

Report of the President 2018

It is always a challenge to present in a brief report the wide-ranging and important work in which Council is engaged. As we look back at the 2017/2018 TUCC program year, this is even more true. I am pleased to report that we have made progress in six significant categories of our work: our legacy of providing financial support to congregations and ministries, providing innovative ministry solutions through congregational consulting, in partnering with presbyteries and other councils of the church, work to follow up on the challenges from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and finally our partnership with the camps in their important work with young people. We have also been looking forward to ways in which Council can continue to offer its gift of connecting resources with ministry in the new regional system that comes into effect on January 1st. Let's look at each of these areas in turn –at least in point form.

1. Financial Support to Congregations & Social Ministries

Council's support of ministry through capital loans remains a major piece of the contribution it makes to the life and work of United Church ministries. These loans in turn provide revenue that is distributed to the 36 congregations, individuals and organizations that invest in the Investing In Ministry Fund from the loan capital is drawn. Council also stewards a suite of restricted funds that provide targeted financial resources to ministries, sometimes in partnership with donors who give their advice on how monies should be used.

- Current loans to congregations and ministries stand at \$5m with projects ranging from the completion of the Lansing redevelopment, new church buildings in Wasaga Beach & Brampton, a new manse for the Ghana Calvary Methodist United Church, to smaller bridge loans for a variety of projects.
- Conversations are under way which could see a further \$4m in loans being made in the coming program year.
- Investing in Ministry Fund (IIMF) Investors received just over \$1m in distributed earnings in 2017.
- Grants from restricted funds have been made in the past year to Lansing's nearly-new shop, a new French-speaking ministry in Southwest Presbytery, Eastminster United's elevator projector to support accessibility to their Out of the Cold ministry, and Central Weston's food start-up incubator program among others. These grants, plus those made from donor-advised funds, totalled over \$100,000 in the year.



2. Innovative Ministry Solutions

Throughout the past year the Centre for Church Development and Leadership has continued to be very much in demand. Through consultancy and workshops, the Centre helps congregations and presbyteries imagine and create cutting-edge initiatives to support and grow healthy and vibrant ministry and mission.

- The Living Presence Ministry continues to thrive. Janet Marshall and Bri-anne Swan are now working on a writing project to capture some of the learnings from this partnership with Living Waters Presbytery
- A new regional urban 'parish', East End United, has now been established after much work and guidance from Janet Marshall.
- This and other experience has led to the development of a plan for an innovative missional-ministry training program focused on new expressions of church, with Toronto Southeast Presbytery is an active partner. The CCDL will continue to develop further support and partnership with presbyteries, theological schools, and other organizations.
- In 2017-18 we launched a pilot project to explore providing consultancy on the best use of church properties for mission and income. Katja Brittain has made significant inroads into shaping this work which you can see described in our *Albatross or Asset* handout.

3. Partnerships with Presbyteries & Conference

The missional ministry training program mentioned above is one example of the way in which TUCC has forged new relationships with the councils of the church. Other examples include:

- The provision of facilitation services to South West Presbytery in their discernment of the future of its community ministries, and also for work on a its response to the national restructuring implementation team.
- The creation of the Toronto Southeast Presbytery Major Capital Grant Fund, a \$2m dollar fund to support strategic capital projects and grants for new and emerging ministries in the area served by that presbytery.
- 'How Green Is Your Church' is co-sponsored by Council's Sustainable Energy Loan Fund and the joint Social Justice Committee of the two Toronto presbyteries. Participating congregations were asked to create a plan for one of the three levels of green certification offered by Greening Sacred Spaces. The first year's awards were presented at the meeting this evening. The scheme will continue next year and will be open to the whole of region 10.
- The work of administering 'surplus properties' on behalf of Toronto Conference has continued with some interesting and challenging properties. The work has been well received.

- Our CCDL team have been contracted by Toronto Conference to carry out ministry team training events for selected team ministries.

4. Truth & Reconciliation Commission Response

In 2016 Council made a commitment to join with the rest of the church in reviewing ways in which it might join in the reconciliation process. We have lived out this commitment most notably through two Heart & Vision events and in cooperation with the Conference Living into Right Relations Circle held an educational event in 2017. This October, the Heart & Vision event will again focus on Truth and Reconciliation issues but other steps have been taken as well.

- In September 2017, Council co-sponsored the first Great Lakes Water Walk where indigenous elders met large groups of people at the mouths of the Credit and Rouge Rivers for a blessing of those historic watersheds. The two groups walked Toronto's Lake Ontario waterfront, joining finally at Marilyn Bell Park, just west of Ontario Place for an interfaith act of blessing.
- In recent weeks Council has agreed to give financial support of \$12,000 to the Gibimishkaadimin Project, an initiative of Bloor Street United and several other Toronto congregations, which brings together indigenous and non-indigenous youth for time together to work, talk and pray.
- A grant of \$10,000 was given for the documentary film "Finding Peter Bryce", the story of a public health physician who spoke truth to power in 1904 about residential schools. The film was previewed at the Toronto Conference Annual Meeting and was well received as a potential teaching tool.

5. Ministries for children and youth: Camping programs

Council continues to raise funds through the Camping Opportunities Fund (COF) to send children to camp and assist camp corporations in maintaining the camp sites.

- In 2017, \$125,000 helped our camps ensure that every child has an opportunity to experience grace through a camping experience.
- An extraordinary gift from the Church of the Master established a fund which will contribute to the COF in perpetuity, reinforcing our commitment to that ministry's good health in the long term.
- Council has also continued to build its funds for the maintenance of the camps.

6. Preparing for life in the new United Church structure

In addition to all this program work the conversation about Council's role and mission in the new regional structure has continued throughout the year. This discernment includes:

The Toronto United Church Council

- Recognizing Council will have partner congregations and ministries in regions 8,9,10 & 11 on January 1st, 2019. Council wants to continue serving these partners and also their new neighbours.
- First discussions are beginning with other agencies that carry out capital lending and other services in these areas.
- Developing relationships with partner congregations and ministries is an important value for Council (“longer, deeper, local”) and this will shape our sense of the geography we can serve.
- Some of Council’s expertise can be used further afield than we imagine: the proposed missional institute, mission articulation (MAP) work with a train-the-trainer approach are just two examples.
- The Board has approved additional staffing for two years to release the Executive Director’s time to make connections with the new regions and potential partner bodies.
- The TUCC website is in the process of redesign to make it more accessible to those who do not know Council.
- The ‘accessible office project’ is underway and a report on options by Katja Brittain is expected over the summer.
- We are revisiting Council’s name (as you will have experienced in the meeting tonight.) The Board recognizes that the current name does not really describe who Council is to those unfamiliar with its history.

As President I offer my appreciation and that of the Board for the passion, professionalism and commitment that each of the TUCC staff brings to Council’s work. Ron Ewart leads by example and the cohesiveness of the staff reflects his leadership style. I will also take this moment to thank Tim Beard for his efforts, and wish him and Susan a long and healthy retirement in Mitchell Ontario. Ken Clarke has joined the staff, taking over both the property portfolio and the management of the capital loans and we welcome him.

Lastly, I thank each of you, the volunteers, who offer your time and talents to the work of TUCC. Your efforts are reflected in the excellent work we do and the communities of faith we help.

Wendy Jarvis
President, TUCC