

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Pastoral Relations Commission
Tuesday, June 13, 2023**

The Pastoral Relations Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 by video conference. The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present

Donna Bowman-Woodall (chair); Todd McDonald (staff); Dale Hildebrand (staff); Andrew Comar (ordered); Barbara Hendren (lay); William Haughton (ordered); Beth Moore (lay); Lawrence Nyarko (ordered); Paul Stott (lay).

Regrets: Deirdre Lawrence (lay); Liz Mackenzie (ordered); Robin Pilkey (lay); Sung-Ran Kim (ordered).

Welcome, constituting the meeting and prayer

Donna Bowman-Woodall, chair, declared there was a quorum and called the meeting to order. Donna welcomed everyone, acknowledged the indigenous territory that they found themselves on and led the opening prayer.

Agenda

MOTION by Paul Stott / Barbara Hendren SW PRC 2023-06-13-01
that the agenda consisting of items that had been circulated to the commission in
advance of this meeting be approved.

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION by Beth Moore / Lawrence Nyarko SW PRC 2023-06-13-02
that the minutes of the May 9, 2023 meeting of the commission be approved.

MOTION

CARRIED

Omnibus Motion

MOTION by Andrew Comar / Barbara Hendren SW PRC 2023-06-13-03
that the Pastoral Relations Commission take the following actions:

a) Calls

... concurs with the request of **East End Pastoral Charge (Toronto)** and approves the call to **Bri-anne Swan**, ordained diaconal minister, beginning September 5, 2023, full time based on 40 hours per week with the following terms for Category B and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$68,567 per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at 23% which equals \$15,770.41, for a total salary of \$84,337.41 per annum, basic telephone \$900 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this call does require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **Fairlawn Avenue Pastoral Charge (Toronto)** and approves the call to **David Cameron Watts**, ordained minister, beginning September 5, 2023, full time based on 40 hours per week with the following terms for Category F and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$75,787 per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at 21.4% which equals \$16,218, for a total salary of \$92,005 per annum, basic telephone \$855 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this call does require an act of covenant.

b) Appointments

... concurs with the request of **Collier Street Pastoral Charge (Barrie)** and approves the appointment of **Robert Murdock**, candidate for ordained ministry, from May 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025, part time based on 20 hours per week with the following terms for Candidate Step 1 and Cost of Living Group Assignment 4: Salary \$59,746 (pro-rated \$29,873) per annum, basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 (pro-rated \$771.50) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this appointment does require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **Coldwater Eady Pastoral Charge (Coldwater)** and approves the re-appointment of **Kathleen Mowat**, retired ordained minister, beginning July 1, 2023 to September 15, 2023, part time based on 27 hours per week with the following terms for Category F and Cost of Living Group Assignment 4: Salary \$70,917 (pro-rated \$47,868.98) per annum, basic telephone

\$825 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 (pro-rated \$1041.53) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this re-appointment does not require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **Humbercrest Pastoral Charge (Toronto)** and approves the re-appointment of **Helena Medeiros**, ordained minister, beginning July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, full time based on 40 hours per week with the following terms for Category F and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$75,787 per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at .4% which equals \$2,000, for a total salary of \$77,787 per annum, basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this re-appointment does not require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **St. Matthew's Pastoral Charge (Toronto)** and approves the appointment of **Brigid Maya Douglas**, ordained minister, beginning September 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, part time based on 24 hours per week with the following terms for Category C and Cost of Living Group Assignment 5: Salary \$70,372 (pro-rated \$42,223.20) per annum, salary in addition to the minimum at 20% which equals \$14,074.40 (pro-rated \$8444.64), for a total salary of \$84,446.40 (pro-rated \$50,667.84) per annum, basic telephone \$825 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 (pro-rated \$925.80) and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this appointment does require an act of covenant.

... concurs with the request of **Westmount Pastoral Charge (Orillia)** and approves the appointment of **Huanyun Ye** candidate for ordained ministry, from July 3, 2023 to June 30, 2025, part time based on 30 hours per week with the following terms for Candidate Step 1 and Cost of Living Group Assignment 4: Salary \$59,746 (pro-rated \$44,809.50) per annum, basic telephone \$800 per annum, Continuing Education and Learning Amount \$1543 (pro-rated 1157.25) per annum and all other terms according to The Manual I.2., and that in accordance with The Manual I.1.9 this appointment does require an act of covenant.

c) **Request for Change in Relationship**

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of **David Cameron Watts**, ordained minister at Forest Grove Pastoral Charge effective September 4, 2023 and gives thanks for his ministry.

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of **Bri-anne Swan**, ordained minister at Jubilee Pastoral Charge effective September 4, 2023 and gives thanks for her ministry.

... in accordance with The Manual I.3.1.4(b) accepts the request for a change in pastoral relations of **Brigid Maya Douglas**, ordained minister at St. James Pastoral Charge effective August 31, 2023 and gives thanks for her ministry.

d) **License to Administer Sacraments**

... concurs with the request of **Collier Pastoral Charge (Orillia)** and grants sacramental privileges in accordance with The Manual I.2.4(a) and I.2.4.2, to **Robert Murdock**, candidate for ordained ministry, during their time of appointment at Collier Pastoral Charge.

... concurs with the request of **Westmount Pastoral Charge (Orillia)** and grants sacramental privileges in accordance with The Manual I.2.4(a) and I.2.4.2, to **Huanyun Ye**, candidate for ordained ministry, during their time of appointment at Westmount Pastoral Charge.

MOTION

CARRIED

It was requested that going forward the Request for Change in Relationship section be moved to the first item of the omnibus before the calls and appointments, to make it easier to understand. This will begin with the August meeting.

It was noted that some of the change in relationship seemed to be less than 90 days. Dale clarified that they gave notice prior before the end of May but that it was just coming to the commission now in mid-June. Todd added that when a minister requests a change in pastoral relationship, the date on that letter is the first day of the 90 days notice. However, if a pastoral charge makes the decision to change the terms of the pastoral relationship or end the pastoral relationship, the first day of the 90 days notice period is the meeting of the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Report from Staff

Todd McDonald and Dale Hildebrand reported in on the work that they are doing:

a) Liaisons

The following liaisons have been appointed by staff:

Lynella Reid-James appointed to Kingston Road Pastoral Charge (Toronto) for Intentional Interim Minister search.

Jim Clubine appointed to St. Matthew's Pastoral Charge (Toronto) for search for short term supply minister.

b) Pastoral Charge Supervisors

Warren Ball appointed as pastoral charge supervisor to Queensville Holland Landing Pastoral Charge (Queensville).

c) Flourish

The Ministers Day Together Flourish event will be held on Wednesday June 14, 2023 at Jubilee United Church in Toronto. There are 83 ministry personnel registered to attend. Rev. Maya Landell, Jason Locke and The Moderator, The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne will be leading.

Growth Animator Deployed to Region

APPENDIX A

The Growth initiative represents the leading priority of the Strategic Plan of The United Church of Canada. As a way to embody this priority, the General Council Office's Organizational Development and Strategy Unit is working with regional councils to create and fill six new positions. The six Growth Animators will be deployed across the regions to work in local and regional partnerships with a focus on renewing existing communities of faith, creating new communities, and strengthening invitation. Growth Animators will support and connect with communities where growth is occurring, and seek to bring best practices and fresh possibilities where growth is a challenge and feels impossible.

Todd shared a video to introduce the commission members to the overall call and vision of The United Church that was established by General Council. The video can be found here: <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/our-call-and-our-vision>

Todd then presented how this Growth Animator will fit into the strategic plan and the work of the Region and reviewed the position description (see appendix A) Like the Stewardship Officer or Office of Vocation Minister for Shining Waters and Canadian Shield regions, this new staff person will be deployed from and accountable to the General Council office but will work exclusively in the two regions. Staff didn't know if this was an open-ended permanent position or a term contract. There was some discussion with the following points made:

- Churches are struggling and need help, not another place to go to. How does a minister get the support needed in his congregation? That needs to be shared by this new person. In the position description there is a lot of connecting people with resources, and will be an interesting development to watch.

- There are lots of exciting things happening in local churches but where do they find that support, in order to make things happen? Clusters were meant to help but it has been difficult to get churches to pull together.
- This new person will not have much familiarity about what is going on in local churches. Will there be regional staff working with them around that and what kind of communication will be needed? Other GC staff deployed to regions connect in different ways with regional staff and governance, this will need to be worked out.
- What is the expectation of this role and what is needed to roll it out by one person alone? It sounds like there needs to be a group working on this, not just one single staff person.

Todd to follow up with SWRC Executive Minister Peter Hartmans, so that these minutes and comments are noted beyond the commission.

Dale's Dime/Todd's Tab Report

APPENDICES B & C

Over the last three months Todd and Dale have visited with ten groups of ministers across the region. One purpose, especially after the isolation of covid, was to introduce each other and connect new ministers with long time ministers in the same areas. The second was to ask them, and discuss, what they need to thrive in their ministry. A more comprehensive report was submitted by both pastoral relations ministers to the committee for review (see Appendices B and C)

Staff asked if there were any directions heard in the reports that should be explored for Flourish programming in the fall and after Christmas. It was noted that there was a definite hunger for more opportunities to meet together, and not just ministry personnel but also lay people, as was overheard at the recent regional meeting in May. People miss presbytery meetings. It would be worthwhile to explore reestablishing what we used to have with presbytery, just not as frequently and not as a business meeting. A time of fellowship, to check in and connect with each other, include a speaker and a meal and gathering time. Use the old presbytery areas or adjust slightly for new boundaries, but it would be a good place to start. The vision of clusters but didn't happen in that context, so now we should to try to make it happen another way. Todd thanked everyone for their suggestions.

Equity Task Group Report (Staff reporting) Pastoral Relations Commission Policy Changes

APPENDIX D

At a recent Executive meeting, the following change was approved for the "Membership" section of the PRC policy (see Appendix D for full policy)

- Current policy: A Chair and six to ten members to allow for some regional representation with a balance of ministry personnel and laity to work with the Pastoral Relations Ministers

- New Policy: A Chair and six to ten members to allow for some regional representation with a balance of ministry personnel and laity to work with the Pastoral Relations Ministers, *to include one person who is a pastoral relations liaison to be named by the Pastoral Relations Commission.*

This change fulfills one of the objectives of the Equity Goal and Plan under the goal: Grow equity within pastoral relations policy and practice within Shining Waters Regional Council. There are now four pastoral relations liaisons on the Commission, Donna Bowman-Woodall, William Haughton, Barbara Hendren and Paul Stott. If there were none, then someone could be added, but currently there is no need.

2023-2024 Meeting Schedule

APPENDIX E

The meeting schedule of the commission for 2023-2024 was distributed to the commission. As is the usual pattern, the commission meets on the last Tuesday of the month, with a couple of exceptions for December (Christmas holidays) and May (ordination appointments). A full day meeting in October, location to be confirmed.

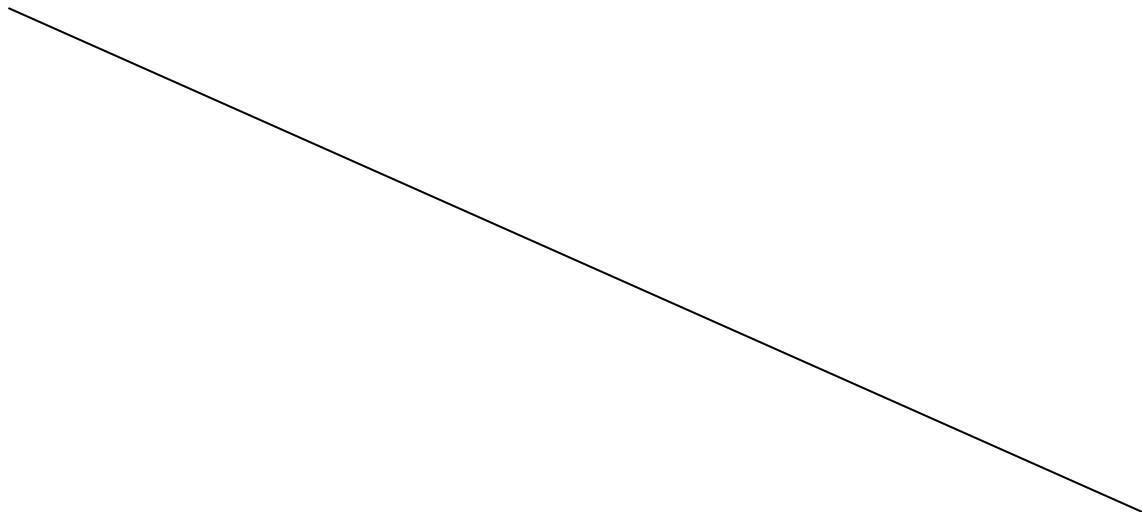
The next meeting of the Pastoral Relations Commission will be held by Zoom video conference on Tuesday, August 29, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

End of meeting

There being no further business, Beth Moore closed the meeting with a prayer.

Donna Bowman-Woodall
Chair

Donna Rutz
Note taker



APPENDIX A – Growth Animator Position Description

Growth Animator

Description

Position Purpose

Within the framework of the strategic plan, under the direction of the Director of Growth and Ministry Development, and working directly with the relevant Regional Executive Minister (or delegate), the Growth Animator plants, enhances, evaluates and connects new communities of faith, supports renewal efforts in existing ministries, and strengthens invitation to The United Church of Canada.

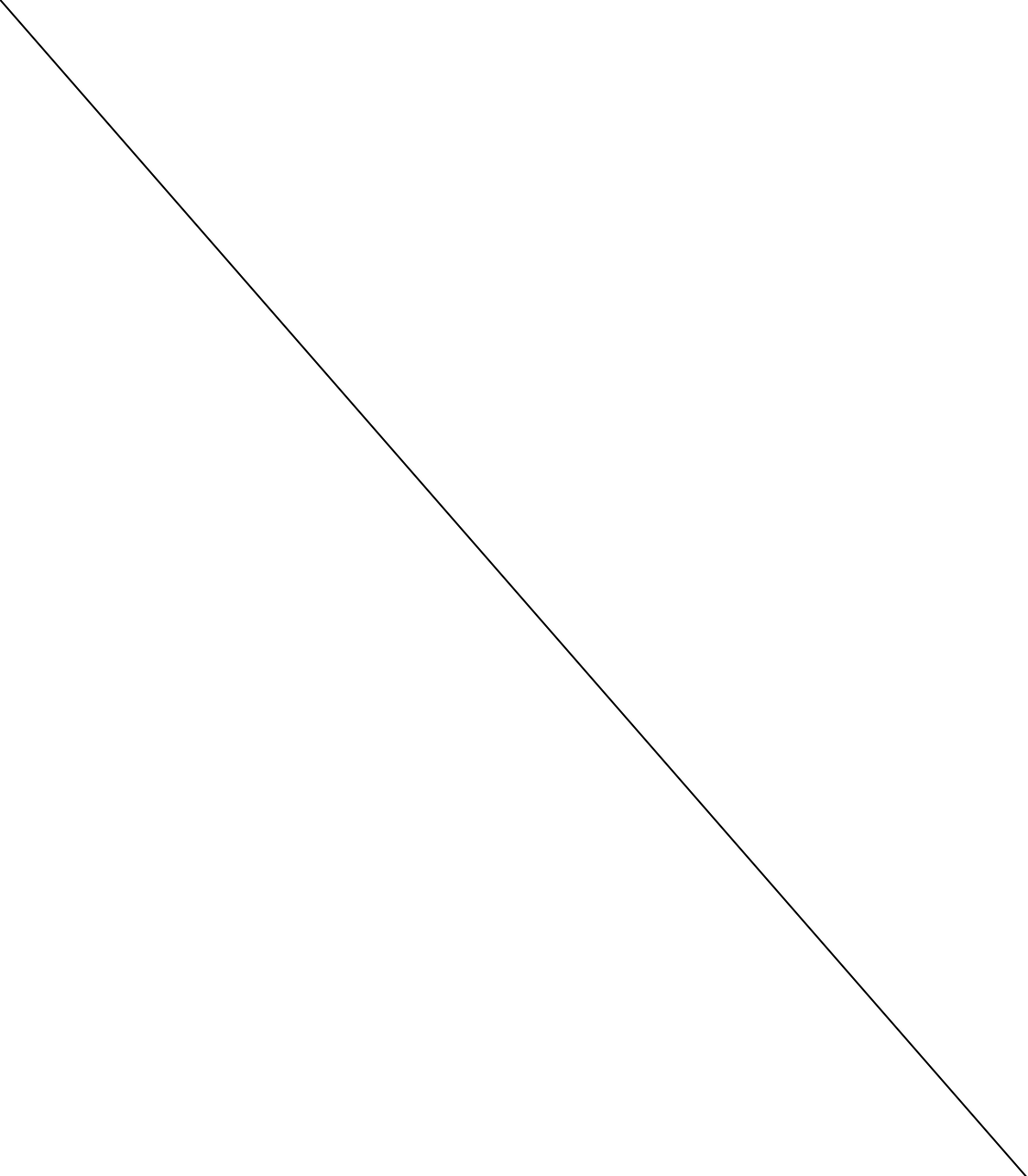
The main areas of focus are:

- 1. Renewing Existing Communities of Faith; 45%**
 - Collaborate regionally with committees and staff dedicated to renewal efforts within the relevant region, and provide support, when assigned, to key regional or inter-regional specific renewal projects, particularly in relation to rural ministry;
 - Encouraging and equipping communities of faith to engage in changes of vision, regeneration and new ministry.
 - Contribute to strategies and resources that span both new communities and renewal in existing communities, connecting communities and building collaborative partnerships as appropriate.
 - Work collaboratively on stewardship development, and explore and promote sources of funding support for renewal in communities of faith;

- 2. Seeding New Communities of Faith, 40%**
 - Receive proposals from within the relevant regions for new or emerging communities of faith;
 - Provide ongoing support, consultation and evaluation to new communities of faith;
 - Assess needs for financial support and help to identify and match with available regional, national, Foundation, or other resources beyond the church;
 - Link regional growth initiatives to strategic national initiatives;
 - Develop needed resources to support, promote and interpret church planting efforts;
 - Invoke imagination and support for church plants through hosting events and making presentations, in many forms;
 - Assist in collectively celebrating the formation of new communities.
 - Collaborate and support one national thematic planting streams (e.g. online, communities of disability, francophone communities, migrant, intercultural, Indigenous, rural etc).

3. Learning, Adapting, Innovating, Inviting

15%

- Stay abreast of best practices and emerging trends in fresh expressions, church planting, rural ministries, and church renewal;
 - Engage with and integrate decolonial, intercultural and Equity, Diversity and Anti-Oppressive (EDA) practices;
 - Assist the church with active experimentation, bold action and deep learning.
 - Identify regional and community of faith opportunities to strengthen invitation to The United Church of Canada;
 - Working with regional communicators, contribute to and help animate communication campaigns;
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APPENDIX B – Dale’s Dime Report - March 17, 2023

Over the period of one month, I invited all ministers south of Highway 407 who are in a call or appointment to join in small groups over coffee. These were organized into six meetings, with attendance ranging from 3 – 9 ministers at each gathering. In total, 34 ministers attended (about half of the active ministers south of the 407).

The general format for each gathering was:

- a) quick introductions – there are always ministers who don’t know each other
- b) I would give a context and frame the informal discussion
 - three years since the pandemic
 - pandemic also coincided largely with the restructuring of the UCC
 - we know that the impact of the past three years has been very significant on our CoFs and on how ministry is carried out
 - we have not had many opportunities to meet together in person for three years. This is a check-in. I would then throw out a number of questions to help those around the table to tell the group how they were doing and what their challenges, joys, concerns, etc. were.
- i) **How has the past three years impacted your ministry and well-being?**
- ii) **How full is your tank/how charged is your battery?**
- iii) **Considering the present context, and looking to the next 3 – 5 years, what do you need to do effective ministry? How can the Regional Council support you?**
- iv) **How are you feeling about your connection to other ministry personnel and to the wider denomination?**

Here is what I heard:

- i) **How has the past three years impacted your ministry and well-being?**
- ii) **How full is your tank/how charged is your battery?**
 - The change has been very significant. The general impact of the pandemic on churches has been a reduction in congregants ranging from 33 – 50%. Some congregants have shifted to only joining worship on Zoom. This has impacted the volunteer base in churches and caused more stress on time and finances. This has impacted ministers, with increased demands on them to make up for the lack of volunteers. And in many cases, they continue to do extra work to adapt to the digital environment.
 - There has been a general trend that children and youth have not come back post-pandemic.

- A significant number of churches have amalgamated or are considering amalgamating as a result of the pandemic (pandemic accelerated timelines for this with its impact on finances). This has meant extra work for some ministers.
- In general, despite all the added pressures, most ministers indicated they are resilient and are not considering leaving ministry due to fatigue. Some saw opportunity from the changes of the past three years to do new things in their churches and to reinvigorate the mission of the church.
- My own personal observation is that there is an increase in the number of ministers who are taking medical leaves for mental health reasons. These ministers were not at these Dale's Dime gatherings.

iii) Considering the present context, and looking to the next 3 – 5 years, what do you need to do effective ministry? How can the Regional Council support you?

- Mental health issues have increased among congregants. Most ministers do not feel equipped to respond to the depth of these issues. Opportunities for increasing skills in this area would be welcomed.
- Affirmation expressed for the monthly Tuesday morning Zoom gatherings. They would like these to continue.
- Ministers want more opportunities like the coffee shop meetings to connect with other ministry personnel. This format was really appreciated: informal, doesn't take a lot of time out of their day, opportunity to meet some colleagues they hadn't met before.

iv) How are you feeling about your connection to other ministry personnel and to the wider denomination?

- There was a strong and consistent sentiment expressed that ministers feel disconnected from the wider denomination. Quite a few mentioned the loss of presbytery meetings where they would meet with their colleagues. A number also feel disconnected from each other.
- I was curious, given this desire to meet with each other, why there was not more uptake on the Clergy Peer Learning Groups that was offered in late 2022/early 2023. The common response was that they did not want to be the ones to organize the gatherings. Did not have time to do that and it was seen as another responsibility on top of the long list they already have.

Report submitted by Dale Hildebrand

APPENDIX C – Todd’s Tab Report

Prepared for June 13, 2023 meeting of the Pastoral Relations Commission

During March and April, 2023, Todd McDonald held four gatherings across the northern part of the regional council: Brampton, Aurora, Barrie and Bracebridge. Over the four locations, 25 ministry personnel attended. Of the 25 participants, five were from new pastoral relationships established in 2022-23.

The purpose of the gatherings was to discuss this key question: “As you think about your ministry and from conversations with your colleagues, what do you need to refresh and thrive in your ministry?” This question was the back drop to an informal conversation that included a deep introduction of each other and supportive check in. Many ministers did not know each other, some arriving to new pastoral relationship during the pandemic period.

There were several themes that emerged from the Todd’s Tab gatherings:

1. Deep Listening for Ministers: several ministers mentioned the need for spiritual direction, ministry coaching and silent retreats – spiritual supports/guides for ministers as they navigate current context for ministry.
2. Connection: participants identified the isolation for the last three years. One person called it “emerging from the COVID cave”. This describes the energy it takes to gather, energy to be together since the pandemic. People identified the need to have opportunities to gather, realizing that it takes much energy to step out.
3. The Pandemic Vacuum: Ministers also identified the pandemic period as a time when some individuals stepped in to serve the church with great commitment but not necessarily best polity. These individuals stepped into the vacuum left by the pandemic. As congregations emerge from the pandemic, so is normalizing the decision-making process and oversight. Ministers are noticing those individuals who stepped into the vacuum now struggling to make room for returning leaders.
4. Finally, Minister’s health: A strong theme is, Ministers feel they are emerging from a tomb but not quite at “Hallelujah!” yet. There is a weariness and a wariness: Is the pandemic is truly over. The number of pivots and adaptations that happened during the pandemic are still living memories for some. Ministers are wondering how to re-energize and be full of joy again.

Report submitted by Todd McDonald

APPENDIX D – REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE: PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

This policy outlines the authority, membership and responsibilities of the Pastoral Relations Commission and the relationship with the Communities of Faith Commission

Date Approved: November 30, 2018	Review date by Executive: 2021
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PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

The Pastoral Relations Commission will set policy and give direction within their mandate.

The Pastoral Relations Commission will provide support for ministry personnel throughout their ministry, including equipping, covenanting, pastoral relationships and retirement.

AUTHORITY

The Pastoral Relations Commission is established in accordance with the direction provided in November 18-20, 2017 General Council Executive New Covenant Policy.

The Pastoral Relations Commission will be elected by the Regional Council or the Executive to make decisions on behalf of the Region or its Executive. (*The Manual 2019 C.3.3.1*)

The decisions of the Commission are non-debatable. The commission's decision is as effective as a decision of the governing body or executive that appointed it. (*The Manual 2019 C.3.3.2*)

The Commission will report its decisions to the Regional Council Executive and the Regional Council. (*The Manual 2019 C.3.3.3*)

MEMBERSHIP

A Chair and six to ten members to allow for some regional representation with a balance of ministry personnel and laity to work with the Pastoral Relations Ministers, **to include one person who is a pastoral relations liaison to be named by the PRC.**

STAFF SUPPORT

The Pastoral Relations Ministers will provide support to the Commission.

TERMS OF OFFICE

The term will be three years with a renewal for one term. After a one year hiatus, an individual may be elected again.

MEETINGS

The Commission will meet by electronic or other means at least monthly and perhaps once or twice face-to-face annually.

QUORUM

Quorum will be 50% plus one of the members with at least one ordered minister and one lay member.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES OF FAITH COMMITTEE

The collaboration will be done by staff.

RESPONSIBILITIES DELEGATED BY THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE EXECUTIVE

Covenanting: (*The Manual 2019 C.2.1*)

The Pastoral Relations Commission's responsibilities in the life cycle of a community of faith that is a congregation or pastoral charge are set out in more detail in *The Manual 2019 G.1*.

The Pastoral Relations Commission will be responsible for,

- a) recognizing a new pastoral relationship by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- b) living in a covenantal relationship with ministry personnel.

Preparation for Ministry: (*The Manual 2019 C.2.7*)

The Pastoral Relations Commission is responsible for licensing Licensed Lay Worship Leaders.

A Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Committee will be established that will report to the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Pastoral Relations: (*The Manual 2019 C.2.8*)

The Pastoral Relations Commission is responsible for co-operating with communities of faith in,

- a) recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith;
- b) ending calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel and other staff; and
- c) appointing a regional council liaison officer to assist a community of faith in pastoral relations matters at designated times. (*The Manual 2019 I.1.5*)

Support to retirees and celebrating retirements: (*The Manual 2019 C.2.10*)

The Regional Council is responsible for celebrating the retirements of ministry personnel. The Pastoral Relations Commission will offer support.

Ministry Personnel: (*The Manual 2019 C.2.11*)

The Pastoral Relations Commission is responsible for,

- a) encouraging and supporting ministry personnel toward health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice; and
- b) assisting with informal conflict resolution processes. This responsibility is shared with the Community of Faith Commission.

Sacramental Privileges (*The Manual 2019 C.2.9*)

The Pastoral Relations Commission is responsible for granting a licence to administer the sacraments to diaconal ministers, designated lay ministers, people who retired while serving as designated lay ministers, and sacrament elders, as set out in *The Manual 2019 I.2.4*.

APPENDIX E - 2023-2024 Meeting Schedule

Shining Waters Pastoral Relations Commission

Meeting schedule 2023/2024

All meetings are Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom unless otherwise noted

August 29, 2023

September 26, 2023

October 24, 2023 (9:30 am - 3 pm) An in-person joint meeting with the Community of Faith Commission - location TBD

November 28, 2023

December 12, 2023

January 30, 2024

February 27, 2024

March 26, 2024

April 30, 2024

May 21, 2024 (*moved up from normal last Tuesday of month to accommodate ordination candidates)

June 18, 2024 (9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. in person all day meeting – location to be determined)

