



MINUTES OF HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

OF BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

The United Church of Canada

May 26 and 27, 2010

AUTHORITY	The regular meeting of the Home Missions Committee was convened at the call of the Chair at BC Conference Office in Burnaby, B.C. at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, May 26, 2010, David Martyn, Chair, presiding, Sandra Nixon, Secretary. A quorum was present.
PRESENT	David Martyn, Chair Sandra Nixon, Secretary & Convenor, Vancouver-South Presbytery Jim Martin, Convenor, Prince Rupert Presbytery Bob French, Convenor, Victoria Presbytery Bruce Comrie, Convenor, Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery Dale Gillard, Convenor, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery Bill Walsh, Convenor, Fraser Presbytery Dal McCrindle, Interim Convenor, Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery
STAFF PRESENT	Nellie Tang, Finance Minister, BC Conference Bruce Cowburn, M&S Animator Michael Hare, Conference Minister (Prince Rupert) Terry Harrison, Conference Minister (Victoria) Ivy Thomas, Conference Minister (Kamloops-Okanagan) Bill Laurie, Conference Minister (Comox-Nanaimo) George Maier, Conference Minister (Kootenay) Paul Davis, Conference Minister (Cariboo)
GUESTS	Yoko Kihara, Fraser Valley Japanese United Church Will Sparks, Northwood United Church
REGRETS	Clare Hill, Conference Minister (Native Ministries) Ted Giesbrecht, Convenor, Kootenay Presbytery Keith Pederson, Convenor, Cariboo Presbytery Carole Finch, Westminster Presbytery
12:00 LUNCH	The meeting began with lunch and fellowship.
GATHERING/WELCOME	The Chair convened the meeting at 1:00 PM and led Committee members in opening worship and prayer.
INTERCULTURAL MINISTRIES	Yoko Kihara and Will Sparks gave a presentation on emerging Intercultural Ministry in the UCC as mandated by General Council in 2006.
INTRODUCTIONS	Members introduced themselves around the table.
DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	Michael Hare – works part-time for the Central Mainland Marine, which is funded by Home Missions.
ADOPTION OF MINUTES	M/S/C (Sandra Nixon/Bruce Comrie) that the minutes of the November 5-6, 2009 meeting be adopted as presented. CARRIED.
ADOPTION OF AGENDA	The Agenda was adopted as circulated.
REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE	No question or comments.

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL MISSION SUPPORT CONSULTATION

A number of future directions for the UCC were highlighted:

GC will be reducing staff costs by 10%, and 15-20 staff positions will be cut.

Discontinuing youth ministry, overseas mission.

Radical renewal of understanding of UCC identity; process to take several years.

Planning to simplify processes, reduce Manual, develop focus teams, streamline leadership. There will be no reduction in Conference grants, but there will be a reduction in overseas, Home Missions and theological grants.

A New Ministries Fund is being established.

JGER will be reducing the number of its partnerships and reconfiguring its partnership model.

Home Missions will have a 10% reduction in funding for the next three years.

There is an initiative to restructure the Ventures in Mission program, which may affect repayment options for congregations and the distribution of proceeds from the sale of church property.

UPDATE ON REAL PROPERTY TOUR

Nellie and David reported. 11-day tour in April. A good opportunity to “get everyone on the same page” and set priorities for Real Property maintenance in Prince Rupert Presbytery.

The National Church now has someone directly involved with these faith communities and their needs.

It was reported that Bamfield was sold for \$1.7 million, with \$200,000 given back to the community. The remaining proceeds go back to other Real Property maintenance. Nellie reported that a portion of the funds will be used to support Native ministries in BC Conference.

THOMAS CROSBY REQUEST FOR 2011

Marion Best has been chairing a committee on Right Relationship. This grew out of an event in Pinawa, MB two years ago. Conference reps were appointed to create dialogue on the issue. Four workshops were held in BC Conference over the last year, with resource person Cathy Cammellieri. Work is ongoing. Partial funding is requested from the Thomas Crosby Fund, for up to \$2000.

M/S/C (Jim Martin, Bruce Cowburn) that we approve up to \$2000 from the Thomas Crosby Fund towards the Right Relationship event in Prince George.

CARRIED

UNSPENTS REQUEST

M/S/C (Paul Davis, Bruce Comrie) that \$10,000 in unspents be allocated to Kispiox.

CARRIED

M&S/STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Bruce Cowburn reported that the appeal for the earthquake in Haiti resulted in \$2.8 million in donations. The M&S Consultation discussed a new “United Cares” fund which would direct funding to specific programs and projects designated by congregations.

5:30 PM DINNER

STORYTELLING

Victoria

Bill Laurie – Campus Ministries Summary Report (interim)

Open Door/Our Place – reduction in funding pending

Comox-Nanaimo

Texada – bill submitted; Bamfield – sold; Moorecroft – close to being put on market

Fraser

Exciting new initiatives in progress. Folks can follow new developments in their newsletter.

Vancouver-Burrard

Longhouse Native Ministries – part-time ministry continues

First UC – development plans continue. Sleeping 200/night, feeding 250/day. Beginning \$40 million capital campaign.

Vancouver-South

Richmond Chinese United Church – growing its youth and children’s programs. Close to becoming a pastoral charge. Did not receive MSG funding in 2010, but hoping to re-apply for 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned for the evening at 8:00 PM.

9:00 AM WORSHIP

Dal McCrindle led the committee in morning worship.

CHURCHES & HOUSING

The Chair circulated information from Erik Mathieson at GC office for churches considering Housing developments.

CAUCUS GROUPS

We broke into caucus groups to explore questions of the HM Committee’s role, governance and decision-making.

Questions for discussion were:

- (1) What would happen if we received 5 new worthy requests totaling ½ of our existing budget?
- (2) How might we implement a cut in the existing Mission Support allocation?
- (3) Name at least one “elephant in the room” that seems to get in the way of good governance or good decisions?

Issues identified from the non-staff group:

- How do we define a “worthy” request? Does it have to do with it being a new ministry, or a ministry trying to survive? Does it need to have a good chance of becoming self-sustaining, growing in numbers or in givings?
- Is a worthy ministry defined as one that will “save souls”? Do we ask, “What will happen to the community if the UCC was not there?”
- HM cannot provide full funding for all existing and new ministries applying. We need to look at coordinated funding partnerships with other levels of the church, other “pools” of funding. The church needs to clarify and streamline how various types of ministries are funded between various levels/“pools”.

“Elephants in the room”

- the discrepancy in representation between presbyteries with a Conference Minister and those without. This also raises the issue of the role of staff in the HM process.
- the perceived “rubber stamping” of funding for First Nations missions and the tension between honouring the historic promises made to aboriginal communities while trying to fund other ministries which seem in some ways to better fit our evolving sense of what a “worthy” mission/ministry is.
- perceived “automatic” funding for First United, when this mission has greater access to other funding sources than do many of the other missions funded by

HM. IS there meaning though in showing “symbolic” support from HM?

Issues for future meetings: Role of “staff”

What to do about the larger “adaptive” questions?

What should HM’s funding priorities be? Perhaps the larger question is: What is/should be the mission of our missions?

Before we tackled the specific questions, we talked about the emerging role of Conference Ministers at Home Missions, and how there was a consensus among the Conference Ministers that Home Missions needed to shift from a “maintenance model” of ministry to a “mission model”.

Issues identified from the staff group:

Q 1. What would happen if we received 5 NEW worthy requests totaling HALF our existing budget?

Unfortunately, we felt that in a circumstance like this, the decision committee would go around in circles, trying to decide between competing interests, and end the day with a feeling of resignation and defeat.

Q2. How might we implement a cut in the existing Mission Support allocation?

Long-term approach (to happen over the course of a couple of years): Agree to a new purpose/mission for Home Missions, and develop criteria to cut those allocations that do not directly support this purpose/mission.

Immediate approach (this year): Make a single, but major cut to those organizations (First UC and Our Place Society) that can access government grants and/or receive funding from sources outside the UCC.

Q3. Name at least one “elephant” in the room that affects or seems to get in the way of good governance and good decision-making?

- That in the face of a church in decline (members and givings) that our funding decisions have increasingly been driven by a survival imperative (a process that among other things engenders a welfare mentality among congregations)
- Employment security (an implicit priority of our funding decisions is to keep Ministers employed)
- That organizations that Home Missions has supported for many years have become “sacred cows” (ex., First UC)
- The painful complexity of our relationship with First Nation communities and congregations, which makes it difficult for us to even talk about making cuts in these areas.

STORYTELLING CONT’D

Prince Rupert

Bella Bella – now has independent congregation with local minister; Kispiox – funding from CCM and elsewhere to fix roof, etc and now has a DLM; Haisla struggling a bit; Port Simpson had 21 baptisms at Easter (M. Hare), future possibilities for DLM, Skidegate still served by Nancy O’Higgins, on road to self-sufficiency.

Cariboo

Leadership Development program is up and running.

Kootenay

No requests to HM for last few years. Trying to re-conceive the presbytery’s

relationship to HM committee, looking to support applications for exciting ministry as opposed to “survival” ministry.

Kamloops-Okanagan

Two missions currently funded:

North Thompson PC (Barriere/Clearwater) – been receiving funding for many years. Clearwater has 10 people, worship in catholic church; Barriere has 25, and is a combined UCC, Anglican, Lutheran congregation and is now called the Church of St. Paul.

Lumby – continues to focus on Emerging Spirit/Wondercafe initiatives.

Oasis PC – grew out of Penticton UC, currently being served by DLM

A current question is shared funding between the UCC/ACC and the difference in funding deadlines between the two denominations. What mechanism do we have for navigating that difference?

2011 MSG REQUESTS

2nd round review of anticipated 2011 Mission Grant requests.

LUNCH 12:30-1:30PM

Sandra Nixon offered grace.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL LEGACY

Brian (former Senior Advisor to National Residential School committee), shared with the Committee some of the history of the residential school legacy.

Current situation - issue has been settled with the federal government by the courts and a 2008 agreement. Tension still exists at the national institutional level, but relationships with aboriginal survivors, groups within/outside church are healthier. Relationship building is ongoing – the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (from 2008 agreement) begins in Winnipeg in June, with a strong UCC presence.

Work is also being done here in BC to prepare for events to be held here (dates not known yet). Challenge is for the church to get involved.

There are now more 1st Nations people “at the table” at General Council than before.

One challenge for Home Missions is to identify which Native ministries have “historic promises” attached to them and the nature of those promises. If they have to do with “reparations” (as opposed to “mission”), should the funding come from a more appropriate source more directly related to the Residential School legacy and T&R initiatives?

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Deadline for applications to be received by conference office is **October 18**.

***Please ensure application forms are submitted to David and Nellie by the deadline, even if they have not yet been approved by presbytery.**

Application forms are available online at the National website.

www.united-church.ca/files/forms/msg5.rtf

www.united-church.ca/files/forms/msg7.rtf

ADDENDUM TO APPLICATION FORM

Suggestions:

Ask for a definition of the “mission” that is being supported by the funds, and an accompanying mission strategy.

Financial plan should relate to directly to the mission vision.

Make wording more accessible, less “insider language” when asking about expected outcomes and how they relate to the funding principles of the Home

Missions Committee.

ACTION: Nellie and David will work on a draft and send it out to committee members for comment.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Discussion postponed to Fall meeting. Home Missions committee members are encouraged to read the proposed changes and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

FALL MEETING DATE

Fall meeting is scheduled for **November 3-4, 2010.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at PM.

David Martyn, Chair

Sandra Nixon, Secretary