

ATTENDANCE: Deborah Hoekstra (chair), Mary Annan, Bill Calder, Delores Hanchurak, Nancy Kerr (secretary).

REGRETS: Lloyd Lovatt, Angela Maciaszek

1. OPENING AND CONSTITUTION OF THE MEETING: The meeting was called to order at 5.30 pm. Deborah opened the meeting with a prayer. She constituted the meeting with these words, " In the name of Jesus Christ and by the authority of Edmonton Presbytery, I declare this meeting of Edmonton Presbytery Council to be in session for the work that may be properly brought before it to the Glory of God". The roll of the meeting will be the names of those delegates who are in attendance.

This constitutes a quorum.

2. WELCOME TO GUESTS: Deborah welcomed Danette Barner (president) and Anneli Johnson (secretary/treasurer) of the CGIT Board of Edmonton Society.

MOTION 2012/2013-16: Mary Annan/Delores Hanchurak THAT corresponding privileges be extended to Danette Barner and Anneli Johnson. **CARRIED**

3. AGENDA: The agenda was approved as written.

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

4.1 From John Henry Centre for Peace & Human Rights. International public forum. 2013 Global Youth Assembly (GYA), Aug. 7-10, 2013. *Human Rights. Health. Ignite Change Now*, Edmonton, Alberta. www.youthassembly.ca/# .

4.2 From United Church Health Services Society , BC. Appeal for three physicians and locums for Coastal BC communities of Hazelton, Bella Bella and Bella Coola. See WWW.unitedchurchhealth.ca .

4.3 From General Council Office, People in Partnership. Naramata Seminar, April 13-14, 2013. Learning for International Faith Engagement (LIFE) Seminar.

4.4 From Andrew Robinson, Methodist minister at Hillcrest in Durban, South Africa, interested in a pulpit swop for one month, October or November, 2013. Please contact him if interested. More information about pulpit exchanges: <http://worldmethodistcouncil.org/whatwedo/ministerial-exchange-program/> .

5. CAMP LEASE: Council members talked at length with Danette Barner and Anneli Johnson.

MOTION 2012/2013-17: Bill Calder/Delores Hanchurak THAT Edmonton presbytery extend the original 1977 land lease for a period of 5 years instead of 49 years and to use the time to work intentionally on a long tem lease, the lease extension to be written by a lawyer. **CARRIED**

6. COUNCIL MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING - November 13, 2012.

MOTION 2012/2013-18: Bill Calder/Mary Annan THAT the minutes of the Edmonton Presbytery Council meeting on November 13, 2013 be approved . **CARRIED**

7. COUNCIL MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETINGS – November 1, 2012 and November 22, 2012.

MOTION 2012/2013-19: Mary Annan/Delores Hanchurak THAT the minutes of Special Council meeting held on November 1, 2012, be approved. **CARRIED**

MOTION 2012/2013-20: Bill Calder/Nancy Kerr THAT the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on November 22, 2012, be approved. **CARRIED**

8. PERSONNEL UPDATE: The presbytery animateur, Lynn Elliott, has been on medical leave since mid December and will receive 6 months of restorative care. It was agreed that some short term assistance would be obtained to assist Joyce Kimmerly in the Presbytery office.

The Personnel Committee has no members at present because its three members have resigned for various reasons, including health matters. Recruiting for the committee will take place; the names of several possible candidates were mentioned. Normally, the Committee is composed of five members, including the chair, and consists of ministerial and lay persons. The Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee will be reviewed by the new Committee and sent forward for approval.

9.1 NEW GOVERNANCE REVIEW REPORT: Steven Johann has prepared a report on the review of the new governance model, *Edmonton Presbytery, New Governance Model Discussion: Final Report* (see Appendix 1, page 35). It will be distributed to presbyters for discussion at the Presbytery meeting, Feb. 16, 2013.

9.2 CORRESPONDENCE RE GOVERNANCE OF PRESBYTERY: Presbyters were encouraged to send comments to Council regarding the new governance review. A letter written by Margery Wright regarding the revision of the governance model was reviewed. A member of Council will contact her to discuss her concerns and determine whether she wishes her letter to be distributed to presbyters. It is possible that some of her concerns are covered in the *Edmonton Presbytery, New Governance Model Discussion: Final Report* in Appendix 1.

10. COMMITTEE RECRUITMENT: The following committees of Presbytery need new members: Personnel Committee, Faith Formation, Finance, Outreach Committee (one person). A new Council member is needed.

11. HONORARY LAY MEMBERS: Council would like to receive nominations for the designation *Honorary Lay Member*. Marg May will be asked to speak at the next Presbytery and remind presbyters to nominate people worthy of this honour.

12. APPROVAL OF LEARNING SITE:

MOTION 2013/2014 -21: Delores Hanchurak/Bill Calder THAT McClure United Church be approved as a learning site. **CARRIED.**

13. FEBRUARY 23 PRESBYTERY MEETING AGENDA ITEMS: Worship, Governance model report (lead by S. Johann, N. Chegus and D. Koots); National Comprehensive Review (Jess Cobb, Katharine Moore, Bill Calder), Agnes Morgan remembrance, Team reports, election of Council member.

14. MARCH PRESBYTERY MEETING: It was agreed that the March 26 meeting of Presbytery be cancelled because it falls in the middle of Holy Week.

15. ADJOURNMENT: Following a prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 7.50pm.

Rev. Deborah Hoekstra, Chair

Nancy Kerr, Secretary

Appendix 1, page 35, follows.

Edmonton Presbytery New Governance Model Discussion: Final Report

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarize the overall comments that were elicited by a process to examine the New Governance Model that was approved by 2 motions approved by Edmonton Presbytery on November 20, 2010. Steven Johann led this process at the Presbytery meeting on November 27, 2012. Looking at all the feedback through a qualitative data investigation process generated this final report. Initially all the comments were coded into broad categories, without any consideration to how the comments were generated. Stage 2 of the analysis involved placing the coded comments into sections, which described their general subject area with bolded comments beside them as to the meaning of the given comment by the investigator. Phase 3 involved summarizing meanings of the comments into the following categories: Communication, Presbytery Meetings, Team Reporting and Accountability, Presbytery Council, and Clarity of Roles and Structure of the New Governance Model.

Communication

Information from speakers to the entire groups is seen as extremely beneficial and helpful. In general, however, communication within Edmonton Presbytery is not seen as positive. It seems that there is a feeling of disconnectedness amongst Presbyters to Edmonton Presbytery. They often feel uninformed and that there is not always a timely response to their questions.

There is an expressed need for small group discussions and more opportunities to raise individual concerns and questions. There is some concern that only a few people are heard and that at times communication in meetings becomes contentious.

It is a common opinion, that receiving Council agendas and Council minutes in a more timely manner, would help in keeping members up to date with all the work being carried out in Edmonton Presbytery.

It is felt by many that there is lack of knowledge of the work of the Presbytery Teams and Committees.

Also, it is felt that receiving minutes of Council and Presbytery at earlier dates, would serve to help Congregational representatives communicate work of Presbytery to their respective congregations. There is a feeling of isolation amongst Pastoral Charges to the whole of the Edmonton Presbytery.

Although the purpose of the feedback about the New Governance model was not specific to that of the Edmonton Presbytery Website, there were a few comments, which relate to this area. Knowledge of the website is prevalent amongst some. However, it was commented, that little information gets directly to the congregations. Also, there were comments, that the Organizational Chart of Edmonton Presbytery, that is posted on the website, is difficult to read.

On many comments communicated at the forum for feedback on the New Governance Model, information from Council to the Court has not been prompt and adequate.

Presbytery Meetings

There were many comments made about the regular meetings of the Court of Presbytery. On a positive note, the meetings have improved in that they are much shorter, and more informative. There was positivity about hearing from speakers with “a big picture” perspective. The reporting that has been done from the various teams has been good, although, there were feelings that this could be done more often.

It is appreciated that Worship has been included in the Presbytery meetings. Although meetings in the new Model have been more productive, Visioning and Strategic Policy of Edmonton Presbytery does not seem to be addressed, as it had been planned. A summation at the end of each meeting would be appreciated. Also, there is lack of focus on local and global justice. There was one comment that indicated that Church, Community, and World be the focus of the whole of Edmonton Presbytery, and not just one team.

Trust and respect is often a central theme in many of the comments made about relationships of people, teams, the Council and the Court at the meetings of Presbytery. Some individuals experience alienation from the “in” crowd, and there was a comment that being argumentative regarding some discussions is not a productive communication process within Presbytery Meetings.

Team Reporting and Accountability

There was some faith that the work of the Teams is being done effectively and that they are accountable to Council.

In general, however, there is a widespread concern amongst the feedback about the New Governance Model, that there is not enough of knowledge of the work of the various teams of Presbytery. Presbyters do not feel connected to the teams and their objectives with the ongoing work of Edmonton Presbytery.

There is uncertainty of the accountability of the various teams of Presbytery. In much of the feedback, there seems to be the feeling that the teams function independently of both the Council and the Court. This may give the perception that there are sometimes three levels of Governance and perhaps four if Committees also are functioning as independent bodies. This may be the reasoning that more feedback and reporting are being requested at the Presbytery Meetings.

Presbytery Council

The feedback given about the New Governance Model indicates a large gap in knowledge about the relationship between Presbytery Council and Edmonton Presbytery. In many instances, it is seen that Council is an autocratic body that is not always accountable to the Court of Presbytery.

The decision-making processes of the Council and the Court are not well understood. There is also some confusion as to how the decision-making process occurs between meetings of the Council and meetings of Presbytery.

It was felt that decisions from Council couldn't be revisited at the Presbytery meetings. And, there is some confusion as to how the agendas of Presbytery are determined.

The individuals of Presbytery also do not commonly understand the relationship between Council and the various teams. There is a perception that Council may not be evaluating or assessing the needs of the teams.

A comment was made that there fails to be an openness of the actions of Council to be questioned, discussed, or if necessary, overturned.

There is a strong request to have the agendas and the minutes of Council available to Presbyters at Presbytery meetings.

As a result of the above, there is a general feeling of discomfort and perhaps distrust between Council and Presbytery.

Clarity of Roles and Structure of the Governance Model

In the feedback received, there is some positivity and optimism about the New Governance Model, in that there is recognition that the model is in its early stage of development. Also, that with time, new Presbyters gradually become accustomed to the processes of the new model.

For new Presbyters, familiarity with the model comes with time through observation and experience with the communication processes of the New Governance Model. The early Presbytery experience is expressed as confusing.

There is some desire that the model be reviewed periodically and involve the entire Court.

In general, however, the feedback regarding the New Governance Model indicates unclear roles among Teams, Council and the Court and perhaps the Committees too. Perceptions are that they all may be operating independently. It seems that there is not a full awareness and understanding of Motions 1 and 2 approved by Edmonton Presbytery on November 20, 2010. This raises the question as to the knowledge of the availability of Presbytery Council Terms of reference on the Presbytery website and whether these terms of reference are being applied.

Feedback suggests that Council staffing and job descriptions and development of the responsibilities of Council members need to be transparent in the Court of Presbytery. There is a good concern that hiring staff and changing job descriptions involve the entire Court.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the process of obtaining feedback from the Court of Presbytery was thorough and well thought out. It gave many opportunities for individual feedback, as well as feedback generated by small group discussion. The process was culminated in a plenary session where three individuals summarized general feelings and opinions of the entire court. Comments were elicited through questions that initiated both positive and negative feedback and gave opportunities for individuals to suggest how to improve or to change current processes of the New Model.

This report is a general summation of a careful analysis of all the feedback that was given.