



WestRock Council Newsletter

October 4, 2015

2015-2016 WestRock Council



Kester Wilkening
WestRock
Council
Chairperson



Lynn Walsh
Vice Chairperson
& Small Groups
Committee



Peter Reiner
Vice Chairperson
& Sunday Service
Committee



Justin Okamoto
Secretary
& Outreach
Committee



Jessica Sattinger
Treasurer
& Finance
Committee



Steve Honey
Councilor
& Facilities
Committee



Akiko Morris
Councilor
& Education
Committee



Elisa Hack
Councilor
& Member Care
Committee

COUNCIL WELCOMES REV. KONE

We had a Council business meeting at the White House on Sep. 15th. It was great, to say the least, to have our new pastor, Rev. Kone, with us. The "empty chair" is now full. With his presence and participation we all feel an extra spiritual stability as we work together. The council is determined to do our best to support Rev. Kone, and clearly Rev. Kone is determined to do his best to serve WestRock too!

TRYING TO BE GOOD STEWARDS - MAKING THE BUDGET

The Finance Committee and the Budget Sub-committee together with Rev. Kone and our bookkeeper, Akiko Sheilds, spent many, many hours going over our expenses and income from last year in order to anticipate where we will be this year.

As expenses have increased and income has not we had to make some difficult cuts, tightened up on several expenses and have set goals for some new income raising this year. We have a good group with many good ideas on how to be good stewards. It turns out we still have some final issues to review, so we are close, but do not yet have a complete budget. When we do we will make the budget summary available to the community.

VISITORS!

Visitors: Thank you for our visitors: Dominic Barber, Jack LaValley, Helen Alexander, Cynthia Shibuya, and Eric Erstling. Here is a reminder that as our agenda is usually packed, that visitors should contact the council (any council member) ideally a week before the meeting to suggest an issue be discussed or to express an opinion.

PLEASE NOTE: Our next Council business meeting is scheduled for Tuesday October 13th at 7:30pm, at the White House.

COUNCIL GETS SNAPPY

We are getting more efficient with our time and communication. Kester Wilkening, our chair, has us all using Google Drive in order to work on documents together online, post our minutes for pre-approval before the next meeting and have a common place to store our documents and records. Also the council will start having some of our meetings using video/online meeting service called Zoom. As some of our meetings go well into the evening, it helps us economize on our time, taking less time away from our families.

CHANGE IN COUNCIL MEMBER

We were sorry that Reiko Kessler recently resigned from the council. We thank her for her contributions to the council for over a year. We will miss her and wish her well.

But with that we are happy to announce that Akiko Morris was nominated and accepted to become our new councilor. As Akiko is already involved in the community with Up and Coming and the Sunday School we know she will be a good asset to our team. Welcome Akiko-san!

Summary of WestRock Council Retreat

The WestRock Council spent from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon, September 25- 27 at Camp Sunrise in cool but wonderful weather. All of us felt much satisfaction that we had accomplished a great deal through a well-planned but packed schedule.

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The council welcomes your input!

Please email your comments, questions or suggestions to wrcouncil@googlegroups.com
Also view our newsletter and other news online at westrockfamily.com

Summary of WestRock Council Retreat September 25-27, 2015

continued ... As we had welcomed Heavenly Parents presence from beginning to end, by our closing on Sunday many felt that even God was happy with what we had tried to do together.

Our "business" meetings were well-managed with a fine tuned agenda, Steve Honey's timekeeping and Justin's and Jessica's note taking, while projecting each document under discussion on a screen. Kester has had a big impact on creating efficiency and clarity in our council with our now common use of google docs and well-structured meetings. So there, in a cabin with beautiful nature all around, acorns plunking loudly on the roof, warmed by a fire in the fireplace, we sat around a table with our laptops open, focused on the "live" Google document projected on the wall. We were following one of our newly agreed upon Council Values, "Live smarter, not harder".

We began Saturday morning with a Hoon Dook Hae in groups of three. Next we moved into an overall discussion of the strengths, accomplishments and great resources of WestRock. Throughout the retreat it was very evident that each member had unique and valuable contributions and viewpoints that rounded out and enriched our sharing. The first resounding appreciation for Westrock was having hired our new pastor, Rev. Kone. One of the real joys during the retreat was getting to know Rev. Kone and recognizing his wisdom, humility and passion for serving God, True Parents and WestRock. We are lucky!

Our next task was an honest discussion of areas of concern for our community. From this we could understand each other better and think more deeply about the challenges we hope to help address. We will be continuing this kind of discussion in our future monthly "Vision" meetings. After that topic our next objective was to clarify the purpose of the council. We did this by creating first our WestRock Council "vision statement" and then a more concrete "mission statement." It was a labor of love - and much thought. We are happy with what we produced, and both statements will serve to keep us on track with our most important responsibilities are to our pastor, community, and True Parents. We will publish both statements in our next newsletter, as they are still in a "draft" stage.

By Saturday afternoon we were ready to refresh ourselves and take a break. The beauty of the day pulled us all into kayaks and canoes on the exquisite Camp Sunrise lake- a first for Rev. Kone! Great fun was had by all. Later in our cabin, Rev. Kone led us with a guided meditation which centered, calmed and inspired each of us. Saturday night we had large fire by the lake, singing songs with Kester and Peter on their guitars. We played a campfire game and had s'mores (another first for Rev. Kone!) Rev. Kone suggested we share our first experience with True Father. Each one of us shared unique personal experiences - leaving us amazed at how Father so personally conveys God's love, concern and recognition for each one of us. Looking over the lake with an almost full moon, there could not have been a better end for the day.

Sunday we had pair-share Hoon Dook Hae allowing each of us to have individual time to get to know another councilor. For the rest of the morning, we were back in our cabin sitting at our table with documents projected on screen. Kester led us in an inspiring training of the "Sociocratic" method of running meetings and organizations. We much appreciate how Kester brings new ideas to the council such as this. The "sociocratic" method will be an excellent tool for building a well-functioning council that empowers each person's gifts. Next we delved into determining specific measurable goals in order to check if we were accomplishing what we intend as the council. We produced a substantial list of specific goals to help define our accountability. In order to focus on how we can activate more energy in our community, we made similar goals for each of our committees: Sunday Service, Finance, Education, Family Care, Facilities, Small Groups, and Outreach. We also scheduled our next "Vision Meeting" for ongoing open discussion about concerns and inspirations for improving our community.

And the food! Each meal at Camp Sunrise was fabulous. We have to commend Debby, Larry, Valentina and all the staff who obviously put their heart and soul into taking care of us with every detail. They knew how to keep us happy, well fed and comfortable.

By Sunday afternoon we were all a bit worn out on one level but focused on our tasks to serve on the WestRock Council. With more authentic connections and new appreciation for each member, we have a good base to work with each other. We came away believing that God can do some amazing things with our rich WestRock Community. We are ready to roll our sleeves up and will be looking for all of you to be part of new ideas and new growth. True Parent's have reason to be hopeful for our precious community!

