

The United Church of Canada
Shining Waters Regional Council

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Intercultural Diversity Commission
January 23, 2023**

The Intercultural Diversity Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on January 23, 2023 by video conference. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Joel Aguirre, Hedy Baker-Graf, Amy Lee (Chair), Néstor Medina, Moon Ja Park.

Staff Support: Kim Uyede-Kai

Regrets: John Joseph Mastandrea, Innocent Karuhanga

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, Opening Reflection, and Prayer

Amy Lee welcomed everyone, and lit a candle. Joel Aguirre gave an acknowledgement of the land, an opening prayer, and a short reflection titled, *Encouragement for a New Year*, based on Joshua 1:9.

Agenda

One item was added to the agenda; under *New Business*: What a 2023 event could look like for intercultural diversity. The agenda was approved by consensus as amended.

Sharing Circle

The commission members had a time of sharing community and community of faith news.

Staff member Celio de Andrade Santos joined the meeting to meet and get introduced to the Commission members. He then left the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the Commission meeting held November 28, 2022 were approved by consensus, as circulated.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence to come to the Commission.

Staff Updates – Kim Uyede-Kai

- Provided an update on staffing changes within Shining Waters Regional Council;
- Gave an update on grants approved by the Grants & Mission Support Committee;
- Shining Waters financially is in good shape for this year, so don't have to worry about cuts to the Commission budget;

Commission terms - Amy Lee

Amy reviewed the terms of the Commission members that are ending at the regional council meeting this year, and asked who was willing to serve a second term. Kim reported that Paul Rose has resigned from the Commission.

2023 Budget

The Commission budget for 2023 has been approved. There are three major areas of budget allocation.

Korean language translations

Kim Uyede-Kai reported that the language translation piece is well in hand so we will be looking at next projects for translation into Korean. She asked the Commission members to let Amy know if they have any requests for other language translation of different documents.

The Commission started with Korean language translation because there are five Korean language congregations in Shining Waters and they have asked specifically for particular documents that they do not have access to in English. Two major documents are almost finished; Pastoral Relations Search and Selection Guidelines, and Ministry and Personnel Committee Guidelines. Both of these are in final proofreading stage. Amy suggested that the final proofreader be paid and have it put in the budget.

Kim also reported that EDGE is now becoming part of the General Council staffing groups and they apparently have a potential budget line for language translations. So, once that is final we can make contact with them to partner with them, and have translations available nationally, not just for Shining Waters.

Events and Education

One event that has been asked for a few times is to help people and communities understand what is meant by intercultural ministry. So, a potential event could be something that would help communities of faith and ministry personnel to understand the diversity of intercultural ministries and go a little deeper. It was suggested that perhaps a small task group be formed to look at this.

As part of the Admissions process, one of the first items for the new matching for admittands and communities of faith is around anti-racism and intercultural diversity, so this Commission could be a resource to do that as well. We have a lot of people in our region who can help with training, developing training, and vetting the training.

Seoul Presbytery PROK - proposal for Partner in Mission “Memorandum of Understanding”

Kim updated the Commission that there has been no word from Seoul Presbytery on this. With Christmas, there hasn't been the chance for a task group to meet. The task group can decide, from the United Church Shining Waters perspective, what kind of a relationship we want to have. Rather than respond to PROK, let's start on our own, what would a partnership look like, what would a Memorandum of Understanding look like from Shining Waters' perspective. That would allow us to come as equal partners to that relationship. We would be the first regional council to develop and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, so we are cautious about developing a document that would bind us in unhelpful ways. We want national's Partners-in-Mission to walk with us on this as we're not skilled in doing global relationships.

On the task group currently is John Joseph Mastandrea, Amy Lee, and Richard Choe. Amy asked other commission members if they would like to be a part of the group; Moon Ja Park agreed to participate.

January 23, 2023

2023 Regional Council Meeting May 26-28 – Update

The regional council meeting is being held at North Bramalea United Church, Brampton. The program planning group has met and John Joseph Mastandrea and Kim Uyede-Kai represented this commission although John Joseph was on vacation at the first meeting. The draft themes identified are community ministries, environment, and equity. The community ministries focus is clear. For the environmental issues, the Social and Ecological Justice Commission is doing work around that. Equity is very vague, so this commission may be asked to shape something that would help the region at the annual meeting.

Korean language translations - next translation priorities

Kim Uyede-Kai suggested that the next priorities for translation could be the Ethical Standards and Standards for Practice of Ministry. It is not well known in the United Church and especially with other language congregations. It would be an essential piece to go with the Ministry and Personnel Handbook translation. The other ones that would go with those is the Violence and Harassment Policy and the Sexual Abuse Policy.

New Business

2023 events

It was suggested to have an event to explore what intercultural means, to have input from people in the region to talk about their stories around intercultural, what they mean, what do they understand, and we can de-bunk some of that with maybe a panel discussion or workshop. If it was done online, there are some creative ways that we could explore intercultural relationships. We have the budget for it and we had discussed having one big event, and putting a lot of energy into doing something online, perhaps contracting with someone to do some work around coordinating it. It was suggested that a survey be done with churches.

There was discussion around what this event would look like and the content. It was suggested to hold a workshop in April, with another in mid-October, or to have something in conjunction with the regional council meeting in May. It was decided to request 90 minutes on the regional council meeting agenda. Kim and Amy will take that request to the planning group.

Next meeting: Monday, February 27, 2023, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Hedy Baker-Graf will give the opening reflection and the land acknowledgement.

Closing

The Commission members said the Lord's Prayer in their own language, and the meeting closed at 7:43 p.m.