



Highlights and Decisions

The Canadian Council of Churches Governing Board Meeting November 25-27, 2015 – Crieff Hills Retreat Centre, Puslinch, ON

The Canadian Council of Churches is the broadest and most inclusive ecumenical body in Canada. The Governing Board brings together representatives from Anglican; Evangelical; Free Church; Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox; Protestant; and Catholic member denominations to review and coordinate its committees and commissions, appoint officers, obtain funds, and determine external relations to other religious and secular organizations and movements.

The purposes and functions of the Council shall be to serve God's mission in the world, to give expression to the unity which is offered to the world through Jesus Christ, to witness to the continuing renewal of the Church by the Holy Spirit, to promote the growth of ecumenical and missionary obedience among all Christians, and to facilitate common action by the member churches.

At this semi-annual meeting of the Governing Board we:

1. **Shared** the practices, commonalities and tensions experienced in the areas of mission, evangelism and culture in a session led by the [Canadian Churches' Forum](#).
2. **Compared** the insights of the [Capetown Commitment](#) (Lausanne), [Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes](#) (World Council of Churches), and [Evangelii Gaudium](#) (Pope Francis) on mission, evangelism, and culture.
3. **Engaged** with the latest news and experiences in Canada of the Middle East Refugee crisis helped by staff and volunteers from Lifeline Syria, Armenia Family Support Services, and Canadian Lutheran World Relief.
4. **Sent** a pastoral letter to all member denominations on welcoming refugees, particularly Syrians, to Canada.
5. **Prayed** in the Anglican, Baptist, and Mar Thoma Christian traditions.
6. **Experienced** for the first time the 2016 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity theme of [Called to Proclaim the Mighty Acts of God](#) prepared this year by the country of Latvia.
7. **Received** an update and **provided** feedback on the interfaith, faith and witness, biotechnology, truth and reconciliation, and justice and peace activities and plans of The Canadian Council of Churches and its bodies.
8. **Reflected** deeply together on "Forum" and the Lund Principle of ecumenism led by members of the Executive Committee Richard Schneider, Ronald Fabbro, and Stephen Kendall.
9. **Wrote** to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to request the Supreme Court of Canada to extend for a reasonable period of time the suspension of the implementation of its ruling in Carter v. Canada on physician assisted death in order to allow for a full and thorough public discussion.
10. **Discussed** multimedia communication strategies to improve the reception of Canadian Council of Churches resources.
11. **Met** the Chaplain General, Padre Guy Chapdelaine, and **learned** about the current opportunities and challenges in military chaplaincy including public prayer, sexual harassment, mental health, suicide, interfaith relationships, and working for peace.
12. **Adopted** a 2016 operating budget and **empowered** the Executive Committee to adopt the Project Ploughshares and Canadian Churches' Forum budgets after review by the Finance Committee.
13. **Proposed** questions President Alyson Barnett-Cowan will ask when she visits each denominational head office (first of two Presidential priorities of President Alyson Barnett-Cowan in the coming three years).
14. **Shared** ideas on how member denominations and The Canadian Council of Churches will respond to the Calls to Action of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools](#) and live up to the commitments of its own [Expression of Reconciliation](#) (second of two Presidential priorities of President Alyson Barnett-Cowan in the coming three years).
15. **Adjourned** with prayers for one another's well-being.

The next meeting of the Governing Board is scheduled for May 18-20, 2016 at the University of Saint Paul in Ottawa. Visit www.facebook.com/CCC.CCE for more pictures and highlights!