

SIXTH SEDERUNT

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUTED

At St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Tuesday, June 6, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., the Assembly met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator constituted the Assembly with prayer.

COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS (cont'd from p. XXX)

Roll and Leave to Withdraw

J. Barrett provided an interim report on the Roll and Leave to Withdraw.

Changes to the Roll

D. Kim, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca – Removed from the Roll.

Leave to Withdraw

Sederunt 5 – L. Kim Den Otter, Presbytery of Kingston

Sederunt 7, 8 and 9 – B. Dean, Presbytery of PEI.

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LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE

The Assembly called for the report of the Life and Mission Agency Committee which, as printed on p. XXX, was presented by D.E. McIlveen, convener.

Consent recommendations were placed before the Assembly.

A commissioner requested that Recommendation LMA-014 (p. XXX) be withdrawn from the consent recommendations.

Consent Recommendation

T. McDonald-Lee moved, duly seconded, that the following recommendations be adopted by consent. Adopted.

LMA-007 (p. XXX)	LMA-011 (p. XXX)	LMA-012 (p. XXX)
LMA-013 (p. XXX)	LMA-015 (p. XXX)	LMA-016 (p. XXX)
LMA-017 (p. XXX)	LMA-019 (p. XXX)	LMA-020 (p. XXX)
LMA-021 (p. XXX)	LMA-022 (p. XXX)	LMA-024 (p. XXX)
LMA-025 (p. XXX)	LMA-026 (p. XXX)	LMA-027 (p. XXX)
LMA-028 (p. XXX)	LMA-029 (p. XXX)	LMA-030 (p. XXX)
LMA-031 (p. XXX)	LMA-032 (p. XXX)	

Teresa McDonald Lee highlighted the work of PWS&D.

PWS&D 75th Anniversary

A video marking the 75th anniversary of the ministry of PWS&D called Practical Compassion was shown to the Assembly.

Recommendation LMA-001 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-002 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-003 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-004 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-005 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-006 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-008 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-009 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-010 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-014 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded.

Amendment

It was moved by C. Clarke, duly seconded, that “\$750” be replaced by “\$1,000” and that after “2024” add “and that it increases \$100 per year for the following five years.

Immediate Vote

R. Royal moved, duly seconded, that the Assembly take an immediate vote. Adopted.

Amendment adopted

That “\$750” be replaced by “\$1,000” and that after “2024” add the words “and that it increases \$100 per year for the following five years.

Recommendation LMA-014 was adopted as amended as follows:

That the minimum continuing education allowance be increased to \$1,000, effective January 1, 2024, and that it increases \$100 per year for following five years.

Recommendation LMA-018 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Recommendation LMA-023 (p. XXX) was moved by T. McDonald-Lee, duly seconded. Adopted.

Planned Giving Video

A video expressing thanks to God for those who have left a legacy of faith and hope by donating bequests and other financial gifts to support mission and ministry into the future was shown to the Assembly.

Report as a Whole

T. McDonald-Lee moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

Dissent with Reasons

M. Ruttan asked that his dissent regarding the Recommendation that the Report as a Whole be adopted, be recorded with reasons, given as follows.

I share my dissent in the spirit of John 1:14. Christ came “full of grace and truth”. As his servant, I seek to pastor with both grace and truth. While there is much in the Life and Mission Agency report to support, there are some things I cannot. It highlights Bill C-4 which bans conversion therapy. The legislation, while perhaps well-intended, over-reaches. It may go so far as to criminalize certain conversations and prayers, even in an informal pastoral context. For example, if an individual is struggling with their gender identity and wants to speak to and pray with a pastor about identifying with their biological sex, this may be a criminal act under the legislation. Not only does it seem to restrict a pastor, but it seems to restrict the individual from expressing certain ideas and prayers in that same context. That is, if a person wishes to explore a new identification with their “sex assigned at birth,” it has to be asked whether there is any pastoral or therapeutic context in which they would be free to explore this since such an exploration entails a “conversion” which is now prohibited in law. The Life and Mission Agency report seems to endorse this legislation and, therefore, its over-reach. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has yet to engage in sustained biblical reflection on contemporary gender theory, especially in light of the rapidly changing landscape. We have begun using “LGBTQI2+” as an acronym. This may be overly simplistic. It may short-circuit more in-depth discussion or mute the voices of a group of persons within the larger acronym.

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DOCTRINE

The Assembly called for the report of the Committee on Church Doctrine which, as printed on p. XXX, was presented by J. Bellsmith, a member of the committee.

Recommendation CDC-001 (p. XXX) was moved by J. Bellsmith, duly seconded.

Motion to Lay on the Table

S. Howard moved, duly seconded, that Recommendation CDC-001 be tabled. Adopted.

Recommendation CDC-002 (p. XXX) was moved by J. Bellsmith, duly seconded.

Amendment

A.J. Cluney moved, duly seconded, that the words “the intention of the Committee on Church Doctrine be affirmed to continue exploring the questions and realities around Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) and its intention to submit reflections to the General Assembly that will assist the church to respond faithfully and practically” be replaced by “the Committee on Church Doctrine produce a document for the 150th General Assembly using the term Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) that will assist the church to respond faithfully and practically in pastoral situations”. Adopted.

Recommendation CDC-002 was adopted as amended as follows:

That the Committee on Church Doctrine produce a document for the 150th General Assembly using the term Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) that will assist the church to respond faithfully and practically in pastoral situations. Adopted.

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INTERFAITH GUEST

The Moderator called upon the Rev. Kenneth H. Stright to introduce Rabbi David Ellis, Rabbi-at-large to the Jewish communities of Atlantic Canada. The Moderator welcomed Rabbi Ellis.

Rabbi Ellis began by quoting the former New Democratic Party Member of Parliament, Bob Rae, saying, “The work is not for you to complete, but neither are you free to desist from it altogether.” The Rabbi commented on our many unanimous votes by noting that is the Jewish way to look for differences and look for disputes because it makes people think about issues. He described the “Ethics of the Fathers” as a male society that were not going to war but engaged in a conquest of ideas and words and would argue among themselves about a biblical text, for example, to make life better.

NARRATIVES OF HOPE AND POSSIBILITIES (cont'd from p. XXX)

Moderator invited the Rev. Victor Kim, Principal Clerk of the General Assembly, to continue to lead the Assembly in conversation about the Narratives of Hope and Possibilities. He introduced this session by talking about how moving the national office from 50 Wynford Drive to 300 Bloor Street reflects where we have been as a denomination and where we are going. He noted that structures support our stories. Then he asked what sort of structures we need to support our story moving into the future.

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GOOD NEWS STORY (cont'd from p. XXX)

This good news story was submitted by St. Andrew’s Church in Calgary, Alberta. After a pow wow in 2019, St. Andrew’s decided to co-host the pow wow for their immediate neighbourhood where some 600 Indigenous people live. St. Andrew’s is partnering with a Kingsland community association and the Calgary Indigenous Friendship Centre to plan and carry out the pow wow. The project is being supported by social workers that serve the area, a local junior high school, an A.A. group, volunteers from the congregation and the wider community. There is excitement in the possibility of connecting with the Indigenous people who live nearby.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

The Principal Clerk announced that the minutes of the first four sederunts have been posted on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website and on PC-Biz.

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ADJOURNMENT

Announcements having been made, the Moderator adjourned the Assembly with prayer to meet at St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., of which public intimation was given.