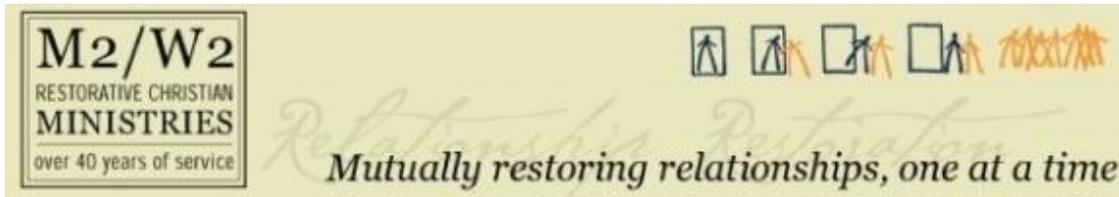


## Executive Director's Official Last Message to membership

[View this email in your browser](#)



March 30, 2014

Greetings M2/W2 Members:

### *Preamble*

I am one day away from full retirement. I have *loved* being on M2/W2 Staff for a total of 26 years, and having served on the Board for 6 years. For 40 years I have been an M2/W2 volunteer and member. And throughout, in related employment, I have served the larger Restorative Justice cause of M2/W2 through national and international leadership in Restorative Justice development. I have so many wonderful relationships with friends and colleagues as consequence.

I am hugely grateful to the membership all these years for support in this amazing venue of service.

After 16 years as Executive Director, and 40 years of a career in criminal justice, I have mixed emotions about "retirement". Knowing that I will continue as consultant, practitioner, presenter, etc. however as I take up the mantle of more extensive research and writing in this field (at last!), I am passionately excited!

It is reluctantly, but with great personal hope for a better day that I bring to you grave concerns (ongoing now for 4 years) about the current leadership at M2/W2.

You have been aware from the past two Annual General Meetings, and from other communications, that there has been severely debilitating conflict between Staff and Board for 4 years. Not one conflict issue has been resolved between Staff and Board. Mediator Alan Simpson and I have urged the Board (repeatedly in my case) to address these concerns through a full process of reconciliation. It has failed and has refused to do so. My last day as Executive Director is tomorrow, so I communicate these concerns to you now. I had waited until now in the failed hope that there might be changed behaviour even up until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour before my retirement.

There are three outstanding concerns, **the third of which is personally urgent**. All are raised with hope for a better tomorrow however. Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann states that “The home of hope is hurt.” While there is hurt, there is that much more “*abounding hope*” (Romans 15:13)!

I can only “bear witness”. As I continue with that witness, please bear in mind as under- and overlay my great joy in the enormous privilege through this agency of having worked in this field for four decades: with prisoner friends, ex-prisoner friends, volunteers, Staff, members, financial supporters, most Board members, victims, partners, etc., etc.

### *Three Outstanding Issues*

The three issues I am raising for the membership are below. I cannot fathom how these can be dismissed and the agency continue to be known as “Restorative Christian Ministries” .:

1. **Board rejection of the Board Manual:** The current Board for the past four years has consistently refused to be guided by its own Board Manual, and to affirm the core values of the agency spelled out in that document.
2. **Board rejection of reconciliation:** The Board has consistently refused to work all conflict issues through in a face-to-face mediated context.
3. **Board “libel” against me:** The Board authorized that a WorkSafeBC complaint be filed against me December 12, 2013. The claim was never investigated, and it was subsequently rejected by WorkSafeBC. The uninvestigated complaint document was however sent by Co-Chair Barry Neufeld to several Staff and Board members. A general allegation against me of “bullying and harassment” was also communicated through e-mail to all Staff and Board members by Barry Neufeld on two occasions. The complainant was contractor Colette Squires. *It felt like “libel”*. The allegations are false. It has been experienced as unfounded character assassination. (Yet both Barry Neufeld and Colette Squires sang my “leadership” praises in the recent AGM Report, as you may recall!)

Not one person on the Board has ever asked me about the false allegations. Yet they unfathomably sent in a WorkSafeBC claim that asserted them as true. They have never since asked me about the “truth” of these allegations. For the record: **They are false.**

On January 13, 2014, I sent a PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL e-mail, with Staff copied, to ask several clarification questions about this claim. I asked for a response by January 24, 2014. The Board rejected this request, and has let the uninvestigated “libel” stand. Such malicious accusations eventually spread widely over time, like waves from a rock thrown into a pond.

Since I am left with only one other recourse, I am first appealing to the membership to hold the Board accountable to authorize immediately a full investigation of the

WorkSafeBC and of the bullying and harassment claims. This I know will eventuate in the Board's publishing to Staff and membership a necessary full retraction of the WorkSafeBC claim specifically, and of any general claim that I have been responsible for "bullying and harassment". The future of my work and ministry in retirement years is in potential jeopardy. THE BOARD'S "LIBEL" AGAINST ME IS THE PROFOUNDEST INJUSTICE I HAVE SO FAR EXPERIENCED, OF MANY, AT THE CURRENT BOARD'S INITIATIVE! I am at a complete loss to understand.

Perhaps an Extraordinary General Meeting needs to be called to address this issue? *For any counsel on this, please call me at: (604)796-0400, or contact me through my website (information below).*

In summary: I believe the membership should hold the Board accountable to:

- fully affirm the agency's core values by following the guidance of the Board Manual;
- initiate a process of full reconciliation of all conflict issues through re-engaging the services of mediator Alan Simpson.
- retract the "libel" fully.

Under current leadership, I believe that M2/W2 *has forfeited any continuing right to do ministry*, which is predicated on the core values of relationship building, cooperation, collaboration, consensus decision-making, reconciliation, and integrity. I reel from the Board's intransigence.

Two brief illustrations of multiple examples in the past four years are:

- The membership was told by Barry Neufeld at the AGM November 14, 2013 that there would be full consultation by the Board with the Executive Director in the appointment of new Board members. **There was no such**

**consultation** when the Board appointed three new Board members. All three new members accepted appointments knowing of that lie. Trust was yet again broken.

- Membership was informed March 20, 2014 that Bernie Martens was appointed as of February 7, 2014 “Interim Transition Coordinator”; and beginning April 1, 2014, Interim Executive Director in anticipation of the agency’s hiring a new Executive Director. **There was no consultation** with Staff about either appointment. I oppose it on principle because it represents continued rejection of the Board Manual and of any process of reconciliation: in short, all agency core values are forfeited.

#### *A Little More Background*

In my 40-year membership and volunteer/staff involvement with M2/W2, I have felt profound passion and joy amidst the mundane and routine of ministry work. In January 2010, the Board passed a MOTION to adopt a “Board Manual” that encapsulated the agency’s core values centred on the Gospel. *This was a supreme agency high point, and for me a career achievement!*

*Since June 2010 when Barry Neufeld became Board Chairperson, the agency’s core values so well-articulated in the Board Manual have been persistently rejected by current leadership.*

You as members finally became aware of some of this conflict at the AGM’s of 2012 and 2013. There had been numerous previous attempts to encourage the Board to embrace the agency’s core values of relationship building, cooperation, collaboration, and consensus decision-making, as enunciated in the Board Manual. They were consistently rejected by the Board. There were repeated calls for a full process of reconciliation through a mediator to resolve the conflict issues. They were consistently rejected by the Board.

As a fellow M2/W2 Association member, prison visitation volunteer of 40 years, former Staff member of 10 years in the 1980's, former Board member of 6 years, former Restorative Justice leader of 10 years with Mennonite Central Committee Canada (under which leadership this agency still operates), and Executive Director of 16 years, I feel reluctantly duty-bound to inform the membership of M2/W2's current leadership forfeiture of Gospel legitimacy; of its practices of what have felt like deceit and betrayal of integrity.

### *What To Do?*

For me: with this communication I am discharging a duty-bound obligation to inform the membership.

I have otherwise three requests of members:

#### 1. **Try to gain understanding of these issues by:**

- Speaking with "Interim Executive Director" Bernie Martens
- Speaking with Board co-Chairs Barry Neufeld and Darrel Schultz
- Speaking with me. If you wish to talk with me, I have posted the back story to a personal website: [Wayne Northey | \(mostly\) my writings](#). Under "Restorative Justice Links" you will find "M2/W2 Association". **There is a password to view that page.** Please phone me (604-796-0400), or go to the [Contact me](#) page and send me a message requesting the password. I will respond. Sadly the story is long and disturbing. **NOTE: The password will be given out only from April 1, 2014. I will be asking you about what use you choose to make of the information, if other than the three above requests.**

Depending on where one is seated on opposite sides of a table – or an issue!, the

following three “letters” spell two completely different words as you can see: MOM or WOW. Get it? So please, do not talk with just one side of the table/issue...

2. **Hold leadership accountable to fully embrace M2/W2’s core values through a process of reconciliation** that addresses all the conflict issues between Staff and Board.

In a January communication to the Board, I wrote:

I put on record finally: I recommend that mediator Alan Simpson be re-engaged to *fully* mediate the multiple issues that obtain between Board and Staff, with a view, hope, and ultimate goal of full reconciliation. *If not undertaken, I believe that our agency loses its ethical right and compass to continue to offer the services of this ministry.*

3. **Please assist me with the urgent “libel” issue:** I believe that an Extraordinary General Meeting needs to be called to address the “libel issue”. I am at a loss here. Time is of the essence, would you not agree, given how increasingly damaging this kind of malicious rumour is to me? *For any counsel on this, please contact me at: (604)796-0400.*

#### *Board Manual*

Below are some citations from the [Board Manual](#). The Manual is also posted on my website:

- “This [Board governance ideal] is an alternative model to the hierarchical model...”
- It is “[A] model [that] is based on the influence of Christ’s example of foot washing and his statements regarding the use of power and authority. We value collaborative authority, and the exercise of power and authority in a **bottom-up** manner (tree diagram, p. 9).”

- “This model, rooted in Restorative Justice, values the relationships of all board members and staff and clients, empowering each to flourish in functioning in their specific role and responsibility as board member and staff from a servanthood model.”
- It is a model of “Empowerment of ... management ... [that] will motivate creativity while also stimulating responsibility and accountability.”
- It is a model of “Effective open communication and decision making by **consensus** [that] will ensure that every voice and opinion is heard and honoured.”
- It is a model of “Collaborative board process [that] is different from hierarchical managerial style.”

### *Conclusion*

#### **I have now discharged my unpleasant duty.**

I include this plea, repeated in the back story document on my website page:

I now plead to the membership in the name of God and in the name of justice:

*please hold the Board, please hold “Interim Executive Director” Bernie Martens, accountable to do the right thing: 1) initiate a full process of reconciliation immediately according to the agency’s core values in the Board Manual; 2) retract immediately and publicly the “libel” against me!*

I repeat: *And there remains hope that does not disappoint (Romans 5 and 15; I Corinthians 13)!*

Thanks

Wayne Northey

Outgoing Executive Director

.

Copyright © \*|2014|\* \*|M2/W2 Association|\*, All rights reserved.

**Our mailing address is:**

208-2825 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6S3

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---

This email was sent to [wayne@smartsettle.com](mailto:wayne@smartsettle.com)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

M2/W2 Association · 208-2825 Clearbrook Road · Abbotsford, BC V2T 6S3 · Canada

The MailChimp logo is displayed in a white, cursive font within a dark grey rectangular box.