

**Annual General Meeting
of Friends of the Centre for Christian Studies Inc.
March 25, 2021**

1.0 Opening and Welcome: Kathy Platt

1.1. Attendance:

Central Council: Ansley Tucker (Council Co-chair), Kathy Platt (Council Co-chair), Sadekie Lyttle Forbes (In-coming Co-Chair), Michelle Owens (Principal), Mona Denton (Staff Support Committee Chair), Joyce Dickson (Student Representative), Deborah Laforet (Program), Ray McGinnis (Communications and Promotions), Janet Nield (Recording Secretary), Bob Osborne (Planning & Governance Committee Chair), Jen Prince (Student Representative), Keith Simmonds (UCC representative), Stacy Stanley Young (Finance Committee Chair),

Staff: Scott Douglas, Marcie Gibson, Janet Ross, Lori Stewart, Cheryl Thiessen, **Regrets:** David Lappano

Students, Graduates, Former Staff, and Friends: Barbara Barnett, Letitia Berger, Carolynne Bouey Shank, Marlene Britton, Ken DeLisle, Janice Dodd, Ted Dodd, Anne Duncan, Linda Ervin, Barbara Hansen, Jim Hatt, Melanie Ihmels, Penny Lewis, Lorrie Lowes, Vicki McPhee, Anne Manikel, MaryEllen Moore, Robert Murdock, Ann Naylor, Dorothy Naylor, Hyerim Park, Kristie Pilling, Nancy Renwick, Irene Sale, Tim Sale, Fred Tappenden, Karen Tjaden, Kathy Toivanen, Dianne Trollope, Eric Tusz-King, Aileen Urquhart, John Young

Regrets: Charlotte Caron, Nancy Ford, Barbara Lloyd, Keith Hall, Maylanne Maybee, Nancy Post, Heather Robbins, Bishop Geoff Woodcroft

1.2 Worship and In Memoriam – Bob Osborne

Worship was offered through an invocation prayer, and the reading of the In Memoriam List.

In the moments of remembrance of alumni and friends of the Centre who died in 2019, the following persons were named:

Dorothy Lillian Butler (Former Student)

Irene Fullarton (UCC 1987)

Marjorie Smith (UCC 1966)
Mary Elliott (UCC 2011)
Mary Naidu (ACC 1961)
Nancy Holman (UCC 1956)
Pauline Graham (UCC 1983)
Ron Williams (Friend)
Ruth Jefferson (ACC 1958)
Vera Elinor Bell (UCC 1964)
Yvonne Wilkie (UCC 1961)

1.3 Acceptance of Friends

MOTION:

Moved by Melanie Ihmels, seconded by Linda Ervin that all those present, not already a Friend of the Centre for Christian Studies (member of Council or committee, current student, current staff, graduate, donated in past two years, graduate of the Western Field-Based Program for Diaconal Ministry), be made a Friend of the Centre.

CARRIED

1.4 Greetings: DUCC, DOTAC, ST. Stephen's College, UCC

Vicki McPhee, chair of the DUCC Coordinating Committee, brought greetings from DUCC. She spoke of strengthening the relationship between DUCC and CCS.

Ted Dodd brought greetings from DOTAC and World Diakonia. The latter includes twelve diaconal associations and communities, and represents a diversity of Christian denominations. Ted shared about the program, "Mondays in May;" and that all are welcome to join these meetings. To be part of both organizations is to broaden one's point of view, and deepen one's sense of diaconal identity.

Fred Tappenden, Principal and Dean, brought greetings from St. Stephen's College. He stressed the long relationship as educational partners between CCS and the college.

John Young brought greetings from the national office of the United Church of Canada. He noted the importance of the theological colleges staying connected with one another, and of continuing to build collegiality. He also noted with appreciation the model of theological education that CCS offers.

In closing, Kathy Platt introduced Sadekie Lyttle Forbes, the in-coming co-chair of Central Council.

1.5 Agenda Review: By consensus, the agenda was agreed upon.

1.6 Approval of Minutes of AGM March 19, 2020

MOTION:

Moved by Ken Delisle, seconded by Linda Ervin, that the Minutes of the AGM March 19, 2020 be approved. **CARRIED**

1.7 Business Arising from the 2020 Minutes

There being none, the meeting continued.

2.0 “2020, Imagining EVERYTHING Differently,” Michelle Owens

2.1 Pandemic: “So much turned upside down.”

March: all programming, including circles and events, moved on-line; staff worked from home; it was a time of deep uncertainty.

April: working on adapting for on-line learning; sadly, the annual banquet and service of celebration was cancelled; on-line workshops were offered, to help with those needing to respond to the new context.

Summer: the “Learning on Purpose” was cancelled; and an “LoP lite” was developed and offered to new students.

During the summer, Woodsworth House was open for staff.

Fall: the Second Wave hit, and was serious in Manitoba; and all circles were offered on-line. Many externals taken at other institutions were available on-line, and so, widely available to students--many students chose to do externals in place of a field placement.

2.2 Progress: “Just-Pressing-On felt like progress.”

Innovation and development of on-line pedagogy: ten learning circles were held in 2020, including three new circles; one of the new circles was “Ministering by Word and Example” for Anglican deacons. In April were the “Pandemic Response” workshops. CCS Fridays became an on-line workshops series, which continued into the fall, and now this past winter, 2021. Staff were also presenters at two conferences.

It became clear that the Pandemic was not affecting everyone equally. The dynamics and hierarchies and fault lines of society were put into high relief.

The “Black Lives Matter” movement especially pushed CCS to consider deep needs for change.

2.3 Positives:

CCS realized that there was already resilience in our field-based education; and staff are familiar with being dispersed. A new social media presence was developed with the company Strategic Charm Social Media. We reflected on and learned from every event and circle, revising our curriculum through an anti-racist, decolonial lens, noting biases. We discovered that racism is different, depending on the ethnicities to which the racism is directed.

2.4 Planning:

Recruitment of new students is key and crucial. Theological schools can no longer rely on the steady intake of students through the church processes of call and discernment and

candidacy. Thus, CCS will be hiring a staff person to develop recruitment tools and processes.

Secondly, the financial sustainability of CCS must be worked on. We recognize that our Donors remain committed to diaconal education. Our fundraising increased substantially this past year. How do we continue with that trend?

The CCS partners:

Anglican Church of Canada, United Church of Canada, Diakonia of the United Church (DUCC), Anglican Deacons, DOTAC, St. Andrew's College, St. Stephen's College, Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, Strategic Charm (social media).

The presentation being concluded, Michelle offered to answer any questions:

Ted Dodd noted the importance of including the study of all types of racism, and to recognize similarities and differences depending on the group (Black, Asian, Indigenous) to which racist behaviour is directed.

Jen Prince noted her very positive response to the on-line circles she participated in. She described how community amongst participants was built, and noted that things worked and happened.

The chair was turned over to Ansley Tucker.

3.0 Reports

3.1 Business from Annual Report: there being none, the meeting continued.

3.2.1 Financial Report: presented by Stacy Stanley Young, who noted with thanks that the financial work of the Centre is accomplished by a hardworking team.
(Please note that the Financial Statements are appended to these Minutes)

Stacy presented for the year 2020, the Balance Sheet; the Statement of Revenues, with a total revenue of \$682,322. (which included the Pandemic Wage Subsidy of \$73,755); and the Statement of Expenditures, with a total expenditure of \$668,576.

Stacy opened the floor to any questions or comments:

1. Is there a "cost of educating one student at CCS"? Stacy responded that she will follow up with that. It depends on the size of the student body. Expenses divided by the number of students. Comparables with other theological schools would be helpful.
2. Fundraising campaign: how many donors responded compared to how many being asked? Lori responded that CCS had about 400-450 donors over the last two years. 2020 was a stellar year for positive and generous responses from donors.
3. Lori described the learning from the workshop she attended. "People need to be asked many times to donate," ie, frequency gives a positive outcome. "Ask for what you need," noting especially the letter written to express the particular challenge of

our needs this year. She noted with appreciation that students raised \$5000 at an “end of year” concert.

3.2.2 MOTION:

Moved by Keith Simmonds and seconded by Eric Tusz-King that the audited financial statements for 2020 be approved. **CARRIED**

3.2.3 MOTION:

Moved by Stacy Stanley Young and seconded by Bob Osborne that Rawluk & Roberts, Chartered Professional Accountants, be appointed as auditor for the year ending December 31, 2021. **CARRIED**

3.2.4 MOTION:

Moved by Stacy Stanley Young and seconded by Marcie Gibson that the current signing officers remain in effect until replaced by Central Council. **CARRIED**

3.3 Nominations Report:

Janice Dodd presented as a member of the Volunteer Recruitment and Support Working group.

Janice noted the committee’s thanks to Janet Ross for the new spreadsheet she developed, for tracking volunteers, so that their gifts and skills can be matched to the needs of CCS governance.

3.3.1 MOTION:

Moved by Janice Dodd and seconded by Diane Trollope that nominations for Central Council for the 2021 year be closed; that the slate of nominees for Central Council for 2021 be approved; and that the slate of nominees for Committees and Working Groups be approved. **CARRIED**

4.0 New Business: there being none, the meeting continued.

5.0 Thank You:

Michelle gave thanks to all those who came to the AGM (fifty persons); to everyone who volunteers with the Centre; to the staff, who have gone above and beyond through an incredibly challenging year. Thanks are extended to Bob Osborne, who will be stepping down from the Central Council, noting his strength and wisdom. Thanks are extended to Kathy Platt, who will be stepping down as co-chair -- her calm, mindfulness, grounded in diaconal ministry. Time and attention given is so greatly appreciated.

Ansley expressed deep thanks to Michelle for her exceptional leadership, especially this past year, and in the need for “pivoting” in so many ways.

Those present at the meeting expressed thanks to the staff.

6.0 Closing Prayer – led by Bob Osborne, “Compline Prayer” from the Book of Common Prayer.

7.0 Adjournment- Motion to adjourn by Barbara Hansen
The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm CDT.

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Janet Nield

Co-Chair _____ **Secretary** _____