

The United Church of Canada  
Shining Waters Regional Council

**EXECUTIVE**

**MINUTES of Meeting held November 4, 2025** at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**PRESENT:** Eric Nyarko, Tina Conlon, Lynella Reid-James, Paul Shepherd, Richard Gardner, Sarah Lough

**STAFF:** Peter Hartmans (Executive Minister), Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Susan Whitehead (Administrative Support)

**REGRETS:** Thomas Shin, Bri-anne Swan, William Haughton

**GATHERING, HONOURING THE LAND AND SAFE SPACE**

President Eric opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Peter 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.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Peter shared that our thoughts and prayers are with all those suffering in Jamaica and in the Caribbean after hurricane Melissa. He read from Ephesians 3:14-20 and then led in an opening prayer.

**CHECK IN**

Executive members did a check in since last they met and shared something new that is happening in their lives.

**AGENDA**

**MOTION by Paul Shepherd/Sarah Lough                      SW Exec 2025-11-04-01**  
**That the agenda for this meeting be approved, as amended.**  
**CARRIED**

**MINUTES**

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Lynella Reid-James      SW Exec 2025-11-04-02**  
**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Shining Waters Regional Council**  
**Executive held on October 7, 2025 be approved, as circulated.**  
**CARRIED**

**COMMISSION MINUTES**

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Paul Shepherd              SW Exec 2025-11-04-03**  
**That the Executive receive the Minutes of the Social and Ecological**  
**Justice Commission from May 2025 to September 2025, for information.**  
**CARRIED**

**E-MAIL VOTE: October 28, 2025**  
*SWRC Nominations Report*

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- Elected those listed in the Nominations Report to serve on the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive, Commissions, and Committees of Shining Waters Regional Council for the stated terms.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

*Letter to Executive re: Regional Council Meetings – Patti Rodgers (attached)*

*Email from Ross Carson re: Proposal SW2025-01 – Broadview (attached)*

*SW2025-02 Proposal Support Letter #1 from Coldwater Eady UC*

*SW2025-02 Proposal Support Letter #2 from Midhurst UC*

*Fairlawn UC Letter re: Review of Ministry & Funding Priorities Report*

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Sarah Lough**

**SW EXEC 2025-11-04-04**

**That the SWRC Executive receive all five (5) pieces of Correspondence at the November 4, 2025 Executive meeting.**

**CARRIED**

## **EQUITY DISCUSSION – Rev. Eun-Joo Park**

Peter expressed deep gratitude about the equity leadership at GC45 and shared that Adele Halliday has offered her equity services as a resource to SWRC, as we continue our equity conversations around the region.

Peter welcomed Eun-Joo Park to the meeting. Eun-Joo shared that the Pastoral Relations Commission (PRC) has completed phase one of the regional equity work - completing the Negotiation Handbook and naming an Equity Officer for the PRC and is ready for phase two. They wanted to get some direction from Executive around where the region would like to go with this.

Peter expressed gratitude for the leadership of the PRC and their work around equity. The decision was made that Peter would reach out to Adele Halliday and request her equity leadership with Executive first and then get advice on how we as a region could build on that. During their discussion, Executive stressed that we look at what equity actually is; a clear understanding and necessarily a definition in our context and not necessarily only being equal.

Executive thanked Eun-Joo for coming to the meeting and sharing her knowledge.

## **2025 SW REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING (RCM) AND CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY SERVICE**

### **• Debrief and Thoughts**

Peter shared his gratitude to Past President Tina, President Eric, Jody Maltby and Eun-Joo Park for their leadership at the Regional Council Meeting and the Celebration of Ministry Service. Jody stated that this meeting was a very complex one, especially when it was online and Jody, Tina and Susan were not sitting beside each other in a room. It became more complex when the Parliamentarian needed to come on screen twice during the meeting to help navigate some intricate issues.

Executive discussed peoples' thoughts about the RCM; some suggestions for improving our RCM include:

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- Possibly borrow or implement something similar to the Chime App that was used at GC45 - when in-person, click a button when you want to speak and there will be a definitive list of speakers that a moderator can use;
- At an in-person meeting, have a camera pointed directly at the procedural microphone so that the person speaking can be put up on the screen at the front of the room but more importantly, that the people online can see the person clearly;
- There were concerns about the 2027 SW RCM being online as that is the meeting that we will be forwarding our motions/proposals to GC46.

The discussion turned to the correspondence from Patti Rodgers.

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Paul Shepherd                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-05**  
**That the SWRC Executive refer Patti Rodgers' letter dated October 29, 2025 to the 2026 Regional Council Meeting planning team for input and to report back to Executive.**  
**CARRIED**

• **Motions for Special Meeting - 2026 Budget and Review of Ministry and Funding Priorities**

Executive had discussions about the Ad Hoc Committee, the Financial Report and Budget and picking a date for the "special" Regional Council Meeting (RCM) that was called for at the October 2025 RCM.

**MOTION by Paul Shepherd/Richard Gardner                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-06**  
**That the SW Executive extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee to include the request of the 2025 Regional Council Meeting motions SW RCM 2025-10-24/25-07 and SW RCM 2025-10-24/25-08.**  
**CARRIED**

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Richard Gardner                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-07**  
**That the SWRC Executive refer the Financial Report and the 2026 Draft Budget back to the Finance Committee for further work and to refer it back to Executive within one to two months; and that the SWRC Executive refer the Review of Ministry and Funding Priorities back to the Ad Hoc Committee and request they provide financial reporting to support the decision-making process and refer it back to Executive within one to two months.**  
**CARRIED**

**MOTION by Sarah Lough/Paul Shepherd                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-08**  
**That the 2025 Special Regional Council Meeting happen on December 9, 2025 in the evening, with timing being agenda-dependent.**  
**CARRIED**

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**Proposal SW2025-01 (Broadview) Discussion**

Peter shared that Ross Carson sent an email to staff offering to coordinate a committee to do the actual work and not have it staff-led. Peter will correspond with Ross indicating we accept his offer, and then refer the creation of the a Working Group to the Nominations Committee.

**MOTION by Sarah Lough/Paul Shepherd                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-09**  
**That the SWRC Executive accept the possible procedure from Rev. Ross Carson regarding the proposal SW2025-01: Broadview Subscription Challenge Campaign and Fundraising Contest and refer the creation of a working group back to the Nominations Committee.**  
**CARRIED**

**Funding Request - Aurora United Church**

Jody shared the background of Aurora UC, the fire and the rebuilding which will now include seniors housing. Significant challenges arose, some of them related to the pandemic and when Aurora UC raised a concern approximately a year ago, SWRC started working with them to explore the possibility of amalgamating with one of their partner congregations. After approaching a number of congregations about the possibility, it was discovered that it wasn't a good fit for any of them.

Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) was brought in to help sort out some options and then Kindred Works was brought in as the congregation was getting to the point where they were going to run out of money and the project was not going to be completed. Kindred Works was commissioned to do a legal review of the current contracts to understand the potential liability of Aurora United Church, and by extension, the wider United Church.

If Aurora UC was not able to complete the project (with the review confirming an obligation to complete the work and no clear path to terminate without recourse), Aurora UC, SWRC and the General Council Office would most likely face significant liability, and that the actual cost to complete the work (\$5 million) would potentially be less than the cost of litigation.

The General Council Office (GCO) was brought into the conversation to talk about how we might manage this. Kindred Works is recommending that we transfer the property into the Shining Waters Regional Trust and then immediately into an individual limited partnership with the intent of limiting the potential exposure to just that property and not any other properties that have come through the Regional Trust.

The staff at the GCO are approaching their elected body to see about a loan of \$2 million towards the cost of the work and Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) are also approaching their elected body for a loan of the same amount for a total of \$4 million. Both of those are conditional on the property going into the regional trust which would mean that we, Shining Waters Regional Council, would be the beneficiary of the any funds from the property.

There will be \$200,000 per year in guaranteed income from the seniors' housing, which will start as soon as the first tenant is in there, and with that part of the building all ready to go, we anticipate that rent should start coming by before the end of the year.

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**MOTION by Lynella Reid-James/Sarah Lough SW EXEC 2025-11-04-10**

**That the Executive of SWRC approves a loan of up to \$1 million, to come from the proceeds of the sale of Westmount United Church, to assist with the completion of the development project of Aurora United Church and authorizes the transfer of Aurora United Church into the regional trust and then into an individual limited partnership. The Executive also authorizes the Executive Minister and Regional Staff Lead to pursue a loan of \$2 million from Tucc and \$2 million from the General Council.**

**CARRIED**

**Joint Executive Meeting – Dec. 4, 2025 (online)**

Peter just checked with the new Executive to see if the December 4, 2025 date works for everyone.

**2026 SW Regional Council Meeting (RCM)**

- **Possible Location - North Bramalea UC**
- **Possible Date/s – October 2026**

Executive discussed the possible location of the 2026 In-Person SW Regional Council Meeting. There was discussion of having an alternate location for the 2028 In-Person Meeting and it will be discussed further closer to the date.

**MOTION by Richard Gardner/Paul Shepherd SW EXEC 2025-11-04-11**

**That the 2026 meeting of the Shining Waters Regional Council be held at North Bramalea United Church, with the date and time to be negotiated between President Eric Nyarko, Staff Lead Jody Maltby and North Bramalea United Church in either October or early November of 2026.**

**CARRIED**

**EXECUTIVE MINISTER REPORT (APPENDIX A)**

Peter shared his Executive Minister Report with Executive. He discussed the Joint Executive meeting with both Shining Waters and Canadian Shield.

**MOTION by Sarah Lough/Paul Shepherd SW EXEC 2025-11-04-12**

**That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive receive the Executive Minister Report.**

**CARRIED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Jody shared there have been a number of cemeteries that crop up from churches that closed quite a while ago, and she is working with Toronto United Church Council and our legal counsel to transfer them to the municipalities. There is one that is ready to be transferred up in Huntsville.

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**MOTION by Sarah Lough/Richard Gardner                      SW EXEC 2025-11-04-13**  
**That the Executive of SWRC names Jody Maltby, Diane Matheson**  
**and Chris Bennett as trustees for Ravenscliffe Cemetery, located**  
**at 640 Fowlers Road, Huntsville, ON and authorizes them to**  
**proceed with the transfer of the cemetery to the town of Huntsville.**  
**CARRIED**

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Peter led in a closing prayer. Eric the meeting closed at 3:25 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:    Joint Executive Meeting** - Tuesday, December 4, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.  
via Zoom; to be followed by a separate SW Executive Meeting at 1:30  
p.m. that afternoon.

January 6, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom  
February 3, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom  
March 3, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom  
April 7, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom  
May 5, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom  
June 2, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom

## **Executive Minister Report - Shining Waters Regional Council November 2025**

Greetings new SWRC Executive! Thank you so much for serving on the Regional Council Executive. This Executive Minister Report offers some highlights around our work and also the partnership with the Canadian Shield Regional Council (CSRC).

### **Toward 2035:**

The funding for Towards 2035 was passed a General Council. The following proposal was passed:

#### *GC45 WF33: GCE04 Funding Strategic Growth Initiatives for Summer 2025*

Most groups supported this proposal, naming the priority of pursuing growth in a variety of expressions, including creating new ministries and renewing and strengthening existing communities of faith. Some groups were curious about how to ensure that this work does not only occur in some parts of the country, but is present in all Regional Councils. Other groups name the importance of ongoing reporting. This reporting already occurs in the annual strategic plan reporting and in the General Secretary's reporting to the General Council Executive. As in other proposals about allocating resources, participants name the continuing value of global partnership in our Mission and Service giving. Therefore, the Way Forward Team proposes that, in response to GCE04 Funding Strategic Growth Initiatives, the 45th General Council 2025:

- Authorize 10% of Mission & Service givings over the course of the 2025-2028 triennium as follows - 5% in 2026, 7.5% in 2027 and 10% by 2028 - be earmarked for new, renewing and emerging ministries;
- direct the General Secretary to develop and communicate the criteria and process for how the funds will be expended, and
- direct the General Secretary that implementation should:
  - include initiatives from all three streams of the growth initiative – renew, create, invite;
  - consider setting proportional targets for diverse intercultural ministry expressions;
  - consider accessibility and engagement by rural, remote and other communities;
  - Prioritize First Third Ministry;
  - Consider equity across Regional Councils; and,
  - invite Regional Councils to identify resources within their bounds (e.g., revenues from property, sales or bequests) which they can use to contribute to regional initiatives.

The United Church of Canada is currently working on an update for its strategic plan called Towards 2035, to be circulated. A completed version of a Congregational Tool Kit will be shared with communities of faith in the near future. We completed a joint Townhall Meeting on June 17, 2025 to present and get feedback for the material. The townhall meeting was very well attended. In addition, following General Council in Calgary, The UCC hosted a special meeting of key leaders from across The UCC to continue the conversation around the Towards 2035. SWRC and CSRC folks gathered during lunch to discuss our Regional Council specifically. We look forward to continuing the conversation at our Joint Regional

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Council Executive meeting with Canadian Shield in December of 2025. This joint meeting will be longer than normal, starting at 10:00 a.m.

In addition in September, there was a joint in-person meeting with the Community of Faith Commission and the Pastoral Relations Commission where they heard a presentation on Towards 2035. We focused on Towards 2035 material at our Regional Council Meeting in October 2025, with Jennifer Henry presenting material along with Alyce Mutungi.

**Staff Update:**

I wanted to share up coming retirements: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Senior Governance Support Lead and my direct supervisor, will retire Spring 2026; Alan Hall, Executive Minister for Shared Services, will retire in December 2025. I have been approved for a Sabbatical in advance of Cheryl-Ann's retirement, from January to March 2026. Jody Malby and Diane Matheson-Jimenez will provide coverage as Acting Executive Minister. Diane has been approved for a Sabbatical for the summer 2026 and Jody and I will cover for her.

**October Regional Council Meeting:**

The October Regional Council Meeting took place on October 24 and 25, 2025 with the Celebration of Ministry Service on October 26, 2025 at Jubilee United Church in North York. We give thanks for the leadership of President Tina Conlon and Jody Matlby, who filled in for my absence and played a major role planning and supporting the meeting. We also give thanks for the planning team members, the worship team, and all our staff support. We also give thanks to Jubilee United Church for hosting the service. The meeting weekend, the theme, and the conversation all helped to be a rich blessing for the Regional Council and ending with our Celebration of Ministry service was an opportunity to give thanks for our many blessings as a Regional Council and The United Church of Canada.

**The Shining Waters Regional Council Review of Funding:**

At our October 2025 Regional Council meeting, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee was received. Below is a summary of the 6 recommendations presented with a link to the final report, which was received by the Regional Council Executive back in June of 2025. We give thanks for the incredible work of the Ad Hoc Committee throughout this past year.

The **6 Recommendations** are as follows:

1. Support to Existing Communities of Faith: Congregations
2. Support to Communities of Faith: Community Ministries, Missions and Outreach Ministries
3. Ensuring there are Sufficient Funds for Regional Needs and Grants
4. Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults
5. Right Relations with, and Justice for, Indigenous Peoples
6. The Need for a Strategic Plan

<https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Review-of-Ministry-and-Funding-Priorities-Recommendations-Final-Report.pdf>

The material was referred but the Regional Council Executive by the Regional Council for further work at the October 24-25, 2025 Regional Council Meeting. Jody will share an update at our meeting and recommendations regarding next steps.