

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL
MINUTES
Sunday, September 18, 2022

The 44th Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met in-person for a time of orientation and business from the evening of Thursday, September 15 to Sunday, September 18, 2022. The Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne, presided.

Attendance

Voting Members: Mitchell Anderson, Michael Blair, Richard Bott, Teresa Burnett-Cole, Michael Caveney, M Chorney, Samuel Vauvert Dansokho, Paul Douglas Walfall, Catherine Glover, Carmen Lansdowne, Kit Loewen, Jane McDonald, Arlyce Schiebout, Thea Sheridan-Jonah

Corresponding: Diane Bosman, Treena Duncan, Alan Hall, Adele Halliday, Jennifer Henry, Jennifer Janzen-Ball, Faith March-MacCuish, Erik Mathiesen, Murray Pruden

Regrets: Kathy Brett, Wilson Gonese, Marlene Lightning

Welcome

The Moderator and General Secretary welcomed the Executive to the business session, which followed two days of orientation for the General Council Executive and staff leaders.

Worship

The Moderator and General Secretary led worship.

Constituting the Meeting

The Moderator constituted the meeting in French and English.

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le quarante-quatrième Conseil général, I hereby declare this meeting of the Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

Introduction of the Business Planning Committee

The General Secretary, Michael Blair, introduced the Business Planning Committee, chaired by Kit Loewen. Kit outlined the business that was before the Executive at this meeting.

GS 01 Procedural and Consent (v.2)

The General Secretary noted that the Procedural and Consent proposal had been updated to include the receipt of the Financial Report, and that the Nominations proposal had been

updated to add Michael Caveney as a member of the Finance Advisory Committee. The full text of the report and proposals is found in Appendix I.

Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen

2022-09-18-001

The General Secretary proposes that the General Council Executive:

1. Approve the [minutes](#) of the General Council Executive meeting held on April 30, 2022, and ratify all decisions made at Sub-Executive meetings held May 25 and June 9, 2022.
2. Adopt the agenda for this meeting as circulated, with any changes which may be necessary as the meeting evolves, to be made on the recommendation of the Business Committee.
3. Name as corresponding members to this meeting any General Council Officers, Executive Ministers, Executive Officers, and Regional Council Executive Ministers who are present; anyone else who may be named by the General Secretary to serve as resource persons to the General Council Executive.
4. Receive for information the following report:
 - Financial Report, September 2022
5. Approve the following proposals:
 - NOM 01 Recommendations for Appointment
 - WF 26: ARW05 & SW08 Care of the Church's Marginalized *[take no action]*
 - WF 28: GS05 Discipline of Members and Adherents *[GS to clarify recommendations]*
 - WF 34: NS02 Community of Faith Meeting Quorum *[affirm and direct GS to review pertinent section of The Manual for clarity]*
 - WF 38: SW07 Review of New Structure *[take no action – already in place]*
 - WF 40: NEW02 To Have the United Church Recognize the Armenian Genocide of 1915 *[recognize April 24 as Armenian Genocide Memorial Day; discussion notes & proposal referred back to GS for further review to determine way forward on remainder of proposal]*

Carried

Time with the Moderator

The former Moderator, Richard Bott, assumed the chair. The Moderator outlined her hopes for her upcoming term. She named as her three priority objectives:

- engaging Canada in change-making conversations;
- widening the engagement of the Moderator's office within and beyond the church; and
- mentoring the next generation of leadership in the church.

The Moderator began her tenure by joining the United Church delegation to the 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, attending the funeral of respected Elder Bernice

Saulteaux, and representing the church at a Government of Canada consultation on unmarked graves.

There was an opportunity for questions and comments. Richard prayed for the Moderator and her work. The Moderator resumed the chair.

Unfinished Business from General Council 44

The General Secretary and Kit Loewen explained the process for dealing with the Way Forward proposals remaining from General Council 44 (GC44).

WF 10: PM01 Alberni Indian Residential School (Appendix II)

Recognizing the significant developments since the creation of the original proposal from Pacific Mountain Region, there was lengthy conversation on the Way Forward proposal from GC44. This included concerns raised regarding the original proposal, which was created prior to the discovery of unmarked graves at Kamloops. The actions suggested in the original proposal and being affirmed by the Way Forward proposal were that:

The General Council might undertake the following action to further address the harm caused by its Alberni Indian Residential School:

- 1) offer to conduct a forensic archeological search of AIRS in order to locate any bodies of children buried on the site in unmarked graves;
- 2) offer to exhume, identify and repatriate, as requested, the bodies of any children buried on the AIRS site to their home, or for appropriate commemoration ceremonies, and markers;
- 3) offer to safely remove and dispose of the remaining AIRS buildings from the territory;
- 4) develop a plan and funding model for a Healing Centre on the former AIRS site;
- 5) develop a plan to engage in deep listening to the Indigenous Elders in the territories of the other UCC residential schools to determine actions to offer in each context.

After a break, during which a small group had worked on the proposal, the following motion was presented.

Motion: Mitchell Anderson/Kit Loewen

2022-09-18-002

That the General Council Executive take no action on WF 10, and respond to the proposal *PM01 Making it Right: Alberni Indian Residential School* by

- developing a principles-based approach to reparations, including for communities and families affected by United Church-run residential schools,
- continuing to be in relationship with Indigenous communities in an Indigenous-led and trauma-informed way, and
- ensuring that the communities impacted by the Alberni Indian Residential School are aware of, and have access to, the Bringing the Children Home initiative.

Carried

The General Secretary reminded the Executive that there was a communication plan in place and to not share decisions before the official release of information.

WF 06: N:ka02 Membership in United Church Through Non-Congregational Communities of Faith (Appendix III)

The Way Forward proposal was shared, with further information supplied by the General Secretary regarding some complications regarding membership in communities of faith which are not congregations. There was considerable conversation and several questions posed with regard to this proposal. Broadening the understanding of what constitutes a community of faith is at the heart of this proposal (which will require a remit). The actions suggested in the original proposal and being affirmed by the Way Forward proposal were to:

Amend *The Manual* to provide communities of faith that are not congregations the ability to welcome new full members to the United Church of Canada by baptism, confirmation or profession of faith.

Motion: Teresa Burnett-Cole/Samuel Vauvert Dansokho

2022-09-18-003

That the 44th General Council Executive, in response to *N:ka02 Membership in United Church Through Non-Congregational Communities of Faith* affirms this proposal with implementation to be informed by the study in *TICIF01 Membership*.

Carried

The remaining two items from GC44 which had been on the agenda will be brought to the November, 2022 meeting of the Executive. These were *WF 13: CS02, WOW01, CW01 Essential Agreement*, and *WF 35: NS03 Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council to End a Pastoral Relationship*.

Mileage Reimbursement and Cost of Living Allowance (2023)

The General Secretary reported that the reimbursement for mileage had been increased in May 2022, to 46 cents per kilometer, and that this will continue until the end of the year because of the recent surge in inflation. In the new year this amount will increase to 55 cents per kilometer. The General Secretary noted the financial impact this will have on congregations.

The second item being reported was the cost of living allowance for 2023 – this will be set at 3.2%. The General Secretary indicated that the decisions are made while trying to balance the needs of ministry personnel and communities of faith.

Alan Hall noted that there will be a compensation study to review the various remuneration policies across the church.

The Moderator thanked Alan and Erik Mathiesen for joining the meeting for these two items.

Vacancy on the Executive

Kit Loewen offered two options for processes to discern how to work at filling the vacancy on the Executive. The consensus of the group was for the Workflow Working Group and Kit, as chair of the Business Planning Committee, to work together at discerning the needs of the Executive before the vacancy is posted.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be November 18 and 19, 2022, and will be an online meeting. A recommendation will be coming from the Workflow Working Group regarding how the Executive will work together, information regarding the 2023 budget, and an update on the strategic plan. The General Secretary noted that there will be some adjustment to the dates suggested for the spring meetings in 2023 and 2024.

Pulpit Supply

In response to a question the General Secretary clarified that for online meetings that do not involve a Sunday there will not be compensation for pulpit supply. For in-person weekend meetings pulpit supply is available.

Authorizing the Sub-Executive of the General Council

Motion: Michael Blair/Kit Loewen

2022-09-18-004

That the General Council Executive authorize its Sub-Executive to deal with the business placed before it by this meeting of the Executive and any emergent business that may arise prior to the next meeting of the General Council Executive.

Carried

The Moderator offered a closing prayer.

Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne

General Secretary, Michael Blair