



CANADIAN
UNITARIAN
COUNCIL

CONSEIL
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DU CANADA

**CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023**

MINUTES – May 19, 2023

Conducted Canada Wide online on Zoom and in person at Algonquin College, Ottawa

1. **Invocation and Chalice Lighting** by Rev. Shana Lynngood, Minister Observer to the CUC Board

2. **Call to Order** by Chair Chuck Shields

3. **Land Acknowledgement** Trustee Ilara Stefaniuk-Gaudet acknowledged that we are meeting across Canada on traditional territories of Indigenous peoples.

4. **Report of Credentials Committee**

Nancy Cale reported that a quorum was present. Quorum is at least 30 delegates from at least 8 congregations from at least 3 regions. The meeting is properly constituted.

5. **Recognition of Staff, Board, Official Representatives, & Other Guests**

Executive Director Vyda Ng introduced the CUC Board of Trustees, staff, and representatives of CUC affiliates.

6. **Introduction to online meeting procedures, report on mailing of notice**

Executive Director Vyda Ng explained online meeting procedures using the Zoom platform.

7. **Motion to adopt annual meeting procedures**

The Executive Director referenced meeting rules in the package and gave a brief run-down of Robert's Rules of Order to be used during this meeting.

The Chair introduced Dylan Fijal as the Parliamentarian, whose role is to advise the Chair on rules of procedure and points of order.

Motion to adopt the annual meeting procedures was moved by David Zalokar (Neighbourhood). Duly seconded. CARRIED

8. **Adoption of Agenda**

Motion: to adopt the agenda, by Mollie Twidale (Victoria). Duly seconded. CARRIED.

9. **Minutes from previous meetings**

Secretary Kiersten Moore moved the following:



- Approval of 2021 AGM minutes. Duly seconded. CARRIED.
- Approval of minutes of special business meeting November 2021. Duly seconded. CARRIED.
- Approval of 2022 AGM minutes. Duly seconded. CARRIED.

10. **Report of the Nominating Committee by Chair, Maury Prevost** (*Terms of office are for 3 years unless otherwise stated*)

The following CUC Board members will continue their terms during 2023-24:

NAME	REGION	TERM
Rev. Debra Faulk (Victoria First)	BC	2nd Year of First 3-year term
Yvette Salinas (Unitarian Church of Montreal)	Eastern	2nd Year of First 3-year term
Rev. Rodrigo Emilio Solano-Quesnel (Olinda)	Central	3rd Year of Second 3-year term
Kiersten Moore (Unitarian Church of Vancouver)	BC	3rd Year of Second 3-year term
Margaret Wanlin (Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship)	Western	3rd Year of Second 3-year term

The nominees for the CUC Board are:

NAME	REGION	TERM
Margo Ellis (Unitarian Church of Montreal)	Eastern	1st Year of First 3-year term
Ilara Stefaniuk Gaudet (Unitarian Church of Edmonton)	Western	For an initial term of 2 years
Margaret Kohr (Toronto First)	Central	1st Year of Second 3-year term



The following Nominating Committee members will continue their terms during 2023-24:

NAME	REGION	TERM
Lesley Giroday (Comox Valley)	BC	2nd Year of First 3-year term
Alex Schumacher (Calgary)	Western	3rd Year of First 3-year term
Maury Prevost (Ottawa First)	Central/ Eastern	3rd Year of Second 3-year term
Kim Turner (Halifax)	Eastern	2nd Year of First 3-year term

The following are the nominees for the CUC Nominating Committee:

NAME	REGION	TERM
Carey McDonald (Guelph)	Central	For a full 3-year term
Jamie Struthers (Regina)	BC/Western	1st Year of First 3-year term

Nominating committee chair Maury Prevost thanked the departing board members, board liaison Margaret Kohr, and fellow Nominating Committee members for their service.

President Chuck Shields declared the Board candidates elected by acclamation.



Chuck Shields thanked departing Sr. Youth Observer to the Board Eric James, incoming Senior Youth Observer to the Board Artemisia Frolic-Smart, and Minister Observer to the Board Rev. Shana Lynngood, serving a final third year.

Chuck Shields declared the Nominating Committee candidates elected by acclamation.

11. Motion to receive 2022 Annual Report

Motion: to receive 2022 Annual Report as presented, moved by Joan Hill (Mississauga). Duly seconded. CARRIED.

12. Executive Director's Report

Vyda Ng spoke about the highlights and challenges of 2022 and what has been accomplished in 2023 up to the date of this meeting:

- Learned from doing too much stuff virtually post-pandemic.
- Four national services curated and organized by Amber Bellemare.
- Virtual AGM.
- National Gathering on the theme of Covenant and leaning into discomfort.
- Inclusivity Forums and Action Groups.
- Covenants and relationships keep us together in spite of conflicts.
- Lots of ministerial transitions.
- Sought to engage more with youth/young adults.
- Joan Carolyn's retirement.
- Business as usual while navigating the changing landscape.
- Staff transitions, departure of Caitlyn Seale and Samia Tecle.
- Some congregations have dissolved, sharp decline in many congregations, very few showing growth.
- Strategic goals and priorities continue to guide work.
- Fewer online events.
- Will be hiring dismantling barriers position after Symposium.
- Strategic planning process to begin.
- A year of learning and growth.
- Committed Board of Trustees and dedicated staff.
- Nicole McKay, first Canadian Armed Forces chaplain.
- First multi-platform Conference.



Comments from the floor:

- Rev. Diane Rollert (Montreal) thanked Vyda Ng for her service as Executive Director.
- Marlo Turner Ritchie echoed Rev. Rollert’s comments, offering to serve on an HR committee.
- Gilbert Salgado (Toronto First) expressed thanks to Vyda and the board.
- Rev. Nicole McKay shared that UUMOC had voted to have a minister representative on the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy.
- Question from Steve Faraher-Amidon (Comox) about the cause of decline in membership numbers nationwide. Response that this will be a question considered in the strategic planning process.
- Question about allowing for gradients of agreement in decision-making, while acknowledging this would require change in bylaws.

13. Report from Decision Making Exploration Team (Eric James)

Team member Eric James spoke about the team’s formation and mandate and its past and upcoming events.

14. Report from the Minister Observer to the Board (Rev. Shana Lynngood)

Rev. Shana Lynngood expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Minister Observer to the Board of Trustees, a fantastic group of people with whom to work, who’ve carried out their work with grace and humility, mostly behind the scenes.

15. Report from the Youth Observers to the Board (Eric James and Artemisia Frolic-Smart)

The YOBS gave their report, focusing primarily on their main project over the past year, growing the MyceliUUm national youth network.

Comments from the floor:

- Rev. Meghann Robern expressed appreciation for the MyceliUUm network.
- Question from Gilbert Salgado (Toronto First) about whether MyceliUUm had considered looking beyond UU circles to increase its presence. Eric James responded that this had not been considered, and that this might make the group less UU in its focus.
- Question from Steve Faraher-Amidon (Comox) about how the CUC can attract more young people. Eric James suggested talking to the CUC’s YaYA staff leads about this.



16. Report from the Bylaw Committee (Margaret Kohr)

Margaret Kohr reported from the bylaw review committee. Phase 1: Administrative review. Completed. Phase 2: over the coming year, more substantive review. Report from Decision Making Team would be taken into account as well as exploring a process for changing our fundamental statements of faith e.g., principles. Bylaw committee will be working on a clear and distinct process for this. Watching UUA with interest, but this is completely separate from our process.

Motion to accept [proposed bylaw changes](#).

Questions from the floor:

- Question from Sue Sparlin (Beacon) about policy on consensus - Margaret Kohr responded this refers to Board policy governance for Board meetings.
- Steven Faraher-Amidon (Comox Valley) - Wondered about changes to principles. Chuck Shields assured these would come back before an AGM before they took place.

CARRIED.

17. Review, and Motion to Approve Proposed Goals and Strategic Priorities for 2023 – 2024 (Rev. Rod Emilio Solano-Quesnel, Board of Trustees)

The goals guide the work of CUC staff and Board in fulfilling its vision. Within those goals, a set of strategic priorities further refine the focus of staff work.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The work of the CUC be guided in 2023 - 2024 by the following goals and strategic priorities:

CUC Goals

The CUC ensures that it has resources to maintain its own sustainability in order to advance the cost-effective achievement of the following primary goals:

1. Strengthen our Unitarian Universalist member congregations and communities in order to thrive spiritually, theologically, organizationally, economically, and socially in a diverse, multi-generational context.



2. Enhance community resilience through exploration, education and sharing of diverse and inclusive spiritual and organizational practices, including those from our own faith tradition;
3. Advance socially responsible actions to live out our vision of interdependence, love, and justice to bring benefit to Canadian and global communities;
4. Strengthen collaborative and interdependent UU networks of congregations and communities.

CUC Strategic Priorities

Within these goals, the following strategic priorities are recommended for 2023-2024:

A. Strengthen the national fabric of our Unitarian Universalist¹ congregations and communities by:

- a. Nurturing and enhancing innovation and sustainability;
- b. Strengthening ministry and shared ministry;
- c. Developing, curating and focusing on Canadian resources to advance religious exploration, spiritual growth, and congregational resilience in a multigenerational context; and
- d. Ensuring that the CUC and its member congregations and communities are well positioned to welcome and embrace those who seek Unitarian Universalism.

B. Justice and equity:

I. Live into the 8th Principle of individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and systemic barriers to full inclusion in ourselves and our institutions, through:

- a. Truth, Healing and Reconciliation
 - i) Uncolonizing ourselves and our processes;
 - ii) Supporting First Nations / Indigenous self-determination and initiatives;
 - iii) Acting on repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery



- b. Identifying systemic barriers to full inclusion and acting on dismantling these in ourselves and our institutions;

II. Undertake the following -environmental justice initiatives:

- a. Enacting environmental justice through respectful stewardship practices, which include:
- i) Consulting and collaborating with Indigenous communities in order to advance policies and practices which end environmental racism; and
 - ii) Effective environmental actions and climate initiatives which minimize and mitigate the effects of climate change.

III. Refugee support

C. Sound financial management

All these goals and strategic priorities shall be achieved with sound financial management, including sustainable revenue sources, to continue the work of building vital Unitarian Universalist congregations and communities.

Comments from the floor:

- Carol Card (Ottawa First) wondered about limited eighth principle focus in strategic priorities. Response that the eighth-principle and the strategic priorities are slightly different, and that staff have limited capacity.
- Sue Sparlin (Beacon) proposed a motion to amend the wording in the appendix to the goals and strategic priorities to bring it in line with the body. After some discussion, the Parliamentarian confirmed that as this was a change to the appendix, it did not require a motion to amend.
- Motion to extend discussion on the item by 10 minutes by Karen Fraser Gitlitz. Duly seconded. CARRIED.
- Moira MacDonald (Neighbourhood) expressed support for the emphasis on strengthening the national fabric of Unitarian Universalism in the priorities.
- Rev. Pat Trudeau and Wilburn Hayden (Northwest Toronto) expressed concern about the absence of taking action against anti-Black racism in the strategic priorities.
- Kristina Stevens (Victoria) expressed concern about the absence of detail regarding refugee support in the strategic priorities.



- Rebekah Mobley-Kasner (Calgary) wondered about expanding the priorities to include indigenous and BIPOC communities. Confirmation from the Parliamentarian that this would amount to a substantive change and is thus out of order.
- Vyda Ng confirmed that the dismantling racism focus in the priorities is meant to include people of all races.
- Rev. Diane Rollert (Montreal) reported that several ministers were concerned about the omission of action against anti-Black racism.
- Rev. Frances Deverell (Nanaimo) expressed concern about the limited focus on climate change.
- Beverly Horton (Hamilton) expressed concern about the CUC not having hired the eighth principle staff person. Vyda Ng responded that the money for this item remained in the budget but the hiring hadn't taken place due to a lack of capacity.
- Motion for a recess by Katharine Childs (Montreal). Duly seconded. CARRIED.

Break

Motion by Rev. Rod Solano-Quesnel to indefinitely postpone the motion to adopt the goals and strategic priorities for 2023-24. The Parliamentarian explained this was due to the need for more time than existed to discuss the original motion.

Comments from the floor:

- Katharine Childs (Montreal) wondered about when the issue would come back for discussion. Response: this wouldn't be rushed, a special meeting would be held if necessary.
- Rebecca Mellett (Victoria) wondered about the possibility of splitting the motion to allow the non-contentious parts to go forward.
- Rev. Diane Rollert (Montreal) expressed appreciation for the board having heard the concerns about the omission of action against anti-Black racism.
- Steven Faraher-Amidon (Comox Valley) wondered about how to communicate thoughts on this issue. Response that the board always welcomes feedback.
- Moira MacDonald wondered about how the board would move forward if the goals and strategic priorities are being postponed. Response: it will be guided by those adopted the previous year.
- Sue Sparlin (Beacon) also wondered about the possibility of splitting the motion.



- Comment from Brian Jones (Niagara) about emphasizing continued commitment to action against anti-Black racism in the motion to postpone indefinitely.
- Rev. Meg Roberts (Beacon) wondered how other Unitarians can step up to address the issues in question given the board and CUC’s staff’s limited capacity.
- Rev. Norm Horofker (Halifax) expressed concern about splitting the motion, as this would lead to further discussion and would move forward with goals and strategic priorities omitting action against anti-Black racism.

CARRIED.

18. Motion to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery (Kiersten Moore, board of trustees)

Be it resolved, that the Canadian Unitarian Council formally repudiates the Doctrine of Discovery and urges its member congregations to do the same. The CUC will add our name to the list of faith organizations who have already repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, and this will be communicated to the member congregations. The CUC advocates for legislation to formally enact the repudiation of the Doctrine nationally and within Canadian legal systems and that an Action Group be set up immediately to plan the implementation of this repudiation.

Comments from the floor:

- Pam Griffin-Hody (Halifax) wondered about a mechanism for congregations which have voted individually to repudiate the Doctrine to communicate this. Response: this would be created.
- Steven Faraher-Amidon (Comox Valley) wondered about clarifying that the federal government is the government in question being asked to repudiate the Doctrine.
- Gilbert Salgado (Toronto First) suggested the board consider a motion to repudiate terra nullius.

CARRIED

19. Motion to receive the 2022 audited financial statements as presented (Joanne Green, board of trustees)

CARRIED.



20. Motion to accept the 2022 actuals compared to the budget as presented (Joanne Green, board of trustees)

CARRIED.

21. Motion to accept the revised 2023 budget as presented (Joanne Green, board of trustees)

Comments from the floor:

- Sue Sparlin (Beacon) wondered whether postponing the strategic priorities would affect the implementation of the eighth principle position. Response: this would not be the case.
- Barbara Huhn (North Shore) expressed concern about the size of the transfers from the reserves taking place. Response: there's agreement this isn't sustainable.
- Myron Hedderson (Fredericton) wondered if the large transfers were the only option the board had. Response: that it was.

CARRIED.

22. Motion to accept the preliminary 2024 budget as presented (Joanne Green, board of trustees)

Comments from the floor:

- Mara Shaw (Kingston) wondered if the CUC had considered changes to staffing levels. Response: this had not been considered.
- Maury Prevost (Ottawa First) wondered when the CUC would make changes to ensure its operations were more sustainable financially.
- Kath Anthony (Halifax) expressed appreciation for the online national services the CUC provided following the outbreak of the pandemic.
- Brian Jones (Niagara) wondered about changes to the CUC's investments. Joanne Green responded that the board would be looking at a request for proposals for an investment manager.
- Wendy Martin (Grand River) expressed support for continued investment in the CUC's programs.

CARRIED.

23. Motion to Approve Auditor (Joanne Green, board of trustees)

Motion: be it resolved that Grant Thornton be appointed to continue as auditor for the CUC 2023 – 2024.



CARRIED.

24. Motion of thanks (Kiersten Moore, board of trustees)

Kiersten Moore, Secretary of the CUC Board, offered thanks to CUC Board members who are departing from the Board:

- Sr. Youth Observer Eric James
- Chuck Shields
- Joanne Green

She also extended thanks on behalf of the board to the CUC’s task forces, study groups, and committees:

- The National Lay Chaplaincy Committee
- The Nominating Committee
- The Theological Education Funds Committee
- The Shining Lights Committee
- Dismantling Racism Study Group
- Decision Making Exploration Team

25. Motion to adjourn formal part of the meeting by Barb Wallace (Hamilton). Duly seconded.
CARRIED.

26. Announcement of New Board Executive (President Kiersten Moore)

- Kiersten Moore -President
- Margaret Kohr – Vice President
- Yvette Salinas – Co-Treasurer
- Margaret Wanlin Co-Treasurer
- Rod Solano-Quesnel – Secretary

27. Installation of 2023 – 2024 CUC Board of Trustees

Reverend Shana Lynngood and Reverend Samaya Oakley installed the CUC Board of Trustees for 2023– 2024 witnessed by all those in attendance in person and online