

Toronto United Church Council

Our Story – Excerpts from our Meeting Minutes

Series 2010

Prior to the 2010 Annual Meeting, the following excerpts were emailed weekly to members of the Corporation “in order to continue with the story-telling and to prepare for our time together at our Annual Meeting.” They were received with appreciation and are offered here to help introduce Council and its history to those who visit our website.

From January 30, 1945

Fairlawn United Church mortgage dated September 29th, 1924 for an amount of \$15,282.44 completed final payment in 1944 and mortgage was burned January 22nd, 1945. At the mortgage burning ceremony, the following resolution was passed and forwarded to the Council – “The Fairlawn Congregation desires to express to The Toronto Home Missions Council its hearty thanks for its great liberality and help to our cause during all these years. We further pray that many others may be blessed by your Council as Fairlawn has been.”

As an added note, the mortgage described above was interest free for the full 20-year term. Council also assisted the congregation with a land grant.

From May 30, 1968

Mr. C.P. Terry, Chairman of the Property Committee, reported on the Council's use of portables over the years and some of the problems encountered. His information included a listing of Council's eleven owned buildings showing the first location of each and the subsequent moves. In all, some 25 extension congregations have been served by Council's portables [prior to construction of their permanent building].

Unit 1 – Wilson Heights (1953) to Knob Hill (1955) to Glen Ayr (1959)

Unit 2 – Applewood (1953) to Bloordale (1957) to Calvary Newmarket (1963 as a second unit)

Unit 3 – Wilmar Heights (1954) to Northminster (1957) to Hillcrest (1965)

Unit 4 – West Ellesmere (1954) to Church of the Master (1959) to Birchmount/Cass site (1964)

Unit 5 – St. John's Scarborough (1957) to Thorncliffe Park (1962) to Emmanuel Aurora (1966 as second unit)

Unit 6 – St. Luke's Islington (1957) to Emery (1962)

Unit 7 – St. Matthew's Richmond Hill (1957) to Emmanuel Aurora (1963)

Unit 8 – Westway (1958) to West Humber (1962)

Unit 9 – Humbervale (1959) to Bay Ridges-Fairport (1966)

Unit 10 – Richview (1959) to Parkwoods (1962) to Church of the Covenant (1965)

Unit 11 – Calvary Newmarket (1959)

As an added note, the operation of these portable buildings was included in the general budget of Council so cost assignment to each extension congregation is difficult to discern.

From June 19, 1929

On motion of Rev. J.J. Coulter, seconded by Dr. D.M. Ramsay, that this Board's Downtown Committee be directed to make a survey of all hospitals and institutions within the city requiring Chaplain services, to provide a programme of work, to arrange that monthly reports be made to the Secretary.

As an added note, the Council developed, managed, and financed the Chaplaincy program within the City of Toronto until 1972 when the program naturally evolved to being supervised by the Conference (the period when the Conference became a regional court with a broadened mandate) and to being financed by the mission support system (Mission & Service Fund). In 1972 when Council relinquished this activity, there were 25 part-time hospital and nursing home chaplains and visitors and 1 police court chaplain in the programme that started with the 1929 motion above.

From January 31, 1984

SITE FOR NORTH BRAMALEA UNITED CHURCH – We [the Dufferin & Peel Presbytery Extension Council] have looked at six potential sites and put an offer in for a church site on Howden Blvd. to Bramalea Ltd. next to the shopping plaza to be built in the near future. They have acknowledged our offer and cheque and have stated that as soon as the Separate School Board has made up its mind as to the property it wants – the school site on Howden Blvd. or the site on Maitland. It may be April before the Board of Education for the Separate School gives its approval and decision. There will be further discussions.

From July 16, 1984

Moved by Shaw/Miller that the Dufferin & Peel Presbytery Extension Council sell to the North Bramalea United Church and its trustees [the North Bramalea Howden Blvd. site legal description] for the book value of \$134,425 on the following terms – a grant of \$40,000 and a loan of \$50,000 interest free for three years, the balance of the purchase price to be a three year mortgage at the current bank rate. Carried.

As an added note, on January 1, 2008, the Dufferin & Peel Presbytery Extension Council and Toronto United Church Council amalgamated to become a new corporation. The most recent expansion of the North Bramalea United Church is financed through the Toronto United Church Council's General and *Investing In Ministry* Funds.

From December 8, 2005

Vincent Alfano reminded Directors that the Mission Strategy Program of Council is completed at the end of 2005 and the grant just approved [Toronto Scarborough Presbytery – \$5,000 for a needs survey in Malvern] will be the last to be made. He reported that the Program has been in place 13 years and over that period of time Council has made available \$1,160,000 for mission strategy within the nine Presbyteries of Toronto Conference. Vince also noted that over the 13 years, support funding for mission strategy has shifted with the establishment of capital holding corporations in some Presbyteries and the founding of the Conference/Council jointly sponsored Church Development Fund. The Directors reflected on the myriad of initiatives that had been made possible over the years and felt that the investment in the work was indeed worthwhile.

As an added note, the \$1,160,000 advanced directly to the Presbyteries between 1992 and 2005 was used for a variety of activities and programs including paying salaries for Presbytery staff, providing grants for research projects examining new and ongoing mission activities of the Presbyteries, and covering the cost of consultant services to analyze Presbytery governance models. The referenced Church Development Fund is now being phased out but will be available to help complete church development projects begun prior to June 30, 2009. The Presbytery capital holding corporations are currently being consolidated under one Conference capital holding corporation. This new corporation will be the ongoing source of funding for church development and mission strategy in the Presbyteries.

From May 12, 1964

Welfare Industries: "Business is growing" at a modest, but steady pace. Our store at 148 Ossington Avenue [purchased by Council in 1961] continues to do more business month by month. Our second store at 505 Parliament Street has been "self-supporting" since first it opened in 1963. On June 1st, we expect to move to a larger store at 464 Parliament Street, where men and women's clothing will be offered for sale. The matter of repairing furniture, appliances, etc. is still largely in the future but has not been forgotten. Our Downtown Clothing Distribution Centre [at 761 Queen St. West] continues to function well. In 1963, the needs of more than 5,500 persons were looked after. Co-operation from the United Church Women is excellent, as it is from a large number of congregations throughout Toronto. [Partnership financial support was also received from the Department of Home Missions of the General Council.]

As an added note, before there were mega Goodwill and Value Village stores, there was Council's supported Welfare Industries. Operated from the 1950's until the very early 1980's, Welfare Industries' three stores (the two named plus one on the north side of Queen Street west of Bathurst) gathered and resold clothing, furniture, appliances, and other household items. Each of the three stores and the "warehouses" in the Queen Street United Church building (761) and the Fred Victor Centre had employed staff and were served by Welfare Industries trucks. As the "mega" used clothing stores came into being, it was determined that this ministry would be well looked after and Council should move on to other social ministry.

From November 29, 1951

The Secretary pointed out that we have no property on either side of the Queen Elizabeth Way, between Etobicoke Creek on the east and Centre Road (Highway 10) on the west, a distance of 3½ miles. With Applewood Acres being developed on the south side just west of Haig Avenue, and the prospect of similar development on the north side, approach has been made to the subdivider to find if any property was available. The Secretary was given authority to negotiate purchase of a suitable site.

From May 19, 1952

Rev. R.G. Oliver reported a recommendation that Council purchase five lots in the Shipp development in Applewood Acres, on the north side of Queen Elizabeth, half a mile west of Dixie Road. The Executive has concurred with the recommendation that the Board purchase lots No. 32-33-34-35-36 inclusive at a cost of \$7,500. This will give us approximately one acre of land, with parking privileges on the parking lot of the new proposed shopping centre. [A motion to acquire the land with legal description followed.]

As an added note, much of Mississauga was part of Toronto Conference until January 1, 1954 when Halton Presbytery within Hamilton Conference was created. Council had special interests in several new church developments such as Applewood in this suburban area. These interests and Council's church development role were transferred to the new Halton Presbytery Extension Council. Even though Applewood United Church is now in Hamilton Conference, it does acknowledge Council's important part in its establishment and highlights this fact on its website history page at www.applewoodunited.ca/about/history/applewood/. When you visit this website page, you will see two photographs (exterior / interior) of one of Council's eleven owned portables (this one was affectionately known as Unit 2 which was afterward moved to Bloordale, then to Calvary Newmarket).

From March 21, 1951

The President stated that the Board of Home Missions [of the United Church's General Council], who owned camp properties at Lake Scugog, has now deeded these lands to the Toronto Home Missions Council for the nominal \$1.00.

As an added note, the Lake Scugog Camp was acquired in 1913 by The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 1925, this property was transferred to The United Church of Canada as part of the union negotiations among the churches. During the period the property was owned by the United Church, the actual operation of the program and the care of the site were under the stewardship of our Council. The transfer of land in 1951 was an acknowledgement by the General Council of the important ministry our Council had been undertaking on behalf of church since church union. The unique wording on the deed is: "Whereas the lands hereinafter described have, in fact, since June 10th, 1925, been in the occupation and control of the Toronto Home Missions Council, this conveyance is executed to verify and validate the title of the said lands."

From June 1, 2000

Ian Miller/Charles Drury that the Pooled Asset Fund of Toronto United Church Council be established based on the policies and procedures set out in the Pooled Asset Fund document [Appendix 2 of the minutes]. Carried.

From December 14, 2000

Charles Drury/George Woodward that the Pooled Asset Fund name be amended to the Investing In Ministry Fund. Carried.

As an added note, these resolutions established what has become one of the most successful ministry tools in the United Church. Since the *Investing In Ministry Fund* began, 32 investors have chosen this investment vehicle recognizing that, unlike many other church investment options, their capital will be financing ministry endeavours within their United Church. There have been 38 loans made from the *Fund* that have financed affordable housing initiatives, site acquisitions, new and renewed church facilities, and routine roof, furnace and brick repairs. The current value of the *Fund* is \$6,167,000 and growing (so far in 2010, \$737,000 has been added to the *Fund*.)