

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of a meeting of
the Executive of Toronto Conference
Tuesday, April 27, 2010**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met by conference call on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 to consider one item. The meeting began at 11:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

Members present

Carol Gierak (president), David Allen (executive secretary), Linda Parsons (Living Waters), Marg Walker (president elect), Tom Clarke (Toronto Southeast), Paget Blaza (Toronto Southeast), Kevin Logie (Living Waters)

Regrets

Bill Jermyn (Living Waters), Ralph Schmidt (Northern Waters), Don Laing (South West) Linda Thompson (Northern Waters)

Absent

Karen Williams (South West), Ron Coughlin (South West), Brian Goodings (Northern Waters)

Constituting the meeting

President Carol Gierak welcomed people to the call, constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ to conduct such business as should properly come before it, and led in prayer.

Statement on sex education curriculum

The Executive had been asked whether the Conference would be making a statement on the implementation of a new sex education program in the Province of Ontario. Members discussed their feelings about and understanding of the issues involved, and what would be unique to a response from the Conference.

There was a consensus that the Conference should make a statement focusing on the values we hold as Christians within the United Church. Some of the comments that might be included:

- We want to give voice that there are different perspectives
- We can speak to the values we hold; we have no direct knowledge of the curriculum or the research behind it

- We want children to have respect for themselves and others
- Parents need to be part of the education as well as the professionals
- We are not a multicultural group so can't speak for others
- We don't need to cross swords with those with other theological perspectives
- Understanding may help protect the vulnerable
- people are responsible for their actions
- we're created as diverse beings, e.g. differing kinds of families and relationships
- there is a need for something in a safe environment rather than just on the Internet
- education needs to be done in a non-judgmental way
- respect leads to healthy relationships
- we recognize the challenge of diversity, as we know from our own experience in the church
- we respect the different faiths
- the *Song of Faith* might give us some guidance.

The president and executive secretary will draft a letter to the premier and education minister with copies to the Presbyteries.

The Executive recognized that there is a gap in our policy on making public statements, both at the Conference and Presbytery levels. How do we make statements on a timely basis? Presbyteries are also swamped with requests.

Adjournment

The business of the meeting completed, the president-elect declared the meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Carol Gierak
President

David Allen
Executive Secretary