**Covenant Commission**

**Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council**

**of The United Church of Canada**

Shape ***Connecting, Supporting, Transforming***

Thursday, April 8, 2021, **7:00 PM**, Zoom Call

**Roster:** (8) Ann Harbridge (DLM), Sandy Loomis, Kate Crawford (Rev.), Marg Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Matthew Lindsay

**Staff Support:** Rev. John Neff, Minister, Congregational Support and Mission

Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant

**Present**: Ann Harbridge (DLM), Sandy Loomis, Marg Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Matthew Lindsay

**Regrets**: Kate Crawford

**Welcome and Constitute Meeting:** Ann Harbridge welcomed all and constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ for all business that comes before it.

**Acknowledging the Land:** Judy Chalmers

Judy shared the land acknowledgement that was developed with the help of M’Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre and the Chippewas of Nawash and adopted in February 2021 by Grey County councillors.

“We acknowledge with respect, the history, spirituality, and culture of the Anishiaabek, Six Nations of the Grand River, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples on whose traditional territories we gather and whose ancestors signed treaties with our ancestors. We recognize also, the Metis and Inuit whose ancestors shared this land and these waters. May we all, as Treaty People, live with respect on this land, and live in peace and friendship with all its diverse peoples.”

**Opening Worship:** Sandy Loomis shared a reading “God is love…” from Ann Voskamp’s book *The Broken Way: A Daring Path Into the Abundant Life.* Sandy closed with prayer

**Opening Agreements:**

Approval of Agenda:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree** on the agenda, including the highlighted sections added.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree t**o approve the minutes of March 11, 2021 as circulated.

**Business Arising**

1. What is being done with Annual Reports and Self Assessments?

It is the Covenant Commission’s job to review and analyze annual reports and especially self assessments. Currently there are criteria for annual reports; the commission discussed how to handle self assessments.

It was suggested and agreed that twice a year the commission will review collected self assessments for commonalities, items that stand out. Will start in June this year, see how many come in and also determine a fall time. Self assessments to be added to the June dropbox folder. Judy Chalmers volunteered to review the self assessments and compile a synopsis of commonalities for the commission to look at.

**Consent Docket**

1. Correspondence
   1. Question from Heather Davies if there will be regional representation at the closing service of Mount Hope UC on June 28, 2021. Sandy Loomis volunteered to attend. Sandy will contact Heather Davies to clarify if the service will be on zoom or in person, confirm the date, and ask if the Mount Hope congregation would like anything said.
2. Pastoral Charge Supervisors
   1. Marg Krauter to Drayton UC from June 1-Aug 31, 2021 while minister, Mark Laird, is on sabbatical.
   2. Marg Krauter to Meaford United Church for a meeting on March 24, 2021 while the minister is on leave.
   3. Colin Snyder to Moorefield UC from June 1-Aug 31, 2021 while PCS Mark Laird is on sabbatical
   4. **Needed** for a meeting of Chesley UC on May 6, 2021 at 9:30 am. Sandy suggested either Herb Klaehn, Ralph Schmidt, Doug Brown, or Tim Reaburn might be contacted to serve as ongoing pastoral charge supervisor. Ann Harbridge will attend the May 6 meeting (by zoom).
   5. Arthur Hills to Calvary UC, Kitchener, effective April 1 – July 1, 2021
3. Documents received for information
   1. Shelburne Primrose Pastoral Charge – 2020 Annual Report and Financial Statement
   2. Calvary United Church, St. Jacobs (will search for 2nd ministry personnel) – Community of Faith Profile (Demographic, Financial Viability, Real Property, Living Faith Story, Cover Page), Financial Statement 2019, 2020 Annual Report, financial report 2020. Recommendation that Calvary UC, St. Jacobs community of faith is viable to call/appoint a 2nd minister up to Category F for 40 hours per week. (John’s assumption is F, can determine based on their financials).
   3. Zion UC, New Hamburg – 2020 Annual Report
   4. Dublin St. UC, Guelph – Annual Self-Assessment
   5. Grace UC, Tavistock – Annual Self-Assessment
   6. Clinton UC – Annual Report
   7. Trinity UC, Kitchener – Annual Report

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agrees** by consensus to the Consent Docket.

**New Business**

1. Annesley UC, Markdale – Reduction of ministry time in search process

**MOTION** Sandy Loomis / Judy Chalmers that the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council agrees with the recommendation of Annesley UC, Markdale to reduce the amount of ministry time in their search from 40 hrs to 27 hrs. **CARRIED**

It was noted that Markdale will have to update this change in their ChurchHub account. The Covenant Commission will advise the Human Resources Commission of the change. John Neff added that Markdale is in conversation with a couple other churches in area about combining. John commended Markdale for coming back to the commission after a reassessment of their financial situation.

1. Use of restricted capital. Are we continuing past June 30, 2021?

Following some discussion, it was **agreed** that the authorization given to communities of faith to access to funds restricted by either the previous presbytery or regional council without Covenant Commission permission, will come to an end as of June 30, 2021.

Effective July 1, 2021, communities of faith seeking the use of funds restricted by either the previous presbytery or regional council will require permission from the Covenant Commission.

It was agreed that this information should be circulated in the next WOWRC e-newsletter.

1. Tottenham UC – Tiny Bees Rental Contract

**MOTION** Norm Eygenraam / Matthew Lindsay that the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council supports the lease agreement between Tottenham United Church and Tiny Bees Childcare Ltd. The Commission directs Tottenham United Church to seek independent legal counsel to have the lease agreement reviewed. **CARRIED**

# Noted that the commission should be encouraging churches to bring leases to commission. It’s a learning and never a bad idea for any church to pass such documents by the Covenant Commission.

1. Representative to the Regional Council Executive

The Covenant Commission accepts the resignation of Norm Eygenraam as CC representative to the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive, with thanks for his service, and will appoints a new representative to the Regional Council Executive.

To be carried to the May meeting of the Covenant Commission. Ann Harbridge will attend the April Executive.

1. Parkview UC, Stratford – Technology Support Grant

**MOTION** Arthur Hills / Marg Bakker that the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approves the Technology Support Grant application for Parkview UC, Stratford and leaves it with the Financial Support Group (FSG) of General Council to decide on the two-year request.  **CARRIED**

1. Brucefield UC – transfer of property (the old Varna UC property) to Bluewater Municipality.

**MOTION** Marg Bakker / Sandy Loomis that the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the transfer of land known as the Varna United Church, the legal description of which is Plan 308 Pt Park Lot 26, Bluewater Municipality, and the municipal address of 75820 Parr Line, Varna, ON to the Municipality of Bluewater for use with the existing surrounding cemetery. **CARRIED**

1. Dungannon UC – Trustee Resolution for listing the church for sale as part of disbandment process.

**MOTION** Marg Bakker / Norm Eygenraam that the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the request of the Board of Trustees of Dungannon United Church to list the church property for sale, the legal description being Lot 61, Plan 229, Part Lot62, Plan 229, Wawanosh Township of Ashfield Colborne Wawanosh, County of Huron and the municipal address of which is 60 Southampton Street, Dungannon, Ontario N0M 1R0. Advertising the sale of the church in the local papers, Blyth/Brussels, Clinton, Goderich, Lucknow and Wingham for two weeks concurrently. Following this, allow for interested parties to book an appointment to view and then submit a bid for the church, with an appraised value of $225,000, for an additional two weeks. If there are no interested buyers, we would then seek a real estate broker, probably Paul Zinn, to conduct business on our behalf. With or without a broker, a lawyer to be hired to complete the details of the sale once Covenant Commission approval is gained, with a proposed closing date in the fall of 2021.

All funds to be received will be considered restricted until the asset dispersal form is received by the Covenant Commission. **CARRIED**

1. Thames Road – Elimville PC Covenanting Service

From Thames Road – Elimville: Our first choice is Sunday, September 19 with a second choice of Sunday, September 26.  The location and time is to be determined at a later date.  The location will depend on Covid-19 restrictions and weather.  If we will not be able to hold the combined service in our church, we would like to hold it at our community park, which will depend on weather.  We will have a better idea of weather closer to September.  If the weather does not co-operate and we are not back in our church the combined service will be done through Zoom.  We did not discuss time which we can do at our May council meeting and I will let you know.

The Covenant Commission will confirm who will attend on behalf of the Regional Council at the next meeting.

1. Pastoral Charge Supervisor policy Work on the policy is not complete. Will leave it as an outstanding item on the agenda.

Matthew Lindsay advised the commission he is moving to Stratford and thus will no longer be serving as a regional representative at his present church. The Executive will be advised, but there are no issues with Matthew continuing in his role as a commission member.

Trinity Centennial – Rosemount: June covenanting. Hopefully outdoors and in person. If can’t be in person, will either be cancelled or try zoom. Norm Eygenraam will attend.

**Next Meeting:** Regular meetingThursday, May 13, 2021 by Zoom Call – 9:00 AM. Will determine if meeting is required a week prior.

Worship for next meeting: Judy Chalmers

Land Acknowledgement: Margaret Bakker