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Highlights of the Fall Meeting for Antler River Watershed Regional Council



Early in 2021, the Executive and Commission members of the regional council together attended the four sessions of the United Church's racial justice training. That experience informed the spring meeting where time was devoted to Indigenous justice and anti-racism. It also informed this fall meeting where the traditional Land Acknowledgement shifted from a formula into a reflection. The title became "Reconciliation Focus" and we considered the nearest First Nations to us, the name of an Indigenous leader who influenced us and our next step in this journey towards reconciliation. The names were formed into a word image:

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Indigenous Leaders Who Have Influenced Us

Just as prominent as the names of national leaders were the names of Indigenous leaders known to us personally, such as Geraldine Robertson, Grafton and Eileen Antone and Janice Rising. We give thanks for these elders among us.

We were pleased to have Elaine Jacobs introduce us to Walpole Island (Bkejwanong Territory) and Tarance Whiteye to introduce us to the ministry of the congregation at Moraviantown. Chief Denise Stonefish of the Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown) also joined us to share with the regional council her people's deep connection to the land where the village of Fairfield once was and their hopes to create an interpretation centre there to expand the story curated by the museum.

Karlene Brown-Palmer opened our sessions with the lighting of the flame and offered us words of wisdom and insight in worship. Her unshakeable faith and

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were a gift that lifted our hearts and our hopes inspiring us to “Keep Calm and Rock On”.

The fall meeting of the regional council had two main foci:

1. Business and accountability;
2. Proposals to General Council 44.

The regional council received one proposal for its own consideration concerning the role of former ministry personnel continuing to offer ministerial leadership in a community of faith where they no longer serve. This was passed and directs the regional council to develop an educational plan and to raise concerns with the Office of Vocation concerning ministry personnel who continue to do this.

Another six proposals for General Council 44 were presented. Author, Jim Evans, shared these were formed from concerns voiced at a gathering sponsored by UniFaith. One of the six was withdrawn as a commitment has already been made to what it was requesting (a review of the new structure). The regional council's role was to determine if it agreed or did not agree with the proposals. The regional council elected to agree with all proposals, adding a further note to a few of them. The proposals can be found in the workbook here:

[ARW Workbook](#)

Many thanks to President Jane Van Patter and Agenda and Business Chair Kenji Marui for helping the regional council navigate its first experience of significant online debate.

Treasurer, Doug Cameron, gave an update on finances and outlined the principles that informed the preparation of the 2022 Budget which the regional council adopted. The way that the income earned on investments supports our priorities was highlighted.

Unfortunately, the time needed for business truncated the opportunities for small group time. Please consider drawing together neighbours to discuss the

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Where is sacred space for you? How are you doing (at this point in the pandemic)? and, lastly, What are you taking home and how will you share it?

The Planning Team hopes you will take home a sense of being in community, dealing with complicated topics, being inspired in worship and learning more about the work of the regional council. Many thanks to the Covenant Commission, Human Resources Commission and Mission and Discipleship Commission for the video presentations of your work and the written accountability reports. The latter can be found in the workbook and the former will be posted on the regional council website and are below. Also below and to be posted on the website, a helpful video prepared by Stewardship and Gifts Officer, Dave Jagger, that we did not have time to share.

The United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC) video and the video introducing the United Church's new mission statement: Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice will also be added. These latter videos may not be posted quite as quickly as we need to confirm access first.

General Secretary Michael Blair brought the words of our new statement to life for us with his message at the Celebration of Ministry Service on Saturday evening at Byron U.C. Many thanks to Byron and their minister, Greg Brawn, for all they did to make the regional council welcome and for the ways they supported and enriched the service. Congratulations to Karlene Kimber on being commissioned as a diaconal minister. Karlene is well known from her days as the Director of the Middlesex Presbytery Resource Centre. We are delighted for her and for the Belmont-Harrietsville-Mossley Pastoral Charge where she serves.

We look forward to gathering in the spring. We hope to have an in-person meeting then but that depends upon the public health guidelines at the time. We'll keep you posted but, in the meantime, may you "Keep Calm and Rock On"!

**The Celebration of Ministry live stream
is available to view on Youtube!**

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