



MINUTES OF  
EXECUTIVE

Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE  
The United Church of Canada

25 May 2015  
CONFERENCE CALL

<b>PRESENT</b>	Norma Fraser (Chair), Marion Hollingshead, Reta Robertson, Leslie Ross (Secretary), Leslie Stirling (Treasurer), Stephen Hershey, and Ian Fraser.
<b>REGRETS</b>	Don Seaton, Ivy Thomas (Conference Minister), and Bari Castle. Ivy Thomas and Bari Castle are on sabbatical.
<b>AUTHORITY &amp; CALL TO ORDER</b>	Pursuant to the authority of the Spring Meeting (February 13-15, 2015) of Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery (KOP), the Executive of KOP was Called to Order at 10:02 am. Norma Fraser (Chair) presided. A quorum was present. The meeting was called so that Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery could <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make decisions regarding proposals coming out of the conversations held to discuss the final report of the Comprehensive Review Task Group.</li> </ul>
<b>OPENING PRAYER</b>	Norma led us in prayer, blessing us, expressing our concerns for the people of Cache Creek as they deal with the results of flooding, and lifting up the United Church as it discerns future directions.
<b>PROPOSALS</b>	Individuals that attended Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery's northern conversation about the Comprehensive Review Task Group's final report have developed two proposals to be forwarded to BC Conference. <p><b>Motion: (Stephen Hershey / Reta Robertson)</b> that Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery send the proposal titled "Membership of Denominational Council" to BC Conference. <b>Carried.</b> It is attached as Appendix 1 on pages 2 to 3 of these minutes.</p> <p><b>Motion: (Ian Fraser / Marion Hollingshead)</b> that Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery send the proposal titled "Considering Terminology" to BC Conference. <b>Carried.</b> It is attached as Appendix 2 on pages 4 to 5 of these minutes.</p>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	Norma Fraser adjourned the meeting at 10:15 am.

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Ken Jones, Chair

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Leslie Ross, Secretary

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**Appendix 1**

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**General Council Proposal 2015-  
Membership of Denominational Council**

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<b>Proposal Name</b>	Membership of Denominational Council
<b>Recipient</b>	General Council 42
<b>Originating Body</b>	Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery
<b>Proposed Action</b>	<p>That the 42nd General Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>determine that membership of the denominational council shall consist of lay and order of ministry representatives elected from the regional councils such that the diversity of the United Church is represented and include others by the virtue of the office held and</li><li>develop the parameters that will recognize that diversity, including but not limited to rural/urban, size of community of faith, generational, ethnicity, and experience in the wider church, and identify the offices in which the incumbent shall be a representative so that the membership of the denominational council does not exceed five hundred (500).</li></ul>

**Background**

This proposal comes out of conversation with these concerns:

1. The proposal of one ministry personnel and one lay member from each community of faith in *United in God's Work* would result in a membership of more than 4,000 based on the December 2013 figures of 2,172 local pastoral charges and 3,016 individual congregations found on the United Church's website. The size of this body seems impractical for the following reasons:
  - a. Finding a suitable venue that would accommodate this number as well as the volunteers and staff needed for the council to operate is a limiting factor.
  - b. Although the tourism industry would do well with a gathering of this size, ensuring that there would be sufficient rooms available for this number of people would also be difficult.
  - c. Having a gathering of this size would be wonderful if its purpose was to be a faith festival. However, it is to set policy, make decisions about how the denomination will respond to issues relating to public witness, deal with proposals coming from regional councils, elect a Moderator and executive, and set a budget. The number attending is the size of a small town. Towns elect councils to set policies and make administrative decisions because to have the entire town to do so would be unwieldy and inefficient. Similarly, organizing a gathering of more than 4,000 to do the work proposed in *United in God's Work* would be unwieldy and inefficient. Just the voting process for all the decisions would take up considerable time and resources.
2. Although the funding recommendation in *United in God's Work* indicates that the assessment costs to communities of faith would result in an average of a one percent (1%) increase in their operating expenses, the costs associated with attending the denominational council have also been directly downloaded to them rather than being included in assessments. Also, as it is an operating

expense, it will be factored into Line 40 and therefore could also cause an increase in assessments in the future.

3. To give a sense of the costs to communities of faith for this model, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) provides a bit of an example. ELCIC has a biennial convention. The structure allows for a representative from each congregation. Conferences (regional areas of the synods) elect a number of rostered ministers (clergy in paid accountable ministries) to go to the convention based on the size of the baptized membership in the conference. Those congregations that do not have a rostered minister elected elect a lay representative to attend. Therefore, the convention includes both lay and clergy representatives. Others by virtue of office are also included. The registration costs include the cost of operating the convention, some meals, and a travel pool. Accommodation is not included and the convention is not billeted. The expectation is that congregations will pay both the registration and accommodation. This year the registration cost is \$1,350 and the convention is being held in downtown Edmonton. The convention lasts four days. In 2013, there were 533 congregations. However, as some of the smaller congregations cannot afford to send a delegate each time, the number of delegates at any given convention is closer to 500.

In this Presbytery, there is an Ecumenical Shared Ministry with ELCIC being one of its three partnered churches. The minister was elected to attend this year's National Convention. The cost is approximately one percent (1%) of the pastoral charge's operating expenses for this year. With the United Church's General Council gathering usually lasting one week and with at least seven or eight times the number of attendees, the registration costs would probably be much higher.

4. If the *United in God's Work* three-court model were already in place, the pastoral charge referred to in point 3 would be sending representatives to two national gatherings this year. This situation would occur once every six years. In the intervening years, there would be three years in which it would be sending a representative to one national gathering and two years in which it would not be sending anyone to a national gathering. Most ecumenical shared ministries are small congregations. The suggested model will definitely impact their operating costs. There could be a possibility that they would be less likely to choose to attend national gatherings even though there is an expectation to do so. This model could also deter congregations who are considering becoming ecumenical shared ministries.
5. Reliance on technology for national meetings of this size can be unwieldy and unreliable. For instance, there are several areas of the country that do not have reliable internet connections that would allow for virtual attendance at a national function of this size. The logistics of participating in discussions, decision-making, and voting can also become practically and technically difficult and time-consuming. Live streaming of the meeting does not easily and practically allow for any participation by anyone attending through this venue. In summary, technology has not yet caught up to the desire to have virtual meeting opportunities this large and this complicated.

**Financial  
Implications**

The funding implications are unknown at this time.

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**Appendix 2**

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**General Council Proposal 2015-**  
**Considering Terminology Used in *United in God's Work***

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<b>Proposal Name</b>	Considering Terminology Used in <i>United in God's Work</i>
<b>Recipient</b>	General Council 42
<b>Originating Body</b>	Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery
<b>Proposed Action</b>	That the 42nd General Council:  consider using <i>General Council</i> or <i>National Council</i> for <i>denominational council</i> , <i>Engaging the Spirit</i> for <i>Catching the Spirit</i> , and <i>Investigative Committee</i> for <i>Complaints Committee</i> .
<b>Background</b>	<p>Recognizing that communication is complex, it is important that chosen terminology provides clarity, deepens meaning and understanding, and avoids inadvertent negative connotations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Concerning <i>denominational</i>:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>The term <i>denominational</i> seems to put the church in a box rather than allowing for opportunities to colour outside the lines.</li><li>It had been explained that there was a desire to choose something other than <i>General Council</i> since changing terminology is a way to help the transition to new structures and processes. Most involved in the United Church of Canada probably already equate <i>General Council</i> with an understanding of a body connected to the entire church. That has not changed in the proposed Three-Council Model. As well, there are many in congregations who do not concern themselves with the broader church so are currently unaware of the current structures and processes and therefore will not need the assistance of a terminology change to recognize new ones but would find comfort in hearing a familiar term in the midst of all the changes they may experience with a move to a Three-Council Model.</li><li>The other two terms used in the Three-Council Model appear to be geographic or to have a sense of place. Therefore, <i>national</i> would be a better fit.</li><li>Recognizing that there are congregations that are members of the United Church of Canada beyond the borders of Canada is a reason for retaining <i>General</i> if it is agreed that <i>denominational</i> should not be used.</li><li>There are a number of Ecumenical Shared Ministries within the United Church of Canada. The most common partner churches are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. For clarity in these congregations, it would be helpful to have a distinctive term. <i>Denominational</i> is generic sounding. The terms used in the partner churches are <i>General Synod</i> (Anglican), <i>National Convention</i> (Lutheran), and <i>General Assembly</i> (Presbyterian). The elected bodies that govern the work of the church between national gatherings are known as Council of General Synod, National Church Council, and Assembly Council respectively.</li></ol></li></ol>

2. Concerning *Catching the Spirit*

This phrase generates some images that are not helpful.

- a. There is a sense of running after someone or something. The question is whether the chase is futile or not.
- b. There is a sense of catching something and putting it in a cage.
- c. There is a sense of catching a disease.

*Engaging the Spirit* has a sense of being interconnected, being involved, participating, hiring (or calling upon), and even doing battle (think of Jacob).

3. Concerning *Complaints Committee*

There is a sense that the committee's name needs to be more reflective of what it would be doing rather than what it would be receiving. Therefore, *Investigative Committee* is suggested.

**Financial  
Implications**

The funding implications are unknown at this time.

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