

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL
November 21–23, 2021

The Assembly Council met by video conference and in-person at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario, from Sunday, November 21 to Tuesday, November 23, 2021 commencing on Sunday at 3:00 pm ET. C. Stymiest led the Council in worship, prepared with C. Reid, using resources from the Iona Community.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
OF TRADITIONAL
TERRITORY**
153/21C

The convener acknowledged that The Presbyterian Church in Canada and its members are on the historic territory of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit Peoples of this land. As a church, we take seriously the challenge of reconciliation, to deepen bonds of friendship and solidarity, to strive to “walk together” in the present and future, and to live with integrity the words of Our Confession to Indigenous Peoples from 1994.

PRESENT
154/21C

Assembly Appointees: The Rev. Cherie A. Inksetter, Mr. Peter A. Kinch, the Rev. Germaine Lovelace, the Rev. Jeffrey M. Murray, Ms. Ann Paterson, Ms. Barbara Sargent, Ms. Linda Shaw, the Rev. John R. Wilson.

Presbytery Representatives: The Rev. John C. Borthwick, Ms. Brenda Butler, the Rev. Jennifer L. Cameron, Ms. Sandra J. Cameron Evans (convener), the Rev. Henry Heung Ryeol Han, Ms Diane Reader Jones, Ms. Vivian Ketchum, the Rev. Jinsook Khang, the Rev. Robert J. Murray, the Rev. Dr. John-Peter C. Smit.

Ex-Officio – Voting: Ms. Cathy Reid, Ms. Cindy Stephenson, Ms. Carol Stymiest.

Ex-Officio – Non-Voting: The Rev. Stephen Kendall (secretary), the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, Mr. Oliver Ng, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald.

Staff: Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton, the Rev. Donald Muir.

REGRETS
155/21C

The Rev. Henry Heung Ryeol Han (Monday afternoon), the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart (during teaching responsibilities), the Rev. Bethany McCaffery, the Rev. Jeffrey M. Murray (Sunday afternoon), the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott, the Rev. Dr. John-Peter C. Smit (Sunday afternoon).

VISITORS
156/21C

The Council welcomed the following visitors to this meeting:

- The Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls for the workshop on “How will we live together: Biblical theology living with diversity” and the General Assembly Design Team.
- Ms. Marilyn Repchuck and Mr. Ian Mason re the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre.

**ATLANTIC MISSION
SOCIETY (AMS)**
157/21C

Carol Stymiest, Vice-President, Atlantic Mission Society, shared some recent highlights of the AMS: the auxiliaries are meeting; the annual meeting was on October 18, 2021 with Glynis Williams and Alyson Carr as guest speakers; their mission focus year is on Indigenous People; and they recently connected with Pauline Brown, retired lifelong missionary, in India. The AMS decided to disburse \$60,000 to Presbyterians Sharing, PWS&D and the Priority Mission Funds.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
158/21C

No member indicated a conflict of interest for this meeting.

AGENDA
159/21C

It was moved by P. Kinch, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the agenda be approved.

REPORTS
160/21C

It was moved by B. Sargent, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the reports be received and considered.

MINUTES
Council
161/21C

It was moved by B. Butler, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the minutes September 27, 2021 and October 1, 2021 be
approved.

Executive
162/21C

It was moved by R. Murray, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the Executive minutes of September 27, 2021 and November 8,
2021 be received for information.

CORRESPONDENCE
Presbytery of Algoma and
North Bay
163/21C

A letter was received from the Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay re the
correspondence concerning the General Assembly remits.

It was moved by J. Borthwick, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the above letter be receive for information, noting that a
response was sent to the presbytery.

Presbytery of Hamilton
164/21C

A letter was received from the Presbytery of Hamilton re reflections of the 2021
General Assembly.

It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and

that that the above letter be referred to the General Assembly
Design Team.

165/21C

Amendment

It was moved, in amendment, by J. Wilson, duly seconded, and

AGREED, to add “to respond to the Presbytery of Hamilton by the end of the
year”.

166/21C

Motion as Amended

AGREED, that the above letter be referred to the General Assembly Design
Team to respond to the Presbytery of Hamilton by the end of the
year.

G. Jay and D. Campbell,
resignation of
167/21C

G. Jay and D. Campbell have communicated with the Executive that they wish
to resign from the Assembly Council. See the Executive report. (Min. Ref.
171/21C)

Committee to Nominate
Standing Committees
168/21C

A letter was received from the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees
calling for nominations for consideration by the 2022 General Assembly.

It was moved by J. Wilson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the above letter be referred to the Nominating Committee.

- Robert Fund, Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario**
169/21C
- A letter was received from the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario re the Robert Fund.
- It was moved by B. Sargent, duly seconded and
- AGREED, that the above letter be referred to Financial Services.
- St. Andrew's, Huntsville**
170/21C
- A letter was received from the Session of St. Andrew's, Huntsville re the correspondence concerning the General Assembly remits.
- It was moved by B. Butler, duly seconded and
- AGREED, that the above letter be received for information and that a response be sent to the session.
- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Report**
171/21C
- The report of the Executive Committee was presented by R. Murray.
- G. Jay and D. Campbell**
172/21C
- Recommendation No. 1**
It was moved by R. Murray, duly seconded and
- AGREED, that the resignations of Geoff Jay and David Campbell be received with regret and that the thanks of the Council be extended to them for their service.
- New Member, C. Inksetter**
173/21C
- Recommendation No. 2**
It was moved by R. Murray, duly seconded and
- that Cherie Inksetter be named to the Executive Committee of the Assembly Council.
- 174/21C
- Motion to Refer**
It was moved by J. Wilson, duly seconded and
- AGREED to refer to the Nominating Committee.
- General Assembly 2022**
175/21C
- Recommendation No. 3**
It was moved by R. Murray, duly seconded and
- AGREED, that the Moderator be invited to convene an in-person General Assembly for 2022 (June 5–8) subject to confirmation by January 15, 2022 by Wilfrid Laurier University that hosting the General Assembly is possible.
- Report**
176/21C
- It was moved by R. Murray, duly seconded and
- AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.
- MARCH COUNCIL MEETING**
177/21C
- There was a preliminary discussion about the format (in-person or hybrid) of the March Council meeting. It was agreed to follow up on this discussion at the end of the meeting.
- GENDER PAY EQUITY/DISCRIMINATION**
178/21C
- D. Reader Jones presented the report of the Gender Pay Equity/Discrimination Working Group. This report indicated the plans for gathering information in order to present recommendations to a future Council meeting.

**INCLUSION LANGUAGE IN
POLICIES**

Task Completed
179/21C

T. Hamilton reported on the review of policies within the General Assembly Office to ensure that they reflect inclusion language.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by J. Borthwick, duly seconded and

AGREED, to report to the General Assembly:
that the review of policies re inclusion language was completed.

Discharge
180/21C

Recommendation No. 2

It was moved by B. Butler, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the Working Group re Policy Review be discharged with thanks.

LGBTQI REPRESENTATION
181/21C

T. Hamilton presented the report regarding the request to ensure that LGBTQI persons are considered when appointments are made, noting that the Council's Nominating Committee is aware of this item.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by J. Borthwick, duly seconded and

AGREED, to report to the General Assembly:
that the inclusion of LGBTQI persons on the Assembly Council committees will be encouraged and monitored.

**WOMEN'S MISSIONARY
SOCIETY (WMS)**
182/21C

C. Reid brought greetings from the WMS and shared some of their recent highlights: Coming Together events for members, a recent gathering with retired missionary Pauline Brown, the cancellation of the Women's Gathering, and plans for the 110th anniversary of the WMS in 2024.

**MANAGEMENT TEAM
Report**
183/21C

The Management Team report was presented by I. Ross-McDonald.

Task Items
184/21C

The report outlined the actions of the following tasks assigned to the Management Team.

- Support for the National Indigenous Ministries Council as a standing committee: administrative support will be the Life and Mission Agency.
- Funding for the Special Committee re Confession to LGBTQI: will come from the annual budget that supports standing committees of the General Assembly and from savings from the 2021 online meeting of the General Assembly.
- Funding for the Special Committee re: Petition Nos. 1 and 2, 2021 (Confession to ethnic contingent of denomination) will come from the annual budget that supports standing committees of the General Assembly and savings from the 2021 online meeting of the General Assembly (\$54,775).
- Funding for counselling and psychotherapy for those who have experienced harm done by homophobia, hypocrisy, transphobia and heterosexism will come from funds currently available in the appropriate benevolence funds.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by B. Sargent duly seconded and

AGREED, that the above action taken and proposals be reported to the 2022 General Assembly.

Report
185/21C

It was moved by B. Sargent, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the report as a whole be adopted.

RECESS FOR EVENING
186/21C

The hour for recessing for the evening having come, the convener closed with prayer.

MONDAY 11:00 am – 1:30 pm

OPENING PRAYER
187/21C

The convener opened this session with prayer.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY WORKSHOP
188/21C

The convener welcomed the Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls to the Council who then led the workshop, “How will we live together: Biblical theology living with diversity”.

The Council expressed its appreciation to P. Dutcher-Walls for her leadership.

RECESS FOR AFTERNOON
189/21C

The hour for recessing for the afternoon having come, the convener closed with prayer for lunch.

MONDAY 3:00 – 5:30 pm

GENERAL ASSEMBLY DESIGN TEAM 2021 Feedback
190/21C

P. Dutcher-Walls led the Council in a conversation about the 2021 General Assembly for the General Assembly Design Team. The conversation focused on: commissioner support, worship and PC-Biz. The design team will consider the comments offered by members as it plans for future Assemblies.

FINANCE COMMITTEE Report
191/21C

The report was presented by P. Kinch, convener.

2023 Budget Principles
192/21C

The principles for the 2023 budget were presented.

Presbyterians Sharing Congregational Allocation Formula	
– Target	\$5,900,000
Presbyterians Sharing – Individuals	\$250,000
AMS (to be confirmed by AMS)	\$40,000
Bequest Revenue	\$30,000
Investment Income	\$300,000
Fund Transfers	\$1,700,000
transfer from Restricted Funds	1,400,000
transfer from Presbyterians Sharing Legacy Fund	300,000
Total Expenditures	\$8,340,000
Inflation Assumption	1.5%

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by P. Kinch, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the above 2023 budget principles be approved.

Honouring the Children Fund, Funding for
193/21C

Recommendation No. 2

It was moved by P. Kinch, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the funding sources to achieve the initial target balance of the Honouring the Children Fund of \$1,000,000, beyond the approximately \$100,000 already transferred from the 2020

undesignated bequests, be initially from the 2021 undesignated bequests and then the residue from the New and Renewing Ministry and the Dissolved Congregations Funds in equal amounts.

Report
194/21C

It was moved by P. Kinch, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the report as a whole be adopted.

DEPARTURES/ALTERNATE GOVERNANCE
195/21C

P. Kinch presented the report of the Departures/Alternate Governance Working Committee.

The Council broke into small groups to discuss questions as outlined by the working group with summary of conversations forwarded to P. Kinch. These questions focussed primarily on the question of Alternate Governance.

(cont'd on p. 1479)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HERITAGE CENTRE
196/21C

The convener welcomed Marilyn Repchuck, convener, and Ian Mason, curator, to offer a presentation on the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre. The convener expressed the Council's appreciation for this presentation.

REGISTRY OF MINISTERS FOR SAME SEX MARRIAGES, OVERTURE NO. 42, 2021
Report
197/21C

D. Muir, for the Working Group re Registry of Ministers for Same Sex Marriages (Overture No. 42, 2021), presented its report.

Amendment to Report
198/21C

Amendment to the Report

It was moved by J. Wilson, duly seconded and

DEFEATED, to add to scenario No. 3, the wording: "if the minister is also willing".

Recommendations Taken Together
199/21C

The response to Overture No. 42, 2021 re registry of ministers and congregations re solemnizing same-sex marriage is:

The 2021 General Assembly approved that The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds two parallel definitions of marriage and recognizes that faithful, Holy Spirit filled, Christ centered, God honouring people can understand marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or as a covenant relationship between two adult persons. At that same General Assembly, Overture No. 42, 2021 was referred to the Assembly Council. The overture asks the church to do three things:

1. Establish a national registry of ministers and congregations that are willing to celebrate same-sex weddings and those that are not.
2. Request presbyteries to maintain the same kind of registry.
3. Prepare guidelines for how a minister who is unwilling to celebrate same-sex weddings would refer a couple to a minister who will conduct same-sex weddings.

The overture, transmitted by the Presbytery of Montreal, notes that it would be pastorally helpful to presbytery clerks to have such a registry so they can provide contact information to same-sex couples seeking to be married in a church. It also maintains that a list of ministers and

congregations not willing to celebrate same-sex weddings may be needed to facilitate dealings with the l'état civil of the Quebec Government, which otherwise might find the refusal by some clergy to marry same-sex couples as arbitrary under Quebec practice. It then speculates that such a registry could eliminate the desire some have to create a separate system of presbyteries based on a choice for or against same-sex marriage.

The working group agrees that it would be pastorally supportive to have a registry of congregations and ministers that will welcome and conduct same-sex weddings for the benefit of same-sex couples looking for a church in which they can be married. Therefore, it supports the creation of a registry.

The working group is not convinced, however, that the registry should include the names of congregations and clergy not willing to conduct same-sex weddings. Ministers have the right to say no to any wedding request and for a variety of reasons. Since the church continues to uphold the definition of marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman, a minister may legitimately be guided by that principle when approached by anyone requesting a wedding ceremony. The decision not to conduct a wedding of a same-sex couple should not be characterized as an arbitrary choice by the minister or congregation but one supported by the theology and polity of the denomination and their individual convictions.

The working group is of the opinion that it would be redundant for both presbyteries and the national office to maintain registries. A publicly accessible registry maintained by the national office should be sufficient. It is not anticipated that a new office or additional staff would be required to oversee this work. Presbyteries could choose to maintain their own registries if they wished.

Whether the creation of such a registry would eliminate the need some feel for a separate system of presbyteries cannot be predicted with certainty.

There are three scenarios which could warrant a listing in the registry as envisioned by the working group.

1. Minister and session welcome weddings of two adult persons of the same sex.
Both the name of the minister and the congregation could be included in the registry.
2. Minister welcomes weddings of two adult persons of the same sex and the session does not.
In this case, the minister could conduct weddings of same-sex couples somewhere other than in their own church. The minister's name could be included in the registry and the congregation's name would not. (In this instance, the minister would be required to keep their own marriage register to record weddings they conduct that are not recorded in the congregation's register.)
3. Minister does not welcome weddings of two adult persons of the same-sex and the session does.

In this case, the session could permit a minister from another congregation to conduct the wedding in the church. Therefore, the session could ask to have the congregation's name included in the registry whenever it is known that an alternative minister is available.

The minister, in this instance, would not have their name recorded in the registry.

The working group believes the submission of information for the directory should be offered on a voluntarily basis by ministers and sessions.

The overture asks for guidelines as to how a minister who is unwilling to celebrate weddings of same-sex couples would refer a couple to a minister who will conduct same-sex weddings. Like any wedding request, this situation would present a pastoral opportunity. The minister can make a connection between the couple and the church, graciously and respectfully explain that they cannot conduct the wedding due to their understanding of marriage and offer to help the couple find a minister who can conduct the service. The national registry might provide the information needed or the minister may know of a nearby colleague who could be approached. When possible, the minister could introduce the couple to the other minister as a further expression of pastoral care.

It was moved by G. Lovelace, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the following recommendations taken together be adopted and referred to the General Assembly:

Recommendation No. 1

that a national registry of ministers and congregations that are willing to celebrate same-sex weddings be created and maintained by the General Assembly Office.

Recommendation No. 2

that the names and contact information of ministers willing to conduct same-sex weddings be recorded in the registry on a voluntary basis.

Recommendation No. 3

that the names and contact information of congregations willing to host same-sex weddings be recorded in the registry on a voluntary basis.

Recommendation No. 4

that the registry be publicly accessible through The Presbyterian Church in Canada website and by other appropriate means of contact with the General Assembly Office.

Recommendation No. 5

that presbyteries be reminded by the General Assembly Office, on an annual basis, to invite the ministers and congregations in their bounds to update their listing in the registry if necessary.

Recommendation No. 6

that the prayer of Overture No. 42, 2021 re registry of ministers and congregations re solemnizing same-sex marriage be granted in the above terms.

200/21C

Dissent

J. Wilson requested that his dissent be recorded.

I wish to record my dissent to the Same Sex Marriage Register adopted report of Assembly Council in response to Overture No. 42, 2021 for the following reasons.

I would like to first commend the authors of the report for a helpful outline that seeks to give good guidance to the denomination as to how to reflect and communicate our parallel definitions of marriage to individuals inquiring about same sex marriage and to any government agencies that may require information. My dissent is not against their sincere efforts to think through the work set before them, but with the interpretation and action of Assembly Council to my request first for a friendly amendment by the authors to include the words “if the minister is in agreement”, which was initially agreed to by one of the authors, but then challenged on the floor, made into an amendment and defeated. My dissent is to the understanding of Assembly Council that it is permissible in our theology and practice for the ruling elders to bypass the teaching elder and bring in one who would enact their wishes.

3. Minister does not welcome weddings of two adult persons of the same-sex and the session does.

In this case, the session, {if the minister is in agreement} could permit a minister from another congregation to conduct the wedding in the church. Therefore, the session could ask to have the congregation’s name included in the registry whenever it is known that an alternative minister is available. The minister, in this instance, would not have their name recorded in the registry.

The interpretation of Assembly Council goes against hundreds of years of Reformed polity and makes us Congregationalist/Baptist in our understanding of our divisions of authority. The Book of Forms clearly states in 111, “As the executive of presbytery, the minister is responsible for the conduct and content of public worship and for the supply of the pulpit.” In our polity the minister is responsible solely to her/his conscience and to her/his presbytery for who they marry, not to the ruling elders alone. This understanding of Assembly Council also allows for the potential for serious division within a charge and undermines the promises that the congregation (including the Ruling Elders) make to the minister during her/his call, especially the promise to “all due respect, encouragement, and allegiance in the Lord”.

Secondly, the Book of Forms 247.1 states: All ministers, whether they be on the constituent roll or the appendix to the roll, before agreeing to undertake pastoral services (i.e., baptisms, weddings, funerals) in a congregation other than the one where they are the current incumbent, are required to consult with and receive permission in writing from the session of the local congregation. It is understood that in all cases “session” includes the minister who must be in agreement with the decision to invite another minister into her/his pulpit.

Thirdly, the decision of Assembly Council in this case also undermines the Remits themselves and denies the freedom of conscience and action promised to both sides of the Same Sex Marriage decision. The Assembly Council is therefore in error.

I wish to acknowledge my thanks to the Principal Clerk who approached me following the above decision to convey to me that he and the Deputy Clerk had discussed my concerns following the meeting and understood the point I was making. While I appreciate their counsel that as this is just a scenario mentioned it is not therefore a guarantee of actions to be taken, my fear is that the understanding of Assembly Council would be seen as definitive by others who read the report a certain way.

Should the Clerks of Assembly wish to request that Assembly Council reconsider its understanding of scenario 3, and/or should the Assembly Council move to reconsider the above report prior to Assembly it would be my sincere hope that a helpful clarification could be found.

Report
201/21C

It was moved by G. Lovelace, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the report as a whole be adopted.

**HEALING AND
RECONCILIATION**
202/21C

The report of the Healing and Reconciliation Working Group was presented by
C. Inksetter.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by C. Inksetter, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the staff of Justice Ministries be invited to the March meeting
of the Council regarding an update on the work of healing and
reconciliation in response to the Calls to Action before the church.

Report
203/21C

It was moved by C. Inksetter, duly seconded and
AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.

RECESS
204/21C

The hour for recessing for the evening, J. Khang closed with prayer.

TUESDAY 11:00 am – 1:30 pm

OPENING PRAYER
205/21C

The convener opened the session with a reading from *To Bless the Space
Between Us* by John O'Donohue and with prayer.

**LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE/
INDEMNITY, OVERTURE
NO. 41, 2021**
206/21C

The progress report of the Liberty of Conscience/Indemnity (Overture No. 41,
2021) Working Group was presented by D. Muir.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
OF REMITS, OVERTURE
NO. 4, 2020**
Response to Overture
207/21C

S. Kendall presented the report of the Legal Implications of Remits (Overture
No. 4, 2020) Working Group.

In the overture, which was received prior to the 2021 General Assembly, the
following request was made of the Assembly:

To clear the path to a transparent decision on Remits B and C by
making everyone aware of the pertinent information on legal opinions
based on the full wording and facts, understand by the legal decisions
offered and by the wording of the remits, so that the 2020 General
Assembly may be fully competent and confident in its legal
understanding before the vote is taken at the 2020 General Assembly.

The Assembly Council considered a response to this overture at its January
2021 meeting but it was rejected in favour of a motion asking instead, that:

The Executive be instructed to retain independent counsel with
constitutional expertise to address the matters contained in Remits B
and C, 2019 and to report back to the May meeting (January 2020).

This was done, and through the services of Supreme Advocacy LLP, a
detailed (52 page) legal opinion was obtained and considered by the
Assembly Council, which in turn, made sure that commissioners had the
legal opinion (and a four page executive summary) in time for the 2022
General Assembly. The opinion and summary are available at
<https://assembly.presbyterian.ca/#/search/3001208>.

This action fulfilled the request of the overture, that a legal opinion based on the exact wording of the remits be made available to commissioners in advance of making a decision on the remits at the General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by C. Inksetter, duly seconded and

AGREED, to recommend to the General Assembly:
that Overture No. 4, 2020 be granted through the action of obtaining and publishing a legal opinion based on the wording of the remits in advance of decisions on Remits B and C, 2019.

Report

208/21C

It was moved by P. Kinch, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.

COVENANTAL PLEDGE

209/21C

R. Murray provided an update on the Covenantal Pledge Working Group.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

210/21C

S. Kendall presented the report relating to Environmental Aspects concerning the use of single use plastics and Styrofoam items.

The Assembly Council was asked to respond to two referrals from the 2021 General Assembly that came in the form of recommendations from the Life and Mission Agency.

Recommendation No. LMA-002: That the General Assembly seek to eliminate the use of single-use non- biodegradable plastics and Styrofoam at all their meetings.

Recommendation No. LMA-003: That congregations, presbyteries, synods and committees of the church be encouraged to eliminate the use of single-use non-biodegradable plastics at all their meetings.

Following consultation by the General Assembly Office staff regarding these recommendations, it was confirmed that in recent years, the venues we have used for the General Assembly have been conscientious about not using non-biodegrade plastics and Styrofoam or willing to not use them for our meetings. The General Assembly Office will continue to ensure that this matter is raised and ensure that, wherever possible, such items will not be used.

Similarly, arrangements for the Assembly Council meetings, wherever possible, will make not using such items a high priority.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by L. Shaw, duly seconded and

AGREED, to recommend to the General Assembly:
that the Assembly Council concurs with these recommendations.

Report

211/21C

It was moved by J. Wilson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
212/21C

The Archives and Records Management Committee report was presented for information.

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE
213/21C

The convener of the Life and Mission Agency Committee, C. Stephenson, presented its report.

Honouring the Children Fund Terms of Reference
214/21C

The terms of reference for Honouring the Children Fund are as follows:

Purpose

In honour of the children who were lost and all people living with the consequences of that legacy, The Presbyterian Church in Canada established the *Honouring the Children: Reconciliation and Residential Schools Fund*. This Fund will support initiatives associated with searches for unmarked burial sites in communities where schools were operated by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Programming of Funds

This work begins with listening. We continue to live out the covenants made in the 1994 Confession, be led by the principles articulated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and seek the guidance of Indigenous people and affected communities. All grants will emerge from, and take into account, consultations with affected communities. Other related groups, including churches and the Indigenous-led Centre of Expertise sponsored by Crown-Indigenous Relations, may also be consulted. All work will complement efforts to address systemic racism against Indigenous people, both in the church and Canadian society, and the ongoing healing and reconciliation work being done in the ministries of the National Indigenous Ministry Council. This is not an endowment fund and the Fund is intended to be spent as required.

What can the Fund support?

- Consultations with Indigenous communities needed to ensure this work is carried out in a good way.
- Costs associated with searches of cemeteries and unmarked burial sites on the grounds of, or associated with, The Presbyterian Church in Canada run schools, including actual searches.
- Follow up actions including but not limited to, repatriation of remains, commemoration or memorials, healing and health supports – healing from trauma – all in accordance with family and community members' wishes.

Disbursal

Funds will be disbursed as requests are received.

Discernment

One person named by each of the National Indigenous Ministries Council, Life and Mission Agency and the Assembly Council with appropriate staff will be responsible for discernment.

Reporting and Administration

The Life and Mission Agency will be responsible for administration of the grants and providing reports to the National Indigenous Ministries Council, the Life and Mission Agency Committee and the General Assembly.

Contributions

The Assembly Council designated an initial \$100,000 and committed to at least \$1,000,000 for this work. Individuals and congregations have been invited to make additional gifts. Funds may be solicited from other groups.

Reporting

A narrative of Fund uses will be prepared for the General Assembly.

Background

In response to the devastating confirmation of unmarked graves on the grounds of former Residential Schools in Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada published *A Statement Regarding Residential Schools* on June 15, 2021. The statement included the following commitment:

We have heard The Presbyterian Church in Canada must work to ensure the grounds of the residential schools we ran – and especially Birtle and Cecilia Jeffrey, which we ran the longest – are searched for any unmarked graves. We must also ensure any search is taken in respectful consultation with the Indigenous communities and families impacted; this would include financial support from the church for those searches. We commit to this work.

The Life and Mission Agency Committee and members of the National Indigenous Ministries Council have developed these terms of reference taking into consideration the wishes of Indigenous peoples and affected communities.

Recommendation No. 1

It was moved by C. Stephenson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the terms of the Honouring the Children Fund be approved.

Funding for Harm Done 215/21C

The terms for funding for Harms Done (Rec. RCL-006, A&P 2021, p. 655) are as follows

Establishing Terms

The terms to provide support from The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Emergency Benevolence funds for psychotherapy/counselling for those who have experienced harm done by homophobia, hypocrisy, transphobia and heterosexism in the denomination are established by the Assembly Council.

Available Funds

Up to \$100,000 per year from 2021–2024, to be reviewed annually, be available from the emergent benevolence funds for disbursal. Unless additional designations are made, requests for support thereafter will continue to be considered from the emergent benevolent funds, after annual consultation with the Benevolence Committee.

Eligibility

People who have experienced harm done by homophobia, hypocrisy, transphobia and heterosexism in The Presbyterian Church in Canada are eligible to be considered for financial support.

Use of the Funds

Funds can be used for psychotherapy and counselling related to harm done by experiences of homophobia, hypocrisy, transphobia and heterosexism in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 2019, The Presbyterian Church in Canada reaffirmed its statements that homosexual orientation is not a sin

and that studies have not revealed any scriptural, scientific or pastoral basis or justification for programs designed to change a person's sexual orientation and therefore acknowledged that any form of conversion or reparative therapy is not an appropriate pastoral response for those who identify as LGBTQI. Therefore, funds will not be available to support any course of therapy or counselling that is designed to change a person's sexual orientation.

Consideration

Requests will be considered and discerned promptly on a case-by-case basis.

Discernment

Discernment will be made by the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly, the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency and the Program Coordinator, Sexuality and Inclusion. From time to time, it may be prudent and advisable for any one of these discerners to appoint an appropriate designate.

Confidentiality

All enquiries and any information that the discernment committee receives will be kept strictly confidential.

Administration of the Funds

The Life and Mission Agency will be responsible for the pastoral administration and dispensation of the funds.

Reporting

The Life and Mission Agency will report to the General Assembly and the Benevolence Committee.

Recommendation No. 2

It was moved by C. Stephenson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the terms securing funding to support psychotherapy/ counselling for those who have experienced harm done by homophobia, hypocrisy, transphobia and heterosexism in the denomination be adopted

**Associate Secretary of
Communications, Position
Description**
216/21C

Barb Summers recently submitted her resignation as the Associate Secretary of Communications, effective February 28, 2022. The Council's responsibly is to review and approve position descriptions for executive staff.

Recommendation No. 3

It was moved by C. Stephenson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the Executive Committee be given power to issue to review and approve the position description for the Associate Secretary of Communications.

B. Summers, Appreciation
217/21C

It was moved by J. Murray, duly seconded and

AGREED, that appreciation be expressed to Barb Summers for her work as Associate Secretary for Communications.

Report
218/21C

It was moved by C. Stephenson, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.

- DEPARTURES/ALTERNATE GOVERNANCE**
(cont'd from p. 1470)
219/21C
- The Council resumed the discussion on the report of the Departure/Alternate Governance Working Group, in small groups. This was followed by a plenary discussion.
- PRINCIPAL CLERK SEARCH COMMITTEE**
220/21C
- C. Stephenson, co-convenor of the Principal Clerk Search Committee, presented the report of the committee.
- Recommendation No. 1**
It was moved by C. Stephenson, duly seconded and AGREED, that the Principal Clerk position description be modified by adding under Nature and Scope: the responsibility representing the church in initiatives supporting relationships with Indigenous peoples.
- Report**
221/21C
- It was moved by B. Sargent, duly seconded and AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.
- NOMINATING COMMITTEE Report**
222/21C
- The report of the Nominating Committee was presented by J. Cameron.
- Benevolence Committee**
223/21C
- It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and AGREED, that Glenn McCullough be appointed to the Benevolence Committee.
- Finance Committee**
224/21C
- It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and AGREED, that Diane Reader Jones be appointed to the Finance Committee.
- Executive Committee**
225/21C
- It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and to affirm the recommendation from the Executive to appoint Cherie Inksetter to the Executive Committee.
- 226/21C
- Amendment**
It was moved in amendment by B. Sargent, duly seconded and that the name of Jinsook Khang replace Cherie Inksetter.
- 227/21C
- Withdrawn**
The amendment was withdrawn with the permission of the Council.
- 228/21C
- Reworded**
It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and AGREED, that Cherie Inksetter and Jinsook Khang be appointed to the Executive and that steps be taken to amend the terms of reference accordingly.
- Report**
229/21C
- It was moved by J. Cameron, duly seconded and AGREED, that the report as whole be adopted.

**MARCH MEETING
FORMAT**
230/21C

It was moved by J. Smit, duly seconded and

AGREED, that the Executive be given power to issue to set the date and format of the March 2022 meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS
231/21C

The next meetings will be:

Council: January 2022 (tentative) and March 2022.
Executive: to be set.

**THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION**
232/21C

Ross Lockhart, Dean of St. Andrew's Hall, shared information on theological education with a focus on St. Andrew's Hall and VST.

CLOSING WORSHIP
233/21C

The closing worship was led by Ross Lockhart with a focus of leading into the Advent-Christmas season and John 1:14.

ADJOURNMENT
234/21C

The items of business being addressed, the Council adjourned with worship lead by Ross Lockhart.

Ms. Sandra Cameron Evans
Convener

The Rev. Stephen Kendall
Secretary