

Mission and Discipleship Commission
Horseshoe Falls Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming

Approved Minutes

March 16, 2020

1-3pm

via Zoom

Roster: Diane Viney, Geof Thompson, Michelle Hogman, Irene Ty, Colleen Cavanaugh, Karen Orlandi (acting Chair), Sula Anne Kosacky, Ryk Brown, Phyllis Buchner

Staff Support: Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister, Social Justice

Kathy Douglas, Minister, Faith Formation

Dave Jagger, Philanthropy and Stewardship Officer

Thérèse Samuel, Minister Right Relations and Social Justice

Ruthanna Mack, Administrative Assistant, Mission and Finance

Present: Karen Orlandi (Acting Chair), Sula Anne Kosacky, Geof Thompson, Colleen Cavanaugh, Michelle Hogman, Irene Ty, Phyllis Buchner, Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Kathy Douglas, Thérèse Samuel, Dave Jagger, Ruthanna Mack

Absent: Ryk Brown

Welcome and Introductions: Karen offered a special welcome to Thérèse and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Acknowledging the Land: Karen Acknowledged the Land that we live and work on.

Opening Worship: Irene Ty asked us to share what Spiritual Practices we were each using to cope with the ongoing Covid-19 social isolation.

She shared a closing prayer from 'Faith on the Move'

Opening Motions:

Approval of the agenda:

MOTION: By Michelle Hogman/Colleen Cavanaugh that the HFRC Mission and Discipleship commission approve the agenda as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED

Approval of the minutes of 2021-02-09:

MOTION: By Geof Thompson/Sula Anne Kosacky that the HFRC Mission and Development Commission approve the minutes of 2021-02-09 as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

Business Arising

1. Landback Lane: Diane MJ outlined the details of the situation – The land under dispute was owned by the Six Nations. The land was sold to a developer by the Band Council against the Hereditary Chief's wishes. Land Defenders have mobilized to stop the Mackenzie Meadows housing development project. Diane will forward an article with additional information to the group via email.
Also, Thérèse and Diane will invite someone from the Christian Peacemakers Team to join in our next meeting to discuss this topic.
2. Geof Thompson on Cave Springs Camp Board Update: The Cave Springs Board is moving their meetings back to the original evening time and starting in April, Geof will be able to join those meetings. Conflict resolved. Cave Springs is working towards being open this summer and their new Conference Centre is now being used. Cave Springs will be changing their name to Cave Springs Camp and Retreat.
3. Brock University Ecumenical Chaplaincy Board. While Sula Anne has volunteered to be on the Board there are already two UCC members on the Board. Karen to follow up with Sybil Wilson to get additional information.

Opioid Crisis:

Jeffrey Dale of Shining Waters RC has worked to organize the following meetings relating to Harm Reduction:

1st Meeting (April 14th, 7-8:30pm) – Harm Reduction and United Church Engagement

2nd Meeting (April 21st, 7-8:30pm) - The Decriminalization of Illicit Substances for Personal Use

3rd Meeting (April 28th, 7-8:30pm) – The Theology of Harm Reduction

For Full Report see Appendix A

MOTION: by Michelle Hogman/Irene Ty that the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council Mission and Discipleship Commission support and promote and add its name to materials advertising the Shining Waters Regional Council events concerning Harm Reduction.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Homelessness: After a brief discussion it was agreed that Sula Anne and Geof would have a separate conversation about possible solutions to a perceived gap in homelessness services in the mid-Niagara area. Diane MJ and Thérèse offered their support.

Karen reminded us all that individual Communities of Faith can always join in the advocacy piece for both Homelessness and the Opioid Crisis.

5. Monica Coleman: Diane MJ reminded us that Monica Coleman is a Black Process Theologian who focusses on the intersection of Faith and Social Action. There was general support for the initiative to bring Monica Coleman in as a speaker for all three Regional Councils to benefit. The cost would be \$2500 for a 1 ½ hr presentation with Q&A. This cost would be split between our three Regional Councils.

MOTION: by Geof Thompson/Michelle Hogman that the HFRC Mission and Development Commission direct the Staff to proceed with investigating bringing Monica Coleman in as a guest speaker for the three Regional Councils.

MOTION

CARRIED

6. Communication Work: After a brief discussion, Karen and Geof agreed to meet at a later date to summarize the communication items that might go into a HFRC Newsletter focusing on the work of the Mission and Discipleship Commission. It was suggested that folks could email them with suggestions.

New Business:

1. Racial Justice Workshops: No dates have been set for the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council's series of workshops.
2. Sula Anne raised the item of the pastoral letter from the Vatican that was published on March 15th. The letter stated that no blessing of same-sex marriages could happen. She felt strongly that a response was needed from the United Church of Canada. Diane Matheson-Jimenez suggested that Karen Orlandi, as Acting Chair, write a letter to the HFRC Executive. The HFRC Executive could then determine their response.

Staff Reports:

Kathy Douglas, Minister, Faith Formation:

- **Taste of Palestine**-3 sessions well received and lots of interest and movement. W DMJ
- **Pastoral Care Training/support**-working with a team to prepare programming for both volunteer teams and paid accountable folks doing PC during Covid: -grief/isolation/funerals

- **Duty of Care/Faithful Footsteps**-Always good to remind Communities of Faith that they need to 'always' be reducing risk and making inclusive safe space in their ministries
- **Music Ministry Support**-helping music ministry people in our churches to share celebrations and struggles...feel support and collaborate. I have been asked to help coordinate this
- **Mental Health in Rural Areas:** " In the Know'...partner program with U of Guelph and CMHA [In the Know \(cmha.ca\)](http://cmha.ca)
- **Key stats from UCC Camps**
REMEMBER-OUR CAMPING MINISTRIES ARE ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO SHARE FAITH FORMATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH.
OMC Survey 2020 UCCanada Report
Supplement <file:///C:/Users/DouglasKathy/Downloads/OMC-Survey-2020-UCCanada-Report-supplement-1.pdf>
There is lots of information in here for the United Church Camps to use.
Some brief highlights:
UCC Camps saw a 99% decrease in the number of campers from 2019
UCC Camps reported a \$6.28 million loss in revenue in 2020
45 unique UCC sites responded to the survey
64% of our camps have no full-time staff
100% of our camp directors responding were white – 38% were male, 62% were female
71% of our camps had no onsite guests or programming in 2020
40% of our camps saw lower donations than in 2019

My Sabbatical has been approved for May 17 -Aug 13, 2021

Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister for Social Justice:

- **March 5, 2021** folks from across the country met to talk about the crisis in LTC facilities. Engaging in a plenary session, we heard from Steven Staples of the Canadian Health Coalition. Steven is working on a national day of action at the end of April and will channel information to interested parties through me. In smaller regional groups, we began networking and sharing resources. The next step will be to another gathering but this time we will divide into interest groups based on how we feel called to respond to the crisis.
- **PIE Day is March 14** – a time to be Public Intentional and Explicit about our commitment to being an affirming ministry! Use your email contacts and social media platforms to share how you will work at PIE in the coming year. Moderator Bott created a video, encouraging our participation in PIE Day. Who can you share it with?!
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX-w46NSfH0>)

- **March 25, 2021** folks engaging in For the Love of Creation resource, or who are generally passionate about climate justice, will come together to share ideas, resources, best practices...and begin conversation about ways to partner in the work to maximize the impact. All are welcome! (<https://fortheloveofcreation.ca/>)
- Motion from the HF M&D Commission meeting on February 9th, 2021 was declared ultra vires.

Thérèse Samuel, Minister Right Relations and Social Justice:

- **CALLS TO THE CHURCH: EVENTS AND PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATION**

in preparation for the visit of **The Honourable Senator Murray Sinclair**, Diane MJ, Kathy D, Thérèse S met with Sara Stratton (GC Staff), and the following tentative plans for sessions to prepare people for the upcoming event with Justice Sinclair:

Main Event:

WHAT: UCC, Residential Schools and TRC 101

An Introduction or Refresher to key events and issues related to the United Church of Canada's call to right relations between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples.

WHEN: Two offerings, one daytime and one evening. Tentative dates (dates to be confirmed, Indigenous Elder hopefully to be part of each)

Thursday April 29, morning

Wednesday May 5, evening

Experiential Events:

Tentative pending availability of facilitators, etc., hoped to precede the main event mentioned above:

- KAIROS Blanket Exercise – Virtual

- Woodland Centre tour of Mohawk Institute

Then, following the event with Justice Sinclair on May 28th, another event for developing concrete Action Plan. Yet to be planned.

- **GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME (GLI):**

Light a Candle on April 8, vigil to support the guaranteed livable income movement: This is primarily a virtual vigil. People are being asked to light a candle, take a picture and post it to social media, send it to the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, local MP, news outlets. Follow up with email or phone call.

There will be small in-person vigils held at select locations, with designated individuals only. The public is NOT invited to attend these, to ensure all restrictions on gatherings are upheld.

- **ORIENTATION**

At this time, I am, with significant guidance, support and input from the staff team, orienting myself to the work of the region related to my two portfolios of Right Relations and Social Justice and the online office technology.

Dave Jagger, Stewardship and Gifts Officer:

- Giving Program: “Called to be the Church”: <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/get-involved/stewardship/called-be-church>
- For 2021: “The Journey” is a parallel project to “Called to be the Church” Stewardship program Module 1: (now available) Covers topics of Stewardship Best Practices. Four sessions of 2 hrs each: Register with Dave: djagger@united-church.ca registration limited

Module 2: will be available later and will provide support for Communities of Faith while they complete the five-week Stewardship programme.

Next Meeting: April 13th, 2021 from 1pm-3pm

Worship by: Michelle

Appendix A:

Shining Waters Regional Council is doing vital work in the area of harm reduction, and we are being asked to participate:

From Jeffrey Dale -

“As some of you may be aware, the 2018 General Council Meeting received a proposal from the then BC Conference regarding the Decriminalization of Illicit Substances for Personal Use. The proposal was not engaged at the meeting, and instead referred to the Executive of General Council. The decision was made at the Executive level that there were two pathways for the church to proceed:

- 1) That the church take no action.
- 2) That the church engage in a wider conversation.

I have been working on how best to frame this particular conversation, and through conversations with Amy Crawford (Team Lead for Communities in Mission/Ministry at the General Council) and Stephen Fetter (United-In-Learning) we have been considering the possibility of the church hosting a series where we can present a fulsome conversation around the need for the Decriminalization of Illicit Substances for Personal Use across the country, and how the United Church of Canada is engaged in Harm Reduction. These conversations are currently being sponsored by the Communities in Mission/Ministry Unit and Shining Waters Regional Council, we are hopeful that other Regions would like to join us in the sponsoring of these conversations. If you think your region might be interested in being a co-sponsor, please let me know.

As of right now, the plan for the conversations would be as follows (this is open to development and change):

1st Meeting (April 14th, 7-8:30pm) – Harm Reduction and United Church Engagement

We would be asking any of you that are engaged in Harm Reduction work in your community of faith to be willing to be part of a panel or provide us with a video that explains how you are engaged in harm reduction. We would be able to hold space for a time of a “round table” discussion/panel and videos (for those who are not comfortable speaking in a discussion) and then time for questions and answers.

2nd Meeting (April 21st, 7-8:30pm) - The Decriminalization of Illicit Substances for Personal Use

We would engage in another round table conversation with both people in the church who have a direct experience with the realities of criminalization of illicit substances. We are hopeful that members of the United Church (with lived experience; familial and personal), Medical Officials and Social Service Providers would be willing to engage in this particular conversation. We would also host a question and answer period after.

3rd Meeting (April 28th, 7-8:30pm) – The Theology of Harm Reduction

The third meeting would bring together a conversation of where God’s call is in understanding Harm Reduction. How is God calling us to engage further? What does the scriptures teach us about harm reduction? This would be a great opportunity for people who would be participating in this meeting to present their own understanding of a theology of harm reduction, and then a discussion could happen. The discussion would be different than the previous question and answers, and more focused on smaller groups speaking with one another (maybe in break out rooms) around what they heard and witnessed.”

If one of these specific topics peak your own interest and you would be willing to participate or send in a video, please let me know.