

President's "Monthly Message" October 12, 2023 - November 11, 2023

Greetings, Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council, Staff and All Communities of Faith

This is my fifth month as your President and as I continue sharing with you what I have been doing on your behalf from October 12, 2023 to November 11, 2023 as I travel within the Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council.

On Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 7:30pm via ZOOM, I attended a listening session for the October 21, 2023 General Council Annual Meeting. As President, I am a Commissioner to General Council 44. I have been reading all of the background information regarding the remit and the proposals that will be discussed and voted on next week.

On Saturday, October 21, 2023, beginning at 12:30pm, I attended via ZOOM the Annual General Meeting of General Council 44. As your President of the Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council, I serve as a Commissioner to GC44. All proposals that came before us were passed. As this was my first time as a Commissioner, I attended several sessions with General Council Staff where we as Presidents could ask questions for clarification on any of the proposals or remit. Everything was explained as to how the day would unfold, so making sure we attended all sessions beforehand was very important. The GC Staff are highly skilled in the knowledge of the church (policy and polity). I learned a great deal over the past few months listening to those who wrote the proposals as well as those who were not in favor of them. I think as CoF's we should be making sure we are kept up to date with what is happening at the General Council level as well as with the region. If people have questions, there are always those who can direct you to the right person within the church structure, whether locally within a Community of Faith, the wider church including the Bermuda-Nova Scotia Executive, or the General Council Staff Office. All you have to do is reach out to any one of us and we will be more than happy to assist you in any way.

On Tuesday, October 24, 2023, I attended an all day, in-person Executive Meeting at St. Andrews United Church, Truro, NS. We began at 9:30am with a welcome and check in with each other. We continued with our business meeting. In the afternoon, led by Rev. Faith March-MacCuish, our Executive Minister, we entered a session to update priorities and focus on the strategic plan. I concluded our meeting with a reflection and prayer.

On Wednesday, October 25, 2023 I attended via ZOOM at 10:30am the Annual Meeting Planning Committee Meeting where I am a member of this committee as President of the Region.

On your behalf, I brought greetings from the Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council, Staff and All Communities of Faith when I attended the Justice, Mission and Outreach Committee (JMOC) Gathering on Thursday, November 9, 2023 to Friday, November 10, 2023 in Tatamagouche, NS. This was a combined gathering between Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters (FSLDW) and Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council (BNS). There was a lot of discussion around Palestine, Mental Health and Indigenous Rights. Dr. Kathy Bigsby (FSLDW) and Dr. Sandi Tomsons (BNS) are co-chairs of the Justice, Mission and Outreach Committee and the Minister for Justice,

Mission and Outreach, Rev. Sherpherd Munikwa from the Sackville, NB office were all in attendance. I enjoyed my time immensely. I had never been to Tatamagouche before. The peacefulness of the grounds along the water's edge even at this time of year was breathtaking. The Staff were wonderful and very accommodating during my time there.

As I stated in my notice last week, due to a family emergency in October and my illness in November, I've been limited to only participating in a few in-person gatherings this month, while the rest were all online via Zoom. I had to postpone commitments but will resume as soon as I am able. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

On Saturday, November 11, 2023 I spent my morning watching the Remembrance Day Service from Ottawa. During these trying times, with so many conflicts going on around the world, we should all take some time to reflect on who we are and how we'd like the world to see us, how we would like others to know what is truly in our hearts and minds and how we can learn to communicate with one another through peace and reconciliation.

In Peace and Hope,

Shauna MacDonald  
President  
Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council