

Minutes of the CEM Special Conference
April 13, 2024, 9:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
In person at Scarborough Congregation and Online

Conference opened at 9:35 a.m. with about 60 people in person and about 80 online.

1. Housekeeping items were presented by Cathy Baker.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Riley Mallot /Rebecca Pederson of Wabash led the conference in a land acknowledgement.

3. Welcome

Mission President Mary Jean Belrose welcomed us and thanked Scarborough Congregation for hosting. Introductions included the following persons:

Sam Smalldon – Associate Bishop of Canada, CEM and CWM

Shannon McAdam – Co-President team for CWM, special guest

John Glaser – President of Seventy Quorum 8

Apostle Art Smith – Apostle for Canada Mission Field, Haiti, and South-Central Asia Mission Field

Vonda DenBoer, Mary Jean Belrose – Co-President team for CEM

Absent Dawn Dawson – Co-President team for CEM

Darrel Kennedy – Parliamentarian

Pat Pallister – Secretary

Lindsay DenBoer, Troy Roach, Peter Williams, Joy Green, and Jeannie Jacobson – Tech Team

4. Video & Meditation

A video of the Mission Prayer was presented and followed by a short meditation led by Leandro Palacios, Toronto Congregation.

5. Invocation

Meagan Millard of St. Thomas led the conference in prayer.

6. Call to Order

Mission Centre President Vonda DenBoer called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. She noted that no sustaining action of officers or delegates for this conference was required since all are sustained for one year and were voted on at our fall 2023 conference. Furthermore, the delegate list from our fall 2023 conference was used unless notification was given for any changes.

7. Greetings from World Church

Apostle Art Smith brought greetings to the conference from World Church.

8. Motion to accept the Credential Report

Melissa Freer read the list of delegates from each congregation and from General Membership. There was a total of 80 delegates and 20 ex-officios.

Resolved, That the Credentials Report as received be approved.

Moved by Roger Dawson, Toronto Congregation

Carried CEM 24 - 323

9. Standing Rules for CEM Hybrid Conference

Resolved, that the Standing Rules for CEM hybrid conferences adopted in October 2023 be adopted for this special conference.

Moved by Mary Jean Belrose, Awakening Spirituality

Carried CEM24 - 324

10. The Sacred Stewardship of the Temple and the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri, and the Principle of Common Consent

Passed by the Toronto Congregation, 14 March 2024, and forwarded to the Canada East Mission Centre Conference for consideration.

Resolved, that the Temple and the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri, be declared essential for the enduring mission of the church, and as such, any or all decisions regarding the sale or mortgage of the Temple and/or the Auditorium must be made in keeping with the principle of Common Consent by means of direct authorization by the World Conference of the church.

Moved by John Hamer, Toronto Congregation

11. Amendment to the Motion

Dorothy Lethbridge of Chatham made a motion to amend the motion.

Resolved, That notwithstanding any existing standing bylaws this action should proceed if approved by World Conference.

The chair ruled the amendment out of order as it does not change the original resolution.

12. Point of Privilege

Ken Barrows of General Membership raised a Point of Privilege requesting voting results to be given as a total number rather than percentages. Chair responded saying that results are shown in both formats.

13. Point of Order

Jon Abbey, Windsor stated that if there are existing bylaws and regulations giving the Presiding Bishopric the right to make these decisions, then that would supersede this motion. Therefore, the amendment is necessary.

The chair rule the point out of order due to the delay for an appeal.

14. Point of Order

Ken Barrows, General Membership, expressed concern for delegates trying to reach the chair's attention for Points of Order, Points of Privilege, or to appeal in a timely manner with the current process in place. This point needs to be considered for future conferences.

15. Motion to Close the Debate

Moved by Dariq Wolsey, Woodfield.

Carried

A Vote was taken on the original motion regarding Temple Stewardship.

Carried **CEM24 - 325**

16. Lunch break

Seventy John Glaser offered a blessing on the meal. Conference broke from 11:30 until 12:30.

17. Conference Resumed

The conference was called to order at 12:36 p.m.

18. Establishment of a Bylaw Review Committee

Whereas, Community of Christ is working its way through several governance-related

transitions, including non-geographic congregations operating on social media platforms, the establishment of some policies applicable only within certain national churches, the cultural shift of moving from a people with a prophet towards being a prophetic people, and the increased use of technology to allow for remote participation for conferences as well as sophisticated polling tools to allow for consensus building practices,

Resolved, That, this Conference authorize the creation of a Special World Church Committee to investigate and propose recommendations for updated bylaws and governance models, to better meet current and anticipated future needs of an international church with multiple national jurisdictions, all the while upholding common consent as an important principle of our governance heritage; and be it further

Resolved, That, this Committee provide a report to the 2028 World Conference.

19. Loss of Zoom Connection

Leandro Palacios led the in-person gathering in singing ‘The Spirit of God’. Conference resumed once connection was regained.

The motion was moved by Bryce Taylor, Gathering Place

20. Point of Order

Nadine Manson, Gathering Place requested Lew Shepherdson to repeat his comments for benefit of Zoom attendees who had not heard his remarks.

A vote was taken on the Establishment of a Bylaws Review Committee.

Carried **CEM24 - 326**

21. Presentation on Celebrating Mission

John Hamer, Toronto Congregation spoke to the conference about the “Celebrating Mission” initiative set to begin working with Providence Bay, SLIM, St. Thomas and Kitchener and two congregations in western Canada.

22. Break

A short break occurred from 2:00-2:10 p.m.

23. Q&A With Apostle Art Smith

Apostle Art Smith answered various questions that had been previously submitted.

24. Closing Worship

Cathy Baker led a short closing worship.

25. Conference Adjourned

Mary Jean Belrose declared the conference adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Pat Pallister". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Pat Pallister
Conference Secretary