

**Settlement and Pastoral Relations Committee
Meeting Minutes, Thursday, October 28, 2010
at the Conference office**

The Toronto Conference Settlement and Pastoral Relations committee met on Thursday, October 28, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Conference office.

Members Present

David Shearman (chair); David Allen (staff); John Hamilton (South West, lay); Rick McKinley (Living Waters, lay); Helen Prior (Northern Waters, ordered); Jean Porter (Toronto Southeast, lay)

Regrets

Linda Pennock (Conference, diaconal), Kate Young (South West, ordered); Elaine Lush (Living Waters, ordered); Peter McNaughton (Toronto Southeast, ordered); Linda Thompson (Northern Waters, lay)

Welcome, introductions and worship

David Shearman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He led the group in worship using the *Still Speaking* daily devotional from the United Church of Christ. He read from 2Tim 3.10-15 and offered prayer.

Agenda

The group AGREED that the agenda be adopted as circulated.

Minutes

MOTION by John Hamilton/Helen Prior that the minutes of the October 21, 2009 meeting of the committee be approved as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Business arising from the minutes

Signing authority: See p. 2. A new motion is required for the 2010-2011 year.

MOTION by Rick McKinley/Jean Porter that for the 2010-2011 Pastoral Year, the committee authorize David Shearman and/or Linda Pennock to be signing officers on behalf of the committee to sign calls, transfers, and warrants to covenant, but if there are anomalies in the system, David and/or Linda have the option to consult the committee.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Electronic signatures: See p. 2. A response from Wendy Cranston of the General Council office indicated that a decision had been made that either faxed original signatures or pdf files of scanned originals that have been signed are fine. Sending an electronic signature separate from a form and having it added by a third party is not fine.

Template motions: See p. 5. Elaine Eve and David Allen worked on template motions for pastoral relations work; the motions were sent to the committee via email October 8, 2010 (Appendix A). Following discussion, the following changes will be made:

- Change the words “accede to” to “concur with”.
- Ann Harbridge had noted a couple of typos and had three questions regarding potential motions for Designated Lay Ministry and Interim Ministry
 - When a DLM position ends, what happens with DLM’s Presbytery membership? The committee acknowledged the confusion found at Section 310(b) which leaves a gap when a DLM finishes an appointment. Until *The Manual* is changed to address this issue, no motion is required because a non-active DLM could be appointed as a member at large under Section 310(b)xiii.
 - Sacraments privileges for retired DLMs: This is an optional motion as per Section 343(c)iii. In looking at Section 343, the committee noted that *The Manual* is unclear about the status of a DLM in between appointments, so it is not clear whether Section 343 applies in that case.
 - Section 389(b)viii mentions information to be received: Following discussion, the committee agreed that a motion should be included to receive the report for information. Presbytery may choose to take other action based on the report, but that would be a separate motion.

The committee will request that Presbytery pastoral relations committees/Commissions and admin staff use the motions as drafted.

It was also noted that former Staff Associates and LPMiTs are to be part of the PLAR process. The CPM’s are working with those who are affected by this.

Meaning of “consultation”: See p. 5: Section 365(d) – What are the expectations regarding consultation? The committee recognized that the authority for this section resides at the Presbytery level; the committee will request each Presbytery to have a conversation on this matter.

Transfer Committee meeting – October 20, 2010

David Shearman had attended a meeting of the Transfer Committee on October 20, and made a report to the committee (Appendix B). The report will also be posted on the Conference’s website. The committee discussed the information and asked questions for clarification. In this first year of the new system, there will be many questions and concerns that get raised. We anticipate the second and subsequent years should be more smooth.

Presbytery concerns

The Presbyteries are still working out their new structures and dealing with the hold-over of some of the previous Presbyteries. Generally, there are too few people with too much work, and sometimes files are incomplete. Appreciation was expressed for the personnel minister staffing. Overlap between Commissions has not been helpful when it’s unclear who should be taking the lead.

South West: Presbytery has a number of charges moving ahead and not following procedures.

Living Waters: Presbytery has named a pastoral relations person for the south, central and north sections of the Presbytery.

Northern Waters: There has been conversation about the workload for one person doing much of the pastoral relations work.

Toronto Southeast: Jean is concerned that she is not a member of the Presbytery; she said that the Presbytery needs to make sure that a regular Presbytery member is present at the settlement committee meetings.

Correspondence

A number of items of correspondence were noted. No response has been received on the e-mail request regarding Section 444 and Pastoral Charges in arrears. David A. will follow up on this.

Lunch

Rick McKinley led grace and lunch was shared. The group reconvened at 12:37 p.m.

Correspondence (cont'd)

A question was raised about the role of Presbytery or Conference when Ministry Personnel dies. Committee members shared their experience of Presbytery being very involved, but in other cases sometimes the Presbytery doesn't even know who the minister is, and sometimes retired ministers or their families don't want wider church involvement.

The committee will request each Presbytery to have a conversation about the role of retired Ministry Personnel including the issue of who would conduct a funeral.

Marriage policy and VAM form

A number of questions have arisen during the year; the committee made some comments for changes to the policy:

- Many congregations use marriage registers issued and owned by the province;
- We need to include Presbytery-designated ministries
- Use "registration" rather than licensed "permanent registration to conduct"
- An "on-going United Church Pastoral Charge"

David A. will draft a policy and procedures taking into consideration the comments received at this meeting and at the February 9, 2011 meeting of the Conference Executive.

The committee was asked questions about VAMs:

Can a person be in one Presbytery as a VAM and also in an appointment in another Presbytery or should the appointment supersede and the VAM status be dropped? The committee discussed the matter and decided to not make any suggestions in this regard.

Can a Designated Lay Minister be a VAM? Can a retired DLM be a VAM? The committee recognized that in both cases Presbytery would make the decision. The committee is not offering an opinion on this matter.

Timeline for upcoming year (Appendix C)

The committee reviewed the timeline for the year and made changes and additions (new version attached).

Conference personnel ministers

David Allen reported on topics discussed by the personnel ministers.

Pre-retirement workshop: For many years the Conference has arranged a pre-retirement workshop with assistance from General Council staff. With General Council cutbacks, staff in that office have devised a new way of providing this service through monthly conference calls and personal telephone assistance. One of the big issues, though, has been a discussion about life after retirement, e.g. etiquette about staying on in a congregation following retirement, etc. Conference staff are considering whether this kind of workshop on transitions may be useful. Ken MacDonald is taking the lead on this.

List of spiritual directors: Teresa Burnett-Cole is developing a list of spiritual directors. There have been an increasing number of ministers looking for this kind of help.

Support for Ministry Personnel, e.g. workplace harassment: The new Ontario legislation regarding workplace harassment is having an impact on the church as employer. Some of the initial thinking on this matter is that it would be good for each Pastoral Charge to have an Official Board workshop on bullying and harassment. David A. will be taking this to the Conference Executive for discussion. As part of the discussion, the committee was reminded of the work done three years ago on care of Ministry Personnel; Presbyteries were requested to consider a number of recommendations that were included in the report. Presbyteries will be re-informed about that work.

Racial justice training follow-up: The four racial justice workshops have taken place, and there are still several hundred Ministry Personnel who have not taken the course. More work will be done on this.

Criteria for people to be on the supply list: The personnel ministers are getting more clear about who would be on the Conference-produced supply list. A question was asked about people who do occasional preaching, e.g. Rick McKinley. Do we have criteria for people like Rick?

Settlement report

The report was done in two parts this past year. The list of those Retained on Rolls was given to the Executive at its September meeting. David Allen and Linda Gray have discovered that the report is supposed to go to the Conference's annual meeting. This will take place next year.

A question was asked about how ministers under suspension should be recorded in the report. The committee agreed to try using the category "Suspended from functioning" in its next report.

Payroll

The chair reminded the committee that Presbytery cannot approve calls or appointments if the Pastoral Charge is not enrolled in the payroll service. David requested that Presbytery not forward any calls without the ADP code; he will not sign the warrant to covenant without the payroll requirement filled. This should be dealt with in the JNAC process.

David also spoke about a situation where a congregation could not pay the payroll. The General Council and the Presbytery worked together with the Pastoral Charge and there was a good discussion.

End of meeting

The meeting ended at 1:58 p.m. The closing prayer was offered by David Shearman.

David Shearman, Chair

David Allen, minute-taker

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