

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
BERMUDA-NOVA SCOTIA REGIONAL COUNCIL
REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE
June 20, 2024 at 9:30am via video conference

RC1

ATTENDANCE

Derek Elsworth, Peter Hardy, April Hart, Shauna MacDonald, Angela MacLean, Faith March-MacCuish, Donald Morrison, Ann Piper, Carol Smith, Janet Sollows, Mary Taylor, Donna Tourneur.

Attendance

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Donna Tourneur, the newly installed President, welcomed the Executive to the meeting. Special welcome was extended to new members Mary Taylor, President-Elect for the region; Angela MacLean, Nominations chair; Janet Sollows, Ministry Resources chair; Carol Smith, Member at Large; and Ann Piper, UCW Representative. The members of the Executive took time to check-in and to introduce themselves. President opened the meeting. The President offered an opening prayer.

Welcome

Opening Prayer

QUORUM AND CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL

The President, Donna Tourneur, noted that a quorum was present and constituted the council in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, and by the authority of Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council, for all the business that shall properly come before it.

Quorum
Constitution of
the Council

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

Donna Tourneur, President, acknowledged the land on which we gather, with respect for all peoples of this land as we live out the apology, and move towards becoming the community that God calls us to be together in peace and friendship.

Acknowledging
the Land

AGENDA

MOTION: (Peter Hardy/Carol Smith)

That the agenda be adopted, with the addition of Conflict Resolution Facilitation under New Business.

CARRIED

Agenda

MINUTES

MOTION: (Peter Hardy/Janet Sollows)

That the minutes of the April 11, 2024 meeting of the Executive be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION: (Shauna MacDonald/Peter Hardy)

That the minutes of the April 19, 2024 meeting of the Executive be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING

Communications

The Executive Minister updated the Executive on the fact that this committee requires members in order to meet. The Executive Minister will be in contact with Nominations.

Business
Arising

Communications

Evaluation of
RC Structure**Evaluation of Regional Council Structure**

The Executive Minister reported that an update on the process has now been provided to all three regional councils. The Executive Minister has a July meeting planned with the consultant, and an update will be sent to the regional communities of faith after this meeting.

Cluster
Animator**Cluster Animator**

The Executive Minister reported that the position description has been drafted and is in the final review process before posting. It is hoped that this position will be filled in September.

Sackville Office-
Mount Allison
Agreement**Sackville Office-Mount Allison Agreement**

The Executive Minister reported that several meetings have taken place with the University, and an email has been sent to the representatives for agreement on what is being asked of the Sackville Office. It is hoped that the move will begin over the summer.

Correspondence**CORRESPONDENCE**Seeds of Hope

1. Seeds of Hope – A letter was received to confirm that the region has received a grant of \$15,000 (fifteen thousand) to be used for the Cluster Animator position.

Reports**REPORTS**President**PRESIDENT**

The President, Donna Tourneur, has attended an amalgamation service and a retirement party and noted that it has been a privilege to attend events on behalf of the regional council. The President also met with the Executive Minister and the three new presidents of the eastern regions, and will represent the region at a funeral service next week.

Executive
Minister**EXECUTIVE MINISTER**

The Executive Minister reported that the three regional council annual meetings have now taken place. In the short term, the Executive Minister will be working on follow up pieces from the annual meetings and the position description and hiring process for the newly approved full time administrative position for the Sackville Office.

Finance and
Administration**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

April Hart, Division chair, presented the report of the division. The chair reported that the majority of the recent work was brought to the annual meeting, however the work of the committees continues. The chair reported that the contribution from the region to the Alison Etter Memorial Fund has been made.

Ministry
Resources**MINISTRY RESOURCES** – Appendix A

Janet Sollows, new chair of the Division, presented the report, included in the appendix. The chair has been attending committee meetings to familiarize herself with the work of the Division.

Regional
Services and
Support**REGIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT** – Appendix B

Donnie Mission, chair, presented the report of the Division, included in the appendix. The Division have noted the possible distraction of having a regional strategic plan, at the same time that the General Council has been launching and using great resources to prioritize the national church's strategic plan. The Division discussed whether the regional plan could be folded into the United Church strategic plan, and asked that this suggestion be brought to the next meeting of the Executive. It was agreed that this conversation would be added to the agenda of the fall meeting of the Executive.

Nominations**NOMINATIONS**

Angela MacLean, new chair, reported that the committee has not met, but she is looking forward to working with this group of members. The chair will have a report for the next meeting of the Executive.

STAFF SUPPORT

Staff Support

In the absence of the Staff Committee representative, the Executive Minister reported that the two 360 Reviews for staff have been completed, and that the committee will soon be meeting to finish this work and plan for the hiring process for the full-time Sackville administrative position.

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

United Church Women

Ann Piper, United Church Women (UCW) Representative, presented the report. Ann reported on some of the recent activities of the UCW, including the strategy to think outside the box and determine new connections and possibilities.

MOTION: (Shauna MacDonald/Ann Piper)

That the reports of the region be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

New Business

EXECUTIVE MEETING DATES

Meeting Dates

The Executive discussed meeting dates for the 2024-25 year. The following Executive meeting dates were agreed upon:

September 11-12, 2024 – in person at Bible Hill, NS
(beginning at 5:00pm, September 11)
December 5, 2024 at 9:30am – via Zoom
March 6, 2025 at 9:30am – via Zoom
June 20, 2025 at 9:30am – via Zoom

It was noted that additional meetings will be called by via Zoom video conferencing, if needed, for business arising.

(Derek Elsworth joined the meeting)

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATES

Annual Meeting Updates

General Council Commissioners

The Executive Minister reported that a full slate of commissioners were elected at the annual meeting, and this contact list will now be forwarded to General Council.

GC Commissioners

Proposal 1 – Sustaining University Chaplaincy in Bermuda-Nova Scotia Region

The Executive Minister reported that the Justice, Mission and Outreach Committee will now work with chaplaincy to begin some visioning work around the way forward.

Proposal 1 – Sustaining University Chaplaincy in BNS

Proposal 2- Clergy Housing Assistance (Region)

A formal letter will be sent to Pastoral Relations to begin this work approved at the annual meeting.

Proposal 2- Clergy Housing Assistance (Region)

Proposal 3 – Clergy Housing Assistance (General Council)

The Executive Minister reported that this proposal and the motion from the region have now been sent to General Council. An email confirming receipt has been received.

Proposal 2- Clergy Housing Assistance (GC)

Proposal 4 – Next Stop on the Reconciliation Journey

The Executive Minister noted that she is discerning how best to proceed with this work. The Executive Minister reported that she is also part of Task Group with the Tatamagouche Centre for reparation, and a Task Group with General Council for the reconciliation journey. The Executive Minister is looking for wisdom from Executive as to who best could form a small group to do this work, such as the President, Property Committee, etc. The Executive are asked to please forward ideas of gifts and skills for this work.

Proposal 4 – Next Stop on the Reconciliation Journey

Centennial
Commemoration

Centennial Commemoration

General Council have announced that the 100th Anniversary Commemorative service will be taking place in Newfoundland in June, 2025. The Executive Minister requests that the Executive bring ideas to the fall meeting regarding ideas for celebrations and commemorations throughout the region. The two annual meeting planning committees from Bermuda-Nova Scotia and Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters will begin meeting together in the fall to plan this joint event.

Conflict
Resolution

CONFLICT RESOLUTION FACILITATION – File# 2023-0622-01

File #2023-
0622-01

The Executive Minister updated the Executive on the work on this file. Four (4) Executive Members are requested to be a part of the conflict resolution process as a part of the healing and education. It would be preferred that members who served on the Executive at the time on the complaint be named to this group. It was agreed that Donna Tourneur, April Hart, Shauna MacDonald, Donnie Morrison be the Executive representatives.

The Executive Minister noted that a document will be signed, on behalf of the region, agreeing that we aspire to resolve the conflict by moving into a mediated conversation in order to restore to community.

Next Meeting

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Executive will be in person in Bible Hill, NS, on September 11-12, 2024, beginning on September 11, 2024 at 5:00pm. Carol Smith offered to lead devotions.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (April Hart/Mary Taylor)

That the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED

Benediction

BENEDICTION

Faith March-MacCuish, Executive Minister, closed the meeting with prayer.

Donna Tourneur
President

Faith March-MacCuish
Executive Minister

Appendix A

MINISTRY RESOURCES

Division of Ministry Resources
Report to the Executive
June 20, 2024

The Division of Ministry Resources met on May 23, 2024. New positions on the Division included Janet Sollows as Chair; Alicia Cox as Secretary; Sean Boulger as Chair of Pastoral Relations and Stephen Mills as Chair of Retiree Support. Thanks was expressed to members of the Division who have faithfully served their terms – Anne Cameron, Chair; Tom Woods, Pastoral Relations; and Ruth Gamble, Retiree Support. Congratulations was also extended to Ruth Gamble on her recent ordination.

The Pastoral Relations Committee continues to meet monthly. Updates on the work of the Pastoral Relations Committee are found in the weekly announcements for the Region. Members of the committee receive emails between meetings to update them on calls, appointments and other situations needing approval.

The Future Directions Committee is continuing their study of “Unbinding the Gospel.” They have a draft of an “Ending Well” checklist for congregations for their self-evaluation. The Future Directions Committee hosted a workshop at the Annual Meeting with 35 people attending. The Committee plans to have a day-long meeting in the fall to plan for the coming year. They are also interested in exploring how their work and that of the Growth Animator intersects.

The Retiree Support Committee is trying to update contacts and establish groups of retirees in each area of the Region that will meet and support one another. Ruth Gamble will be the secretary for the committee.

The Licensing Committee continues to field requests for permission to administer sacraments and liaise with Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWLs). The Licensing Committee received an invitation from the Fundy-Saint Lawrence Dawning Waters Region to collaborate on a LLWL Annual Event to be held in October in Sackville, NB. Discussions regarding leadership, budget and cost-sharing are taking place. The committee is hoping to be able to conduct LLWL interviews at this event.

The Faith Story and Community Covenant Committee is planning for a Faith Story workshop to take place in the Valley in the fall.

Our next scheduled meeting will be on October 3, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Sollows,
Chair, Division of Ministry Resources

Appendix B**REGIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT****Divisional Reports to Regional Council Executive
Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council****Division Name:** Regional Services and Support

June 20, 2024

Committee Names within the Division

Faith Formation and Leadership Development (FFLD)

Communications

Children, Youth and Young Adult (CYaYA)

Stewardship

Justice, Mission & Outreach (JMO)

Annual Meeting Planning (AMPC)

Affirm

Date of Divisional Meetings: A Zoom meeting was held on June 5, 2024.**Report of the decisions and discussion items before the Division:****Webinars**

The Division continues to keep the topic of webinars before it. Division committees had agreed to being responsible for providing webinars on topics relevant to communities of faith. The goal was to do one educational webinar per month between October and April (excluding January). Webinars connect committees and networks to communities of faith.

The Division will plan webinars in a more intentional way going forward.

FFLD and Affirm have been organizing webinars.

It was discussed that we need to offer again a Trustees webinar and better advertise the M&P training webinars that David Hewitt presents. Also discussed that webinars are not the solution for every pastoral charge and we need some local in-person training. FFLD is looking at in-person events. It is felt that in-person meetings are the gold standard, but this needs to be balanced against good financial stewardship.

Retreat

The Division is still considering an in-person retreat. JMO has an annual fall retreat and the chair of JMO is doubtful about their capacity to attend a division retreat in the fall. JMO members don't want to take time away from their work and might not connect the need to attend a Division retreat with their work on the ground.

It was agreed that the Division Chair will send out a small 3 to 4 question survey asking "if this weekend retreat is available to you, would you be interested in attending?"

Strategic Plan

The Division discussed how well the General Council strategic plan resonates with people. "Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice" seems to be inspiring United Church members while our

BNS Region strategic plan might be a distraction from the more popular message. The BNS strategic plan falls in line with the United Church strategic plan and has valuable objectives – could it be folded into the United Church strategic plan so that we can capitalize on how that one is presented, while fleshing out the UCC plan out with our objectives for our region?

Dates of Committee Meetings: *(since last Executive meeting)*

- Faith Formation and Leadership Development (*meet monthly*)- Mar. 14, Apr. 15, May 16 and June 20, 2024
- Communications ∅
- Children, Youth and Young Adult (*meet monthly*)- Mar. 19, Apr. 2, May 1 and June 12, 2024
- Stewardship was on sabbatical this year so that the Chair could do the work of the Regional Council President
- Justice, Mission & Outreach - Apr. 16, 2024
- Annual Meeting Planning - meets monthly from Sept. to June (except for December)
- Affirm - Mar. 26, Apr. 23, and May 21, 2024

∅ = no meeting dates reported

Appendix B - continued

REGIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT - continued

Reports of the decisions and discussion items from the Committees:

Faith Formation and Leadership Development

The Division Committee welcomed FFLD Secretary Susan Reid to report.

FFLD offered 5-week program of weekly webinars centered around Intergenerational Worship and aimed at lay community members who are interested in leading or assisting in leading worship in their community of faith. The committee was discouraged by the numbers – only 7 participants. The program worked very well by Zoom, with lots of opportunities for individuals to contribute and they did.

FFLD is in the process of putting together another webinar on the topic of Discipleship. The committee is also looking at the possibility of recording webinars in the future depending on permissions required. FFLD is also exploring logistics on doing in-person educational events.

Communications

This committee has no chair. Its activity is suspended until the task group set up to examine the communications work of our region completes the work.

Children, Youth and Young Adult

In the fall, CYaYA looked at its mandate and set priorities for the year. The committee is looking at food insecurity in youths and supported Dalhousie University chaplaincy meals.

The committee was busy with planning for Youth @ Region. 50 youths and young adults attended this year, returning numbers to what they were prior to COVID.

The committee is planning for a Rendez-vous pilgrimage from Nova Scotia to St. Catharines, ON, where Rendez-vous is being held this year from July 3-6. CYaYA received a grant for \$10,000 to help bring youth to St. Catharines. They hired a bus that holds 56 people. The pilgrimage is being organized with FSLDW Region. About 25 are registered from this region.

Camps Kidston and Sherbrooke Lake leader training happened a few weeks ago. CYaYA provided financial support for this and invited camp directors to provide updates. The camps are working well together. The camps are in need of money and volunteers.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee decided that they would step back until the Chair, BNS Regional Council President, Shauna, is past president and then they will begin going around to communities of faith.

Justice, Mission & Outreach

In the past year, JMO has held 3 Zoom meetings and one in-person meeting. Since pandemic restrictions have been lifted, this fall will be the third in-person meeting.

JMO was active at both the BNS and FSLDW annual meetings, organizing speakers and workshops.

The committee is beginning the fall gathering planning.

The Just Peace in Israel and Palestine working group is not pausing for the summer, but the other working groups are, and will be resuming in the fall. There will still be calls to action from working groups through email networks and announcements.

The committee is considering how to bring FDEE into their work. There is an eagerness to collaborate. Shepherd Munikwa has been gauging interest and hopefully there will be participation from FDEE at the JMO fall gathering.

Annual Meeting Planning

Chair Jane McDonald will meet with the FSLDW planning committee on June 10 to talk about planning for the joint annual meeting to be held in Sackville NB next year. It might be mostly a celebration meeting together and the business conducted on-line before the meeting.

Affirm

Affirm would like to look at an equity support team. Growth Animator, Sharon Ballantyne, has been attending committee meetings and has experience in this.

Appendix B - continued**REGIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT** - continued

The committee is hoping to have a webinar led by Katie Logan about queer identity issues. She is coordinating this with Executive Minister Faith.

Affirm is working on developing its social media presence with which the committee can offer resources to the Region and Communities of Faith. The committee provides announcements for the weekly regional announcements.

Concerns of the Division and the Committees:

We continue to be concerned about the low membership of the FFLD Committee.

Recommended Motions from the Division to the Executive

As discussed above, the Division asks the Executive to consider folding the BNS strategic plan into the United Church strategic plan so that we can capitalize on how that one is presented, while fleshing out the UCC plan out with our objectives for our region?

-Donnie Morrison
Chair
Division of Regional Services and Support