

Mission and Discipleship Commission
Antler River Watershed Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Holding and Encouraging Communities of Faith

Approved Minutes
March 2, 10am -12 noon
via Zoom

Roster: Richard Auckland (Chair), Robert Harris, James Haupt, Glenda McMillan, Linda Badke, Carey Wagner, Tabitha Carey.

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

Kathy Douglas - Minister, Faith Formation

Ruthanna Mack - Admin Support

Dave Jagger - Stewardship and Gifts Officer

Thérèse Samuel – Minister for Right Relations and Social Justice

Present: Richard Auckland (Chair), Bob Harris, Glenda McMillan, Linda Badke, Tabitha Carey, Carey Wagner, Jim Haupt, Kathy Douglas, Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Thérèse Samuel, Ruthanna Mack, Randy MacKenzie, Norma Cronkwright, Pat Gilmore, Cindy Aniol

Regrets:

Welcome and Constitute Meeting: Richard welcomed everyone and made a special welcome to Thérèse. She was then asked to introduce herself to the group.

Acknowledging the Land: Richard acknowledged the land.

We acknowledge that we gather on the traditional territory of a number of First Nations and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages. This Land known as Antler River Watershed, was once settled by the Attawandaran Peoples. Later the Algonquin, the Anishinabe, the Lenne-Lenape and the Haudenosaunee Peoples who used their lands as their traditional gathering, hunting and congregating place. Let us also recognize our three closest neighbours from these nations: The Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, The Munsee-Delaware Nation, and the Oneida Nation of the Thames. We seek a new relationship with the Original Peoples of this land, one based in honour and deep respect.

Opening Worship: Diane Matheson-Jimenez offered words written by **Anne Lamott** which can be found at the following link:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=280285303459983&id=100044355462750

Corresponding Members:

- MOTION by Carey Wagner/Glenda McMillan that Norma Cronkwright, Randy MacKenzie, Pat Gilmore and Cindy Aniol from the Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resource Centre be named as corresponding members of the Antler River Watershed Regional Council Mission and Discipleship Commission.

MOTION

CARRIED

Approval of Agenda:

- 1st Amendment: Carey Wagner's report was added to the agenda.
- MOTION by Carey Wagner/Tabitha Carey that the 2021-03-02 ARW M&D Agenda be accepted as amended.

MOTION

CARRIED

Presentation from the Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resource Centre:

Randy MacKenzie presented an historical overview of the Center.

Pat Gilmore also spoke glowingly as the UCRD Rep.

Cindy Aniol mentioned difficulty in getting the word out about the Centre and about the "Did You Know" Newsletter.

Cindy noted that ARW makes up about 10% of the Centre's business.

Jim asked if his email could be added to their list of Newsletter recipients.

Richard asked the group if they would be willing to have their emails shared.

Richard will send contact list to Norma Cronkwright

Tabitha suggested that the Centre might ask local churches to add a link on their websites.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

- 1st Amendment: Carey's question regarding the LGBTQ+ community within the Ridgetown Chaplaincy. Richard followed up with Ridgetown Chaplaincy. Richard noted that the Chaplaincy is open and welcoming to the LGBTQ+ Community and have on occasion had participation from members of that community.
- 2nd Amendment: Add ARW Grants deadlines: April 1st and October 1st
- MOTION by Bob Harris/Glenda McMillan that the Mission and Discipleship of Antler River Watershed Regional Council approve the minutes of 2020-12-15 as amended.

MOTION

CARRIED

Amendments noted in the 2020-12-15 minutes.

Business Arising:

1. Ridgetown Chaplaincy Presentation follow up:
Kathy and Diane (had) shared their concern with Richard, around the Chaplain's usage of the word 'crazy'. We need to look for other words to use than 'crazy' as it stigmatizes those with mental illness unnecessarily. (examples of other words to substitute include but are not limited to: 'ridiculous', 'demanding', 'difficult', 'odd', 'hectic')
Richard also mentioned the possibility of the ARWRC hiring an Equity Monitor.
2. Climate Justice Zoom Call Jan. 18 – See Diane's Staff Report Below

Correspondence:

- a) ELUCO Annual Report circulated Feb 11th, 2021
- b) Bill C-6 correspondence from St. Luke's Church (shared)
– President Jane Van Patter's response (circulated)

New Business:

- a) Correct use of pronouns: 3-minute video & discussion:

<https://michikobownkai.wixsite.com/ministry/pronouns>

(first 3 minutes of the 12 are most impactful)

We, as members of the ARW Council are expected to be leaders of positive change. One way we can show support for the LGBTQ+ community. Looking to hire an Equity Monitor for the region.

- b) Further Leadership Opportunity:

Racial Justice Training – March 3 & 17, April 7 & 21 in the evening (tentative). Sessions start at 6 p.m. (link sent Sunday, Feb. 28)

All Commission members are expected to attend. **Register if you have not yet.**

- c) Report from Carey Wagner:

Report from the Antler River Watershed Region Social and Ecological Justice Network ARWR SEJN

- Request to continue to support UNJPPI (**U**nited **N**etwork for **J**ustice and **P**eace in **P**alestine **I**srael) - we several years the Division of Social Justice of London Conference and now ARWR Mission and Discipleship Commission have supported the work of UNJPPI – \$1000 has been the amount in the past.
- The ARWR SEJN has created a page for Social and Ecological Justice awareness and has added a link to the ARWR webpage

[Social & Ecological Justice Network – ARW Region – The Social and Ecological Justice Network of the Antler River Watershed Region connects people who are passionate about social justice concerns. \(arwsej.ca\)](#)

We think the web page is ready to be seen publicly, though the commission will need to know that we're still adding information and even pages. Our group is committed to updating our webpage going forward. We need guidance from the Commission as to who to talk to and what the process is for the Region helping people to know our site exists, and how we might integrate our social and eco justice site and pages with those on the Region web site, or at least refer to one another.

- The ARWR SEJN completed a book study CATHEDRAL ON FIRE | A CHURCH HANDBOOK FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS, we plan to offer it again to the region again in the near future.

Other Information The next meeting of the SJNOR (Social Justice Network of Ontario Regions) Thursday morning, April 15 at 10 AM

ISARC - The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC) is a non-partisan provincial network of faith groups working together for greater social justice and to eliminate poverty in Ontario through education, advocacy and work with low-income people. ISARC was born out of the hope that faith groups working together can contribute to new public policies based upon greater justice and dignity for Ontarians marginalized by poverty. We work with faith communities, other social justice partners and with government and politicians from all parties. Do we want to continue to support ISARC?

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

- Motion: Carey Wagner/Jim Haupt that the ARW Mission and Discipleship Commission pay the annual support of \$1000 to UNJPPI (United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine) via a payment to Bathurst United Church, Toronto earmarked for UNJPPI.

MOTION

CARRIED

Other Items: FYI

Feb. 23 – Presidents including President Jane met with Moderator

Staff Reports:

- **Kathy Douglas, Minister for Faith Formation:**

Taste of Palestine-2 sessions well received and 1 more scheduled session (on Action)

Senator Murray Sinclair prep-staff working on programming for education regarding the calls to the church

Name a person for **Guaranteed Living Income national cluster** needs/is asking for a rep from each region to sit on that. (we can send out a request in an email for this)

Pastoral Care Training/Support-working with a team to prepare programming for both volunteer and paid accountable folks doing Pastoral Care during Covid.

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

Education and Faithful response around Opioid Crisis and Homelessness

My Sabbatical is being approved for May 17 -Aug 13, 2021

- **Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister for Social Justice**

Friday March 5 at 11 am 35 participants from BC to Quebec (weren't able to tap into resource people in the East, but will work at it for next time) will join a Zoom call to talk about the **crisis in long term care facilities**. Steven Staples, National Director of Policy and Advocacy of the Canadian Health Coalition will be our guest speaker and will share what the CHC is doing in general and in response to COVID. The gathering is intended to connect likeminded folks and lay the foundation for concrete action that may be individual or collective

The climate justice call January 18th saw 90 enthusiasts from across the country gather to hear more about For the Love of Creation. As a direct result of that meeting, Thursday March 25, from 2:30 t 4 pm, climate enthusiasts from the 3 regions will gather for conversation about the For the Love of Creation resource. Anyone who is interested in conversation about how the resource can be rolled out and how to communicate this with churches in the region are welcome to join for a Zoom call. To receive the Zoom link, please contact Diane MJ (dmatheson@united-church.ca)

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 – 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 - 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 – 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.

- MOTION: Carey Wagner/Jim Haupt that the ARWRC Mission and Discipleship Commission endorse a series of events around Harm Reduction.

MOTION

CARRIED

- MOTION: Carey Wagner/Linda Badke that the ARW Mission and Discipleship Commission allocate \$1000 (from the M&D Events Budget) to each program staff for their discretionary use to add flexibility to their work. Reports from each staff to follow with details regarding how the funds are used.

MOTION

CARRIED

Next Meeting: April 6th, 10am – Noon, via zoom

Future meetings confirmed: 10am to Noon for all meetings

June 1st

September 7th (both September meetings to review and approve Mission Support Grant applications)

September 9th

November 9th

December 7th

January 11th, 2022

Glenda offered a closing prayer.

Carey made a motion to adjourn

Discussion of recording meetings tabled to next meeting.