



# UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA WESTERN INTERCULTURAL MINISTRY NETWORK

**Report: 2019-2020**

*Respectfully Submitted: Alwin Maben, Chair*



**(The Western Intercultural Ministry Network includes the people of, and leadership from, Pacific Mountain, Northern Spirit, Chinook Winds, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils.)**

## **The Interim Executive:**

At the Annual General Meeting of the **Intercultural Ministry Network** (Northern Spirit Regional Council and Chinook Winds Regional Council) held on October 16, 2019 at Providence Renewal Centre, Edmonton, the then executive decided to expand our network to include all of the Western region under an assumed name "**Western Intercultural Ministry Network**" with the following members as its Interim Executive: **Kay Quon** – Elder (Edmonton), **Katheryn Yamashita** (Lethbridge), **Julie Graham** (staff support), **Pamela Won** – Secretary, (Calgary) **Kwang Beom Cho** – Vice-chair (Winnipeg), **Alwin Maben** – Chair (Coronation)

At that time we did not have anybody from the **Pacific Mountain region** at the AGM to be coopted into the Interim Executive. However, with help from the Regional Councils and with little persuasion, we were able to have **Deborah Richards** representing **Pacific Mountain Region** and **Kurt Katzmar** representing **Edmonton Intercultural Ministry Network** and later **Dambar Khadka** joined us as Interim Executive member. We are grateful to all our interim Executive members for their wisdom, enthusiasm and input with regard to the functioning of our committee

## **Policies and Procedures (Terms of Reference):**

As an Interim Executive we started working on preparing **Policies and Procedures (Terms of Reference)** with Dr. Kathy Yamashita on the chair. We thank Kathy for drafting the terms of Reference and the committee accepted the same with some corrections which was later shared with all the five Regional Councils for their information (Copy attached).

## **Committee Meetings:**

Our first Interim Executive Committee meeting over Zoom was on **November 5, 2019**. In order to keep the momentum going after the success of our Continuing Education and Learning Day event - **“Continuing the Awkward Conversation to become an Intercultural and Sustainable Church”** (Oct.16-18, 2019) with **Rev. Dr. Eric H.F. Law** and **Rev. Dr. Andrew Sung Park** at Providence Renewal Centre, Edmonton and a **“Korean Ministers/Lay Leaders Gathering 2019”** on Oct.18-19 at Edmonton Korean Church with Rev. Dr. Andrew Sung Park, we began planning to host the **Education and Learning day event for 2020**. Initially, we planned to host it in September 22-25, 2020 at FCJ Centre, Calgary with the Theme: **“New Wine” – Creating Missional, Sustainable and Intercultural Ministries in the United Church.**” While **Rev. Dr. Eric Law** was returning as one of the Main Speakers we were also hoping to have the support from or collaboration with **The First Nations** and **“Being Good Relations”** Network. After preparing a budget for this event, we also sought financial support from all concerned regional councils who were gracious enough to accept our proposal and the budget. So far the committee has met seven times over Zoom. We are especially grateful to Dr. Kathy Yamashita for taking the minutes and sharing it as Pamela Won was not able to participate in most of our meetings.

#### **Continuing Education and Learning Day event 2020:**

With COVID-19 coming in the way, we had to change our plans with regard to hosting the Education Event. While we retained the Theme: **“New Wine” – Creating Missional, Sustainable and Intercultural Ministries in the United Church.**” with **Rev. Dr. Eric Law** as returning Main Speaker, we also contacted few Indigenous leaders to be the Second speaker. We are happy that **Rev. Tony Snow** accepted our invitation and will be the other Speaker at this event. In consultation with the speakers, our committee decided to host this year’s Education Event online on three separate Fridays with a particular theme which is as follows:

**September 25: Missional Ministries**

**October 2: Sustainable Ministries**

**October 9: Intercultural Ministries**

There will be presentations, dialogue between Tony and Eric, small group conversations, Q and A, and a break in each session. At the end of each day, participants will be given “homework” contextual to their ministry, and tools to engage people in their ministry. They will bring their experience and reflection back to the following session. Each day will include an optional afternoon or evening informal conversation circle to close the day; these will be based regionally, linguistically, and more. While the cost is free, registration is required. For full information please go to: <http://bit.ly/2CqFRjt> . We look forward to many participating and benefitting from this event.

With the change in plans the budget too was revised and we are grateful to **Norther Spirit** and **Chinook Winds Regional Councils** for approving our budget and also for extending Staff support to our ministry. We are particularly grateful to **Julie Graham** for the tremendous staff support she is extending to us.

### **Zoom Chai/Coffee Conversation:**

A special feature has been the two **Zoom Chai/Coffee Sessions** we had this year. The first one on **February 4, 2020** was mainly for those who attended the last education event. This session was chaired by Dr. Kathy Yamashita and was quite well attended with lots of suggestion and concern shared with regard to intercultural ministry. The second session was on **June 23, 2020** where the focus was on Racism within the United Church. This too was well attended and was planned and Moderated by Deborah Richards and Julie Graham to whom we are very much grateful. Another session is planned for **November 17, 2020 at 12.30 PM (MST)**. All are welcome to participate.

### **Support to DUIM:**

**“Deepening Understanding of Intercultural Ministry”** offered by the Canadian Council of Churches from time to time has not been held Alberta so far. There was a request to host the same in Alberta with the help of Edmonton Intercultural Ministry Network. Rev. Jonathan Schmidt - Associate Secretary: Intercultural Leadership; Justice and Peace, had an exploratory meeting with Rev. Kurt Katzmar and other members of the Edmonton Intercultural Ministry Network on February 5, 2020 at Sherwood Park United Church. Unfortunately not much progress has been made due to COVID-19.

### **Annual General Meeting:**

The Annual General Meeting this year will be on **November 24, 2020 at 12.30 PM (MST)**. We hope that interested folks from all regions will participate in this and that we will be able to form a New Executive to continue the work of Intercultural Ministry within our region with new vision and enthusiasm.

Once again we express our sincere gratitude to all the Regional Councils in the Western Region, particularly, **Northern Spirit** and **Chinook Winds Regional councils** for all the support and encouragement we have received and look forward to continued support and guidance in the important ministry for the Glory of God and for the good of all God’s children.

**Alwin Maben**

**The Western Intercultural Ministry Network**  
**The United Church of Canada**  
**(December 9, 2019, DRAFT)**

**Mission Statement**

In 2012 the General Council of the United Church of Canada declared that it would become an Intercultural church. By this we understand that we are affirming the very beginning of our faith which was born in a time which was richly coloured by people from many different countries and traditions and faiths. When we affirm and welcome a variety of traditions and faith expressions, our understanding of God and of each other is deepened.

1. To this end, in 2019 the Western Intercultural Ministry Network was born from the ashes of the Alberta and Northwest Conference and Edmonton Presbytery Intercultural committees. Our mission is to extend the vision of intercultural ministry to the five Western regions of the United Church of Canada.
2. We will endeavour to work closely with General Council in their Intercultural Ministry support for the whole of the United Church of Canada. At the same time, we hope to bring together those who are doing intercultural ministry work in their regions.
3. We hope to educate the mainstream United churches about the issues experienced by people who are marginalized because of race, sexual identity, disability and poverty. We will work toward holding an annual educational event featuring speakers who can teach us about becoming an Intercultural church.
4. We hope to build a relationship with indigenous peoples in order to learn about their histories, traditions and spiritualities.
5. We hope to continue support for ministry personnel who have come to Canada to work in the United Church and must navigate its culture and policies as they seek to become fully accepted in the United Church of Canada. We intend to petition the Office of Vocation and federal and provincial governmental agencies to improve their policies to fully support immigrant ministers in the United Church of Canada.
6. This mission statement is a work in progress and will need to be reviewed and approved at each general meeting.

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Mandate**

- To nurture and support the ministries of Ethnic Congregations, Migrant Congregations, and those of visible Minority Clergy and Laity in mainstream Congregations of the United Church of Canada's five western Regions: Living Skies, Prairie to Pine, Northern Spirit, Chinook Winds and Pacific Mountain.
- To enable these ministries to participate fully in the life of The United Church of Canada
- To empower the constituents of the Intercultural Ministry Committee to participate in the General Council Mandate, "Towards becoming an Intercultural Church."
- To advocate for persons navigating the immigration process and provide supports to enable integration into life in Canada.

### **Membership**

- Chairperson, Secretary and either past chair or chair elect to act as Co-Chairperson
- At least one member from each of the member Regions and one member from each of the ethnic, affirming and migrant ministries. Intercultural ministry working groups within our five Regions will be welcome to appoint a member.
- The recruitment of network members will take into account the diversity of peoples in the United Church.
- There will be an attempt to rotate the leadership amongst the diversity of the groups represented in our network on a three yearly basis.
- Elders may be named in recognition of wise and faithful contribution from a longstanding former committee member. The Elder will have full corresponding privileges

### **Accountability**

- The Ethnic congregation representatives shall report about their church matters and will support and respond to the goals set by the Network
- The Network will maintain a connection with General Council and the Regional executives of the United Church of Canada

### **Meetings**

- A General meeting and Educational event will be held once a year, lasting 2-3 days
- Other meetings may be held electronically as called by the Chairperson or two members of the Network with at least two weeks notice.

### **Financial Support**

- We will petition each Region to assist their representatives with travel expenses.
- We will request funding from each Region to support the cost of the Annual General meeting and Educational event.

### **Review**

- These terms of reference shall be reviewed and accepted annually at a general meeting.