

ATTENDANCE

Present

Ordered John Van Omme, Cathy Larmond, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Eun-Joo Park, Sheila MacGregor, Wanda Burse, John Brown, Doug Wright, Mark Marshall, Carey Wagner

Lay Glenda McMillan, Ken Hunking, Mary Anne Silverthorn, Brent Caslick, Bev Slater, Sandra Stock, Doreen Hewitson, Chuck Scott, Connie Ellis, Tanya Cameron

Regrets: Kenji Marui, Joyce Payne

OPENING – Past-President Cathy Larmond

In the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the church, and by the authority given to me by the 91st Annual Meeting of London Conference, I declare this meeting of the Executive of London Conference duly constituted for any business that may properly come before it. The bounds of the meeting shall be this room.

Past-President Cathy Larmond opened with a reading from Numbers, Chapter 11. Members were invited to introduce themselves, clarify the role they serve on the London Conference Executive and identify how their presbytery or division is starting to work towards the changes that are expected via the United Church Remit process. There was a varied range of responses, with Presbyteries hosting “Remit Education Parties”; Committee/Division convenors are preparing for any eventuality by becoming more comfortable with the unknown; being prepared to help as the church decides its future direction; and concerns expressed about a lack of easily accessible current information from The United Church General Council Office.

Condolences were expressed to Connie Ellis and Doreen Hewitson on the deaths of their aunt and mother-in-law respectively, and a card was passed for Bruce Gregerson of the General Council Office whose mother had recently died.

There was a request to send out the draft minutes to the Executive members as soon as possible following each London Conference Executive meeting and to also put them on-line. The Conference Staff has created the mechanism to place the minutes on-line and the minutes will be placed on the London Conference website. Those minutes placed on the website pertaining to disciplinary action or other pastoral relations discussions will have identifying details redacted; however, the original signed archival minutes remaining in the Conference Office will contain the complete details with appendices.

AFFIRM PRESENTATION

Special guest Rev. Karen Low, Western University Chaplain, attended our meeting to provide an update on Affirm United and London Conference’s process to become an affirming conference. Karen offered appreciation and thanks for the London Conference’s dedication to entering into

this work and continuing to offer support and assistance to the LGBTQ2 community locally and beyond. She spoke of the devastation to the LGBTQ2 community and allies of the targeted assault of June 12, 2016 on the Orlando nightclub "Pulse" where 49 people were killed and a further 53 were injured by a lone gunman.

Karen offered methods by which we can convey support to the LGBTQ2 community: listening to queer people; ask us what we need (don't tell us what you want to do); tell us that you're thinking about us; ask us about our families; reach out and let us know we matter and that we belong – refraining from those qualifying statements that include "despite who you love."

She shared that the poem that Right Reverend Gary Patterson quoted at a recent vigil in Vancouver. The Poem is "The Low Road" by poet Marge Piercy from *The Moon is Always Female*:

What can they do
to you? Whatever they want.
They can set you up, they can
bust you, they can break
your fingers, they can
burn your brain with electricity,
blur you with drugs till you
can't walk, can't remember, they can
take your child, wall up
your lover. They can do anything
you can't stop them
from doing. How can you stop
them? Alone, you can fight,
you can refuse, you can
take what revenge you can
but they roll over you.

But two people fighting
back to back can cut through
a mob, a snake-dancing file
can break a cordon, an army
can meet an army.

Two people can keep each other
sane, can give support, conviction,
love, massage, hope, sex.
Three people are a delegation,
a committee, a wedge. With four
you can play bridge and start

an organization. With six
you can rent a whole house,
eat pie for dinner with no
seconds, and hold a fund raising party.
A dozen make a demonstration.
A hundred fill a hall.
A thousand have solidarity and your own newsletter;
ten thousand, power and your own paper;
a hundred thousand, you own media;
ten million, you own country.

It goes on one at a time,
it starts when you care
to act, it starts when you do
it again and they said no,
it starts when you say We
and know who you mean, and each
day you mean one more.

-Marge Piercy, 1980

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to direct the Executive Secretary and the President to send a pastoral letter to London Conference Pastoral Charges acknowledging the care and concern we continue to maintain for the LGBTQ2 community given the current world events.**

This correspondence will be sent via all Presbytery Secretaries and Presbytery Representatives.

Eun-Joo Park provided an update of the Affirm Task Group and the questions they are wrestling with: How is London Conference communicating being welcoming within our divisions and committees? How can the Affirm Task Group reach out to expand membership of the committee beyond the current membership of clergy-only? The Affirm Task Group was encouraged to set a date for a fall 2016 educational event so that attendance by other members/groups within London Conference can be arranged.

Further questions posed from the Executive included:

- Are we planning to become an Affirming Conference in 2017?
- How are we going to address Covenanting Congregations?

Oversight of pastoral charges is the responsibility of Presbytery. Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa confirmed to the Executive that this work belongs to Presbytery Representatives to the Executive along with engaging in conversations about what it means to be a covenanting congregation. Our goal, as becoming an Affirming Conference, is to say: "In our work are we

cognizant of this; have we had conversations about this; are we doing the faithful things ourselves?"

Further, how do we take ownership as London Conference as a whole? As the Affirm Task Group continues, would they be willing to attend Presbyteries to do presentations and then recruit from within the Presbytery to be a presbytery "champion" of Affirm process? There is a process and associated standards to uphold to officially become Affirming – completion of the Affirming process affords the participating body to use a logo that indicates a safe space for members of the LGBTQ2 community. This logo cannot be used by a body that has not successfully completed the official Affirming process.

It was agreed to send the process to become Affirming to congregations in London Conference with the expectation that London Conference can set the example and model the behaviour in order to demonstrate to congregations "what that looks like."

MINUTES

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2016; May 11, 2016 and May 19, 2016 London Conference Executive.**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS EDUCATION

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa provided an update on our auditor's PriceWaterhousecoopers LLC requirement that our financial statements be modified to display our financial information in a format better suited to a charitable organization. This reformatting makes it difficult to compare past financial statements to current statements in order to track changes over time, so a few minutes were spent on educating the Executive on how to interpret the new statements. There was also a presentation of the special funds that London Conference holds, including how those funds receive money and how that money is expensed (Appendix 1).

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Mary Anne Silverthorn presented proposals 1 through 4 (Appendix 2).

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to accept Proposal 1: The Audited Financial Statements for 2015 be approved by the London Conference Executive. (Appendix 3)**

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to accept Proposal 2: That Price Waterhouse Coopers be approved as auditors for the London Conference Financial year 2016.**

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to accept Proposal 3: That Krista Ford and /or Tanya Cameron and /or Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa and /or Brent Caslick be named as signing officers for London Conference. (Any 2/4 to sign)**

Motion It was moved, seconded and carried to accept Proposal 4: That Pastoral Charges forward their monies for the New Ministries Fund directly to the London Conference New Ministries Fund at the United Church Foundation Fund.

Motion It was moved, seconded and carried to make Beverley Slater a corresponding member for 2016-17 until the rise of Conference 2017.

MINISTRY REVIEW UPDATE

Rev. [REDACTED] has chosen to defy the Sub-Executive's decisions made at the London Conference Sub-Executive on March 30, 2016 and upheld at the May 19, 2016 meeting and is refusing to fulfil those requirements during her appeal process. The appeal process does not allow the subject to opt out of completing the required courses as the London Conference Executive did not extend the deadlines for completion. Cheryl-Ann confirmed that the London Conference Executive will be informed of the situation as events unfold.

PUBLICATION OF EXECUTIVE MINUTES ON LONDON CONFERENCE WEBSITE

All minutes from the London Conference Executive and Sub-Executive meetings will be placed on the London Conference website. Prior to posting, all identifying personal details will be removed from minutes that will be circulated to the public in pastoral relations matters. The original minutes residing in the London Conference office will contain all details and information and are considered the official record.

IONA COLLEGE UPDATE

Motion It was moved, seconded and carried to officially request repayment by Iona College of the Middlesex Presbytery trust fund.

Motion It was moved, seconded and carried to make the terms of the repayment of the Middlesex trust fund an interest-free mortgage paid out in full of the fifth year of the anniversary of the agreement with a 6% interest on outstanding balance. If the terms are not completed, then the London Conference Executive Secretary will report Iona College to the Ontario Public Guardian and Trustee and "call" the mortgage after 5 years.

It was opined that the mortgage will probably be held by "The United Church of Canada" but that Cheryl-Ann would clarify that with legal counsel.

STAFF SUPPORT UPDATE

John Brown provided highlights of the search process for the vacancy of half-time Pastoral Support Minister and plans for coverage during the Minister of Youth, Young Adults and Faith Formation Betsy Exley's sabbatical during September – December, 2016. He solicited advice from the Executive members as to any advice or requests that they may have to direct to the Staff Support Committee as they determine the future staffing plan. One possibility was to

direct any requests received by the London Conference office concerning elements of Betsy's portfolio to those who have that expertise in the Conference. It was also wondered if there was an opportunity to offer fee-for-service contracts to those already engaged in Youth and Young Adult ministry within the Conference. Cheryl-Ann and Staff Support noted they would consider that possibility.

A London Conference Sub-Executive meeting will be scheduled for some time during the summer 2016 in order to bring the name of the successful applicant for the Minister, Pastoral Support to the sub-executive for approval.

MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND EDUCATION

Tanya Cameron outlined the process for readmission to The United Church of Canada and the London Conference Executive's role in that process as Mark Giuliano of The Presbytery of the Western Reserve is applying for re-admission. (Appendix 4)

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried that pending receipt of acceptable Police Records Checks as defined by the General Council Office, London Conference Executive requests the London Conference Interview Board to examine Rev. Mark Giuliano's faith and theological stance as he applies to be removed from the Discontinued Service List – Voluntary for the purposes of Re-admission to The United Church of Canada and make a recommendation to Middlesex Presbytery.**

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Carey Wagner gave an update from the Social Justice division and provided their minutes of their last meeting to the Executive (Appendix 5). He confirmed that Climate Change will be an area of interest that the Social Justice Division would be investigating.

MISSION SUPPORT GRANTS

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa gave an update on the London Conference Mission Support guidelines and eligibility for application. (Appendix 6). There was a discussion about United Church camps and their eligibility for funding through Mission Support, which led to a fuller discussion of the future of camps dependent upon the outcome of the Remits and potential Regions (as opposed to current Conference structures).

The future of United Church camps is scheduled to be discussed at the Camping Connections event held at Pearce Williams Christian Centre, Fingal Ontario on October 20 – 23, 2016. It was noted that there was difficulty maintaining a Conference connection to United Church camps as camps rarely participated in meetings and events held by London Conference nor are they submitting required paperwork as directed by their status as Incorporated Ministries in London Conference. Presbytery Representatives were encouraged to have a liaison from Presbytery be a member of the Board in order to maintain a denominational connection.

Motion **It was moved, seconded and carried to approve changes to the guidelines of Mission Support grants in London Conference:**

1. Mission Support Grant applications have to demonstrate that they are also supported by other bodies (congregation, pastoral charge, Presbytery or a combination).
2. Submissions must include clear financial statements – and also include their last Charity Tax Return - T3010
3. Mission support grants are meant to be temporary and will normally have a maximum 5-year declining period of funding.
4. In the applications, congregations are responsible for explicitly demonstrating their direct involvement in social outreach ministries (this involvement is not necessarily financial)

Presbytery Representatives are encouraged to report back to their presbyteries and Mission Support Grant applicants that presbytery sponsorship of the project via financial means is important and will receive priority consideration. As it is presbytery's responsibility to consider and potentially approve the motion for the Mission Support Grant applicant to apply for funding via the London Conference Mission Support Grant, then it is logical to request that the Presbytery to also provide financial support.

RIGHT RELATIONS

August 20th, 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of The United Church of Canada's Apology to First Nations Peoples. Per the United Church of Canada website:

“At the site where the United Church's Apology to First Nations Peoples was given in Sudbury 30 years ago, you are invited to gather with representatives from the Indigenous church and Moderator Jordan Cantwell to honour the Apology.

We will gather together at Huntington University (on the Laurentian campus) to begin the story. Then we will journey together to the cairn to mark what happened in 1986 and since, before moving forward together in reconciliation. Huntington University will host us for a meal afterwards. All are welcome—plan to join us if you can. For more information on the event, contact

Sara Stratton
Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator
1-800-268-3781 ext. 2742
SStratton@united-church.ca

Sunday Service: The next day, Sunday, August 21, at 10:30 a.m., the Sudbury churches will hold an outdoor service with Moderator Cantwell presiding. All are welcome; light refreshments to follow. The service will be held at:

Grounds of Minnow Lake Legion
1533 Weller Street, Sudbury”

Eun-Joo Park noted that Algoma Presbytery may attend as a Presbytery-wide event. Mark Marshall from Oxford offered to drive people to the event in his 12-seater van. The Social Just committee and the London Conference delegates that attended the Truth and Reconciliation Ceremonies in Ottawa in June, 2015 will be offered an opportunity to attend.

Cheryl-Ann provided the Executive with her Executive Secretary’s accountability Report for information (Appendix 7).

NEW BUSINESS

Next meeting: September 28th, 2016 9:30 – 3:00pm

There have been some Presbyteries that wonder about testing elements of the Remits; at this time London Conference does not have permission from the General Secretary to test various Remit models via The Manual exemptions. While a work-around is possible (at any point, a Presbytery can surrender its authority to Conference) at this time during the remit period, it may be difficult to manage the complexities of doing “all the new things” and the preference is to maintain the status quo until Remits are completed.

Cathy Larmond declared the meeting closed.

Cathy Larmond, President

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Executive Secretary