

Covenant Commission
Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming

Stated hour: 10 a.m. via Zoom

Meeting began at 10:10 a.m., in the hope that others would join and make quorum

Roster: (10) Marg Bakker, Ross Carter, Judy Chalmers, Ann Harbridge, Chair (DLM), Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Sandy Loomis, Thom McDonough (RDLM), Ted Oldfield, Connie Shiell

Staff Support: Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant
Rev. John Neff, Minister, Congregational Support and Mission

Present: Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Sandy Loomis

Regrets: Ann Harbridge (holidays), Judy Chalmers

Absent: Marg Bakker, Ross Carter, Thom McDonough (RDLM), Ted Oldfield, Ross Carter, Connie Shiell

Appoint acting chair: Arthur Hills volunteered to serve as acting chair in Ann Harbridge's absence. Agreed by consensus.

Welcome and Constitute Meeting: I constitute this meeting in the name of Jesus, the Christ, for all business which properly comes before it.

Acknowledging the Land: While calling in from various places in Southern Ontario we acknowledge that our ministries and buildings are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples and subject to various treaties. In the wake of the arrest of 680 workers in Mississippi on illegal immigration charges, leaving their children coming home from school to empty houses, we acknowledge our desire for continued reconciliation for all peoples who yearn to call the land home.

Opening Worship: Norm Eygenraam

Norm read a few pages from Marianne Williamson's *"A Year of Miracles: Daily Devotions and Reflections"*, as a reminder and encouragement of the work of the covenant commission. He closed with prayer.

Opening Agreements:

Corresponding Members:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council agree by consensus to recognize representatives from Trinity United Church, Grand Valley as corresponding members.

Approval of Agenda:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council agree through consensus on the agenda as circulated.

Business Arising

1. Covenant of Confidentiality – copies were sent to all commissioners and signed copies were submitted to John.
2. Representative to Executive from Covenant Commission
It was agreed that Norm Eygenraam be the Covenant Commission representative to the Executive of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council. The Covenant Commission will formalize this appointment at their next full meeting.
3. Trinity UC, Grand Valley – request to use capital funds. **Stated hour 10:30am**

Trinity United, Grand Valley board representatives Elaine Bilton, Sam Forman, Lorraine Henderson, Elizabeth Taylor, Marlene McCauley Brown, Jeff Molson (treasurer) joined the meeting.

Arthur advised the Trinity, Grand Valley reps that a decision would not be able to be made at today's meeting as the commission was without quorum.

The community of faith members were invited to tell the commission about Trinity and the nature of their request. Elaine explained the background of the request for use of manse funds noting that employee wages are only for a minister and a minimum amount for the organist and that expenses have been trimmed. The community of faith is requesting the use of \$20,000 from the manse fund of approximately \$200,000, to help keep the church viable. They hope to continue with pulpit supply to the end of this year and then begin a search for a part-time (13 hrs/week) minister. Their vision is reflected in their mission statement.

In response to a question from the commission, the Trinity treasurer confirmed that their financial obligations to the national church are up to date. The money requested is for general funds usage.

Frustration with the time spent waiting for a decision, the process and the inability to access "their" money was expressed during the discussion by some members of Trinity. John reiterated the regional council's commitment to talking with, not about, communities of faith.

John explained briefly the policy of the United Church of Canada in regards to the use of restricted funds (ie manse funds). He also referred to Trinity's community of faith profile and suggested that adding a category range would be of benefit – by not having a category listed potential ministers might overlook Trinity as a possibility. Elaine suggested they would revisit that item.

The commission also suggested that looking at a shared ministry agreement with other churches in the area would be beneficial.

Arthur added that another reason to have Trinity folks join the meeting was so the commission could walk with them. John confirmed that there was now a greater understanding of the church and its needs. An open invitation was extended to the commission to visit Trinity, Grand Valley.

John advised that he would try to arrange a meeting of the commission within a week to come to a decision.

The Trinity, Grand Valley representatives left the meeting.

After discussion regarding the viability of the congregation long term, the members of the commission present agreed to recommend to the wider commission that the use of \$20,000 of the Trinity, Grand Valley manse funds be approved with a request that the congregation develop a viability plan and look into shared ministry.

New Business

Arthur asked if there would be conflict of interest, re: the Ayr modernization grant and his work as the Ayr pastoral charge supervisor. He was advised that if he felt there is a conflict, he can abstain from voting when the grant application vote comes forward.

1. Pastoral Charge Supervisors

John suggested that those named start their work; they will be formally appointed at a later date. More pastoral relations supervisors are required, particularly lay.

(The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council agree through consensus to)

- a) appoint Greg Smith-Young as pastoral charge supervisor to Alma United Church beginning September 1, 2019.
- b) thank Arthur Hills for serving as pastoral charge supervisor for Emmanuel United Church in Waterloo and release him from his duties.
- c) appoint _____ as pastoral charge supervisor to Arthur United Church.
- d) appoint _____ as pastoral charge supervisor to Trinity United Church, Grand Valley.
- e) appoint _____ as pastoral charge supervisor to Lion's Head/Pike Bay + South Sauble.
- f) appoint _____ as pastoral charge supervisor to Hepworth/Sauble Beach.

List of pastoral charge supervisors for review in Dropbox

John will schedule a meeting in the next week (via zoom or conference call) to address the following items that are time sensitive and require a decision prior to the scheduled September 10th meeting:

Trinity UC, Grand Valley – request to use capital funds

Community of Faith Profiles – Atwood United Church, Trinity, Listowl

Ayr: Knox UC – Modernization Grant Application

Meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.