

Manitou Conference General Meeting 2017
Temiskaming Shores
June 2nd - 4th, 2017
“Oh, The Places We’ll Go”

Friday, June 2, 2017

Manitou Conference President Stewart Walker welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting with the following words: “In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Sovereign Head of the Church, this General Meeting of Manitou Conference is open for all business that shall come before it to the glory of God.”

Stewart lit the Christ candle and acknowledged our presence on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

Betty Tadescon and Roy Paul brought greetings on behalf of the Temiskaming First Nation, followed by prayer.

Carmen Kidd, Mayor of Timiskaming Shores, brought greetings.

Pastor Nick welcomed everyone to the Pentecostal Assembly church.

The following guests were introduced:

- Nora Sanders, General Secretary, General Council, Theological Reflector
- Ruth Noble, Mission & Service Engagement Coordinator and Theme Speaker for Manitou Youth Forum
- David Armour, Executive Minister and President of the United Church Foundation
- Chris Pullenayegem, Congregational Mission Program Coordinator
- Catherine Christie, United Church of Canada Overseas Personnel, Korea
- Jackie Childerhose, Grand River Bookstore & AVEL Ontario

The former Presidents of Conference, present in the Court, were introduced:

- Jim Sinclair (1988-1989)
- Bill Rogers (2003-2005)
- Elizabeth Frazer (2007-2009)
- Judith Visser (2009-2011)
- Ted Harrison (2011-2013)

Dawn Monroe brought greetings from the Manitou Conference UCW. The members of the Manitou Youth Forum were welcomed.

Judith Visser introduced the Local Arrangements Committee and thanked them for all their work.

Worship

Stewart led the President's Worship and reflected on the theme "Oh, The Places You'll Go".

Table Group Check-In

Table groups introduced themselves and talked about the theme.

Safe Space

Lillian Roberts, Jane Howe, and Brenda Lumsden lead a presentation on "Safe Space" and what it means to be in a place of safety. Lillian noted that the Sexual Abuse and Harassment in the Workplace policies are all part of the duty of care for safe communities, including a safe environment for worship.

Routine Motions

Motion GM 2017-1: Bill Steadman/Gordon Roberts

That the following reports and routine motions be adopted for information and action:

Reports for Information, (found in the Report Packet) be received "for information":

Review of 2016 Mission and Service Givings (Page 11)

Message from Financial Development Officer, Melody Duncanson Hales (14)

Summary of Actions taken by Manitou Conference Executive (41)

Report from North Bay Presbytery (47)

Report from Sudbury Presbytery (50)

Report from Spirit Dancing Presbytery (52)

Reports from Conference Committees or Working Groups

- Nominations (53)

- Archives (54)

- Music United (57)

Manitou Youth Forum (59)

Partnership Reports

- Huntington University (88)

- Atlantic School of Theology (91)

- Designated Lay Minister Program: St. Andrew's College (92)

- The Centre for Christian Studies (93)

- Emmanuel College (94)

- Five Oaks (95)

- Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resources (AVEL ON) (96)

Roll of Conference: That the roll of Conference be the lists of Ministry Personnel on the Presbytery rolls, corrected by the Lists of Transfers and the

Lay Delegates as authorized by the Presbyteries through their respective Secretaries.

Bounds of Conference: That the bounds of the 2017 General Meeting of Manitou Conference be the Haileybury Pentecostal Assembly (for Friday June 2nd, 2017 - Saturday, June 3rd, 2017), and St. Paul's United Church – New Liskeard (for Sunday, June 4th, 2017). The Celebration of Ministry Service will be at St. Paul's on Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

Agenda: That the agenda as printed and circulated be the order of business subject to those changes that are approved by the Conference.

Adjournment of Sessions: That the President have the authority to recess the Conference when business, as ordered, is completed until the next Order of the Day.

Election of Scrutineers: That those selected from each Presbytery (Christine Guttman, North Bay Presbytery; Laura Hutchison, Spirit Dancing Presbytery; Mardi Mumford, Sudbury Presbytery) and as Chief Scrutineer, Joy Galloway (Spirit Dancing Presbytery), be declared elected.

Voting Procedures: That voting will normally be done by a show of voting cards. Requests for secret ballot require a mover and seconder. Upon motion duly passed, a vote shall be taken by ballot.

Corresponding Members: That the following be made corresponding members: the participants in the Conference program, participants in Manitou Youth Forum, guests and dignitaries and that their names be added to the record (Marilyn Legge from Emmanuel College, Cindo Peterson from Five Oaks).

Meeting of Presbyteries During the General Meeting: That Presbyteries or Presbytery Executives that need to meet during the General Meeting arrange to do so after the adjournment of regular sessions.

Need to Leave the General Meeting Session: Any delegate who wishes to leave this meeting before the rise of Conference, must present a written request, (Permission to Retire Form) stating the reason(s) to the Business and Agenda Committee who will present the request to Conference.

New Business: Members of the Court who wish to bring new business items before this General Meeting should advise the Business and Agenda Table, no later than 4:45 p.m. on Saturday, June 3rd, 2017.

Distribution of Printed Materials: Any person or group wishing to distribute printed material(s) to the delegates during the sessions of the General Meeting must do so through the Business and Agenda Table.

Minutes Secretary: For this General Meeting, the Minutes Secretary will be Joan MacGillivray.

Carried

Minutes of the 2015 General Meeting (Pages 18-36)

A few typos were corrected and should read: Page 1 - Sunday, May 24, **2016**; Page 25 should read **AOTS**.

Motion GM 2017-2: Bill Steadman/Gordon Roberts

That the minutes of the 2015 Manitou Conference General Meeting be approved as corrected.

Carried

Kathie Smith, President-Designate, took the chair for Stewart Walker to present the Accountability Report of the Conference Executive.

Accountability Report of Conference Executive

Stewart reviewed the work of the Conference Executive beginning with General Council in Newfoundland and his time as President of Manitou Conference. He thanked staff at the Manitou Conference office and the members of the Executive.

Motion GM 2017-3: Stewart Walker/Stuart Taggart

To accept the Conference Executive's Accountability Report as presented.

Carried.

Stewart resumed the chair.

Affirming Ministry

Lillian Roberts introduced the members of the Steering Committee and reviewed the Conferences who have become Affirming.

Peter Haddow shared his story of coming to terms with who he is and his journey which was followed by a standing ovation.

Dawn Vaneyk, from St. Peters United Church, shared what it is like to be an Affirming congregation. She told about its importance in the life of the church including restoring the church to wholeness.

Gailand MacQueen invited table groups to discuss the stories they heard and how they connected with each one. Afterwards, he reviewed the proposed vision statement for Manitou Conference as an Affirming Ministry. This includes Manitou Conference's current mission statement of radical hospitality and the importance of including all marginalized people, including those with accessibility difficulties, hearing, and sight losses.

The presentation concluded with a short worship of reconciliation.

Nominations

Stewart reviewed the nominations to date and encouraged delegates to discern their gifts for each position.

Grand River Bookstore

Jackie Childerhose gave information on the display from the Grand River Bookstore.

Living Into Right Relations (Pages 55-56)

Elizabeth Fraser recognized the traditional territory and treaties and introduced the members of the Living Into Right Relations Committee. She reviewed their report and noted the documentary: "The Memory Project," produced by Huntington University on the memories from the 1986 Apology by the United Church to First Nations. She also noted the Manitou Collection and artwork shared throughout the Conference to build bridges between church and indigenous peoples.

Table groups had a chance to discuss the opportunities and challenges that these priorities present in moving forward. They also discussed what is needed to do this work integral to all the United Church's work.

Motion GM 2017-4: Elizabeth Fraser/Teresa Jones

To approve the Living Into Right Relations report as presented.

Carried

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Stewart introduced the video "Haven't We Done That?" and asked all to consider the following:

- What are the connections between the promises we have made as a church and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?
- Do you think things have changed for Indigenous Peoples in Canada since the Apology?
- Do you think their experience is what the Declaration hopes for?

Theological Reflection

Nora Sanders reflected on the presentations of the day. She noted the intertwining stories of all our lives and the places we'll go including the journeys we've been on since 1925 and will continue to take together.

Adjourn

Stewart declared the meeting adjourned until 8:45 Saturday morning.

Saturday, June 3, 2017

Worship

Worship was led by the Manitou Youth Forum.

Melody showed pictures of youth, their work and activities in congregations across Manitou Conference.

Accountability Report of the Conference Executive Secretary (39-40)

Will Kunder reported on behalf of the staff of Manitou Conference. He noted how staff have worked to be with congregations and presbyteries as needed even in times of difficulty including through the destruction of the fire and staff reductions. Will expressed appreciation for colleagues across the church who have made it possible for Manitou to continue their work. He also noted the sharing of staff with other Conferences. This has helped to reduce some costs but will mean that there will not be the capacity to be present as much as in the past. A priority of staff time is also the work of the remits and to help with transitions into a new structure.

Motion GM 2017-5: Will Kunder/Stuart Taggart

To accept the Executive Secretary's Accountability Report as presented.

Carried

Staff Committee (Page 61)

Janice Brownlee, Staff Committee Chair, acknowledged the staff of Manitou Conference and thanked them for all their work. In appreciation of staff, Janice presented each with a plant.

Motion GM 2017-6: Janice Brownlee/Cory Vermeer-Cuthbert

To accept the Staff Committee Report as presented.

Carried

Mission Support Grant (Page 58)

Melody reviewed the Mission Support Grant report noting the difference these grants make within congregations.

Motion GM 2017-7: Melody Duncanson Hales/Brynn Carson

To approve the Mission Support Grant Report as presented.

Carried

**Ministry, Personnel, Education, Settlement and Internship
Committee (MPESI) (Page 65-75)**

Mary-Jo Eckert Tracy reviewed the MPESI report with the following changes:

Page 68 should say Burks Falls, Katrine

Page 71 should say Linda Saffrey, 1 August 2020.

Motion GM 2017-8: Mary-Jo Eckert Tracy/Joan MacGillivray

That the MPESI report be received as corrected.

Carried

Mary-Jo thanked the committee members for their passion and concerns for all ministry personnel.

Mary-Jo introduced Proposal 2017-03 and responded to questions.

Motion GM 2017-9: Mary-Jo Eckert Tracy/Mardi Mumford

That a special Conference Service for admission to ministry in The United Church of Canada be permitted in advance of the next Conference General Meeting.

Carried

It was noted that there will be conversations between the MPESI chair and the Executive for follow-up including details regarding the service and next steps.

Mary-Jo thanked Lillian for her work and assistance on MPESI.

Sexual Misconduct Policy Update

Lillian reviewed the Changes to the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy with amendments that are effective July 1, 2017. She noted changes as well as required training and the availability of a hot line. There will also be a poster for each pastoral charge that must be displayed in a prominent place.

Motion GM 2017-10: Mary-Jo Eckert Tracy/Stuart Taggart

That the Settlement and Internship reports be accepted as printed.

Carried

Finance (Page 76-77)

Bill Rowe reviewed the Finance Committee Report and thanked Dave Clarke for his work regarding Remit 4. He thanked Toronto and B.C. Conferences for their generosity and responded to questions.

Motion GM 2017-11: Bill Rowe/Bill Jones

That the Finance Committee report be approved.

Carried

Budget (Page 79-83)

The budget was reviewed noting the deficit that will be covered by reserve funds. This will carry Manitou through until the transition takes place, January 1, 2019, providing that the remits pass. At that time the new regions and the new funding formula would come into effect.

After the break, Stewart Walker apologized to Dale Young for misunderstanding her while she was at the microphone. He asked everyone to please use the microphones when addressing the court to ensure that everyone is able to hear.

General Council Reports

General Council Executive (Page 45-46)

Erin Todd and Janice Brownlee reflected on their work as part of the Executive of General Council (GCE). They noted the use of electronic meetings beginning in May 2016 in order to save on costs. They mentioned that Adobe Connect worked well and enabled them to meet in table groups as well as to speak to the business before them. The main difficulty was all the time zones across Canada.

Some of the work of the GCE included justice issues. GCE adopted an official statement of the United Church on medically assisted dying. There will be liturgical resources and study guides for congregations to give a better understanding to everyone.

The United Church of Canada's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to endorse UNDRIP (the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) will be forwarded from the GCE to the next General Council. Measuring compliance will be one item that will be reviewed.

The budget deficit for General Council was also reviewed and the importance of the remits to assist with this was discussed.

They also noted that, depending on the results of Remit 1, GC42 could be reconvened to establish a boundaries commission. GC43 in 2018 will include a shorter business meeting with a large festival of faith. The theme will be Risking Faith, Daring Hope. Commissioners will also have a more structured preparation time in order to increase discussion at General Council.

Questions were responded to including the redevelopment of the General Council Offices and the challenges of redevelopment of Bloor Street United Church because of zoning requirements.

Motion GM 2017-12: Janice Brownlee/Erin Todd

That the General Council report be accepted as presented.

Carried

General Council Guests

Chris Pullenayegem, Congregational Mission Program Coordinator, gave an overview of some of his work in faith formation and discipleship including support for congregations to become vibrant communities of faith, and work with People in Partnership, Refugee Sponsorship, Ministries in French, Faith Formation, Lay Leadership Development and Rendez Vous. He also thanked the UCW for the \$134,497,151 they have given to M & S since 1962.

Catherine Christie, overseas personnel, served the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea and the National Council of Churches in Korea. She gave the history of those who were called to support those suffering and joining with partner churches in Korea.

David Armour shared the work of the Philanthropy Unit including the importance of living within our means. He noted that 10% of M & S goes to Embracing the Spirit which looks at new ways to be church. He noted the importance of focusing on the good work being done and the importance of focusing on the health and vitality of our congregations even as we go through restructuring. He stressed the importance to focus on who we are as disciples of Christ and how to love one another.

Five Oaks report

Cindo Peterson gave an update on Five Oaks and affirmed that this United Church retreat centre is still very much in business. She noted the partnerships that they are working towards and some of the programs that will be taking place.

Emmanuel College

Marilyn Legge gave an update on Emmanuel College as they shape opportunities for theological education, including lay certificates and

continuing education programs. She noted that they are becoming an inter denomination organization with advanced degree studies.

Budget

Continuing from an earlier discussion on the budget.

Motion GM 2017-13: Dave Clarke/Stuart Taggart

That Manitou Conference approve the 2018 Conference Budget.

Carried

Ted Harrison gave an update on Bud Thompson and his contributions to both his church and to Manitou Conference.

Motion GM 2017-14: Will Kunder/Ted Harrison

That Manitou Conference honour George (Bud) Thompson with the designation of "Treasurer Emeritus".

Carried

"Oh, The Places We'll Go"

Will Kunder gave an update on the remits and next steps. He talked about discussions happening across Ontario on how Ontario's Conferences could be realigned into regions. He noted that geography, urban, rural and culture all have a role as well as networks that are regional, clustered and passionate. Also how will we work on solutions, solve problems and deployment of staff? Many of these can be positives including sharing resources and the opportunity to learn with more diverse regions.

Table groups were invited to continue this conversation and suggest ways, on a map of Ontario, of how Ontario could be aligned into regions including connections and numbers.

Theological Reflection

Nora Sanders reflected on the day's work including the intertwining stories of our lives, the places we'll go and the journey we've been on since 1925.

Nominations

Conference Officers

Stewart asked the Court, three times, if there were any further nominations. With no responses, he declared the nominations closed.

Motion GM 2017-15: Ted Harrison/Bill Steadman

That the Slate of Officers be approved as follows:

Finance Committee Chair - Bill Jones

Finance Committee - Janet Ross and Stuart Taggart

Living in Right Relations Chair - Maxine McVey
Staff Committee Chair - Janice Brownlee
Staff Committee Secretary - Cory Vermeer-Cuthbert
MPESI Chair - Mary-Jo Eckert Tracy
Internship Chair - Maxine McVey
Settlement Chair - Kathleen McCallum
MPESI Secretary - Joan MacGillivray
Carried

Youth Commissioner to General Council

Motion GM 2017-16: Ted Harrison/Stuart Taggart

That the appointment of Manitou Conference's Youth Commissioner to the 43rd General Council be delegated to the Conference Executive.

Carried

Commissioner Nominees

Ballots were passed out, delegates voted and the scrutineers collected the ballots.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Stewart reviewed the next steps including Bill C262 and gave table groups the opportunity to discuss what is taking place in their congregations.

President's Banquet

After dinner, retirees and those celebrating anniversaries were honoured. The newly recognized DLMs were introduced.

Commissioner Nominees

The Commissioners elected by ballot were announced as follows:

Motion GM 2017-17:

Lay Commissioners

Kathie Smith
Janice Brownlee
Susan Lindquist
Peter Haddow
David Clarke
Eric Brownlee
Barbara Nott (alternate)

Ministry Personnel Commissioners

Stewart Walker
Bill Steadman
Cindy Desilets
Gord Roberts
Erin Todd
Linda Saffrey
Tracy Davis
Maxine McVey (alternate)

MYF and GCE still to be elected

Affirming Ministry

Dawn Vaneyk, Peter Haddow and Gailand MacQueen gave further information and answered questions regarding Manitou Conference becoming an Affirming Ministry. They talked about the importance of showing God's hospitality and inclusion to all people.

The Affirming Ministry Vision Statement was introduced and discussed.

Motion GM 2017-18: Judith Visser/Bill Jones

That Manitou Conference adopt the following Vision Statement:

In living its call to God's radical hospitality Manitou Conference understands that it is called to a ministry that affirms:

Radical hospitality is more than acceptance and welcome, it is a call to live towards a vision of humanity that is transformational and renewed, where all people participate as beloved children of God. Whereas the Song of Faith states, "gifts shared for the good of all, resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize, human dignity defended."

That to understand and engage our neighbours' struggle for dignity, is a call to take action that risks making an intentional place at God's table for all; to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalized; to be bold in being identified as those who stand with those whose sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, life experience, different abilities, ethnicity, race, generational culture, age, geographical location, economic circumstance and others we have yet to discern, invite us to a web of diversity and strength.

Manitou Conference in its work as a court of The United Church of Canada is committed to holding welcoming, inclusive, safe space for all people who offer themselves to the work and ministry of the Church. It is will be attentive to barriers that may limit the ability of all people to participate fully in the ministry of being the Body of Christ within the Conference.

Manitou Conference will use the resources of Conference to explore with presbyteries and pastoral charges ways in which they are called to "radical hospitality" in their ministry contexts.

Manitou Conference will seek opportunities to partner with and support other justice networks that are committed to diversity as a gift of humanity.

Carried

Motion GM 2017-19: Stuart Taggart/Gailand MacQueen

That a 75% approval be required for Manitou Conference to become an Affirming Ministry.

Carried

Motion GM 2017-20: Peter Haddow/Dawn Vaneyk

That Manitou Conference become an Affirming Ministry and seek designation by Affirm United as such.

There was a request for ballots which were passed out and collected by the scrutineers.

United Church's Living Apology Project

Aaron Miechkota, the Project Coordinator for Affirm United and The United Church of Canada's "Living Apology Project" gave the history of LGBTQ2S in the United Church and that we are not always practicing the justice that we preach. She noted that this is the 30th anniversary of inclusion of all people in the United Church which we must continue and work towards living into with welcome and affirmation for all.

Affirming Ministry

The results of **Motion GM 2017-20** were read.

Carried by 94%

Motion GM 2017-21: Will Kunder/Bill Jones

That the ballots for Commissioners to GC43 and Manitou Conference becoming an Affirming Ministry be destroyed.

Carried

Memorial Worship

An Evening Vespers worship took place, remembering those Conference leaders who have died since the last general meeting. The congregations of Knox-Callander and Trinity-Garson, along with Camp Lorrain, were held in prayer.

Adjourn

Stewart declared the meeting adjourned until 8:45 Sunday morning.

Sunday, June 4, 2017

Stewart welcomed everyone to St. Paul's United Church in New Liskeard.

Change in Remit Process

Will gave an overview and update on the remit process. He invited discussion on the changes proposed and what this will mean as we move forward.

Motion GM 2017-22: Will Kunder/Stuart Taggart

That the 43rd General Council 2018 initiate a process to change current polity which requires 50%+1 of all pastoral charges or presbyteries to vote

in favour of a remit in order for it to be approved. We advocate a new formula by which 50%+1 of the pastoral charges that vote be used to determine whether a remit passes or fails.

Carried

A concern was raised about those unable to hear because of people not using the microphones.

Motion GM 2017-23: Dale Young/Dave Clarke

That in keeping with our conference commitment to inclusivity, and recognizing that persons who are hard of hearing or deaf have gifts to offer the church but often feel excluded when microphones are not used, that Manitou Conference ensure microphones are used at all times when conducting the business of the court.

Carried

Manitou Youth Forum

The youth reported on their visioning this weekend including "Not the Future, the NOW". They requested that Youth Forum meet prior to the General Meeting so that they can consolidate their views and send appropriate representatives.

This request was referred to the Conference Executive for action. There was also a suggestion that each Presbytery name one Youth member to be part of the Conference Executive. This will be an agenda item at the next Executive meeting.

Will thanked the leadership and members of the Manitou Youth Forum for their work.

Table groups had an opportunity to talk about what they will take home from this General Meeting and what information they will share with their congregations.

Courtesies

Melody Duncanson Hales and Taylor Chisnell thanked all who supported Youth Forum over the weekend, those who gave presentations, leadership, planning team, and to St. Paul's for their hospitality.

Judith Visser, on behalf of Local Arrangements, thanked the General Council staff for their participation.

Stewart gave his personal thank you to Conference staff and the Executive for their guidance and also to local arrangements, his family and the two St.

Stephen's churches. He also thanked Brian Matheson for his technical expertise, the musicians, General Council Office guests and other guests.

Will thanked Stewart for his service the past 2 years.

Adjourn

Stewart invited everyone to gather again on Saturday, October 20, 2018, at a location to be determined in North Bay, for the next meeting of Manitou Conference.

Stewart declared that having completed the business before it, the 2017 General Meeting of Manitou Conference adjourn following the Celebration of Ministry Service, which will include the installation of the Manitou Conference President, Kathie Smith.