**Covenant Commission**

**Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council**

**of The United Church of Canada**

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

September 9, 2021, 9:00 am, Zoom Call

Roster: (8) Ann Harbridge (DLM), Kate Crawford (Rev.), Margaret Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Matthew Lindsay, Bruce Gregersen (Rev)

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

Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant

## Present: Ann Harbridge, Margaret Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Arthur Hills, Bruce Gregersen

**Regrets:** Matthew Lindsay, Kate Crawford, Norm Eygenraam

**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:**  Arthur Hills

**Opening Worship:** Ann Harbridge

Ann asked those present to reflect on who do people think you are and how do we see ourselves? She closed with prayer

**Opening Agreements:**

Approval of Agenda:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree** on the agenda.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree t**o approve the minutes of July 15, 2021 as circulated.

**Consent Docket:**

1. Correspondence
   1. Resignation from Kate Crawford. Ann Harbridge received a letter from Kate Crawford, tendering her resignation from the Commission. The Covenant Commission accepts the resignation of Kate Crawford with understanding and thanks for the work she has done.
2. Pastoral Charge Supervisors
   1. Appoint John G Smith to Port Elgin UC while PCS (Kate Ballagh-Steeper) is away - July 26-Aug-24th. John Neff to fill in, if necessary, when John G Smith is away.
   2. Thank Kate Ballagh-Steeper for serving as PCS to Port Elgin and relieve her of her duties as they will have a short-term appointment beginning September 7, 2021.
   3. Paul Vollick to Exeter United Church during Laurie O’Leary’s sabbatical from October 1, 2021 – January 17, 2022.
   4. Marion Boyd to Tara United Church effective August 11, 2021
   5. Marg Krauter to Letterbreen UC effective Aug 25, 2021
   6. Gerry Hofstetter to Underwood-Wesley Pastoral Charge effective September 1, 2021
   7. Thank Ann Harbridge for serving as PCS to Shelburne/Primrose PC and relieve her of her duties as they will have a called minister beginning September 7, 2021.
3. Documentation
   1. Kincardine UC – Governance Manual (Constitution). Requests CC to review draft.

Question raised re: page 11 reference to trustees; that the Board can choose a trustee until the next congregational meeting. John Neff will doublecheck that that is in order, but it is his understanding that a Board can choose a trustee until the next congregational meeting if the position is vacant, as an interim. Kincardine is to be commended on preparing an excellent document. In the context of saying well done, suggestion was made that the outline of the UCC could be sharpened up.

* 1. Londesborough UC – receive 2020 Annual Report
  2. Knox UC, Auburn – receive 2020 Annual Report
  3. Knox UC, Ayr – receive CoF Profile and approve the recommendation that Knox UC, Ayr community of faith is viable to call/appoint a minister up to Category **\_F\_** for **\_30\_** hours per week.

The 30 hrs/wk presented by Ayr was questioned. Fulltime job, paying ¾ time for? General agreement that any part-time position should not be preaching fulltime. John Neff noted that Ayr is in discussion about a possible shared ministry. If that happens, the minister would probably go to half time.

* 1. Georgian Shores UC, Owen Sound – receive Community of Faith profile and approve the recommendation that Georgian Shores UC, Owen Sound community of faith is viable to appoint a supply minister up to Category **\_F\_** for **\_40\_** hours per week.

Ann noted there was no financial report attached.

* 1. Lucknow Financial Viability Worksheet, Financial Statements

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

Alma UC – receive Financial Viability Worksheet and approve. Removed from Consent Docket for separate discussion.

Ann Harbridge noted that looking at the financial reports, Alma is not financially viable, there are significant deficits. Looks like their plan is to spend down their reserve and they are not looking to call someone. If funding not sustainable, should the commission be encouraging them to look at their possibilities. John Neff noted that he did ask for clarity in July around the appointment position, and has not received a reply. Ann added that she is not comfortable approving the ministry position. They have not indicated how much ministry time they are looking for.

It was **agreed** by consensus that a written response be prepared, indicating that the commission is concerned about Alma’s financial viability and would like to have a conversation about that issue. John Neff will have the initial conversation and see where that goes.

**New Business:**

1. Nottawa UC – Disbandment proposal for disbursement of funds

**M****OTION** Arthur Hills / Marg Bakker

That the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the disbandment proposal for the disbursement of funds submitted by Nottawa United Church. **CARRIED.**

Nottawa will be reminded to check that all recipients have charitable status.

1. Hepworth/Sauble Beach Pastoral Charge - have received a signed covenant with region form. They had a covenanting service Aug 29th, unclear who was the regional council representative. John will doublecheck who represented the regional council.
2. Thames Road – Elimville – Covenanting with regional council service September 19th.

Regional council representative is needed. Service will be in person, outside, in case of inclement weather will move inside of the building. Ann contact Brent Caslick and see if he can do it. If no success, she will email the commission for more ideas.

1. Dundalk UC – Increase in Project Budget

Scope of work has increased, unanticipated issues with wiring and the discovery of an old oil tank.

**MOTION** Bruce Gregersen / Judy Chalmers

That the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the Dundalk United Church’s request for an increase in the Dundalk renovation project budget to include:

Removal and testing of buried oil tank: $20,000 (estimate)

Replacement of 2 oil furnaces with natural gas furnaces and add air conditioning: $19,138

Removal and replacement of knob and tube wiring with proper electrical wiring throughout the church: $ 7,600

Total: $46,738 **CARRIED.**

1. Fordwich UC – Request to sell the church property as part of disbandment through a tender process.

**MOTION** Arthur Hills / Marg Bakker

That the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve Fordwich United Church’s request to sell the church property as part of disbandment, through a tender process with the selling price to be not less than $250,000 without further approval of the Covenant Commission.  **CARRIED.**

1. Bayfield, St. Andrews Listening Team

Ann Harbridge and John Neff did a listening exercise with Bayfield. There were 10 participants, not a great uptake. Reported back to council with recommendations. Think received the report quite well and hopefully will move forward in a more positive way. Will be presenting to the congregation on Oct 3, implementation of all recommendations.

The main recommendation, that affects the Covenant Commission, is that participating in the United Fresh Start module on respectful congregations would be helpful to them. Ann Harbridge asked that the Covenant Commission cover the cost of the module as a way to support congregation to move forward in a healthier way.

**MOTION** Bruce Gregersen / Judy Chalmers

That the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve covering the cost of the United Fresh Start module “Respectful Congregations” for St. Andrew’s United Church, Bayfield. **CARRIED.**

1. Info Tracking Document

John Neff went back to the beginning of year and started tracking all documents received. He will keep this document updated. The Motion tracking document is up to date to July 2021.

1. Covenanting service with Arthur UC November 7. Covenanting will be during Sunday service and a representative is needed to attend. Arthur Hills might be able to attend. He will confirm with Ann Harbridge.

**Adjournment**