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MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA
JOINT COUNCIL MEETING
June 19, 2021
Via ZOOM
Meeting Minutes

Joint Council Present: Calvin Quan (Moderator), Geraldine Balzer (Assistant Moderator), Allan Hiebert (Secretary/Treasurer), Gerald Gerbrandt (Moderator MCM), Brenda Tiessen-Wiens (Moderator MCA), Margaret Kruger Harder (MCA), Gerry Grunau (Moderator MCBC), Betty Loewen (MCBC), Arli Klassen (Moderator, MCEC), Ly Vang (MCEC), Terry Stefaniuk (Moderator MCSK), Alison Jantz (MCSK)

Staff Present: Tim Wiebe Neufeld (MCA), Michael Pahl (MCM), Leah Reesor-Keller (MCEC), Garry Janzen (MCBC), Ryan Siemens (MCSK), Doug Klassen (Executive Minister); Susan Reynar (Exec. Assistant)

Regrets: Andrea De Avila (MCM)

Note: Joint Council met both before and after MC Canada's AGM and delegate sessions.

- 1) **Welcome.** Calvin called the meeting to order at 11:00 am Central Time.
- 2) Geraldine presented the **opening**, starting with a land acknowledgement and recognition of the recent news across Canada regarding residential schools and other crimes relate to race, Islamophobia, and LGBTQ hatred. Tragically, this IS who we are. This is our "origin story" (Sarah Bessy). The lines from Nunavut NDP MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq's resignation speech are telling..."I am reminded that I don't belong here". "There is no room in your budget for basic human rights..." As MC Canada, we are called to examine our relationship with our country and the role we have to enact justice. Ernesto Cardenal (Nicaragua) challenges power and rewrites Psalm 57 to reflect the injustices around him...We are called, here in Canada, to be accountable within an unjust system to bring justice. "May we be instilled with the fire that enables us to do the work of God"
- 3) Joint Council joined in the **MC Canada Covenant litany**.
- 4) **Agenda and minutes:**
 - a) The circulated agenda was reviewed and accepted with the addition that after the break for the AGM we will give reflections and feedback from AGM.
 - b) The minutes of the Joint Council and Joint Executive Committee (MC Canada – MC USA) meeting of May 15, 2021 were reviewed.

CONSENSUS: The minutes of the May 15, 2021 Joint Executive Committee meeting were approved as circulated.

- c) The minutes of the Joint Council meeting of May 15, 2021 were reviewed.
 - i) One error in the MCEC update, line 239 – policing was in Kitchener-Waterloo, not Kingston

CONSENSUS: The minutes of the May 15, 2021, Joint Council meeting were approved with the amendment.

5) Executive Minister's Report (pp. 15 of docket)

- a) **General Updates:** Doug reviewed his written report in the docket with following additions:
 - i) Expressed thanks to Geraldine for assistance with a misconduct case.
 - ii) ESG will meet with Lauri Guenther Reesor at their next meeting to review church engagement.
 - iii) The Youth event planned for next summer will happen in two parts. There will be a larger gathering at Camp Valaqua prior to a smaller gathering of youth leaders in Edmonton during the MC Canada Delegate Gathering.

52 iv) Questions or comments:

- 53 • Process for donations to Bethlehem Bible College (BBC)– Checks would be made to MC Canada and
- 54 memo “to Bethlehem Bible College”, and sent to MC Canada as is done with funds designated to other
- 55 international partners.
- 56 • Clarification about increased requests for Witness projects: Most requests are coming from historical
- 57 partnerships that are hoping to reconnect. Some also originating in the regional churches from people
- 58 hoping to serve.

59 **b) Capital Project Proposal for PBCI-CFP in Philippines (pp.16-17 of docket)**

- 60 i) Doug provided background of Dan and Joji’s proposal to put the Peacebuilders Community and Coffee for
- 61 Peace on a sustainable basis, in anticipation of their retirement. Facilities for on-going the programming are
- 62 needed.
- 63 ii) Doug invited questions from Joint Council. (Questions from ESG on the bottom of p. 17 of the proposal):
- 64 • Based on MWC experience, there are many requests to the Global North church for resources. How will
- 65 the church in northern Philippines feel about this large sum of money going to the group in southern
- 66 Philippines?
- 67 • When Dan and Joji leave the area, is the church strong enough to be part of MWC as part of the Anabaptist
- 68 family?
- 69 • Do we have a nationwide strategy with priorities that guide our responses to requests from the global
- 70 church instead of defaulting to a first come first serve basis?
- 71 • What is the ongoing witness ministry of CFP? It seems to be more of a business model. Is there a witness
- 72 component that feeds into the ministry of the church? How is this different from other businesses? MEDA
- 73 specifically supports building sustainable businesses. Would this be a better fit?
- 74 • As a missiological reflection, is the work done by Witness workers to establish thriving Peace Builders
- 75 something we value and cherish or do we only focus on the “established church”.
- 76 • Are there bequest funds from Mennonite Church designated specifically to Dan and Joji or is our choice
- 77 to allocate the bequest funds it to this project? Response: Our current financial policy is to allocate 10%
- 78 /year of the Witness bequest fund into the Witness budget.
- 79 • What is the ongoing commitment of the Regions/Witness to support this proposal? Response: The hope
- 80 is that Dan and Joji will be here in September and itinerate between the churches and individuals that
- 81 have already been supporting this for years.
- 82 • Any further questions are invited. Please send to Doug.

83
84 **6) Finance (May 31 Financial reports previously sent by e-mail)**

- 85 a) No questions asked about financial reports.

86
87 **7) Facilities**

- 88 a) Capital Budget for Mennonite Church Office Building siding replacement
- 89 i) Engineering report shows no immediate problems with water ingress.
- 90 ii) Architect drawings and a building permit are needed to re-side the building. Due to high building costs, and
- 91 a busy season for architects, this work will not possible this summer. Aim to have architect and building
- 92 permit started this fall with aim to complete in next fiscal year.
- 93 iii) The total amount for the project is estimated to be ~\$81,000, with about \$14,175 in this fiscal year.

94
95 **CONSENSUS: Joint Council recommends to present this capital budget item to the AGM (in addition to the operating**

96 **budget that is already approved).**

97
98 **8) Annual General Meeting – Small Delegate Gather Preparation.**

- 99 a) Approximately 80 people have registered.
- 100 b) The procedures for the AGM were reviewed.
- 101 c)

102 **Break at 11:50 am to go to AGM Zoom session.**

103
104 **Joint Council Meeting Resumed at 1:45 pm.**
105

106 **9) Feedback from AGM:**

- 107 a) Joint Council members commented on various parts of the AGM program with suggestions on ways to improve
108 future AGM's
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110 **ACTION: Ask Katie to post regional and program director reports on the website and ask to Regional Communicators**
111 **to highlight in weekly newsletters.**
112

113 **10) Governance Review**

- 114 a) Betty Pries and Jessica Dyck of Credence and Company conducted a Governance Evaluation of MC
115 Canada. They did this by reviewing documents and conducting individual interviews of Joint Council
116 and Executive Staff Group members, as well as one additional staff.
117 b) Betty and Jessica gave a presentation of their findings to Joint Council on June 14, 2021, and after
118 some additions and corrections presented a final report on June 16. This was then e-mailed to all Joint
119 Council and ESG members.
120 c) **Responses to the report** were heard from all (Joint Council and ESG). To ensure all voices were heard,
121 comments were specifically invited from individual JC and ESG members, moving from east to west and
122 ending with JC executive officers.
123 d) **Where do we go from here?** After some discussion, Joint Council reached the following
124

125 **CONCENSUS: That Joint Council receive the Credence Report dated June 16, 2021 and request that the**
126 **Executive Committee assess Joint Council comments and recommend next steps by mid-July, 2021.**
127

128 **ACTION: Doug/Susan will set up doodle poll to determine a meeting date in July to process any recommendation**
129 **from the Executive Committee.**
130

131 **11) Upcoming Agenda**

- 132 a) New items for future meetings
133 b) Items for Regional Church boards to process for next JC meeting
134 i) Shared Revenue Agreement. Need feedback from moderators and regions by September 13, 2021.
135

136 **12) Next Meetings**

- 137 a) Oct 2-3, 2021, Fall Meeting, Winnipeg (in person/hybrid/zoom will be confirmed by Aug. 15) *Comment: Knowing*
138 *before Aug. 15 would help for fall travel plans around this meeting.*
139 b) Jan 29-30, 2022, Saskatoon
140 c) April 9-10, 2022, Winnipeg
141 d) July 29-Aug 1, 2022, Edmonton (Delegate Gathering)
142 e) Oct 1-2, 2022, Winnipeg
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144 **13) Closing – Prayer by Betty.**
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146 **14) In Camera**
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148 **Adjournment at 4:35 pm Central.**
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