**Discipleship and Justice Commission**

**Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council**

**of The United Church of Canada**

*Connecting, Supporting, Transforming*

**Approved Minutes**  
***February 15th, 2023 at 1-2.30pm via Zoom***

**Roster:** Gail Fricker (Chair); Edith Coyle, Mary Hawthorne, Cathy Hird, Andrew Hyde, Joyce Osborne, Thom McDonough.

**Present:**  **Gail Fricker, Mary Hawthorne, Cathy Hird, Thom Mcdonough, Kathy Douglas,**  **Joyce Osborne, Thérèse Samuel, Brenna Baker, Andrew Hyde, Ruthanna Mack**

**Regrets:** Jenn Hind-Urquhart (Co-Chair), Edith Coyle

**On Leave**: Rodger Filsinger

**Staff Support:** Kathy Douglas - Minister, Faith Formation

Thérèse Samuel – Minister for Right Relations and Social Justice

Brenna Baker – Community of Faith Stewardship Support

Ruthanna Mack-Administration

Position Vacant - Minister, Social Justice

**Agenda**

1. Acknowledgement of the Land/Territory - Gail Fricker – Next month: Cathy Hird
2. Opening Prayer/Worship -Gail Fricker
3. **Establishing/reminder of Equity Monitor and Pastoral Presence for our meeting(s) -***Choose monitor:*  ***Andrew Hyde***
4. **Approval of Agenda for Feb 15th, 2023**

MOTION by Cathy Hird/ Mary Hawthornethat the Discipleship and Justice Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the agenda February 15, 2023:

MOTION CARRIED

1. **Approval of Minutes from Jan 18th, 2023**

MOTION by Mary Hawthorne/Cathy Hird that the Discipleship and Justice Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the minutes from Jan 18th, 2023 with one correction:   
Approval of minutes for Nov 30 should say WOW not HF

MOTION CARRIED

1. **Business Arising:**
   1. Change time of meetings moving forward to 7pm  
      Discussion: Cathy-maybe another night at 7 would work; Joyce that would work; Andrew busy Wednesday evening; Thom – good with evenings  
      Gail to check with Jenn if next meeting moved to Thurs March 16  
      Jenn has responded and says Thursday evenings would work for her.

Going forward, meetings will be Thursday evenings at 7pm

* 1. Nominate a new representative to attend Exec. Meetings:  
     Thom McDonough volunteered to be the Rep  
     Cathy Hird will fill in as needed

Gail stepping down as Chair after the Regional meeting

* 1. Assign someone to write and submit report to on what action we have taken on Affirming Action (see email and notes below)  
     Gail will email person noted below   
       
     Affirm: There was a decision at the in-person Regional Meeting to purchase Affirming flags to give as a gift to Affirming Congregations – No action has been taken on this yet.

Duty of Care as a regional council, an area we could take action on  
Safer spaces at meetings and in Congregations. Cathy Hird mentioned this.

1. **Funds available** *(As recorded in Events and Meetings Funds Tracking sheet in Dropbox)*
   1. Events fund balance available as of the last meeting: $5,000
   2. Meeting Fund balance available as of the last meeting: $10,000
2. **New Business:**
   1. Time with Jenny Stephens from the Tri-Regional Evaluation Team.
3. **Staff Report from Thérèse** re preparation for Remit for Indigenous churches to determine their organizational structure within the United Church  
   This remit will be out March 2023: Regional Councils have 1 year to vote  
   to pass, there needs to be a majority of CofF. A non-vote is a no-vote  
   Cathy: that we make a concerted effort as a Commission to get this remit passed congregation by congregation. Therese: this is really the purview of the Exec. Cathy will write a letter to the Exec  
     
   **Registration for Antiracism series**
   1. Reporting here although was a program paid for by Executives
   2. Feb 7th 208 were registered, 148 came.
   3. Registration now 213. People asking for the video are told to register. <https://catalog.churchx.ca/product?catalog=UILX1150>
   4. Some feedback about the video expressed concern about the gallery view format
      1. Slides too small to read in Selam’s video
      2. Some expressed discomfort about participant views in the video
      3. Selam’s administrator was contacted and will revise the video
   5. Selam’s administrator made an error in setting up the meeting, which resulted in some not able to enter and the meeting had to be closed and re-opened again. She completed the session, 111 stayed to the end, and the video is available for all who had to leave early to see what they missed
   6. CHURCHx made it possible to send a note to all 208 people with one click. Without CHURCHx it would have taken 15-20 minutes to send emails in batches of 15.

**Registration still open for the Lenten Study** Tuesdays Feb 28 and March 28:

32 registered to date

<https://catalog.churchx.ca/product?catalog=UILX6000&utm_source=United-in-Learning&utm_campaign=02503fa7d4-UiL_230116&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b151b1ffa7-02503fa7d4-189464643&goal=0_b151b1ffa7-02503fa7d4-189464643&mc_cid=02503fa7d4&mc_eid=133b2def54>

[PIE Day Workshop - Ozhawa Anung Kweon - Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council (wowrcucc.ca)](https://wowrcucc.ca/pie-day-workshop-ozhawa-anung-kweon/) The Tri-regional Affirming Network has endorsed it.

*Also, the presentation information:*

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS TO THE REMIT:**

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People  
<https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice/un-declaration-rights>

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission *(including the Calls to Action)*

<https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice/truth-and-reconciliation>

The Calls to the Church  
<https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/being-community/indigenous-ministries/calls-church>

To read the proposals, visit <https://commons.united-church.ca/>

Then select the following: Governance > General Council > 44th General Council > 3. Proposals > Theme - Nurture the Common Good.

And then select the document you wish to read:  
GS10 Living into Reconciliation  
NIC01 National Indigenous Circle—Restructuring of Indigenous Church.

**Kathy Douglas**  
Working with folks around **Refugee Advisory Groups**. For people hoping or currently doing refugee work. Gathered a think tank from all three regions to create a strategy for folks looking for support.

- **Kids Across the Regions Event**  June 16-18 at Camp Bimini. Built on Children at Conference (London Con) this event offers short camp experience for kids trying overnight camp, leadership development for teens and young adults, a community building opportunity for Children and Youth Ministry folk. In an effort to ‘rebuild’ our region wide events, and children ministry in general we want to reduce barriers. Cost is one barrier. If all three D&J Commissions subsidize this camp at $500 each we can keep the participant fee between $75-$100. Watch for poster and registration.

**MOTION by** Cathy Hird and Thom McDonough that the WOW D&J contribute $500 out of the Events budget to the Kids Across the Regions event at Camp Bimini in June 2023.  
**CARRIED**

o Moved by (mover/seconder) that the Western Ontario Waterways Discipleship and Justice Commission approve the allocation of $ from 500 the Events (or Meetings) Budget for Kids Across the Regions Event (June 16-18, 2023 at Camp Bimini. This will act as a subsidy to reduce participant fees.

- Working with **For the Love of Creation** <https://fortheloveofcreation.ca/earth-week/>

I will send you all some information about it and have you start to share it broadly.

- **Worshiplude** - Feb 3-5 Horseshoe Falls RC D&J Commission and Niagara Youth Festival are splitting the cost (total $6000) for the bus. A free coach bus, sleeping on Parkdale UC church floor, taking part in Worshiplude service and Winterlude in down town Ottawa (skating on the canal) Love to fill from HF but open to filling from any region. Stratford church is interested from our region. For Grades 7 and up accompanied by a leader or adult. **CANCELLED as the bus company cancelled.**

**YAYA Gathering in Winnipeg.**  I will be away at this Feb 26-March 3. On agenda Duty of Care, Intercultural Church and National church strategic plan, Church X, Anti racism Curriculum with Adele Halliday, and a general conversation about the legacy of youth and young adult ministry in the UCC.

Brenna Baker:  
**“Your Generosity Matters” Mission and Service Stories –** A collection of 8 stories that tell the impact of Mission and Service with accompanying videos and devotionals. Communities of Faith should be receiving hard copies in the mail (if they haven’t already), but digital versions are available here: <https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/mission-and-service-worship>   
<https://forms.office.com/r/idCxNLcBeg>

Also on that website are weekly stories to use in worship, which replace the former “Minutes for Mission”.

**Called to be the Church: The Journey Upcoming Stewardship Opportunities –**

Getting Started in Stewardship – Feb 21st at 1pm on Zoom. This is an introduction to our stewardship program and best practices. It’s a good primer for those who want to do Module 1: Stewardship Best Practices in the spring, but also a low-risk way to start exploring the ideas of stewardship as discipleship.

Module 1 will start in March and run over several months with cohorts, practical projects, and coaching. We ask communities of faith to gather teams of 3-4 to participate together in the module. Throughout the time, we’ll learn how to:

* Claim Your Mission: it's really why people give to you
* Cultivate Generosity: practical ways to increase giving
* Create a Culture of Gratitude: saying thank you is critical
* Stewardship Is Discipleship: integrating stewardship into your spiritual growth programming

1. **Any Other Business? Report from Equity Monitor Andrew Hyde**  
   **Pleased with process and effectiveness around choosing a new meeting time and date**  
   **Pleased also with discussion on Affirm work**
2. **Closing Words.**

**Adjournment**

**Next meeting:**  March 16th, 7pm

**WOW** **M&D Priorities:   
Right Relations,   
Camps/Youth/Faith Formation,   
Chaplaincy**

(email received Jan 30th, 2023)

Greetings Regional Councils and Commissions,

 I am writing on behalf of the Tri-Regional Affirm Network to follow up on the time we spent with you during the orientation gatherings last September. We are wondering whether that time together, focusing on the regional action plan has translated into action for your regional councils and commissions?

 With the regional meetings approaching, we encourage you to report on your priorities and progress in relation to the Affirming action plan, and the work of your group.

Blessings  
Rev Michelle Owens

[owens@whiteoaksunitedchurch.ca](mailto:owens@whiteoaksunitedchurch.ca) 519 681 3229  (church) 548 888 4256  (mobile)

| *Post-It-Notes items from Affirming Action Plan that participants wanted* **Mission and Discipleship Commission***to address* | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ARW | WOW | HF |
| Practices: Guest speakers – diversity, exposure | A: Education around inclusion (defining inclusion) | A: remove barriers in life and work  Provide orientation |
| Practices: work toward accessible properties | (B) Acknowledging risk to trans folk and advocating for safety | A: Affirming education for interested lay people |
| B: Outreach to local Pride organizations | B: Advocate for municipal, provincial, federal government policies and laws that reflect a diverse and inclusive society | B: Speak out on current events that demean, stigmatize or incite violence against others (3x) |
| B: 1st Point: Advocate for municipal, provincial and federal government policies and laws reflect diverse and inclusive society (3x) | C: Committing to be open to the spirit | B- Advocate for governments to create policies and laws that reflect a diverse and inclusive society (3x) |
| B: speak out on current events that…(2x) | E: Provide support for the Affirm Network (E, last point) | B: Continuing to remove barriers to participation in society (2x) |
| C: Continue to be open to the Spirit | E: Provide support for Affirm Network | B: Actively advocate for justice for all who are oppressed and who face discrimination within our region |
| C: Listen together for God’s ongoing revelation | E:, especially 1, 2, 3 | B: Create physical and emotional spaces |
| D: Be mindful of the disgraceful relationship of the church with 2S-LGBTQIA+ | E:- Welcome, celebrate | B: Encourage ecumenical interfaith conversations |
| D: resisting oppression | E: Education for communities of faith- some still don’t understand even biblically | C: Committing to be open to the Spirit  1. Listen together for God’s ongoing revelation  2. Discern new voices and seek them out (2x) |
| D: Education and info re: gender identifying language | E: Encourage communities of faith to engage in conversations about making safer spaces within the church and community for people of any sexual orientation or gender identity | D: Seek to provide accompaniment to those travelling a difficult path (2x) |
| E: Providing support for individuals- individual community of faith/individuals | E) Welcoming and celebrating people… | E: Tell Stories (by actual people & from their mouths) about queer experience in the church - challenge & hope stories |
| (E) Camps- nongendered facilities | E: Discipleship commission needs to connect with communities of faith to make people open to the spirit and where it will take them | (E) Work with camps to be come affirming especially Cove Springs, and partner with Queer Kid Bible Camp, St. Catharines |
| E: Welcoming and celebrating people of any orientation |  | E – Welcoming and celebrating, provide education and information |
| E: Visibly support 2SLGBTQIA+ activities |  | E – Provide opportunities for the celebration of our diversity |
| E: Educate re: evolving gender identity, diversity of identity and pronouns |  | E: Encourage communities of faith to engage in conversation |
| E: Addressing gendered language  Make it more expansive and inclusive in worship and meetings |  | E: Education for communities of faith |
| (?) Advocacy re 2S-LGBTQ+ safety |  |  |

1. **Summary of Fund Expenses or Adjustments made at this meeting or email votes:**  
   *(To be recorded in Events and Meetings Tracking form in Dropbox)*

EVENTS FUND:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2023 Events Budget $10,000** | |
| **Description of Expense or Adjustment** |  |
| Last Month Balance | $10,000 . |
| Kids Across the Region event at Camp Bimini (approved Feb 15, 2023) | $500 |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2023 Meetings Budget $5,000** | |
| **Description of Expense or Adjustment** |  |
| Last Mont Balance | $5,000 |

**Items tabled for Future Meetings**

**Examples of Motions**

***For Money***

Moved by (mover/seconder) that the Western Ontario Waterways Discipleship and Justice Commission approve the allocation of $\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the Events (or Meetings) Budget for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

***Email voting Template***

You are being asked to vote on the following motion;**MOTION**: Moved by (mover/seconder) that the Western Ontario Waterways Discipleship and Justice Commission approve the allocation of $\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the Events (or Meetings) Budget for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(or wording appropriate to the context)*

**VOTING WILL CLOSE** at *time and date (allowing at least 48 hours).* Please vote by replying to *the Chair*. You can vote at any time before the closing date and time, and are free to change your vote at any time until the voting closes.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS** are welcomed, and must be visible to all voting members.

**CANCELLING EMAIL VOTE**: If two voting members object to making this decision by email, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss it.

**QUORUM:** We require a quorum from the Commission to respond by the closing time for the vote to be valid.

*Please let me know if you have any questions and thanks for your participation.*