

The Presbytery of Westminster met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 7:00pm via Zoom Video Conferencing due to the CoVid-19 restrictions on in-person meetings. Worship was led by Patricia Dutcher-Walls.

CONSTITUTION

The Moderator, Patricia Dutcher-Walls constituted the Court and opened the meeting with prayer at 7:35 pm.

The Moderator welcomed the following guests:

From Brentwood: Steven Scherer and Benjamin McRae; First Church: Sue Harry and welcomed new Presbyter of Mission and Vision: Dale Woods to his first Presbytery meeting.

DOCKET

It was moved by Victor Kim, seconded by Brad Childs that the consent agenda below be adopted.

The Clerk emphasized that in accepting the consent agenda it is understood and agreed that members of the court would participate in the Breakout Time for Fellowship and Prayer Time lasting no more than 15 minutes.

CARRIED

Consent Agenda:

- that the Docket be as indicated,
- that the attendance be recorded as noted in the Roll Record Book,
- that regrets and requests for permission to withdraw be noted as sent to the clerk of presbytery,
- that the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 16, 2020 be adopted,
- that the correspondence be dealt with as indicated,
- that reports without recommendations be received "for information."
- that reports with recommendations be received and their recommendations considered,
- that the presbytery treasurer be permitted to speak to financial issues.

If the Court is agreed, these motions will be adopted at the beginning of the meeting. Any member may ask for an issue on the consent agenda to be withdrawn from this list before the agenda is adopted.

ROLL

Constituent Roll:

M. Baxter, H. Botha, B. Childs, P. Dutcher-Walls, P. Eastwood, B. Fraser, S. Goble, D. Howard, T. Hsieh, G. Jay, T. Kim, B. Kim, R. Lockhart, C. MacLeod, L. McKay-Deacon, R. Simpson, B. Skelding, M. Szigeti, R. Topping, W. van de Wall, M. Wong, D. Woods.

M. Adams, A. Beattie, J. Con, B. Dennehy, I. Evans, B. Feick, L. Gorman, R. Harry (Alt), K. Kim, A. Lin, R. Miller, K. Sewell, B. Shepansky, G. Shields, J. Sonachansingh, S. Stacey, E. Wilson, P. Wong, L. Yen, M. Zaine.

Appendix:

A. Aicken, L. Bae, B. Garvin, G. Inglis, J. Kim, J. Martin, R. Ross

Students:

N. Hartley, C. Lee

REGRETS

M. Fontaine, C. MacLeod, W. van der Westhuizen, R. Watson
 N. Abramson, D. Jennings, K. Patrick
 J. Allan, S. Cleland, K. Jordan,
 A. Perrett

Permission to withdraw given to: none

CORRESPONDENCE: 06-08-20 through 09-10-20

06-08-20	David Jennings	Submission of WPGPC Statistical Report	Received and forwarded to PCC
06-09-20	Tim Dickau	New Certificate in Missional Leadership Program available through SAH beginning in September 2020	Distributed
06-09-20	Sean Foster	Transfer Certificate for Lydia Bae	Received
06-09-20	Ron Miller	Submission of First PC 2019 Statistical Reports	Received and forwarded to PCC
06-10-20	Marjorie Copeland	Academic Degrees of Minister of Word and Sacrament and Diaconal Ministers	Received
06-10-20	Thomas Kim	Hans Kouwenberg passed away on June 10, 2020. More details to be shared later.	Noted and distributed to Roll
06-10-20	Csilla Zathureczky	New Rep Elder for First Hungarian is Michel Herczeg	Noted
06-10-20	Maggie Leung	Presbyterians Sharing Reports – May 2020	Received
06-10-20	Janet Eastwood, Daniel Martinez	Summer Camp Sustainability Fund	Distributed
06-12-20	Jennifer Astop	Innovation Grant for Coquitlam PC – to run a “Church-in-Box” program for \$1,000 has been approved by the LMA of the PCC	Noted
06-17-20	Mark Richardson	Mark is trying to track down a retired Minister Rev. Iris Ford and the A&P shows that she would be in Langley.	Received and responded
06-18-20	Jennifer Astop	Hummingbird Ministries 2021 Grant Letter (Re-application process)	Received
06-19-20	Ian Ross-McDonald	National Indigenous People’s Day Statement	Received and distributed
06-20-20	Arthur Lin	Request Clerk notify the Pension and Benefits Board Office that the church will still be vacant after August and to adjust premiums accordingly.	Noted and confirmed
06-20-20	Judy Sonachansingh	St. Columbia is considering applying for government grants and seeking clarification	Received

06-22-20	Patty Panagiotopoulos	Confirmation of payments for BTPC and vacant pulpit.	Received
06-22-20	Bernie Skelding	Following up on CPC communication grant status and question on election of elders during this time of Covid	Noted
06-23-20	Patty Panagiotopoulos	Confirmation of end dates for calculation purposes (pension, group insurance and dental) and congregational assessment payments	Noted
06-24-20	Jennifer Astop	Innovation Grant for St. Paul's for \$1,000 has been approved by LMA.	Noted
06-24-20	Jennifer Astop	Innovation Grant for Vancouver Taiwanese for \$1,000 has been approved by the LMA	Noted
06-24-20	Jennifer Astop	Innovation Grant for Haney PC for \$1,000 has been approved by the LMA	Noted
06-27-20	Paddy Eastwood	Online Worship Service Summer 2020	Received and circulated
06-27-20	Blair Bertrand	Confirmation letter from POW for nomination of Bertrand to Presbyterian College posting	Responded
06-28-20	Ruth Chueh	Summer services for VTPC (Taiwanese and Mandarin)	Noted
06-29-20	Paul Wu	Receipt of nomination letter for Blair Bertrand	Noted
06-29-20	Omnya Nawar	Insurance Invoice (Marsh) 2020-21 & AON 2020-21	Received and forwarded to treasurer
06-29-20	John Con	Transitional plan for VCPC: possible rental of WPGPC	Received
07-01-20	Ross Lockhart	Video message from the new Dean of SAH	Received and distributed
07-01-20	Larry Eastwood	POW June 2020 Financial Statements	Received
07-01-20	Paddy Eastwood	Revised "Online Worship Service List"	Distributed
07-01-20	Daniel Martinez	Camp Douglas Sunday Video for distribution to churches in POW	Received and forwarded
07-01-20	Janet Eastwood	Advertising announcement for virtual Camp Douglas	Received and distributed
07-04-20	Paddy Eastwood	Ministry Committee has appointed two interim people to assist First Church, New West: Graeme Illman and Larry Yen	Noted
0708-20	John Paeng	Rev. John Allan will be moving to Langley from Vancouver Island Presbytery. Complete details to follow.	Noted
07-09-20	Brad Childs	Inquiring if there is a list of people who work with youth within the presbytery	Received and responded

The Presbytery of Westminster
 Regular Meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing
 September 15, 2020

8887

07-09-20	Brian Fraser	Submission of available Worship Services for Brentwood	Noted
07-11-20	Dennis Howard	Requesting Clerk's signature on Retirement Form	Received and authorized
07-14-20	Terrie-Lee Hamilton	Minimum Stipend for 2021	Received
07-15-20	Dale Woods	New email pmvwestmin@gmail.com	Received
07-15-20	Brian Fraser	RRG application for Christian Urban Camps 2020 (revised for pandemic version)	Received
07-15-20	John Paeng	Rev. Dr. John Allan moving to Langley effective 01 August 2020	Received
07-16-20	Guy Sinclair	Submission of resignation as Stated Supply of First Church effective September 10, 2020	Received
07-21-20	Maggie Leung	Presbyterians Sharing Reports – June 2020	Received
07-21-20	Jim Smith	Architizer A+ Award Nomination – Architecture + Art. Voting to close July 31	Received and distributed
07-21-20	Young Tae Choi	Free A/V Consultation support available to churches within the POW through Poieo Centre and Production Elements.	Received and distributed
07-23-20	John-Peter Smit	Information re Sunday School options for September	Received and distributed
07-27-20	Guy Sinclair	Requesting his name be added to Pulpit Supply List	Noted
07-27-20	Eileen Sparrow	Letter advising POW that St. Aidan's has applied and receive approval for the CERB grant	Noted
07-28-20	Lydia Bae	Requesting that her name be added to the Pulpit Supply List	Noted
07-30-20	Marjorie Copeland	LMA with recommendation from E&R confirm status of studies for Shirley Carleton	Received
07-30-20	Shirley Carleton	Thank you letter for relaying exciting news on her future studies.	Received
07-30-20	Marjorie Copeland	LMA with recommendations from E&R confirm status of studies for Chanil Lee	Received
07-30-20	Kathryn Muir	Changes to the Roll for July 2020	Received
07-30-20	Patricia Dutcher-Walls	Guidance on issue of Covid safety plan for renters	Received
08-01-20	Larry Eastwood	POW Financial Statements for July 2020	Received
08-03-20	Ted Siverns	<i>Laughing in Lebanon: Stories of Jiha and Friends</i> just e-published on Kindle	Received and distributed
08-04-20	Marjorie Copeland	Confirmation that the status of Samuel Silwamba has been dropped as per the recommendations from E&R	Received

08-04-20	Ross Lockhart	RE: Chanil Lee has completed the required number of courses as per E&R and is now ready to accept a call within the PCC	Received
08-05-20	Chanil Lee	Letter giving thanks to Ross (SAH) and Victor (POW) for the ongoing support.	Received
08-05-20	Ted Siverns	"NEST and Beirut explosion" appeal for support	Received
08-06-20	Adrian Wong	Church Membership/Adherents: looking for clarity on how to keep accurate roll records	Received
08-08-20	Rod Steward	Betty McLagan has had a heart attack but is recovering in hospital, prayers requested.	Received and distributed
08-08-20	Bev Shepansky	Central PC and Henrique Partners have won first place in the People's Choice for the International Architecture and Art category.	Received and distributed
08-10-20	Betty McLagan	A letter from Betty to our Clerk and the Presbytery for their support during her stay in hospital.	Received
08-10-20	Blair Bertrand	Blair will be transferring to the Presbytery of Ottawa as his he will continue his appointment with International Ministries in Ottawa.	Received
08-11-20	George Robertson	A letter from Burnaby/New Westminster Collaborating Churches and the ongoing conversation around renewal and growing together	Received and forwarded to strategic planning
08-12-20	Diane Maki	Details and confirmation regarding Dale Woods transfer to the Presbytery of Westminster	Received and responded
08-13-20	Bev Feick	Questions regarding Dennis' retirement and celebration protocols.	Received and responded.
08-13-20	Ross Lockhart	Enquiry from a Brentwood PC member looking to attend a Presbytery Meeting.	Received
08-14-20	Ian Mason	Canadian Society of Presbyterian History holding historic Zoom Conference on September 26 at 12 noon EST.	Received and distributed
08-18-20	Murat Kuntel	Returning to the Presbytery of Westminster and would like to be added to Directory and Pulpit Supply List	Received and noted
08-22-20	Joanne B Kim	Email address updated: memorybckim@gmail.com	Noted
08-26-20	Julie Lees	VST virtual Open House scheduled for September 30 th 2:30-3:30pm	Received and distributed
08-27-20	Kathryn Muir	Call for Moderator for the 2021 General Assembly	Received and distributed

08-27-20	Kathryn Muir	Deadline for Overtures and Petitions – General Assembly	Received and distributed
08-27-20	Melanie Adams	Melanie Adams is Rep Elder for Knox with Gareth Youdan as Alternate	Noted
09-01-20	Maggie Leung	Presbyterians Sharing Report – July 2020	Received
09-01-20	Larry Eastwood	POW Financial Statement for August 2020	Received
09-05-20	Calvin Crichton	Enquiry for temporary marriage licence	Received and responded
09-06-20	Neil Abramson	Possible regrets for September 15 Presbytery meeting	Noted
09-10-20	Glynis Williams	Notice of Blair Bertrand’s move to within the bounds of the Presbytery of Ottawa	Clerk to send transfer of Blair’s presbytery certificate to the Presbytery of Ottawa

A 15 minute Break out Groups for Fellowship and Prayer time was recognized and greatly appreciated.

REPORTS

STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The report was presented by Rebecca Simpson, Strategy and Leadership Committee Convener. All motions, unless otherwise noted, moved by Rebecca Simpson, seconded by Emily Wilson.

**Presbytery of Westminster
 Strategy and Leadership Committee Report
 Sept 15, 2020**

The Strategy and Leadership committee met three times this past summer in order to prepare for the arrival of Dale Woods and to help orient him to the new position of Presbyter of Mission and Vision.

Dale’s work as PMV began August 1, 2020. From Aug 1-23 Dale met with 5 out of 6 students under the care of the POW, 18 of 20 ministers on the roll, Camp Directors, SAH Dean, Cyclical Director, as well as many others. As people are returning from vacation Dale continues these introductory meetings.

The PMV first year work plan includes the following:

1. Establish an initial relationship with each congregational and specialized ministry, including its session or leadership, and minister with the POW.
2. Working with SLC, establish a process and guidelines / criteria for the development and nurturing of new worshipping communities through which a number of initiatives might be discerned and supported by the

POW, both with graduated grants and benchmarks, for possible ongoing support and accountability as specialized or new ministries of the presbytery.

3. Connect with the wider church around resources which may assist the presbyter, both in terms of people and resources and program resources (SAH, Center for Missional Leadership, Cyclical etc).
4. Plan at least two workshops, one for ministers and one for lay leaders/ congregational members.
5. Prepare and present a theological reflection at 4 regular presbytery meetings over the first year of work.

Since we will not be meeting as a Synod this fall, the SLC and PMV are planning an educational opportunity for presbyters and sessions on the morning of Saturday October 17, 2020 by Zoom. More details to come.

Please see the Property and Finance sub-committee report for information on use of Power to Issue and a recommendation concerning Brentwood PC.

Dale Woods spoke to presbytery introducing himself and about how he plans to address his role as the Presbyter for Mission and Vision as per the work plan highlighted in the Strategy and Leadership report. In particular he emphasized especially how that work plan relates to the goals that the presbytery has already adopted.

Respectfully,

*Rebecca Simpson, Convener,
Strategy and Leadership Cte*

REPORT OF PROPERTY AND FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE September 15, 2020 Presbytery Meeting

Since the June Presbytery meeting, the Property & Finance Committee has continued to receive congregational materials, corresponded with those enquiring about potential property matters, discussed matters with legal counsel, and corresponded with one another by way of email throughout the summer. P&F wishes to report to Presbytery on the following matters:

A. Use of Power to Issue

At the June Presbytery meeting, a general Power to Issue was granted to P&F for matters that could not appropriately wait until the September Presbytery meeting.

P&F did exercise that power to issue for the purpose of authorizing a **roofing project (estimated cost around \$45,000)** at **St. Andrew's Newton** that arose after the June meeting. P&F confirms that St. Andrew's Newton provided to the committee all the required information and documentation, including

- a general summary description of what work is to be done and estimated cost
- Evidence of a competitive bid process
- Evidence of sufficient cash reserves to pay for the capital expenditures

- Certified copy of minutes of a Zoom congregational meeting showing approval for the project and use of funds.

P&F also used power to issue for the purpose of authorizing a **paving project for Brentwood costing up to \$31,000**. We received from Brentwood copies of two bids for the paving working received from Burnaby Blacktop and Palmieri Paving in the spring of 2021, together with an updated bid from Burnaby Blacktop in the amount of \$29,417.04, including GST. We also have written confirmation from Brian Fraser that fundraising has been successful in raising all needed funding, and that the funds are on deposit. They have further confirmed that the previously proposed long-term lease of a portion of their building for a day care is no longer part of this proposal.

B. Appointment of New Convener

Ian Rokeby, Elder at Gordon Presbyterian Church, member of P&F and a professional engineer, has agreed to serve as convener of the P&F subcommittee. Ian is not a member of Presbytery but will correspond through the Strategy & Leadership Committee, as set out in its standing orders. If you need to reach Ian Rokeby directly, contact him at ian.rokeby@gmail.com, 778-896-7229.

*Respectfully submitted,
Ian Rokeby, Convener*

A verbal supplement was made to the report as follows:

It has come to the attention of the Property and Finance sub-committee of the Strategy and Leadership Committee that the new roof installation at First Presbyterian Church in New Westminster is well underway. After the report of the Special Visitation Committee to First PC brought to light serious financial issues, in particular that the roofing fund had been spent, it was clear that alternative funding for the roofing project was needed. Alternative funding for this project has not yet been secured or approved by Property and Finance; therefore the project should not have begun yet. Therefore the following motion was brought before the court:

Moved by Rebecca Simpson, seconded by Martin Baxter, that the Special Visitation Committee at First PC be charged with discovering the steps that led to the commencement of the roofing project without financing approved by the Property and Finance sub-committee, and that the Special Visitation Committee report their findings at the November Presbytery meeting. **CARRIED**

MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT

The report was presented Paddy Eastwood, Ministry Committee Convener.

All motions, unless otherwise noted, were moved by Paddy Eastwood, seconded by Mike Zaine.

Ministry Committee Report to Presbytery September 15, 2020

The Ministry Committee has corresponded by email rather than meet by zoom in preparation for this report.

The Rev. Dennis Howard

The Presbytery accepted the retirement of the Rev. Dennis Howard from Langley Presbyterian Church in June, effective October 1st, 2020. The Rev. Willem van de Wall is the Interim Moderator to the congregation.

Recommendation 1: that the Rev. Dennis Howard be invited to address the court.

CARRIED

Dennis Howard addressed the court expressing his gratitude for his ministry at LPC and thanked presbytery for their ongoing work. He gave thanks to all members of presbytery for their support and guidance and looks forward to serving as he is able.

Special Visitation Committee to First Presbyterian Church, New Westminster.

At the June meeting of the Presbytery, the Ministry Committee was given power to issue to appoint at least two people to help the session with the tasks outlined in recommendations 4&5. During the summer, Mr. Larry Yen has been helping the session with its vision and financial plan and the Rev. Graeme Illman has been working with the session to review Presbyterian polity.

The original Special Visitation Committee will report to Presbytery at the November meeting, not at the October special meeting as originally planned.

In July, the Rev. Guy Sinclair indicated his desire to resign from his Stated Supply position at First New Westminster, effective September 5th, 2020. Mr. Sinclair has served this congregation for 4 ½ years, first at 1/3 time, then later at ½ time.

Recommendation 2: that the Presbytery accept the resignation of the Rev. Guy Sinclair as Stated Supply minister at First Presbyterian Church, New Westminster effective September 5, 2020 with thanks and regret.

CARRIED

On Friday September 4, the Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon resigned as Interim Moderator at First Presbyterian Church, effective immediately.

Recommendation 3: that the Presbytery thank the Rev. McKay-Deacon for her ministry and accept with regret the resignation of the Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon as Interim-Moderator at First Presbyterian Church.

CARRIED

The Ministry Committee plans to appoint two co-Interim Moderators to First Presbyterian Church, New Westminster.

St. Aidan's Presbyterian Church Presbytery Visitation Report July 2020

Visitation Committee members Gordon Shields (lead), Rev. Dennis Howard and Arthur Lin met via Zoom with Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon at 6 pm, and with all nine Session members at 7 pm.

St. Aidan's has been reaching out to the community of New Westminster for 110 years. Laurie initially came to St. Aidan's as a half time minister approximately 10 years ago, and for the past year and a half has been full time. At the time Laurie arrived, the feeling in the congregation was one of discouragement. She has worked with the congregation over the past ten years to overcome this attitude and give people a renewed zeal for mission and outreach to the community around them. Laurie made sure that whatever the congregation took on could be sustained joyfully, and used "experiment" language so that it was never a "long term" commitment and if the congregation didn't see the results hoped for, they didn't feel like they had failed. Practicing grace with people, and, if people are tired, encouraging them to step back and take a break, are key to building a sustainable church. Laurie and the Session laugh together, especially in Session meetings. It has breathed life back into the leaders to not take things so seriously that the Spirit has no room to move. During our visitation with the Session, there was a strong indication that they get along well together.

Members of the congregation also enjoy each other's company, as evidenced in the conversation before worship. The sign of true compassion and community for Laurie is the chatter of sincerely touching base with each other before and after worship, the amount of laughter and response during worship, and the number of people staying for coffee following worship. Encouraging relationships and fun and true enjoyment has helped people move from a heavy spirit to being aligned with the Holy Spirit.

"Compassion, Community and Hope" is St. Aidan's statement of purpose, and the congregation embraces these values in all facets of church life. A longstanding congregational group, the "Kara Fellowship" fosters an attitude of mutual support and encouragement between members of the congregation.

Worship and Sacraments

St. Aidan's last met in the sanctuary for worship on March 22, 2020. Since that time, due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the St. Aidan's congregation now meets with Gordon and Knox Presbyterian churches via Zoom. This collaborative effort, coordinated by Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon, Rev. Cal McLeod from Gordon Church and Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher Walls, an elder at St. Aidan's, is now reaching an estimated 80-100 people, including people who because of health, age, or busy family lives did not attend regular services pre-COVID. During the week, the worship team plans the sermon, prayers, music and scripture readings, organizing people from the three congregations to take part in leading worship. The ministerial team meets during the week to run through the service for the coming Sunday, and the bond of friendship between the team members has strengthened. During the pre-COVID period, worship service attendance would be in the range of forty people. Elders mentioned the strong focus on uplifting worship and great music that characterized worship during the normal pre-COVID period. Communion is offered in both a traditional style, and in a more intimate group circle. The congregation is comprised of approximately 70 members, with an additional 15-20 adherents. The Collaborating Churches Zoom worship continues to celebrate Communion, with a full communion liturgy and everyone partaking at home.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is well done at St. Aidan's, and is truly shared between Laurie and the elders. The elders each have districts and actively engage in supporting members via phone calls, email, cards, and occasional visits. Laurie pays particular attention to the spiritual welfare of the elders and considers them to be her "district". The elders commented that Laurie is very compassionate and has a heart for pastoral care.

Christian Education

Despite the fact that St. Aidan's does not have more than one or two children within the congregation itself, they have jointly collaborated with four other churches in the area (Gordon, Brentwood, First and Knox) to host a Christian Urban Camp that typically runs the month of July, five days per week from 9am to 5 pm. Each of the five clergy with the Collaborating Churches typically takes a "day" each week to be the teacher/leader for the camp, with all five joining in the last day. The coordinating committee meets monthly year round to plan future camp activities. The camp has been in operation for the past five summers.

This year, because of the issues around COVID-19, they are doing "Camp in a Bag" and each week the children will pick up their supplies for the coming week on Saturday morning at either Knox or St. Aidan's. Laurie and St. Aidan's elder Marion Baird will offer science experiments and more challenging crafts during one week and those will be posted weekly on the Facebook page for Christian Urban Camp. They will also post a story and music (created by Dan and Ben from Brentwood Presbyterian). To date, there are twenty-three children registered for this year's modified camp experience.

Laurie has been working on a grant to do a Bible Study via Zoom to offer to the wider Presbyterian church. Building on the Biblical knowledge of Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher –Walls, St. Aidan's has hosted educational events for the Presbytery, including a study last November on texts from the book of Isaiah in preparation for Advent. Last fall, St. Aidan's also hosted a Presbytery wide "Sing a New Song" event to learn new songs from each of six participating congregations.

The congregation has experimented with occasional family nights attended by approximately 7-10 people, where a "messy church" approach is taken, focussing on fellowship, crafts and games.

Finances and Stewardship

The congregation stepped out in faith and called Laurie to full time ministry after nine years in a part time association with St. Aidan's. She initially served as the Interim Moderator during a pulpit vacancy, then moved to a part-time stated supply contract, followed by half time and $\frac{3}{4}$ time ministry. Several elders commented that the move to full time ministry has been energizing for the congregation, allowing them to envision greater possibilities for ministry than were present before. As a reflection of the financial commitment of the congregation, offerings during the COVID period have actually held steady or even increased slightly overall. The church finances have been impacted by COVID, due to the closure of the church building to the usual rentals that were budgeted to be in the range of \$44,000 for this current year. One rental has continued, the before and after school care program, so that children of first responders and health care workers have care. Rentals are commencing once again, so this will improve the church balance sheet. The congregation is also renovating the manse, now that Laurie is living there, and following a period when the manse was rented out. An active Stewardship Committee is present within the congregation, and each year St. Aidan's has either a series of Stewardship Sundays, or once every 6 weeks or so has a Stewardship Sunday. On each of these Sundays a gift is given to everyone attending the service, and there is a testimonial by a congregation member on how faith has made a difference in their life, as well as a sermon or engagement time around giving generously. At a recent Stewardship Sunday, everyone received a soup bowl as a gift, and then the congregation was invited to stay for soup after the service.

St. Aidan's is blessed to have a treasurer, Ross McLennan, who knows Presbyterian polity and the law well. He is a man of vision who is excited about the possibilities for mission and outreach that are available to St. Aidan's. In conjunction with the congregations at Gordon and Knox churches, St. Aidan's is looking into some type of organic merger. A number of years ago, St. Aidan's initiated a study of the highest and best use of their site. This

included looking into tearing down the existing church – and potentially the manse as well – in order to build affordable housing and reinserting a sanctuary, church office, manse apartment, daycare, and community space. They are still exploring the possibilities; with The Presbyterian Seniors Housing Society now joining the discussion; however, it does look as though Gordon Presbyterian would have an easier time being rezoned as an affordable housing complex, as it has the zoning capacity to build upwards.

Mission and Outreach

This area might be the most exciting expression of the living faith at St. Aidan's. Earlier this year, in response to seeing an urgent need during the COVID-19 pandemic, and building on a food program started last summer with Lord Kelvin School, Laurie began heading up an outreach to help ensuring that people don't have to go without food during these uncertain economic times. The "Don't Go Hungry" project is now feeding up to 200 households at three sites (St. Aidan's, Knox and Queensborough) and as of July 11th, starting at Gordon Presbyterian Church. Laurie applied for and received a \$50,000 grant from the United Way. This grant will permit hiring a one day coordinator starting August 1 for 35 weeks to help network with the community/businesses to maintain the food hamper program going forward. St. Aidan's has already received \$32,500 from the Vancouver Foundation and along with reclaimed food delivered from five SaveOn Food stores every Saturday morning, they purchase and distribute the food throughout the day on Saturdays. Any leftover perishable foods are donated to Dunwood Manor, a Presbyterian Seniors Housing Society residence in New Westminster. It seems certain that for the next 18 months, there will be an increased need for foodbanks during the recovery from this slowdown in our economy. A private firm, Align Construction Ltd., based in New Westminster, has been generously supporting the foodbank initiative and providing free construction services to assist St. Aidan's in installing a food storeroom at the manse.

There are many other outreach programs underway at St. Aidan's, all filling specific community needs, and serving as a witness for Christ in the community of New Westminster. From reading to children at Lord Tweedsmuir Public School, to collecting socks, underwear, toques, gloves, and Christmas gift items for Lord Kelvin Public School – the congregation is compassionate and generous.

Administration/Communication/Leading with Care

The congregation takes seriously the need to comply with LWC policies, by holding fire drills (once per year in the summer), and by meeting and annually reviewing fire regulations for the site. To acknowledge the importance of accountability in Leading with Care, the church has now ensured that all upstairs doors have windows for enhancing visibility and security.

A church newsletter "News and Views" is published every quarter– thanks to Wayne Tamkin, one of the church elders. St. Aidan's newsletter has been published continuously for over 50 years. The elders are good at communication with their districts via email/phone. Session activities are circulated in a report from Session in each issue of the News & Views. A number of elders noted the effective work of their Clerk of Session, Eileen Sparrow. As St. Aidan's does not have a church secretary or administrator, a member of the congregation prepares the bulletins and sends them to assigned readers/greeters. A high level of trust between the minister, elders and congregation is key in the process of getting the weekly administrative work done. It was apparent to the Visitation Team that St. Aidan's, under the leadership of Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon, is a congregation that has been blessed, and is itself a blessing to the community around it. The Minister, Session and congregation are on the same page and working together with a strong focus on outreach.

Recommendation 4: To commend Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon, the Session, and the congregation for their faithful stewardship of and dedication to the work of Christ at St. Aidan's Church. **CARRIED**

*In His service,
Gordon Shields, Rev. Dennis Howard, Arthur Lin
Presbytery Visitation Team*

Reports

Bradner Presbyterian Church, Abbotsford

The Rev. Dr. Bob Paul reports that Bradner is gathering for worship every Sunday by Zoom. Most of the congregation is participating. The Session is reviewing monthly whether to resume in-person worship at the church building, but many members of the church are reluctant to do that. They probably will continue to worship together online through the rest of this year.

Financial giving has remained strong. Church members are taking care of the church building, and are also caring for one another. Everyone has become more skilled at Zoom.

Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Burnaby

The Rev. Dr. Brian Fraser reports that Brentwood is worshipping live on Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10am (averaging about 35 participating), with the recording posted on their Facebook page (averaging 110 viewings per week). They are posting a shorter version of Jazz Evensong on that Facebook page for people to participate in asynchronously (averaging 270 views), a significant increase in reach. They are not planning to return to face-to-face worship at this time.

They hope to have their parking lot paved this fall, making it safer, less dusty, and more useful for community events. They have raised \$30,000 to do this. They received an innovative faith formation grant from our national church to produce 16 podcasts hosted by two of our young musicians, Ben MacRae and Kayden Gordon, based on the Sunday sermon. This week, the series was posted on all of the major streaming services.

Central Presbyterian Church, Vancouver

The Rev. Cal Macleod reports that the pulpit has been preached vacant. There have been no services during COVID but members are exploring various virtual services and some attend and participate in leading the liturgy of Collaborating Churches ZOOM worship. He has had some informal meetings with Session and coffee with congregation via ZOOM during April/May and has met with the session formal in July and September. Central's Tuesday hot meals ministry restarted in August. The session has decided to re-open for worship on October 11

St Columba, Vancouver

The Rev. Calvin Crichton reports the people of St. Columba are worshipping in person with all social distancing and sanitation recommendations in place. During the beautiful weather, they have been meeting outside for bring-your-own lunches. The services are also broadcast; both live and recorded, on Facebook. A biweekly zoom bible study will commence on September 25th. The congregation is faithful in its giving, so they are financially secure for the moment. The Rev. Crichton continues to provide pulpit supply.

*Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Paddy Eastwood,
Convener, Ministry Committee*

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

*The report was presented by Victor Kim, Administrative Committee Convener.
All motions, unless otherwise noted, moved by Victor Kim, seconded by Cal MacLeod.*

Administrative Committee Report September 15, 2020

Motions regarding previous Notice of Motion from the June 2020 meeting:

Recommendation 1:

Given that the Administrative Committee of presbytery meets on the Wednesdays before regular meetings of presbytery, that any item for discussion at the presbytery must be submitted for consideration by the Administrative Committee and placed on the docket, either through the pertinent committee or as a new item of business, and that submission of items for the docket which are not already included in committee reports must be received by the Administrative Committee through Clerk of Presbytery by the end of the day on the Tuesday prior to the Wednesday Administrative Committee meetings. Emergent matters must be presented to the presbytery at the time of the consideration of the Docket and must receive 2/3rd majority support of the presbytery in order to be considered at that meeting. This would be added to the Standing Orders of the Presbytery of Westminster. **CARRIED**

Recommendation 2:

Given that occasionally a committee or other group within presbytery may be granted power to issue on matters, that there be an obligation for the committee or group granted that power to issue to report to presbytery at the next meeting on any decisions that have been taken with respect to the power to issue granted them. This would be added to the Standing Orders of the Presbytery of Westminster. **CARRIED**

Review of Standing Orders:

The current Standing Orders of the Presbytery, including the new committee structure, were adopted in December 2019 for a one year interim basis. The intent was to live with the new structure and to review the Standing Orders after one year. Given that this past year has been unexpectedly complicated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Admin Committee feels that it is too soon to try to evaluate the Standing Orders by the end of 2020. We propose that our current committees give strong attention to how the structure is functioning for them and report back to presbytery at the first four meetings of 2021, the regular January, March, April and May meetings. These reports should include suggestions for changing the Standing Orders if changes would be deemed helpful. At the June 2021 meeting of presbytery, we would then be able to consider formal changes to the Standing Orders, with the hope of adopting them for a 5 year period.

Recommendation 3:

That the Presbytery of Westminster delay the review of the current Standing Orders, including committee structure and the frequency of meetings, until the June 2021 meeting of the presbytery and that in the 4 regular meetings of presbytery prior to June 2021, current committees report back on the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of our current structure. **CARRIED**

Presbytery Website:

The Admin Committee is looking into developing a website for the presbytery through the Presbyterian Church in Canada's PCCWeb.

Please forward to the Clerk, clerkwestmin@gmail.com your current website for your congregation or your specialized ministry.

Transfer of Certificate for Blair Bertrand

Correspondence was received from The Life and Mission Agency indicating that the Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand is now residing within the bounds of the Presbytery of Ottawa. Blair's certificate was sent to the Presbytery of Ottawa and he is entrusted into their care and removed from our presbytery roll.

A memorial minute for the Rev. Dr. Hans J. Kouwenberg will be presented at the November meeting.

A reminder that a special meeting of presbytery is called for Saturday, October 17, from 9:30AM to Noon via Zoom, focusing on the vision of the presbytery and the role of the PMV in that vision.

Brian Fraser addressed the court on the subject of grant applications and the recent announcement from the Life and Mission Agency that Program and Capital Grant applications must be received by October 15, 2020. Given there is no regular presbytery meeting in October and the new standing order allows that a special presbytery meeting for emergent matters can be called the following motion was put forth before the court:

Moved by Brian Fraser, seconded by Rebecca Simpson that presbytery be willing to consider a special meeting on October 6th for the strict purpose of reviewing 2021 grant applications. **CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Victor Kim
Convener/Clerk*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The report was presented by Isabel Evans, at the request of Glen Davis, Community Engagement Committee Co-Convener. All motions, unless otherwise noted, moved by Isabel Evans, seconded by Brian Fraser.

**Report of the Community Engagement Committee
Presbytery of Westminster, Sept. 15, 2020**

At the June 2020 meeting of presbytery the Community Engagement Committee presented a report on the subject of a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI)¹. It was supported by a letter from the national church of the PCC signed by the Moderator of the General Assembly. The following paper addresses some of the critical statements made at the June meeting which claimed that what the Moderator wrote was inaccurate, irresponsible, and poorly researched. But more importantly, it addresses some of the major concerns people might have about the concept of a GBI. What we hope to do here is present a case for why Presbyterians should treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves, and engage in a respectful conversation about both its merits and potential problems. **Because this paper is rather lengthy, we are not asking presbytery to discuss its contents at this meeting. Rather, we are requesting that presbyters read it before the next regular meeting of presbytery in order to participate in a conversation that might lead to further action. The CEC welcomes questions and comments prior to the Nov meeting, and they could be very helpful to our discussion at that meeting.**

A Livable Basic Income

The Gospel of Jesus Christ often leads us along pathways that are different from those of our culture. The Gospel sometimes pushes us to make better what we cannot make ideal. The gospels portray Jesus as meeting many suffering persons along the way. He responded by healing, welcoming and including people, and such is our calling. Today, Jesus lives on in the presence of his disciples. The church is made up of his followers, imitators of that model that Jesus laid out so dynamically.

In our era, the context is different but the need remains. We are the salt of the earth, not with power to command the world to be different, but with salt that has the potential of wooing those with the power of change to help our world to taste, at least a little, the values of the kingdom of God. And powers of government sometimes will hear our case. As faithful witnesses we must do our Spirit-inspired best to find a better way for "the little ones" to have a chance in this world.

Because we have been bequeathed the loving heart of Jesus, we do not believe the poor to be worse than or inferior to us. We see all humanity to be made in God's image. In this witness we labour and struggle, up to, and including, the cross. And that is why our church is concerned about a livable wage for all Canadians.

Our church's letter to the government, signed by the Moderator, provides a brief summary of what the PCC has said and done on this subject. It makes clear that the letter is in keeping with past statements and positions taken by our church. Here are some relevant quotations.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada affirms that the church has a calling to seek justice in the world, and that the church's pursuit of justice requires concern for the poor as well as seeking the best way to create well-being in every society. Creating such well-being entails addressing issues such as employment, education and health.

¹ "Guaranteed Basic Income" is one name for government provision of a basic income floor for all people. There are other names, but this one, together with the "GBI" abbreviation, is used here.

...As early as 1973, the Presbyterian Church in Canada communicated its support of what was then called a 'guaranteed annual income' to the federal government.

Statements from the church such as these have been followed...by appeals to the federal and provincial governments during the recession in the early nineties to ensure that efforts directed towards economic recovery should not occur in concert with the curtailment of social programs, and again in 2007, affirming the need for a national strategy ...to reduce poverty in Canada, including that minimum wage should be indexed to the annual cost of living and that there should be the establishment of a national social housing program.

Thus the Presbyterian Church in Canada has a decades-long history, beginning with advocating for a concept similar to Guaranteed Basic Income, of advocating for the end of poverty and that all should be able to live with dignity and meet their basic needs.

Presbyterians relate to one another with rarely a reference to household income. The income of each is a little different, yet we assume that each of us is in the livable range. But there is a percentage of the population that exists below a line of livability. That line is somewhat arbitrary but those who daily experience inadequate income, feel its impact deeply.

Income that is too low can bring on a range of problems that others cannot see – inability to pay for dental care and prescribed medication, inferior housing, frequent shelter changes, clothing that inadequately protects against the elements or leads to social exclusion, more frequent visits to doctors and hospitals, the inability to continue education, jobs that are harder on the body and on the family, high stress levels and depression. We note also that when the poor cannot afford what they need, it affects even those of us who have enough, and more, to meet our needs. The economy depends upon consumption, which involves not only the luxuries of the rich, but the every-day necessities of the poor. Thus, a GBI can contribute to the health of the economy. This is an argument that appeals to the mind of the political right and they frequently use it in support of a GBI.

In this time of pandemic the problem has grown worse as lower echelons of health care workers face illness and death, without systemic protection. There is a dawning recognition that their income is not consistent with what they give and risk. In many other areas of the employment-seeking world, the prospects have worsened. The provincial and federal governments have found it necessary to intervene.

1. Poverty, with new severity.

Today our world is marked by increasing inequality. For many, a job with a livable wage is no longer within reach. There is a rapidly growing population of billionaires while those families in the lower 13% of income earners do not have access to what is needed to live in security. Since 2008 employment is drifting more quickly away from full-time jobs. The combined factors of inequality, the increased cost of health care, and the absence of job security combine to lead to the exclusion of those with low income from the community.

As our church has evolved over past decades, we recognize that our people, many of whom are over 65 years of age, tend to live with higher-than-average income. Canadian pension schemes give wide protection from want to most seniors in our churches. As a result of employment pensions, together with two government pensions (CPP and OAS), most Canadian seniors enjoy a kind of guaranteed income, as do needy families with young children (CCB²). Unlivable income is outside the experience of most of our church folk.

2. Income Without Work?

² The Canada Child Benefit is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency. It is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age.

Some of us will be uncomfortable with the prospect of people receiving an income that is not related to their labours. The contemporary economy is making a significant shift that is pressing us to take a new look at how work functions in our lives. It takes fewer people to accomplish the same work, yet there is much to be done. It requires more and different training. We have arrived at a place where not all are able to find work. Ironically there is still a shortage of workers, usually in areas where there are not enough people trained for the job or in areas where the pay for the job is so low that workers cannot live on the wage (e.g. farm workers, fast food workers, lower levels of healthcare workers). On the other side of the ledger are the very rich who have a variety of options, including well-paying jobs and opportunities to invest capital, that enable them to increase their wealth well beyond their needs.

Contemporary work is often shaped by short-term contracts without such benefits as a pension plan, extended health care, dental care and medical prescription coverage. Jobs are for a season, without security. Most people of low income do have a job, and frequently both adults in the house are working, yet income is inadequate to meet the need. It is common that lower income employment comes with higher risk to life and limb and less access to what will heal the body. Aged-out youth – those who reach the age of 18 after living as wards of the government – are cast out on the street to fend for themselves, without the necessary family and material resources to support them.

3. Responses that Address Income

In these times there are regions of the world that are turning toward a government-guaranteed basic income, either for all, or for some, of their citizens. The City of Barcelona began an experimental program in 2017 using four different models to see which is the more effective and practical. In May 2020, Spain introduced a GBI that will provide a minimum income for the poorest members of its society. Finland and the Netherlands have experimented with a GBI and there are cities in Scotland and the U.S. that are exploring it. Various models have been launched in poorer countries too: Malawi, India, Kenya, and Namibia.

Here in Canada there was a desire to explore the provision of a basic income (or GBI) for all Canadians who fall below a fixed income level. It was long ago, in the 1970's, but it was one of the more meaningful attempts that the world has seen. It happened in Manitoba, in parts of Winnipeg, in a sprinkling of villages, and in Dauphin. Dauphin is a town of 10,000 whose population was saturated, i.e., every resident with below-the-line income received the benefit, which was called "Mincome". The amount received was a little higher than provincial welfare rates but it was quite different from social assistance. Social assistance requires the recipient to check in with a welfare worker. The cost of bureaucracy and administration is high. Life is monitored, and any perceived misbehaviour can terminate the income. Once that happens, all social benefits (such as pharmacare and dental) are ended. But Mincome was about income only, and it involved no bureaucratic surveillance over how the recipient chose to use the income.

GBI allowed for additional earnings. Every dollar earned reduced basic income payment by 50¢. In the 1970's a family of four, with no other income, could receive \$3,800 a year (\$22,000 is an estimated 2020 equivalent). If the total rose to \$7,600 (\$44,000 today), the Mincome payments would stop. The benefit was paid by both the federal (75%) and the provincial (25%) governments. Everybody was expected to file an income tax return and that was the sole basis of calculation. Anyone below the line would receive funds that would lift them up to the line. The money came by the same route as one would receive a refund from the Canada Revenue Agency. Whenever combined income reached taxability, it was taxed. Payment was "unconditional" in that it came as a result of low income, not at all related to case-worker surveillance. It was not received by every citizen but only by those who could demonstrate that their income was below the established line. This is the only form of Basic Income that Canada has ever used, and the guidelines were very similar to the formula used in the recent and prematurely ended experiment in Ontario.

4. Is GBI Affordable?

This is one fear that has held back GBI implementation in the past. What is the cost? The Parliamentary Budget Office,

an independent and non-partisan group, was asked this question. A figure was produced.³ How would the government find the necessary \$23 billion? The newspaper columnist Andrew Coyne, a proponent, has said it would cost three points on the G.S.T. By that he means a move from 5% to 8%, a tax that is still low by European standards. GST is a good route to go in that it is a tax on what is consumed, not what is earned. While precise calculation is not possible because of inter-related variables, most economists are content to accept Coyne's figure as a valid approximation.

If Canadians are willing to accept the plan, the net benefits are likely to be high. In the Dauphin experiment, hospital admissions were 8.5% lower than they were before Mincome was in place. There were fewer accidents, fewer expenses from alcohol abuse, and lower mental health care costs. Visits to the doctor were down as was the need for the services of health care workers. Policing costs were lower. This experiment indicated that the pre-Mincome system tended to push a host of the needs of the poor over to the health care budget, an inefficiency that was costly.

Many of us, viewing a 3% increase in the G.S.T. would give the knee-jerk response that it is an unwelcome increase in taxes. What would I be getting for this expense? The major benefit is that the lower 13% of income recipients would have the necessities of life. And the spin-off benefits are many. Researchers of the Dauphin experiment, the Finland project in 2017-2018 and studies of results from the first year of the recent GBI program in Ontario, note these positive results:

- able to pay bills
- decrease in stress and anxiety
- afford healthier food
- self improvement - able to continue education
- higher self-esteem
- feeling of fulfillment from doing useful work
- decrease in mental illness
- lower health care costs (fewer visits to doctors, fewer hospitalizations)
- part time work income is not clawed back
- decrease in family violence
- less abuse of alcohol and traffic accidents among youth
- more social inclusion with friends and family

In brief, the cost will be felt, but the rewards are many, and they are what we have been praying for.

5. Does GBI Lead to Idleness?

Often this is society's largest fear. The whole of the Mincome experiment in Manitoba was set up to find an answer to this question. If the reader is suspicious of the poor, seeing them as wanting to pick your pocket, you could well have this fear. There are some who will scam the system, although the Mincome experiment showed that they were few in number. Like you and me, most people use their resources for their family's best outcome and, given the choice, they want to work. Those who will abuse this system are already abusing the present systems. The research shows that, when income is in the form of welfare, it is insecure. It encourages people to spend quickly, for one does not know whether there will be money tomorrow, and if so, how much.

³ It would cost about \$76 billion. In process of paying it other expenditures presently paid would no longer be offered. This reduces the total by \$32.9 billion. The provinces, too, would have lower payouts in that they would no longer be providing welfare or social assistance. This reduces the total by \$20 billion. There remains \$23 billion that would need to be found, which is roughly what the Canada Child Benefit costs the people of Canada each year.

Here are some stories from the Dauphin experiment.⁴

"It wasn't a case of getting money to live and do nothing," says Sharon Wallace-Storm, who grew up in Dauphin and was 15 when the experiment began. "They set a level for how much a family of three or four needed to get by. You applied showing how much you were making, and if you didn't meet that threshold they would give you a top up."

There was also an increase in the number of adolescents completing high school. Before and after the experiment, Dauphin students – like many in rural towns across Manitoba – were less likely to finish school than those in the city of Winnipeg, with boys often leaving at 16 and getting jobs on farms or in factories. However, over the course of those four years, they were actually more likely to graduate than Winnipeg students. In 1976, 100% of Dauphin students enrolled for their final year of school.

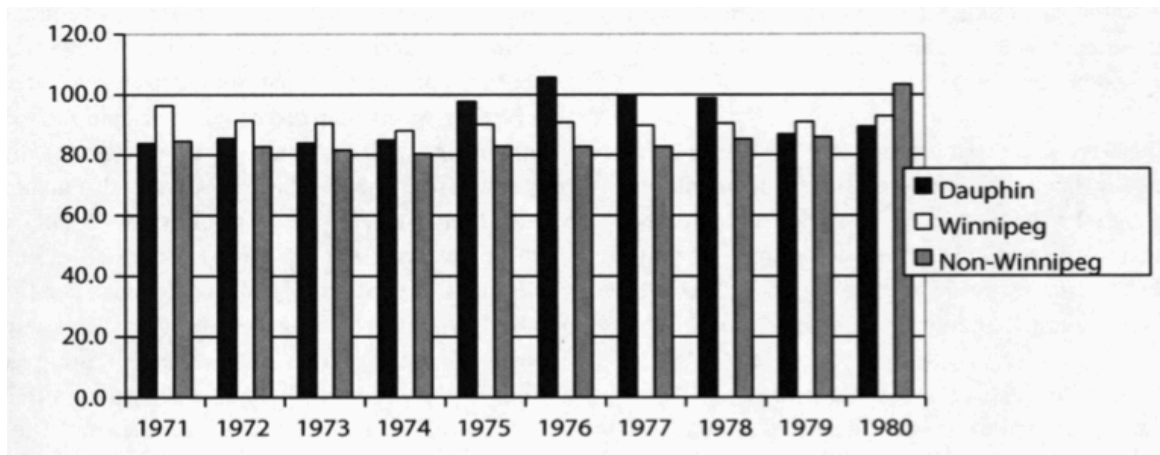
"Very often these people were the first in their family who'd ever finished high school", says Evelyn Forget. "When Mincome came along, families decided they could support their sons in school just a little bit longer, and, in some ways, I think that's the most exciting result because we saw that investment in human capital."

The results of the Dauphin experiment revealed an oddity. There was one demographic that tended not to seek employment. They were males in their late teens and early twenties. Why?

Researchers looked at high school records in an attempt to find the answer. They found that young people in Dauphin, prior to Mincome, were less likely to finish high school than those in the city of Winnipeg. In the 70's there was farm work readily available to youth with neither education nor experience. Many households were running on a very tight budget so it was natural for parents to urge their young men to quit school and take jobs.

The GBI made it possible for students to stay in school, or even return to school. During the three years that Mincome was in effect, there were more students enrolling in grade 12 than had completed grade 11 the previous June.

⁴The quotations in this section, along with those from Greg Mason, below, are taken from a BBC report by David Cox (<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20200624-canadas-forgotten-universal-basic-income-experiment>). This BBC report leans heavily on the doctoral thesis of Evelyn Forget which was recently published as a book: Basic Income for Canadians. It is well worth reading for anyone who has questions about the Mincome experiment, and a proposed design for a future basic income plan.



Graph 2: Grade 12 enrollment as a percentage of previous grade 11 enrollment

Source: Forget p. 291

In 2017 and 2018, Finland ran a pilot basic income program. It paid a regular monthly income to 2000 randomly selected unemployed people with no obligation to seek a job and no reduction in their payment if they accepted one. Its primary goal was to see if the guaranteed income would motivate people to take low-paying or temporary jobs without fear of losing benefits.

Depending on the social, political, economic or faith perspective from which we look at a GBI, the results of this pilot program can be seen as a success, a failure, or some of both. If our only criteria are getting more people to work and how much it cost, then we might conclude that the program was not successful because it did not do much to encourage recipients into work. But there are other criteria we must look at. Researchers at Helsinki University undertook a study of the program and concluded that it "improved their mental wellbeing, confidence and life satisfaction." They also "experienced less mental strain, depression, sadness and loneliness." (*The Guardian*, 2020, 05 07)

Researchers also noted a mild positive effect on employment, particularly for families with children. Others just said there were no jobs in the area they were trained for. Still others said that with the basic income they were prepared to take low-paying jobs they might not have taken otherwise. Receiving the basic income also encouraged some to get more involved in voluntary work such as care for family and neighbours. The income legitimized for them this kind of care work.

The researchers concluded that the results of the study could support arguments both for and against basic income. Surely it is important for us as Christians to take into consideration values that look beyond purely financial costs and economic productivity, and appreciate those like decreased depression, less sadness, fewer doctors' visits, more sense of security and satisfaction with life.

6. How Much Should It Be?

Greg Mason, an economist at the University of Manitoba, says:

All the experiments so far have only considered whether basic income affects the willingness to work of those receiving the extra payments. But they haven't looked at the people who are just above the threshold for receiving basic income. Those people could well become very resentful of anyone who isn't

working, and yet only earn slightly less than they do.⁵

Mason believes that for basic income to work on a larger scale, governments would need to find an eligibility income threshold that is reasonable enough to cover necessities, while not allowing people to live “the good life”. He predicts that such a threshold is likely to lie in the region of **\$15,000** – somewhat similar to the equivalent sum that families in Dauphin received during Mincome. The exact amount will depend upon such things as whether it is an individual or a typical Canadian family. A range between \$15,000 and \$17,000 a year will be the most probable choice.

The church is unlikely to be asked what the level should be. Both right-wing and left-wing politicians have espoused a basic income benefit, the right-wing usually coming in at a lower dollar figure than the left-wing. It is the caring principle behind the move that the church can heartily support, rather than getting embroiled in an argument about amounts that tends to lose the larger issue. We can assume that some formula, in the neighbourhood of what Dr. Mason has proposed, will be the one used, and for the reasons that he has suggested. As time moves along it could well rise and fall. That’s not necessarily bad because we are all finding our way in this strange new world.

Conclusion

In the stories that tell the ministry of Jesus in the four Gospels there is no overt concern with poverty on the whole, but there is a focus on exclusion. There are about fourteen encounters in the first nine chapters of Mark’s Gospel, and all of these people who encountered Jesus have afflictions that have excluded them from their community and left them outside the city wall. Exclusion is their curse. Their being healed not only makes them more physically capable but also brings them back into community. The church is called, not only to look after its own corporate well-being, but also to bring restoration to those who have been cast out of their community. So says the story in the Hebrew Bible. Although the New Testament is heard in another key, the theme is the same. Healing includes restoration to community.

How shall we respond? It is the job of the Christian Church to act as midwife for the birth of the Kingdom of God, to help the world toward its healthiest shape. Part of that job is to prod, press and encourage those with political power to come up with the appropriate mechanics and dollar figures that will create a Canada where everyone can live with the security and dignity of a livable wage.

Our faith cries out for the support of the little ones in our society who are without adequate resources and without the security and confidence that they will have enough bread for today and tomorrow, as our Lord prayed. The disciples of Jesus learned to bring the sick, the needy, the blind, the lame, the lonely to Jesus, who, in turn, brought even the excluded leper inside the circle. Jesus’ ministry of healing and welcome is our ministry. We are the salt of the earth and it is our calling to woo the empires of this world toward a higher level of justice. If we do what we must do, by supporting this ambitious social experiment, we might well play a small role in answering our Lord’s prayer that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Recommendation: That this report be received and that presbyters be asked to read and reflect upon it, and be prepared to consider it for further action at the November meeting of presbytery. **CARRIED**

Submitted with respect and hope,
Glen Davis and Neil Abramson, Co-conveners

⁵ David Cox, “Canada’s Forgotten Universal Basic Income Experiment” BBC, June 2020
www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20200624-canadas-forgotten-universal-basic-income-experiment.

CAMP DOUGLAS COMMITTEE REPORT

The report was presented by Rebecca Simpson, Camp Douglas Convener for information only.

Camp Douglas Report Presbytery of Westminster September 15, 2020

Thank you for your prayers, shares, and other forms of support for Camp Douglas' ministry this summer!

Since COVID-19 disallowed in-person overnight camps, we hired a skeleton staff of two young adults to create videos to bring camp at home to families. These positions were funded entirely through grant money, including a PCC Regional Resourcing Grant, and we were able to make all our content available to families for free. This is important because many of our families rely on camperships to send their children to camp, and because many families have been financially affected by the pandemic.

Videos fell into two broad categories: those that were explicitly faith-focused, such as bible study, scripture reading, guided prayer, chapel, and campfire; and those that led favourite camp activities, such as arts and crafts, science experiments, and skits. We also had a weekly zoom meeting for youth and last year's Leaders-in-Training, many of whom would have volunteered as leaders for the first time this summer. Sharing the gospel is the heart of Camp Douglas's ministry, and although meeting campers in person was not possible this year, the online content and meetings provided an opportunity to witness to Jesus's love in all circumstances and to the enduring love of Christian communities. All the videos were filmed at camp and posted on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and a virtual-camp portal (now deactivated). Facebook and Instagram proved to be great ways to reach out to people. On average, every video reached (was in the social media feed of) 300 people and was liked or shared by 60 of those people. According to the various media's tracking meters, our posts reached an average of 1000 people per month. The challenge of jumping from an in-person community to an online camp pushed us to do things differently and we are confident that we reached many families and that we were able to keep in contact with our camp community.

Warm thanks to Pamela Roa, who took on the task of ordering food and planning meals, as well as cooking and cleaning; Andrew Whiteside, who volunteered five full weeks to property maintenance; Adrian Kiss, who helped with videos during his days off; and to Brian, Debra, and Cathleen Dennehy, Colleen and James Deutschmann, Darren Whiteside, Lawrence Eastwood, Larry and Walter Yen, and Andrew Hsieh, who volunteered their time, brainpower, and muscles to repairing the bridge to campfire and performing other maintenance projects that had been cancelled in the spring due to social distancing and travel restrictions.

We are thankful for this opportunity to share in God's ministry to the children and youth of our presbytery and communities, despite this year's unusual circumstances.

*In Christ,
Daniel "Chico" Martinez and Janet "Thistle" Eastwood*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator ended the court with prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Brian Fraser, seconded by Ross Lockhart to adjourn the meeting.

CARRIED

- A special meeting of presbytery is tentatively scheduled, at the call of the Moderator, for October 6 at 7:00pm to review possible grant applications.
- The next meeting of presbytery is a special meeting on October 17 from 9:30am to noon, via zoom, focusing on the vision of the presbytery and the role of the PMV in that vision.
- The next regular meeting of presbytery is scheduled for November 3, 2020 via zoom.

The Moderator closed with a benediction at 9:30pm.

Patricia Dutcher-Walls, Moderator

Victor Kim