

March 17, 2021

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Communities of Faith Commission
Wednesday, March 17, 2021**

The Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 by video conference call. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

Present:

Chris Bennett, Carolyn Harding, Calin Lau, Amy Lee, Kevin Logie, Cindy Randall, Gloria Tozek (chair), Harry Ramsaran

Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Susie Henderson, Diane Matheson,

Regrets: Christine Smaller, Sandra Nottegar, Bronwyn Corlett

Guests: Tim Blair (UPRC), Liz McKenzie, Lori Diaz

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson welcomed everyone, and opened with the New Creed. She 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.

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

MOTION by Chris Bennett/Amy Lee that the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council dated February 17, 2021 be approved as corrected.

MOTION

CARRIED

There was confusion about how Kevin Logie had seconded a motion after he left the meeting. Subsequently, it was determined that the decision around policy changes was moved to earlier in the meeting, prior to the break, as the meeting was running ahead of

schedule and there were several people who were leaving throughout the meeting, so we wanted to ensure quorum.

Burton Ave United Church, Regional Representative to Governing Body

MOTION by Harry Ramsaran/Carolyn Hastings that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council appoint Rev. Patricia Gale-MacDonald to attend the meeting of the governing body of Burton Avenue United Church to meet the requirement of ministry personnel present.

MOTION

CARRIED

Email votes

The following decisions were made by email:

- Humbercrest lease with Erik Grice

Approved the Lease agreement between Humbercrest United Church and musician Erik Grice dated February 15, 2021 to February 14, 2022

- New Hope United Church loan application to the Toronto Southeast Presbytery Major Capital Fund

Approved the loan application from New Hope United Church, Vaughan to the Toronto Southeast Presbytery Major Capital Fund which is managed by the Toronto United Church Council, in the amount of \$85,000

- Cummer Ave. loan with TUCC

Approved the loan between Cummer Avenue United Church, Toronto and the Toronto United Church Council in the amount of \$600,000 with the following terms and conditions:

Date:	June 1, 2021
Amount:	\$ 600,000
Amortization:	25 years
Term:	Three (3) years
Interest:	4.0% or the Bank of Nova Scotia three-year interest rate, or whichever is the higher Interest Rate on the date of the first drawdown. The loan will be set as a blended monthly repayment for the remaining Term at the date shown below under repayment.
Repayment:	Interest-only payment until June 1, 2022 with conversion to monthly Principal and

March 17, 2021

Interest payment thereafter until Maturity Date.
Security: Promissory Note for the authorized loan amount and a direction to assign the currently invested \$465,000 held by TUCC on behalf of CAUC
Approval: Shining Waters Regional Council (To be obtained).
Source of Funds: Toronto United Church Council General Fund (TUCCGF)

- North Bramalea loan renewal with TUCC

Approved the loan renewal between North Bramalea United Church and Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) on the following terms and conditions:

Date: April 1, 2021
Amount: up to \$1,247,043
Amortization: 13 years
Term: 3 years
Interest: the Bank of Nova Scotia 3-year mortgage rate or 4% whichever is the higher for the term as of the renewal date
Payment: monthly payments, principal and interest
Provisions: the renewal fee be paid (\$3,117.61)
Security: first mortgage in place
Approval: Shining Waters Regional Council
Source of Funds: Investing in Ministry Fund

- Trinity Huntsville, new constitution

approved the Constitution of Trinity United Church, Huntsville, dated February 28, 2021.

- Parry Sound Rural Pastoral Charge, name change

Approved the change of name of the Parry Sound Rural Pastoral Charge to Seguin Pioneer United Church.

Election of vice-chairperson and terms of office

MOTION by Kevin Logie/Amy Lee that the term of office for the chairperson of the Communities of Faith Commission be one year as vice-chair, two years as chair and one year as past-chair.

MOTION

CARRIED

MOTION by Carolyn Hastings/Cindy Randall that Chris Bennett be elected as vice-chair of the Communities of Faith Commission.

MOTION

CARRIED

It was noted that for this first year, the chair and the vice-chair have been elected at the same time. The commission expressed thanks to Gloria and Chris for taking on the leadership roles.

Mapping Process – Kevin Logie, Susie Henderson

Susie, Kevin and Chris met to continue the planning around the Mapping Process. Earlier this month, Susie met with Sharon Buttery from Edge about a final version of the report. It was agreed to create a web-based report with a live map as the base so that people can zoom into actual locations.

In the meantime, there are two sections of the report available on a website page that is accessible only to members of the commission. The link will be circulated by email.

Once the web report is available we can book a time to walk through it with Sharon in greater detail. The final report will include:

- A live regional map that incorporates census and United Church data, both historical and recent;
- Community of faith “profiles” that incorporate multiple layers of data;
- Potential clustering connections drawn from the data;
- A list of opportunities identified by Edge that emerge from the data.

Engaging the Material

It would be useful to see the material through a variety of sub-sets categories that combine various maps together. For example, the more obvious ones are: UCC membership; regional geography and demographics; age; intercultural content. There may also be more ministry specific categories that we may also want to explore (social enterprise, community ministry, etc.) These categories can become topics to explore in more depth over time in focused sessions (with external facilitators, like Edge, or on our own). It makes sense to wait until the Intercultural Diversity Commission is established to review the ethno-cultural material.

There are three potential levels of engagement with the material and the commission can decide where to go with it once we see it.

- Data profiles – What does it look like? What are the trends over time? For both the region and communities of faith.
- Analysis and reflection – What does it mean? What is this an indicator of?
- Planning – What do we want to do with it? Are there strategic objectives that we want to set? Do we want to be intentional about how we direct regional resources?

March 17, 2021

There are three possible applications for the use of the data:

- To inform case by case decision-making with community of faith profiles;
- To direct regional resources towards emergent needs or new opportunities;
- To support communities of faith in developing their own living faith stories.

Hopeful Economics UnConference Report – Gloria Tozek, Susie Henderson

Gloria and Susie reflected on this online event put together by EDGE which included a combination of faith groups and social purpose organizations. The first day included presentations and exhibitor booths that participants could visit while the second day was workshop style. It was interesting to be able to listen to presentations and view booths at same time, and to move between conversations.

Ryan Turnbull, MPP for Ottawa and chair of the Social Innovation Table and Readiness Investment Program spoke about the emerging social economy and need for systems change and transformation. Communities of Faith have an important role to play to assist with resilient recovery needed to create an equitable and sustainable economy.

A significant learning was the importance of not compartmentalizing our faith from rest of our lives. Social enterprise can act as a bridge. Mission-driven organizations exist to address social, cultural or environmental issues. There could be opportunities for congregations around being a community hub.

Susie shared a glimpse of Whova, the application used for the conference and which has potential for some of the programs offered by the region.

These platforms are a good way to bring people together that is accessible and at a lower cost. They provide a good model to complement live gatherings. In some ways they can be even more interactive as a way to connect with presenters through chat.

The Commission took a 10-minute break.

What do you think of when you hear the word Innovation? – Gloria Tozek

Gloria invited members to reflect on what they think when they hear the word innovation. Some comments include:

- Change can be painful for people.
- Sometimes we need to be creative.
- On my good days, innovation makes me hopeful in terms of possibilities even while it's not without pain.
- Is there a difference between innovation and invention? Is innovation working with what you know where invention is creating something completely new?
- In the field of economics, we keep working within a framework that isn't working but we can't seem to change the framework. Yet it has to be changed or we're

- doomed. We've created a system based on endless growth and that's not possible.
- Maybe tinkering isn't enough.
 - Maybe innovation isn't radical enough. When I think of innovation it's employing new ideas, tools or perspectives to old problems. When we think of social innovation, it's looking in new places to address social problems. Maybe we can't use that frame to address deep systemic issues because we have forgotten that systems are human construct and we think we can't change the systems.
 - Connecting our understandings in different ways can become the innovation.
 - Innovation can be a thing, e.g. a new computer application, or it can be a process. It is both a noun and a verb. Words are how we conceive of our world and shape our worldview. Our worldview is based on a capitalist system and we don't see how we can change it, but that system has only been around for a couple of hundred years.
 - What are the conditions that need to exist in congregations in order for innovation to happen?
 - There is concern about energy levels in congregations, which has been negatively affected by the pandemic. Will this change after pandemic? Sometimes it is just lack of energy that prevents us from pursuing something new.

Three issues that impact on innovative ministry:

- Trust – it's hard to do innovation when there isn't a strong sense of trust between minister and congregation, among lay leadership
- Patience – innovation doesn't happen overnight, we don't get answers overnight
- Commitment to fail and move on – this is really hard and not limited to churches. People want an answer that is right and perfect and will succeed once you've made the commitment and that is just not always available.

We need to be committed to each other and to trying and failing and moving on. We may understand the concept of trying and failing and moving on, but usually this involves financial investment and congregations don't have deep pockets.

What are the connections between innovation, sustainability, viability, mission-focused, and thriving? We need to develop a common language for our policy and work so that we can support congregations. Can a congregation be thriving and viable and not innovative? How does this connect to our mapping and use of resources? Being innovative could be a good thing but does everyone HAVE to be innovative? Innovation can be one sign of vitality.

We need to find methods to share experiences broadly so we can learn from each other. There is a breadth of experience across the region and also a lack of experience. Not everybody has to fall over the same stone – that can be a role for the commission. We aren't just dispensing policy but giving people support and connection.

If members of the commission have ideas of topics or resources that would help in our work and policy development, please let Gloria know (i.e. videos, reading, etc.)

March 17, 2021

Updates:

South West Community Ministries

Gloria Tozek, Chris Bennett, Harry Ramsaran and Jody Maltby provided an update on the conversation with the Social and Ecological Justice Commission and the community ministries. Gloria will work with Susan Eagle to have further conversations with the Board of the community ministries. It is helpful to understand the history of the relationship between the ministries and the wider United Church. How do we do a better job of having these conversations earlier in the process?

St. Andrew's, Markham

Diane Matheson and Carolyn Harding provided a report on St. Andrew's. The Listening Team process worked really well. Diane thanked Carolyn for her significant contribution to the process. It was really helpful to have access to the pastoral relations liaison and pastoral charge supervisor, and particularly to have them on the team.

MOTION by Carolyn Harding/Chris Bennett that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council accepts the recommendation of the Listening Team, as outlined in their report, that St. Andrew's United Church, Markham, continue in a six-month intentional supply with a priority on streamlining and simplifying the governance structure of the congregation.

MOTION

CARRIED

This decision will be communicated to the governing body of St. Andrew's by the Listening Team rather than a letter from the office. It was noted that a learning of the pandemic is that a remote Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) can work with intentional plan for emergency pastoral care around funerals and visits, or as a part-time model where the IIM work is supported remotely, while worship and pastoral care is managed in-person.

Conversation with United Property Resource Corporation

The Chair welcomed Tim Blair from the United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC), Liz McKenzie and Lori Diaz to the meeting. Liz is the Intentional Interim Minister for Dewi Sant Welsh United Church, Toronto and Lori is the region representative to their transition team.

Tim provided a brief history of the development and mandate of the UPRC and then an update on the research they have been doing regarding the property that has housed the congregation of Dewi Sant Welsh United Church.

Closing: Amy Lee offered a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Next Meeting: The commission will meet on April 21, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. via video conference. Amy Lee will give an acknowledgement of the land and Gloria Tozek will offer an opening prayer or reading.

