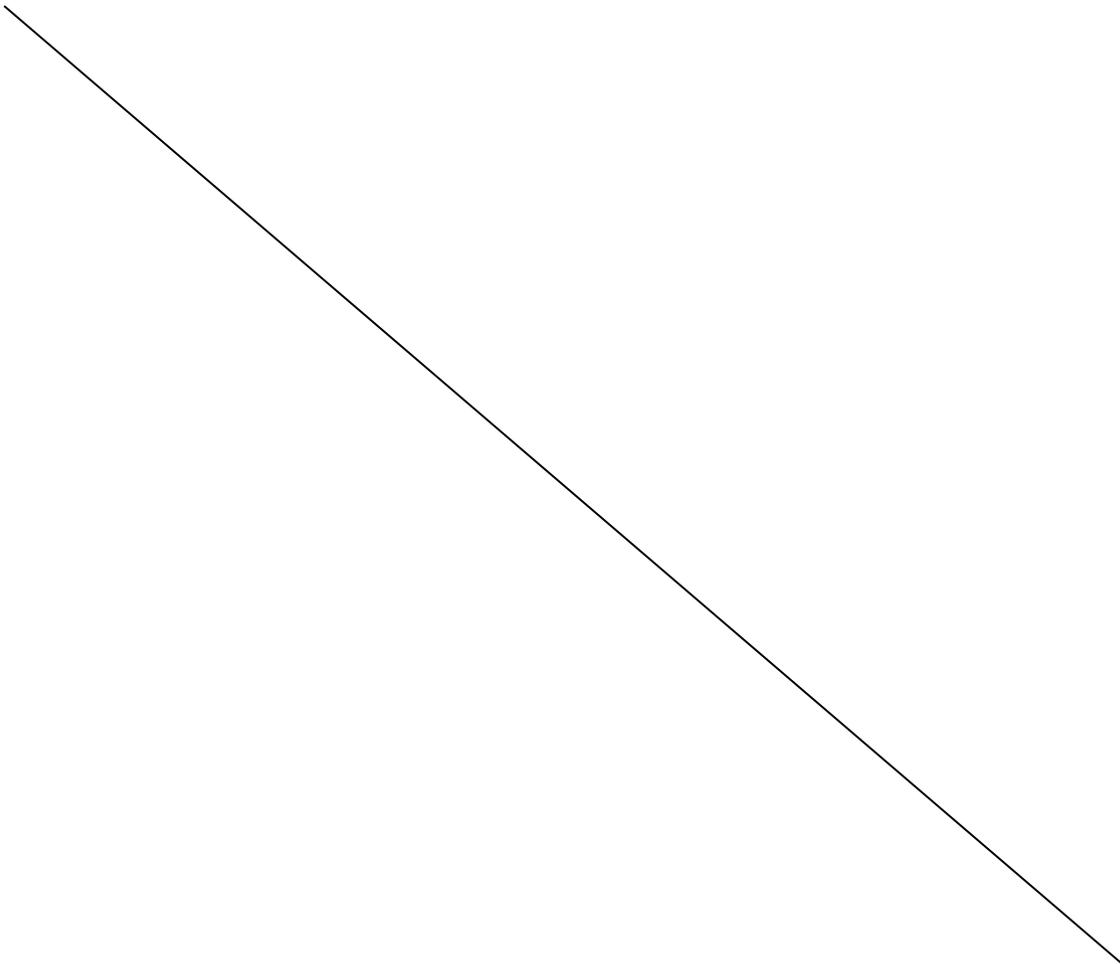
There being no further business, Lawrence Nyarko, closed the meeting with a prayer.

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Andrew Comar, Chair

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Dale Hildebrand, note taker



## APPENDIX A – Equity Goal Research Project Overview

Pastoral Relations Commission – Shining Waters Regional Council

### 2021 Equity Goal Research Project Overview

*“to further resistance to all forms of oppression, welcome and celebrate people of all abilities, any sexual orientation and gender identity, racialized persons, and all others who are marginalized.”*

#### Purpose

The Pastoral Relations Commission wants to know how its actions and policies create inequity, and how its actions and policies can increase equity. So, the goals of this project are:

- to look at the impact of current SWRC pastoral relations policies and procedures, and
- to determine whether or not these policies work towards ending inequity.

#### Method

Policies are best evaluated by listening and talking with those who use them and are primarily affected by them. This study will listen to the stories of different people’s experiences in the pastoral relations process, at different stages. This will be done through interviews, small sharing groups, and surveys (see below). In addition, we will look at the Pastoral Relations Commission data about terms of call, search processes, and concerns or complaints they have heard in the past 18 months.

#### Areas of the Study

**Ministry personnel** - Interviews and focus groups (if participants feel comfortable & there are enough);

- those who are searching for a new pastoral relationship,
- those who have recently or provisionally been called/appointed,
- those who are in the first 10-14 months of a new pastoral relationship

**Applicants** – an online survey of ministers who have applied for positions in SWRC but not been chosen.

**Regional Council accompaniers** - Interviews and/or focus groups with those from SWRC who have accompanied communities of faith during a search process in the past 18 months.

**SWRC Communities of Faith** – an online survey of search committees in the past 18 months.

**SWRC-PRC data** – looking for patterns in the information that the region has about terms of call, search processes, and concerns/complaints.

#### Timeline of Research

**February 1-15** – Orienting the Researcher

**February 15-28** – Designing the Research Tools and Inviting Participants

**March** – Facilitating Interviews, Focus Groups, and Surveys

**April** – Continuing Research and looking at Regional data

**May 1-15** - Analyzing Data

**May 15-31** – Synthesizing Data & Report Writing

**June 1-15** – Presentations

#### Key Questions for Research

- How do ministers experience the support, effectiveness and perceived equity of the pastoral relations process; from the regional council, from communities of faith? And if not, how so?
- What has been ministers’ experience of being appointed/called or turned down in the search process (how often, reasons given, etc.)?
- How do ministers experience the process of deciding the terms of an appointment/call? And has this experience been different in the last 18 months than before?
- For ministers in Communities of Faith, how does (un)conscious racist/sexist/heterosexist/ ableist bias make it harder for ministers’ “health, joy and excellence in ministry”?
- What are the particular experiences of racialized, BIPOC, differently-abled, and LGBTQ+ ministers after one year in their pastoral relationship? And how does (un)conscious racist/sexist/ableist bias affect this?
- What do Regional Council accompaniers notice in the search process, related to equity issues / groups? What PRC policies are accompaniers using to prevent or address equity problems?
- What do Communities of Faith search committees notice about their own bias, their own equity work, the Region’s policies and purpose?

Pastoral Relations Commission – Shining Waters Regional Council  
2021 Equity Goal Research Project Overview

*"to further resistance to all forms of oppression, welcome and celebrate people of all abilities, any sexual orientation and gender identity, racialized persons, and all others who are marginalized."*

The Team

**Advisory Group** (from the Pastoral Relations Commission):

- Robin Pilkey
- Rev. Lawrence Nyarko
- Rev. Elizabeth Mackenzie
- Rev. James Ravenscroft

**Regional Staff Support:**

- Todd McDonald
- Donna Rutz

Our Hope

That this research will help shape changes in policy and practice, towards greater equity in pastoral relations.

Your voice matters.

Your stories matter.

Your opinions matter.

You can be part of making this change in SWRC & the UCC.

About the Researcher

My name is Marcie Gibson (she/her). I am a diaconal minister, living in Hamilton, with a passion for justice and equity in the church and beyond. I am currently in part-time congregational supply ministry and on Program Staff with the Centre for Christian Studies. I also teach the UCC Polity and Administration at UTC, with ordination students and those in the Admissions process. I have UCC pastoral relations experience; with the Great Lakes Waterways Presbytery & the All Native Circle Conference's Councils on Learning, chairing the Ministry Personnel and Staff Committee of Waterloo Presbytery, as a Commissioner to GC43, and currently serving on the Office of Vocation Response Committee.

I entered ministry after being a social worker and community organizer in Montréal. My work included participatory action research and community needs assessments; supporting grassroots, student, and non-profit groups to develop campaigns, projects, advocacy, environmental and social justice-oriented change. I grew up in the Anglican church (in Toronto) and transferred into the United Church in my early 20's while in Montréal. I am white, Canadian-born, recognizing the privilege that affords me in this social context and in the church. I have experience in neuro-divergent communities and am a queer parent in an interfaith family.



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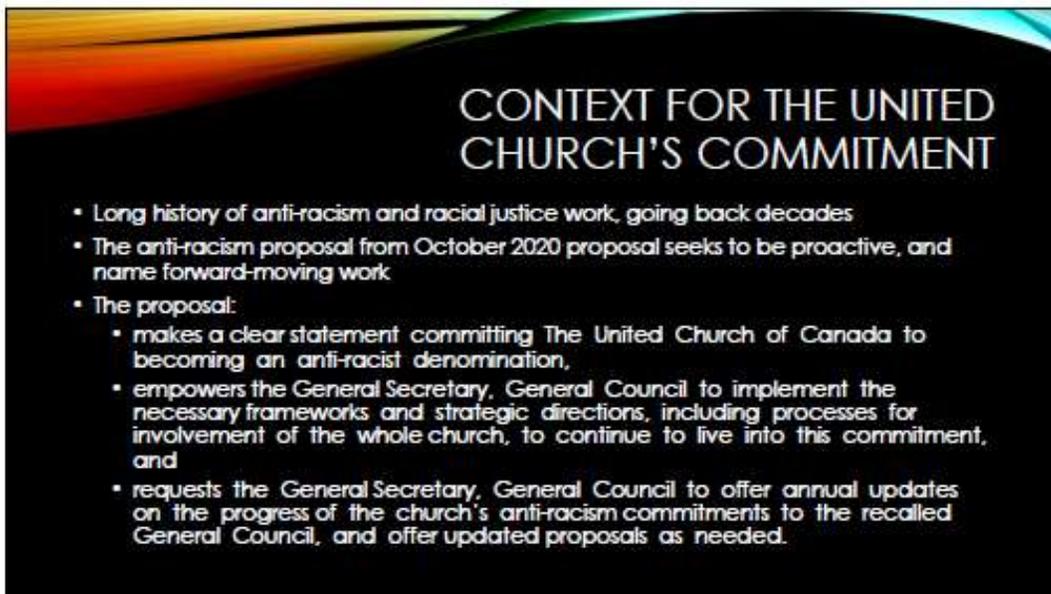
**APPENDIX B – PowerPoint Presentation Slides**





## AGENDA FOR CONVERSATION

- Overview of position and goals
- Anti-racism and equity plans in progress
- Questions and conversation



## CONTEXT FOR THE UNITED CHURCH'S COMMITMENT

- Long history of anti-racism and racial justice work, going back decades
- The anti-racism proposal from October 2020 proposal seeks to be proactive, and name forward-moving work
- The proposal:
  - makes a clear statement committing The United Church of Canada to becoming an anti-racist denomination,
  - empowers the General Secretary, General Council to implement the necessary frameworks and strategic directions, including processes for involvement of the whole church, to continue to live into this commitment, and
  - requests the General Secretary, General Council to offer annual updates on the progress of the church's anti-racism commitments to the recalled General Council, and offer updated proposals as needed.

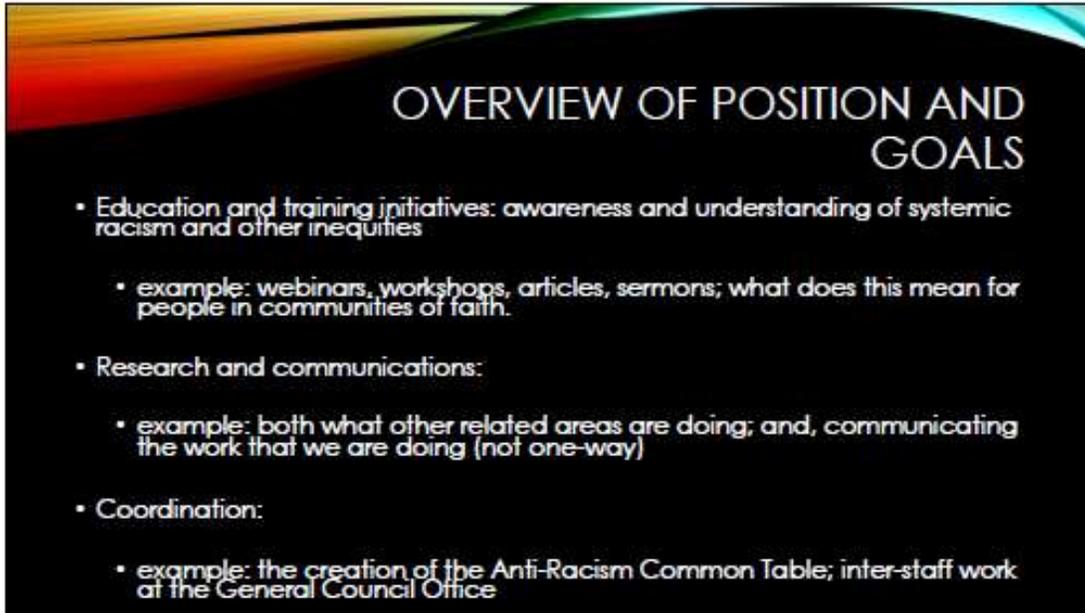
## BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST DENOMINATION

### What this might mean:

- Continuous effort
- All parts of the church are involved
- Equipping leaders
- Engages with anti-racist practices
- Builds on history
- Reflects on theology
- Has a concrete strategy

## OVERVIEW OF POSITION AND GOALS

- Policies and strategic directions around anti-racism and equity
  - example: an anti-racism action plan for the church as a whole
- Frameworks, evaluations, and reports on our anti-racism work
  - example: name a benchmark, and measure its progress. For example, we might decide to name that we want a certain % of BIPOC on a national committees; or, to increase BIPOC ministry personnel by % by a certain date



## OVERVIEW OF POSITION AND GOALS

- Education and training initiatives: awareness and understanding of systemic racism and other inequities
  - example: webinars, workshops, articles, sermons; what does this mean for people in communities of faith.
- Research and communications:
  - example: both what other related areas are doing; and, communicating the work that we are doing (not one-way)
- Coordination:
  - example: the creation of the Anti-Racism Common Table; inter-staff work at the General Council Office



## ANTI-RACISM COMMON TABLE

- New national committee working on strategic directions for the church's anti-racism work (GS 92)
- The Anti-Racism Common Table is currently drafting a national anti-racism action plan for the church as a whole
- Upcoming consultations with all of the regional councils and many affinity groups (before the plan is finalized)
- Proposed action plan will be sent to GCE for approval in September
- Work is jointly accountable to GCE and the National Indigenous Council



## GOVERNANCE

- Equity Monitors:
  - a feedback survey with Equity Monitors has just been completed
  - as follow up from GC43, a "position description" will be created that will be shared across the church
- Creation of guidelines for more equitable committees also underway
- Ongoing work with various committees on anti-racism and equity

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

- An anti-racism video series (5-6 videos, each 3-4 minutes long) is in progress: this will be a multi-lingual video designed for communities of faith and broad use across the church; a series of questions will accompany it
- A general study guide is also in development, which would also be for communities of faith
- An anti-racism children's church school resource is also proposed, in response to feedback
- Online racial justice training ongoing: mandatory for ministry personnel; open to all

## WORSHIP RESOURCES

- UN International Decade for People of African Descent – daily prayers cycle
- Newly-created anti-racism worship page on the website: <https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/anti-racism>

## GENERAL COUNCIL PROCESSES

- Proposed staff training on equity, for people in the General Council system from 2021-2023
- Current management training with middle managers (i.e., Team Leads) over the next several weeks, with the equity as the foundation for the education sessions
- Human Resources processes: job descriptions, "EDI" competencies, employment equity
- Identity-based data collection
- Proposed pastoral relations project on equity (hope to build off Shining Waters RC work)

## NETWORKING

- Consideration of creating a national anti-racism network
- Possible creation of a separate BIPOC network
- Newly-created anti-racism Facebook group

## PARTNERSHIPS

- Listed in the database for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation
- Signed on to anti-racism framework with Cooperation Canada

## COMMUNICATIONS PLANS

- Monthly email updates, responding to mandate to communicate widely about the anti-racism and equity work
- As needed, news integrated in to E-ssentials
- Can email [anti-racism@united-church.ca](mailto:anti-racism@united-church.ca)