



BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

May 1, 2018

President Update re: Transitional Governance (Commission) for Region 1

Dear Friends,

My apologies for the volume of correspondence from me through the spring. We are still experiencing plenty of shifting, and my approach is “more communication is better” at a time like this. Today my topic is the Transitional Executive for Region 1.

As you know, only Saskatchewan Conference/Region 4 remains exactly the same through this transition. The situation of most Regions as we approach January 1, 2019, is that they are in “uncharted territory” and must start completely from scratch to build their governance structures. Until the Regions become legal in 2019, there is no legal entity that can make decisions for those Regions.

As a result, the General Secretary is recommending that the best way forward is to have the General Council 43 meeting this summer appoint a Commission for each Region as a transitional governance body, until the Region has a chance to meet and elect its own governors in 2019. Commissions have the ability to take make decisions and take action without needing any further authorization from the General Council.

Our Presbyteries, President-Elect Jay Olson, and I recently received a letter outlining this process from the General Secretary. It also asked for names for the Transitional Executive for Region 1 by May 2, 2018.

At its March meeting, the BC Conference Executive discussed this topic. We agreed that for several reasons, Region 1 would be well served by maintaining the current Executive as the Commission, serving as the transitional governance body:

1. Our future Region is very similar geographically to the present BC Conference.
2. Our governance model clearly gives the Executive the desired power and functionality needed;
3. Since most members are willing to continue to serve, we would have the benefit of the experience and wisdom already at the table;
4. Our current Executive includes members from the (soon to be former) Presbyteries, thus ensuring that a diverse group are at the table as the Region is being established;
5. Our current Executive (if I may say so) has demonstrated a depth of cohesiveness, trust, insight and leadership in the last year that I have not frequently seen (and I've sat on the Conference Executive 10 out of the last 15 years). This current group has already wrestled with several matters related to the structural shifts and is well-positioned to continue to carry out that work, even while recognizing the new Region will be slightly different from our present Conference.

Our original intention at the March meeting was to bring this to the General Meeting at the end of May, but the (reasonable) deadline of May 2 moved us forward a little more quickly. After consultation with the Presbytery leaders, I wrote to the Executive, seeking their support to submit their names by the May 2 deadline, which I have just done, with gratitude for their willingness to serve in this time of change.

For your information, those names are:

Jay Olson (President)
Graham Brownmiller (General Council Representative - Ordered)
Jean Macdonald (General Council Representative - Lay)
Doug Goodwin (Executive Secretary)
Derry Bott (Prince Rupert)
Michael Caveney (Vancouver-Burrard)
Cherie Dobson (Fraser)
Ken Fanning (Finance Council)
Bob Fillier (Cariboo)
Andy Gilman (Comox-Nanaimo – new appointment)
Laura Hermakin (Kootenay – new appointment)
Stephen Hershey (Kamloops-Okanagan)
Ray Jones (Native Ministries Council)
Everest Kao (Ethnic Ministry)
Carol Martin (Victoria)
Ruth Stebbing (Westminster)
Yet to be named (Vancouver South – new appointment)

In addition to this group, the new President-Elect will be added following the Conference General Meeting, as well as anyone who is elected to the new Denominational Council Executive from BC.

Thank you for your faithfulness in this time of change as we attempt to serve the purpose to which God has called us. It is my deep conviction that in order for our primary places of mission, the Communities of Faith, to be supported, the Region needs to be strong and well-governed.

Blessings to all,



Rev. Cari Copeman-Haynes
President, BC Conference