

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL MINUTES January 17-19, 2003

The Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met from 8:45 p.m. on Friday, January 17, 2003 until 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 19, 2003, at the Toronto Airport Marriott Hotel, Toronto, Ontario. The Moderator, The Right Reverend Marion Parady, presided.

ATTENDANCE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Voting Members

Jim Balfour, Ross Bartlett, Marion Best, Hazel Bigby, Claire Borel-Christen, Omega Bula, Nina Butt, Cindy Desilets, Amy Downs, Sheila Duffin, David Estey, Ian Fraser, Alan Hall, Carol Hancock, Ron Holotuk, Jim Jackson, Jon Jessiman, Jennifer Llewellyn, Stephen Mabee, Joanna MacQuarrie, Faith March-MacCuish, Teresa Moysey, Marion Parady, Karen Ptolemy-Stam, Barbara Rafuse, James Scott, Peter Short, Jim Sinclair, Michelle Slater, Sheila Snelling, Norma Soble, Wayne Soble, Walter Sowa, Susan Tough, Peter Wesley, Dale Wiggins, David Woodall.

Corresponding Members

David Allen, Debra Bowman, Wendy Bulloch, Bob Campbell, Virginia Coleman, Muriel Duncan, Catherine Gaw, Cynthia Gunn, Bob Johnstone, Sharon Larade, John Lougheed, Don Maclean, Lynn Maki, Anne Miller, Fred Monteith, Hubert Norman, Bill Rogers, Peter Scott, Yvonne Stewart, Mardi Tindal.

Regrets

Regrets for the entire meeting: Michael Bourgeois, Gérald Doré, Doug Einarson, Margaret Findlay, Bob Jackson replaced by Bill Rogers, Elaine Jacobs, Ruth Nicholls replaced by Amy Downs, Bill Phipps, Bernice Saulteaux, Dong-Chun Seo, Jack Spencer, Martha ter Kuile, Don Willmer.

Regrets during the meeting: John Lougheed will be leaving the meeting on Saturday, David Woodall will be attending on Saturday only, Jennifer Llewellyn will be attending Saturday and Sunday.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2003

CONSTITUTING THE MEETING

The Moderator welcomed the members of the Executive and constituted the meeting with the following words:

"In the Name of Jesus Christ the head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by the 37th General Council, I hereby declare this meeting of the Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le 37ième (trente septième) Conseil général, je déclare ouvert, par la présente, l'executif du Conseil général et ses travaux dans l'intérêt du Royaume de Dieu."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator introduced the new members and members with new roles since the last meeting of the Executive:

- Ian Fraser, General Council Minister, Resources for Mission & Ministry (previously Acting General Council Minister, Resources for Mission and Ministry)
- Fred Monteith, Executive Secretary for Hamilton Conference (previously Acting Executive Secretary for Hamilton Conference)
- Hubert Norman, Acting Executive Secretary of Newfoundland and Labrador Conference
- Jamie Scott, Chair of the Business Committee of the Executive of the General Council
- Anne Miller, Acting Speaker, All Native Circle Conference

- David Estey, Acting General Council Minister, Programmes for Mission and Ministry

The Moderator introduced Fred Graham who will be offering his gift of music this weekend and thanked Peter Short who has resigned as Chair of the Business Committee for his work on that Committee.

The Moderator talked about the powerful witness we present by modelling our mission in the way we govern ourselves with a reminder to honour all voices, being mindful of our purpose, goals, and where we want to be when we adjourn on Sunday. She also talked about the anniversary of the Gulf War and the rally that will be taking place in downtown Toronto, this weekend, and thanked the people who will be at the rally on our behalf.

The Moderator talked about the new relationship that the United Church is entering into with aboriginal people. It begins with confession for past wrongs and moves to walking together in a healed relationship. This relationship, with minor changes in the wording, could be similar to the hopes for this meeting.

Those who have sent regrets for this meeting of the Executive:

- Ruth Nicholls, Lay Representative, Toronto Conference being represented by Amy Downs for this meeting of the Executive
- Bill Phipps, Immediate Past Moderator will not be attending this meeting
- Doug Einarson, Chair of the Committee on Finance will not be attending this meeting
- Jack Spencer, Ordered Representative, Maritime Conference will not be attending this meeting
- Martha ter Kuile, Ordered Representative, Montreal and Ottawa Conference will not be attending this meeting
- Bernice Saulteaux, Ordered Representative, All Native Circle Conference will not be attending this meeting
- Gérald Doré, Ordered Representative, Francophone Constituency, will not be attending this meeting
- Michael Bourgeois, Chair, Committee on Theology and Faith will not be attending this meeting
- Dong-Chun Seo, Ordered Representative, Member at Large will not be attending this meeting
- Don Willmer, Chair of the Committee on Ministry and Employment Policies and Services will not be attending this meeting
- Elaine Jacobs, Lay Representative for All Native Circle Conference will not be attending this meeting
- David Fines, Press will not be attending this meeting
- Margaret Findlay, Lay Representative, Alberta and Northwest Conference will not be attending this meeting
- Bob Jackson, Acting Executive Secretary for Manitou Conference being represented by Bill Rogers for this meeting of the Executive

Those who will be absent for part of this meeting of the Executive:

- John Lougheed will be leaving the meeting on Saturday
- David Woodall will be attending the meeting on Saturday only
- Jennifer Llewellyn will be attending on Saturday and Sunday

The Moderator noted that a briefing has been arranged for David and Jennifer when they arrive tomorrow in order to bring them up to date.

Sharon Rose Joy Ruiz-Duremdes, our global partner from the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, has completed her term.

There was a question related to the number of people who sent regrets. How many people attending are voting members and how many are corresponding members? Voting members were asked to stand.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Corresponding Members

Motion: Jim Sinclair/Jamie Scott

2003-01-17-0554.PRO

That the corresponding members of the Executive of the General Council for this meeting be Sharon Larade (Chief Archivist), Muriel Duncan and John Lougheed (Observer), Bob Johnstone (Interim Planning and Processes Strategist, Executive of General Council and GC38), the Executive Secretaries of the

of the Conferences, Yvonne Stewart and Mardi Tindal as Facilitators and others invited to attend as resource.

Carried

Administrative Staff**Motion: Jim Sinclair/Jamie Scott****2003-01-17-0555.PRO**

That the administrative staff for this meeting be Robin Chen, Sharon Buttrey and Joan MacGillivray and that the minute secretary for this meeting be Joan MacGillivray.

Carried**Reference and Counsel****Motion: Jim Sinclair/Jamie Scott****2003-01-17-0556.PRO**

That the following persons be the Reference and Counsel Committee for this meeting of the Executive of the General Council: Stephen Mabee, Joanna MacQuarrie, and Ross Bartlett.

Carried**Agenda****Motion: Jim Sinclair/Jamie Scott****2003-01-17-0557**

That the Executive of the General Council adopt, as circulated, the Agenda for this meeting of the Executive of the General Council and that changes to the agenda, which may be necessary as the meeting evolves, be on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

Carried**Motion: Jim Sinclair/Jamie Scott****2003-01-17-0558**

That the Executive of the General Council adopt, as circulated, the Purpose, Goals and Desired Outcomes for the January General Council Executive Meeting.

Carried**MODERATOR'S STATEMENT RE THE LISTENING TEAM**

The Moderator made a statement to the Executive of the General Council concerning the Listening Team. As background, the Moderator noted that on an earlier occasion Walter Sowa, as a member of the Listening Team, wrote concerning the mandate of the Listening Team. At its meeting on September 10 and 11, 2002, the Sub-Executive noted the correspondence from Walter and, in light of its time and its content, decided to move it to the Executive of the General Council meeting in November, 2002. During this meeting, the correspondence from Walter was received for information.

Bob Johnstone, acting on behalf of the Planning Team for this special meeting of Executive of General Council, had earlier invited responses from Executive members. A number of very helpful responses were received, including Walter's. In his thoughtful letter, he again emphasized the need to clarify the mandate of the Listening Team.

The Moderator made the following statement noting that this statement is coming from her rather than the Acting General Secretary since the Moderator presided over the meetings of the Sub-Executive and, as mandated by the Sub-Executive, assisted in establishing the Listening Team.

"The motion to establish the Listening Team was moved, seconded and carried on February 12, 2002. The motion did not contain the words, "to make recommendations".

Motion: Jack Spencer/Sheila Duffin**2002-02-12-0301**

That the Moderator and the Sub-Executive put in place a listening team to:

- Listen to the concerns, fears, feelings of staff;
- Review the human resources processes used through the last few months; and
- Consider the workplace environment of church house and the issues which give rise to what many staff experience as an unhealthy workplace.

Carried.

The Sub-Executive discussed various matters relating to the Listening Team at its meetings in March and April 2002. The assumption was made and articulated by the Listening Team in its report to the March 7th Sub-Executive meeting that the report back would include recommendations: "The mandate of the Listening Team is to listen and review the Human Resources procedures with a report back and recommendations". Other reports included similar references to recommendations. While there was no motion to this effect, there is no indication in the minutes from those meetings that any other member of the Sub-Executive challenged this assumption.

At the April 18, 2002 meeting of the Sub-Executive, the Chair of the Listening Team described the process that the Listening Team intended to follow in completing their work and reporting to the Executive. He noted that the Listening Team would include recommendations on "where to go from here". It was stated in the minutes that "Members of the Sub-Executive agreed to the process as laid out by the Listening Team".

Therefore, the Moderator concluded that from a review of the Listening Team's mandate as established by motion by the Sub-Executive on February 12, 2002, it is understandable why the Commission on Leadership stated that the Listening Team exceeded its mandate by making recommendations.

From a review of the context of the reports, discussion and commentary that surrounded the original motion, it is also entirely understandable why the Listening Team understood its mandate to extend to making recommendations. When the Listening Team reported that it intended to make recommendations, the Sub-Executive communicated its approval of that direction to the Listening Team.

Although there has been a different understanding among these parties about the mandate of the Listening Team, we can be clear on one matter. The Listening Team, Sub-Executive and the Commission on Leadership all acted in good faith, took their respective roles very seriously, and worked diligently to serve the best interests of the Church."

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROCESS

The Moderator introduced and welcomed Mardi Tindal and Yvonne Stewart as the facilitators returning to assist us for this meeting and invited them to lead us in the next steps.

Mardi gave an overview of our weekend together and presented an image of a spiral to understand how we are approaching our work. Tonight we are at the top of the spiral with the big, sweeping picture. Throughout the weekend we will spiral down to a focussed conclusion on Sunday.

Mardi introduced the three major themes of the weekend:

- Theological and Practical Understanding of Leadership
- How the Executive of General Council will operate
- Accountability of staff and programme and of the Executive of General Council for its own governance process

After prayer Mardi reviewed the holy manners developed at the November Executive of General Council meeting. Tomorrow the list will be reviewed and changed as needed for consensus.

Yvonne reviewed the Purpose of the meeting -

To seek God's wisdom and grace in having respectful conversation, and in making informed, faithful, and clear decisions about the Commission Report on Leadership as it pertains to the Executive of General Council's role and responsibilities for faithful and effective governance for the well-being of the whole church.

Yvonne also reviewed the goals and suggested adding a new 6th goal - "To accept our responsibility as an Executive of the General Council for good governance". These goals, along with any changes, will be affirmed tomorrow.

Yvonne reviewed the agenda and talked about the image of the body and its brokenness. She introduced the three themes and the worksheets that were the result of reflection on the responses sent in by the members of the Executive. The hope is that there will be decisions made for each of these sections.

Mardi talked about the image of the body as portrayed in the Commission report including the brokenness and healing. She invited everyone to focus on their contribution to the body's healing without focussing on the brokenness of the past. Throughout the agenda there will be opportunities to think about actions to contribute to the healing of the body. The goal is to seek truth and honesty.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jamie Scott, chair of the Business Committee, made some general housekeeping announcements.

EXAMEN AND VESPERS

Mardi talked about the Ignatian examen with examples from the book "Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life" by Dennis, Sheila and Matthew Linn. The book described how children in refugee camps were unable to sleep until someone gave them a piece of bread to hold throughout the night. This bread was a symbol to them that God has provided for them today and God will provide for them tomorrow. The examen is a time to reflect on times and things that we are grateful for and times that we are not grateful for. In Table Groups each person was invited to reflect on the examen and take a piece of bread with them tonight.

Vespers followed led by the Moderator and Acting General Secretary.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2003

The Moderator welcomed everyone this morning and welcomed David Woodall, Muriel Duncan and Sharon Buttrey.

The Moderator reported that Dr. Doug Hall and Dr. Peter Newbery have both received the Order of Canada and she will be sending letters on behalf of the church. The Moderator also remarked on the sad news of Ralph Mills' death. Albion Wright and David Iverson will be attending the memorial service on our behalf today.

WORSHIP

Bob Johnstone led a service of Healing and Reconciliation.

Mardi and Yvonne continued with the process from last evening with an opportunity to act on the declaration of hope that was made this morning in worship.

HOLY MANNERS

The holy manners approved at the November Executive of the General Council were reviewed with additions made.

Our intention is to -

- Keep God at the centre of everything we do
- Speak for ourselves
- Speak for a purpose
- Separate people from problems
- Allow for full and equitable participation
- Listen carefully without interruption
- Welcome the conflict of ideas
- Take a future orientation
- Demonstrate appreciation
- Honouring the decisions of the body
- Commit to holding one another to account when we do not keep our holy manners
- We will keep the discussion at the table
- We watch our body language
- Check in about good use of time
- Process for allowing the quiet people to speak with an invitation
- Sincerely say what we really feel

The Executive agreed to these holy manners with a consensual "AMEN".

GOALS

Yvonne reviewed the goals including the new 6th goal added last night.

- To explore the theology of leadership as outlined in the Commission Report.
- To hear an update on the progress made in addressing the decisions and recommendations contained in the Commission Report.

- To engage in a discussion and decision-making exercise with regard to the decisions and recommendations not already acted upon.
- To affirm a clear course of action for the Executive of the General Council, relating the decisions and recommendations of the Commission report to the larger context of the mission and ministry of the General Council Offices.
- To participate openly with each other within the framework of “holy manners”, as we work and worship together in a process enriched by theological reflection.
- To reaffirm our responsibility as an Executive of the General Council for good governance.

There was mutual agreement by the court to accept these goals. The goals were reaffirmed with an “AMEN”.

Yvonne referred back to the purpose of the meeting “To seek God’s wisdom and grace in having respectful conversation” and talked about the image of “Our Broken Body”. The table was reset as it was at the November Executive of the General Council as a continuation of the invitation from the Commission to return to the table where healing is given. Table groups talked about their willingness to come to the table and were asked, “Is there anyone who is not willing to be at the table?” Everyone affirmed their willingness to be present and to come to the banquet.

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FROM THE ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY (Appendix A)

Jim Sinclair shared his report for information. It will seek official acceptance at the April Executive meeting. Through different images for bread, Jim talked about the courageous decision made in August 2000 to restructure the General Council Offices and how, with the best of intentions, snags were encountered. He also talked about the significant gifts of people who are still in our community and of the many who are not. He noted the struggle to differentiate between what was and where we are now. The Senior Leadership Team has been working on this and needs the assistance of the Executive.

Jim noted that the Mission and Service totals are still unknown and there is some concern. Revenue generation is a major piece of work that will be on the April agenda of the Executive. Jim also noted the Strategic Planning process, the meetings of the Executive Ministers and the Senior Leadership Team (the Planning and Operations Group), supervision and performance reviews.

THEOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP

Mardi introduced the worksheets that will be used in Table Groups. The task until lunch is for table groups to look at the Theological and Practical Understandings of Leadership Related to the Roles of General Secretary and of Executive of General Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jamie Scott made some housekeeping announcements.

After lunch, the Moderator welcomed Jennifer Llewellyn. She also gave John Loughheed the best wishes of the Executive as he moves into his new ministry. We were reminded of the peace rallies taking place across the country and prayed the prayer for peace.

CHECK-IN RE THE BODY

Mardi reviewed the comments placed on the body that members had agreed to take responsibility for including honesty, prayer, listening, reconciliation, learning, accepting positive, honour of purpose, patience, wisdom and affirming, to name a few. Members were invited to reflect on what they heard, what they are grateful for, and what they are not grateful for.

THEOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP

Table Groups reported back reflecting on the work presented making additions, deletions, and noting areas of agreement. The facilitators will compile this information and bring it back for further work later in the meeting.

A proposal regarding Recommendation #11, that the General Council Executive affirm the principles on the Commission Report pages 77-78, was discussed. There was much discussion on this proposal and it was noted that this Executive of the General Council has begun the task of differentiating itself from the Commission Report as an instrument for consideration and decision. The work done on the work sheets

will come back later in the meeting. There was agreement that Table Group 1, working with the facilitators, will collate the work of this afternoon and bring a list of characteristics of the common understanding of the role, responsibilities and expectation for the Office of the General Secretary as a way of addressing Recommendation 11.

HOW THE EXECUTIVE OF GENERAL COUNCIL WILL OPERATE IF THE COMMISSION REPORT IS IMPLEMENTED

Working in table groups the group worked on the work sheets to develop a scenario of how the Executive of the General Council needs to work. Mardi referred to the image of the spiral and how yesterday we were at the top and now we are working our way down to a level of practicality. Table Group 3 was the first to report back with the other Table Groups feeding in their additions, changes, and deletions to reach consensus. Again the facilitators worked with all the written reports to identify points of harmony and disharmony and will bring back later in the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jamie Scott made a few announcements before dinner. Alan Hall asked everyone to distribute as widely as possible the posting for the General Secretary Search and to encourage people who may be interested to apply. The General Council Minister, Programmes for Mission and Ministry is also in the search process and this posting should also be circulated widely.

After dinner Fred Graham led with music.

CHECK-IN RE THE BODY

Mardi continued her check-in and reviewed additional responsibilities to heal the body. These included acknowledging helpful behaviour, check out presumptions, encourage self evaluation, friendly words, less critical of others suggestions, laughter, prayer, keeping the vision, listening with the heart, discern meaning behind words, asking appropriate questions, be clear about boundaries, strengthen relations, and spirituality, to name some of the offerings.

HOW THE EXECUTIVE OF GENERAL COUNCIL WILL OPERATE IF THE COMMISSION REPORT IS IMPLEMENTED

The Facilitators brought back, from the work done in table groups, a scenario related to how the Executive of the General Council and General Council will operate if the Commission Report is implemented.

Table Group responses to the following questions were:

What will happen at a meeting of the Executive of General Council?

How might a report be formulated for decision or policy making?

What decisions might GCE make? On what aspects of the issue?

What kind of decisions might the GCE be tempted to make that are not yours to make?

- The lead persons for the Committee present a report (this was a generic response using the Residential Steering Committee as an example).
- Reports are clearly designated for information and/or proposals for action.
- Expert opinion might also be offered (Legal counsel or appropriate resource).
- Prior policy set by General Council or its Executive would have to be followed or a proposal made for change. The Executive would usually consider proposals; turn them into motions with the possibility for amendment or substitute motion. Even if a report were for information, the Executive would decide if any action was necessary. Decisions would be policy decisions or funding (beyond budget) decisions. (i.e. Are we going to settle for cultural loss? Would we accept a certain percentage of cost of settlements?)

Other responses included:

- Documentation is received before a meeting – material includes context for how this fits into mandate, mission, vision, and framework.
- The Executive to identify benchmarks of accountability and timelines.
- When an issue is first brought to the Executive, it will be referred to an appropriate, Permanent Committee, that will enable the Executive to make an informed decision (new business). It was noted that we need to be flexible on this and could be asking for a report.
- Have the Senior Leadership Team offer its wisdom; decide whether to proceed or not in light of human and financial resources.
- The Executive would be responsible for determining the appropriateness of the theology.

The following were identified as things that we may be tempted to do but know that we do not do.

- We might be tempted to make the detailed decisions related to implementation.
- We might be tempted to get into structure and job descriptions.
- Management decisions would not be decided (i.e. specific cases or who would go to meetings, etc.)

How will the Executive deal with material before it? How will a strategic plan, vision and priorities be used in the decision making process?

- If there was a clear vision statement, part of the reporting would be to show how it would meet or move us toward established goals or priorities.

Other responses included:

- Presentation with proposals, questions for clarification, hear from the Senior Leadership Team, according to priority, deal with in sessional committee or in plenary. Use strategic plan to test proposal. An historian, theologian or reflector might offer input/reflection on the report.

What boundaries will there be between the Executive of the General Council and the Permanent Committees and between Senior Staff and the Executive? How will their roles and functions differ?

- Boundary is not a helpful word. Rather we should be speaking of relationships and how to define them. The Governance Project Team and the Permanent Committees are discussing this at present. It is still in flux.

Other responses included:

- Permanent Committees are the arms of the Executive. They have authority as given by the Executive and are accountable to them. The Permanent Committee has oversight of the task given, the Senior Leadership Team needs to respect the Executive's role in making decisions and the Executive needs to respect the Senior Leadership Team's role in implementation and management. The Executive of the General Council decides what work it wants done and gives it to a Permanent Committee to delegate, coordinate, and prioritize the work.

The facilitators noted that when they were compiling the information, a question was lifted out that needs attention. We have no accountability structure in place for the Permanent Committees, if they overstep boundaries, who calls them on it? How would the Executive of the General Council know about it?

- The Governance Project Team is working on this. The Permanent Committees and the Senior Leadership Team have membership on each of the Permanent Committees. One scenario is that if something were not functioning properly, concerns would be taken to the Permanent Committee, to the Senior Leadership Team, and to the Executive. The Business Committee will review this so that we are clear in reference to this statement.

What will be the communication between the Sub-Executive and the Executive of the General Council?

- The Sub-Executive can only do what the Executive tells it to do. Currently a synopsis of Sub-Executive work and agendas keep the Executive of the General Council current even before minutes are received. Both are helpful.

A similar response was:

- E-mail agendas of the Sub-Executive before and summaries of decisions after each meeting.

What will be the communication with the "commissioners" to General Council regarding commissioners' decisions and directions if any?

- Commissioners are commissioners until the next General Council but we do not inform them in a formal way of ongoing work regarding the decisions they made. Some conferences do use commissioners for ongoing tasks. A digest could be on Conference and National Web sites and communicated by e-mail at little cost. Commissioners have been polled in the past between meetings.
- The Year Book includes a synopsis of actions of the Executive. It could be organized according to priorities and themes. Should lay commissioners receive copies of the yearbook or at least the report section?

How will you expect the Moderator and General Secretary to facilitate the meeting and decision making process? The Business and Agenda Committee?

- By preparing for and leading the meeting in a clear and accessible way.
- By structuring the meeting and process in an open and efficient way.
- The proposal method saves a lot of time and process.
- Written materials need to get to members in good time so members can be well prepared. This is the responsibility of all preparing documents. The annotated agenda was helpful.

Other responses included:

- The Moderator and General Secretary need to be keepers of the big vision and hold it before us.
- Remind us of which decisions are ours to make. Work with Agenda and Planning Group re: allocation of time. Help Agenda and Planning Committee to ensure that appropriate resources are available. Clarify use of table groups. Be sure that proposals are in appropriate form that could lead to motions.
- Should the Moderator not be chair? She/he cannot offer wisdom when chairing (a proposal has been prepared and forwarded to the Business Committee about this.)
 - This was referred to the Permanent Committee on Governance and is on the agenda of their February meeting and therefore does not need to be dealt with at this meeting.

There was a question seeking clarity on the difference between the Business Committee and the Agenda and Planning Committee.

- The memberships of the Agenda and Planning Committees for General Council and its Executive were approved at the November, 2002 meeting. The Governance Project Team is working on this question in planning the April meeting of the Executive. The Chair of the Business Committee is also on Agenda and Planning and is responsible for planning prior to the meeting. The Business Committee identifies the flow of the work during the meeting. The chair of Agenda and Planning for the Executive is the Moderator.

What process/commitments might need to be in place in order to avoid falling into the “common church trap”?

- Good staff supervision will help avoid this including appropriate grievance processes within the system. Someone could sit at the business table with the role of flagging issues as they come along. This was echoed by others including being clear about the mandate of the Executive.

What biblical or theological images or concepts challenge or affirm your scenario?

- Justice - woman at the well, Mary Magdalene, the whole ministry of Jesus, Moses and the 70 elders, the Judges of Israel.

Other comments and suggestions included:

- On GPBP page 6 – the intent of the second to last paragraph needs clarification. It will be referred back to the Governance Project Team for further clarification.

A comment was included about a possible action for Recommendation 4 (Healthy relationships between GCE and senior staff) as follows:

We affirm the idea of an Executive of General Council members' handbook (GPBP report) that would include:

- A list of things the Executive of the General Council must do.
- A job description for members.
- An explanation for why we deal with some things and not others.

The Executive was comfortable to have the above as a summary of how they want to see the Executive of the General Council function in the future. The Business Committee will work from this to help move us into decision-making tomorrow.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERSHIP EXPECTED IN A GENERAL SECRETARY

Lynn Maki reported on the proposal that was generated from the discussion earlier in the day. The proposal is as follows:

The Executive of the General Council recognizes that neither “CEO” nor “Servant Leader” adequately reflects the shared expectations of the style and the character of leadership offered by the General Secretary, General Council. Church leaders are always challenged by the varied images of leadership portrayed in the scriptures: Moses as a visionary, first shall be last and the last shall be first, Jesus washing the disciples feet, Jesus challenging leaders and overturning tables.

What is agreed at this time is that the General Secretary:

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| | <i>From the Commission Report (pp 77-78) and the earlier discussions:</i> |
| 1) Will be and be seen to be a spiritual leader integrating theology and worship with the administrative component of the exercise of the strategic plan of the General Council. | <i>Commission Report: model to the rest of the Senior Leadership Team and staff in integrating theology and worship. From discussions</i> |
| 2) Bears the vision of the General Council within the GCO and holds responsibility for its implementation. | <i>Discussion: embodies the spirit of the General Council and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.</i> |
| 3) While rooted in the consultative character of the United Church decision-making, will act decisively in his or her role as chief administrative officer of the General Council. | <i>Commission Report: "in charge" of the overall admin; appropriately assertive; buck stops From discussions</i> |
| 4) Together with the Moderator, on behalf of the General Council and its Executive is responsible for the care of the whole of the United Church. | <i>Commission Report: manifestly committed to the overall best interests of the whole</i> |
| 5) Is accountable to the General Council and its Executive for the building and maintenance of a Senior Leadership Team which functions in the richest sense of the term "team". | <i>Commission Report: accountable to GC and GCE for building collaborative SLT</i> |
| 6) Will be appropriately assertive with the General Council and its Executive in ensuring that the actions of the Court are consistent with its policies and with its fiduciary responsibility. | <i>Commission Report: appropriately assertive with GCE in challenging GCE</i> |
| 7) Will ensure that the General Council and its Executive will be provided with adequate and appropriate resources in a timely fashion, to make decisions. | <i>From discussions</i> |
| 8) Together with the Moderator, in a balance which respects and supports the primacy of the Moderator, acts as a spokesperson of The United Church of Canada. | <i>From Commission Report</i> |
| 9) Will intentionally and consistently embody the common vision towards which all are working. | <i>From discussions</i> |
| 10) Affirms the contributions of both administrative and programme staff. | <i>Commission Report</i> |
| 11) Is a pastoral presence in the GCO. | <i>Commission Report</i> |

Motion: Alan Hall/ Jon Jessiman

2003-01-17-0559

That the above be adopted by the Executive of the General Council as key characteristics expected of the General Secretary leadership role.

Carried

Motion: Jennifer Llewellyn/Michelle Slater

2003-01-17-0560

That the Theology and Faith Committee, in consultation with the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes, be asked to assist the Executive in continuing the discussion about theological perspectives on leadership.

Carried

THEOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF LEADERSHIP RELATED TO THE ROLE OF EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Yvonne reviewed the summarized work of the table groups on the Theological and Practical Understandings of Leadership related to the role of the Executive of General Council.

What sort of leadership do you expect to provide as a member of the Executive of the General Council?

- To provide informed leadership to shape, articulate, interpret, and clarify the General Council vision, and establish policies, goals, and priorities consistent with the will of General Council.
- To reflect the breadth and character of the whole church. To ensure that the regions are heard.
- To accept responsibility for committee work of the Executive of the General Council.
- To interpret the actions/decisions of Executive of the General Council to the regions.
- To bring wisdom, integrity, faith and theological reflection to the table. To add the knowledge and perspective of the constituency.
- To be continuously learning.
- To be a non-anxious, clear, non-reactionary body.

What would this leadership look like practically so that the General Council and the church-at-large know that you are fulfilling your leadership role faithfully and effectively for the sake of the mission of the church?

- We need to do what we say we will do. Take responsibility for our decisions.
- To talk about/share information about issues from the General Council or its Executive as a resource to the various courts of the church.
- We would keep track of our work from one General Council to the next.
- We would be well informed of the work of Sub-Executive.

How does this fit with your biblical and theological understandings of leadership?

- We come together as a council. We are like the apostles as “elected” leaders of the church.
- Different styles of leadership – the diversity of gifts – “some are preachers, some are teachers...”
- Moses and the 70 elders to govern the people of Israel (we are the elders).
- Equipping the saints for the work of ministry. It is our job to equip the church.
- Isaiah “the government” will be on his shoulders.

Addendum

It may be that our struggles to be a faithful Executive are an attempt to do an impossible task. Perhaps the mandate of the Executive of the General Council (*Manual* 520-526) may need to be re-examined as a prior step.

If the duties and powers of the Executive were to be more realistically designed with a much more modest proposal as an alternative, we might find a way to be a more faithful and effective Executive and all the work of the church be more effectively done.

The Business Committee will work on this report to assist in our decision-making tomorrow.

The Moderator thanked Mardi and Yvonne for the work they did today.

Fred Graham led a Taize worship to close the meeting for today.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2003

Mardi and Yvonne led worship and prayers using the prayer cycle that is prayed every morning at Five Oaks.

The Moderator called to mind the congregations from which we come and the congregations gathering in worship this day. Isabela Simon was welcomed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jamie Scott shared the agenda for today and made a few announcements.

The Business Committee reviewed the work and issues throughout this meeting, the work from November on the Commission Report, the Report from the Acting General Secretary and also the work of the Governance Project Team to put together a package of proposals for consideration to assist in decision-making.

The following items have already been referred and work is proceeding on them or has been completed, no further action is needed on these today.

A. Decisions of the Commission

- #1,2 & 3 need no further action. Governance Project Team Report GPPB 22.
- #4 accomplished through the mandate of the Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes Permanent Committee.
- #5, 6 & 7 needs no action, as minuted in the Acting General Secretaries Accountability Report.

B. Recommendations of the Commission

- #11, 12, 13, 16, 18 – no action needed today.

RECOMMENDATION 4

A proposal related to Recommendation 4 from the Commission on healthy relationships between the Executive of the General Council and Senior staff (first part only) initiating a healing and reconciliation process with the former General Council Secretaries was presented as follows:

That the Executive of the General Council, acknowledging that healing is needed in its relationship with former members of the General Council Secretaries, direct that the Moderator, Acting General Secretary and two representatives to the Executive of the General Council invite the former members of the General Council Secretaries to meet with them for the purpose of acknowledging the brokenness, allowing all voices to be heard and moving toward the re-establishment of right relationships

Jim Sinclair gave the background of this recommendation which was included in his Accountability Report followed by discussion on the proposal.

Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk

2003-01-17-0561

That the Executive of the General Council, acknowledging that healing is needed in its relationship with former members of the General Council Secretaries, direct that the Moderator, Acting General Secretary and two representatives to the Executive of the General Council, with the assistance of a facilitator, invite the former members of the General Council Secretaries to meet with them for the purpose of acknowledging the brokenness, allowing all voices to be heard and moving toward the re-establishment of right relationships.

Carried

RECOMMENDATION 8

A proposal on Recommendation 8 related to the Reference and Counsel Committee was presented as follows:

That the Executive of the General Council direct the Permanent Committee, Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes, to engage the expertise of a Mentor in governance and theological reflection to be funded by the Executive of the General Council Project Fund.

The mandate of the Mentor would be:

- 1) Have a thorough understanding of the authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the Executive of the General Council, and the General Secretary General Council, and the Senior Leadership Team, and the appropriate relationships and responsibilities between and among them;
- 2) Acquire expertise on General Council and the Executive of the General Council process, and the appropriate functioning and interaction of its constituent parts;
- 3) Advise the Chairpersons of the Executive of the General Council Permanent Committees on questions relating to the appropriate exercise of their committee's oversight and accountability responsibility;

- 4) Attend all meetings of General Council and the Executive of the General Council and the Sub-Executive, and, when requested, provide advice regarding:
 - a. Procedure;
 - b. Procedural fairness;
 - c. Boundaries of jurisdiction;
 - d. Where jurisdiction does reside;
 - e. Relations between the Executive of the General Council and staff, and between the Executive of the General Council and its own committees;
 - f. Theological implications, and implications regarding traditional understandings of the ethos of the United Church;
 - g. Recommendations for solving apparent "roadblocks" in the business of the court, in conjunction with the Executive of the General Council Business Committee;
- 5) And, even when not requested, counsel General Council or the Executive of the General Council or the Sub-Executive, if it appears they may unwittingly be exceeding the boundaries of their appropriate roles.

Michelle Slater gave the background from the November meeting, this also came up yesterday in discussion about a theological reflector. It was noted that this may not be something that is needed forever but is helpful to flag.

Questions and discussion included the concern about the time frame for this position and the differing roles for the different Committees. It was noted that the intention was that this would be a time-limited position to help with the transition. The fact that it is funded through the Project Fund would limit it to one year.

Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk

2003-01-17-0562

That the Executive of the General Council direct the Permanent Committee, Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes, to engage the expertise of a Mentor in governance and theological reflection to be funded by the Executive of the General Council Project Fund and reviewed after a 2 year period.

The mandate of the Mentor would be:

- 1) Have a thorough understanding of the authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the Executive of the General Council, and the General Secretary General Council, and the Senior Leadership Team, and the appropriate relationships and responsibilities between and among them;
- 2) Acquire expertise on General Council and the Executive of the General Council process, and the appropriate functioning and interaction of its constituent parts;
- 3) Advise the Chairpersons of the Executive of the General Council Permanent Committees on questions relating to the appropriate exercise of their committee's oversight and accountability responsibility;
- 4) Attend all meetings of General Council and the Executive of the General Council and the Sub-Executive, and, when requested, provide advice regarding:
 - a. Procedure;
 - b. Procedural fairness;
 - c. Boundaries of jurisdiction;
 - d. Where jurisdiction does reside;
 - e. Relations between the Executive of the General Council and staff, and between the Executive of the General Council and its own committees;
 - f. Theological implications, and implications regarding traditional understandings of the ethos of the United Church;
 - g. Recommendations for solving apparent "roadblocks" in the business of the court, in conjunction with the Executive of the General Council Business Committee;
- 5) And, even when not requested, counsel General Council or the Executive of the General Council or the Sub-Executive or the Permanent Committees, if it appears they may unwittingly be exceeding the boundaries of their appropriate roles.

Defeated

RECOMMENDATION 14

Recommendation 14 states that the General Secretary, General Council, General Council Ministers and the Executive of the General Council covenant new relationships consistent with the report. The following was offered as a proposal.

That the Executive of the General Council recommends that the Senior Leadership Team develop and implement a process to reaffirm the healthy manner in which people would work in the governance processes of the Church. (This would be at a time which the Senior Leadership Team deems appropriate i.e. following the rise of GC38 or the completion of the transition phase). The Senior Leadership Team would also consider the work of the Task #7 from November 2002 Executive of the General Council meeting.

Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk**2003-01-17-0563**

That the Executive of the General Council recommends that the Senior Leadership Team develop and implement a process to reaffirm the healthy manner in which people would work in the governance processes of the Church. (This would be at a time which the Senior Leadership Team deems appropriate i.e. following the rise of GC38 or the completion of the transition phase). The Senior Leadership Team would also consider the work of the Task #7 from November 2002 Executive of the General Council meeting.

Defeated**RECOMMENDATION 2**

Recommendation 2 relates to the public acceptance of responsibility. The following was proposed:

That the Executive of the General Council use the "Prayer for Repentance and Release" developed by Task Group #2 (November 2002 Executive of the General Council), in the closing worship of this meeting.

Michelle Slater gave an overview followed by discussion including whether this was the proper time to do this. It was noted that there will be a prayer of confession in the liturgy this afternoon.

Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk**2003-01-17-0564**

That the Executive of the General Council use the "Prayer for Repentance and Release" developed by Task Group #2 (November 2002 Executive of the General Council), in the closing worship of this meeting.

Defeated

In voting against this motion the Executive expressed concern that this is not yet the appropriate time for such an action. It is important to acknowledge what has taken place over the past three years. The Executive also expressed the need to invite others into this process.

The time for an order of the day, to allow people to break and check out of their rooms, was announced.

Motion: Jon Jessiman/Peter Wesley**2003-01-17-0565**

That we extend the time of this discussion and the order of the day by 20 minutes.

Carried**PROPOSALS**

Proposal 1 and 2 came from the facilitators to address the accountability issues that were not dealt with in the agenda.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The following proposal was suggested:

That the Executive of the General Council directs the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes to prepare a process for evaluating programs undertaken on behalf of the General Council or its Executive and bring such proposals to the November, 2003 Executive of the General Council meeting.

Discussion included clarification between programs and program units. Programs are the work that we do. The November Executive referred program evaluation to the Governance Project Team.

Motion: Jon Jessiman/Steven Mabee**2003-01-17-0566**

That the Executive of the General Council directs the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes to prepare a process for evaluating programs undertaken on behalf of the General Council or its Executive and bring such proposals to the November Executive of the General Council meeting.

Carried**GOVERNANCE OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL****Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk****2003-01-17-0567**

Since the Oversight and Support Project recommends that ways of evaluating the governance process of the Executive of the General Council be developed (8),

That the Executive of the General Council:

- a) Direct the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting to make a proposal on a regular audit of the Executive of the General Council governance process by an external body and
- b) Direct the Agenda and Planning Committee of the Executive of the General Council to schedule time at every meeting for the Executive of the General Council to evaluate its own governance process at that meeting.

Carried

There was a suggestion to revisit the motion 2003-01-17-0560 passed yesterday regarding the Theology and Faith Committee. There was a concern that by the Executive of the General Council asking the Theology and Faith to work with the Permanent Committee it was averting its own process of not working through the Permanent Committees. It was noted that the Theology and Faith Committee is a standing committee of the General Council and as a result our process was correct and the motion is valid.

OMNIBUS MOTION

The Omnibus Motion was presented and there was a request to remove Item 3. The following was removed from the motion -

Regarding recommendation 3, The Executive of the General Council directs a nomination body when appointed, to ensure the appointment of a Supervision Team for the General Secretary for the approval by Executive of the General Council or Sub-Executive as soon as possible. The Executive of the General Council urges the Acting General Secretary to select a support team as soon as possible.

In discussion it was noted that the Commission Response Coordinating Team (CRCT) was set up to monitor decisions and recommendations. This Group met and the Executive appreciates the CRCT's work. As the Executive began to take responsibility for more of its work it was no longer necessary for this group to meet and no follow up was necessary.

Motion: Jamie Scott/Ron Holotuk**2003-01-17-0568****Regarding recommendation 1,**

- a) That the Executive of the General Council disband the Commission Response Coordinating Team (CRCT).
- b) That the Executive of the General Council discharge the Commission with appreciation for the time, labour, and skill its members devoted to this task over the summer months.

Regarding recommendation 4, That the Executive of the General Council direct the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes to consider the functioning of the Sub-Executive: membership, role, frequency and type, and refer to the work of Task Group 3 from the November 2002 meeting for consideration.

That the Executive of the General Council direct the Acting General Secretary to: have minutes of the Sub-Executive meetings speedily dispersed; distribute weekly reflections to the staff, to the Executive of the General Council as well; keep the Executive of the General Council informed between meetings; determine ways the Executive of the General Council can have some contact/presence with staff.

That the Executive of the General Council refer the comments on How the Executive of the General Council Will Operate Regarding the Sub-Executive (as gathered on Saturday January 18, 2003) to the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes.

Regarding recommendations 5, 6 and 7, Refer the comments on How The Executive of the General Council Will Operate and Theological and Practical Understandings of Leadership Related to the Role of the General Secretary and the Executive of the General Council (as gathered on Saturday January 18, 2003) to the Governance Project Team for information.

Regarding recommendation 9, That an extra day be added to the November 2003 Executive of the General Council meeting for orientation, community building and education, and that the Senior Leadership Team, working with the Governance Project Team/Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes, be asked to prepare/facilitate this day.

Regarding recommendation 10, That the Executive of the General Council direct the Senior Leadership Team to develop a comprehensive communication plan for all levels of church activity, taking into consideration the suggestions of Task Group #5, and present this plan to the April 2003 Executive of the General Council meeting.

Regarding recommendation 15, That the Executive of the General Council refer for action to the Senior Leadership Team.

Regarding recommendation 17, That the Executive of the General Council direct Ministry and Employment Policies and Services (MEPS) to continue clarifying policies and procedures re search and selection, and direct MEPS to undertake in-house education re hiring policies.

Table Group proposals

- That the Executive of the General Council refer to the General Council Minister, Regional Relations, for consideration, the proposal re role of Conference representatives to share significant issues/learnings, as well as sharing "consolations and desolations of the Church's life" in the Conferences.
- Re nomenclature naming of Executive Minister, refer to the Senior Leadership Team as part of the completion of the restructuring project.

Carried

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Moderator asked if anyone is going to be in Scotland May 17 to 23 and would like to take greetings to the Church of Scotland, please let either the Acting General Secretary or herself know.

EXAMEN

Mardi and Yvonne introduced a final Examen. Mardi talked about the children in concentration camps who survived because others gave them their last pieces of bread. This is a reminder that everything can be taken except for the last freedom to choose one's attitudes in a particular way. She noted that the Executive has chosen to name some things and post on the body while it has chosen not to name others. There are still sore spots and broken places and there are still places that need God's healing. The Executive was invited to reflect on ways individuals have taken responsibility for the healing of this body in this time, the ways in which they intend to take further responsibility, and the ways they have not been ready to take responsibility. We were reminded that God works through our failures as well as those things done in harmony with the Creator. The Executive was invited to reflect on what it is as a governance body, who your staff are and how can we move ahead with accountability. The Examen will take us from one meeting to the next with reminders of what was life giving to hold on to until the next meeting and what we are not grateful for.

Yvonne invited people, in table groups, to reflect on what they are grateful for and what they are not grateful for. A few of the responses included:

Grateful for: committed, caring people; for the Business Committee and the work they did last night; the residential setting and the different sense of community it fosters.

Not grateful for (troubled about): Troubled that lost the use of table groups to empower all to have a voice and wondering how to integrate the whole so that we don't lose the spiritual nature when we move into the business section.

As the gathering at The Table concluded, Mardi and Yvonne cleared it until the next time we gather.

APPRECIATIONS, EVALUATION, AND WORSHIP

Walter Sowa extended our appreciation to Mardi and Yvonne as the bearers of hope.

The Moderator thanked the members of the Executive for giving this extra weekend and for engaging in a way that has given promise and hope. Marion also thanked Bob Johnstone and Robin Chen, without their hard work this meeting would not have happened. Marion also thanked, Joan MacGillivray, Sharon Buttrey, and Isabela Simon for their work. She thanked the Business Committee for the tremendous work they did and Jim Sinclair for the support and direction he gave and she thanked everyone.

Joanna MacQuarrie thanked Fred Graham for the blessings of his music.

Jim Sinclair thanked the Moderator for her grace and presence.

Bob Johnstone asked people to spend time now to fill in their evaluation sheets.

The meeting concluded with communion worship.

ADJOURNMENT

The Moderator declared the meeting of the Executive of the General Council adjourned.

Moderator, Marion Pardy

Acting General Secretary, Jim Sinclair

**General Council Executive Special Meeting
Friday 17 January 2003 to Sunday 19 January 2003.**

Appendix A

Acting General Secretary's Accountability Report

Submitted by Jim Sinclair

Introduction:

This report will outline for the Executive something of the status of life in the General Council Office since November 2002. It lists the Executive's previous actions regarding the Report of *The Commission On Leadership* and offers an update on work done since we last met. All this is happening on a weekend which provides a vivid reminder of the mission of the church; on the twelfth anniversary of the outbreak of the Gulf War thousands of United Church people will share in a public witness across Canada that war is not the answer in Iraq. All of this is happening on a weekend when hundreds of thousands of United Church members and adherents will gather in their places of worship to praise God and seek the hope they need to share Christ's ministry in the coming days. Our meeting is happening... and many people do not even know that we are here. In many ways it is for them that we come together, so that our service to Christ might remain faithful, our discipleship eager and our actions will remind others everywhere that "We are not alone."

Life In The General Council Office

There is a good mood amongst the staff in the General Council Office. This is not to say there are no moments of stress. They happen, and for the most part are related to factors that are not unusual in any workplace. But the willingness of people to resolve such moments, and their loyalty to the mission of the church has moved us along. The celebrations of the different units and the all-staff Christmas dinner were obvious highlights in recent weeks. Each one was a welcome occasion for people to gather and to enjoy one another. One woman who had joined the staff in recent months told me she had never attended a staff Christmas party that was so much fun. The event was organized, decorated and served (the cooking was catered) by a large cadre of volunteers from all over Church House, principally from the General Council Support and Services Unit and the Financial Services Unit.

The worship life of the community and its capacity for people to care for one another is important. Attendance at our Wednesday morning service is consistently good. When individual staff members have suffered family difficulties, there has been solid support from co-workers. That was especially evident at the sudden death of Ruth Doll, a long-term employee of the Pensions Department. We record her passing with sadness. We continue to value the work of the GC Personnel Minister John Burton whose presence, Bible study, facilitation of groups and private consultations are helpful and appreciated.

As time goes on the new design continues to unfold in hoped for, and sometimes surprising, ways. More and more each day we are experiencing the difference between a concept for re-structuring and the specific ways it is implemented. I find myself attempting to name over and over again how our new patterns are distinct and different from "the way things were before." The current pattern of the Senior Leadership Team is one example.

The Moderator, the Acting General Secretary and the General Council Ministers who make up the Senior Leadership Team now meet every Thursday morning. This is more than we originally expected. It also means the team is doing considerable operational decision-making which is not its original purpose. By default, since there was no manager for the re-structuring project, the group is filling that role. These unintended developments, however, have had a beneficial effect. They have led the team into every corner of the GCO operation, providing valuable learnings for all of us. This will continue for a while. It provides a bridging function until the Permanent Committees are able to assume their roles. It will decline as delegated authority continues to be clarified, lines of supervision and accountability become clearer, and a more collaborative working style becomes more integrated. Some of that is happening in the new Planning and Operations Group (POG) which meets monthly. It is made up of the Executive Ministers/Officers from all the units, the GCMs, the Moderator and the Acting General Secretary. It allows

us all to have a shared look at the present situation across the GCO and to name possible ways of addressing needs. I value greatly the cooperation and wisdom displayed by colleagues in this setting.

The recent appointments of Executive Ministers Ron Olsen in Finance, Juliet Huntly in Resource Production and Distribution, Michael Burke in MEPS have been well received. They have added valuable strength to our staff contingent. David Iverson in his new role as General Council Officer: Residential Schools Steering Committee has been providing key leadership as that part of the church's mission enters a new phase with recent agreements between the federal government and other churches. David is establishing a regular email newsletter to keep the church up to date on this matter. We are grateful for the work of David Estey as the Acting General Council Minister: Programmes for Mission and Ministry. The search for a permanent appointment to that position is now underway, as is the search for a permanent General Secretary to the General Council.

It was good to have a weekend with the Permanent Committee Chairs and some members of each committee. This was hosted by GCM Ian Fraser and Elected member Coordinator, Mary Purdon. First meetings of these committees are scheduled over the next few weeks. Similarly, the gathering in early December of the Leading Elders, Presidents and Presidents-Elect hosted by GCM Carol Hancock and her colleague, Administrative Assistant Joan MacGillivray, was an important milestone.

Obviously, there are many challenges ahead. The planning for General Council 38 is underway. Early plans for GCE in April have been unfolding. Special projects in terms of record management and the rationalizing of the nominations process are either underway or about to begin. The position audit suffered another delay late in the Fall; we are getting closer to a start date for this critical piece of work. The former Book Room space has been sub-let and the retail arm of RPD has been located in renovated quarters at our Distribution Center. A new data-base for tracking work being done in the GCO is almost ready. It will allow us to coordinate the efforts of many units and groups, and to provide a greater accountability to the GC.

We do not yet have final totals on the 2002 gifts to the *Mission and Service Fund*.

Actions of the GCE to date, in terms of The Commission's Report:

At the November 2002 meeting of the Executive the following actions were taken.

- A. "To receive the report of the Commission" [Minutes, p. 201]
- B. that:
 - i) The actions taken by the Commission that the Commission characterized as "Decisions" in its report be hereby ratified and confirmed by this Executive as decisions of this Executive, and
 - ii) This section be without prejudice to the right of any member of this Executive to move reconsideration of any of the Commission's Decisions. [Minutes, p. 212]

"What does it mean to receive a report?" My understanding of that action is -

From Bourinot's Rules of Order, 4th ed., at page 62:

"A report can simply be received, which means it has been accepted but that no further action on it will be taken. This is appropriate when the report is essentially informative or when the main body does not wish to take action for the time being on any proposal in the report. Receipt of the report is recorded in the minutes, and its proposals can be considered at a later date."

If a report has been received and therefore "accepted", the following are conclusions that could be drawn:

- the Court acknowledges that the report has been delivered to it;
- the Court is aware of the contents of the report; and
- a copy of the report is included as part of the official minutes of the meeting at which the report was received.

The Commission's report contains both Decisions and Recommendations. Receiving the report does **not** mean that the Court agrees with the Recommendations made in the report. As noted above, consideration of the Recommendations is left for a later meeting. The Decisions made by a Commission are reported for information only to the Court that appointed and empowered it to make Decisions on the Court's behalf.

Update on Work Accomplished or Planned

I have listed the following, where appropriate, in a manner parallel to the categories outlined in the Commission's list of Decisions and Recommendations.

"DECISIONS"

4. regarding a strategic planning process

Though the church does not yet have an intentional, cohesive strategic plan, it has declared some strategic priorities. The importance of racial justice and the commitment to enhancing regional relations are clear; senior portfolios have been created to move these priorities forward. Considerable work in each area has been undertaken in recent months. Having the Permanent Committee on Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes (GPBP) take this on is a major, welcome action.

5. regarding senior staff working principles

The Senior Leadership Team undertook a two-day retreat in late November. It offered an opportunity to begin identifying ways that we can be supportive to one another, to share in the development of work plans, and to engage in theological reflection and visioning. In late February we will take a similar period in a residential setting, including time with an outside facilitator to assist us in developing ways to address conflict situations we might experience as a team. Related to this is how to establish greater harmony and health to the GCO workplace. Considerable effort is going into this on an ongoing basis.

6. relationship between General Council Ministers and Executive Ministers

We are all working at this. Both in one-to-one supervisory relationships and on several other fronts as well. There is an obvious willingness to cooperate, and to go well beyond that to engaging in the kind of discussion and effort that makes for meaningful outcomes for the church-at-large and all concerned. The POG group is helpful in this regard. In addition, there are weekly gatherings of Executive Ministers /Officers with the GCMs they report to on a supervisory basis.

"RECOMMENDATIONS"

3 regarding Senior Leadership Accountability

The Governance Project Team's recommendations regarding supervision are now normal practice in the staff group. The *supervision* team for the (A)GS has not yet been established. The intended *support* team for the GS (Sub-Exec. June 17-18, 2002) did not get appointed.

4 regarding healthy relationships between GCE and Senior staff

The December 19th Sub-Executive agenda was circulated in advance by email to the GCE. However, we still were later than we hoped in sending out the supporting documents to the Sub-Executive. They arrived in advance but not conveniently, at a busy time. The Acting General Secretary's Monday (sometimes Tuesday!) Morning Notes to the GCO staff are now being circulated to Executive members and the Conference Offices. I have already mentioned the newsletter about residential schools developments. The initial meetings of the Permanent Committee Chairs and some members included senior staff people, as did the gathering of the Leading Elders, Presidents and President-Elects. All the Senior Leadership Team will be available, as appropriate, to support the work of the Permanent Committees.

9 regarding equipping GCE members for Nov. 2003 and beyond

Significant work on orientation and continuing training of GCE members is being done by the Governance Project Team.

10. Communication among Moderator, GCE, Sub-Exec and committees

Comprehensive planning for a communications policy is contemplated. Different elements of this kind of activity have been identified and undertaken. One example would be the Moderator and Acting General Secretary's letter to Presbyteries and pastoral Charges in December reporting on current life and concerns in the church, and providing charts which describe the new design and the role of each unit.

14. GS-GC, GCMs and GCE covenant new relationships

This is a sensitive area, one not yet addressed well in our new life. The suggestion for GCE to appoint 3 members to meet with the Senior Leadership Team to develop a covenanting process that would take into account persons in ordered ministry serving in executive roles in the GCO is necessary.

15. Norms and principles for units.

Ongoing work being done in this regard.

16. Spiritual Life of the General Council Office

The Worshipping Life Committee continues its work on this. Late in November and early December a team of 25-30 volunteers undertook the mission of visiting all staff (if permission to visit had been obtained) The purpose was to inform them of the committee and its purpose, to invite their comments and suggestions about worship and how the spiritual life within Church House might be developed. On February 5th a meeting will be held to analyze the comments shared and to establish future directions. An early scan of the suggestions offered includes a yearning to enhance the chapel space, to continue the Monday noon Bible study, to offer a Tuesday meditation group and to provide a wider variety of types of worship experiences.

18. Regular Performance Reviews

At a Planning and Operations group meeting on this subject in December a worthwhile discussion took place. An immediate priority expressed by the GCMs and Executive Ministers/Officers was for a consistent process to offer worthwhile and effective performance reviews. Out of that a plan for a staff management development program is being designed. Mr. Dick Johnstone, a senior Canadian management consultant and dedicated member of The United Church of Canada, is assisting with this task. He has agreed that the funds for the Johnstone/Hall Bursary, monies he donates in memory of his parents and parents-in-law, can be used to assist with implementing this plan, and has offered to help with some of the training as an instructor.