

Executive
Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Roster: Gary Clark (President), Rod Coates (Secretary), Brent Caslick (Treasurer), Heather Leffler (Past Chair), Jessica Cottrell, Heather Davies, Joyce Johnston, Margaret Krauter, Mark Laird, Tim Reaburn, Peg Schieck, Joyce Ward, Micol Cottrell (Human Resources Commission), Bruce Dickson (Mission & Discipleship Commission), Norm Eygenraam (Covenant Commission)

Staff Support: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa (Executive Minister), Sue Duliban (Executive Assistant)

Present: Brent Caslick, Gary Clark, Rod Coates, Jessica Cottrell, Micol Cottrell, Heather Davies, Sue Duliban, Norm Eygenraam, Margaret Krauter, Mark Laird, Heather Leffler, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Joyce Ward

Regrets: Bruce Dickson

The Executive of the WOW Regional Council Executive was called to meet via Zoom teleconference on Wednesday, August 19, 2020. Gary Clark called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM.

Welcome and Constitution of the Meeting

Gary Clark declared the meeting constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the Church and by the authority invested in him by the first meeting of the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council for whatever business may properly come before it.

Acknowledging the Land

Gary Clark stated the following: We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of many First Nations. We acknowledge that we who are the newcomers to this land have gained so much and our gain has come at a great cost to these peoples. We also acknowledge that we have gained much by the racist systems that have benefited those who are white, Christian and heterosexual. Our acknowledgement of the land and of the sin of racism is just the beginning of our journey toward reconciliation with The First People of this land and all who have felt belittled in this culture. Our words must now be followed up with action.

Opening Worship

Gary Clark read Psalm 139, then asked those in attendance to identify a word or phrase in the psalm that connected with how their summer has gone. Some of the themes which emerged were darkness & light, experiencing God in the peacefulness of the night sky, continuing to adjust to disrupted routines & staycations, experiencing family in a new “bubble reality”, realizing that the pandemic will be with us for some time, dealing with difficult family relationships & health issues, and knowing the reassuring presence of God in all things.

Consent Docket

A. Enabling Actions

1. That the Agenda be adopted as circulated.
2. That the minutes of the June 17, 2020 meeting be approved as distributed.
3. That motions and proposals be written and given to the Secretary.

B. To receive the correspondence and address it as it arises in the agenda

1. COVID-19 Thank you letter July 2020 (for information)
2. WOW UCW Acceptance of Invitation to become a Community of Faith (for information)

Ministry Preparation Fund – Referencing the June 17th minutes, Brent Caslick questioned whether there ought to be a limit set for Stream 1 ministry candidate support, similar to the Stream 2 candidates. Several comments in support of this suggestion were made. Cheryl-Ann suggested that there be some additional research on the present SME (Supervised Ministry Education) programs to review normal expenses under the current system, as compared with the previous internship model. She also suggested that we add all this information to the governance handbook once it's been determined rather than doing it piecemeal.

Gary Clark asked if there was consensus on the Consent Docket and declared it approved as presented.

Business Arising

1. Commission reports

a) Covenant

Sue Duliban stated there was no July or August meeting of the Covenant Commission. She noted that there has been agreement to arrange a meeting with a community of faith and a mediator once it is deemed safe to meet in person on neutral territory.

b) Human Resources

Micol Cottrell said he was pleasantly surprised at how well things are progressing vis-v-vis pastoral relationship changes despite the pandemic. He noted structures that are being established:

- the LLWL (Licensed Lay Worship Leader) process is now working well.
- The United Fresh Start program is being restarted, working with ministry personnel & communities of faith in new pastoral relationships. It will be online in a tri-regional format.

Margaret Krauter raised a question about a community of faith which has been without a minister for over a year and been asked to obtain an interim intentional minister.

Micol said that there is an option to do short term appointments while preparing for a long-term solution to their options. Cheryl-Ann said she would follow up to investigate the circumstances surrounding Margaret's question.

c) Mission & Discipleship

There was no report. Cheryl-Ann noted that the applications for mission support grants are being sent out and, although we will be experiencing a significant cut in mission support grants, we will seek ways to minimize the impacts on staffing.

2. Financial Update

Brent Caslick said there were no financial statement updates but commented that Bob Savaria (General Council office) is assembling various pieces of financial information in anticipation of a fall audit. Cheryl-Ann said that there are no financial concerns at present as we are in healthy financial situation. Brent noted that as 2019 was the first year of operation in the new financial model it will be extraordinary year and more work will be required to conduct the audit due to the organizational transition.

Brent asked if a quarterly financial report to Executive would be adequate, with the understanding that if there is an issue which would result in a budget issue then the matter would be raised to the Executive.

New Business

1. Correspondence (for information)

Cheryl-Ann raised a question about the UCW having now been recognized as a community of faith (COF), and whether that recognition should be raised at the annual meeting or as a separate celebration with that COF as a non-congregation. This situation would apply to other ministries such as camps, but not to those whose covenant relationship is automatically recognized. Following some discussion as to whether this should be a special recognition, Cheryl-Ann suggested that those in a covenant relationship be recognized during the annual meeting as part of the worship service.

Heather Leffler suggested that the fall online meetings begin with table group discussions so that there is an opportunity for community-building and discussion, a suggestion to which there was general agreement. Gary Clark asked if there were any other suggestions for the agenda planning meeting for next week.

Heather Leffler asked about the timing of the Celebration of Ministries service and if it would conflict with normal Sunday worship services. Heather Davies suggested this would be an opportunity for a pre-recorded worship service. Cheryl-Ann said the event messaging would be for COF's to allow their ministry personnel to be free to participate in the Celebration of Ministries service and each community of faith encouraged to participate in the Celebration of Ministries service.

Cheryl-Ann said an annual meeting is also a good opportunity to tap people on the shoulder and make suggestions for roles for which they might be suited.

Other Business

Gary Clark said that his congregation had reviewed church reopening protocols and felt as if there should be guidance to COF's. Cheryl-Ann noted the checklist which had been previously sent via the Western Ontario Waterways newsletter, which was then shared on the screen for the Zoom meeting and reviewed briefly. Micol Cottrell noted that his local health unit has been very helpful with providing resources.

Cheryl-Ann said that while we wish to help COF's during this time, decisions about reopening are for COF's to make since they are those best able to deal with their specific local circumstances.

Heather Davies asked if it would make sense to facilitate a meeting with congregations to see how they consider reopening; Cheryl-Ann suggested this would be best facilitated with the local health unit. Micol said that it would be helpful to know what others are doing and exchange

that information with each other. Gary Clark said that it's good to know what other congregations are doing, citing an example of an opportunity for others to connect who have no computers at home (meeting at a local Baptist church to watch a Sunday worship service). Following discussion, it was agreed that a helpful approach would be to address ways in which information & experiences could be shared between COF's, facilitated by tech support and supported by the Executive. An evening meeting could be a way to allow information to be exchanged with other COF's in WOW. Several Executive members stated they would participate, but situationally dependent as many are sorting out what the schools are doing and the impact on their specific family situation. Cheryl-Ann suggested, and it was agreed, the evening of September 17th for this event.

Closing

Gary Clark ended the meeting with prayer at 11:35 PM

Upcoming Meetings:

- ARW/HF/WOW Joint Executive Meeting, September 15, 2 PM via Zoom
- WOW Regional Council Executive, September 16, 9:30 AM via Zoom

DRAFT