

**Shining Waters Regional Council
2024 Regional Meeting
June 7- 8, 2024**



RESOURCE BOOK

**North Bramalea United Church
363 Howden Blvd., Brampton, ON L6S 4L6**

JOINING THE MEETING ONLINE

JOINING THE MEETING

- **MEETING LINK:** Your personalized link to the meeting was emailed to you after you registered. There will be a reminder email closer to the meeting that also includes the link. This is the only link that you may use to access the meeting.
- **ARRIVAL TIME:** Friday: sign in to the meeting by 8:45 Am (EDT) or earlier. You will arrive in the waiting room and be admitted at 8:55 Am. The Call to Order is at 9:00 am.
Saturday: sign into the meeting by 8:45 am, you will arrive in the waiting room and be admitted at 8:55 am. The Call to Order is 9:00 am. You will be muted upon entry and we ask you to stay muted.
- **YOUR NAME:** Check that your name appears correctly in the participant list. The MORE button beside your name allows you to rename yourself. Corresponding and non-voting participants please add a “Z” in front of your name to help with scrutineering.
- **AUDIO:** When you join the meeting, you will be asked about connecting audio. It is easiest to join by computer audio unless your computer does not have speakers. If you have trouble with your audio you may also connect by phone with the number in your invitation. Remember to use the toll-free number for long-distance calls. If you use a cordless phone, please be sure it has enough charge to last the duration of the meeting, and/or charge your phone during the breaks.
- **VIDEO:** For this meeting you will not need to start your own video (webcam) unless you are going to speak. At the beginning of the meeting, it may be nice to “see” everyone, but once the meeting is underway it is best for all video to be off apart from the presenters. For best viewing please change to “Speaker View” and/or “Side by Side” at the top of the video panel of your screen.

PARTICIPATING

- **PARTICIPANTS PANEL AND CHAT:** Open both the Participants Panel and the Chat box on the Zoom toolbar.
- **LISTEN ONLY:** For the majority of this meeting, you will likely only need to listen to those presenting.
- **SPEAKING:** Staff will be monitoring the Participants Panel and the Chat box. Please signal your desire to be added to the speaker’s list by raising your digital (not your real) hand by clicking the hand at the bottom of the Participant’s Panel. When you are recognized by the President, unmute your microphone to be heard. In the event there is some issue with sound, you may type in the chat box. Please don’t lower your hand, we will do that for you.
- **POINT OF ORDER:** To raise a point of order raise your hand, and type “PT OF ORDER” in the chat, so that the President can adjust the speakers order accordingly.

VOTING

- **ELIGIBILITY:** Only elected Lay Regional Representatives and Ministry Personnel are eligible to vote. If you are not a voting member, please put an “z” before your name – this way the scrutineers can see the votes more easily.
- **RAISE HAND:** We will be voting using the Raise Hand icon found at the bottom of your Participants Panel to vote, following the instructions from the President. To abstain, type ABSTAIN in the chat.
- **VOTE BY PHONE:** Voting representatives participating on the phone will vote by pressing *9 when the President calls for you to vote by phone and this will raise your hand in the Participants Panel.
- **RE-OPEN THE PARTICIPANT AND CHAT PANELS:** Note: When the host shares their screen (ie: with the agenda or a proposal) the program will put you into full screen mode and you will lose the chat and participant panels. To get these back click “Chat” and “Participant” on the Zoom toolbar (usually at the top of your screen). They will reappear in the centre of your screen but you can move them to the side by clicking on the top of the pod and dragging it over.

- **TWO VOTES:** If two people are joined from the same household one person can vote with the Raise Hand button. The second person can add their vote by typing Yes or No in the chat.

CHAT

- **LIMITED** Chat is limited for this meeting to minimize distractions and you are only able to chat with the hosts and co-hosts.

North Bramalea United Church
363 Howden Blvd., Brampton, ON L6S 4L6
(near Hwy 410 and Williams Parkway)

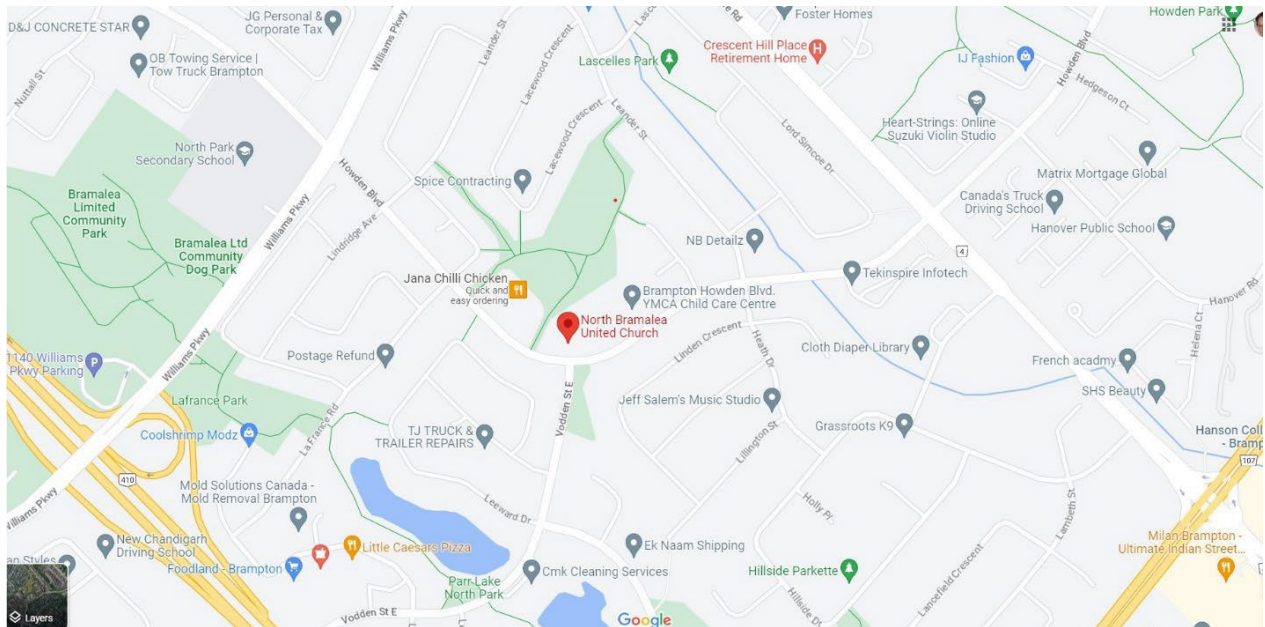
Celebration of Ministries Service:
North Bramalea United Church

Parking:

There is some parking available at the church but will mainly be used for handicapped and staff parking. There is additional parking available at the neighbouring church, Daily Hope Community Church.

Accessibility

Our meeting spaces have barrier free access, and accessible elevators and washrooms nearby. All stages and speaking areas are barrier-free. Please indicate any requirements for wheelchair accessible accommodation, handicapped parking, hearing assistance, sign language, large print, dietary needs, or other considerations when registering.



As we gather on the grounds of North Bramalea United Church, we honour that North Bramalea acknowledges the land on which it gathers is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit; acknowledges the territory of the Anihinabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples, and the land that is home to the Metis, and are grateful to have the opportunity to meet on this land, and by doing so, give our respect to its first inhabitants.

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Encouraging and Connecting Communities of Faith

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM YOUR PLANNING TEAM

We're trying something different for our regional meeting this year. The theme for both 2024 and 2025 is 'Sanctuary: towards a kingdom of peace, justice and reconciliation'. This theme is rooted in the story from 1 Kings 17 when Elijah found sanctuary in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, then in Zarephath in the region of Sidon where he stayed with a widow. In both instances, sanctuary was provided not by the wealthy but by people who were the poorest of the poor and considered unclean.

A significant portion of our 2024 regional meeting's agenda will be considering and voting on proposals intended for action by either Shining Waters Regional Council or by the General Council in the summer of 2025. To help us make good decisions, we will be grounding our understanding of sanctuary both in the lived experiences of people who are marginalized in society and in the principles-based approach to justice work that was approved by the General Council in October 2023.

Our theme planning team this year includes President Maria Christina Conlon, Past-President David Leyton-Brown, Ariel Saigan who is in ministry with Asbury and West United Church and is a member of the working group that developed the principles for the General Council, Allyce Mutungi who is a member of the Shining Waters Executive and Uganda Martyrs United Church.

A two-year theme will give us the opportunity to hear many perspectives and reflect deeply on issues connected to sanctuary, including displacement, housing, reparations, restoration and reconciliation. Come join us on this journey.

Main Office: 59 Line 4N, Oro-Medonte, ON, L0L 2L0 **Phone:** 416-231-7680/1-800-268-3781, ext. 2059
Toronto Office: 963 Pharmacy Ave., Toronto, ON, M1R 2G5 **Phone:** 416-231-7680/1-800-268-3781, ext. 6145
Website: www.shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca



SANCTUARY

Towards A Kingdom of Peace,
Justice and Reconciliation

2024 Shining Waters Regional Council Meeting

June 7 - 8, 2024
North Bramalea United Church and online

Online and Onsite at North Bramalea United Church

Draft Agenda

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Friday, June 7 | |
| 8:00 a.m. | Registration, Book Room, Prayer Room, Displays |
| 9:00 a.m. | Opening of Regional Meeting Land Acknowledgement by Settler Church Welcome and traditional/cultural teachings shared by Tabitha Shurgold, The Indigenous Networ Opening Motions |
| 10:30 a.m. | Worship |
| 10:50 a.m. | Break |
| 11:05 a.m. | THEME REFLECTION: Sanctuary |
| 12:30 p.m. | Lunch (<i>on-site by pre-registration or on your own</i>) |
| 2:00 p.m. | Business 1 – Discussion Accountability Reports Nominations Presentation Hearing from Candidate for President-Elect Finance Presentation |
| 3:00 p.m. | Break |
| 3:15 p.m. | THEME REFLECTION: Principles-Based Approach to Justice |
| 6:00 p.m. | Dinner (<i>on-site by pre-registration or on your own</i>) Nominations Close New Business Closes |
| 7:00 p.m. | Business 2 – Proposals SW2024-03: Support of Broadview Proposal (Grace UC – Barrie) SW2024-04: Reducing Homelessness in Canada Proposal (SEJC) SW2024-05: SEJC RC Information Sharing Proposal |
| 8:00 p.m. | Closing Benediction |
| | |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Saturday, June 8 | |
| 9:00 a.m. | Worship |
| 9:30 a.m. | Business 3: Proposals SW2024-01: Financial Assistance for SWRC Proposal SW2024-02: FAUC Viability of Ministries Proposal (Fairlawn Ave. UC) |
| 10:30 a.m. | Break |
| 10:45 a.m. | Business 4: Proposals (continued) |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch (<i>on-site by pre-registration or on your own</i>) |
| 1:30 p.m. | In Memoriam |
| 2:15 p.m. | Business 5: Nominations – Decisions on Nominations Report Additional time for Proposals if needed New business |
| 2:45 p.m. | Closing Remarks and Courtesies |
| 3:00 p.m. | Adjournment and Blessing Prepare sanctuary for Celebration of Ministries Service Rehearsal |
| 6:30 p.m. | CELEBRATION OF MINISTRIES SERVICE |

CONSENT AND PROCEDURAL MOTIONS 2024 FOR ACTION

The following enabling motions be adopted:

- a) **Roll of the Regional Council:** that the roll of Roll of the Regional Council shall consist of:
- All ministry personnel within the geographic bounds served by Shining Waters Regional Council (Basis of Union 6.2.1);
 - Ministers of denominations within mutual recognition agreements while under appointment or call (Basis of Union 6.2.2);
 - Lay members elected by the Community of Faith, respecting the balance of lay and ministry personnel where possible (Basis of Union 6.2.3);
 - Additional lay members as determined by the Regional Council if necessary, to respect a balance of ministry personal and lay members who are not ministry personnel in the membership of the Regional Council (2024 Manual C.1.2.b).

(The President and Secretary of the SWRC United Church Women (UCW) or their designates, former Lay Moderators, past Lay Toronto Conference and SWRC Presidents, and current General Council Lay Commissioners [if they are not already representing their local congregation as a Regional Council Representative] shall all be voting members of the Regional Council)

- b) **Bounds of the Regional Council Meeting:** that the bounds of the Regional Council meeting for voting purposes shall be North Bramalea United Church, 363 Howden Blvd., Brampton, ON L6S 4L6 and the zoom meeting ID: 895 5117 1366 when in session; that the Shining Waters Regional Council hold a Celebration of Ministry Service including admission and ordination to the Order of Ministry of The United Church of Canada on Saturday, June 8, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to take place at North Bramalea United Church, 363 Howden Blvd., Brampton, ON L6S 4L6 to fulfil its responsibility to ordain those whom the Office of Vocation has confirmed as having completed all the requirements for ordination and commissioning, and admit those whom the Office of Vocation has confirmed as having completed all the requirements for admission, and whom the Regional Council has confirmed have a covenantal relationship in place with a community of faith.
- c) **Agenda:** that the Agenda as posted to the regional website be the order of business, subject to those changes that are recommended by the President.
- d) **Minutes:** that the Minutes of the meetings of Shining Waters Regional Council held May 26-28, 2023 and September 19, 2023 be approved as circulated.
- e) **Accountability reports:** that the reports as presented in the Resource Book be accepted for information.
- f) **Adjournment of Sessions:** that the President have the authority to recess the Regional Council when business, as ordered, is completed, until the next order of the day.
- g) **Corresponding Members:** that corresponding members shall be official guests of the Regional Council. Their names shall be included in the Record of Proceedings (2024 Manual C.1.5).
- h) **Commitments:** that the regional council participants commit/covenant to honour the Holy Manners printed in the Resource Book and commit to our regional council's commitments around equity, justice and anti-racism through both conversation and actions. If there is failure to honour these commitments, individuals may be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the President.

- i) **New Business & Nominations:** Nominations and items of New Business shall be given to the President by 6:00 p.m. on June 7, 2024.

Procedural

1. The procedural and prayer microphone shall be microphone #1 and the zoom chat box.
2. Any handouts must be authorized by the President.
3. The Parliamentarian shall be Beth Moore.
4. The President will present proposals. The President may, at their discretion, invite an individual to verbally introduce a proposal for up to five minutes. The President will invite prayerful discernment and discussion on the wisdom of the proposal. When the President discerns that the sense of the meeting is such that we are ready to hear a motion on the proposal, they will invite the presenter to move the motion. Once the motion has been moved and seconded, Rules of Debate and Order shall be followed.
5. At the discretion of the President, microphone time for each speaker will be limited to 1½ minutes per proposal and 1½ minutes per motion with the exception of the mover (who may speak at the beginning and end of a motion).
6. Microphone time may be reduced at the discretion of the President in 30-second increments when any item of business exceeds 20 minutes.
7. The normal voting procedure, in person, shall be a show of hands using voting cards, except where a secret ballot is required (ballot sheets will be provided by the Chairperson through the Regional Council Office). The normal voting procedure, online, shall be a show of hands using the RAISE HAND icon found at the bottom of the participants panel or *9 for those on the phone. If two people are joined from the same household one person will vote with the Raise Hand icon and the second will type Yes or No in the chat. Those who wish to abstain will type ABSTAIN in the chat. Where a secret ballot is required, ballots will take the form of a Poll in Zoom and shall remain secret.
8. In the case of limited time for business, items will be dealt with in the following order: Nominations, Reports requiring a decision of the Regional Council, Reports for Information, and Proposals to Shining Waters Regional Council.

HOLY MANNERS

We strive, in this time of community, to be brave by...

B – being accountable for the impact of both our words and our silence

R – reflecting on and naming our own biases

A – actively listening

V – vocalizing questions that arise from our learning

E – encountering new ideas with curiosity and wonder

To be continued.... learning as we go....

*Written by Diane Matheson-Jimenez
for Affirming Network webinar, September 22, 2020*

Please also see our Regional Council Commitments related to equity and justice

Anti-Asian Racism statement

<https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/regionalcouncil-statement-on-anti-asian-racism-hatred-and-violence/>

Anti-Black Racism statement

<https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/regional-statement-on-anti-black-violence-and-racism/>

Equity Policy

https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/sw_policies_Regional_Council_Equity_Policy.pdf

Shining Waters Regional Council is an Affirming Region

<https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/equity/affirming/>

MARIA CHRISTINA (TINA) CONLON
PRESIDENT, SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL



Maria Christina Conlon, or Tina, baked pies, cookies, and a variety of other specialties at the Groaning Board straight after receiving her M.Div at Emmanuel College in 1983. Not only did this job help give her an insight into her former classmates who conducted luncheon meetings at this place, but it also gave her enough money to put together resumes to look for jobs. She worked in a variety of contract employment from building a shelter for non-English speaking women and children, to volunteer coordination and as a community coordinator at Frontier College, now known as United for Literacy. Before working for

FoodShare, she worked at Chalmers UC in Guelph where she helped the church become a community ministry. Afterwards, she worked for the Downtown Churchworkers Association where she helped found the Multi-Faith Coalition Against Racism in response to some police shootings. As one of the first members of Toronto Food Policy Council, she volunteered on its board for seven years, proud to have played a part in ensuring that bST, or BGH would not be sold in Canada. As a Missioner at the West Don Area Ministry, now known as Regent Park Community Ministry, she led a discussion series with unchurched and de-churched WDAM community residents called "Unprotected Texts," reflecting on biblical narratives. She also found a way to illustrate these stories through painting and formed a group called Old Town ARTbeat. While conducting midweek prayer services in the Peace Garden, she met indigenous people who invited her to Council Fire and eventually became a member of Toronto Urban Native Ministry. In June 2014, she started working as the Davenport Perth Community Minister. In 2019, when The United Church of Canada recognized that community ministry is also a community of faith, she requested discernment and was ordained in May 2022.

Tina Conlon came to Canada in her late teens with her family in 1972 from the Philippines after its declaration of martial law and where she was beginning to see the colonization of food. She was one of eight children of the late artist Rol Lampitoc and Cecilia, a self-taught pianist. Tina has three grown children and resides with her husband Philip in a housing co-op in downtown Toronto

DAVID LEYTON-BROWN
PAST PRESIDENT, SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL



David Leyton-Brown is a member of Richmond Hill United Church, and was Co-Chair of the Transition Commission of Region 10, and of the Vision and Church Development Commission of Living Waters Presbytery.

In civilian life he is Professor Emeritus (which is fancy talk for “retired”) of Politics at York University, where he served as Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Master of Calumet College and most recently Master of McLaughlin College, and was seconded as Executive Director of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, and has been a member of the Board of Trustees of World Education Services, the TOEFL Board, the government of Ontario’s Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board, and the Board of Governors of York University. His academic teaching and writings have focused on international relations, with particular emphasis on Canada-United States relations.

**REV. ERIC NYARKO CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT
SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL**



The challenges facing the Shining Waters Regional Council (SWRC) of the United Church of Canada, is not different from the challenges facing the other Regional Councils of the United Church of Canada, and Christianity in Canada in general. The major challenge facing the SWRC is the closing down of Community of Faiths (Churches) and the lack of youth and young people in our places of worship or our Communities of Faith.

The lack of youth and young people is a major challenge not only in the SWRC and the UCC, but in many mainstream churches as well. This challenge threatens the future of the church; as a result, leading to the closing down of many Communities of Faith / churches.

In the mainstream churches, majority of the members are over 50 years of age with very few or no young people in attendance. This is a serious concern and if care is not taken, in the next few decades majority of our churches will not be in existent as there will be very few or no young people to take over our churches. Thus, we need more young people in our churches who can be groomed by the older generation in order to carry on the mantle in the years to come.

To be able to deal with these challenges, there is the need to include the youth and young people in all our discission makings. To be able to get the youth and young peoples in our pews, there is the need to set a national, regional, and congregational budget for Youth development. Set a national Youth Directorate may be at the General Council Office and the need for all the regional councils to have directorate or department overseeing the work of the youth and young people at all levels. Based on this, I will recommend about 25% of the Young People in the Leadership and structures of the Church.

It is a fact that, “The church is the instrument of Christ, called to carry on his mission in the power of the Spirit.” When Jesus finished his earthly work, he promised his disciples empowerment for mission (Acts 1:8) and commissioned them to: “go and make disciples of all nations..... (Matthew 28:19-20). A lot of people Know us as members of the Shining Waters Regional Council and for that matter members of the UCC because of who we are, but we can also let these people know us based on who we are not. (ie. That we do not impose any culture and beliefs other on a community of Faith etc.). There is the need for us to go out there, and win souls for Christ and the Church. Our regional council is in the most Multicultural and diverse environment, and there is the need to reach out to all irrespective of cultural. race, ethnicity etc.

On the issues of closing down of Churches, there is the need to see declining Churches as “half full than half empty “. With this, we will be able to support churches that are weak, declined in membership and support them to be strong again. It is interested to know that; people are now planting churches with much hope and enthusiasm whereas we are rather closing down churches because the numbers are declining.

I am of the firm belief that, with collective efforts, dedication and zeal, we can move the church and the regional council forward. I feel God is calling us at this time to rebuild our Church and the regional Council. Therefore, let us rise up and build.

Respectively Submitted by Rev. Eric Nyarko.

PLANNING TEAM



Maria Christina Conlon



David Leyton-Brown



Ariel Siagan



Allyce Mutungi

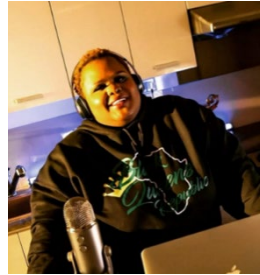
PANELIST



Marisol Veridiano



Ruth Silencino



Jane Namarome



Irene Kyompaire

CHAPLAINS



Bri-anne Swan



Andrew Kunyoung Lee

PRAYER ROOM



Lawrence Nyarko

PARLIAMENTARIAN



Beth Moore

CHAIR, CANADIAN SHIELD REGIONAL COUNCIL



Rev. Nancy J. Ferguson

SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF



Executive Minister

Rev. Peter Hartmans

phartmans@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and spends time in each region.

Role: Peter provides leadership, counsel, and support for the governance and administration in the Regional Councils.

Contact Peter about: Budget and Policy; Media and Public Statements; Regional Joys and Concerns; Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence.



Regional Staff Lead and Communities of Faith Minister

Rev. Jody Maltby

jmaltby@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works from the Guthrie Main Office

Role: Jody coordinates the support to communities of faith, including coordinating the work of regional staff.

Contact Jody about: Appeals; Conflict Resolution; Congregational Finance; Covenants and Self-Assessments; Grants; Intentional Interim Ministry; Incorporated Ministries; Property Matters; Transitions – amalgamations, collaboration, closures.



Pastoral Relations Minister

Rev. Todd McDonald

tmcdonald@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works in the Guthrie Office.

Role: Todd encourages and supports ministry personnel toward health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice.

Contact Todd about: Conflict Resolution; Finding A New Minister; Licensed Lay Worship Leaders; Licenses to Administer Sacraments; Pastoral Relationships Policy; Resources for Transition Times; Retirement; Sabbaticals; Sick Leave; Short Term Supply Ministers; Visiting Minister Options. Todd is responsible for all the Communities of Faith and ministry personnel in the region that are located north of Highway 407.



Minister, Justice and Faith Formation

Shawn Redden

sredden@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks from home

Role: Shawn encourages and connects communities of faith with matters of faith and justice and the regional council in youth and young adult ministry and matters of faith formation and liaises with the General Council in this regard.

Contact Shawn about: Affirming Ministry; Camping Ministries; Faith Formation; Guaranteed Income; Harm Reduction; Homelessness; Poverty; Social and Eco-justice; Worship and Music; Youth and Young Adult Ministry, United Church Women (UCW)



Minister Communities of Faith and Pastoral Relations

epark@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council

Location: Teleworks from home

Role: Eun-Joo encourages and supports both communities of faith and ministry personnel.

Contact Eun-Joo about: Conflict Resolution; Finding A New Minister; Lay Employees; M+P Committees; Licenses To Administer Sacraments; Pastoral Relationships Policy; Resources for Transition Times; Retirement; Sabbaticals; Sick Leave; Short Term Supply Ministers; Visiting Minister Options. Eun-Joo is responsible for all the Communities of Faith and ministry personnel in the region that are located south of Highway 407.



Minister, Communities of Faith Support, Anti-Racism and Right Relations

Kim Uyede-Kai

Kuyedekai@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works in the Toronto Office

Role: Kim encourages and connects communities of faith in their work and supports indigenous ministries in their relationship with the region and promotes and supports racial justice.

Contact Kim about: Anti-Racism; Conflict Resolution; Congregational Finance; Intercultural Ministry; Right Relations; Vision and Mission



Minister, Community of Faith Support

Diane Matheson-Jimenez

dmatheson@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks from home

Role: Diane provides support for the region by encouraging and connecting communities of faith as they adapt and experiment in changing times.

Contact Diane about: Conflict Resolution, Community Ministries, Congregational Finance, Covenants, Grants, Property, and Transitions - amalgamations, collaboration, closures.



Pastoral Relations Minister

Rob Smith

rsmith@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works in the Thunder Bay Office.

Role: Rob encourages and supports ministry personnel toward health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice.



Executive Assistant and Administration

Susan Whitehead

swhitehead@unitedchurch.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Works from the Canadian Shield main office in North Bay.

Role: Susan is the Executive Assistant to Peter Hartmans and gives administrative support for the Canadian Shield and Shining Waters Regional Councils.



Communications and Administrative Support

Donna Rutz

drutz@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works in the Toronto Office.

Role: Donna provides administrative support to the region as a whole including communications, record-keeping, event planning, office management, and reception. Contact Donna about: General Inquiries; Community Events; Covenanting Services; Records Management; Regional Communication; Regional Events; social media; Updating Contact/Subscription Information; Website.



Administrative Support

Celio deAndrade Santos, Jr.

cdeandrade@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks and works in the Guthrie office

Role: Celio provides administrative support to Shining Waters and Canadian Shield Regional Councils.



Administrative Support

Kathleen Jones

kijones@united-church.ca

Serves in: Shining Waters Regional Council and Canadian Shield Regional Council

Location: Teleworks from home

Role: Kathleen provides administrative support to Shining Waters and

Canadian Shield Regional Councils.

United Church of Canada staff who support Shining Waters Regional Council specifically as part of their assigned denominational work through the General Council Office:



**Community Capacity Development Coordinator (CCDC)
Indigenous Ministries & Justice Unit**

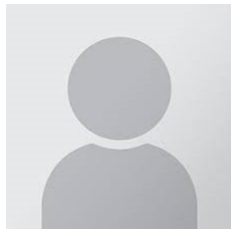
Martha Pedoniquotte

MPedoniquotte@united-church.ca

Serves in: the area of Ontario Quebec East Region

Role: one of three CCDCs working for the National Indigenous Council, Indigenous Ministries & Justice Unit of The United Church of Canada.

CCDCs build capacity within the Indigenous communities of faith through knowledge transfer, skill development, sharing of resources and best practices, facilitation of training and funding opportunities. CCDCs assist with the Mission & Service working group, and the Real Property and Capital Plan working group, and ensure that the needs are met for pastoral care, ministry recruitment and other requirements of the community of faith. Martha currently works with 24 communities of faith in Ontario Quebec.



Office of Vocation - Indigenous Church

Tim Hackborn

Phone: 1-800-268-3781 Ext. 2223

thackborn@united-church.ca

Tim's work supports the Candidacy Pathway and the oversight and discipline of ministry personnel for the Indigenous Church across Canada.



Vocational Minister, Ministry Personnel Accountability

Rev. Kellie McComb

kmccomb@united-church.ca

Serves: Canadian Shield and Shining Waters Regional Councils

Location: Teleworks from home in Paris, Ontario

Role: Supports the processes for the discernment and training of ministry personnel, the determination of their fitness/readiness for accreditation, the fulfillment of continuing education standards, and the formal processes for oversight and discipline of ministry personnel



Growth Animator

Calin Lau

clau@united-church.ca

Serves: Growth and Ministry Development department, deployed to Canadian Shield Regional Council and Shining Waters Regional Council

Location: Teleworks from home

Role: Within the framework of the strategic plan, under the direction of the Director of Growth and Ministry Development, 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



Community of Faith Stewardship Support

Melody Duncanson-Hales

mduncanson-hales@united-church.ca

Serves in: Canadian Shield and Shining Waters Regional Councils

Location: Teleworks from home.

Role: Support for all aspects of community of faith stewardship, including annual giving programs, year-round stewardship, Mission & Service, planned giving, the United Church Foundation and more. Melody also brings her experience to the modules of Called to Be the Church: The Journey, the United Church stewardship program.

Contact Melody about: Called to be the Church: The Journey program; Congregational Giving; Mission & Service; Planned Legacy Giving; Stewardship Education; The United Church Foundation.

United Church of Canada staff with employment which lies with Shining Waters Regional Council for Administrative Employment Support and/or Ministry Support:

Isaac Kamta: La Mission Protestante Francophone de Toronto (MPFT), the only francophone Community of Faith of The United Church of Canada in Toronto.

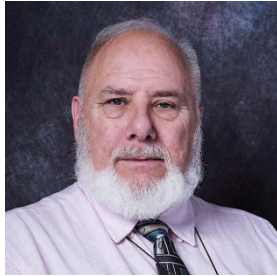
Alana Martin: Minister to the GO Project. The GO Project facilitates youth programs across the country. GO believe its mission is to create open programs and spaces for young people to learn how to put faith and love into action in the world.

Angie Hocking: Regent Park Community Ministry, becoming a Christian community of faith and justice in Regent Park. They seek to innovate, and to be compassionate, intercultural, and open to all.

COMMISSIONAND ORDINANDS ADMITTANTS

COMMISSIONAND

Robert J. Murdock



A lifelong pursuit of understanding my place in the world and how the puzzle pieces of life fit together, was a never absent goal throughout the years. The ecumenical experiences of several Christian denominations, built a personal credo on which my inquiries could progress. The fullness of time had not yet arrived. It wasn't until the passing of my wife—Patricia, that I began to seriously and earnestly explore my relationship with the Divine.

The Circle of Accompaniment—those peers, friends, and mentors that walked alongside my journey, became resources of knowledge and sources of comfort that will be invaluable in my ministry. I acknowledge and name those saints in my video presentation. Collier St. United supported my candidacy and became a place of both refuge and learning. St. James in Stroud has called me to continue that pathway in service. Nearly four decades in law enforcement and ten years in teaching provided a wealth of unique and unparalleled lived experiences on which to build as I seek to serve God, a community of faith and the wider church.

The depth of knowledge provided by the Centre for Christian Studies gave me the freedom to explore personal growth and their support was foundational. As I complete my Master of Theological Studies at St. Stephen's I am reminded that personal self-improvement was not an unintended side effect of education.

The world is in great turmoil and we must be willing and prepared to offer not only refuge and solace but provide the grace and strength to meet these crises head on with humility, with hope, with faith, and with love for all.

ORDINANDS

Christopher Matthew Fraser



Hello, I am Christopher Fraser and currently serving at Parkdale United Church. I am happily married to Prentice Fraser and am excited to have a family soon. I have a B.A in political science from McMaster University. After graduation I drove across the country to live in the Comox Valley BC. I worked various roles within the forestry industry throughout BC, and was once charged by a grizzly bear!

Originally a C&E Christian, By God's grace I walked into St. George's United Church in Courtenay BC. There Rev. Ryan Slifka who took me under his wing, teaching me the basics of our faith. At St. George's, I was exposed to the power and work of the Risen Christ. I saw first hand how core Christian convictions equipped people for incredible endeavors of social justice. The saints of St. George's demonstrated to me the transforming power of God's love, especially Clinton and Ellen Wise.

Rev. Ryan encouraged me to apply to seminary to consider being a leader in Christ's church. I enrolled in Emmanuel College and completed my Md.Div in 2022. I interned at Alderwood

United and am very thankful for Rev. Dr. Connie denBok for being my SME supervisor and mentor.

When I am not reading or writing I enjoy birding and loooong bike rides. I am excited to be on the lookout and participating in God's activity in my church neighbourhood.

Laura Gallagher-Doucette



Hello! My name is Laura Gallagher-Doucette, and I am a candidate for ordained ministry in the United Church of Canada.

I am a lifelong member of the United Church of Canada, having attended Trinity-St. Paul's since I was a young child, and before that, St. Matthew's United Church. I am honoured to devote my ministry to the denomination that raised me as a Christian.

I hold a combined honours in Theatre Studies and Early Modern Studies from the University of King's College, a certificate in Creative Writing from Humber College, and a Master of Divinity from Emmanuel College. Upon graduation from Emmanuel, I was awarded the Sanford Gold Medal in Divinity.

I currently serve the congregation of Runnymede United Church as their Engagement and Growth Minister. It is a delight to minister to this congregation alongside Rev. Ted Grady, particularly as this community begins a new chapter as a two-campus church, having amalgamated with Windermere United Church in 2023.

I am deeply grateful for the family, friends, and communities who have shaped my journey to ministry. Your support has been a blessing beyond words.

William Richard Gardner



As I approach this significant milestone of ordination within the United Church of Canada, I find myself reflecting on a journey that has been as enriching as it has been enlightening. My path to ministry, deeply rooted in the vibrant community of Nobleton-Schomberg, has been a testament to the power of faith, fellowship, and collective growth. This pastoral charge has been more than just a setting for my ministerial calling; it has been a dynamic ground where I have grown alongside a community that embraces each individual's spiritual journey with open hearts and minds.

My time at The Atlantic School of Theology has been instrumental in shaping me into the minister I am today. It has deepened my engagement with the Scriptures, enabling me to think critically and reflectively about the word of God. This theological education has also refined my pastoral sensitivities, equipping me to respond with compassion and empathy to those I serve. The rigorous academic and spiritual formation I received there has played a pivotal role in preparing me to live out my calling within the United Church of Canada with conviction and grace.

Looking forward, I am committed to expanding our ecumenical ministry, fostering connections that transcend denominational boundaries. The vision I carry is one of unity and collaboration among faith communities, inspired by a belief in the transformative power of shared dialogue and action. My journey, from all of the enriching experiences at The Atlantic School of Theology to the meaningful engagements within the community I serve, have imbued me with a deep sense of purpose to bridge communities in a spirit of love, hope, and reconciliation. Together, we can illuminate the path forward, guided by the teachings of Christ and the collective wisdom of our diverse faith traditions.

Krista Marie Moore



My name is Krista and I am passionate about guiding people back to God through faith in Jesus. I came to ministry later, as a mom of two amazing adult kids, with a supportive husband and family. My journey has taken me from the world of IT, acting and writing, to spiritual retreats in Peru and Tuscany. As a spiritual director and yoga instructor, I feel I came to ministry on a spiritual “walk-about,” discovering that I was both “spiritual and religious.”

Originally baptized and confirmed as a young adult at Collier Street United Church in Barrie, I spent many years at West Hill United in Scarborough, where my faith was challenged, yet my gifts for lay worship leadership was encouraged. Called by the Spirit to return to my Christian roots, I became a member of St. Mark’s United, which accompanied me during my seminary experience at Emmanuel College. I completed my SME at Churchill and Gilford United Churches in Innisfil, where I feel duly blessed to be called as their ordained minister.

I discovered the gifts of community: connecting with other churches and organizations; serving on outreach teams like Community 4 Kids and Youth Unlimited; and participating in Innisfil’s first Diwali celebration. I feel I bring fresh perspectives, spiritual energy, and enthusiasm to new initiatives like Prayer Yoga, the “Preacher’s Plunge,” and my Jesus the Healer series and Exploring Our Faith series, which deepens faith and welcomes new members to the church.

My mission is to share the love of Jesus, inspire faith and hope in God, and nurture spiritual growth in community.

Andrea Wheaton



I graduated from Emmanuel College in 1992 with a Master of Religious Education and in 1994 with a Master of Divinity. In 1989 I began the candidacy process towards ordination, but requirements, such as the settlement process, deterred me from continuing that path and I withdrew from candidacy in 1992.

As I considered other options for living into my call to ministry, in 1998 a church welcomed me, after a Toronto Conference interview, to serve in full-time accountable ministry. In 2010, I was interviewed again, to be recognized as a Designated Lay Minister even though I did not have the benefit of the DLM training. I have served two congregations in Barrie since 1998, at the first in the Ministry of Christian Education and the second as Minister of Word, Sacrament & Pastoral Care. Thirty years after seminary and with twenty-six years of experience serving in the local community of faith as their minister or on committees and boards for all other levels of the United Church, now is the right time to take this step to recognize, with ordination, my call to ministry.

While I celebrate this step with joy, I also feel some sorrow in leaving behind my DLM identity. I do know that my ministry as a DLM will not be diminished by ordination, but instead my future ministry will benefit from experience as a DLM. In continuing my faith journey, I am blessed to do so with the people of Burton Ave United where I have served since 2015!

ADMITTANDS

Néstor Medina



I have been involved with the United Church for the last 13 years as a People in Partnership Program. I went every year to Cuba taught at the Seminario Evangélico de Teología (SET) (Evangelical Seminary of Theology). For the last few years, I have also worked in several Anti-Racial discrimination initiatives including 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism. This involvement helped me imagine myself contributing to the United Church. UCC's commitment toward Indigenous peoples and towards fostering a culture of anti-racism is something that I am happy to jump on board without hesitation.

I was formed a Catholic and a Pentecostal, I came into collaboration with the United Church convinced of the importance of considering the activity of the Holy Spirit. My involvement with the UCC and its determination to become an intercultural puts on display its profound commitment to living a life of the spirit. One of the things I celebrate most about the UCC is its willingness to be intentionally open to diversity as an expression of its vocation. These are values that I treasure and that I also teach at Emmanuel College, where I serve as faculty.

I have also learned that the United Church encompasses a rich diversity of church communities. Each local church has its own character and culture which contributes to making this denomination a phenomenal experiment. The United Church of Canada can become a new home for me. It is a place where many of my gifts as a scholar, minister, and as a member of the church are welcome. My hope is that I can make a valuable contribution as a minister not just from the sidelines.

Jason Byassee



My name is Jason Byassee and I am the senior minister of Timothy Eaton Memorial Church in Toronto, Ontario.

I was previously a professor at the Vancouver School of Theology in British Columbia, where I held the Butler Chair in Homiletics and Biblical Hermeneutics. My primary vocation is to reinvigorate today's church with the best of ancient and contemporary wisdom for creatively faithful living.

I have authored or edited several books and have written widely on church and culture. I am a native of North Carolina, where I was senior pastor of Boone United Methodist Church during a period of growth from 2011-2015. More recently, I was a visiting fellow at St. John's College at Durham University in the UK.

I am married to Jaylynn Warren Byassee, a fellow Methodist minister from the US and we have served in ministry together in British Columbia. Together we have sons who are 21, 19, and 16. Things break in our house on the westside of Toronto.

RETIREES

The Rev. Daniel Benson

2014 marks the tenth anniversary of my ordination, and in looking back on my years in congregational and intentional interim ministry, a decade at General Council Office as Executive Minister of Communications, and, about the same tenure with the Anglicans as General Manager of Anglican Book Centre, I'm surprised to tally some 30 years working in Churchland. Turning the clock way back (the pun is intentional), my first vocation was as a horologist; the wandering road between tending time and tending sheep gives credence to the clichés that God moves in mysterious ways and has a sense of humour. Along the way, I have found that ministry, whatever form it takes and wherever it takes root, is always rewarding and challenging, is found both in the instant and infinite, is often clearly defined yet frustratingly obscure, and is relentless as the return of the sabbath but as remarkable as the empty tomb.

Gratitude is at the core of my faith: I've often begun a reflection, worship, or a meeting with the words, 'The first and best prayer is always one of gratitude...' Yet, I know I've often fallen short of that ideal: the pressures of ministry, an ever-increasingly complex world, the suffering I see around us and experience within us, paradoxically push gratitude aside even as it becomes more essential to our hearts. So, as I continue in retirement to serve God's church in the world in new ways, I return to gratitude: for the congregations of East End, St. Paul's Scarborough, Glebe Road, Dalston-Crown Hill, and Bloor Street; friends and colleagues at General Council and General Synod; my husband Grant and my family; and for all those who have walked this journey with me. I'm grateful for all of you and all of this: it has been time well-spent. Thanks be to God.

The Rev. Lois Brown

Lois Brown, the youngest of four children, was born on April 25, 1947 in Kirkland Lake, ON. She lived in Kearns until 1956 when the family of one boy and three girls moved to Elliot Lake, a booming uranium mining town. Her father died suddenly in 1968 when she was in first-year Co-Op Chemistry at Waterloo University. Lois continued her education at Toronto Teachers' College and taught Special Education for 32 years while taking night classes at U. of T., graduating with a BSc. She then attended Emmanuel College, graduating in May, 2005 with an M Div.

Her first pastoral charge was 12.5 years at St. Andrew's, Port Loring, and St. Paul's in Golden Valley, ON. Her second charge was 7 years at Unity United in Midland, ON. Lois is the mother of one son, Greg, who is a Superintendent in the Simcoe County District School Board, the grandmother of three grown children and the great grandmother of one. She enjoys doing 'on-call' chaplaincy at the local hospital and spending time snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, boating, swimming and travelling with her family and friends.

The Rev. Dr. James Clubine

I was born into a family that faithfully attended worship at a local Baptist church in what was then a rural part of Ontario. It was there that I learned of our Saviour Jesus Christ and his great love and grew in my faith commitment to him. Through the ministry of that congregation, I sensed a call to ministry and began divinity studies at Central Baptist Seminary. Upon graduation I served a congregation of the Missionary Church of Canada for ten years, four years as youth minister and then six years as senior pastor.

I stepped aside from pastoral ministry and took up leadership development consulting work. During that time my wife and I began worshipping at West Ellesmere United Church in Scarborough where my seminary preaching professor, Rev. Dr. James Wetherall was pastoring, and he encouraged me to return to pastoral ministry. During the process of seeking credentialing in the United Church of Canada I served, for five years, the congregations of Beverley Hills United Church and Downsview United Church in the west end of Toronto for five years, first as a student minister and then was settled there upon ordination.

In 2003 I accepted a call to Central United Church in Unionville where I have served as minister of worship and pastoral care for just over 20 years. I am grateful for the congregations I have had the joy of serving and for our Lord's faithfulness to me in that work. As I reflect on the almost forty years of pastoral ministry, I can say that there is nothing else I would rather do.

Pastor Patricia James (DLM)

My road to ministry began as a child when I joined in saying the Lord's Prayer at school every morning. We didn't ever attend church (although my parents walked the walk every day of their life) but the prayer became my evening prayer every night since grade one. The wonderful result of this simple introduction to God is that I developed the most loving, childlike relationship with the Holy Spirit. It was that innocent relationship that led me to live Micah 6:8 throughout my life. It led me to work in the social services sector helping others, until I could no longer ignore the call to ministry at 57 years old.

I am exceptionally proud of the DLM stream that I chose to guide me over the past 10 years. Throughout the extensive training, the focus on compassionate, pastoral care and the importance of including justice issues (i.e. Indigenous) in my ministry, enabled me to lead with empathy Indigenous spirituality, a crucial part in the life of the United Church.

It is through the teaching of the DLM Circles that I found ways to grow our church community and family; a family that stayed strong and connected throughout the covid years and one that I pray will be guided to do justice, love kindness, and continue to walk humbly with God.

Thank you, Lord, for your grace upon me,

The Rev. Margaret MacDonald

I am delighted to embrace this new chapter called retirement on life's journey. Thank you to the United Church for your acceptance and the opportunity to live my faith in Jesus Christ through serving Communities of Faith. I am blessed to call Canada my home.

Thank you to my family, friends and colleagues. Most importantly, thank you to all the people I encountered on my journey. Here I met Ken MacDonald. Here I baptized my grandson. Here I learned the significance of coffee fellowship and the mysteries of table conversations. It is a privilege to serve God's people.

In 1993, at my ordination service in Guyana and my admission to the United Church I heard these words: "You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you asked him in my name." (John 15:16. NRSV) With heartfelt gratitude: "Love one another!" Thanks be to God!

The Rev. Brian McIntosh

The Reverend Brian McIntosh was ordained by Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada in 1988, has served in Congregations in the Maritimes and here in Toronto, and has served at Bloordale United Church in Etobicoke from 2008 until this year, as he retires at the end of June.

Brian has served in local, regional and national United Church and ecumenical organizations as well as inter-faith and community groups, with a concentration on efforts to seek justice and advocate for equality and human dignity. Brian has served in right relations building with Indigenous peoples for 35 years, and has undertaken community development work throughout his ministry by fostering partnerships and collaboration with others who share similar goals.

Brian was the 1998 recipient of the Fredericton YMCA Peace Medallion, the 2023 Canadian Council of Imams Community Interfaith Award, is the proud father of two adult daughters, Lydia and Sarah, a grandparent of five, and is the happy husband of Debbie.

The Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam

When I began to discern a call to ordered ministry many years ago, little did I realize that I was at the beginning of a journey that would lead to 40 years as a minister in the United Church of Canada. The journey has been one of deep meaning. In 1984 I was ordained by Bay of Quinte Conference. I started out as that conference's minister with the Deaf. My feminist and liberation theology were gifts as I learned about the oppression and marginalization of the deaf community both in Canada and around the world. I worked with a deaf congregation, was the Chaplain at Sir James Whitney School with the Deaf and visited deaf people in hospitals and prisons.

I was sent to Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., the only deaf university in the world. There I took advanced sign language training as there was no place in Canada offering this program at that time. After seven years, I was called to Fenelon Falls United Church where I stayed for eleven years. This rural two-point pastoral charge taught me that we can work together to do the work and ministry of Christ. Lives can be changed and spirits nourished. I then served George St. United Church in downtown Peterborough. This congregation taught me to risk. Initiated by lay folk, we offered educational opportunities for people to engage in theology and explore their faith in a more progressive and inclusive way. We found that there was interest outside the church for the opportunities we offered. We hosted events, sometimes for up to 600 people. Questions, doubts and conversations led to new understandings of faith. In 2011 I moved to Toronto Conference (now Shining Waters Regional Council) to St. Paul's United Church in Midland where I have served for almost 13 years. This congregation has taught me to embrace

change and new technology. It engages fully in the life of the community as well as globally with its refugee sponsorships.

I am indebted to these congregations for their wisdom, faith and commitment to walk the path of Christ. I am also very grateful to the United Church of Canada whose vision of an inclusive and justice-based faith has broadened my understanding of God. It transformed my understanding on what it means to be a Christian in a multi-faith world. I was privileged to serve on the General Council Executive for six years, and on its sub-Executive for three years. I am also deeply grateful for all of those who have shared this journey with me all these years. In these people I have witnessed the Holy Spirit, the sacred mystery working in us all. Lastly, my spouse, Keith Stam, has been on this journey since the very beginning. His love and support have never wavered and for that I am truly grateful.

Dr. Barry Rieder (DLM)

Although my theological training was in the Lutheran Church, I found home within The United Church due to its strong roots in the social gospel movement and commitment to justice. I wonder though if we have become a little too inward looking and lost a bit of our salt though. I remember the first few AGMs of Toronto Conference when media would cover the proposals we approved and Stephen Mabee as president of the conference asked all congregations to participate in the Days of Action.

For the last 29 years I have been serving as the Community Minister in Jane and Finch. It has been a great honour and privilege to walk with this low income but culturally rich community. During that time, I was awarded a Social Justice Award for Outstanding Achievement and an Honourary Doctorate for work in the community. However, the greatest award has been the love and respect I received from the community. Working in partnership with the community, building upon its strengths and assets we have tried to raise the economic bar of the community. The community has and still does have its challenges, mainly rooted in systemic racialized poverty. Some of the symptoms of this are the outbreaks of violence and I must admit providing pastoral care to 3-4 fatal shootings a year has been taxing.

I am grateful that through lobbying of fellow community ministers across the country that Community Ministry is now recognized as a Community of Faith and not just seen as the poor cousins on the back porch. Not only does community ministry have much to offer the particular communities they serve, but has much to offer to the wider church. I am grateful that at the last AGM, a proposal to sustain the three Community Ministries in the region was approved. I retire in confidence that the vital community ministry in Jane and Finch will continue and that God is calling the Church to where it needs to be. I leave you with a quote from Proverbs 14:31 “If you oppress poor people, you insult the God who made them; but kindness shown to the poor is an act of worship.”

The Rev. Meriel Simpson

A first generation Canadian, I was born and grew up in Toronto. I gained my B.A. in Modern Languages from Victoria University, U of T and later earned a Business and Computer Programming Certificate from Ryerson. For many years, I worked in the corporate world, initially in the airline industry, then as a computer programmer and finally as a Communication Specialist. My home congregation was Dewi Sant Welsh United Church in Toronto, where I was

an active member for 30 years. Between my corporate work and church work, I gained a lot of leadership experience.

Over the years at Dewi Sant, I taught Sunday School, was on Council, assisted the Clerk of Session and did some lay preaching. Like many other people, my call was not a “burning bush” but a slow realization and response to God’s nudges and whisperings, which had never stopped through the years. I studied for the ministry and received my Masters of Divinity degree from Emmanuel College in 2014.

After completing an internship at Westway United Church (U.C), I was ordained in June 2015 and appointed to Cosburn U.C., where I ministered to a small congregation in the throes of deciding to become part of a regional church. In December, 2016, I was delighted to receive a call from Scarborough Bluffs U.C. to be their minister.

The congregation of Scarborough Bluffs welcomed me very warmly and I soon came to know a kind and vital group of people who were devoted to their church. We had seven great years together, however, as in everyone’s life, there comes a point when planning for retirement becomes essential. My remaining family lived in BC and my sister was practicing medicine in Michigan. We decided to be with family in Nanaimo. We made the trip across the country at the beginning of May and have just moved into our new home.

The Rev. Linda Wheler

I am grateful to have served in ministry within the United Church for the last 27 years. It has been a great privilege to witness the work of the Holy Spirit within people and congregations throughout my ministry.

I graduated from Emmanuel College with a M. Div in 1997 and I was settled into a part-time position in ministry with children and youth at King City United Church. At the same time, I started a part time position in pastoral care at Islington United which eventually led to a fulltime position at Islington. I had the joy of serving the people of Islington United Church as Minister of Pastoral Care for 17 years. Then since 2014 I have had the privilege of serving with the people at Trinity United Church in Newmarket for the last ten years.

While in Toronto West Presbytery I served On Education and Students Committee. When I moved to Trinity I became an Educational Supervisor, I had the honour of accompanying three people on their journey toward ministry.

I have also had the opportunity of serving in the ministry of connecting resources and ministry with the Church Development and Leadership Committee at Toronto United Church Council.

This last 27years has been an exciting journey of ministry, learning, growing and serving within this United Church of ours as we continue to faithfully seek creative ways of serving in the mission and ministry of Christ Jesus.

The Rev. Neil Ryerson Young

Neil Young was a candidate out of Woodroffe United Church, Ottawa, and studied at Emmanuel College, Toronto, 1983-86, with 2 summers as an Armed Forces Chaplain Assistant and summer

'85 on the Grasslands Pastoral charge in south Saskatchewan: Mankota, McCord, Glentworth, Fir Mountain & Wood Mountain. In 1984-85 he was on field placement at College St. UC, in Toronto.

Ordained at Montral & Ottawa Conference in 1986, he was settled in Borderlands Pastoral Charge, Moose Jaw Presbytery: Coronach, Fife Lake, Rockglen & Killdeer. The next year he married Kate McLarty, who worked candidate supply on the charge until 1989. He took a 2nd settlement in Iron Bridge & Bellingham, Algoma Presbytery, while Kate took the Rydal Bank charge. Thereafter, they worked separate pastoral charges.

He moved to Harriston & Cotswold, Bruce Presbytery, in 1992, then to Erindale in Mississauga, Halton Presbytery, in 1999. In 2015 he moved to St. Andrew's at Yonge & Bloor in Toronto, from which he now retires. He has served in matters of finance and property at all levels of the church, and was on the council of Emmanuel College and the Board of Regents of Victoria University for 9 years.

His interests have included ancient numismatics and Biblical archaeology. His collections of sermon volumes from the 1800s and pages from pre-King James bibles are now in the collection of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at U. of T. He does historical reenactment, serving as a Grenadier in the King's Royal Regiment of New York (1777-1784) a Loyalist formation from the War of the American Rebellion.

Kate & Neil have three daughters and three grandsons.

The Rev. Janet Smith Zenwirt

Who runs home from school in Grade 1 to teach their teddy bears from their Sunday School books? I was a dancing spirit preaching good news and making sure they were seen, heard, and loved. My childhood was steeped in church life at Queensville United. My family demonstrated the value found in people's full humanity, and I took this approach through my communications, advocacy, and community work in addition to church roles prior to attending Emmanuel College in January 2011. Mid-life provides experiences for understanding the complexities of life and death, essentials for pastoral ministry. I also learned to embrace patience and waiting as I delayed graduation until 2016.

After an internship at St. Andrew's United, Georgetown, I served briefly at Christchurch United, Mississauga before Westway United, Toronto. I am currently savouring ministry at St. Mark's, Toronto. I treasure helping people deepen connections with each other, our broader world, and God through inclusive, spiritually enriching approaches. The vibrancy and tenacity of people has stayed in my heart during these brave days of being the church and living out the inclusive and daring ways of Jesus. It has been a blessing to journey with people in celebration and sorrow as we listen for the Spirit's quiet yet bold presence to lead us.

While I intend to embrace retirement, I will continue to treasure my church, the beautiful people I have met along the way, and my supportive colleagues. The Dancing Spirit will continue to lead me on faith-filled adventures that strive for connection with others and God. I will still demonstrate and utter these words: know that you are seen, heard, and loved just as you are.

*Note: All retirees above have given their consent to be listed here – it may not reflect the actual list of Retirees

JUBILANDS

The following ministers are celebrating significant anniversaries of their entry into ministry within The United Church of Canada:

| | |
|----------|---|
| 70 years | Morley Hawley John Klassen |
| 60 years | Kenneth Deer David Winsor Morris Bartlett Kenneth Moy |
| 50 years | O. Wayne Myhre James Thompson Susan Thompson Heather Branch |
| 45 years | David Allen Linda Levin Bruce Roffey A. Jean Ward F. Stephen Willey Paul Wilson P. Ann Howes Kyong Ja (Kay) Cho Mary Davis Emmanuel Tehindrazanarivelo |
| 40 years | Karen Ptolemy-Stam D. Lorraine Newton-Comar Andrew Comar Andrew Stirling William Kervin Deborah Hart Robert Oliphant Jean Hunnisett Edward Reeve Judith MacGillivray |
| 35 years | Linda Godfrey Thomas Davis Mary Katharine Young John Niles Victor Poelzer Kevin Logie John Joseph Mastandrea Mary-Ann Jansen |

| | |
|----------|--|
| 30 years | Barbara Lloyd Sung Shim Christopher Lehman Won Hur John Perigoe Young-Joon Rhee Arlene Simms William Ford |
| 25 years | Nina Fulford Nelsona Dundas Sang Ye Yoon Kathleen Mowat M. Valerie Blatherwick-Noakes Christopher Cheung W.J. Keith Lockhart |
| 20 years | Ralph Wushke Cynthia Randall Charles Arasaratnam Ratna Arasaratnam Sandra Michener Sarah Miller Mary Joseph Ambury Stuart Peter McNaughton Jim McKean |
| 15 years | William Haughton Michael Blair Anne Hepburn Young-Hwan Yun M. Diane Bennett-Jones |
| 10 years | Sheryl Johnson Daniel Benson |
| 5 years | Jason Meyers Nicholas Forrester Heather Stevenson Stephen Milton Daniel Reed |

OBITUARIES

The Reverend Helen Jane Prior (March 16, 1964 – May 8, 2024)

Helen was an Ordained Interim Minister in the United Church of Canada for more than 30 years and served four pastoral charges as a settled minister and completed seven intentional interim ministries, serving in both Saskatchewan and Ontario. She served since 2017 on IMN's teaching faculty and was an IMN member for nearly 20 years.

She is survived by her wife, Barb Adams, and parents Jean and Wyn Adams.

The Reverend Dr. Donald Jay (May 7, 1928 – April 30, 2024)

Don served in various churches in Alberta and Ontario, including in Uxbridge, Brampton, and Barrie. He was honored to be Minister Emeritus at both Central United Church and Collier St. United Church. We celebrate his 70 years of ministry with The United Church of Canada.

He is survived by his wife, Christina Jay (Murphy), children Donna, Dianne and Karen, and five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The Reverend John Tudor Harries (January 29, 1940 – April 8, 2024)

John's career was seeded at Manor Road United Church and Regent Park United Church in Toronto, before serving in several communities near Kirkland Lake and North Bay. He also served at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church for several years. Following his retirement, John coordinated outreach initiatives to retired ministers in the former Living Waters Presbytery. He also served as a part-time minister in two congregations - Browns Corners and Lemonville United Churches. We celebrate his 56 years of ministry with The United Church of Canada.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara Ellen (Bowman), children Dylan and Kristina, and grandchild Blair.

The Reverend Karen Hilfman-Millson (February 28, 1956 – February 21, 2024)

We celebrate Karen's 36 years in ministry, including serving at St. Paul's United in Orillia for 17 years. Karen was a good friend and colleague as a member of the staff in both the former Toronto Conference and then in Shining Waters Regional Council. She was passionate about relationships and her life work of creating Beloved Community rooted in Circle Culture / Authentic Connection Culture which she had the opportunity to explore and develop as an ordained minister of The United Church of Canada. Karen was known as vibrant and dynamic with high energy to engage the people and world around her.

She is survived by her husband, Allan, children Sarah and Melissa, and four grandchildren Copper, Makenna, Lewis and Zachary.

The Reverend William Brumby “Bill” Thorneloe (August 13, 1924 – February 10, 2024)

We celebrate Bill's 75 years in ministry, including serving in the former Toronto Conference at Victoria Park United, Riverside-Emery United and Alderwood United before retiring in 1989. Bill was in his 100th year!

He is survived by his wife, Beth (Brown), and children David, Sheila, and predeceased by Edward and John, and predeceased by granddaughter Emma, and survived by 7 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

The Reverend David Bruce Black (November 13, 1942 – January 2, 2024)

David was retired but during his 45 years in ministry he served the following congregations: Streetsville, Lynedoch, Annan and Woodford, Westway, Newtonville, Kendal and Shiloh, Harriston, Calgary, Corunna, and Ebenezer United Churches. He was most recently a voluntary associate minister with Grace United Church in Barrie.

He is survived by his wife, Lorraine, and children Alexandra and Gordon, stepchildren Jennifer and Kelly, and his five grandchildren.

The Reverend James Moulton (October 24, 1930 – December 5, 2023)

We celebrate Jim's 65 years in ministry, where he served many communities of faith in the former Toronto Conference before he retired in 1996. He remained active for many years as a retired minister in the Peterborough area.

He is predeceased by his wife, Myrna Mable (Taylor), and children Heather, Brooks and Paul, and four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

The Reverend Zenovia Skibinski (January 2, 1942 – November 23, 2024)

We celebrate Zen's 43 years in ministry, including serving at Parkdale United and St. Paul's United, Scarborough before retiring in 1993.

She is pre-deceased by her husband, Rev. Michael Skibinski.

The Reverend Murray Binstead (November 9, 1932 – October 12, 2023)

Murray's pastoral career with The United Church of Canada spanned more than 35 years.

He is survived by his wife, Marion (Black), his children Karen, Kevin, Heather and David, and his 6 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

The Reverend Beverley Ann Marie Irwin (March 21, 1941 – October 8, 2023)

After a long career in the United Church, Bev retired in early 2019. Her last charge was at St. Paul's United Church in Midland.

Bev was predeceased by her spouse, Heather Graham, who passed in September 2023.

The Reverend Heather Graham (February 27, 1949 – September 16, 2023)

Heather will be remembered as minister for Midhurst United Church, and Wyevale Waverley Pastoral Charge and had broad communities of faith across both Saskatchewan and Ontario.

At the time of her death, she was survived by her spouse, Bev Irwin, who later passed in October of 2023.

The Reverend George Albert Moore (April 12, 1949 – June 25, 2023)

George attended Emanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto, where he received a Bachelor of Divinity degree. He was ordained as a minister in the United Church of Canada, serving congregations in Scarborough Ontario, Kelleher Saskatchewan, Rockwood and Port Dover Ontario. He spent many years at Dalston-Crown Hill UC.

He was survived by his wife, Alice and his children Mary and Kent, and his three grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren and his one great-great-grandchild.

The Reverend Donald Matheson (November 11, 1942 - August 21, 2023)

Don enjoyed a long and varied career in pastoral ministry, chaplaincy, education and administrative positions with The United Church of Canada. He enjoyed retired pulpit supply in his retirement.

He is survived by his wife, Blondina, and several nieces and nephews.



**DIGEST OF ACTIONS
THE EXECUTIVE
OF SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL
FOR THE PERIOD May 31, 2023 to June 4, 2024**

Decisions made by the Executive by E-Vote May 18, 2023

1. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Fred Victor Centre

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of Fred Victor Centre to purchase the property known as 501 Logan Avenue from The Toronto United Church Council.

This is based on the Board Minutes of April 20, 2023, the request from Fred Victor Centre staff received May 17, 2023 and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

b. The Toronto United Church Council

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of The Toronto United Church Council to sell the property known as 501 Logan Avenue to Fred Victor Centre.

This is based on the Board Minutes of December 8, 2022, the request from The Toronto United Church Council staff received May 16, 2023, draft minutes of settlement with regards to Remediation Crossclaim and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve The Toronto United Church Council 2021-2022 Board of Directors

Carole Bennett
Elizabeth Cunningham
Greg Daly
Brian Heinmiller
Roberta Howey
Ted Meyers
Harry W. Ort
Doug Smith
Christopher White
Grant Williams
Kate Young

This is based on the Annual Meeting minutes of June 6, 2021, 2021 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve The Toronto United Church Council 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Carole Bennett
Elizabeth Cunningham
Greg Daly
Brian Heinmiller
Roberta Howey
Ted Meyers
Harry W. Ort
Doug Smith
Christopher White
Grant Williams
Kate Young

This is based on the draft Annual Meeting minutes of June 23, 2022, 2022 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada

c. Dunkerron Cemetery motion:

WHEREAS The Board of the Trustees of the Dunkerron United Church (the “Vendor”) holds the property legally described as PT LT 1 CON 3 WEST GWILLIMBURY BEING PTS 4 & 5 51R38624; TOWN OF BRADFORD WEST GWILLIMBURY (the “Property”), being the cemetery that is adjacent to the church building of the former Dunkerron United Church;

AND WHEREAS the Vendor wishes to sever the cemetery property from the adjacent church building property and transfer the Property to the Township of Bradford-West Gwillimbury (the “Purchaser”);

RESOLVED THAT the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the severance and sale of the Property to the Purchaser, for nominal consideration, closing as soon as reasonable possible, as recommended by Toronto United Church Council (TUCC).

Decisions made by the Executive by E-Vote May 31, 2023

2. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council nominates Philip Armstrong as a Director of The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation at their Annual Meeting on June 7, 2023.

Decisions made by the Executive June 20, 2023

3. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Meeting Proposal SW2023-01: A Vision for the Post-Pandemic Church from a Community Ministries Perspective be referred to the Social and Ecological Justice Commission (SEJC) for action, in consultation with other Shining Waters Regional Council Commissions.

4. That the SWRC Executive refer SW2023-02 "Funding Community Ministry as a Priority for the Church" to the Communities of Faith Commission, in consultation with the Grants and Mission Support Committee, for further exploration and to make recommendations to the Executive for action.

5. That the SWRC Executive refer SW2023-03 "Process for Election of President Elect” to the Nominations Committee for recommendations to the Executive around policy.

6. That the SWRC Executive refer SW2023-04 "Working for a Guaranteed Livable Income for all Canadians" to the Social and Ecological Justice Commission for further action.

7. That the SWRC Executive approve the following additions to the SW Property Policy:

- If the property is to be held for development or rental to provide a long-term income source, it may be transferred to the Shining Waters Regional Trust and managed by Kindred Works and/or Toronto United Church Council. Any money or investments remaining at the time the congregation disbands will be used to assist with maintenance and capital costs associated with holding this and other properties.
- The congregation may make a proposal to the Communities of Faith Commission regarding community partners who wish to continue accessing space in the building. Where possible, these requests will be accommodated for as long as is reasonably practicable, however the first priority will be support for United Church ministry.

Decisions made by the Executive by E-Vote September 6, 2023

8. That the meeting of the Shining Waters Regional Council, occurring June 7 – 9, 2024, be held at North Bramalea United Church.

Decisions made by the Executive by October 3, 2023

9. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Camp Ahshunyoong operating as Camp Big Canoe

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Camp Ahshunyoong operating as Camp Big Canoe 2022-2024 Board of Directors

David Berton
Doug Clark
Patricia Clark
Laurie Cook
Heather Dahmer
John Dinner
Vicki Greenwood
Jeremy Hyde
Katherine Leaman
Scott Taylor
Chris Tindal
Sue Williams

This is based on the draft minutes of Annual General Meeting of April 27, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

b. Central King Seniors Residence

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Central King Seniors Residence 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Mary Louise Ashbourne
Alex Gribben
David Hewitt
Joyce Klamer
Sandy McCamus
Taye Maddison
Lang Moffat
Stephen Mogford
Jennifer Osther
Bob Putnam

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of May 24, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

c. Fred Victor Centre

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Fred Victor Centre 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Chris Anastasopoulos
Anne Bell
Sandra Bennett
Neill Carson
Mardi Daley
Nancy Easton
Michele Erskine
John Hinds
Jawad Kassab
Ken McKinnon
Monica Masciantonio
Anju Nair
Prossy Nambatya
Muwanguzi Ssebagala
Christina Topp

This is based on the draft minutes of Annual General Meeting of June 28, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

d. The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC)

...based on the guidance received from General Council Staff, pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve BY-LAW NO. 4, Articles of Amendment, and the Restated Articles of Incorporation, as approved by the members on June 7, 2023 of the incorporated ministry known as The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation.

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve The Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Philip Armstrong
John Barr
Brent Caslick
Bill Jermyn
Mark Laird
Louise Mahood
Harry Ramsaran
Nick Walker

These are based on the draft minutes of Annual Members Meeting of June 7, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

Insurance for 2023 has not been received yet with the challenges of the changeover to UCC Protect. Erik Mathieson of the General Council office confirms that PTCC is insured and as this is not a delay caused by PTCC this recommendation is being presented to the Executive to suspend the usual practice of this requirement. Staff will continue to follow up.

e. The Toronto United Church Council (TUCC)

...based on the guidance received from General Council Staff, pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve GENERAL BY-LAW NO. A, and Articles of Amendment, as approved by the members on June 15, 2023 of the incorporated ministry known as The Toronto United Church Council.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve The Toronto United Church Council 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Carole Bennett
Elizabeth Cunningham
Greg Daly
Brian Heinmiller
Roberta Howey
Doug Mills
Harry W. Ort
David Shearman
Grant Williams
Kate Young

These are based on the draft Annual Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

f. United Church of Canada GO Project

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve the United Church of Canada GO Project 2020-2021 Board of Directors

Brian Allen
Jane Armstrong
Dorothy Carson
Keith Hall
Carla Langhorst
Laura Leach
Louise Mahood

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2020, 2020 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve the United Church of Canada GO Project 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Jane Armstrong
Dorothy Carson
Keith Hall
Vineet Khattar
Laura Leach

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2022, 2022 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada, approve the United Church of Canada GO Project 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Jane Armstrong
Dorothy Carson
Lloyd Dunham
Keith Hall

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2022 and May 8, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada. Staff clarified that the above approval is accurate per GO Project's practice, rather than their by-laws. By-laws are being updated to make this correction and to be in compliance with ONCA.

Insurance for 2023 been received, but with the challenges of the changeover to UCC Protect, the IM has not been able to obtain a missing D&O certificate for 2021. Hub has confirmed this insurance is in place, and as this is not a delay caused by GO Project this recommendation is being presented to the Executive to suspend the usual practice of this requirement.

Staff and the IM are continuing to follow up on the by-laws and insurance.

g. Weston King Neighbourhood Centre

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Weston King Neighbourhood Centre 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Jean-Marie Boutot
Faisal Hassan
Kerri Lee
Daniela Marinova
Eleni Marino
Lang Moffat
Olive Noel
Sally Pan (Poon)
Iqbal Singh
Kathy Steiner
Kenny Stier
Barbara Stone

This is based on the AGM Minutes of September 20, 2022, board minutes of October 20, 2022, 2022 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Weston King Neighbourhood Centre 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Jean-Marie Boutot
Simone Cato
Rochell Elliston
Faisal Hassan
Kerri Lee
Eleni Marino
Lang Moffat
Sally Pan (Poon)
Kathy Steiner
Kenny Stier
Barbara Stone

This is based on the draft AGM Minutes of June 20, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

10. That the SWRC Executive refer Harry Oussoren's Proposal to the Social and Ecological Justice Commission (SEJC) for further review and possible action.

11. That the SWRC Executive initiate a conversation with the Office of Vocation and other regional councils about the North and Central Candidacy Board letter, with the expectation the conversation would lead to a joint conversation with the theological schools.

12. That the SWRC Executive approve the following recommendation from the Nominations Commission re: Succession Planning:

- That each commission and committee will normally have a three-year term for leadership that will include, one year as chair-elect and two years as chair. Recognizing that there is a six-year membership term limit and that some people will not be named chair-elect in their first three years, their term as chair and their term on the commission/committee may end at the same time. If they continue on the commission/committee following the end of their term as chair, they would become past-chair until their term is complete.

13. That the SWRC Executive approve the recommendation from the Communities of Faith Commission to apply for a Seeds of Hope Grant.

14. There was consensus that Jody will send the email from Allyce to the SEJC for action, as well as a supporting letter from Tina as Chair.

Decisions made by the Executive by November 7, 2023

15. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Abiona Centre for Infant & Early Mental Health (formerly The Massey Centre for Women)

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Abiona Centre for Infant & Early Mental Health 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Edam Akan
Jessica Amey
Lisa Blanchette
Alana Buckley
Beth Dewitt
Susan Golets
Michael Kuske
Carolina Martelo
Anika Mehta
Jalpa Patel
Elena Simonetta
Hilary Smee
Catherine Wang

This is based on the draft Annual Members Meeting Minutes of September 19, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of Abiona Centre for Infant & Early Mental Health in connection with its ongoing arrangements with the City of Toronto under its Contribution Agreement with the City dated June 28, 2023 to provide the City with a registered third mortgage on 55-57 Humewood Drive, Toronto, Ontario, in the amount of \$10,000.00.

This is based on the request received October 25, 2023 from Abiona Centre, and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

N.B. The Abiona Centre board is conducting an email vote and will provide staff with confirmation when completed.

b. Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2020-2021 Board of Directors

Ken W. Andras
Chris Barfield
Graham Clark
Jeff Dobson
Karen Hamilton
Shannon Lundquist
Tim Magwood
Jessica Marangos
Sally Jo Martin
Melody Onuoto
Carol Rhynas
Patti Smith
Myriam Theodule

This is based on the AGM minutes of October 28, 2020, 2020 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2021-2022 Board of Directors

Janet Adamson
Ken W. Andras
Graham Clark
Jeff Dobson

Karen Hamilton
Tim Magwood
Jessica Marangos
Sally Jo Martin
Melody Onuoto
Patti Smith
Myriam Theodule

This is based on the AGM minutes of November 24, 2021, 2021 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Janet Adamson
Ken W. Andras
Graham Clark
Jeff Dobson
Karen Hamilton
Tim Magwood
Jessica Marangos
Sally Jo Martin
Jenn Meeker
Melody Onuoto
Patti Smith
Myriam Theodule

This is based on the draft AGM minutes of November 22, 2022, 2022 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

c. The Toronto United Church Council (TUCC)

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada and the request from The Toronto United Church Council approve the transfer agreement for 86 Cedar Street, Orillia between The Toronto United Church Council and Hillcrest Lodge.

This is based on the draft Board Meeting Minutes of October 26, 2023 the transfer agreement and other documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

Currently the property is leased to the corporation on a long-term triple net lease basis. To be eligible for property tax exemption the operator of the housing project must also be the beneficial owner. The transfer agreement includes a reversionary clause that would return title to TUCC in the event that the corporation ceased to exist or changed its purpose.

16. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council authorizes the Executive Minister or their designate, where a congregation has disbanded, to transfer property that is not being sold

to the regional trust for the purpose of holding such property for development and/or rental to create a sustainable income source for the work of the Regional Council.

17. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council approves and authorizes the sale of the property of the former Cheltenham United Church, being 14309 & 14299 Creditview Road, Cheltenham, ON, to John Grange, in the amount of Three Million, five hundred thousand (\$3,500,000) with a completion date of December 14, 2023.

18. That when a camp within the bounds of Shining Waters Regional Council requests a loan, it will be approved by the Communities of Faith Commission as part of the Regional Property Policy and reported to the Executive, for information.

19. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council accepts the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for the Process of Election of President Elect to be included in the Regional Council Executive Policy:

After discerning with each nominee that they are equipped to serve in this capacity, the Nominations Committee will present all nominees for the position of President Elect to the Regional Council meeting at the end of the first year of the President's two-year term for election to serve for one year as President Elect, two years as President, and one year as Past President.

20. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council receive the Executive Minister Report, for information.

Decisions made by the Executive by December 5, 2023

21. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive require the Abiona Centre Board to provide their board motion with regard to their registered third mortgage on 55-57 Humewood Drive, Toronto, Ontario, in the amount of \$10,000.00.

22. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Ina Grafton Gage Home of Toronto

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Ina Grafton Gage Home of Toronto 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Maura Bascom
Anne Fomin
Ntonghanwah Forcheh
Pamela Gauci
Molly Marrack
Kevin Pook
Rizuan Rahman

This is based on the draft minutes of Annual General Meeting of September 20, 2023 and board meeting of October 6, 2023, the 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

b. Wilmar Heights United Church Non-Profit Homes

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Wilmar Heights United Church Non-Profit Homes 2023-2024 Board of Directors

David Almack
Trevins Fonseka
Frances Greco
Neil Harris
Bridie Lane
Tony Lo
Jim McArthur
Jo-Anne McArthur
Patricia Shearer
Ty Yusko

This is based on the draft minutes of Annual Virtual Zoom General Meeting of June 20, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

23. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the recommendations of the Grants and Mission Support Committee as presented, recommend the Net Annual Revenue grant applications to the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation for consideration, recommend the 5% Capital grant applications to the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation, recommend the St. Enoch's Fund grant applications to Toronto United Church Council, and recommend the Toronto Southeast Presbytery Major Capital Fund application to Toronto United Church Council.

(3 Abstentions – Tina Conlon, Jingle Ayupan, Isaac Kamta)

24. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the recommendation of the Grants and Mission Support Committee to the release of the third year of funding to the community ministries of Davenport-Perth, Jane Finch and Regent Park and recommend the Net Annual Income grant, the 5% Capital grants and the Community Ministries Fund grants to the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation.

(3 Abstentions – Tina Conlon, Jingle Ayupan, Isaac Kamta)

25. That the Executive of the Shining Waters Regional Council approve the 2024 Budget as presented.

(1 Abstention – Peter Hartmans)

26. There was consensus that the January 2, 2024 SW Executive meeting be canceled and will resume on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 and that there will be no Executive meetings the week of RCMs in the spring for both regions.

27. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council receive the Executive Minister Report, for information.

Decisions made by the Executive by February 6, 2024

28. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Fred Victor Centre

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of Fred Victor Centre to renew the 40 Oak Street mortgage with Toronto United Church Council with a three-year term and an amortization over 13 years, of up to \$236,379, at the rate of 4% or the Bank of Nova Scotia three-year interest rate, whichever is the higher on the date of the renewal as approved by the Fred Victor Centre Board of Directors on November 16, 2023.

This is based on the minutes of Board Meeting of November 16, 2023, letter from TUCC dated September 29, 2023, and receipt of other required documentation per Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of Fred Victor Centre to enter into a Letter of Commitment and Escrow Agreement and the delivery of the Promissory Note for the Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition (MURA) program with the City of Toronto as approved by the Fred Victor Centre Board of Directors on November 16, 2023.

This is based on the minutes of Board Meeting of November 16, 2023, briefing note regarding the MURA project (summary below), and receipt of other required documentation per Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

MURA is a program funded by the City of Toronto to support non-profits to purchase affordable housing that is at risk of being lost to the private market. Fred Victor applied for MURA funding in the spring and recently found out the application was successful.

It will have access to up to \$6 million to purchase a residential building with existing affordable stock. The property will need to meet specific criteria. Encor, Fred Victor's real estate firm, has been engaged to investigate potential properties with 25-30 units. As well, they will be looking for property with potential for additional housing development on site. The City is on board with this strategy. Funds will be held in escrow by Torkin Manes. Fred Victor will have one year to find a property and enter into an APS.

29. That the SWRC Executive approve the revised purpose as found in the Social and Ecological Justice Commission policy to now read:

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission will encourage, support, and initiate justice work within Shining Waters Regional Council, viewing and acting on issues through the lenses of racial, social, ecological justice and economic equality.

30. That the SWRC Executive authorize SW Staff to begin negotiations for the purpose of changing the terms of Toronto Southeast Presbytery Major Capital Fund to include the entire region.

31. That the Executive of SWRC authorizes the Regional Staff Lead to engage in conversation with Abiona Centre for Infant and Early Mental Health pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada and, if appropriate, begin formal discussions and procedures to move this corporation to a Category 4 Legacy Incorporated Ministry.

32. That the Executive of SWRC authorizes the Regional Staff Lead to engage in conversation with Fred Victor Centre pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada and, if appropriate, begin formal discussions and procedures to move this corporation to a Category 4 Legacy Incorporated Ministry.

33. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council approves and authorizes the sale of Ardtrea United Church, located at 3601 Menoke Beach Road in the municipality of Severn Ontario, to the Orillia Masonic Temple Limited for four hundred thirty-five thousand dollars (\$435,000) with a closing date of February 29, 2024 and directs the Trustees as appointed by motion of the Executive on September 7, 2022 to act on behalf of the Regional Council in executing the sale.

Decisions made by the Executive by March 5, 2024

34. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Church of the Master Homes Corporation

.....pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Church of the Master Homes Corporation 2024-2025 Board of Directors

Pauline Anderson
Jennifer Couthino
Robert Fletcher
Mathew Peltier

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of January 16, 2024, the 2024 board approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

b. Grace Place Community Resource Centre

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Grace Place Community Resource Centre 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Daniel Clark
Linda Davis
C. Jean Jamieson
Chris Moon
Robert Reilly

This is based on the Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Members of November 21, 2023, the 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other

required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

c. Simcoe Presbytery Camp o/a Camp Simpresca

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Simcoe Presbytery Camp 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Geoff Belanger
Brian Cooper
Lucas Cooper
Paul Cooper
Sarah Draper
Peter Fairman
Sarah Fairman
Taylor Poulin

This is based on the draft AGM Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

35. That the SWRC Executive approve the 2022 SWRC Audited Financial Statements.

36. That when a camp within the bounds of Shining Waters Regional Council requests a loan, it will be approved by the Communities of Faith Commission as part of the Regional Property Policy and reported to the Executive, for information.

37. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council reconsider the motion of November 7, 2023 that when a camp within the bounds of Shining Waters Regional Council requests a loan, it will be approved by the Communities of Faith Commission as part of the Regional Property Policy and reported to the Executive, for information.

38. Defeated that when a camp within the bounds of Shining Waters Regional Council requests a loan, it will be approved by the Communities of Faith Commission as part of the Regional Property Policy and reported to the Executive, for information.

39. That the SWRC Executive approve the additional funding of up to \$20,000 to support the hiring of a fundraiser to support the development of a capital campaign with the goal of 10 million dollars to sustain the existing community ministries while also providing seed funding for potential future community ministry in SWRC.

Decisions made by the Executive by April 23, 2024

40. That the Shining Waters Regional Council Executive take the following actions:

a. Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc.

... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Janet Adamson
Ken W. Andras
Graham Clark
Jeffrey Dale
Jeff Dobson
Emma Hosein
Tony Kerkes
Tim Magwood
Jessica Marangos
Sally Jo Martin
Jenn Meeker
Melody Onuoto
Patti Smith

This is based on the draft Board Minutes, Annual General Meeting, November 21, 2023, 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

41. With a vision for the long-term Ministry of the SWRC and the active support of both communities of faith and outreach ministries of the regional council, that the Executive Minister, Peter Hartmans, create a proposal to be voted on via e-vote by Executive and then to be brought to the Regional Council Meeting, to review the current spending commitments and current distribution of proceeds from property sales within the Shining Waters Regional Council and that SWRC would pause on any current proposals around the distribution of funds.

42. That the SWRC Executive receive Janet MacDonald's letter of resignation effective June 30th, 2025, with extreme gratitude.

43. That under exceptional circumstances, the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council will consider a request from admission ministry personnel who are approved to be celebrated at a Celebration of Ministry service, to participate virtually; and that the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council accepts the request of the Rev. James (Jason) Byasse to participate virtually in the Celebration of Ministry service on Saturday, June 7, 2024.

44. That the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council recommends that the regional council provide a loan of \$50,000 in support of the ongoing ministry of St. Luke's United Church, Toronto with the understanding that they will continue to work with Eun-Joo Park to create a more sustainable ministry going forward, with such loan to be repaid from the income of development of their property.

45. There was consensus that a message be posted on the SWRC website welcoming Regional Council Reps and Ministry Personnel to stay for the Celebration of Ministry Service but invite those interested in only the CoMS to consider doing it online.

Decisions made by the Executive by May 28, 2024

46. That the Shining Waters Regional Council (10) Executive take the following action(s):

a. United Church of Canada GO Project

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the request of United Church of Canada GO Project to enter into a bridge loan with Toronto United Church Council of up to \$80,000, at the rate of 4% or the Bank of Nova Scotia three-year interest rate (maximum 6%), whichever is the higher on the date of the first draw. Two draws of up to \$40,000 with two repayments on or about Dec. 3, 2024 and February 28, 2025 including accrued interest.

This is based on the request from United Church of Canada GO Project, draft minutes of Board Email vote of May 10, 2024, letter from TUCC dated May 1, 2024, and receipt of other required documentation per Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

47. That the SWRC Executive approve David Leyton-Brown's election to Executive for a one-year term following the 2024 SW Regional Council Meeting.

48. That the SWRC Executive recommend a deferral of the 2025 Shining Waters Draft Budget until the fall of 2024 at an online Regional Council Meeting, no later than November 30, 2024.

49. That the suggested dates for the 2025 SW Online RCM be October 24-25, 2025.

50. That SWRC cover the regional council's share of the basic moving expenses for Shawn Redden, Faith Formation Minister, as outlined by the UCC, up to maximum of \$9,000 for SWRC's portion.

Decisions made by the Executive by June 4, 2024

51. That SWRC Executive rescind the 2024 Shining Waters Regional Council Meeting proposal entitled *SW2024-01: Proceeds on Property Sales*.



ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT OF SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Regional Council:

Our regional meeting theme for this year is “Sanctuary: Towards a Kingdom of Peace, Justice and Reconciliation.” This regional meeting is a wonderful opportunity to gather together in-person and online across our regional council. We join together as United Church to celebrate our Ministry together as communities of faith, seek encouragement from each other, as we share the gospel and most of all worship and give thanks! As a regional council, as communities of faith, as outreach ministry, we have returned to a more normal routine following lockdowns. Returning to a new normal has been slow for many communities of faith with the disruption of the pandemic challenging the foundation of many within our regional council. We hold each other in prayer.

As a region, as community, as individuals, we give thanks as we continue to be on a journey together; we celebrate the resilience of our churches and the expression of the Gospel in many new and creative ways.

Connecting within our Regional Council:

Although this past year many of our communities of faith, outreach ministries, and camps have struggled figuring out our new normal, we have continued a ministry of caring and support in new and creative ways. Volunteers, music leaders, ministry personnel, camp staff, outreach staff, and congregational support staff have all worked tirelessly. Along with weekly worship in-person, many communities of faith continue to offer ministry through online worship and gathering for meetings virtually - a new and creative offering which was limited across the regional council, pre-pandemic.

As a regional council, the region’s primary tool for connecting continues to be online gatherings, for both Ministry Personnel and Lay Leaders for support, updates, and education. Our website/newsletter “Currents” continues to be a key tool for communication within our regional council. Many local and a few regional networks and local groups have also met to connect, learn, challenge, listen, and work together. The Executive also celebrates the significant work of the regional council Commissions, Committees, networks/clusters, and informal gatherings of UCC folks and community members.

The Regional Council met together in-person May 26-28, 2023 and online September 19, 2023 to honour our mutual ministry together and complete our administrative duties for the year.

Festival of Faith:

This past year, Spring 2023, the Canadian Shield Regional Council invited Shining Waters Regional Council and many other guests from outside the region, to gather together in mutual ministry at the Festival of Faith in North Bay. This was an opportunity for folks from across the regions and Ontario to join together as community to listen, learn, laugh, cry, and grow together in our mutual ministry. We put aside our administrative ministry and gathering together focusing on fellowship and learning from across the region and including guests from across Ontario and Canada.

New in 2025, both the Shining Waters Regional Council and The Canadian Shield Regional Council will join together, mutually planning a Festival of Faith for June 7-9, 2025 in Sudbury Ontario. More details are to come! See our regional council website for updates, following our spring Regional Council Meeting (RCM). Both regional councils will not be meeting together in-person as individual regional councils, for our Administration roles in 2025, but rather online.

Work of the Regional Executive:

Our Executive meets monthly (with the exception of the summer) and does the work of the regional council when our region is not meeting (C.3.1.1). Often the Executive has a very full agenda which includes oversight of the regional commissions, regional finances, regional policy, regional meeting, emerging work, and the Executive Minister and staff.

The draft 2025 budget will be presented at our RCM. This past year's spending reflects an unusual year following Covid travel restrictions. Staff travel was up in 2023, as staff re-connect in-person. We continue with a 5-year budget projection, a requirement of our bylaws, to be updated yearly.

Part of our work as a regional council is to development more dependable income to support the work of the regional council and the work of granting by the region. In 2020, we joined in on a formal partnership with Kindred Works (formally The UCC Property Corporation), to develop rather than sell property. The property would create housing (including affordable housing), regular income, and some regional community space for the regional council. Our first project broke ground late spring 2023 in Orillia, with other projects progressing in the months and years to come.

Monthly Work of the Regional Council Executive:

If you are interested in a detailed account and overview of the work of the regional council Executive, please see the Digest of Actions, which will be received for information at our RCM. The digest offers an itemized account of the Regional Council Executive since our last RCM. It also gives you an idea of the monthly variety and work of our Executive. We have also added a [link to our webpage](#) which offers a close look at our finances, including audited statements as they are completed by the auditors, in one location.

Working towards Right Relations, Anti-Racism and Equity:

The United Church of Canada is working towards becoming an anti-racist institution. For the United Church, it means encouraging the General Council Office, regional council offices, communities of faith, and even Canadian society to pause and reflect. The United Church has allocated staffing and resources for both General Council staff, regional staff and Ministry Personnel. The United Church is offering training, learning opportunities, and discussion groups as part of a strategy of becoming an anti-racist Church. Practically, the Canadian Shield Regional Council and Shining Waters Regional Council staff have joined together for reflecting, learning, re-learning history, theological reflection, and discussion working towards becoming an anti-racist Church and also working towards right relationship.

Both regional councils have encouraged equity conversations at the Executive, Commission and

Committee levels of the church. The regional council continues to lift up our commitment to equity across our work. We are beginning to live into our new pattern of equity being named by each commission.

We continue to work and celebrate Shining Waters Regional Council as a Affirming regional council and support community of faith conversations too!

Staffing:

In 2023/2024, we saw more transition of staff in our regional council. Rachael Howes transitioned into Retirement at the end of May 2023. Dale Hildebrand transitioned to part-time in 2022 and fully retired in early 2024. Jeffery Dale also finished his work at the regional council and transitioned to local community of faith ministry in 2023. We also said goodbye to Susie Henderson at the very end of 2022. We deeply appreciated their work with the regional council and they will be missed. We welcome Eun-Joo Park to Shining Waters Regional Council, as a Support to Communities of Faith and Pastoral Relations Minister. She can be reached at epark@united-church.ca. We welcomed Shawn Redden as a Justice and Faith Formation Minister, sredden@united-church.ca, who works part-time for the Shining Waters and Canadian Shield Regional Councils.

In 2023/2024 we started a more intentional transition to shared staff between regional councils. Rob Smith transitioned from full time in CSRC, to part-time, now supporting Ministry Personnel in Shining Waters Regional Council, replacing part of Dale's time. Diane Matheson-Jimenez also works part-time in SWRC for limited hours. All four administrative staff (Susan Whitehead, Donna Rutz, Kathleen Wolfe, and Celio de Andrade Santos Jr.) have now officially transitioned to serving both regional councils to increase our support to program staff, with Susan Whitehead serving as the Executive Minister's Executive Administrative Assistant.

We continue to deeply appreciate working with Jody, Todd, Kim, Diane, Rob, Melody, Shawn, Celio, Donna, Kathleen, Susan, and Peter. We are blessed with incredible staff who have worked tirelessly over the past year. Thank you! We are also grateful for our Past Chair David Leyton-Brown and current Chair Tina Conlon, who have provided attentive leadership throughout this year. Thank you both!

UCC Strategic Plan:

2023 marks the start and implementation of the The United Church of Canada Strategic Plan (2023-2025). We welcome Calin Lau, General Council Growth Animator, supporting the Canadian Shield Regional Council and Shining Waters Regional Council. clau@united-church.ca
1-800-268-3781 ex. 2047

Sharing the introduction of the UCC strategic plan (found on the UCC website) it states:

“In partnership with regions and the Indigenous Church, the national ministry will dedicate focus, energy, and resources to revitalizing the church towards a vibrant future. We will renew by strengthening existing communities of faith towards transformation. We will create by encouraging the

development and sustainability of 100 new communities of faith, with a particular focus on churches that serve migrant communities. And we will invite by investing in sharing our unique witness with neighbours across the country and encouraging participation in our ministries, communities, and campaigns. This passion for growth will be enabled by leadership development, supported by denomination wide strengths, fostered by justice campaigns and climate initiatives, and realized alongside Indigenous pathways.

Our priority plan pulls key activities in each of these strategic objectives into service towards dynamic growth.

Daring Justice. This is our Call, grounded in our statements of faith, right relations commitment, and core values, but articulated anew for this time. Along with our Call is a Vision to become “a bold, connected, and evolving church” as disciples of Jesus in this place.” (The United Church of Canada Strategic plan 2023-2025 document, post on the UCC website)

The strategic plan has much more detail. See [The United Church of Canada website](#) for the most up to date details.

100 Years!

2024 marks the beginning of the 100th year celebration of The United Church of Canada with an online/in-person hybrid service, hosted by The United Church of Canada, at Metropolitan United Church in Toronto. Let’s give thanks together for our mutual ministry for many years. [Click here for more details.](#)

Thanks

We give thanks for the work of the regional council, outreach ministry and communities of faith, its many volunteers, Ministry Personnel, music teams, administrative staff, custodians, and treasurers to name just a few. May God continue to bless our ministry in 2024/2025.

With Gratitude and Prayer:

The Shining Waters Regional Council Executive

Tina Conlon, Chair

David Leyton Brown, Acting Chair

Peter Hartmans, Executive Minister

Allyce Mutungi

Bri-anne Swan

Daniel Reed

Isaac Kamta

Allan Holditch

Jingle Ayupan

Lynn Mooney

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH COMMISSION

The Communities of Faith Commission's continues with a focus on its mandate to provide approvals related to loans, lease agreements, sale of property, governance changes, property development, and collaboration agreements. Once again this year we share much of this work across task groups that consider these approvals and are grateful for the work that members put in between monthly meetings of the full commission. This permits us at the meetings of the full commission to consider how this group can support the strategic direction of the church and region and take time with policy issues that effect all communities of faith.

This year our policy work included updates to policies related to the distribution of funds generated from the sale of property as churches close or amalgamate. The Commission also recommended a change to the policy and process for initiating financial appeals to communities of faith. This work was part of the commission's work in response to the community ministry proposal that was approved at the 2023 AGM. Through contributions from the sale of properties progress will also be made toward the goal of endowing community ministries with funding to sustain existing and to seed new ministries in the region.

Along with updates on policies over the year, in September the Commission took up a discussion of the theology of property and how we can be informed by our faith to disrupt our thinking about some of the patterns of power and possession that underpin views of property in our denomination and wider society. No policy recommendations have yet emerged from these discussions, but the conversations continue and this reflection is beginning to inform our work supporting our communities of faith and the strategy of the church.

This year we have also turned our attention to two of the most pressing decisions that many communities of faith face – amalgamation or becoming a lay-led congregation. For amalgamation, the staff have prepared a toolkit to help congregations work through the amalgamation process and decisions; and we are working to provide similar support for congregations that are considering the option of becoming a lay-led congregation.

Once again this year, the commission met jointly with our partners in the Pastoral Relations Commission to consider issues of common interest and identify opportunities for discussion and collaboration. At this year's meeting we discussed at some length the possibilities for collaborative ministry and a collective approach to lay-led ministry. This and further discussion of how communities of faith think through transitions, how we as a region can support faith leaders during these changes, how commissions can support congregations as they discern a future path and when appropriate disband set a foundation for the work that these two commission will take up in the years ahead.

The shape of communities of faith continue to evolve with two new amalgamated congregations (Bayview and Cummer Avenue, and Forest Grove and Jubilee United), proposals for lay led ministries, a proposal for an ecumenical shared ministry, and continued partnership with Kindred Works who help congregations find building partners and sustainability.

Over the course of this past year, we have reviewed and approved a wide array of changes that we pray see the region putting our energies into the right places to plant the seeds of new communities of faith and giving care and new homes for those where the difficult decision has been made to disband. As always we are deeply grateful to the staff and volunteers who travel with communities as they make there way through these changes. And it should also be noted that as difficult as these changes can sometimes be, we are resolved in doing this work in the

knowledge of God's abundant love and optimism to see us all on a sustainable path for our church.

As chair of the commission, I once again thank all of the members of the commission and the professionals that support our work for their dedication, wisdom, and care in all the deliberations we take up.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Bennett, Chair

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free,
there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*
(Galatians 3:28)

The purpose of the Pastoral Relations Commission (PRC), as stated in the terms of reference, is as follows:

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.

In reality, this involves things such as: co-operating with communities of faith in recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith; ending calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel; appointing a pastoral relations liaison to assist a community of faith in pastoral relations matters at designated times; appointing pastoral charge supervisors when needed. We are also responsible for encouraging and supporting ministry personnel toward health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice through our Flourish initiative; and assisting with informal conflict resolution processes. This responsibility is shared with the Communities of Faith Commission.

Currently, the PRC meets monthly on Zoom, although our October meeting was an in-person meeting held with the Communities of Faith Commission. At each of our meetings we review a list of calls and appointments, and at times license those needing to administer the sacraments; we review requests for a change of pastoral relations; and we review recommendations from the LLWL Committee for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWL) and respond to requests for Voluntary Associate Minister status. We also set and review policies which guide pastoral relations work in the region and receive reports from staff. Some of the other annual highlights from our meetings have been:

- a) the Ministry Personnel Marriage License Policy was reviewed
- b) the annual telephone allowance was reviewed
- c) it was agreed that financial support for a Black Clergy Network Gathering, 2024 could be provided from our budget
- d) a budget for the commission for the year 2024 was recommended to the regional council
- e) a Ministers Day Together was held June 14 at Jubilee United Church, under the leadership of The Reverend Maya Landell, Jason Locke and Moderator, The Right Reverend Carmen Lansdowne

- f) new members were appointed to the Flourish Advisory Group, whose mandate is “Care, Connect, Collaborate”
- g) as a part of the ongoing work of Flourish, a November retreat for clergy was held at Fern Resort in collaboration with Canadian Shield Regional Council
- h) dates for a 2024 fall retreat and Ministers Day Together have been set
- i) Dale, Eun-Joo, Kim Uyede-Kai and Rob Smith (new Pastoral Relations Ministers) met with small groups of ministry personnel across the southern part of the region in February
- j) in collaboration with the Communities of Faith Commission, the PRC began to look at how we can support lay-led congregations

One piece of ongoing work for the commission is the work on the Equity Project received at our meeting in June, 2021. The PRC through the work of the Equity Task Group is committed to the removal of barriers to employment for equity-seeking ministry personnel. Here is what the commission accomplished since the last annual meeting of the regional council.

- A Role Description for an Equity Advocate for the PRC was approved and implemented with the naming of an advocate.
- The membership of the commission was revised to include one person who is a Pastoral Relations Liaison, to be named by the PRC
- A welcome letter to be sent to all ministry personnel new to the region was approved and is now being sent out by the region
- A ‘welcome to the region’ lunch—for all ministry personnel new to the region—to be held annually at the regional annual meeting will be implemented at the 2024 meeting

Thank you to everyone who has served as a pastoral relations liaison or pastoral charge supervisor during the past year. Your support, service and care in assisting the ministry of SWRC has been most appreciated.

I want to thank the members of the PRC for all of their work throughout this year. The members of the commission are: Andrew Comar (ordered); William Haughton (ordered); Barbara Hendren (lay); Sung Ran Kim (ordered); Deirdre Lawrence (lay); Liz Mackenzie (ordered); Beth Moore (lay); Lawrence Nyarko (ordered); Robin Pilkey (lay); Paul Stott (lay); Donna Bowman-Woodall (ordered). Your willingness to give so freely of your time, expertise and diverse perspectives is greatly appreciated.

The ministry of the PRC and the work of the chair is supported by a faithful and dedicated staff team. I offer heartfelt thanks to Donna Rutz, our staff administrative support who keeps us on track, ensuring paperwork is organized, minutes are recorded, and details are attended to. Sincere thanks also to Todd McDonald, and Dale Hildebrand, our Pastoral Relations Ministers, whose wisdom, advice, and care has supported the commission beyond measure. We had the privilege of saying farewell to Dale in February, while during the year we welcomed Eun-Joo Park, Kim Uyede-Kai and Rob Smith as new pastoral relations staff and look forward to working with them.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Bowman-Woodall (Rev.), Chair

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission carries out its work under the following revised mandate:

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission will encourage, support, and initiate justice work within Shining Waters Regional Council, viewing and acting on issues through the lenses of racial, social, ecological justice and economic equality.

The Commission, composed of nine members met monthly during the past year except for July, August and December. Meetings were via Zoom and occasionally in person. The following areas of concern were addressed:

Lead From the Heart: Youth Justice Opportunities

The commission supported youth justice work through the provision of an animation fund that provided up to \$500 for youth justice and educational projects. It was made available to youth between the ages of 15-30. During the past year three projects were funded: Philippines human rights awareness, eco justice through green tech and an Arts in Theology youth trip.

Eco workshops

During the past year the commission's Ecological Sub-committee chaired by Esther Collier has provided several online Zoom workshops under the overall theme of Near Net Zero by 2030?

Specific workshops have dealt with: Harnessing Community Resources, Green Design for a Sustainable Future, Greening Grounds and Greenbelts, and Heat Pumps and Geothermal Loops. Still to come in November 2024 is Financing and Grant Writing. The workshops are also available through YouTube.

Principles Based Justice Work

The commission reviewed the General Council document, "Principles-Based Justice Work" produced by the Theology and InterChurch InterFaith (TICIF) Committee and then met with committee members Ariel Siagan and Andrew Mills for a conversation about the interface between evidence-based and principles-based interpretations of justice work. We look forward to further conversations.

Issues and Advocacy

During the past year the commission addressed the urgent issues of refugees, homelessness, and Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI), with letters to elected government leaders and also encouragement to communities of faith to take local action through awareness, education and advocacy initiatives.

Specifically, the commission urged the Senate to support the passage of GLI Senate Bill S-233, provided funding to Uganda Martyrs Church to assist homeless refugees, signed a refugee appeal letter titled, "177 of Us," encouraged communities of faith to write to elected leaders and advocate for more supports for unhoused people and supported efforts to draw public attention to the environmental issue of the Greenbelt.

The commission also supported advocacy efforts in Barrie to challenge the municipal council's decision to prohibit anyone from providing "food, tarps, tents or water" to anyone on public land.

It urged communities of faith to follow up on the GLI proposal approved at the annual regional

council meeting last year by encouraging local municipal councils to endorse Guaranteed Livable Income (materials available to assist with that project).

Partnerships

During the past year the commission supported various community and in-church partnerships, providing publicity and promotion for the Ontario Health Coalition's Campaign against Hospital Privatization, funding support for ISARC (Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition) and the United Church SJNOR (Social Justice Network of Ontario Regions), and participating in the national church's Guaranteed Livable Income steering committee.

The commission also supported the Shining Waters network, PalNet which works on issues related to Palestine and Israel. The commission provided funding for speakers for several PalNet Zoom workshops in April and May 2024 as well as a photo exhibit held in the fall of 2023.

Microgrants

With a view to providing more support for local education and advocacy by communities of faith, the commission is providing \$400 microgrants for communities of faith to host justice workshops and raise awareness of local issues. Application forms will be provided very soon.

Community Ministry

The commission followed up on the community ministry proposal that was approved at the last Regional Council meeting (May 2023) by supporting a Community Ministry Working Group which hosted an educational Zoom workshop for communities of faith on May 13: **Love Your Neighbour: Making Connections in the Community.**

Proposals

The commission is providing two proposals for consideration by the annual meeting this year: a proposal for better communication within Shining Waters Regional Council and a proposal related to the urgent need for adequate and affordable housing.

Banners and Lawn Signs

United Church banners with the name of Shining Waters Regional Council are available for use at local gatherings as are lawn signs with a message of support for Guaranteed Livable Income. These can be obtained from the Regional Council office.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to staff, Jeffrey Dale (who was staff support until September 2024), Kim Uyede-Kai and Celio de Andrade Santos for resource leadership and administrative support. We have just recently welcomed Shawn Redden as staff resource and look forward to working with her in the coming year.

Our thanks, also, to Won Hur and Brian McIntosh, who have finished serving their time as members of the commission. We wish them well as they move to national church work and retirement respectively. Our continuing members of the commission are: Lois Brown, Esther Collier, Don Ford, Jennifer Gordon, Irene Green and Alexa Gilmour.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Susan Eagle, Chair
Social and Ecological Justice Commission

INTERCULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMISSION

The purpose of the Intercultural Diversity Commission is to encourage and engage the Shining Waters Regional Council, its Executive and Commissions, and its communities of faith in honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry. The Commission has been meeting ten times a year since September 2021.

The Commission's seven elected members speak from a diversity of experiences, ethno/cultural backgrounds and languages. Relationship continues to be foundational to intercultural ministry in Shining Waters. At the start of each meeting, members share what is happening in their local contexts as well as significant moments in their cultural history so that their Commission work stays grounded in ethno-cultural and church experiences and members learn from one another.

Membership

The Commission was blessed to be joined by new member, Amber Lee Rowe, but saw the departure of original member, Moon Ja Park, due to her move to Alberta. The Commission gave thanks for Moon Ja's faithful service and dedication to intercultural diversity and wished her well.

The Commission meets at least once a year in person to deepen their connections and share their stories in less formal ways.

Resource Development

Language translations of important United Church resources continue to be a priority of the Commission. Two new relevant resources were translated into Korean in 2024: Interim United Church of Canada Process for Mutual Recognition of Ministries between the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) and The United Church of Canada; and Diaconal Supply/Ordained Supply Policy and Process: Exception for Ethnocultural or Linguistic Specific Congregation. More Korean language translations are being developed in 2024. Other ethno-language requests will be considered depending on translator availability.

Relationship with Seoul Presbytery, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK)

A sub-committee was formed to discern the request by Seoul Presbytery, PROK for a Memorandum of Understanding with Shining Waters Regional Council. Given the structural and staffing changes within both denominations and the global effects of the pandemic, renewed relationship building seemed a better place to start. An online meeting is being planned, taking into account the 13-hour time difference.

Gatherings

A January 2024 gathering of ministry personnel and lay leaders of ethnocultural/ethnolinguistic communities of faith was organized by Pastoral Relations Minister, Dale Hildebrand and Kim Uyede-Kai, new Pastoral Relations Minister for ethnocultural/ethnolinguistic communities of faith. It was an information session, time for worship together, as well as an opportunity for ministry personnel and lay leaders to say farewell and thank you to Dale as he prepared to retire. North York Korean graciously offered their church for the gathering and arranged for lunch.

The Commission was pleased join the other Shining Waters Regional Council Commissions in supporting the 2024 Black Clergy Network Gathering held at Emmanuel College this year.

Disability Justice

A series of three webinars on disability justice was co-sponsored by the Commission and Canadian Shield Regional Council. The first two webinars led by Kathleen James Cavan introduced legislation, definitions, stigma, ableism, scripture and hymn analysis. The third webinar was a culturally diverse panel of speakers offering their experiences and suggestions for the Church to move forward. The Commission plans to offer more learning opportunities on disability justice in the future.

The Commission is thankful for the administrative work of Celio De Andrade who turns recorded meetings into minutes.

Respectfully submitted by
Amy Yea Kyong Lee (Chair)

On behalf of Commission members
Joel Aguirre, Hedy Baker-Graf, Innocent Karuhanga, John Joseph Mastandrea, Néstor Medina,
Amber Lee Rowe.
Staff Support: Kim Uyede-Kai, Celio De Andrade

GENERAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE (GCE)

This report is to supplement the following Accountability Report to Regional Councils for the General Council Executive and General Council Office, prepared by the General Secretary. I will offer my impression of the highlights of my first year on the GCE, while trying not to duplicate material in the General Secretary's report.

The GCE reviewed important issues to be dealt with by the 2023 annual meeting of General Council 44. These included: principles to guide the United Church's justice work, and proposals to eliminate functional distinctions between Designated Lay Ministers and Ordered Ministers.

The GCE sent a letter to the Prime Minister about the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, in response to requests from partners in the Middle East and the GC44-adopted justice principles.

The GCE dealt with important budget matters. At successive meetings it approved principles to guide preparation of the 2024 budget (including COLA, grant reductions and planned deficit), and approved the 2024 budget based on those principles. It has begun preliminary work on the 2025 budget, exploring what it means to "live within our means" at a time of declining assessment revenue.

The GCE continues to explore Decolonizing Governance, including reducing the use of the word "mission", given the negative associations with damaging missionary efforts.

The GCE discussed the Pastoral Relations Equity Report, dealing with systemic challenges faced by equity-seeking ministry personnel. Proposals to address the issues revealed by this research are being prepared for future consideration.

The GCE received a report from the Board of Vocation. Most of the discussion focused on the admissions process, and the disappointingly large number of foreign-ordained ministers admitted to ministry in the United Church of Canada who have not been able to find a call or appointment, despite the large number of congregations without a minister.

The GCE has been briefed on plans for General Council 45, which will take place in Calgary August 7-12, 2025. The theme will be Visions and Dreams (Acts 2:17). Two online listening and discussion sessions for proposals will be held in June, with listening and discussion for the most challenging proposals to be in person in Calgary during GC45.

David Layton-Brown

Accountability Report to Regional Councils

Origin: General Council Executive & the General Council Offices

Greetings as you convene for your annual meeting. We pray that it will be a meaningful time of gathering and work as you visualize what it means to be evolving communities characterized by deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice. We recognize the challenges to our collective ministries as we imagine the sustainability of the ministries of The United Church of

Canada and acknowledge the necessity as leaders to be harbingers of hope. We join you in the journey.

The Executive and staff leaders in the church have committed to find ways to enable the ministries of the Communities of Faith. This report highlights four initiatives that will significantly impact our communities.

UCC Protect United

This initiative is by far the largest financial commitment of the strategic plan, with a \$3 million loan funding a captive insurance program aimed at helping participating United Church ministries first reduce and then contain insurance costs. In addition to providing the start-up capital, the national church is also exposed to providing more capital in the event of particularly adverse claims results - especially if they happen in the early years.

The program was rushed into place for December 2022 to provide immediate premium relief, with a rollback of premium increases from 2020 and 2021. This meant premium reductions of 11-27% during a year when insurance premiums in the industry were going up by 15-30%. Even with a premium rate increase in December 2023, on an apples-to-apples basis, participants paid less for insurance than two years prior.

So far – repeat: so far – the program has been a success financially. Annualized premiums paid for 2021-2022 were \$10.1 million versus \$8.1 million for the first year of the program – a saving of almost \$2 million when adjusted for new business and closures/amalgamations. The interest on the start-up loan is being paid annually. Claims experience has been well within target levels, and with each additional year of reasonable claims experience, the captive insurance arrangement becomes more self-sufficient and the start-up loan potentially repayable.

Despite the very encouraging **initial** financial results, the customer service and administration has been very poor and caused much frustration for participants. Much of this was attributable to rushing the launch of the program to deliver the financial benefit, but our partner's existing systems and staff proved inadequate for the volume of queries that arose. Church-side decisions to deliver more savings also proved challenging administratively. There has been much remedial activity underway, and we expect to achieve proper service capacity by the second quarter of 2024. We will launch greater coverage flexibility and improved communications at the same time.

Everyone is reminded that this initiative will need to run just like a traditional insurance company, with claims administered accordingly. The difference is that we are all in it together to try to reduce risk and claims – and therefore premiums. This captive insurance arrangement exists solely to benefit participants.

Strategic Operational Plan Initiative - Growth

All the Growth Animators are now in place, working actively with regions on their strategies for renewing and creating communities and inviting strong participation in The United Church of Canada. In January and February alone, Growth Animators met with:

- 71 Ministry Personnel

- 37 Governing Bodies (by phone, online or in person)
- 16 Communities of Faiths, and facilitated
- 31 conversations about Growth to some form of regional body.

The focus of these meetings has been visioning; collaboration with other Communities of Faith; exploration of neighbourhood profiles; creation of renewal or growth strategies, and exploring practices of discipleship and invitation. Staff continue to explore and develop possibilities in 40 possible sites for new Communities of Faith amongst migrant, diasporic and Francophone communities; close to 10 of these are sufficiently developed to have leadership contracts to support their continued progress.

Collaborative Ministry Models

There are many different models of collaborative ministries that already exist in the United Church. Work is underway to develop and offer training programs for lay leaders and ministry personnel in collaborative ministries, and those who might be interested, including candidates for ministry.

Faithful Footprints

To date, we have invested almost \$3M in this initiative to assist Communities of Faith in upgrading and renovating their heating/cooling systems and addressing issues of environmental sustainability and cost savings.

Other Updates:

Addressing Structural Opportunities: These initiatives are a critical part of the ministry of the leadership team consisting of the Executive and staff leaders. We invite your continued engagement in these areas of work. There are several other initiatives to address some structural opportunities, and responses to emerging issues. We have established working groups to provide additional critical information as we address the challenges of sustainability. We established a Total Compensation Task Group to look at the issues relating to the church's compensation challenges. In keeping with the commitment to evaluating the 2019 structural changes in the church, a Steering Committee has been established to work alongside Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, the staff lead for the project. Both groups will be reporting to the 45th General Council in 2025.

In keeping with The Manual requirement (D.4.1.6), the Executive has established a working group to review the role of the Moderator. Additionally, the Executive agreed to also include the role of the General Secretary in this review.

The Ministry of Justice: As we continue to live into the commitment to becoming an antiracist denomination, we have introduced a new initiative, *Equity, Diversity, and Anti-Oppression Education for Committees*.

To date, most committees have completed, or will soon be completing, their education sessions. From the feedback so far, we hope to offer similar programs more broadly to other leadership

groups in the church. Together with the Indigenous Church, an *Indigenous and racialized youth gathering* is now into its second year. This now-annual gathering is firmly lodged as an emerging youth-oriented community of faith. It focuses on building understanding through mutual learning on experiences of racism and creative responses to antiracism in the United Church.

Finding ways to invite a deeper and a broader engagement in advocacy continues to be a challenge, especially when the church is not of one mind and often is unable to speak together in respectful ways across our differences. There have been two new hires in the General Council Office, a *Government Relations Officer* to help to build our capacity to engage with government as we deepen our advocacy efforts, and a *Program Coordinator, Global Advocacy 2SLGBTQIA+*. In addition, we have developed a new advocacy tool to enable sign-on as part of any advocacy campaign. The Justice Principles adopted by the 2023 annual meeting of the 44th General Council has provided a framework for our advocacy particularity with the war in Gaza.

Together with the Indigenous Church, the work on justice and reconciliation continues as we attempt to address both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action and the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People. Communities of Faith are invited to witness for justice in this area; this includes the Moose Hide Campaign and our own *#SearchTheLandfill* social media campaign regarding the Brady and Prairie Green landfills in Winnipeg.

The Executive invited the *Theology and Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee* (TICIF) in collaboration with the *Indigenous Church* and the *Anti-Racism Common Table* to examine the use of the word "mission," given the colonial history of the word and to bring recommendations; these were adopted in November 2023. (The proposal [GS 63 Recommendations re: Mission](#) is found on the [United Church Commons](#).) Following the request of the 44th General Council, a working group was established to engage the church in learning about and countering antisemitism, particularly within our interpretations of Scripture, in worship, and in Christian education. More information and resources can be found on the [Countering Antisemitism page](#) on the United Church website.

Centennial Celebration: Planning for the United Church centennial is underway. There will be three streams:

1. Commemoration
2. External-focused communication and action plan
3. Fundraising/capital campaign.

June 9, 2024, will be the launch of the centennial year (online and in person) with a worship service at Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, a site close to the inaugural gathering at the former Mutual Street Arena. Every month, from June 2024 to June 2025, a key moment will be highlighted on social media to mark and share our history. The date for the Centennial service itself has been set for June 8, 2025. This will be the celebration to which we invite international guests.

The goal of an external-focused campaign is twofold: to introduce the distinctiveness of the United Church to those who have only a broad umbrella definition of "church," and to reconnect with

those who claim United Church identity but have lost connection. The Executive asked The United Church of Canada Foundation to lead a legacy campaign.

Mission and Service: Good news! We are grateful for your continuing support of the collective ministries of the Church. There is good news to report regarding the 2023 Mission and Service results: contributions by congregations, United Church Women (UCW), and special donations all exceeded budget. The totals for these three areas, sitting at \$17,090,056, were slightly over the 2022 actuals of \$17,062,694.

The total for Mission and Service from all areas was \$20,831,564. This compares favourably to the total budget of \$20,225,000, and is close to the 2022 actual amount raised of \$21,132,213. These are preliminary results, and you can expect a final tally and the Mission and Service Accountability Report in June.

Information and updates about the work of the Executive can be found on the [General Council 44 webpage](#).

The summary of the recent GCE meeting can be found on the website linked above.

**Compte rendu d'activités à l'intention des conseils régionaux
Origine : Bureaux du Conseil général et de l'exécutif du Conseil général**

Nous vous souhaitons la bienvenue à votre assemblée annuelle. Nous prions pour que ce soit un moment significatif de rassemblement et de travail où vous visualiserez ce en quoi consiste le fait d'appartenir à des communautés en évolution caractérisées par une spiritualité profonde, une vie de disciple dynamique et une quête audacieuse de justice. Nous reconnaissons les défis qui se posent à nos ministères collectifs, alors que nous imaginons la durabilité des ministères de l'Église Unie du Canada, et nous reconnaissons la nécessité, en tant que leaders, d'être des porteurs d'espoir. Nous nous joignons à vous dans ce cheminement.

Les responsables de l'exécutif et du personnel de l'Église se sont engagés à trouver des moyens de soutenir les ministères des communautés de foi. Ce rapport met en lumière quatre initiatives qui auront une incidence significative sur nos communautés.

Programme d'assurance de l'Église Unie (UCC Protect United)

Cette initiative est de loin l'engagement financier le plus important du plan stratégique, avec un prêt de 3 millions de dollars finançant un programme d'assurance captive visant à aider les ministères de l'Église Unie participants à réduire les coûts d'assurance, puis à les maîtriser. En plus de fournir le capital de démarrage, l'Église nationale doit également fournir davantage de capital en cas de résultats particulièrement défavorables en matière de réclamations, surtout s'ils surviennent au cours des premières années.

Le programme a été mis en place en urgence au mois de décembre 2022 afin de fournir un allègement immédiat des primes, ainsi qu'une annulation des augmentations de primes en 2020 et 2021. Cela s'est traduit par des réductions de primes de 11 à 27 % au cours d'une année où les primes d'assurance dans le secteur ont augmenté de 15 à 30 %. Même avec une augmentation du taux de cotisation en décembre 2023, les participantes et participants ont payé moins pour une

assurance comparable que les deux années précédentes.

Jusqu'à présent – répétons-le : jusqu'à présent, le programme a été un succès sur le plan financier. Les primes annualisées payées pour 2021-2022 étaient de 10,1 millions de dollars contre 8,1 millions de dollars pour la première année du programme. Cela correspond à une économie de près de 2 millions de dollars après ajustement pour les nouveaux contrats et les fermetures et fusions. Les intérêts sur le prêt de démarrage sont payés annuellement. L'expérience des réclamations a tout à fait correspondu aux niveaux visés. Pour chaque année supplémentaire d'expérience des réclamations conforme aux attentes, l'entente d'assurance captive devient plus autosuffisante et le prêt de démarrage pourrait éventuellement être remboursé.

Malgré des résultats financiers **initiaux** très encourageants, le service à la clientèle et l'administration du programme ont été de piètre qualité, ce qui s'est avéré très frustrant pour les participantes et participants. Cela s'explique en grande partie par le fait que le lancement du programme a été précipité pour offrir les avantages financiers, mais que les systèmes et le personnel de notre partenaire n'ont pas été en mesure de répondre au volume de demandes présentées. Les décisions prises par l'Église pour réaliser davantage d'économies ont également posé des difficultés sur le plan administratif. Plusieurs mesures correctives ont été prises et un bon niveau de service devrait être offert au cours du deuxième trimestre de 2024. Nous offrirons par la même occasion une plus grande flexibilité dans les choix de couverture, tout en améliorant la communication.

Nous vous rappelons que ce programme devrait fonctionner comme un assureur traditionnel et que les réclamations devraient être gérées en conséquence. La différence, c'est que nous sommes tous ensemble pour tenter d'atténuer les risques, le nombre de réclamations et, par conséquent, le coût des primes. Cette entente d'assurance captive a été conclue uniquement au bénéfice des participantes et participants.

Plan opérationnel stratégique – Développement communautaire

Toutes les animatrices et tous les animateurs en développement communautaire ont maintenant été désignés. En collaboration avec les régions, leur objectif consiste à travailler activement à l'élaboration de stratégies visant à favoriser la création et le renouvellement des communautés, en espérant une forte participation au sein de l'Église Unie du Canada. En janvier et février seulement, les animatrices et animateurs en développement communautaire ont rencontré :

- 71 membres du personnel ministériel
- 37 instances dirigeantes (par téléphone, en ligne ou en personne)
- 16 communautés de foi
Par ailleurs, les animatrices et les animateurs en développement communautaire ont également dirigé :
- 31 conversations sur la croissance et une certaine forme d'entité régionale

Ces réunions leur ont notamment permis d'élaborer une vision, de collaborer avec d'autres communautés de foi, d'analyser des profils des quartiers, de développer des stratégies de

renouvellement ou de croissance et d'examiner les pratiques en matière d'invitation et d'engagement chrétien. Le personnel continue d'explorer des possibilités dans 40 emplacements éventuels, dans le but de créer de nouvelles communautés de foi dans des communautés de personnes immigrantes, issues des diasporas et des collectivités francophones. Dans près de 10 communautés assez développées, des contrats ont été conclus avec des dirigeants pour favoriser leur progression continue.

Modèles de ministère collaboratif

Il y a déjà plusieurs modèles de ministère collaboratif au sein de l'Église Unie. Des travaux sont en cours pour développer et proposer de nouveaux programmes de formation aux leaders laïques et au personnel ministériel des ministères collaboratifs, ainsi qu'aux personnes susceptibles d'être intéressées, y compris les personnes candidates au ministère.

Initiative Faithful Footprints [Empreintes de foi]

Jusqu'à maintenant, nous avons investi près de 3 millions de dollars dans cette initiative visant à aider les communautés de foi à moderniser et à rénover leurs systèmes de chauffage et de climatisation et à aborder différentes questions liées à la durabilité de l'environnement et à des économies de coûts.

Autres mises à jour :

Tirer parti des possibilités structurelles : Ces initiatives sont très importantes pour le ministère de l'équipe de direction comprenant l'exécutif et les responsables du personnel. Nous vous invitons à poursuivre votre engagement dans ces domaines d'activité. De nombreuses autres initiatives permettent de tirer parti de certaines possibilités structurelles et de tenir compte de nouveaux enjeux. Nous avons formé des groupes de travail qui nous fournissent des renseignements essentiels pour relever les défis liés au développement durable. Nous avons mis en place un groupe de travail sur la rémunération globale afin d'examiner les défis que l'Église doit relever en matière de rémunération. Conformément à l'engagement pris en 2019 d'évaluer les changements structurels au sein de l'Église, un comité de direction a été mis sur pied pour travailler avec Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, la responsable du projet. Les deux groupes présenteront les résultats de leurs travaux au 45^e Conseil général en 2025.

Le *Manuel (D.4.1.6)* exige que l'exécutif mette en place un groupe de travail sur la révision du rôle de modérateur. De plus, l'exécutif a accepté de tenir également compte du rôle de secrétaire général dans le cadre de cet examen.

Le ministère de la justice : Alors que nous continuons à respecter notre engagement à devenir une Église antiraciste, nous avons lancé une nouvelle initiative, celle de la *formation portant sur l'équité, la diversité et l'anti-oppression*.

La plupart des comités ont terminé leurs séances de formation ou les achèveront bientôt. À la lumière de la rétroaction recueillie jusqu'à présent, nous espérons pouvoir proposer des programmes similaires à d'autres groupes de dirigeants au sein de l'Église. En collaboration avec la constituante autochtone de l'Église, nous organisons un *rassemblement de jeunes autochtones et racisés* pour une deuxième année consécutive. Ce rassemblement désormais annuel vise à

former une communauté de foi émergente pour les jeunes. Il met l'accent sur le développement d'une meilleure compréhension, l'apprentissage mutuel, les expériences de racisme et les approches créatives adoptées pour lutter contre le racisme au sein de l'Église Unie.

Approfondir l'engagement en faveur de la justice demeure un défi, notamment lorsque nous ne sommes pas unis au sein de l'Église et que nous sommes souvent incapables de communiquer ensemble de manière respectueuse pour favoriser les rapprochements et surmonter nos différences. Deux nouvelles personnes ont été embauchées par le Bureau du Conseil général : l'une d'elles *assumera la responsabilité des relations avec le gouvernement*, et nous aidera à mieux collaborer avec le gouvernement dans le cadre de nos efforts liés à la formulation de plaidoyers, alors que l'autre *assurera la coordination du programme de défense des communautés 2SLGBTQIA+ à l'échelle mondiale*. Par ailleurs, nous avons mis au point un nouvel outil de plaidoyer qui permet de s'inscrire aux campagnes de plaidoyer. Les principes de justice adoptés à l'occasion de l'assemblée annuelle de 2023 du 44^e Conseil général nous ont fourni un cadre, notamment pour la guerre à Gaza.

En collaboration avec la constituante autochtone de l'Église, nous poursuivons nos travaux sur la justice et la réconciliation, alors que nous tentons de tenir compte des appels à l'action de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation et des appels à la justice de l'Enquête nationale sur les femmes et les filles autochtones disparues et assassinées, et les personnes bispirituelles. Nous invitons les communautés de foi à témoigner en faveur de la justice dans ce domaine, notamment dans le cadre de la campagne Moose Hide et de notre propre campagne *#Searchthelandfill* [*#Fouillerledépotoir*] sur les médias sociaux, qui milite en faveur de la fouille des dépotoirs de Brady et de Prairie Green, à Winnipeg.

L'exécutif a invité le *Comité théologie et relations interconfessionnelles et interreligieuses*, en collaboration avec la *constituante autochtone de l'Église* et la *Table commune sur l'antiracisme*, à réévaluer l'utilisation du mot « mission », compte tenu de son passé colonial, et à formuler des recommandations, qui ont été adoptées en novembre 2023. (Vous pouvez consulter la proposition [GS63 Recommandations au sujet du mot « mission »](#) dans la [bibliothèque virtuelle de l'Église Unie](#).) À la demande du 44^e Conseil général, un groupe de travail a été formé pour accroître la sensibilisation à l'antisémitisme au sein de l'Église, et le combattre, notamment dans le cadre de l'interprétation des Écritures, des cultes et de la formation chrétienne. Pour plus de renseignements et de ressources à ce sujet, veuillez consulter la [page sur la lutte contre l'antisémitisme](#) (en anglais seulement) sur le site Web de l'Église Unie.

Célébration du centenaire : Le centenaire de l'Église Unie est en cours de planification. Il comprendra trois volets :

1. Commémoration
2. Plan d'action et communications externes
3. Campagne de financement

Le 9 juin 2024, l'année du centenaire sera lancée (en ligne et en personne) à l'occasion d'une célébration liturgique à la Metropolitan United Church, à Toronto, un emplacement situé à proximité du lieu du rassemblement inaugural, dans l'ancien Mutual Street Arena. Chaque mois,

de juin 2024 à juin 2025, un moment important sera souligné dans les médias sociaux pour retracer notre histoire. La célébration liturgique du centenaire sera organisée le 8 juin 2025. Nous accueillerons des invités internationaux à cette occasion.

La campagne externe nous permet d'atteindre deux objectifs : présenter le caractère distinct de l'Église Unie à ceux qui n'ont qu'une vaste définition du terme « église », et renouer avec les personnes croyantes qui considèrent qu'elles font partie de l'Église Unie, mais qui n'entretiennent plus de liens avec nous. L'exécutif a demandé à la Fondation de l'Église Unie du Canada d'organiser une campagne d'incitation aux legs.

Mission & Service : Nous avons de bonnes nouvelles à vous annoncer! Nous vous remercions de votre soutien continu envers les ministères collectifs de l'Église. Mission & Service a obtenu de bons résultats financiers en 2023 : les contributions financières par paroisses, de l'Association des femmes de l'Église Unie et liées à des dons spéciaux dépassent les prévisions budgétaires. Les contributions financières totales dans ces trois domaines, qui s'élèvent à 17 090 056 dollars, sont légèrement supérieures aux 17 062 694 dollars recueillis en 2022.

Les contributions totales pour Mission & Service, tous domaines confondus, s'élèvent à 20 831 564 dollars. Ce chiffre se compare favorablement au budget total de 20 225 000 dollars et se rapproche des 21 132 213 dollars recueillis en 2022. Il s'agit de résultats préliminaires. Un décompte final et un compte rendu d'activités seront effectués au mois de juin.

Pour des renseignements et des mises à jour sur les travaux de l'exécutif, veuillez consulter la page Web du [44^e Conseil général](#).

GS 63 RECOMMANDATIONS CONCERNANT UTILISATION DU MOT *MISSION*

Source : secrétaire général

1. Quel est l'enjeu? (description en termes généraux)

Nous croyons que l'Église est appelée à composer avec l'héritage de sa théologie de la mission, particulièrement en ce qui concerne la manière dont une certaine théologie coloniale de la mission l'a amenée à participer à l'entreprise de la colonisation au Canada, laquelle visait les peuples et les communautés autochtones, et à prendre part à des activités missionnaires et de colonisation ailleurs dans le monde. Courante au sein de l'Église Unie et dans les cercles œcuméniques, l'utilisation du mot *mission* est peut-être le déclencheur d'un sentiment de malaise chez les personnes qui ont subi les conséquences des efforts missionnaires qui en réalité avaient pour objectif d'accomplir un génocide culturel et physique.

2. Quelle est l'importance de cet enjeu?

Cet enjeu est important, parce que l'utilisation du mot *mission* renvoie à des préoccupations plus vastes touchant les théologies qui ont servi de fondement à des pratiques passées de l'Église Unie appelées *activités missionnaires*. Que l'Église Unie continue ou non d'utiliser le mot *mission*, elle est appelée à apprendre davantage sur les théologies qui sous-tendent une certaine expression de la mission afin de mieux les comprendre, et à poursuivre la décolonisation de ses théologies afin que nous puissions vivre en accord avec nos engagements et nos aspirations en lien avec la Commission de vérité et réconciliation, les Appels à l'Église et notre volonté de lutter contre le racisme.

3. Comment l'exécutif du Conseil général peut-il répondre à cet enjeu?

Le secrétaire général recommande que l'exécutif du Conseil général :

- a) charge le secrétaire général d'élaborer des ressources théologiques, éducatives et liturgiques visant à permettre aux membres de l'Église d'entreprendre des discussions, de faire des apprentissages et de poser des gestes en lien avec l'histoire, les théologies et les pratiques de la mission au sein de l'Église, en s'attachant tout particulièrement à nommer et à déconstruire les théologies et les pratiques qui ont causé du tort, créé des inégalités et contribué à la colonisation, en veillant à ce que les différences entre les histoires, les théologies et les pratiques de la mission à l'étranger et au pays soient également mises au jour, et en mettant l'accent, durant l'élaboration des ressources, sur celles qui peuvent être utilisées par les communautés de foi locales et les personnes liées à l'Église unie;
 - b) encourage tous les conseils de l'Église à utiliser le mot *mission* avec grandes parcimonie et prudence, en se laissant orienter par une *herméneutique du soupçon* (Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza) qui nous invite à nous interroger sur les hypothèses, les théologies sous-jacentes et les préjugés inconscients que recèle notre compréhension de la *mission*;
 - c) invite l'Église à continuer à donner la priorité à son travail de décolonisation, par le biais de changements structurels concrets qui sont nécessaires pour remédier aux inégalités et aux préjudices qui se sont produits et continuent de se produire du fait de la participation de l'Église à la colonisation, celle-ci étant particulièrement encouragée à déconstruire la conception de la *mission* qui n'est en réalité qu'un voile masquant une participation à la colonisation.
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4. Quel sera l'effet de la proposition?

Ce travail s'inscrit dans le cadre du plan d'action contre le racisme, des appels à l'Église lancés par les intendants et intendantes du Cercle autochtone et de l'engagement pris par l'Église Unie de faire de Déclaration des Nations Unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones dans le cadre de ses activités de réconciliation.

Ce travail correspond aux activités suivantes du plan stratégique :

- S1.02.009 « Théologie : renforcer l'abandon de la théologie dominante masculine eurocentrique blanche, encourager les théologies existantes et nouvelles qui promeuvent les multiples identités marginalisées et les pratiques interculturelles, et élaborer des ressources théologiques pertinentes et accessibles. »
- S6.01.004 « Théologies et spiritualités : établissement et développement des façons d'être et des savoirs autochtones dans les théologies et les pratiques spirituelles. *lien avec l'activité à S1.02.009 sur la théologie. »
- S1.02.007 « Éducation : élaborer et mettre en œuvre une stratégie éducative qui permette de mieux comprendre les divers impacts du colonialisme, de la suprématie blanche et du racisme dans notre Église. »
- S1.01.001 « Défense des droits : approfondir la compréhension et les gestes posés concernant les injustices coloniales persistantes qui ont été nommées dans les appels à l'action issus de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada (CVR) et dans les appels à la justice consécutifs à l'Enquête nationale sur les femmes et les filles autochtones disparues et assassinées, en faisant la promotion des appels 1 à 6 de la CVR et des appels à l'action adressés aux Églises et aux autres parties à la Convention de règlement. »

- S1.01.004 « Héritage : soutenir le travail relationnel, le financement et le travail d'archivage lié à l'initiative Bringing the Children Home [Rapatrier les enfants dans leurs communautés], et élaborer d'autres mesures particulières en réponse à l'héritage colonial de l'Église lorsque c'est jugé approprié (concernant, par exemple, la rafle des années 1960 ou les pensionnats). »
- S2.02.003 « Repenser la formation théologique : créer un processus normalisé de collaboration entre les écoles concernant les besoins que l'Église et les écoles perçoivent pour le ministère dans l'Église d'aujourd'hui et de demain (au moyen, par exemple, d'un examen des modèles de ministère collaboratif et bivocational, des rôles distincts de l'Église et des écoles, des questions d'accessibilité et de pédagogie, de l'enseignement à distance. etc.). »

Du personnel et un petit budget seront nécessaires pour animer les ressources existantes et en créer de nouvelles (principalement des ressources d'étude biblique pour encourager l'exploration de certains passages bibliques clés). Il peut s'agir de demander à certaines personnes de rédiger de courtes ressources et de leur offrir des honoraires). Toutefois, une grande partie du temps du personnel peut être comptabilisée dans les activités du plan stratégique mentionnées ci-dessus.

L'espoir est d'accroître la prise de conscience de l'Église Unie, alors qu'elle maintient ses engagements et continue de faire face à l'héritage de son passé.

5. Comment cette proposition nous aide-t-elle à vivre nos engagements en matière d'équité?
De la façon indiquée ci-dessus.

6. À l'intention de l'instance transmettant cette proposition au Conseil général :
Avez-vous des commentaires, des affirmations ou des suggestions à formuler à l'égard de cette proposition?

Si cette proposition est une réponse à une demande de travail formulée par le Conseil général ou lors d'une précédente réunion de l'exécutif du Conseil général, veuillez préciser le numéro de proposition ou de motion.

Les questions liées à l'utilisation du mot *mission* ont été évoquées lors de la réunion de l'ECG de novembre 2021, à la fois dans la discussion et dans le rapport du groupe de travail sur une paix juste intitulé *In Support Of Just Peace In Palestine And Israel: A Call To Costly Solidarity* (En faveur d'une paix juste en Palestine et en Israël : appel à une solidarité contraignante).

L'ECG a demandé au Comité théologie et relations interconfessionnelles et interreligieuses de faire un travail de réflexion sur l'utilisation du mot *mission*. Le secrétaire général a approuvé la suggestion de créer un groupe de travail composé de membres du Comité théologie et relations interconfessionnelles et interreligieuses, de la de la Table commune antiracisme et de la constituante autochtone de l'Église.

STEWARDSHIP



This QR code will take you to a digital filing cabinet of [stewardship resources](#)



I am delighted once again to bring news from the stewardship support team, Mission & Service, and the United Church Foundation to the good people of the Shining Region.

Over the past year I have had the honour of meeting with many of you, whether as participants in a *Called to be the Church: The Journey* program, at the last in person meeting in North Bramalea, or through a phone conversation or town halls. If we haven't yet met, my role is to provide resources and support to individuals, communities of faith, and other ministries in the areas of generosity, congregational giving, Mission & Service, and the work of the United Church Foundation. If you have ideas, questions or inspiration to share, please get in contact [with me](#).

One way I would love to connect in 2024 and beyond is through the learning programs, [Called to be the Church: The Journey](#). We currently have 4 course offerings available on [churchX](#) that provide training and support for different parts of the stewardship journey. Whether you want to learn some stewardship-first principles, get resources to run a congregational Giving Program, or are hoping to set up a Legacy Giving Program in your community of faith, we have training options for you!! One participant provided this program feedback, *"I appreciate the leadership, the enthusiasm, the knowledge and the support of the leaders of this course. It was a lot of information, and was presented in a way that was not overwhelming. The recommendations are practical and doable."* You can learn [more here](#).

Speaking of gratitude for shared abundance, Mission & Service is our Church's most powerful vehicle for helping to transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and build a better world. Together we do more. Thanks to generous people like you, 2023 saw \$24 million raised, including Mission and Service givings totalling \$20.8 million as well as bequests and other planned gifts, and funds supporting emergency appeals for the people of Ukraine, the Middle East, Turkey and Syria.

Locally, Mission and Service funds supported a number of amazing ministries in Shining Waters. Community partners like Albiona Centre, Jane Finch Community Ministry, chaplaincy ministries at the University of Toronto and Hospice Muskoka, and outreach ministries such as the Anglican United Refugee Alliance and Cummer Avenue Drop In Centre are just some of the transformative programs supported with your Mission & Service donations in 2023. Thank you!

Setting giving goals and sharing inspiring stories about Mission & Service are effective ways to hold up and celebrate this amazing work, and to encourage deeper generosity in your community of faith. New Stories of our Mission are [posted monthly](#). For those who utilize videos in worship, there are also [videos that tell personal stories of the life changing work of Mission & Service](#). If you want to bring more conversations about stewardship, gratitude, generosity and Mission & Service into your community of faith, consider signing up for the monthly newsletter [God's Mission, Our Gifts](#).

Finally, I want to draw your attention to the important work being done by the United Church Foundation. In 2022 the Foundation established [four priority areas](#): Anti-Racism, Reconciliation with Indigenous People, Climate Justice, and Communities of Faith. If your community faith has program ideas or is engaged in work that falls into one of these areas, there may be grants available. Additionally, the United Church Foundation is there to help you invest in the ministries you care about.

Thank you, Shining Waters Region friends. I am so grateful for your spirit, creativity, generosity, and thoughtfulness. I look forward to learning together in 2024.

In gratitude,

Melody Duncanson-Hales,

Community of Faith Stewardship Support Staff for Shining Waters Region

mduncanson-hales@united-church.ca 705-618-3032 or 1-833-236-0281 Ext. 4

GRAND RIVER BOOKSTORE

Grand River Bookstore continues to be open to serve you. Please call us at 519-442-3366 or 1-888-668-0871. If we do not answer your call immediately we will return your call as quickly as possible. You can email us for any of your book inquiries at sales@grandriverbooks.com

Please visit our website www.grandriverbooks.ca where we are working to provide resources on contemporary issues (such as anti-racism, aboriginal spirituality, worship, loneliness and loss, and spirituality) for good reading, book study and resource information. If we do not have it here, we will do our best to get what you need.

You can also come and visit us at Five Oaks at 1 Bethel Road, Paris, Ontario and take in this beautiful retreat centre.

Thank you,

Pat Gilmore and Cindy Aniol

EMMANUEL COLLEGE

On behalf of Emmanuel College, I want to bring greetings to your region as you meet this spring season. I pray that your meeting goes well and that you experience God's presence and blessing in this important work of the church. **My name is HyeRan Kim-Cragg and it is my privilege to bring you greetings as Emmanuel's Principal.** I hope to see you in person in the near future and share good news of Emmanuel College with you and hear good news of this region's wonderful ministry.

Faculty Compliment, Trauma Informed Pedagogy & Faculty on the Road

Last year, we completed three significant faculty searches, marking historical milestones for the Toronto School of Theology (TST) of which we are a part. Rev. Dr. Glenn McCullough joined as assistant professor through a partnership with Knox, a first in TST's history. Dr. Jenny Bright became Emmanuel's first assistant professor of Buddhist Spiritual Care and Counseling. **The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne will be appointed as the first assistant professor of United Church of Canada studies at Emmanuel** after completing her moderator's role in December 2025. Additionally, Néstor Medina was promoted to associate professor, and Pam McCarroll to full professor, holding the Jane and Geoffrey Martin Chair in Practical Theology.

This academic year, the faculty has engaged training in Trauma Informed Pedagogy (TIP), with monthly discussions involving faculty, staff, and Research Fellows. TIP emerged from student discussions in response to our EDIA stance, "DEAR" (Dignity, Equity Accountability, Responsibility) Declaration, and has been supported by grants from the Wabash Center and the Association of Theological Schools. We plan to host a TST-wide conference in May 2024 to share our insights and impact other theological schools.

The current faculty is keen to go out into different communities of faith to promote Emmanuel and share their scholarship and wisdom. Andrew Aitchison as Admissions Counsellor and Recruitment Coordinator will be a liaison connecting faculty with communities. Please let him know if your communities want to invite our Christian, Muslim or Buddhist faculty. That would be so wonderful.

The Indigenous Healing Garden Project

This project, which aligns beautifully with Victoria University's sustainability strategic framework and Emmanuel's commitment to right relations with Indigenous communities, is currently underway, thanks to an initial grant from the United Church Foundation's Seeds of Hope. Brook McKillop, the architectural firm, has been commissioned to redesign the courtyard which features the Crucified Woman Sculpture. The proposed designs have received approval from the project's advisory committee in collaboration with the Indigenous Elder circle. We aim to begin construction this summer and anticipate project completion by 2025, as part of the UCC Centennial celebration.

Major Celebrations at Emmanuel College

In the next few years, there are several significant anniversaries we're eagerly looking forward to celebrating! Firstly, in 2024-2025 we'll be commemorating three remarkable milestones: the 10th anniversary of the Buddhist Focus in our Master of Pastoral Studies (MPS) program, the 15th anniversary of the Muslim Focus in the MPS program, and the grand 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada. In 2025-26 we will celebrate 30 years of the Committee on Asian/North American Asian Theologies (CANAAT). Then fast forward to 2027-2028, which promises to be another monumental period, marking the 20th anniversary of the Master of Sacred Music Program and the 100th anniversary of Emmanuel College itself. Stay tuned for more information about these celebrations to come.

I envision our celebrations will incorporate multiple fundraising opportunities to establish scholarships, enriching our offerings and supporting marginalized students. Notable progress has already been made in securing scholarships. We proudly unveiled our first named scholarship for Buddhist students in February 2024. Efforts are underway to establish a Korean Scholarship, with an inaugural fundraising dinner held this past fall, and another planned as a music concert commemorating the 100th birth year of the Right Rev. Dr. Sang Chul Lee on October 26, 2024, at Willowdale Emmanuel United Church. Additionally, a special fundraising event is in the works to establish a scholarship for Queer students, scheduled for November 2 for Drag Show paid event, in collaboration with the Drag and Spirituality Summit, to be held at Emmanuel November 1 to 3, 2024.

Hybrid Master of Divinity Program

Our Hybrid Master of Divinity (MDiv) program began this past year which allows for 2 years of a 3-year MDiv can be done online. We hope this will reach more prospective students outside of the Greater Toronto Area. [Read this story](#) about two folks who began the Hybrid MDiv this year.

Multi-faith Spiritual Life

Spiritual and religious activities thrive, in person every week, Tuesday and Wednesday. These sessions are led by Buddhist faculty members, guest religious leaders and our dedicated student Spiritual Life Team (SLT), along with students from Christian worship/preaching and Buddhist ritual courses. This SLT is enrolled in a year-long course for credit called "Worship and Ritual Leadership Practicum." Our Wednesday Spiritual Life Gathering continues to be the heartbeat of our week and alternates between Christian Worship and a Multi-faith Gathering. These gatherings are streamed live on YouTube and are open to the public and all are welcome!

Faith Community Partnerships

Over the past year and a half, we've been fortunate to receive community lunch sponsorships from various Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist faith communities. They've joined us at Emmanuel to share food, stories, and teachings about their faith traditions while learning from our students about their interfaith experiences. Addressing food insecurity is crucial today, and providing meals to our students in this manner has been a great blessing. If your church is interested in partnering with Emmanuel, please be in touch!

Financial Support

Emmanuel College continues to provide significant financial support to students. Through the John W. Billes Fund, Emmanuel continues to provide 100% of tuition coverage to all domestic students who are registered full-time in the M.Div. program and who are engaged in The United Church of Canada's candidacy pathway process. All basic degree domestic full-time students are eligible for our **Entering Theological Education grant, which offers 50% tuition coverage to their first year courses.** We also offer all (domestic and international) students who are registered in the Ph. D. program, 100% tuition coverage for four years. For more information about studying at Emmanuel College and about the financial support available for all Emmanuel programs, whether one is studying full-time or part-time, please contact Andrew Aitchison, emmanuel.admissions@utoronto.ca.

Emmanuel is offering an increasing number of Continuing Education events online. These events are offered through the Centre for Religion and Its Contexts (CRIC). A list of upcoming offerings are found on the [Emmanuel College website](#). For further information about these events please contact Shawn Kazubowski-Houston: ec.events@utoronto.ca.

Please follow us on social media:

[Facebook:](#) @EmmanuelCollegeofVic
[Instagram:](#) @emmanuelcollegetoronto
[YouTube:](#) @EmmanuelCollege1

If you have questions or are seeking further information about Emmanuel College, please be in touch with us or explore Emmanuel: <http://bit.ly/exploremmanuel>.

Rev. Dr. HyeRan Kim-Cragg, Principal
Timothy Eaton Memorial Church Professor of Preaching Emmanuel College

CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

A Year of Desire and Longing

The year 2023 was a year of desire and longing, and with some exciting events to help us feel energized. During the Black History Month, Alcris Limongi organized a lively panel discussion with black diaconal ministers; Principal Alan did something similar with Asian UCC friends during the Asian Heritage Month, with the panelists addressing the question: Who is Asian?

The two-day Con Ed event with Dr. Claudio Carvalhas on worship was refreshing. We rejoiced with The Rev. Dr. Wenh-In Ng during the Annual Service of Celebration when she received the Companion of the Centre Award. To add another layer of joy, the presence of the Moderator Carmen Lansdowne and her conversation with Dr. Ng on Indigenous relations was stimulating.

We began the year desiring to strengthen intercultural education. Conversation with the Executive Director of the Forum of Intercultural Leadership and Education elevated our imagination. As invited by the Office of Vacation, CCS conducted an Admission Orientation Circle in August.

As far as longing goes, we hired Julie Ng-Leung to lead a strategic planning activity. It was a longing for direction and financial stability. After the pandemic, we are faced with the changing landscape in theological education and church life in general. There was a need to sort our priority, strength, and future path.

The strategic activity was completed. Julie has presented the school's leaders several options. The school has set up a special small team to study those findings, taking financial situation seriously. They will also study the recommendations and background information of the strategic plan of 2019. The goal is to provide a decisive strategic goals for the next two years.

CCS is working hard to envision the future. We do not approach it with fear but with courage and understanding. We pray for and work towards transformation.

We are blessed with collaborative, generous partners, including: Anglican and United Churches
Diakonia of the United Church of Canada
Anglican Deacons
Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean
Diaconal Mentors, Field Placements, Learning Facilitators, Local Committee members,
Council and Committee volunteers
St Andrew's College
St Stephen's College
Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre
Strategic Charm (social media managers)

Our Yearbook, Financial Statements, and Annual Report may be found at:
<http://ccsonline.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Annual-Report-2023.pdf>

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. Alan Lai, Principal

ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Atlantic School of Theology serves Christ's mission by shaping effective and faithful ordained and lay leaders and understanding among communities of faith. We did this in a variety of ways in 2023. With students and alumni in every United Church of Canada Region, we bring together a community with an extensive understanding of the varied needs of the church. The Summer Distance MDiv continues to be the degree with the highest enrollment bringing students together for 6 weeks of intensive learning in the summer and online, synchronous, and asynchronous classes in the fall and winter. In addition to the MDiv degree, we have United Church of Canada Students enrolled in the MA as well as 3 diplomas and a wide range of continuing education options.

2023 saw the soft launch of our Bachelor of Theology degree which includes a "Ministry Specialization" stream. We were pleased to welcome 7 students in the fall and anticipate an increase in enrollment in 2024. This degree reduces the barrier for those without an undergraduate degree who feel called to serve the church and want academic excellence at a bachelor's level combined with opportunities for practical experience serving the church. We are excited about the ways this may meet the identified needs of our founding parties. We value our relationship with the Office of Vocation and Candidacy Boards across the country as we seek to respond to the educational needs of the church for shaping effective and faithful leaders.

The Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell concluded his tenure as Academic Dean on the 1st of July and I have taken over the role for the next 3 years. The Presidential search committee concluded their work, and the Rev. Dr. Heather McCance began serving as President on the 1st of August. Like all educational institutions, we face challenges and the road ahead is not always clear, however, there is a spirit of optimism and a sense of renewal within our school community as we chart a path for the future.

It is a joy to work with United Church of Canada students as well as those who support them within the administrative structure of the church and individual communities of faith. We welcome your input as we seek to serve the ever-changing needs of the church.

With the Deepest Respect and Gratitude,

Susan MacAlpine Gillis

Rev. Dr. Susan MacAlpine-Gillis
Academic Dean
Atlantic School of Theology

GROWTH ANIMATOR REPORT

When you hear the word “Growth,” you might ask, “Does it mean number?” Yes, the number of people gathering together is important, the countable and uncountable number of gifts is valuable, but that’s not all. The Call of the United Church of Canada is a good summary of what it’s trying to accomplish, “Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice.” You might ask, “How is it possible?” or “Does it mean something substantial needs to be done?” I can assure you that that’s exactly the direction the United Church of Canada wants to take. The General Council Office of the United Church of Canada has reset its priorities and weaved its key priority activities, to make sure that they all will lead towards Growth. Visually represented, it transformed itself into a fish, with Growth as the fish head, and the rest will follow, namely, climate, justice, leadership, indigenous pathways, and the Common Good.

It’s like a project of building a community garden. Do we want to invite your neighbors to be a part of it? If we do, such an invitation implies we are receptive to changes, which include what size of land we would allow ourselves to share with others when it’s so limited. What type of soil are we going to use? Are we going to use the same type of soil, or other types as well since it implies the building of other sustainable and beneficial ecosystems?

As your Growth Animator, I shall be pleased to listen to your wonderful stories in the past, your present ambitions, and your plans for the future. My support could be summarized as the following three streams of work:

Renewal: This stream has something to do with the existing communities of faith. We want to help you connect, attract and welcome neighbors. Let your neighbors know about your existence, and find ways to knit them into your congregation’s life. We are not talking about arranging some social events like club activities, but what is behind those activities, i.e., sharing in the Spirit’s transforming work in our lives as well as the lives of other participants, which is needed and joyful.

Creation: God is the creator. How can the co-creating workers be helpful to God’s project of creation? Are we satisfied with the existing ways of doing church? Do they appeal to our neighbors and the next generations? Keep doing it if the answer is positive. But what if they are no longer relevant and sustainable? Seeding and strengthening new communities of faith like MPFT might be a possibility. We all realize that the landscape in Canada for doing church has changed in the last few decades. Are there groups and needs being neglected? The francophone ministry is not a ministry for just one homogenous group of people. It has groups of youth and young adults whose needs keep changing. It will have contacts with other communities, including but not only migrants, indigenous people, 2SLGBTQ+ persons, and people with disabilities. What should be done when your next generation requires certain training or practice every Sunday morning? To go online might sound like a bad idea for some, but it might be the only choice for many. God is calling people together in new ways. How can we join in?

Invitation: Evangelism is an old word; however, it might sound like a new word to the United Church people. We don't use that word very often for a reason, but we do share our faith with others. Can that be done more intentionally but at the same time humbly? As we mentioned before, people are fully occupied with activities other than worship services on Sundays. How can we build new relationships or maintain the existing ones deeply through our greetings? Instead of talking about the weather as we used to, can we relate the conversation to something a little bit more personal? Like, relate the sunshine, breezy wind, or cloudy weather to how one feels right now? There are reasons why people can't attend Sunday worship regularly, are we listening attentively and responding with alternatives? What are the other ways that would allow us to explore and experience the Christian life and values together? Being flexible with time, location, and activities is a must. What about also showing our gratitude towards the people we encounter, i.e., the sharing of their talents, and their struggles? These are easy ways to share the story of Jesus effectively. There are also more challenging ways to what a post-Christian, post-colonial, humble and joyful evangelism would look like.

There may have been serious disconnection in the past, however, the church has devoted itself to bridging the gaps that shouldn't be there. The church wants to know if there are any resources it could provide that would help to invite others to join this community-building project, to improve or even change the interpersonal relationship that everyone longs for. A good combination of effective platforms, meaningful dialogues, and agreeable objectives will surely help to build a sustainable and beneficial ecosystem for all.

The church wants to help everyone to dive into the same vision and call, namely deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice. We can move forward or fail forward together. A part of my role is to identify those glitches. The denominational church has decided to create and mobilize its resources for growth, internally and externally, numerically, and spiritually, to walk together with the Regional Councils that have been working hard and faithfully. So, let's keep envisioning and painting the futuristic pictures that you see. As an animator, I will try my best to help bring these pictures and portraits to life.

Calin Lau

UNITED CHURCH RURAL MINISTRY NETWORK

<https://ucrmn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ucrmn-banner402x-3-768x354.jpg>

2024 REPORT FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

The United Church Rural Ministry Network (UCRMN) is a national network, that connects electronically sharing stories and news of rural communities across Canada (and around the world), by networking with lay and clergy leaders of rural communities of faith. Find us on website ucrmn.ca

Let me walk with you through some of the resources on the UCRMN website. Peter Chynoweth (Cochrane, AB) is the web minder. The ‘Network’ connection includes a partner Atlantic Canada network called Rural Roots Through the Holy which has sponsored conferences in the Maritimes for 3 years. In the Prairies is highlighted the ecumenical Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry (CiRCLe M) which has connections to Saskatoon Theological Union. CiRCLe M is hosting a conference, Experiencing the Rural Culture of the Alberta Foothills, June 18-21.

Then there are ‘Resources’. I would like to recommend to all ‘Tech Resources’. Martin Dawson, from Cornwall, PEI, and web minder Peter Chynoweth write thoughtfully, with humour and matters of ethical consideration of computers. They discuss the use of inexpensive software, like the free Jitsi meet instead of Zoom, refurbishing old and tired computers using open-source software – in short, ‘tech for scarce budgets’ with an eye to keeping our tech out of landfills.

Next comes practical and helpful information on Collaborative Ministry, ways for congregations and communities of faith to work in partnership with others.

Then there are interviews that Martin hosts: With Peter on Open Software as an Ethical Alternative; with George Bott on Rural Connect; with Catherine Smith on her views of rural ministry and initiatives in the Maritimes; with Catherine Christie and Eric Skillings on the founding and workings of UCRMN. (These interviews are also found on Short-Wave Radio stations, a huge love of Martin’s)

The next area is Workshops, with information about the quarterly Zoom workshops that UCRMN has hosted through the years. During this Regional Council year, 2023-24, workshops have been: on April 18 - social media in the Rural Church, facilitated by United Church Digital Team, Cara Czech, Stephen Fetter and Aaron Gallogos; Feb. 15 – Life Long Learning facilitated by St. Andrew’s College staff, Dr. Bernon Lee and Shawn Sanford Beck; Nov. 16 – Pastoral Care to the Rural Church, led by Kathy Douglas of Antler River Watershed; Sept. 21 – further discussions on Collaborative Ministry; June 22 - Radically Welcoming and Rural, the opportunities of Diversity in the Rural Church.

Then there is ENews, with an archive of all the past ENews, from 2020 to 2024. We print 9 editions of UCRMN ENews during the year. Events happening throughout the Church are publicized, advertising from Regions and committees, the regular column on Tech Advice, a regular column from Joyce Sasse’s Gleanings of a Prairie Pastor, reports from Conferences, and most importantly, stories from congregations of community action and ministries. We love to have stories shared. If you have something to tell, send an article (about 300 to 500 words) to editor@UCRMN.ca.

There are over 400 members of UCRMN across the country and in most Regional Councils. As a Network, UCRMN asks for financial support from each Regional Council. We thank those who have given support from their Networking funds. Our suggestion is \$300 from each RC - UCRMN wishes to support all the Regional Councils in their rural ministries. (70% of United Church congregations across the country are in rural or small towns, therefore a relevant cost to each Regional Council.)

UCRMN members are taking part in the “Rural Townhall” by Edge Network for Ministry Development, to hear peoples’ thoughts about what is going on in rural churches, and how rural ministries can be supported.

We are a grassroots initiative for Rural Ministry in the United Church of Canada. Our goal is to connect the many Rural Ministry initiatives across Canada.

Respectfully submitted by UCRMN Board:

Catherine Christie, President UCRMN, Abbey, SK, Living Skies RC

Eric Skillings, Secretary/Treasurer UCRMN, Merlin, ON, Antler River Watershed RC

Shelley Roberts, Vice President UCRMN, Lanark ON, Eastern Ontario Outaouais RC

Donna Mann, Officer UCRMN, Elora ON, Western Ontario Waterways RC

Yvonne Terry, Officer UCRMN, Milestone SK, Living Skies RC

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee is responsible for reviewing nominations and submitting to the Regional Council, its Executive or the Executive Minister, as appropriate, recommendations for election to the following:

- a) Executive (including President, Past President or President-Elect and members)
- b) Communities of Faith Commission
- c) Intentional Interim Ministry Committee
- d) Pastoral Relations Commission
- e) Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Committee
- f) Social and Ecological Justice Commission
- g) Intercultural Diversity Commission
- h) Finance Committee
- i) Grants and Mission Support Committee
- j) Nominations Committee
- k) Commissioners to the 45th General Council

In carrying out this responsibility, the committee:

- reflects theologically on the basis for appointed member participation in the church
- discerns who is equipped to serve
- develops and tests processes for selecting individuals and developing effective groups
- to the best of the committee's ability, strives to meet the region's commitments to its mission, including the equity policy and
 - becoming an intercultural church
 - the full inclusion of people with disabilities
 - developing new and young leadership
 - the Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle Calls to the Church
 - any future commitments regarding the appointed leadership of the United Church

Members of the Nominations Committee actively seek out and encourage nominations from across the diversity of the church and try to ensure that at least one third of any nominations slate is reserved for diversity appointments.

The terms of office for most positions are typically for three years, renewable once. Remaining vacant positions may be appointed by the Executive.

The Nominations Committee offers thanks to all those completing their term with this regional meeting, to those who have agreed to a second term and to those who have put their name forward to fill a vacancy.

a) Executive (including President, Past President or President-Elect and members)

The primary role of the Executive is to develop and monitor policies that enable the Region to live out its mission.

The Executive consists of the President, President-Elect or Past President and members to a maximum of 15 who are members of The United Church of Canada One member from the Indigenous community will be named at the Spiritual Gathering.

The President is be elected at the Regional Council meeting for one year as President-Elect, a two-year term as President and one year as Past President.

President

- Maria Christina Conlon (ministry personnel) (term as President ending 2025)

President- Elect

- Eric Nyarko (ministry personnel) (term ends 2025)

Members

- Jingle Ayupan (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Allan Holditch (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Daniel Reed (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Bri-anne Swan (ministry personnel) (term ending 2025)
- David Leyton-Brown (lay person) (term ending 2025)
- Thomas Shin (ministry personnel) (term ending 2027)
- Lynella Reid-James (lay person) (term ending 2027)
- One position available for an Indigenous member named by the Spiritual Gathering on Indigenous Communities

b) Communities of Faith Commission

The Commission:

- sets policy and give direction within their mandate,
- cares for communities of faith and provide resources for collegiality and support amongst communities of faith,
- nurtures new ministries, and
- empowers and resources ministry in the Region. This includes supporting communities of faith in areas such as clusters, networks, visioning, amalgamation, disbanding, and property matters.

Membership is a chair and six to ten members.

- Carolyn Harding (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Amy Lee (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Tom MacNeil (ministry personnel) (term ending 2025)
- Eric Nyarko (ministry personnel) (term ending 2025)
- Trevor Brisbane (ministry personnel) (term ending 2026)
- Sandra Nottegar (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- Chris Bennet (chair) (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- Patti Rogers (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)
- Adèle Etongue Mayer (lay person) (term ending 2027)

- Isaac Kamta (ministry personnel) (term ending 2027)
- Krista Moore (ministry personnel) (term ending 2027)

c) Intentional Interim Ministry Committee

The Committee gathers expertise and retains and integrates best practices and knowledge into our intentional interim ministry.

Membership is six members.

- Jim Keenan (chair) (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Marlene Buwalda (lay person) (term ending 2026)
- Sadekie Lyttle-Forbes (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)
- Cynthia O'Connell (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)

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- Sadekie Lyttle-Forbes (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)
- Cynthia O'Connell (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)

f) Pastoral Relations Commission

The Commission:

- sets policy and gives direction within their mandate, and
- provides support for ministry personnel throughout their ministry, including equipping, covenanting, pastoral relationships and retirement.

Membership is a chair and six to ten members.

- William Haughton (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Barbara Hendren (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Robin Pilkey (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Deirdre Lawrence (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Beth Moore (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- Lawrence Nyarko (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2026)
- Sung Ran Kim (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2027)

g) Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Committee

The Committee implements the License Lay Worship Policy of Shining Waters Regional Council.

The Committee provides support and oversight to Licensed Lay Worship Leaders within Shining Waters Region and is a recommending and reporting body to the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Membership is a chair and four to six members.

- Pat Edmonds (LLWL) (second term ending 2025)
- Lisa Pfau (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Jeannette Schieck (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Doug Reid (LLWL) (term ending 2026)
- Brian Stevens (ministry personnel) (term ending 2026)

h) Social and Ecological Justice Commission

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission will encourage, support, and initiate social justice work within Shining Waters Regional Council, which encompasses but is not limited to anti-racism and becoming a critical intercultural church of justice.

- Susan Eagle (chairperson) (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Lois Brown (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Don Ford (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Esther Collier (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Irene Green (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Jennifer Gordon (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Alexa Gilmour (ministry personnel) (term ending 2026)

i) Intercultural Diversity Commission

The Intercultural Diversity Commission sets policy and gives direction within their mandate. The Intercultural Diversity Commission will encourage and engage Shining Waters Regional Council, its Executive and Commissions, and its Communities of Faith in honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry and work to deepen intercultural awareness and respect.

- Hedy Baker-Graf (lay member) (term ending 2025)
- Joel Saavedra Aguirre (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2026)
- Innocent Karuhanga (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- Amy Yea Kyong Lee (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2026)
- John Joseph Mastandrea (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2026)
- **Néstor Medina (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2026)**
- Amber Lee Row (lay member) (term ending 2026)

j) Finance Committee

In May 2022, the Regional Council approved the creation of a Finance Committee. The committee provides support and oversight to the financial planning and reporting of Shining Waters Regional Council.

Membership is four to six members.

- Allan Holditch (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Beth Herrema (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Bruce Chappell (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Paul Kim (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Wendy Jarvis (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Harry Ramsaran (lay member) (term ending 2027)

k) Grants and Mission Support Committee

In October 2021, the Executive approved the merger of the Grants Review Committee and the Mission Support Committee to become the Grants and Mission Support Committee. The Committee receives all grant applications and determines where the application should be directed. This provides one point of entry for all grant requests.

Membership is seven to ten members.

- Deborah Hart (chair) (ministry personnel) (second term ending 2025)
- Sarah Lough (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Ron Wigle (lay member) (second term ending 2025)
- Bruce Chappell (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- John Joseph Mastandrea (chair) (ministry personnel) (term ending 2026)
- Dan Clark (lay member) (term ending 2026)
- Maryanne Robin Thomson (ministry personnel) (term ending 2026)

l) Nominations Committee

Membership is eight members including at least two, but not more than four, members of the Executive and up to six members not currently serving on the Executive. These must be members of the United Church but not necessarily members of the Regional Council, at least two of whom are lay members and two are ministry personnel.

- David Leyton-Brown (chair) (lay member) (term ending 2024)
- Greg Daly (ministry personnel) (term ending 2025)
- Martha ter Kuile (ministry personnel) (term ending 2025)
- Sarah Jane Wetelainen (lay member) (second term ending 2026)
- Allyce Mutungi (lay member) (term ending 2026)

m) Commissioners to the 45th General Council

The regional council will elect 14 commissioners to attend the 45th General Council which will occur August 7 – 12, 2025 in Calgary, Alberta. The regional council President will also attend.

The slate of commissioners will include a mix of ministry personnel and lay people, new and experienced commissioners and reflect a broad geographic presence. There will be at least one youth or young adult and at least four people intentionally selected to reflect diversity not otherwise reflected.

- Jeffrey Dale (ministry personnel)
- Sarah Lough (lay person)
- Charles Donley (lay person)
- Gail Birkett (lay person)
- Liz MacKenzie (ministry personnel)
- Ross Carson (ministry personnel)
- Richard Gardner (ministry personnel)
- Eric Nyarko (ministry personnel)
- Brigid Maya Douglas (ministry personnel)
- Janice Asiimwe (lay person)
- Allyce Mutungi (lay person)
- 3 vacancies

Alternate

- Maria Christina (Tina) Conlon (ministry personnel)

PROPOSAL TO SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL SW2024-01

SW2024-01 Proposal: Provide Financial Assistance to Shining Waters Region's Congregations

The future for many communities of faith in Shining Waters Region is uncertain. Declining numbers of adherents/members and falling revenue challenge many. This problem should be addressed in a practical manner. The main purposes of this document are to outline the problem and suggest a possible solution. That solution involves moving funds from the control of the Region Executive to individual congregations, as will be described below.

The Financial Health of Shining Waters Congregations

Communities of Faith are required to submit each year Statistical Information Forms to the United Church of Canada. This section outlines a summary of those statistics for Shining Waters Communities of Faith for the years 2019 to 2022. They were obtained through a request to Susan Jackson, Information & Statistics Coordinator for the United Church. Table 1 shows a summary of that data with the column numbers in yellow being the same as on the spreadsheets received and the Statistical Information Forms.

In Table 1, the number of households under pastoral care (column 5), the total membership (column 16), the identifiable givers to local expenses (column 18), and the number of identifiable givers to M&S (column 19), all show a significant decline from 2019 to 2022. Interestingly, the number of people attending weekly worship (column 20) remains fairly steady, close to 11,000, as does the amount raised by congregational givings (column 32A) at approximately \$26 million. The total amount raised went from a peak of \$63 million in 2019 to \$46 million in 2022. The compensation paid to staff (columns 41 and 42) remained fairly steady although there seemed to be a small decline in compensation paid to other ministerial staff (column 42). Travel expenses (column 43) declined noticeably, probably due to the COVID pandemic.

Table 2 shows the 2022 percentile values of the 154 Region's Congregations for the number of weekly Sunday attendees and the total funds raised. It shows that 25% of the congregations had 25 people or less attending each week with a total revenue of less than \$100,000. These congregations cannot support a full-time minister with all the other costs involved including benefits, expenses of the minister, and the normal operating costs of a church. The recommended minimum ministerial salary percentage increases for 2019 (1.6%), 2020 (1.9%), 2021 (2.2%) and 2022 (1.3%) were reasonable. However, those increases have risen in 2023 (3.4%) and 2024 (6.3%) making it likely that more than 25% of Shining Waters Region's congregations will not be able to afford a full-time minister. This will have consequences across the Region. Because of the increase in housing costs, the Cost-of-Living allowances are also likely to increase placing additional stresses on congregations.

Proposed Financial Relief for Shining Waters Congregations

It is proposed that at least \$600,000 be set aside for distribution to the congregations of Shining Waters. That would amount to approximately \$4,000 per congregation. All congregations would be treated equally, regardless of size, since smaller communities of faith probably have greater need. Some threshold should be set to qualify congregations and it is suggested that they have at least 10 regular Sunday Worshipers. For 2022, this would disqualify six of the 154 congregations, four of which had no attendance at Sunday worship. New or proposed congregations would also qualify

subject to Region Executive approval. Each receiving congregation would decide whether to use the funds for operating expenses or, if it is not needed, to distribute the funds to a local registered charity. The Region should track, on an annual basis, how the funds are being used.

Where to get the funds? It is proposed that a percentage of all property sales go towards this purpose. A Reconciliation Fund already gets approximately 15% of all property sales and it is recommended that at least a similar amount be used for this purpose. Congregations which close would probably prefer their funds be used for this purpose rather than other uses at present. Since a sizable portion of the funds would end up with local charities, it is suggested that the support of some charities now receiving Region funds be reduced or eliminated. These charities are metropolitan Toronto centric, and the new model would help more charities across the Region.

Such financial assistance would help many congregations that are struggling. It would send a message that the Region recognizes the problem and wants to help. It also allows a more equitable distribution of funds to charities across the Region, and in some cases might even stimulate more donations.

2022 Statistics Shining Waters Region

| | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Percentile of Sunday Attendees | 15 | 25 | 49 | 85 | 149 |
| Percentile of Total Funds Raised | \$44,210 | \$99,857 | \$183,724 | \$358,601 | \$683,193 |

Table 2: Percentiles of number of Sunday attendees and total amount of funds raised by congregations during 2022. For example, the median or 50 percentile values are 49 attendees and \$183,724.

PROPOSAL TO SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL SW2024-02

SW2024-02: FAUC Viability of Ministries Proposal

Whereas we are unaware of a comprehensive plan for ministry in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and there appears to be meagre support for ministries which are under threat of being under-resourced, we propose that the Region develop a policy for addressing preservation and/or development of property assets and strategic viable ministry, particularly for marginalised communities, in the GTA for adoption and implementation by the 2025 Regional Annual Meeting.

We further propose that the Region form an ad hoc committee or empower the Executive to address compelling needs brought by Communities of Faith in the meantime.

A Strategy for Ensuring the Viability of Ministries in the Greater Toronto Area

Origin: Fairlawn Avenue United Church

1. What is the issue? (describe in broad terms)

Communities of faith in the Greater Toronto Area face different challenges in being missional. Some have internal resources to address these challenges, some, by virtue of the economic disparity of their worshipping communities, do not. For example, a community of faith with meagre resources may be offering ministry to their local community that is beyond their capacity. The Region could be intentional in allocating resources and helping them address that ministry.

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us to be intentional in our ministry planning for Communities of Faith in the Greater Toronto Area.

2. Why is this issue important?

Simply put, Jesus made it clear that we are to care for the least of these, our brethren. The least of these may be described as the marginalised in our neighbourhoods who rely on our communities of faith to care for them.

There is no tool/guideline for determining how to assist a community of faith that is resource rich (i.e., a building) and cash poor carry out their ministry to their neighbours.

A policy is required to direct resources to these communities of faith while they navigate transition.

This policy is required to ensure that we have communities of faith supported across the GTA to offer ministry, instead of simply seeing resources from sales of properties saved for a rainy day.

The policy should ensure that there are communities of faith in recognized neighbourhoods of the GTA—i.e. no area of the GTA should be abandoned as a result of church building closings.

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

Many of our communities of faith have the opportunity to provide a ministry of compassion to marginalized persons, including indigenous persons, people of gender identities subject to prejudice, people from other cultures making a new start, discrimination because of their economic circumstances and/or race. We offer this ministry with an awareness of the intersectionality of the above-named communities.

4. How might the Regional Council respond to the issue?

The development of a strategy articulated as a policy for communities of faith in the GTA would ensure

- 1. Ongoing neighbourhood presence across that part of the region and**
- 2. Allocation of funds to enable some of those communities, on an as-needed basis, to care for the marginalized persons in their neighbourhoods.**

Motion

Be it resolved that the proposal, as circulated with the notice of our Governing Council meeting April 9/2024, for Fairlawn Avenue United Church be approved.

Moved by Vicki Stuart

Seconded by Amanda Hancox

Carried unanimously

PROPOSAL TO SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL SW2024-03

WORKING SW2024-03: Support of Broadview Proposal

Origin: Official Board, Grace United Church, Barrie Ontario

1. What is the issue?

Broadview Magazine, an important voice for faith and justice in the United Church, has suffered substantial cuts to both its funding and advertising revenue.

In 2013, the national church grant to Broadview was \$132,000. In 2020, the grant had dropped to \$102,000. In addition, United Church advertising in the magazine that year was \$83,000.

For 2024, the national church grant is only \$40,880 and there are no contracts for advertising. The dramatic decrease in financial support has not only put Broadview's existence in jeopardy, but also no longer covers the cost of the 20% United Church content in the magazine.

Background:

Since its inception in 1925, United Church members have been informed about what is happening in our church by publications which merged to become the United Church Observer in 1939. During its 78-year history, the Observer became an award-winning magazine committed to stories of spirituality, justice and ethical living as it pertained to our church. In 2019, the publication was retitled Broadview, a name that connects with contemporary audiences and echoes the open-mindedness and inclusivity that defines today's United Church. The magazine and its digital platforms positioned Broadview as the voice of Canadian progressive Christians and those who share our core values.

The magazine has given not only local updates and pertinent information about what is happening across the United Church, but also provided insight and analysis of various theological, ethical and political positions the United Church has established to a wider audience.

It has brought us together as a national church and given us a sense of the wider church to which we belong. As we have de-structured the United Church, eliminated presbyteries, moved to more reliance on Zoom meetings and downsized attendance at General Council meetings, many United Church members have expressed a concern about being left behind and left out. Yet, they are still able to stay informed through Broadview articles and information.

Broadview magazine has continued to provide coverage of United Church life, even while moving ahead with exploring other topics and educational matters of a spiritual nature. As we move into the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada, we need to affirm not diminish those vehicles whereby United Church people can nurture and be nurtured through information, education, fellowship and sharing.

2. Why is this issue important?

We live at a time when false news and false narratives consume much of the public information output. As well, diminished funding for all sources of media and public information means that often there is no in-depth coverage of important issues. Many people express a yearning for deeper understanding and a means to engage with the contentious and complex issues of our day.

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitment on equity?

Broadview Magazine seeks to keep its subscription rate at a level which allows access by those who have limited budgets while still selling its magazine. Broadview Magazine, through its appeal to a wide audience continues to be an important voice for inclusion and diversity.

4. How might Shining Waters Regional Council respond to this issue?

The Regional Council might:

Call on General Council to;

- Affirm the value and importance of Broadview Magazine as a publication that contributes greatly to enhanced education and dialogue about important spiritual and justice issues of our day;
- Affirm Broadview Magazine as a means by which United Church people as well as others learn about the United Church and issues that require in depth ethical consideration;
- Use the 100th year of the formation of the United Church of Canada to help lead a subscription campaign and encourage United Church members and communities of faith to subscribe to this important publication;
- Restore funding to at least a level that supports United Church content (approximately \$80,000, not including postage), and also renew advertising content.

Respectfully Submitted

Paul Burke

Chair, Official Board,

Grace United Church, Barrie

SW2024-04: Reducing Homelessness in Canada Proposal

Origin: Social and Ecological Justice Commission

1. What is the issue?

Background:

Research shows that 35,000 Canadians are homeless right now and 36% of Canadians have been homeless or know someone who has been homeless. Furthermore, statistics show that 1.7 million Canadian households live in precarious housing that is either unaffordable, overcrowded and/or needs major repairs,

Organizations such as the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) and others have been advocating for decades for policies at all levels of government which would help to significantly reduce homelessness in Canada.

Bringing together representatives of the interfaith community, ISARC has participated in Government consultations on affordable housing among other social justice issues affecting people living on the margins. They urge the Provincial and Federal Governments to work together to create more affordable housing and to introduce a Homelessness Prevention and Housing Benefit to stop growing homelessness in Canada.

2. Why is this issue important?

The gospel calls us to love our neighbour, especially our neighbour in need. Jesus reminded his disciples that whatever you do to the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do to me. Justice, equity, compassion and care for neighbour are at the heart of the Christian gospels and Christian theology.

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitment on equity?

One only needs to look at the demographic of those in poverty to see that disproportionately it is composed of those who are victims of inequity: people with disabilities, immigrants, women, people of colour, the sick, the elderly and those seeking to escape the trauma of abuse and violence.

Impoverished people are far more likely to be inadequately housed, or to suffer chronic or intermittent homelessness, than those whose incomes are above the poverty line. Ontario is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis. Small and large communities identify lack of housing, particularly lack of affordable housing as a major issue in their municipalities.

Not only are mortgage costs extremely high but rents have reached levels that place people at risk of homelessness. It is not enough to build additional units. Attention needs to be given to existing affordable units being lost due to vacancy decontrol and demolition to build more expensive rental units. These inequitable situations in Canada must be rectified with bold steps to reverse homelessness with affordable housing and with homelessness prevention supports.

4. How might Shining Waters Regional Council respond to this issue?

The Regional Council might:

- Commend the Federal Government for the bold initiative of promising \$8.1 billion in new spending on housing, complemented by as much as \$55 billion in financing;
- Call on the Federal Government to implement a Homelessness Prevention and Housing Benefit as a necessary tool to stop growing homelessness while more housing is created and housing affordability is restored. This benefit would provide direct support to assist with paying real rents and assisting those who are unhoused to find affordable rents. (HPHB) would provide immediate rental relief to up to 385,000 households at imminent risk of homelessness, help over 50,000 people leave homelessness and reduce pressure on Canada's overwhelmed homeless systems.
- Call on the Federal Government to ensure that the promised new funding includes both an Encampment Response Program to rapidly respond to people living in encampments to assist with finding appropriate, safe and secure housing and a comprehensive Refugee and Asylum Seeker Resettlement Program that ensures those fleeing from their own countries are not placed in municipal homeless shelter systems.
- Call on the Provincial Government to take steps to preserve existing and new housing at affordable rents by:
 1. Restoring rent control to **all** rental housing, and applying vacancy control.
The decision to remove the HST on new apartment buildings and the Federal Government's recent decision to increase the amount of low-interest financing for new apartments is enough of an incentive for new apartment construction. There is no justification for vacancy decontrol or for new apartments not to be covered by rent control;
 2. Insuring above guideline rent increases are limited to the period needed to recover the costs of renovations, and rents then returned to previous levels;
 3. stemming the conversion of long-term housing into short-term vacation units (AirBnbs).
Groups like Fairbnb have called for provinces to set up short-term rental registries and allow municipalities access to collected data;
 4. limiting short-term rentals to principal residences, and hold platforms like AirBnB accountable for the properties they advertise.

PROPOSAL TO SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL SW2024-05

SW2024-05: Creation of a System of Information-Sharing within SWRC

Origin: Social and Ecological Justice Commission

1. What is the issue? (describe in broad terms)

Currently many social justice and environmental concerns are happening worldwide. There is a deep need for information on these issues to be shared quickly with communities. This information may involve swift actions that need to be taken to promote justice (such as needs for resources or calls for political responses to refugee or food and shelter crises) or ongoing lifestyle changes that are required as a response to global situations (such as those needed to reach net zero emissions of greenhouse gases or increase biodiversity and carbon absorption).

Faith communities are ideally-placed to respond as conduits of information within communities because they have spaces to gather, hold positions of influence, and have human resources to activate in information-sharing.

2. Why is this issue important?

The climate and biodiversity crises are now at the stage where they impose risk on human civilizations. Continued disregard for these situations will impact all other aspects of social justice on the planet: wars will increase, income inequality and human displacement will increase, food shortages will increase, wide-spread abuse of the powerless by the powerful will increase.

The solutions also exist and have been studied extensively. People are also looking for leadership on how to respond to the global environmental and social justice issues. Anxiety is leading to tension and stress in our youth and they need to be prepared for the future and know that the adults in their life are working towards a sustainable and equitable planet.

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal initiates three things:

- a specific contact within each faith community who can share information with the faith community.
- directions that guide faith communities to respond in a variety of ways within their community (recognizing that the means to act will differ from community to community)
- ongoing restructuring of the information-sharing in response to situational changes via mandated responses between faith community contacts and the Social and Ecological Justice Commission

4. How might the Regional Council respond to the issue?

It is proposed that the Regional Council

- request that each faith community provide (and update as needed) contact information for a Social and Ecological Justice response person (SEJRP)
- create a communication piece that goes out quarterly to each faith community SEJRP and that the content of this piece
 - be vetted by the Social and Ecological Justice Commission for accuracy and validity
 - contain current information needed to guide social and ecological justice actions
 - contain clear and attainable directions on how to share this information to allow for appropriate and powerful responses to current crises
 - include a range of responses that reflect the different conditions within the faith communities
 - encourage ongoing updates from faith communities about the effectiveness of the communication/responses
- request that each faith community give a quarterly update on how information-sharing is working and suggestions for improvement and that these be forwarded to the Social and Ecological Justice Commission.