

Executive
Horseshoe Falls Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Supports, Connects, Empowers Communities of Faith

March 24, 2021, 5:30 PM via zoom

Roster: Kate Young (President), Robert Lawson (President Elect), John Hurst (Treasurer), Judith Gilliland, Deborah Laforet, Win Czum, Wendy Lowden, Lorna MacQueen, Adrienne Robertson, Thea Sheridan-Jonah, Pat Tooley, Diane Viney, Karen Orlandi (Acting Chair, Mission & Discipleship Commission)

Staff Support: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Executive Minister, Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant

Present: Kate Young (President), Robert Lawson (President Elect), John Hurst (Treasurer), Judith Gilliland, Deborah Laforet, Win Czum, Wendy Lowden, Lorna MacQueen, Adrienne Robertson, Thea Sheridan-Jonah, Pat Tooley, Karen Orlandi (Acting Chair, Mission & Discipleship Commission)

Regrets: Diane Viney

Welcome and Constitute Meeting (President Kate)

I constitute this meeting in the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the Church and by the authority vested in me by this meeting of the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council for whatever business may properly come before it. The bounds of the meeting will be the Zoom call.

Acknowledging the Land (President Kate)

President Kate shared Halton County's Land Acknowledgement and the executive shared the land acknowledgements for where they live.

Opening Worship (Deborah Laforet)

Deborah shared a reflection on Palm Sunday, and Easter. The executive was asked to name those things they are celebrating and bring joy, as well as those things that weigh heavily and make you sad. Offer all up to God. Remember that Easter is not just joy and celebration, but rebirth. Deborah closed by sharing the words of a song from the Iona Community.

Opening Agreements

Consent Docket

MOTION John Hurst/ Adrienne Robertson

Acceptance of the Consent Docket as Circulated/Amended

A. Enabling Motions/Proposals

1. That the proposed Agenda be approved as presented.
2. That the minutes of the February 24, 2021 meeting be approved as distributed.
3. That motions be written and given to the Secretary.

B. To receive the following correspondence and address it as it arises in the agenda

1. Mission & Discipleship Commission Initiative: Response to the Bulletin on the Blessing of Same Sex Unions from The Vatican
2. Letter from Dianne Everitt re PIE (For information)
3. Broadview (For information)

MOTION CARRIED

Business Arising

1. Commission Reports

a. Covenant Commission (Adrienne Robertson)

A written report was submitted (attached). Adrienne highlighted the section of her report that noted, “there seems to be hesitancy and even reluctance for a significant number of people to engage with HF regional council. People asserting that they don’t know what is going on or have no part in decision making etc..... So the questions are: How, When and Who will address them? Is this the work of the executive? Perhaps in some format at our regional meeting?”

Discussion ensued. Some executive members indicated that they have heard from folks who feel disengaged, who have concerns about how the HFRC functions. While recognizing the concerns, it was also noted that folks need to know some of the onus is on them, to be responsible for their engagement and participation and relationship in the regional council.

President Kate suggested that it might be useful if she and President-Elect Robert Lawson, gather with regional council members in the former Presbytery boundaries for conversation/coffee.

b. Human Resources Commission (Pat Tooley)

Main discussion around wording of position descriptions from communities of faith; looking at some of the “ism” words that are used, not only wording but mindset behind it frequently an area of inclusion not addressed. Diane Blanchard will reach out to congregations to discuss some of this wording.

Also issue around part-time – clarity around time, workload. Looking at an appointment form for part-time mp.

Interviews for licencing of LLWLs. List will of those interviewed will be provided to Pat.

c. Mission & Discipleship Commission

Still investigating how to support landback claims work; couple of people will be coming to speak to the commission.

Supporting Shining Waters event re: harm reduction, in April.

Planning tri-regional council event in the fall: speaker Monica Coleman.

Letter received from Mission & Discipleship Commission re: Response to the Bulletin on the Blessing of Same Sex Unions from The Vatican. Cheryl-Ann suggested that for issues such as this if the M&D Commission has the energy and words they can speak on behalf of the regional council without having to get executive approval. The executive agreed by consensus, with the proviso that the regional council president review any such correspondence prior to it being sent out.

New Business

1. Staff Topics

Proposal 1: Updated position descriptions

Proposal 1 Attachments: March 2021 Position descriptions for Minister, Congregational Support and Mission, Minister, Faith Formation, Minister, Pastoral Relation and previous Versions

MOTION: Pat Tooley / Lorna MacQueen

The HFRC Executive approves the attached position descriptions for the

- 1) Minister, Congregational Support and Mission
- 2) Minister, Faith Formation and

- 3) Minister, Pastoral Relations
effective immediately and advises the Executive Minister to forward a copy of same to
General Council Human Resources. **MOTION CARRIED**

Proposal 2: Sabbatical Plan, including Sabbatical Proposal presented by Kathy Douglas,
Minister, Faith Formation

MOTION: Pat Tooley / Deborah Laforet

The HFRC Executive approves the Sabbatical Proposal presented by Minister, Faith Formation, Kathy Douglas and authorizes her sabbatical leave from May 17-August 13, 2021. **MOTION CARRIED**

Proposal 3: Authority for position description update

MOTION: Lorna MacQueen / Adrienne Robertson

The HFRC Executive authorizes the Executive Minister to consult with the staff involved and the Staff Support Committee to make updates to Position Descriptions that do not change the key purpose of the role, or the terms of the position. Any change, other than editorial, in purpose, duties, hours or category would continue to require Executive approval. Any revisions to be reported to Executive for information. **MOTION CARRIED**

2. Proposal 4: TRC 101, Preparation for session with the Honourable Mr. Sinclair

MOTION: Robert Lawson / Judith Gilliland

The HFRC Executive authorizes a budget of \$1,000 from the Regional Council Meeting budget for educational events focused on preparation for the May 28, 2021 event with the Honourable Mr. Sinclair. **MOTION CARRIED**

3. Members' Handbook to the Regional Council (Wendy Lowden, Robert Lawson)

The Executive agreed by consensus that the preparation of the Members' Handbook continue so that it can be ready for the May meeting.

Format notes: Will include an alpha list of churches, with a note that says please ensure ChurchHub is updated. Get permission to share contact individual contact info from everyone who attends the regional council meeting, so that a directory of mp/regional council reps can eventually be prepared.

4. Proposal 5: Financial Support for Complainant HFWVH01 – Moving Expenses (Executive Minister)

MOTION: Pat Tooley / Deborah Laforet

The HFRC Executive authorizes the payment of 11/36th of the moving expenses incurred by the community of faith named in HFWVH01 at the start of its current pastoral relationship due to the early end date. **MOTION CARRIED**

5. Executive Minister Accountability Report March 2021: Received for information.

Continuing Priorities

1. Racial Justice Training: April 8, 10, 22, 24 were suggested as possible dates by the leaders of the training webinar, but not confirmed. It was agreed that there was not enough lead time at this point to have the training in April. Training to be done following the May meeting, perhaps in the fall.

MOTION: Deborah Laforet / Adrienne Robertson

To extend the meeting past the order of the day.

MOTION CARRIED

In the meantime, it was suggested and agreed that a list of resources be compiled to share with the regional council at the May meeting. Books, podcasts, documentaries – a variety of media resources so that people can choose what is best for them. Thea Sheridan-Jonah, Robert Lawson, Deborah Laforet and Karen Orlandi will work on putting this plan together. It was suggested, but not finalized, that reimbursement could be made on book purchases.

2. 2022 Assessments discussion: Will be included in spring meeting agenda.

3. May meeting update

Dates May 27 and May 29 Celebration of Ministry May 29, 4 pm, St John's Oakville

Commission reports: Fall meeting

Spring meeting: only any new initiatives to share/anything requiring regional council input

Further information, registration to be circulated after Easter.

The role of executive as nomination committee was raised. Suggestion of small group brainstorming, as the transition commission did, to think about possible folks.

Executive asked to consider possibilities prior to April meeting; with a plan to be created about how to nominate and find people at that meeting.

Possibility of an extra April meeting at the call of the president.

Motion to adjourn

Next meeting

April 28, 2021, 5:30 PM via zoom (no executive meeting in May)

Worship:

Covenant Commission Report to the Executive: March 24, 2021

One note of interest and celebration from our Meeting of March 9th is the approval of an Ecumenical Ministry Sharing Agreement between Wesley United Church, Jarvis and Knox Presbyterian Church, Jarvis pending approval from the congregation of Wesley United church. We found it to be an excellent agreement and are inviting those who were part of its creation to act as a resource for other congregations who are considering this type of ministry arrangement.

Ongoing conversations are taking place regarding the Covenant between the Region and communities of Faith and how that might take place. This is one of our responsibilities and we are consulting with the other Covenant Commission's in ARW and WOW for their input.

I wonder if in some ways the act of Covenanting (or rather lack thereof) with the Region is connected to and touches on some of the issues that we have raised as an executive in light of the insights regarding disconnect and mistrust that came out of our Executive retreat.

(so far in HF there have been, as far as I am aware, four congregations that have held a covenanting service with the region, in conjunction with covenanting with a new minister: Westdale, Hamilton, Fonthill United, Fonthill, St. Paul's, Oakville and Delhi United, Delhi).

I wanted to share some thoughts and reflections from some of the discussion, questions and situations arising in the context of the work and meetings of the covenant commission. The theme of which seem to be focused around feelings of mistrust between communities of faith and the Region's commissions/executive

(These reflections and observations are from me and from Lynne Allin, staff support for our commission)

We name the fact that there seems to be hesitancy and even reluctance for a significant number of people to engage with HF regional council. People asserting that they don't know what is going on or have no part in decision making etc. BUT, in contrast, we have found that this is not the experience or understanding of all congregations and people within HF. We are blessed with a small number of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers, willing to take on Pastoral Supervision roles when called upon, great folks who actively engage as Commission members providing financial expertise, oversight and engagement with Communities of faith who are visioning or in transition. And we have actually found that Communities of faith are open and responsive to support and direction, and quite keen to engage with our commission.

As we work with congregations we are generally viewed as helpful, supportive, and caring, with the exception of a few problematic situations, and even in those, great care has been taken to be supportive and encouraging.

The challenge we seem to face when engaging in the work with communities of faith is the undercurrent of negativity and suspicion that is being sustained and promoted by those who are still grieving for what was, and for their place and relationships in the previous structure, paired together with a lack of knowledge as well as 'buy in' with the new structure and process.

All of these things contribute to the undermining of the work of regional council, and will inhibit our ability to form new and healthy relationships, unless they are named and addressed...

So the questions are: How, When and Who will address them?

Is this the work of the executive? Perhaps in some format at our regional meeting?

March 24, 2021

HF Executive 21-13

Perhaps one place to start is for the executive to consider ways in which clear, frequent and public support can be offered to regional representatives and communities of faith that builds up the work done by Commissions and staff, and in turn will (hopefully and prayerfully) begin to establish confidence, transparency, and trust.

As a commission we realize that there is a need for us as well to regularly lift up the good news stories of congregations and the ways in which they have engaged with regional council in order to contribute to this as well and will do so in upcoming newsletters. We continue in our work to seek more ways to reach out “personally” to all congregations so we are no longer viewed as a stranger, but as a commission of the faithful that ‘supports, connects and empowers communities of faith. We have found that once we have connected with communities of faith they are quite pleased with the support they have received.