

Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils

2019-10-05_192 MOTION (T. Demirdjian-Petro/B. Reynolds) That the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council accept the recommendation of the Executive to support the covenant with Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils (SJNOR) and request that nominations search for a representative. **Carried**

Covenant of the SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK of ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCILS of The United Church of Canada (formerly the Coordinating Committee of Ontario Conferences – CCOC & the Social Justice Network of Ontario Conferences - SJNOC)

I. Covenant Members

Those represented within the Covenant:

Regional Councils of The United Church of Canada located within Ontario

Corresponding members:

- staff from the Church in Mission Unit of the General Council Office

II. Purpose

Regional Councils of The United Church of Canada, whose boundaries lie within the Province of Ontario, hereby covenant together to form the Social Justice Network of Ontario Regions (SJNOR):

- to collaborate and provide a collective presence of The United Church of Canada concerning socio-economic issues and concerns which impact Ontarians.

III. Mutual Accountability

Member courts will fulfill this covenant by:

- Appointing 2 representatives and 1 regional staff person
- Making a financial contribution based upon an annual assessment

Appendix A

SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK OF ONTARIO REGIONS NETWORK OPERATIONS

A. THE SJNOR WILL:

Examine the social justice issues that exist in the Province of Ontario with reference to their implications for the United Church of Canada, its people and the wider community;

Prayerfully discern what actions to take towards deeper understanding, redress of injustices and just alternatives;

Seek to work with government or non-governmental organizations to develop action plans and make recommendations for just, healthy, environmentally nurturing solutions.

B. OPERATING PROCEDURES

Convenorship for the SJNOR will be vested in co-chairs who will serve two-year terms. Co-chairs should have their respective terms staggered to ensure continuity. Any co-chair can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The SJNOR will meet a minimum of twice yearly. Meetings may be conducted by means of video conference.

Agendas will usually include time for sharing of member court social justice activity and reports from coalitions and task group representatives related to the SJNOR.

Policy decisions rest within the member courts of the church. Representatives to the SJNOR will be communication links with those courts.

Strategizing and decision-making within the SJNOR

(i.e. formulation and implementation of church policies and SJNOR's actions) will be by consensus with an understanding that consensus will not necessarily mean complete agreement but insufficient disagreement to block the decision.

Tasks (such as recording, duplication, distribution, agenda preparation, meeting arrangements, research, analyses, resource development and collection, supervision support) will be undertaken by SJNOR members on a shared basis.

Decision-making between meetings will be undertaken by consulting all member courts' representatives for feedback. Any action will take into account this consultation.

Any member court is free to act unilaterally but should take into account the potential effects upon other member courts. Unilateral action will not imply action on behalf of others.

An orientation to the SJNOR's history, covenant, operating procedures and current activities will be provided for new representatives.

Collection, disbursement, recording and reporting services for operating funds will be provided by the General Council's Mission Through Finance Unit.

C. COLLECTIVE ACTION

The SJNOR will take joint social justice action: This could be accomplished in any of the following ways:

- a) the member courts may endorse and support one regional council in taking a particular initiative;
- b) the member courts may agree on more than one regional council on a joint study or action of vital interest; or
- c) the members may agree to work and speak together, through the SJNOR.

The SJNOR may consider the initiative of one member court but decide not to endorse or support the effort leaving that member court free to take its own action.

The SJNOR will provide leadership representatives on behalf of The United Church of Canada in Ontario for occasions related to SJNOR's social justice agenda.

The SJNOR will designate representation to ecumenical social justice coalitions and task groups functioning within the province of Ontario, such as the Inter-Faith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC) or KAIROS. Arrangements for support such as orientation, expenses, supervision, accountability and communication mechanisms with the SJNOR, etc. will be undertaken.

D. COMMUNICATION

The SJNOR will facilitate the sharing of The United Church of Canada's social justice policy.

The SJNOR will provide an annual report to each member court. These reports are to contain actions taken, future agenda items and financial operations.

E. MEMBER COURT CONTRIBUTIONS

Each member court will appoint two representatives to the SJNOR. Each member court will clarify the terms of that appointment. In addition, it is hoped that there would be a staff person from the member court.

Each member court will make an annual financial contribution to the SJNOC.

Through their representative(s), member courts will share information, analyses and strategies related to their social justice issues, concerns and activities.

Member courts will assume primary responsibility for SJNOR tasks within their resource capacity on a rotating basis.

APPENDIX B

THE SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK OF ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCILS

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER COURT REPRESENTATIVES.

Representatives will contribute their unique gifts to the work of the SJNOR as a proactive participant.

Representatives will act as an essential communication link between their member court and the other member courts by means of:

- a) attendance at SJNOR meetings
- b) regular reports at SJNOR meetings
- c) reports to the SJNOR between meetings of relevant concerns and actions
- d) regular SJNOR reports to their member court including an SJNOR annual report.

Representatives will relay their member court's social justice concerns to the SJNOR's agenda.

Outgoing representatives will brief their successors of the SJNOR's covenant, communication needs with the member court, and the member court's responsibilities.