

UNITED CHRISTIAN COUNCIL IN ISRAEL
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 6th March 2000
at Beit Immanuel Guest House, Jaffa

1.0 DEVOTIONS AND PRAYER Ray Lockhart read from Psalms 33 and 19. We experience a lifting in our hearts when we read these psalms. Recognising who the Lord is we are called to worship and praise Him. Four qualities of God are expounded – faithfulness, righteousness, justice and love. Psalm 35 v 5&6 also speak of these qualities and when we meditate on them we begin to have a picture of who Jesus is. Psalm 33 continues to speak of the creation of the world by the word of God, how the nations are under his control. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. The psalm is addressed to His chosen people – the people of Israel – but His heart is open to all mankind. Our hope is in the Lord. Whenever we are conscious of the pressures around us we are encouraged by God, our hope is in Him and we rejoice in his Holy Name. This is where our confidence lies – in the unfailing love of God, which is for all those who hope in him.

2.1 ROLL CALL

Chuck Kopp (Chairman), Kay Browning, Ron Jones, Wayne King, Ray Lockhart, Trevor Marzetti, Jean Marzetti, Torkild Masvie, Gershon Nerel, David Newman, Suhail Ramadan, Juha-Pekka Rissanen, Philip Sa'ad, and Peter Wells.

In Attendance: Ray Altman (see item 7.1)

2.2 APOLOGIES No apologies were received.

3.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA The Agenda was agreed with the following additions:

6.2 Web Site

7.1 Ray Altman report

7.2 Volunteer Visas

7.3 WEF Asia Secretary

7.4 WEF Assembly

4.0 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING dated 18th January 2000.

MINUTES APPROVED

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 Chairman – Chuck reported receiving a telephone call from Marsha saying she hoped that congregations who have appreciated the summer camps at the Baptist Village would help with future camps as the Baptists will no longer be funding the programme. Chuck also shared that Keren Ronning, granddaughter of Savanto had died and her funeral would be on Friday 10th March.

Chuck stated the Supreme Court had upheld the decision that the 3 Ethiopian sisters be stripped of their citizenship and be deported. The girls had been brought to Israel as minors by their 'adopted' father, who had since died, but their Christian faith had not been declared 9 years ago thus making the application for citizenship illegal. It was felt this situation had come about because they had been identified by the police on a video about Ethiopian believers. Other cases are also pending and concern was expressed that if the decision on the 3 girls is maintained it could open up problems for other believers. Chuck has written to Natan Sharanski requesting a meeting. Gershon expressed concern as to whether the Ethiopian leadership had requested help. This matter could be considered on humanitarian grounds as a civil rights issue.

Chuck reported the Attorney General has been asked to give an opinion on 'whether missionary activity is a threat to the Jewish people and a danger to Israel'.

Chuck reported attending the WEF Cyprus 2000 Conference in February, which centered on a wholistic approach to evangelism – spirit, soul and body. Subjects like health, women's rights,

wife/child abuse were discussed along with preaching the gospel. (The percentage of abuse in Christian families is the same as in the world!). God's best is an approach to the whole person. There were also believers from Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.

5.2 Treasurer - David presented his report for 1.1.200 – 3.3.2000. **REPORT APPROVED**

David reported that Sue Mottishead has agreed to act as Auditor for UCCI .

Trevor was requested to present to the Amuta Authorities the minutes of EXCOM Meeting dated 16th November 1999 confirming the election of officers.

Torkild said Caspari would be pleased to provide free copies of its Media Review if UCCI would encourage individual members to subscribe to the service. Trevor asked Caspari to provide a promotional letter which he would then send to Member Bodies.

5.3 Executive Secretary Ron reported that UCCI are to pay NIS 200.00 per month to CMA for services (cleaning, etc). An answering machine will be installed. The fax machine is on the CMA line. It was agreed Ron should have a Petty Cash fund of NIS 500.00.

5.4 SUB-COMMITTEES:

5.4.1 Planning Committee – Trevor presented a draft programme for the AGM & Spring Meeting on 16th May at Beit Immanuel.

Title: Rejoicing and Weeping Together
Experiences of those suffering persecution
Divide into small groups for prayer
Lunch
Rejoicing with those who are blessed
Report from Chuck on Cyprus 2000
Members Testimonies
Rejoicing and praying together.

A leaflet advertising the meeting would be prepared by Trevor and Ron for distribution as widely as possible.

5.4.2 Mishkan – deferred to next meeting.

5.4.3 Torch Publications – deferred to next meeting.

5.4.4 UCCI News – deferred to next meeting.

5.4.5 Liaison & Public Relations – deferred to next meeting.

5.4.6 Scholarship Committee – deferred to next meeting.

5.4.7 Structure Committee – Peter tabled a formal request for membership from the Norwegian Pentecostal Church together with a letter from their overseas board. It was agreed that further questions should be asked of the group. It was also suggested that Peter contact Israel College of the Bible again regarding membership.

Peter shared there had not been an opportunity to look at the Theological Committee guidelines. A suggestion was made that all guidelines be reviewed. Ray agreed to table an amended draft memorandum of agreement between CMA and UCCI for the use of the Ha-Neviim office facility.

5.4.8 Theological Committee – Deferred to next meeting.

5.4.9 Legal Advisory Committee – Deferred to next meeting.

5.5 Control Committee – It was proposed and agreed that Sue Mottershead be co-opted onto this committee.

6.0 OLD BUSINESS

6.1 Simon the Tanner's House – deferred to next meeting.

6.2 Web Site – It was agreed that Ebenezer Home should link-up with the UCCI web site. Peter suggested that the centre page of the new leaflet (excluding reference to the Bible Society) be on the web site.

7.0 NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Ray Altman from the Baptist Convention in Israel shared that they are on a learning curve. The organisation in Richmond, USA made decisions that are not field based in trying to reach people groups all over the world with the gospel message. There are around 65 people groups in the Middle East who do not have the gospel. Money is to be invested in direct evangelism. In doing so a statement was produced in Richmond expressing the desire to have strategy leaders and to develop strategy within the boundaries of evangelism and discipleship; anything else would be the responsibility of the local body. Our personnel would no longer be running institutions. We would be members of congregations but leadership would be homegrown. Change is slow and not easy. We have a responsibility to develop new platforms for meeting lost people in various societies of Israel. Developing partnership locally and globally. Ray explained they would no longer be involved in camps or conferences (although day conferences were a possibility) but the facilities would be open for groups to provide their own staff. The new focus for evangelism is through sports and a professional body would be bringing in people to run the sports facilities. This venture will not require the whole of the Baptist Village. Agricultural land will require change of zoning. BV facilities are in a bad way and require a large amount of money spent on them.

Concern was expressed that this new strategy had been reached without consultation with the local body which was causing frustration, plus an outside non-believing body would be managing new sports facilities. BV had for many years been used by local believers for evangelism and teaching. Philip shared that the Association of Baptist Churches are looking to provide funding so that BV could continue to serve the believing community in Israel. A suggestion was made that perhaps a joint venture could be set up between UCCI and ABC to manage BV. In addition Philip reported that following protests he had received an invitation to attend a meeting in Hamburg where he would have the opportunity of speak about the BV and possible plans. A further suggestion was made that a letter be sent to Greg Kingray expressing concern at developments, for onward transmission to London and then Richmond.

7.2 Volunteer Visas – Trevor referred to a letter from Petra Heldt stating that the Ministry of the Interior was considering limiting volunteer visas to 4 months, after which volunteers would be expected to leave the country. Great concern was expressed about this proposal and the matter would be considered further.

7.3 WEF Asia Secretary – deferred to next meeting

7.4 WEF Assembly – deferred to next meeting.

8.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 11th May at UCCI office at 10.15am – Devotions: Torkild Masvie.