

“Holy Shift”

Hamilton Conference



**HAMILTON
CONFERENCE**
The United Church of Canada

Annual Reports

2017



**HAMILTON CONFERENCE
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
2016-2017**

REPORT BOOK

**HAMILTON
CONFERENCE**
The United Church of Canada

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ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

The mandate of the Archives and Records Committee of Hamilton Conference is “*to encourage congregations and presbyteries to care for their important records in the best possible manner.*”

To carry out its mandate, the Archives and Records Committee

- provides advice to pastoral charges and presbyteries, informs pastoral charges of their responsibility, per *The Manual*, to deposit records at the Central Ontario Conferences Archives in Toronto,
- assists pastoral charges who have questions and concerns about archives and records,
- reviews the presbytery minute books, and
- plans special events from time to time for ministry personnel and lay people on archives and record keeping.

Through our oversight role with the review of presbytery and congregational records, as well as providing advice and workshops, we strive to contribute to the development of healthy congregations and presbyteries, and the growth of effective congregational leadership.

The Conference Archives and Records Committee met twice in 2016. We reviewed and updated the committee mandate to reflect our current status and goals. Minor improvements and updates were made to our archives and record-keeping webpage, which is intended to provide helpful information and resources to pastoral charges and congregations. There is a link to this webpage under the “Resources” section on the Hamilton Conference website. Many questions about archives and records are addressed on this webpage, as well as contact information for the various presbytery representatives who serve on the committee. Thanks to Barbara Hampson in the Conference Office for her excellent support of this venture.

Our Conference Archivist is Erin Greeno, who is also the Central Ontario Conferences Archivist (Bay of Quinte, Hamilton, London, Manitou and Toronto). Our Hamilton Conference archival collection is housed at the Toronto Christian Resource Centre, 40 Oak Street, Toronto, as is the General Council Archives. Erin returned from maternity leave in May, and we were most fortunate to have the support of Robin Brunelle during Erin’s absence. The committee receives wonderful assistance from Erin and the archives staff to support our work.

In 2016, the Central Ontario Conferences Archives received 26 acquisitions comprising 6.87 meters of textual records from Hamilton Conference presbyteries and pastoral charges.

I am grateful for the support of the members of the Archives and Records Committee, as well as Rev. Peter Hartmans, Executive Secretary of Hamilton Conference, for the staff support we receive. A special word of thanks goes to Rev. Dr. Michael Brooks, who retired in 2016 after faithfully serving as Chair of the Archives and Records Committee for six years. It is a blessing to work with dedicated and faithful people who are passionate about preserving the history of our church.

- *Rod Coates, Chair*

DIVISION OF MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND EDUCATION

The members of the Division of M.P. & E. are: Margaret Bain (Pensions and Group Insurance), Diane Blanchard (Staff Support), Bob Brunner (Interview Board), Deanne Dickson and Harold DeVenne (Co-Chairs of Education and Students), Candy Harvey (Internship and Educational Supervision and Division Secretary), Michelle Hogman, (Settlement), Sybil Wilson (Interim Ministry), and Judy Zarubick (Chairperson)

The purpose of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education is:

“to give oversight and coordinate all Conference responsibilities and concerns for matters relating to the training, settlement, continuing education, and welfare of members of paid and accountable ministry staff on the role of Hamilton Conference.”

Over the past conference year our Division will have met by Conference Call twice and once at the Hamilton Conference Office. Also throughout the past year we have conducted email polls on sacramental licensing and the rite to perform the Solemnization of Marriage. This process is used for the timely response to pastoral charges who request licensing for eligible Ministry Personnel.

At each of our meetings the chairs of the various Conference Committees report to the Division, including Settlement, Pensions and Group Insurance, Education and Students, Interim Ministry, Internship and Educational Supervision, and Interview Board. Hamilton Conference is blessed to have gifted and dedicated people who volunteer to do this work on behalf of the church.

Much of what the committees do relates directly to the four priorities as named by the Conference. By training, matching, offering educational events, interviewing, walking with, and caring for the ministry personnel and students in Hamilton Conference, our Division aids them to be able to strive for healthy congregations and presbyteries, offer effective leadership, bearing faithful public witness, while strengthening partnerships within congregations, communities and the wider church.

Another focus in the work of our Division is an annually held workshop, a “Called to Leadership Event” for ministry personnel. This usually occurs in the spring. This year’s event was called: “Awakening to Contemporary Spiritual Voices,” held at the Conference Office. It was a retreat day with Diana Butler Bass, which occurred in conjunction with the Westdale United Church’s Speaker Series.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Zarubick, Chair of the Division of M.P & E.

EDUCATION AND STUDENTS COMMITTEE

The Conference Education and Students Committee purpose is to assist the work of the presbytery Education and Students Committees, to liaise with candidates as appropriate, and to coordinate the annual New Ministries Interviews day.

The Committee comprises representative(s) from each of the presbytery Education and students Committees, Conference Intern and Educational Supervision Committee, and Conference Interview Board, with staff support from Diane Blanchard. Meetings are held at Conference office or by teleconference when appropriate.

The priorities of the Committee are as follows:

- Organize the annual New Ministries Interview Day for candidates who are preparing to be Commissioned or Ordained at the next possible annual date.
- Encourage communication amongst the presbytery Education and Students Committees in order to share experiences and resources in support of the candidates.
- Review and maintain the Vocational Assessment process through Six Oaks Consulting which all inquirers must complete prior to becoming a candidate.
- Create and bring awareness of the current educational “streams” available for all candidates and communicate the needs and concerns of Hamilton Conference to these different educational faculties.

These priorities support the Conference priorities by enhancing the candidate’s ability to understand and, through experience, learn how to cope with the increasing demands of leading congregations and helping ensure they are healthy. We facilitate effective leadership within the committee as well as within the candidates and we model partnership and collaboration in the way we operate across presbyteries and interact with the various educational streams.

Current Year

This year saw the beginning of the three-year term of two co-chairs of the committee as well as the departure of Jenny Stephens as our staff support and the arrival of Diane Blanchard as our new staff support. We all learned together as we reviewed the feedback from the prior New Ministries Day and planned for the December 2016 event. The 2016 New Ministries Day was in a new location, and was, by all accounts, a success in Guelph at the Loyola Retreat.

Our quarterly meetings continued to encourage collaboration and sharing of resources across the presbytery E&S Committees, thereby reducing wasted effort creating process or forms that someone else has already created. The various E&S committees depend on the Conference Interview Board and Conference Intern and Educational Supervision teams to support and complete important steps in the candidate process, and these quarterly meetings allow for discussion that reduce the “pinch points” where the work intersects.

Year Ahead

The coming year will have its own challenges as we deal with the reality of significantly reduced budgets. This will require creativity and careful planning to ensure that the 2017 New

Ministries Interview Day is as successful as those in the past. We look forward to and embrace the challenge. In the changing environment in which the United Church finds itself, we will need to have ongoing discussions with the education faculties to ensure our candidates are being provided with the best education the schools can provide. We also assume that as the Remits proceed through the approval process, we will have to start thinking about the changes this will bring and what the new process of education, experience and approval will be for new candidates for ministry.

Summary

As co-chairs, this has been an exciting year. We had a successful New Ministries Day, which incorporated a change in venue, and now we look at another year of change in venue and budget. This may be the way of the future – constant change from the way it was done last year.

The committee itself comprises very thoughtful and committed presbytery E&S Chairpersons, CIES and CIB chairpersons, and secretary. Diane Blanchard is a very thoughtful staff support. They all make our role much easier. We thank you all for your dedication and support. God bless you all.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanne Dickson and Harold DeVenne, Co-chairs

INTERIM MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Interim Ministry Committee of Hamilton Conference is responsible for overseeing the work of Interim Ministry within the Conference. The following preamble from *The Manual* of the United Church of Canada explains the purpose and meaning of “interim ministry” and gives a definition of an “interim minister”:

Interim Ministry

In the life and work of the pastoral charge, the time between ministers often provides a critical opportunity for reassessment and growth. For most pastoral charges, this time of transition can be both exciting and challenging. For some, it may be a time of distress or conflict. The pastoral charge may need the leadership of ministry personnel with special skills to help it deal with the past, continue in the present, and prepare for effective ministry in the future.

Meaning

An “interim ministry” is a time-limited ministry in a pastoral charge. The purpose of the interim ministry is to work toward specific goals decided on by the presbytery and the pastoral charge.

An “interim minister” is a member of the order of ministry or designated lay minister who has been designated by the Conference to serve in interim ministry.

As the Interim Ministry Committee, we are responsible for the designation of persons to serve in interim ministry, education of presbyteries about their responsibilities in the designation process

and in the setting up of an interim ministry within a congregation, and the education of transition teams in pastoral charges where interim ministry is taking place.

Discharging these responsibilities directly affects *the health of congregations and presbyteries* when a congregation is effectively served by an Interim Minister. *Partnerships are strengthened* when transition teams work with the Interim Minister for the congregation. Through the process they model *effective leadership and viable partnership*. Having more designated Interims in the Conference increases the availability of well-prepared leaders for specialized congregational situations in the presbyteries.

A Summary of Work

This year the Committee recommended four persons for Initial Designation: Jim Brown, Philip Gardner, Mel Rose, and Rienk Vlietstra, and four persons for Continuing Designation: Wayne Beamer, Deborah Deavu, Hugh MacDonald, and Eleanor Scarlett.

The Hamilton Conference Interim Ministry Committee

- Supported the interim ministers' regular (about every six weeks) lunch meetings for fellowship and in-service education through discussion of their experiences, opportunities and challenges;
- Supported the interim ministers' Refresher's Course in November 2016 at Loyola House, Guelph;
- Co-sponsored, with Hamilton Conference, a two-day training event at Five Oaks, "Holy Currency Exchange," featuring Eric Laws of the Kaleidoscope Institute for Interim Ministers and Transition Team members;
- Reviewed final reports of interim ministry at three pastoral charges: First Grantham (Niagara), Glen Abbey (Halton), and Rockton/Sheffield (Hamilton);
- Received one sabbatical report;
- Reviewed the committee's mandate (we had four new members) focussing on its relationship with presbytery in the oversight of an interim ministry site.

During the year one member resigned from the committee and four joined, thus towards the end of the year we had a full complement of members: Ted Black, Dave Hall, Meg Grieve, Hugh MacDonald, Ken MacDonald, Ken Pettigrew, Pegi Ridout, Pat Tooley, Sybil Wilson (chair). Of these, four are designated Interim Ministers. The staff resource persons for the committee are Diane Blanchard, the Conference Personnel Minister, and Sue Duliban as Administrative Assistant. We are grateful to all—members and staff—for their wise leadership and critical yet compassionate decision making.

Respectfully submitted, *Sybil E. Wilson, Chair*

April 2017

INTERNSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION

One of the ways in which Hamilton Conference implements our priorities of Healthy Congregations and Effective Leadership is through the involvement of congregations in preparation for ordered and lay ministry. Our mandate is to help facilitate the formation of Ordained and Designated Lay Ministers (DLM) through Supervised Ministry Education (SME) experiences with a trained Educational Supervisor. Our tasks are to recruit and encourage internship sites and supervisors and to assess and to approve applications from them; to provide educational events (called 'Gatherings') for Interns/Students, Educational Supervisors, Lay Supervision Team (LST) members, and Designated Lay Ministers (not yet recognized); to support and provide training for Lay Supervision Teams; to oversee Supervised Ministry Education for DLMs and those in other Ministry Based Programs (e.g. AST Long-distance and Summer Education Program); and to host educational supervisor refresher courses. Most of our work with SME, supervisors and students is done through liaising, site visits, the review of evaluations and our interaction during the three 'Gathering' events. There are two national Matching Meetings where interns are matched with educational sites and supervisors from (almost) across Canada. Our Chair attends these in June and in October. The number of interns submitting applications to this method of locating an internship site has tended to dwindle drastically over the past several years.

During 2016–2017, we had six interns for ordained ministry learning in Hamilton Conference churches. The students who were placed at the June Matching Meeting in an eight-month internship were Roni Beharry interning at Trinity United and Sugarbush Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Guelph, supervised by the Rev. John Benham; and Jenn Hind was at First United and Emmanuel United churches in Waterloo, supervised by the Rev. Kellie McComb (DM). There are four students interning in Hamilton Conference enrolled in the Atlantic School of Theology Master of Divinity Summer Distance Program. This is a five-year program. Gavin Williams is at Moorefield United in Moorefield, supervised by the Rev. Robert Thaler and Jan McCormick is at Hillcrest United in Georgetown, supervised by the Rev. Dr. Paul Crittenden. They are in their second year of the program. We have two students in the first year of the AST program. Alison Miculan is at Copetown United Church in Copetown, supervised by the Rev. Bill MacKinnon and Gail Fricker is at Knox United Church in Ayr, supervised by the Rev. Wayne Beamer. Our seventh student is Karen Willis, a DLM student at Linden Park Community United Church, supervised by the Rev. Dr. Diane Walker. Karen is finishing her last year in Supervised Ministry Education. Each of the students has a member of the CIES acting as a liaison, to which they can turn for help and support.

There were four students from Hamilton Conference this year who were doing their Supervised Ministry Education with pastoral charges outside of the Conference boundaries. Amadeus Pyralis is at Cole Harbor Pastoral Charge, in Bay of Quinte Conference. Katherine Selby is at St. Andrew's United Church in Markham, Toronto Conference. Deborah Ambridge-Fisher is at Forest United Church, Forest, ON in London Conference. Marsha Roberts (AST) is currently looking for a SME closer to Bruce Presbytery.

Our educational component began this year with training events for the Lay Supervision Team members of the new pastoral charges involved in Supervised Ministry Education. We held a joint training event at Trinity United for Trinity United/Sugarbush Christian churches and First/Emmanuel United churches. Two separate LST training events were held at Knox United and Copetown United. The educational component was continued through three 'Gathering' events held between September and March. We try to plan our Gatherings to take place at the pastoral charges where the students are interning. This allows for sharing of the hospitality and for the interns to visit other congregational settings for learning, and it gives us further insight as a committee into the internship sites and our interns.

In September we met at Linen Park United in Hamilton. The September ‘Gathering’ is always a required event for new students. All students and supervisors were able to attend, as well as some Lay Supervision Team members. Topics included: Theological Reflection practices, examining the Standards of Practice pamphlet, setting learning goals and learning covenants. In November, we met at First United Church with the topics of: Prophet, Priest and Pastor. Our March Gathering was held at Sugarbush Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Guelph. Topics included: Conflict Management, and “Holy Currencies”—two very popular topics! We always allow time at our Gatherings for each group (i.e. Students, Supervisors, and LSTs) to meet together. Our students, supervisors, and LST members always comment on how helpful they find this networking time.

Just before Christmas, we received the mid-term evaluations from the interns, supervisors, and LSTs. I forwarded our written summary and comments to each student, supervisor, and LST.

We are grateful for our supervisors who are very dedicated and who ensure that their students are experiencing the full range of ministry. We are very appreciative of the congregations that have welcomed the students into this formative time and the reflective support of their LST. The end-of-year evaluations for the AST students and the final evaluations for the 8-month SME’s and our DLM will be shared at the beginning of May and a response letter will be sent to the students, their supervisors, and Lay Supervision Teams with copies to their Education and Student Committees.

The Ministry of Supervised Education cannot happen without congregations who are willing to share their financial resources and the time of their ministers, and ministers who are willing to share their time. The Church is grateful to all who participated this year. At the National Matching Meeting in June we will once again try to match interns and sites from across the country. As of the time of writing this report, we have one student application to present.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the committee. They support the necessary work that is ours to do. They bring great wisdom to our discussions and they make the work of a chair a relatively easy task to accomplish. My appreciation and gratitude goes to the Rev. Diane Blanchard in being our Conference Staff person with this committee.

Next year will be my sixth and final year chairing CIES. We are actively seeking someone who might be interested in becoming a Vice Chair so that person can begin some training for the tasks that we enter into in being the ‘wider church.’

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Candy Harvey (Chair)

Committee Members: Secretary-Marilyn Rogers, The Rev. Ron Pocklington, The Rev. Kim Wright, Marion Brown, The Rev. Ann Stafford, The Rev. Laura Williams, Rosemary Benbow, Yvonne Wright, The Rev. Barbara Fullerton, Pat Gilmore, and The Rev. Diane Blanchard (Conference Staff).

CONFERENCE INTERVIEW BOARD (CIB)

The Conference Interview Board's purpose is to make recommendations regarding those seeking to become part of the Order of Ministry in the United Church of Canada. We interview those who are in the process for becoming Ministers from within our Church and those who are Ministers in other Denominations seeking to become United Church Ministers by admission. The Board is made up of both lay people and order of ministry and our staff support comes from the Conference Personnel Minister. We meet about four times a year but will work to accommodate if necessary. We started our year with a new chair and a new Personnel Minister and so there has been some working out our respective roles in those positions. I thank Diane Blanchard for her support and guidance in my growth in this position.

So far CIB has met in September & November (2016), and January and March of this year and our next planned interview day is in September 2017. We have interviewed four inquirers and four people for admissions in since September 2016. Two of the admission interviews were initial interviews to begin admission process and two were final interviews. In all cases a team of CIB members review all documentation and conduct the interviews, then all members of the board that are present discuss the interviews. The board then makes our recommendation.

We had two people leave the board this year. Barbra Harwood, a long-time member whose wisdom is missed, and Christine Hossack, who has moved to a new position outside of Hamilton Conference. At present the Conference Interview Board consists of Jessica Cottrell, Judy Zarubick, Yvonne Wright, Cathy Dilts, Ann Fleming, Heather Gilmour, Jean Bethune, John Van Duzer, Dwain Ketcheson, Mary Elliott, Roy Holton, and Bob Brunner as Chair. Our staff support, as mentioned, is Diane Blanchard and we also receive the support of Ron Pocklington as our Chaplin. I thank all on the Board for your support and patience as I become comfortable in my new roll; I do miss the interviews but I still feel the energy when the full board is discussing the interviews.

We remind ourselves each time we meet of the privilege we have in serving our God in this manner. We get to experience often the Spirit moving among us during the interviews and our discernment. We are often fed by the passion, deep faith, and energy of the interviewees. We discern not as individuals but as representatives of our Church and seek to see the depth and value of an interviewees Faith and Call even through theological differences while supporting the ideals of the United Church of Canada.

With Respect,

Bob Brunner, Chair Conference Interview Board

PENSIONS AND GROUP INSURANCE

The responsibilities of this committee are outlined below as found in the General Council Committee Handbook and the Pension and Group Insurance Committee Mandate:

- Promoting the interests of the pension and group insurance plans in the Conference;
- informing the presbytery and pastoral charges on matters of current interest concerning the pension and group insurance plans;
- promoting in the presbyteries an active interest in the welfare of plan members and pensioners living in the Conference;
- reporting to the Conference on the work of the appropriate General Council working unit;
- organizing annual visitation of pensioners living in the Conference.

This Committee will have met twice this year to review the work of the presbytery convenors and to discuss matters relevant to the work of the committee as listed above.

Each of the presbytery convenors has been in contact with the pensioners within their respective presbyteries. Several of the convenors have offered opportunity for the pensioners to gather for food and fellowship at least once during the year.

Convenors also offer support to those pensioners who may have need to apply for further assistance with their financial and/or health challenges.

We have the responsibility, along with our conference staff, of honouring the retirees and jubilands at the Meeting of Hamilton Conference. In 2016, since there was not an annual meeting at which to do this, the retirees and jubilands were honoured at the Annual Meeting of the Hamilton Conference Retirees Association which was held in October at Wellington Square United Church in Burlington..

Thank you to all who are a part of this important work – especially to the convenors who work diligently to stay in touch with those who have retired and those on long-term disability. Thank you to Diane Blanchard for her presence at our meetings and the wisdom, insight and guidance that she offers to the committee.

Respectfully Submitted
Margaret Bain, Chairperson

NOMINATIONS

Our purpose is to meet the mission goal of Effective Leadership within the volunteer segment of the Conference governance. In doing so we look to the presbyteries of the Conference as our partners to offer suggestions and for some committees to appoint representatives so that the ministries of the Conference might be fulfilled.

During the Conference year we strive to fill vacancies on committees as they occur through volunteers' need to resign from the committees' work. As we fill vacancies we try to keep,

where appropriate, the balance of ministry personnel and lay people and a gender balance in place. As well, we attempt to keep presbytery representation in balance. Names of all new appointees are recommended to the Conference Executive for approval.

We are pleased to have at the time of writing a full slate of volunteers for the 2017–2018 Conference year. This happy circumstance is because all those with 2017 expiring terms of office were personally asked to extend their terms of service in order that we might explore the Holy Shifts of structure as they become known in the coming year. The majority said yes to the invitation to remain while any vacancies left by those needing to resign have been filled.

We are very grateful for the service offered to the Conference by all volunteers! You are our strength as you give your gifts of time and leadership, your care and commitment across the Conference and in our presbyteries. Through your ‘yes’ to volunteering in the wider church we are stronger as well in being Healthy Congregations and Presbyteries. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Fleming

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Statement of Mission or Purpose

The Hamilton Conference Pastoral Care Team exists to respond to the pastoral care needs of ministry personnel and their families. The pastoral care that the team provides is confidential and is shaped to meet a variety of concerns and situations. The kind of pastoral care offered includes:

- support during times of loss, such as bereavement, illness, separation
- a sounding board for ministry personnel: for example, those who face major decisions around their call in ministry, those who are coping with the stress involved in giving or supporting leadership
- a listening ear when persons feel that they have been abused in any way by those holding power
- direction to the various resources that are available when the person requires specific guidance
- support during times of major change in one’s life: e.g., retirement, settling into new pastoral relationship

Summary of goals:

Our goals over the past year have been to recruit some new members, to provide support for Team members, to provide chaplains at Conference meetings (such as Conference Interviews and at the Conference Meeting) and to raise the profile of the Pastoral Care Team throughout the Conference so that more ministry personnel are aware of and familiar with its work. All of these goals have served to strengthen the Pastoral Care Team.

How these goals address all four of the Conference's priorities:

The Team contributes to “Healthy Congregations and Presbyteries” by offering pastoral care and support to ministry personnel and their families.

The Team contributes to "Effective Leadership" by supporting and offering pastoral care to those in leadership in the Church. This pastoral care helps contribute to the mental and emotional wellbeing of those in ministry. Members of the Team and the Conference Staff resource person encourage and support each other and this also contributes to effective leadership.

The pastoral care offered by Team members is “Faithful Public Witness.” It is in addition to the responsibilities the members have in their ministry positions (as is the case with the work of many committees). Several members are retired and continue to witness to their faith by serving on the Pastoral Care Team (and often in other positions in the church).

The Team’s work of pastoral care, which helps ministry personnel and their families be well in body, mind and spirit, contributes to “Strengthening Partnerships” between congregations and ministers, between the Conference, presbyteries and ministry personnel, and between members.

Summary of the Pastoral Care Team’s work:

The Team held its first meeting of the year in September 2016 at the Conference Office. We welcomed our new Staff Resource Person, the Rev. Diane Blanchard, Personnel Minister for Hamilton Conference, who led us in worship. This included some personal time for reflection. We heard from each member about the pastoral care work he/she had been doing since we last met. We shared lunch together and then dealt with the business at hand, which included an update on the Health and Wellness Event planned for November 3, 2016, at Five Oaks.

The idea for this event, which was sponsored by the Pastoral Care Team, came from a proposal presented by Kim Uyede-Kai and Diane Matheson-Jimenez at our May 2016 meeting and from a discussion among members at our October 2015 meeting. It was well received by the twenty-six people who attended.

The second meeting of the year was a conference call at the end of January 2017. We begin all of our meetings with a brief but important time of checking in with each member. As with many committees in a large Conference, it is a challenge to get to know one another and check-in is an opportunity to do this. During the conference call we heard about the pastoral care being offered by the Team members. After debriefing the Health and Wellness Event, we decided we would plan to sponsor a similar event in November of this year.

We will meet again at the Conference Office in early June. At each meeting there is a time for spiritual nourishment and a time when each member briefly describes the pastoral care situations to which she or he has been attending. All of our work is strictly confidential.

In the past year some members have been chaplains at events such as the New Ministries Day in December at Loyola House (Guelph) and Conference Interviews. Some will be chaplains at the

Annual Meeting of Hamilton Conference this May. Our presence at these events and at presbytery meetings helps raise awareness of the Pastoral Care Team.

The recruiting of new members is ongoing. It continues to be a challenge to have at least two members from each presbytery (the optimum number is three). This past year the Rev. Neville Smith (Halton Presbytery) retired from active ministry and resigned from the Team. The Rev. Gaylyn McLean (Waterloo Presbytery) joined the Team in the spring of 2016. Currently there are twelve members, plus our Conference Staff support person. The current Co-ordinator, the Rev. Martha Reynolds, has given notice that she will be stepping down.

Goals for the coming year:

- to continue to support ministry personnel and their families by offering pastoral care
- to continue to raise awareness of the Pastoral Care Team throughout the Conference
- to recruit new members
- to care for ourselves through support and spiritual enrichment for the Team
- to plan and sponsor another Hamilton Conference Health and Wellness Event

These goals, under the umbrella of the Pastoral Care Team’s mission of caring for and supporting ministry personnel in the Conference, address all four priorities of Hamilton Conference.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Martha Reynolds
Co-ordinator

PHILANTHROPY AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

MISSION: FAITH GIVING

Out of gratitude for God’s abundant grace, we respond with all we are and have in a pilgrimage of caring, learning, and advocacy, so that God’s gifts may be shared by all creation.

COMMITTEE MANDATE

- To encourage philanthropy (with its root meaning of “humanity loving”)
- To review, promote and support Mission and Service in the six presbyteries and presbyterials of the Conference
- To support revenue generation and legacy giving throughout the Conference

THIS COMMITTEE HAS THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- offering up-to-date resources and reporting about M&S congregational giving
- reviewing the Mission and Service giving within Hamilton Conference and its six presbyteries and presbyterials
- encouraging congregations to connect Christian discipleship with giving for the mission of the church in the world

- sharing ideas among our six presbyteries and presbyterials
- planning Conference stewardship events
- providing “Thank You” posters to congregations yearly for their M&S giving

As a committee we still struggle with trying to get full membership, as several presbyteries have not been able to find representatives. This lack of membership has severely handicapped our work. It is imperative that those representatives be found. One of the main functions of this committee is to be a conduit for Mission and Service Promotion and Stewardship Resources. Without presbytery representation, that information is not able to get to congregations, who desperately desire and need them, especially in these times.

This past year we have:

- Kept presbyteries and pastoral charges informed as to their M&S giving
- We have promoted the Work of Mission & Service, and M&S promotional material
- We have sent “Thank-You Posters,” which General Council has also adopted, and are being used through out the church nationally.

Kim Uyede-Kai is Support Staff for Philanthropy & Stewardship Committee. She has provided tremendous strength to our struggling Committee. Kim has strong links with General Council, and helps us to know the Stewardship/Philanthropy trends happening there. Kim’s wisdom, experience, leadership, and hospitality is greatly appreciated.

Dave Jagger is Hamilton and London Conferences’ new Stewardship & Gifts Officer. We encourage congregations and presbyteries to get to know Dave, and take advantage of what he has to offer. This position is sponsored by General Council.

Ed Laksmanis - Chair of Hamilton Conference Philanthropy and Stewardship

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Throughout the year, Hamilton Conference Office Property Committee, whose task it is to oversee the care and upkeep of the office property, our central gathering space for church-related purposes and the workplace of our wonderful staff persons, stayed in regular contact mainly by email. With the intense work of office renovations completed satisfactorily, relatively minor ‘brush fires’ were well managed without the need to meet face to face. Our Executive Secretary, Peter Hartmans, who consulted with members regularly, can rely on a roster of skilled trades- people who have proven themselves to be worthy of return business for their consistently prompt and competent service coupled with fair pricing. Service contracts are honoured with a timely response appropriate to the emergent situation.

Upper hallway carpeting was replaced in an environmentally sensitive manner, by using low-volatile products, reducing toxic exposure with extra ventilation and coinciding installation with minimal office occupancy. Upper level lighting will be upgraded from ‘hostel bedroom’ illumination to current codes and standards for workplaces and public buildings. With heavy construction vehicles no longer coming and going, paving repairs, a fresh top coat and application of clear, relevant markings freshened up the parking lot. Painting of outdoor metal eaves troughs, fire escape, and balcony railing is pending.

Regular review of equipment, life expectancies, and replacement projections takes place to prevent unnecessary breakdowns and to keep check on potential expenditures. A walk-about is undertaken at least once a year to scrutinize potential trouble spots and to make note of conditions needing action sooner than later. Our faithful, much appreciated custodians, Allan and Diane Ellis, regularly go the extra mile in keeping the overall premises up to par.

Committee members, who may appear to be few, pack a punch! All reside within Hamilton Presbytery, and are acquainted with local trades and services. Relying on a solid team effort, essential work is well managed with consensus being the preferred decision making process. When gathered at the table, much experience is present... or emanates from our laptops! Chairperson, Ralph Hayman, legal counsel, offers an expert opinion on vital matters. He, along with two practically minded and competent contributors, Barbara Woodburn and Norene Anderson, the appointee of Hamilton Conference United Church Women (UCW), enjoy a strong sense of good will and collegiality, and not forgetting the unflappable Ruthanna Mack, Administrative Assistant, who keeps us all ticking along! The wholehearted and constant support of Peter Hartmans, whose strength of character and pastoral approach is an invaluable source of joy and satisfaction, freely shared with all.

Hamilton Conference Office Property is a real asset. Regardless of future outcomes or prospects, keeping all aspects of this investment in the best possible condition is a responsibility and a duty that honours the Holy One. This place is the focal point for all things United Church in this special region within God’s realm.

We are not alone! And, we are ready for the Holy Shift...! Thanks be to God!

Respectfully submitted for Chair, Ralph Hayman, and members

Norene Anderson, Secretary

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE COMMITTEE

Goals: To ensure the administration of the United Church of Canada Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response Policy and Procedures. To train ministry personnel, members and adherents about 'boundaries' and about the policy and procedures. Our working committee 2016: John Benham, Lynn Hamilton, Bill MacKinnon, Jennifer Canning, Anita Spiller, Brad Inglis, Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Diane Blanchard (Personnel Minister).

The SAPR team for 2016 is quite encouraged by our year of transition, new learnings, and accomplishments. It has been a delight to welcome Diane Blanchard to our work as she has quickly offered incredible support and guidance. Likewise, Diane Matheson-Jimenez continues to offer her gifts and passion for this ministry to support safe communities, self-care, and boundary training for Hamilton Conference.

Boundary Training

This year the SAPR committee encouraged the growing choices for Boundary Training via the website sessions along with our first training event at the Bruce Network day April 9/16. This training session included a focus on 'social media' boundaries along with creating safe communities, self care, and policy information. This Bruce network training was a pilot project in which we included order of ministry and lay leaders for the first time in the same workshop. Marie Fortune herself expressed her hopes that this would become a priority in the coming years. Our team was delighted by this experience and SAPR is now committed to including lay people at our future Boundary Training events. Budget-wise we make it a real priority to continue personal training and this year Bill McKinnon attended the Marie Fortune training in Nashville. New material is now in place to bring a new focus to our annual training event in the area of 'boundaries with money and gifts.'

Policy Change

SAPR requested that Hamilton Conference Executive align our Boundary Training with the General Council policy from every 3 years to every 5 years. This change was passed by the executive and the SAPR team is making every effort to communicate to all order of ministry and retirees to make sure they have updated Boundary training that fulfills the 'every five years' General Council policy.

Complaints

We are hopeful that continued focus and training events are helping us all with boundaries and 2016 has been a quiet year for complaints.

Consultants

We are truly blessed by consultants who are only a phone call away for anyone within our faith communities. Their work is sensitive and it's important to know that we have very caring consultants in our Conference to support both complainants and respondents through the complaint process. This year we expressed our gratitude for the dedication of Joyce Pearce and Jim Agnew for all their time and commitment as consultants. They have both retired from our Consultant team. As of July 1, 2017, the work of Consultants will shift to the General Council.

UCOM (United Church Outdoor Ministries)

Camp Directors, senior staff of the camps, and Board members were all included for Boundary training thanks to the great leadership of Diane Matheson-Jimenez. John Benham and Diane Matheson-Jimenez prepared the camp directors' training session together and Jennifer Bawden, along with Gord Dunbar and Diane Matheson-Jimenez visited the camps to assist the directors in training the staff teams.

SAPR also provided support and training to leaders of Youth Forum and Children and Young Teens at Conference (CAYTS) and to the Conference at large as together we create a safe community in the programs we share.

Respectfully submitted,
John Benham

STAFF COMMITTEE

The mandate of the Staff Committee of Hamilton Conference is to act as a support group to the Conference Staff. Members of the Staff Committee at present are Rosemary Addison (Chairperson), the Rev. Lynne Bandy, Jackie Childerhose, and the Rev. Bob Tschanz. Prior to September 2016, the committee also had Andrea Buttars, Charles Clarke, and the Rev. Herb Klaehn as its members. Conference Staff consists of the Rev. Peter Hartmans, Executive, Secretary; Kim Uyede-Kai, Conference Minister for Congregational Support; Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Conference Minister for Social Justice and Youth; the Rev. Diane Blanchard, Conference Personnel Minister; Sue Duliban, Administrator for Human Resources; Barbara Hampson, Program Support for Communications, Ruthanna Mack, General Administration. The Staff is greatly appreciated by presbyteries, congregations, and ministry personnel, who seek their guidance and expertise. Their leadership is highly regarded.

At each meeting, members of the Staff Committee and the Hamilton Conference Staff gather for worship, followed by a time of fellowship. At Christmas time, the Staff Committee hosted a Christmas party for the Staff. The Committee prepared the table and supplied special treats for the occasion. Staff members were also given gift certificates as a small gesture of our appreciation for a Staff that continually serves the Conference with a commitment to excellence.

In June 2016, the Rev. Jenny Stephens, who had been the Conference Personnel Minister for sixteen years, took the position of Team Leader, Policies and Programmes for Ministry Personnel at General Council Office. The duties of Conference Personnel Minister were covered until August by Conference Staff Ministers and by the Rev. Fred Monteith, who was hired in a contract position for ten weeks.

On August 1, 2017, the Rev. Diane Blanchard was welcomed as the new Conference Personnel Minister. Diane brings a wealth of experience and talents to the role, and has transitioned well into its many facets. Diane has a clear understanding of the challenges ahead for Hamilton Conference, as well as, for the United Church of Canada. Her knowledge of the policies and politics of the United Church gives her a global perspective of the work of the United Church.

She has specialized training in pastoral counseling, as well as in teaching. She has extensive experience in pastoral relations work within Halton Presbytery and Hamilton Conference. Diane was formally covenanted at the February Executive Meeting of Hamilton Conference.

Kim Uyede-Kai was on sabbatical from January to April 1, 2017. The duties of her position her duties were assimilated by Conference Staff internally.

Members of the Committee have spent much time in meetings discussing the Comprehensive Review and its possible ramifications for Hamilton Conference Staff. Our mandate at this point is to care for Staff, individually and collectively, during the transition. At present, Staff is in a “holding pattern,” continuing to work together as a team to support each other. That being said, there are still a lot of “what if” conversations.

Staff Committee members have stated repeatedly that it is an honour to work and connect with such a remarkable Staff Team. We are blessed with a wonderful group of people, dedicated to their work and to their faith. We ask that you continue to hold them in prayerful support as they continue in their responsibilities within Hamilton Conference.

Respectfully submitted by *Rosemary Addison, Chairperson*