

**East Central Ontario Regional Council**  
**Meeting of the Assembly of Elders**  
**Friday, May 8, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Vision of the Assembly of Elders by which we evaluate progress based on:**

- Supporting and enhancing the life of Communities of Faith where ministry takes place
- Nurturing Social Justice and Outreach programs
- Building Communications

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Rev. Paul Reed	Chair
Rev. Jean Wilson	Past-Chair
Marilyn Fortin	Member
Ted Meyers	Member
Rev. Steve Spicer	Member
Nancy Sutherland	Member
Steve Coles	Member
Rev. Ryan McNally	Member
Rev. Phil Wilson	Member
Brian James	Corresponding Member - Financial Administration
Louise Slobodian	Corresponding Member - Communications and Administration Assistant
Sharon Hull	Corresponding Member - Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages
Rev. David Timpson	Corresponding Member, Pastoral Relations Minister
Rev. Rosemary Lambie	Member, Executive Minister
Joel Miller	Corresponding Member, Program Assistant to Executive Minister, Recording Secretary

**REGRETS/ABSENT**

Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley	Corresponding Member - Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice
Shannon Marsellus	Member

**Opening Devotions**– Steve Spicer led opening worship, beginning with a guided meditation and breathing exercise. Steve referred to the Book of Jeremiah, also known as the “Book of Comfort”. During the events of the past few months, we can hear the doubt in people’s minds and we all need to be encouraged. Steve read Scripture Philippians 4:8-9, and then ended with a prayer.

**Recognize the Land** – Paul Reed acknowledged that we reside on indigenous land, and gave thanks for its stewardship and care over the many years by our indigenous brothers and sisters.

**Circle Time of Sharing** – All were invited to share.

**Appointment of Equity Monitor for this Meeting** – Phil Wilson

**Agenda**

**2020-05-08-057 MOTION** (T. Meyers/J. Wilson) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accept the agenda as circulated. **Carried**

**Minutes of April 3, 2020**

**2020-05-08-058 MOTION** (S. Coles/M. Fortin) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accept the Minutes of April 3, 2020 as circulated. **Carried**

**Minutes of April 17, 2020 email vote**

**2020-05-08-059 MOTION** (T. Meyers/P. Wilson) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accept the Minutes of email vote closed April 17, 2020. **Carried**

*2020-04-17\_XXX MOTION (T. Meyers/ S. Coles)*

*1) to the sale of certain Real Property, the legal description of which is Pt Lt 15 Con 1 Stanhope as in SA246 Except H20582 Except Pt 1 H39227; Pt Rdal STN Lt 15&16 Con 1 Stanhope (closed by H126069) Pt 1 19R2882, Algonquin Highlands, and the municipal address of which is 1021 East Road, Algonquin Highlands (Zion United Church) pursuant to an agreement between the Trustees of Highland Hills United Church, a congregation of The United Church of Canada, as seller, and Helen Litt and David Litt, as buyers, dated the 4th day of April, 2020 for the sale price of \$245,000.*

*2) to the following disposition of the proceeds arising from the transaction: To invest the proceeds, net of the selling costs, in secure investments. Income generated by investments will be used for operations. Any principal will be used for capital works or other substantial projects to the benefit of the congregation only on the approval of the United Church of Canada.*

*The Mission Through Property and Finance Leadership Team will also remind them of the RC Policy that 10% of proceeds is to be sent to the national UCC for Indigenous Ministries. Carried*

**Correspondence**

- a) April 17, 2020 Rev. Marlene Britton, Program Co-ordinator Admission & Pastoral Relations, Ministry & Employment Unit re temporary changes to the Pastoral Relations policy (*for information*)
- b) April 19, 2020 Rev. Will Kunder re Grand River Book Store annual meeting and Financial Review (*for information*)
- c) April 24, 2020 Rev. Aruna Alexander re "What can we collectively do to support the work of Dr. Theresa Tam as Canada's Chief Medical Officer working on COVID-19, and refute derogatory comments?" (*action – refer to Team*)
- d) April 27, 2020 Rev. Phil Wilson, Old Hay Bay Church (*for action 6b*)
- e) April 29, 2020 Rev. Jenny Stephens, Office of Vocation Coordinator re follow-up letter to review with Rev. Don Uhryniw and Emmanuel United Church, Peterborough (*for information*)
- f) April 30, 2020 Rev. Elizabeth Macdonald re work on becoming an Affirming Regional Council (*for action – respond to survey and invite back in June*)
- g) April 30, 2020 Rev. Sharon Ballantyne, Chair, Equity Team ECORC a cover letter and four documents for discussion about equity (*for discussion and response/action 8b*)
- h) May 1, 2020 Ron Ewart, Executive Director, Toronto United Church Council re Invitation to name two representatives for the Annual Meeting on June 4, 2020 (*for action –Mission through Property and Finance*)
- i) May 2, 2020 Rev. Will Kunder, Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils re request for \$1500.00 funding for 2020 work. (*for action*)
- j) May 5, 2020 Maria Pimpinella, Insurance & Risk Management | Mission through Finance re 2020 Mission Support application (*for action – communicate to recipients*)

[https://www.united-church.ca/search/all?search\\_api\\_multi\\_index\\_1=All&search\\_api\\_multi\\_index\\_1=All&default\\_node\\_index\\_type=All&default\\_node\\_index\\_type=All&search\\_api\\_multi\\_fulltext=mision+support+grants](https://www.united-church.ca/search/all?search_api_multi_index_1=All&search_api_multi_index_1=All&default_node_index_type=All&default_node_index_type=All&search_api_multi_fulltext=mision+support+grants)

- k) Patricia Teskey and Nancy Payne requesting an invitation to June Assembly of Elders meeting.

**Business arising**

## Building Communications

- I. Communications** – (see report, **appendix A**) Louise is anticipating registration for September 25-27, 2020 Annual General Meeting. Provided information re Facebook marketing experiment (see report for more details).

Discussion: Louise will provide a budget for new line-item “re Facebook marketing experiment” in 2021 budget (and get to Brian James)

- II. Facilitation Team report** – updates on General Meeting, Celebration of Ministry; meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 25-27, 2020, still no certainty that this will take place in light of COVID 19. It was suggested to have a Zoom meeting for business, and the Celebration of Ministry take place separately (live streamed and limited to specific number of guests). It was suggested to go ahead and plan, so that people can save the date. Even in the event of holding venue, will people still feel comfortable gathering despite isolations bans being lifted. Moreover, need to act responsibly around hosting venue in September and Consider risks involved. It may be better to make a decision to meet via Zoom and move forward.

It was suggested to ask people to save the date (September 25-27) with the understanding that this could be a Zoom meeting. It was suggested that a poll also be circulated to see if members of the Regional Council would participate online.

Candidates are inquiring if they could be celebrated now (individually).

Sydenham United Church is considering hosting a meeting next spring.

The Facilitation Team will look more into logistics of proceeding.

## Supporting and enhancing the life of Communities of Faith where ministry takes place

**III. Covenanting Support Team**

- the Minutes of Covenant Support Team (Pastoral Relations work) for April 6, 2020 (see **appendix B**)
  - the Minutes of Covenant Support Team (Pastoral Relations work) for May 6, 2020 (see **appendix C**)
  - Draft Document for Pastoral Oversight with Communities of Faith – April 29, 2020 (see **appendix D**)
  - Pastoral relations actions passed by the Covenant Support Team – meeting April 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 (see **appendix E**)
  - Pastoral Relations Minister's Report (see **appendix F**)
- a) Team progress report – Assembly of Elder representatives
  - b) Report from Supporting Staff member – during latest meeting, discussion about ministers planning to retire, postpone to help their congregations, as calling new ministers during the

pandemic. There is a recommendation that Liaison be present at an additional touchpoint meeting (stage of interview), which means additional costs.

**2020-05-08-060 MOTION** (J. Wilson/S. Coles) The East Central Ontario Regional Council, Assembly of Elders, in supporting a well understood need in Pastoral Charges Requires the presence of Pastoral Relations Liaison's at all Pastoral Relations interviews. **Carried**

c) Items from Liaison Forum (Pastoral Relations)

**2020-05-08-061 MOTION** (S. Spicer/P. Wilson) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accept the Minutes of Covenant Support Team (Pastoral Relations work) for April 6 and May 6, 2020. **Carried**

Discussion: The Assembly of Elders needs to know in advance before any approval of 'change in reduction of terms in pastoral relations' take place. Moreover, how do the Property and Finance Team become aware of discussion taking place regarding closures and amalgamations?

David highlighted Chalmers and Sydenham Street in minutes of May 6<sup>th</sup> 2020; more actions may come to the Assembly of Elders and interim report in the future.

It was suggested that reporting in the future include a list of Communities of Faith that Covenant Support Team are currently engaged with, highlighting, where Liaisons are working, potential amalgamation or closure, change of terms in a call.

It was noted that post COVID 19 will increase the Covenant Support Team's work (exacerbating existing work); thanks and appreciation for to all members of the Team taking on this work.

d) Licensed Lay Worship Leaders – A LLWL was recently asked to attend a congregational service this past month (despite social distancing regulations). This request is not valid, LLWL need to be aware they also have to respect social distancing rules.

#### IV. Mission through Property and Finance

a) **2020-05-08-062 MOTION** (T. Meyers/S. Coles) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders approves the Trinity United Church, Cannington manse renovation project (\$82,000 to \$92,000) by the Nourish Develop Foundation, work done by contractor, Barkey Construction of Cannington. **Carried**

b) **2020-05-08-063 MOTION** (M. Fortin/J. Wilson) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders approves the Renewal of Loan for Trinity United Church, Uxbridge with Toronto United Church Council. **Carried (Ted Meyers abstains).**

Discussion: \$382,000 interest and principle free during COVID19. It was noted that Toronto United Church Council isn't well known within this Regional Council, more communication is needed.

c) **2020-05-08-064 MOTION** (T. Meyers/S. Coles) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders approves the request of Lakefield United Church to use their Capital Campaign funds to replace their current Sanctuary roof with metal shingles, estimated cost of \$67,000 +HST with a donation back to the church of the HST and a 55 year warrantee. **Carried**

**V. Governance** – It would be helpful to know from the Property and Finance Team what is pending. It was suggested that all decisions be sent (as minutes) to be included as an appendix in the Assembly of Elders minutes.

## **VI. Communities of Faith**

- a) Spring Brook United Church – update pending – nonetheless open to discussion after COVID 19
- b) Old Hay Bay Church – naming a Trustee or representative  
**2020-05-08-065 MOTION** (S. Coles/T. Meyers) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders delegate David Timpson as the Regional Council representative (corresponding member) for the Old Hay Bay Church board. **Carried (Phil Wilson abstains)**

Discussion: Trustees are named through the Nomination Teams

Nurturing Social Justice and Outreach programs
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## **VII. Formation Nurture and Justice**

- Formation Nurture and Justice Report (see **appendix G**)
- Hubbing in a time of COVID – Report on the Back Door Mission for the relief of poverty involvement in COVID -19 response (see **appendix H**)
- Correspondence from ECORC Affirming Forum (see **appendix I**)
  - a) Team Progress report – Assembly of Elder representatives
  - b) Report from Supporting Staff Members - Report of the Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages (see **appendix J**)
  - c) Truth and Reconciliation Report – Report of the Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice (see **appendix K**)
  - d) Mission Priority Grants: application date moved to May 15
  - e) Clusters and Network News
  - f) Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils (SJNORC) – see **appendix L**  
**2020-05-08-066 MOTION** (P. Wilson/M. Fortin) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders authorizes \$1500 be contributed to the Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils for 2020.
  - g) Additional work of the team

## **VIII. Additional Reports**

- a) Nominations – nothing to report
- b) Equity Report – Phil Wilson provided an oral report highlighting the documents below:
  - Zoom April 2020 Accessibility Guide ECORC Equity Team UCCAN (see **appendix M**)
  - Equity template hosting guidelines Face to Face April 2020 (see **appendix N**)
  - Equity template hosting guidelines Virtually April 2020 (see **appendix O**)
  - Equity ECORC Strategies For Connecting Without Internet Access April 2020 (see **appendix P**)
  - Equity ABC's Booklets prepared by Sharon Ballantyne (see **appendix Q**)

**2020-05-08-067 MOTION** (P. Wilson/M. Fortin) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders receive with appreciation the work of the Equity Team and circulate the information to encourage, support and/or challenge improvements. **Carried**

#### **IX. New Business**

- a) Opening Churches post pandemic on the UCC website as of May 7, 2020:  
<https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/reopening-churches-during-covid-19>

Discussion: Highlighted that local regulations must be followed foremost, as well as United Church polity. There is a responsibility of all to encourage an adherence to the UCC instructions on opening of churches. IT was noted that there are 8 different health authorities in Ontario, which means different rules for Communities of Faith within this Regional Council. It needs to be emphasized that all need to ask the question: “will my actions have repercussions for someone else” (i.e., causing them to become ill).

\*When communication goes out, you must have the permission of the Province, the permission of the local Health Unit, before you can even consider reopening.

- Press Release Temporary Amendment Resources (see **appendix R**)

**Opening worship for next meeting** – Paul Reed

#### **Motion to adjourn**

**2020-05-08-068 MOTION** (N. Sutherland/P. Wilson) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders adjourn this meeting at 12:10 p.m . **Carried**

- [www.ministrymatters.com](http://www.ministrymatters.com) was suggested as music resource for online services.

**Closing Prayer** – Steve Spicer led the closing prayer – “From where will my help come... Our help comes from the Lord”

**Equity Monitor Report** – meeting proceeded well.

#### **Next Meeting Dates**

- Friday June 12, 2020 9am-12 ZOOM (Steve Spicer will be absent due to study leave)
- Rosemary will propose possible dates in July
- Friday September 11, 9 am-noon ZOOM
- Friday September 24 – Sunday 26 RC Pickering Village UC, Ajax

Rev. Paul Reed  
Speaker

Rev. Rosemary Lambie,  
Executive Minister

**Appendices**

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Appendix L	Social Justice Networks of Ontario Regions Elders Report/ Extended minutes of virtual meeting of SJNOR (May 6, 2020)	Page 163-172
Appendix M	Zoom April 2020 Accessibility Guide ECORC Equity Team UCCAN	Pages 173-185
Appendix N	Equity template hosting guidelines Face to Face April 2020	Pages 186-188
Appendix O	Equity template hosting guidelines Virtually April 2020	Pages 189-191
Appendix P	Equity ECORC Strategies For Connecting Without Internet Access April 2020	Pages 192-194
Appendix Q	Equity ABC's Prepared by Sharon Ballantyne	Pages 195-221
Appendix R	Press Release Temporary Amendment Resources	Pages 222-227

## Appendix A

**Communications report for ECORC Assembly of Elders May 8**  
**“Facebook marketing experiment report”**

I have been noticing on Facebook comments from communities of faith that have used recordings or livestreamed that they are getting more traffic than they might have thought. They are getting more views, more clicks, and more participation. There has been a sense of being encouraged. I thought to do a few small experiments to capitalize on that. And, it is the Easter season, after all.

Altogether I have committed \$27 to this experiment. There have been two iterations. One whose goal was traffic; the second engagement.

My thinking is that there are two audiences -- those whose own church or CoF is closed and don't know there are so many options; and those who might be interested in testing the waters again in the safest way possible -- at home, incognito.

There were many steps involved but they are done now for any future ads – work that will pay back over time. I also wanted to do this to be able to teach CoF for their own local events and fundraisers.

I reported this to the other RC and national communications peeps on Teams. The national church social media lead, Aaron Gallegos, recommended I swap out the goal of “traffic,” for “engagement” and that is what I chose for the second ad. I don't have a discretionary budget so did this on spec. The Executive Minister and Assembly of Elders can direct me to more such action if desired.

**Here's what I did**

I upgraded the website post about regional CoF services to make the post more appealing: <https://ecorcuccan.ca/worshiponline/>

I signed up as a business on Facebook; in keeping with that I created a RC FB page. It includes a post noting that the page will not be updated with directions to the RC Facebook group. <https://www.facebook.com/East-Central-Ontario-Regional-Council-104593617906219>

I installed a Facebook pixel on the RC website to track results;

I made a few ads but in the end only tested one so far:

I created a custom audience based on the postal codes of the RC and a few criteria (interest in religion, community involvement) and placed the ad the first time, with the reach of traffic.

I wrote a long post about paid advertising into my RC's FB private group to see what people thought about the idea. I was told again that those streaming or posting services are indeed seeing more views or other metrics than expected -- even, more than the numbers of their CoF. There was a lot of interest and one warning that this was a mistake and just contributing to the noise.

**Results:**

Ad 1



Results	Reach	Impressions	Cost per Result	Amount Spent
86 Link Clicks	2,794	3,642	\$0.12 Per Link C...	\$10.17
<b>86</b> Link Clicks	<b>2,794</b> People	<b>3,642</b> Total	<b>\$0.12</b> Per Link C...	<b>\$10.17</b> Total Spent

Ad 2 (running until May 11 with a max budget of \$15). Results from May 7 (midway)

Bid Strategy	Budget	Results	Reach	Impressions	Cost per Result	Amount Spent	Ends
Cost cap	\$15.00	72	764	905	\$0.09	\$6.75	May 11, 2020
	Lifetime	Post Eng...			Per Post ...		

Respectfully submitted by, Louise Slobodian

## Appendix B

**East Central Ontario Regional Council Covenant Support Team****Meeting of April 6, 2020****Extra meeting 9 a.m.**

Present, visually or audibly: David Timpson (Staff) David King (Chair) Debra Elliott, Jean Wilson (Elders) Bill Sheaves, Chris Ingersoll, Darlene Hallett, Katy Gregory (recording)

Regrets: Steve Coles, Donna Bignell, Larry Doyle, Craig Donnelly, Sue Hogan

*This meeting is held via the digital platform Zoom. It is also held during a time of international emergency. A virus, named Covid 19, has been making its way around the world. Thousands are dying, in every country. The best way to slow it down is for everyone who can to remain indoors and in all cases avoid contact with those not in one's household. Group meetings, including those of churches, have been suspended, likely until mid-summer.*

David King opened with prayer.

David Timpson sent us a number of Pastoral Relations matters to be dealt with.

**Provisional calls**

These Provisional Calls will move into full benefits on July 1, while ordination of the called ones has been postponed to the fall meeting of Regional Council.

Moved: Bill Sheaves/Debra Elliott --Carried

That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, having received the properly completed form on Church Hub, approves the provisional call of **Kimberly Lawrence** to part time ministry (24 hours per week) to the Greenwood Pastoral Charge effective July 1 2020.

David King left the chair for this motion.

Debra Elliott took the chair.

Moved: David King/ Jean Wilson --Carried

That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, upon receipt of the properly completed form on Church Hub, approve the provisional call of **Cheryl McMurray** to full time ministry to the Arden Pastoral Charge effective July 1 2020.

**Calls**

Moved: Jean Wilson /Debra Elliott --Carried

That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, having received the properly completed Form on Church Hub, approves the call of **Cathy Underhill**, Diaconal Minister, to full time ministry to the Harmony Pastoral Charge effective July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020.

**Discussion**

Asked why we no longer are referencing the terms of call, David Timpson noted that eligibility is now vetted by the Office of Vocation before it is added to The Hub.

We agreed to go ahead with this new process.

**Retired supply**

Moved: Bill Sheaves/Darlene Hallett --Carried

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That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, having received the properly completed form on Church Hub, approves the appointment of **Brad Ford**, retired supply, ordained minister, to part time ministry (20 hours per week) to the Bath Morvin pastoral charge effective from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Moved: Debra Elliott/Jean Wilson--Carried

That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, having received the properly completed form on Church Hub, approves the appointment of **Don Green**, retired supply, ordained minister, to part time ministry (20 hours per week) to the Trinity Omemee Pastoral Charge effective from July 1, 2020 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

#### Discussion

Darlene asked about past challenges. Jean answered that the Liaisons have not yet met with the congregation but have spoken with Don Green and have seen that the paper is in order. Jean supports the appointment at this time.

#### Appointment

Moved: Debra Elliott/Chris Ingersoll --Carried

That the Covenant Support Team of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, upon receipt of the properly completed Form on Church Hub, approves the appointment of **Bryan Ransom**, retired supply, ordained minister to part time ministry (15 hours per week) with Emmanuel, Peterborough, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 to July 30<sup>th</sup> 2020.

#### Discussion

This congregation is in the midst of a J6 review (personnel.) The settled minister is on administrative leave. The congregation requires leadership. This has been challenged by the Covid 19 situation.

At the request of the parties and during the current Covid 19 emergency the standard notice of 90 days is hereby waved in this appointment. This appointment may be concluded upon 1 week's notice from either party. This work will be mostly pastoral care for the Board & administrative work, since at present Sunday worship cannot be held. Other area churches are providing electronic worship materials.

This completed the motions that David Timpson had brought.

David Timpson opened the floor for questions on the state of the region. He noted that there is much activity around holding worship, meetings in this non-contact time.

Ministers are gathering at 10:30 on Tuesday mornings. Talk about best practices at this time. The national church has initiated several online courses. Eric Matheson speaks about UCC programs and Cdn. Government programs. Not a landslide of conversations about laying off personnel. There is support for documentation that comes with such decisions. When personnel are leaving their positions it is being termed as "Emergency Leave," not a lay-off.

Bruce Fraser, Stirling Cong., is taking a half time compassionate leave of absence for the 90 days leading up to his retirement. To be agreed to by all parties.

Rosemary Lambie is having conversations around laying off staff. Rosemary and David Timpson are handling these jointly. Have to follow Ontario law and UCC policy.

Jean Wilson added that regarding the promised loan from the Federal Government –small, part-time ministries do not qualify. Must be a payroll of \$50,000. However, the United Church of Canada (UCC) will likely lend money to small churches. Also the UCC is backing lines of credit for Communities of Faith where they do not have the collateral. A period of no interest, pay back to UCC Foundation.

Most Communities of Faith are doing well, and some may come out of this with growth. Some churches are doing well with their live-streaming.

#### Liaison Request

Jean Wilson had a recommendation from the Liaison Forum's most recent meeting. For facilitation of search committees, they would like to be given access to the Community of Faith pages of The Hubtwith which they are currently working. This will need to be approved "up the chain."

Jean Wilson will send them to Katy Gregory, to send out to the whole team for consideration at the next meeting.

#### Membership of Team

David King raised the question of another person who should be on this team. David Timpson will follow up with Katy Gregory.

#### Stress

David King spoke of the extra stress that is upon the clergy serving Communities of Faith at this time. There is a real, if not spoken, expectation for ministers to be on YouTube and Facebook, connecting with their congregations. We are aware, and will certainly be praying for all concerned.

David King noted that Bridge Street United served more meals yesterday than ever before, a sign of the times.

We adjourned.

Next regular meeting of the Covenant Support Team is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, from 10 a.m to 2 p.m. at Trinity-St. Andrew's, Brighton ON.

Appendix C

**ECORC Covenant Support Team**

**May 6, 2020**

**via Zoom**

In attendance:

David Timpson (staff), David King (Chair), Deborah Elliott, William Sheaves, Sue Hogan, Steve Coles, Donna Bignell, Jean Wilson, Katy Gregory (recording), Chris Ingersoll, Darlene Hallett, Larry Doyle

Regrets: Craig Donnelly

David King called the meeting to order shortly after 10 a.m. Larry Doyle opened with prayer.

**Pastoral Relations**

Bethel-Emily in Omemee (Rev. Kim Falls) – wanting to move from .6 time to .5 time. We are to approve the move to reduce time to 20 hours a week. Agreeable to both parties. Effective July 1, 2020

Moved/Seconded Steve Cole/Larry Doyle

That the Covenant Support Team approve the move to half time for Bethel-Emile Pastoral Charge (Omemee) and Rev. Kim Falls.

Carried

Madoc Pastoral Charge requests the re-appointment of Audrey Whitney (RS) from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 She's been there since July 2018. Working on their Hub input—had some difficulty with a change in Liaison Bruce Frasier now their liaison.

Moved/Seconded – Bill Sheaves/ Deborah Elliott

That the Covenant Support Team approve the re-appointment of Audrey Whitney (RS) from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Carried

Ebenezer- Maple Grove has just begun with Carol Gillard, and are requesting another year, full time, retired supply. They've had 6 months. Will run July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Larry Doyle brought up a concern about lack of due process in electronic meetings, here and in other situations, especially during this time of COVID-19 (i.e. not meeting in person.) Steve agrees. We agree that David Timpson should make sure that everyone in a ministry unit understand the protocol. Both agree that Carol is a good fit there.

Moved/Seconded -- Larry Doyle/Steve Coles

That the Covenant Support Team approve the re-appointment of Carol Gillard to the Ebenezer-Maple Grove Pastoral Charge from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Carried

Others that are still in process:

- Arden – problem with Hub material
- United Community Ministries – 6 Communities of Faith in Kawartha Highlands – paperwork exists but not on Hub yet
- Picton working away with Phil Hobbs – he's ready to see them through this C19 time but wants to move into retirement so they request more time with Phil

**Accommodations for COVID-19**

David Timpson brought to our attention that there are several concerns about working in various churches during this time. Some of the concern is regarding appointed/called ministry personnel who are nearing or have reached

retirement age but feel this is a bad time to leave their congregations. The National church is ready to defer pensions if that is called for. That was always a possibility.

David Timpson pointed out that this could be an issue if there were people in line for a call, and that got delayed, so then it would become a pastoral relations issue.

#### Decision by Consensus

It is acceptable to this body for leadership to delay pension in order to help the congregation, as long as it is not delaying someone's call.

#### A conversation about COVID-19

David Timpson led a conversation about several problems that have come across his desk with regards to work in the COVID-19 environment

--Problem with ministers, in calls, afraid to take part in video worship because of COVID-19.

--may be issues of not paying ministers coming up

Steve Coles --United Church will put out a protocol about returning to the building

Larry Doyle- Executive Secretary of UCC is working on protocol about returning to church buildings

David Timpson- we may need to have a regional face on some of this

Larry Doyle- we may need to step in if, say, health-compromised clergy disagree about going into communal worship

David Timpson- Says this is the sort of thing that is coming across his desk

Katy Gregory asks about any advisory coming from GC Exec regarding ministry salaries—Larry says there was something that came out a few weeks ago giving Congregational boards, councils, the right to decide without a cong meeting. Also that decisions about reducing salaries, suspending employment, shouldn't be done without Regional help

Federal Government is providing 3/4 salary up to \$58,400 – have to prove a reduction in income- applications open today – also a 10% piece already running and is being processed by ADP, cheques are being received

-of course our congregations do have the right to end pastoral relationships and we have a process for that

-Communities of Faith have been seen putting calls on hold

-Steve Coles says the financial webinars are very helpful and recommends them

Jean Wilson: a question about having to get line of credit

#### Chalmers and Sydenham Street

Coming to the end of their intentional interim period, Rev. Barry King has spoken with David Timpson regarding going forward. Sept. 19, 2020 will be the end of the interim ministry which was brought together to see if the two congregations could work well with each other. At this point, Barry King reports, Chalmers is not willing to continue to explore that option. Rev. Barry King cites some acrimony coming from certain individuals. David Timpson filled us in on some of the financial details.

#### Consensus Decision

That David Timpson will ask Barry King to submit to him an interim report from the transition team. David Timpson will give Barry King the assurance that the Covenant Support Team will act on the information in that report. A sub-team of Donna Bignell, David King, Jean Wilson will receive the interim report and then meet with Barry King to go over it. It will be sent to David King then sent out to others. It is to be received by the end of June. David Timpson will let Barry King know of this decision.

Also received from Chalmers: a potential job description for Pastoral Care, a CDM position. David Timpson thinks we should not approve it as yet.

Steve Coles: they should be informed that this piece will be attached to the transition report

David Timpson will reply to Allan Fletcher and Barry King

From David King:

Liaison Forum:

That Liaisons be given access to the Hub account of the church they are working with.

**Consensus** agreement

That search teams are to provide their liaisons with the password to see their hub information.  
David Timpson will relay this information to liaisons and Communities of Faith involved.

Liaison Forum recommends to Covenant Support Team that a liaison be present at interviews of candidates for calls.

**Moved:** Bill Sheaves/Chris Ingersoll

That Liaisons attend all meetings leading to a call.

Darlene spoke in agreement. Jean does not agree because it wouldn't be acceptable to put that extra expense on the community of faith. Larry Doyle supports the intention of this motion, but wonders why the system left it out and why we keep putting layers back in. General Council leaned toward making it more congregational based.

Steve: yes, sees Jean's point but ...Manual says 5 touch points and we want to add a 6<sup>th</sup>. Against the motion.

Bill Sheaves: simplify motion to "add Liaison to attend interviews."

**Revised motion:** Bill Sheaves/ Chris Ingersoll

That the Covenant Support Team recommends to the Council of Elders that Pastoral Liaisons be required to attend interviews being carried out by the search committees of the Communities of Faith with which they are working.

**Carried**

**Draft document in regards to the Oversight of Communities of Faith**

Following the recommendation at our meeting March 6<sup>th</sup>, Debra Elliott, Larry Doyle and Kate Gregory met to discuss how the Region can best fulfill the Manual requirement that the health of every Community of Faith be reassessed regularly.

Deborah's report was sent out by email and is reproduced below for reference.

DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR PASTORAL OVERSIGHT WITH COMMUNITIES OF FAITH. Dated April 29, 2020

Kate, Larry and Deborah met in a zoom meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup> and generated these ideas for discussion by the whole committee.

This policy if approved would replace the practice of Pastoral Oversight done in the past.

**The Process:**

An extensive questionnaire will be issued every three years.

A team from the covenant support team would receive and read them. Any red flags would be reported to the Covenant Support Team

During the in between times the communities of faith would receive a shorter questionnaire just to stay in touch.

There are approximately 150 communities so this number would be divided by 3 so that each year 1/3 of the Communities of Faith would receive the large questionnaire. We would divide the 1/3 in half and do half in the spring and half in the fall. In the in between times the other communities of faith would get a shorter version, again some in the fall and some in the spring.

It was suggested we need a team divided up geographically so the person reading the report might have other knowledge that could augment the information.

So this is what the time table would look like if we implement this idea of pastoral oversight.

Year one	Year two	Year three	Read By member
Full Questionnaire	Full Questionnaire	Full Questionnaire	In Geographic Area
1/3	1/3	1/3	
Shorter ? 2/3	Shorter? 2/3	Short ? 2/3	

### **The Model:**

We looked at three models for capturing the information needed to get a comprehensive understanding of the particular community of faith. Two were from other presbyteries and one developed by Larry Doyle that is called the Gizmo document. (Gizmo has no other meanings)

Larry is currently reworking that document and we will have it for you soon when it is finished.

The issue of pastoral support to ministers remains open and needs a much larger discussion of the entire committee. We discussed phone calls, different questionnaire, and pulpit exchange. Ultimately we felt this piece of the process should go to the greater committee. We also lamented the loss of face to face contact with ministers and boards plus other staff working in the church. We recognize that some things will fall by the wayside and others things are too important to let go.

- we still need a mechanism/strategy to be in contact with ministry and lay staff
- Jean suggested that we reflect on this then let it be part of an email conversation on the subject.
- We'll return to this at our next meeting

### **Chris on LLWLs**

The secretary has been able to contact only 40 LLWLs in this region where it was thought there were 60. Wondering where the other 20 have gone. Newsletter has gone out. No way to confirm all have been contacted. Ideas?

Send ideas to Chris via email.

We have met with two students, Kathleen White and Lisa Norman. The team agreed that their names should go forward to the Covenant Support Team for continuing their studies.

We had a lengthy discussion about the evaluation of LLWLs in the process. It emerged that all 6 Presbyteries of the current Region had different policies and practises. David Timpson referenced an early Regional policy that decided to use a newly minted Conference policy. He'll circulate this to us.

David King - let's see this as a piece of work we'll come back to down the road

Chris could consult with the LLWL forum on best practices

Decision: David King: there doesn't seem to be the appetite to make any changes in the system now. Relay that information to the LLWL body.

### **Appointments:**

Deborah Elliott reported on her work to make a policy to regularize appointments. The goal is to get all appointments to run from July 1 to June 30. So every appointment coming in should be shortened to end on June 30, then the new portion to begin July 1. This being done, a significant number would come in for July 1. The amended policy is below.

Approved policies regarding appointments that come to the Covenant Support Team

March 6, 2020 approved

Appointments are approved by the Covenant Support Team

1. Appointments are expected to be done on a yearly basis. The calendar year for these appointments is from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.
2. Appointments that are within 3 months of the July 1<sup>st</sup> date could be dated for 15 months so that the next appointment would begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.
3. Appointments that occur after the July 1<sup>st</sup> date (within 3 months) could be for 9 months and the next appointment will coincide with the date of July 1<sup>st</sup>
4. Appointments that are of shorter time frames and at different times of the year can also happen. Those that arrive outside of the regular meetings of the Covenant Support team will be dealt with by a special on line meeting for approval.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 9 to 12. Via Zoom.

## Appendix D

**Draft Document for Pastoral Oversight with Communities of Faith**  
**April 29, 2020**

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Appendix E

**Report for the East Central Ontario Regional Council**  
**May 8<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**“Pastoral relations actions passed by the Covenant support team  
(Covenant support meeting April 6<sup>th</sup> 2020)”**

Provisional calls Complete

- Kim Lawrence part time 24 hrs per week to Green Wood pastoral charge terms begin July 1 2020
- Cheryl McMurray full time Arden pastoral charge terms begin July 1 2020

Calls

- Kathy Underhill Diaconal minister Harmony pastoral charge July 1 2020

Appointments

- Brad Ford Retired supply ordained part time 20 hours Bath Morven Pastoral Charge July 1 2020- June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021
- Don Green Retired Supply ordained part time 20 hours Trinity Omemee pastoral charge July 1 2020- June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021
- Bryan Ransom Retired Supply Ordained part time 15 hours Emmanuel Peterborough April 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 to July 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

**Covenant Support Meeting June 6<sup>th</sup>**

Change in terms of call .6 to .5 processed fully and all parties in agreement

- Kim Falls ordained part time 20 hours per week call to Bethel Omemee July 1 2020

Re appointment

- Audrey Whitney ordained, Retired Supply part time 20 hours per week July 1 2020 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021
- Carol Gillard Ordained Retired supply full time Ebenezer Maple Grove, July 1 2020 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021

**Notes on Pastoral Relations**

- Tim Dayfoot ordained Intentional Interim full time United Community Ministries June 30 2020 to July 1 2021, is finally complete on the hub
- Cheryl McMurray and Arden still struggling with the hub as of today

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Appendix F

**Report to Assembly of elders, East Central Ontario Regional Council May 8<sup>th</sup> 2020**  
**David Timpson Pastoral Relations Minister**

I am constantly amazed by the way my work time seems to fill up each day even without the hours I have in the past spent on the road. My weekly communications with Ministers continues Tuesday's at 10:30 crowd has thinned a little in recent weeks but the group seems to really appreciate the gathering, this will continue. The Thursday Evening group would seem to have run its course and I have not booked it further. Congregational Leaders would seem to have great comfort in reaching out directly to me. This will Free up space on the Zoom account for other activities.

Support for charges without ministers and getting the LLWL forum secretary up and running have been major efforts. Reaching out to LLWL's on their own in succession covering pastoral charges in search as well as support to ministers who do not gather are jobs that expand to the time available.

Facilitating zoom meetings in many of these charges is also a commitment and a major draw of my time. I think I have been to more board meeting in the last months then in the past number of years. There was one recent week in which I met with 5 congregational board's between Zoom and Phone.

The number of pastoral charges in crisis would seem to maintain as one is worked another appears. This week the joint ministry and International interim at Sydenham Street and Chalmers would seem to have come apart. Sydenham Street has informed Chalmers and I that the shared ministry will end in September. My initial analysis in conversation with the Intentional Interim Minister would seem to indicate that Chalmers has not yet managed to work out a long standing problem with a significant group of disaffected members who are a continuing to behave badly and refusing to take part in legitimate decision making. Sydenham Street has it seem had enough. The covenant support team has created a working group to investigate further, receiving reports of both transition team and interim minister and bring recommendations. This body may well become involved at a later date as some of the potential tools rest in the control of the Assembly.

It remains a deep Privilege to work with the many dedicated volunteers of our teams

## Appendix G

### **Formation, Nurture and Justice Team** **Report May 8, 2020**

We have sub groups under our team

- TRC Calls to Action/ Right Relations updates: See Rodney's report.
- A Place at the Table.
- Rural Ministry.
- Children and Youth.
- Care of Creation
- Interfaith, Anti-racism, and Violence Against Women and Children
- Church and Community Partnership
- Outreach Ministries. Relief of Poverty- adapting during Covid 19, providing help while observing health guidelines

Examples:

- See emails about the Hub- Community Hubs for Durham Region-Pickering, Ajax,Oshawa-Back Door Mission
- Belleville-In from the cold,Thank God it's Friday, End of the month
- Peterborough

Talking about:

Drugs - Safe sites-

Emergency Basic Income- Elizabeth MacDonald and Helmut, also brought to SJNORC

- Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils (SJNORC), attended by Marilyn, David Moore and Sharon - see report from Marilyn

“Doing Mission Together” grants application deadline is extended to May 15th.

Next Meeting on May 21

-Will discuss Aruna Alexander email about Dr. Theresa Tam and Equity around Internet

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Appendix H

**Hubbing in a time of COVID**  
**Report on the Back Door Mission**  
**for the relief of poverty involvement in COVID -19 response.**

Submitted by Rev. David Moore, Simcoe Street United Church, Chair of ECORC Faith Formation, Nurture and Justice Team. Member of Durham Region Advisory Committee on Homelessness.

**Summary**

The Regional Municipality of Durham has implemented a response strategy to address the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. Those struggling with Homelessness, food insecurity, addictions, and mental health face unique issues in a time of social isolation. Across the region, hubs for access to services have been created. A central location has been created at The Back Door Mission for the Relief of Poverty, a United Church of Canada charity located in the building of Simcoe Street United Church in Oshawa.

**Background**

The Back Door Mission was founded at Simcoe Street Church in 1995 in response to a growing urban population that was experiencing increased poverty, homelessness, addiction and mental health struggles. It continued as a program of the congregation until 2012 when need surpassed the capacity of the staff and volunteers of the church to manage. It was then incorporated as a United Church of Canada Charity.

In March of 2020, a state of emergency was declared in the Province of Ontario that restricted much of the normal functions of society. The need for isolation and social distancing meant that most businesses, non-essential services and public buildings were closed, and people were expected to stay at home.

For those who are homeless or under-housed, these restrictions cut access to much of the necessities for life, from food and support services to washroom and bathing facility access. Most of the services that the at-risk population rely on were restricted to telephone or online only. Homeless people do not have access to the required technology.

Concerns were discussed at an emergency online meeting of the Durham Advisory Committee on Homelessness (DACH), the Social Services Committee, Public Health and representatives from both regional and local municipalities on March 27. By that time there was a crisis on the streets with increased violence, open drug use, break and enter and assaults. The fear and anxiety was palpable among the at-risk population. Things had to happen fast.

**Hubs**

The DACH was re-tasked with being the Pandemic Response steering committee. It was determined to establish hubs across the region where people could have easy and ready access to basic services and have referrals on site for more extensive services. Basic service Hubs were established in Pickering, Ajax and Whitby where individuals or families could have food delivered, have access to washrooms and showers and obtain referrals and free transportation to the central hub in Oshawa.

With services and social gatherings suspended, Simcoe Street United Church was made available. The Back Door Mission is the lead agency in partnership with Durham Mental Health, the Public Health office, the City of Oshawa, Lakeridge Health, Feed the Need Durham, CAREA, and CMHA deploying front line staff and resources. This new initiative is called Mission United.

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Funding has been provided by the Federal Government under the Reaching Home program. Local businesses have stepped forward to provide food and volunteers from across the community have stepped forward to help.

The Mission is open seven days a week from 9:00am to 7:00pm. Breakfast is provided from the Salvation Army emergency food truck which arrives daily at 8:30. Lunch is served from 10:00 – 1:00. Access to other services is ongoing all day.

Services provided:

- Hot meals
- Food bank
- Doctor and Nurse Practitioner.
- Nurse
- Withdrawal Management
- Social Work
- Mental Health counsel
- Respite (A quiet area with cots is set up in the chapel)
- COVID screening and testing
- Referral service
- Housing support services
- Clothing exchange depot
- Washroom and showers
- Laundry
- Transportation to Region Quarantine location or OTC (out of the crisis)
- Internet and telephone
- Long term storage lockers for homeless persons.

The Back Door Mission has increased staffing from one full time director and volunteer staff to include two additional administrative staff and a full time Red Seal Chef. With redeployment of staff from the other agencies there are twelve professional staff Monday through Friday and over 100 volunteers serving shifts all week. An environmental cleaning crew sanitizes the building daily. The Chair of the Back Door Mission, Derek Giberson, has worked 12 hour shifts, seven days a week since the crisis began in mid March.

### **The Hub extensions**

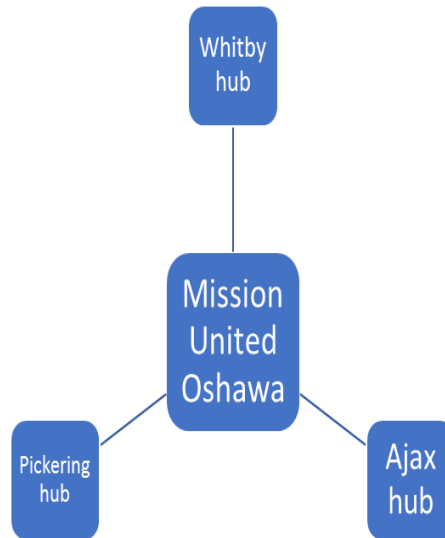
Everyone who comes to the Mission is screened for COVID symptoms and a general wellness check. This assessment will then result in referral to either the services offered on site or if more intensive needs present, to the appropriate service. If a patron has COVID symptoms they are transported to the Quarantine facility. If symptom free, but it is apparent that they are not coping and need to be in a supportive environment, they are invited to go to the OTC site.

Quarantine is being observed in a local hotel. An entire floor has been set aside for individuals while they await results of a COVID test. If they have a positive result, they must remain in the quarantine facility for 14 days. Regional staff have been deployed to provide support. Meals are dropped at the room door and wellness checks are carried out hourly. If health deteriorates, they may be transported to hospital.

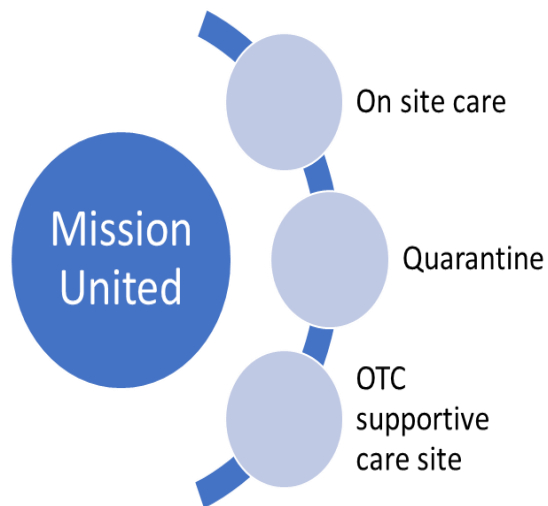
OTC is a redeployment of the out of the cold program from the winter months. It is staffed by regional staff and volunteers. Camp Samac, the local scout camp has been set up to provide a safe, supportive environment for those who have felt overwhelmed by the crisis and have no safe place to retreat. Only those who have tested negative for COVID can stay. They must agree not to leave the premises or use illicit drugs or alcohol. If they do leave

they must return to the Mission and obtain a new assessment for referral. Clients live in the camp buildings in dorm style rooms. They are given three meals a day and are free to gather in common areas or walk the grounds under supervision. Television and internet have been provided for those staying here.

### Organisation chart



### Referral Flow Chart



## Appendix I

### **Correspondence from ECORC Affirming Forum**

I hope this email finds you well and able to stay safe while engaging in your more-needed-now-than-ever ministries with and on behalf of us all in East Central Ontario Region and beyond.

I am emailing you on behalf of Doug Ferris and myself, new Co-Chairs of the ECORC Affirming Forum, with two requests.

All of us involved in the ECORC Affirming Forum are grateful for the time the Assembly of Elders spent with our team at your March 12/20 meeting. We are hoping to come back to the Assembly of Elders for a follow-up session during your June meeting. Recognizing that we do not know how long this meeting is scheduled to last, we are requesting one hour on the agenda and are ready to adjust our presentation to whatever length of time is possible.

We do appreciate the feedback we have already received from a few Elders and Staff following our Mar 12/20 presentation. We would be helped by receiving more input from the Assembly of Elders and Regional Staff. To this end, could you please circulate the following invitation among all of the Elders and Staff.

#### ***Your input is needed!!***

*On March 12 some member of the Affirm Forum appreciated the opportunity to provide opening worship and to conduct a half hour presentation/discussion including the showing of a video "Guess who is coming to dinner?"*

*We have received five evaluations of the March 12 session, but for future session planning we need to know how you perceived the session by filling in the evaluation form below and providing any comments as requested.*

*In addition, we would like to know what information you would like to have about the role of the Assembly of Elders in an Affirming Region, so that we can plan relevant and useful information and experience in a second session.*

*For the five people who have already responded to the Evaluation form, we would appreciate your consideration of topics you would like to have covered in a second session.*

Doug Ferris ([ferrport@gmail.com](mailto:ferrport@gmail.com))

Elizabeth Macdonald ([emacd@kos.net](mailto:emacd@kos.net))

Thank you for considering our requests and participating in the important work of moving East Central Ontario Regional Council through the Affirming Ministry process.

We look forward to your response.

Elizabeth Macdonald & Doug Ferris

## Appendix J

**Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationships and Justice with All Ages**  
**May, 2020 Report for Assembly of Elders By Sharon Hull**

- Zoom, Zoom and more zoom!
- Zoom Meeting YAYA leaders
- Attended a clergy check in and congregational leaders check in
- Connecting with youth, young adults and youth leaders
- Children and youth participating in the GO Project virtual camp
  - Children grade 1 to 6 - 11am EST Mon/Wed/Fri
  - Youth Grade 7 to 12 - 2pm EST Tues/Thurs
- Zoom meeting of National Clusters and Networks
- Zoom meeting of Support to Communities of Faith
- Kairos webinar on Migrant Workers
- Rendezvous - is Reimagined for 2020- online, workshops being reorganized, registration will open, free, T-shirts available to purchase with registration
- Zoom meeting- Outdoor Ministries with The Moderator and Nora
- Quin Mo Lac - AGM went well on zoom, set date of June 1 to decide, applied for \$40,000 Govt grant
- VIBE meetings - will not run in person, notice sent to all who had signed up, checking on Govt summer jobs grant and looking into other opportunities
- Cathedral of the Trees- email sent to all who had signed up for 2020, ministry team meeting soon to evaluate
- Wampum - not running in person for 2020
- I need to check in with Wanda- Expression of Interest Form travel to El Salvador for March 2021 - May 31, 2020 deadline
- Affirming Connections - was a gathering for out west but it went online as a webinar- attended on Saturday
- Formation, Nurture and Justice- see report and hub email
- SJNORC Zoom Meeting on May 6 - See report from Marilyn and Hub email
- Affirming meeting- Elizabeth and Doug co-chairs- see email
- Equity Meeting- see Report from Phil and emails

## Appendix K

### **Minister for Indigenous Justice and Respectful Relationship Report, May 9/20**

1. At an April 22 at an IJRR team meeting, we decided to proceed with a zoom gathering on Saturday June 13th, 10-noon, rather than wait for an in person gathering. A poster has been updated and sent out in last mailing from the region. We will continue to discern opportunities for an in-person gathering this fall.

We plan to interview a number of people immediately after the June 13th event (on a zoom call) to discuss the event and other initiatives around the region and send out to congregations as a 15 minute clip they could use in worship on June 21st or beyond.

2. With Louise's help, I am growing a list of people interested in receiving additional educational opportunities that pop up between newsletters...there are an increasing number of these happening.

3. I participated in a conference call with other regions around IJRR. In Alberta there has been success in congregations sharing educational opportunities throughout the region through zoom and other means. I have recently connected with Roberta Ransom at St. Paul's in Bowmanville about possibly incorporating this into an Indigenous Awareness weekend which was to have occurred this fall that has been placed on hold for the moment. I will be join them for their next planning meeting. I continue to network with other congregations about coming together in these opportunities.

4. Orange shirt day is Sept. 30th, and we may want to make this the theme of an education event the Friday or Saturday night of the regional meeting. This and other topics continue to be discussed at the IJRR team meetings.

## Appendix L

### **Social Justice Networks of Ontario Regions**

**May 6, 2020**

#### **Elders Report**

- we were asked to send in a written report before the meeting
- due to time constraints there were brief updates from RC Reps and GC Reps
- the secretary of the SJNOR's will send out detailed minutes

#### Highlights

- how do we go forward with climate justice after Covid-19
- we need to vision a new way of being
- the environment looks better since the pandemic
- like the hole in the ozone over the Arctic has closed

#### isarc - Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

- this is a window of opportunity and she spoke about the number of gaps that need to be addressed at this time
  - particularly a push for guaranteed basic income that was probably always in our ability to provide
  - their hope that Church and Mission will pick this cause up
  - it was noted that the Anglicans are already working towards this and you can read the letter at [www.anglican.ca](http://www.anglican.ca)
- A public letter on Guaranteed basic income.

- there is a very active social justice group still working between Sudbury and North Bay
- Gender Equity and Right Relations group continue to try to work but are worried about not being able to get together for workshops until next year
- Pride Thunder Bay has been cancelled

- David Moore of ECORC spoke about what is happening in Durham Region in addressing the needs of homeless and at-risk persons in this time of COVID
- he explained how the HUB has become an area where many needs are met for health care, food, clothing, washroom and shower facilities - transportation is available
- there is an isolation place for people who have Covid-19 and are homeless

-some cities are working hard to solve the issue of encampment removals without adequate housing – there are more difficulties because of the pandemic

- five Oaks is housing migrant farm workers that need to be in quarantine for 2 wks
- now on their second round of arrivals
- see article in Broadview magazine [www.broadview.org/five-oaks](http://www.broadview.org/five-oaks)
- there is a request from Wesley for PPE because of a Covid-19 outbreak

- we are encouraged to use e-newsletters
- newsletters for Inter-Cultural Ministries, Living Into Right Relations and United Action for Justice at [www.united-church.ca/newsletters](http://www.united-church.ca/newsletters)

**Social Justice Network Of The Ontario Regions  
Virtual Meeting By Zoom  
6 May 2020**

**Participants By Region  
(East To West)**

**Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region**

Charles Barrett, Chair of SJNOR

Jane Dawson, Minister Supporting Communities of Faith, Clusters, and Networks

**East Central Ontario Region**

Sharon Hull, Minister of Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relations, and Justice

David Moore, Chair-Faith Formation, Nurture and Justice Team

Marilyn Fortin, Assembly of Elders

**Shining Waters Region**

Brie-anne Swan, Minister for Social & Ecological Justice and Network Support

Tina Conlon, Davenport Perth Community Minister

Susan Eagle, (Chair-Social and Ecological Justice Commission) Chair of ISARC

**Horseshoe Falls Region**

Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister of Social Justice

**Antler River Watershed Region**

Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister of Social Justice

Marg Murray, Member-Social Justice Network

Carey Wagner, Member-Mission & Discipleship Commission

Linda Woods, Member-Mission & Discipleship Commission

**Western Ontario Waterways Region**

Diane Matheson-Jimenez, Minister of Social Justice

**Canadian Shield Region**

Will Kunder, Minister for Congregational Support & Justice Animation

Ernie Epp, Member-Support to Communities of Faith Commission

**ROUNDTABLE PLUS**

Participants introduced themselves and commented as follows:

**Antler River Watershed Region:**

Charles noted that Carey had circulated a written report (attached). Carey asked Marg to comment on climate justice work. Marg expressed concern about how we will come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and asserted that we need to envision a new world. She noted the work being done by EDGE, which we need to share. Linda Wood commented on how much better our planet now looks--with lower carbon emissions--and wondered how it will look afterwards.

**Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region**

Jane had circulated a written report (attached). She alluded to a number of concerns, including climate justice, UNJPPI, and Right Relations work, and recognized the ways in which responses to the COVID-19 pandemic were slowing work.

### **ISARC**

Susan commented briefly on ISARC activities, especially the pre-budget consultation and the Basic Income possibilities, before slipping away to Skype-chat with her mother. This led Diane to comment on the possibility of a Guaranteed Annual Income and to wonder whether Church in Mission was working on this. The current emergency, as Marg recognized it, called for action now. Charles said he would be happy to take this concern to the General Council Office. Marg asserted again that the need is urgent, and Charles recognized this window of opportunity.

### **Shining Waters Region**

Ren noted the General Council Office work, especially regarding Right Relations, and identified Sara Stratton as the key contact for the SJNOR.

### **Canadian Shield Region**

Will noted the very active social justice network in the North Bay area, but he said that the cancellation of this spring's Regional Council meeting had removed much of the impetus. Ernie, from the other end of the region, noted the ongoing work of Poverty-Free Thunder Bay with which he is active as a United Church representative. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many cancellations, including the Tenth Anniversary events of Thunder Pride. Ernie might add that the Regional reorganization, which divided Cambrian Presbytery and its Christian Outreach and Social Action committee, has impeded development like the network in North Bay. He is using the current lockdown to work on a book, *On Seeking God's Will for Palestine and Israel*, which will support the work of the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel.

### **East Central Ontario Region**

Sharon had provided a written report as well (attached) and asked David to comment on his work at Simcoe Street United Church in Oshawa. David said that he was coordinating work in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic for the Durham Region and mentioned the community hubs that have been created to facilitate access to services, especially for the homeless. Simcoe Street United Church, which has operated the Backdoor Mission for many years, has responded in various ways to the current challenges. Among other things, a respite centre has been established at a Scout Camp. David stated that the Hub Centres work really well for substance abuse and mental health needs.

### **Shining Waters Region**

Tina stated that she is working to get people in the congregations together. Ren has started a number of initiatives. There are a number of issues, and the question is how the Regional Council should respond to them. Should they take individual actions? They had sent a letter to the City of Toronto regarding the treatment of encampments as alternative ways of finding shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic. An example is Sanctuary Toronto, which has been handing out tents and letting people camp on their property. There is also an online AA meeting. Ren stated that Brie-anne is the fulltime social justice minister for the region. In regard to Tina's report, Ren conceded that the social justice work within the Region is not well coordinated. There has been work on Living into Right Relations, which included support for the Wet'suwet'en people. He had hoped to lead his course, theological reflections on social justice work, a second time, but it would now be only once.

### **Antler River Watershed Region**

Linda expressed her pleasure about work on poverty, including David's, Christina's and Ren's. Bread Not Stones did advocacy work, but these activities were meeting the needs of people now. Diane noted a number of activities,

including the Five Oaks centre providing for temporary workers (as *Broadview* has reported). Her support for community ministries involves various challenges, such as the one in Kitchener-Waterloo which is not on the list for the region and consequently is no longer able to assist the marginalized.

### **Horseshoe Falls Region**

Diane noted that the Wesley Urban Ministries (Hamilton, Burlington and Brantford) had experienced a pretty significant COVID-19 outbreak and provided masks for people (350 per week).

### **ISARC**

Susan returned from her Skype chat with her elderly mother. ISARC is joining with other advocacy groups to push the Basic Income program at this time, when the Federal Government has established a Canada Emergency Response Benefit of \$500 per week for up to 16 weeks. There are gaps in this program, which they have drawn to the attention of the Federal Government. Ontario has extended discussion of its poverty reduction strategy-- "Social Assistance rates are so incredibly low!!" Both ISARC and KAIROS are members of Campaign 2000, which continues to work to end child poverty in Canada. The ISARC-organized hearings are on hold, with no sense of how long that may continue. Charles observed again that there is a window of opportunity for the Guaranteed Annual Income, and that an Anglican group is working on this. Susan added that this has long been the policy of the United Church of Canada.

### **Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region**

Jane noted an email from Christie Neufeld about a planning discussion on social justice activity. Charles brought forward the work of Compassionate Ottawa, an NGO which is building community capacity to assist people nearing the end of their lives. One project, the Healthy End of Life Project (HELP), has found serious gaps in community services.

### **Canadian Shield Region**

Will observed that no one had been active in the Social Justice Network longer than Susan Eagle, but he thought he had the second longest period of service (although it paled beside hers). He stated that the Social Justice Network of the Ontario Conferences had been at its best preparing for the spring meetings of conferences, and this would be such a meeting. But with meetings postponed or cancelled, there was time for more conversation. The Canadian Shield Region, he suggested, will most likely meet again in spring 2021.

## **FINANCING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK**

Will wondered about the financial viability of the SJNOR. An assessment of \$1,500 per region had been agreed upon at the last meeting, since each Regional Council received the same envelop of mission money to fund staff and provide resources. After deciding to fund ISARC at the established rate of \$3,000, we were left with \$600 at the end of 2019. He had checked with Church House and learned that only one Regional Council--Eastern Ontario Outaouais--had provided funding for 2020. He was alarmed to discover that Canadian Shield had not done so-- which has the same Executive Minister as Shining Waters--and he experienced tremendous pushback in regard to 2021 (with General Council instituting an 18% cut in grants). Would we be doing only Zoom meetings in the future? He encouraged members to talk to the leaders of the Regional Councils (other than Eastern Ontario Outaouais, Canadian Shield, and Shining Waters). He observed that ISARC support gives the Social Justice Network real justification.

Will asked: When do we meet again? Can we do it this way? Should we meet more frequently than semi-annually?

Marg expressed interest in Ren's course and wondered whether we might do more programming, process training, and so on? How much money do we need? Can we develop an alternative vision of economics? Susan commented on the difficulty of networking, while Marg felt the need of advocacy training. Ren's theological

training is important. Susan appreciated Will's comments on past work toward meetings of Conferences--and General Council, too! She would like to see at least one face-to-face gathering each year. But how do we network? We need an hour on the finances alone!

Charles asked whether we should plan for monthly Zoom meetings. We need to steer/guide resolutions forward in the regions. Face-to-face meetings are certainly desirable BUT . . . Could we consider some dates for a Zoom gathering? Diane suggested using a Doodle Poll by email, especially since there were no ministry staff on the call.

Charles confirmed that Ernie was keeping the record. Will was going to pursue the assessments. Charles would manage the Doodle Poll. Ernie asked people to send him their titles in order to achieve an accurate record.

## **THE NEXT MEETING**

Will and Charles suggested that we meet again in late June!

## **WRITTEN REPORTS**

### **EASTERN ONTARIO OUTAOUAIS REGIONAL COUNCIL - Jane Dawson**

As Minister Supporting Communities of Faith, Clusters and Networks for EOORC, one of the projects I have been working on during COVID-19 is updating the information on the EOORC website pertaining to clusters and networks (networks section attached).

EOORC does not have a Social Justice Commission or any other body at the regional level that is specifically focused on the work of social justice advocacy within the region. Most of this happens through networks that are focused on specific issues (although not all networks have a social justice orientation, many of them do).

In terms of specific updates with regard to these networks, I will highlight five in particular:

- UNJPPI -- the EOORC chapter of the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) was actively involved in planning a visit of Sabeel's Omar Harnam, which was to have taken place in Ottawa on April 22-23. The visit was to have included visits with parliamentarians (overseen by GCO's Wendy Gichuru), a day-long ecumenical workshop on the Kumi Now process of peacebuilding (in partnership with the Presbyterian church and others), and an evening dinner dialogue with Omar and local indigenous leaders exploring the intersection between indigenous and Palestinian responses to settler colonialism. With the travel restrictions of COVID-19, those events were cancelled, with the hope there might be future opportunities for this visit to take place once the landscape for travel is more open.
- 
- Housing Matters -- There is movement afoot for the creation of a new regional network focused on affordable housing, called "Housing Matters." A primary partner in this network is the Multifaith Housing Initiative based in Ottawa. One goal of the network is to connect Ottawa-area affordable housing initiatives with those who are active in the area of affordable housing in other parts of the region (e.g., Cornwall, Pembroke, Brockville, Perth, Smiths Falls, etc) where affordable housing is also a matter of concern. There will be an online conversation on the subject of affordable housing on May 26, with speakers from the Ottawa Community Foundation, talking about how community foundations and communities of faith can work together.

- 
- Affirm United -- a regional task group has been formed (Linda Stronski, Jenni Leslie) to work with Affirm to explore the process of becoming an Affirming Region (this was announced at the regional meeting held in February, but there have been no further reports on this since then).
- 
- Refugee Sponsorship -- some initial planning has taken place to have a region-wide conversation among those involved in refugee sponsorship at the Annual Meeting originally planned for May, now postponed to October.
- 
- Right Relations -- a question has emerged about how people in the region with an interest in indigenous justice can find out more about what is happening at GCO, without being on Facebook.

## EOORC Networks

### NETWORKS

Networks, while not formal governance bodies, are central to the living out of the faith of the United Church. Their purpose is to link people working on specific issues or for project work that functions through the whole church, depending on the issue.

#### EOORC Networks

Since UCC restructuring in January 2019, a number of regional networks have begun to take shape.

- Healing Pathway (a regional network within the national Healing Pathway Program, [www.healingpathway.ca/practicegroups](http://www.healingpathway.ca/practicegroups)). EOORC contacts, Sharon Moon, [sharonmoon45@gmail.com](mailto:sharonmoon45@gmail.com) or Howard Clark, [healingpathwayeast@gmail.com](mailto:healingpathwayeast@gmail.com)
- Housing Matters (Affordable Housing) [link to the Housing Matters Network document – both documents]
- Social Justice Network. Contact Jane Dawson, [JDawson@united-church.ca](mailto:JDawson@united-church.ca)
- Social Justice Network of Ontario Regions (SJNOR). Contact Charles Burnett, Chair, [Charles.barrett25@yahoo.ca](mailto:Charles.barrett25@yahoo.ca)
- Refugee Sponsorship, contact Norm McCord, [nemccord@sympatico.ca](mailto:nemccord@sympatico.ca).
- United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel, EOORC chapter ([www.unjpji.org](http://www.unjpji.org)), EOORC contact, Jane Dawson, [JDawson@united-church.ca](mailto:JDawson@united-church.ca)
- Urban Indigenous Network. Contact Teresa Burnett-Cole, [revtbc.gsj@gmail.com](mailto:revtbc.gsj@gmail.com)

### Wider UCC Networks

Affirm United, [www.affirmunited.ause.ca](http://www.affirmunited.ause.ca)

Disability Ministries Facebook Group, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/346363425470269>

La Table, [www.egliseunie.ca/contact/la-table-des-ministeres-en-francais](http://www.egliseunie.ca/contact/la-table-des-ministeres-en-francais)

Music United, [www.musicunited.ca](http://www.musicunited.ca)

United Church Women, [www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/united-church-women-ucw](http://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/united-church-women-ucw)

United for Mining Justice, [www.unitedforminingjustice.com](http://www.unitedforminingjustice.com)

### Networks Beyond the UCC

Christian Food Movement, [www.christianfoodmovement.org](http://www.christianfoodmovement.org)

Citizens for Public Justice, [www.cpj.ca](http://www.cpj.ca)

Canada Food Grains Bank, [www.foodgrainsbank.ca](http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca)

Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network, [www.edan-wcc.org](http://www.edan-wcc.org)

Faith and the Common Good, [www.faithandthecommongood.org](http://www.faithandthecommongood.org)

Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, [www.isarc.ca](http://www.isarc.ca)

KAIROS Canada, [www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org)

Rural Church Network, [www.ruralchurchnetwork.org](http://www.ruralchurchnetwork.org)

Wild Church Network, [www.wildchurchnetwork.ca](http://www.wildchurchnetwork.ca)

### Network Resources

- Starting a New Network: [link to Starting a New Network document]
- Why Networks? [link to document]
- Self Organizing Case Study from Network Weaver Handbook [link to document]

If you have any questions, or are part of a network you would like to list on the website, please contact Jane Dawson, Minister Supporting Communities of Faith, Clusters and Networks, [JDawson@united-church.ca](mailto:JDawson@united-church.ca), 1-800-268-3781, ext. 6245.

## EAST CENTRAL ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL - Sharon Hull

Our Regional Council had decided on a 1-day Fall meeting and a 2-day Spring meeting (both in person). Our Spring meeting date was set for May, then rescheduled to September, now we will need to look at options since the numbers would be over 300.

We have moved all of our meetings to zoom (some of them had already been using zoom).

We have 2 weekly zoom check in meetings - a clergy check in and conversation with congregational leaders.

### Equity Team:

- Developing some guidelines and resources
  - Template Equity Checklist- Planning and Hosting Virtually
  - Zoom Resources and Shortcuts
  - Resources for connecting without internet
- Access to Internet Equality

### Affirming Forum:

- Voted to be a Interim Affirming Regional Council in June 2019
- Started some education and workshops with our executive (Assembly of Elders), will now adapt and take to each of our teams

### Formation, Nurture and Justice Team:

We have sub groups under our team.

- 
- Relief of Poverty- adapting during COVID-19, providing help while observing health guidelines  
Examples:
    - Oshawa-Back Door Mission
    - Belleville-In from the cold, Thank God it's Friday, End of the month
    - Peterborough
  - Indigenous Justice
    - Some learning circles postponed
    - Some moved to online- gathering as a network
    - Orange shirt day
    - Looking for funds to support the legacy project
  - Drugs- Safe sites
  - Emergency Basic Income
  - Climate Justice

## **EAST CENTRAL ONTARIO REGION REGIONAL COUNCIL - DAVID MOORE**

### **Hubbing in a time of COVID**

Report on the Back Door Mission for the relief of poverty involvement in COVID -19 response.

Submitted by Rev. David Moore, Simcoe Street United Church, Chair of ECORC Faith Formation, Nurture and Justice Team. Member of Durham Region Advisory Committee on Homelessness.

### **Summary**

The Regional Municipality of Durham has implemented a response strategy to address the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. Those struggling with Homelessness, food insecurity, addictions, and mental health face unique issues in a time of social isolation. Across the region, hubs for access to services have been created. A central location has been created at The Back Door Mission for the Relief of Poverty, a United Church of Canada charity located in the building of Simcoe Street United Church in Oshawa.

### **Background**

The Back Door Mission was founded at Simcoe Street Church in 1995 in response to a growing urban population that was experiencing increased poverty, homelessness, addiction and mental health struggles. It continued as a program of the congregation until 2012 when need surpassed the capacity of the staff and volunteers of the church to manage. It was then incorporated as a United Church of Canada Charity.

In March of 2020, a state of emergency was declared in the Province of Ontario that restricted much of the normal functions of society. The need for isolation and social distancing meant that most businesses, non-essential services and public buildings were closed, and people were expected to stay at home.

For those who are homeless or under-housed, these restrictions cut access to much of the necessities for life, from food and support services to washroom and bathing facility access. Most of the services that the at-risk population rely on were restricted to telephone or online only. Homeless people do not have access to the required technology.

Concerns were discussed at an emergency online meeting of the Durham Advisory Committee on Homelessness (DACH), the Social Services Committee, Public Health and representatives from both regional and local municipalities on March 27. By that time there was a crisis on the streets with increased violence, open drug use, break and enter and assaults. The fear and anxiety was palpable among the at-risk population. Things had to happen fast.

## Hubs

The DACH was re-tasked with being the Pandemic Response steering committee. It was determined to establish hubs across the region where people could have easy and ready access to basic services and have referrals on site for more extensive services. Basic service Hubs were established in Pickering, Ajax and Whitby where individuals or families could have food delivered, have access to washrooms and showers and obtain referrals and free transportation to the central hub in Oshawa.

With services and social gatherings suspended, Simcoe Street United Church was made available. The Back Door Mission is the lead agency in partnership with Durham Mental Health, the Public Health office, the City of Oshawa, Lakeridge Health, Feed the Need Durham, CAREA, and CMHA deploying front line staff and resources. This new initiative is called Mission United.

Funding has been provided by the Federal Government under the Reaching Home program. Local businesses have stepped forward to provide food and volunteers from across the community have stepped forward to help.

The Mission is open seven days a week from 9:00am to 7:00pm. Breakfast is provided from the Salvation Army emergency food truck which arrives daily at 8:30. Lunch is served from 10:00 – 1:00. Access to other services is ongoing all day.

Services provided:

- Hot meals
- Food bank
- Doctor and Nurse Practitioner.
- Nurse
- Withdrawal Management
- Social Work
- Mental Health counsel
- Respite (A quiet area with cots is set up in the chapel)
- COVID screening and testing
- Referral service
- Housing support services
- Clothing exchange depot
- Washroom and showers
- Laundry
- Transportation to Region Quarantine location or OTC (out of the crisis)
- Internet and telephone
- Long term storage lockers for homeless persons.

The Back Door Mission has increased staffing from one full time director and volunteer staff to include two additional administrative staff and a full time Red Seal Chef. With redeployment of staff from the other agencies there are twelve professional staff Monday through Friday and over 100 volunteers serving shifts all week. An environmental cleaning crew sanitizes the building daily. The Chair of the Back Door Mission, Derek Giberson, has worked 12 hour shifts, seven days a week since the crisis began in mid March.

## The Hub extensions

Everyone who comes to the Mission is screened for COVID symptoms and a general wellness check. This assessment will then result in referral to either the services offered on site or if more intensive needs present, to the appropriate service. If a patron has COVID symptoms they are transported to the Quarantine facility. If symptom free, but it is apparent that they are not coping and need to be in a supportive environment, they are invited to go to the OTC site.

Quarantine is being observed in a local hotel. An entire floor has been set aside for individuals while they await results of a COVID test. If they have a positive result, they must remain in the quarantine facility for 14 days.

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Regional staff have been deployed to provide support. Meals are dropped at the room door and wellness checks are carried out hourly. If health deteriorates, they may be transported to hospital.

OTC is a redeployment of the out of the cold program from the winter months. It is staffed by regional staff and volunteers. Camp Samac, the local scout camp has been set up to provide a safe, supportive environment for those who have felt overwhelmed by the crisis and have no safe place to retreat. Only those who have tested negative for COVID can stay. They must agree not to leave the premises or use illicit drugs or alcohol. If they do leave they must return to the Mission and obtain a new assessment for referral. Clients live in the camp buildings in dorm style rooms. They are given three meals a day and are free to gather in common areas or walk the grounds under supervision. Television and internet have been provided for those staying here.

### **ANTLRE RIVER WATERSHED REGIONAL COUNCIL - Carey Wagner**

The Antler River Watershed Region Mission and Discipleship Commission meets regularly, preferring to meet face to face, Today will be our first Zoom meeting since COVID-19.

We welcome Diane Matheson-Jimenez back from maternity leave as Diane becomes Minister, Social Justice for Antler River Watershed, Western Ontario Waterways and Horseshoe Falls Regional Councils.

Prior to COVID-19 the Mission and Discipleship Commission was planning a brain storming gathering for United Church Camps. This gathering was to include the camps from Horseshoe Falls Region and Western Ontario Waterway Region. This initiative came about when we were approving Mission Support Grants for the camps, realizing that funds will not always be available in the future.

The Social Justice Network of Antler River Watershed Region (Former Division of Social Justice for London Conference) continues to meet and forwards their minutes and ideas to the Mission and Discipleship Commission for info.

The Social Justice Network of Antler River Watershed Region regrets we had to cancel our Social Justice Fair for May 9<sup>th</sup> 2020. And we hope to re-schedule later.

The Living in Right Relations Committee continues to meet and send their minutes and ideas to the Mission and Discipleship Commission for info.

The Social Justice Network of Antler River Watershed Region will support UNJPPI (United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine Israel) for the June 2021 National Gathering in London Ont.

We welcome Linda Woods to our gathering today, Linda was unable to attend our last face to face meeting as the second representative from Antler River Watershed Region. Linda was co-chair of the Bread not Stones Campaign – A United Church of Canada campaign to eradicate child poverty. Marg Murray continues to support our gathering as an alternative representative and Marg will share some material on some of the social justice initiatives as well

## Appendix M

**Zoom April 2020 Accessibility Guide ECORC Equity Team UCCAN**

*This accessibility resource was developed by the Equity Team of East Central Ontario Regional Council to provide additional supplemental support to mainstream tutorials and other resources, including those users who can only access Zoom using keyboard commands and cannot access with mouse. For blind and low vision users, unfortunately there is still no way to have screenshare content read by screen readers, at this time. Advance requests to receive PowerPoints and other documents before meetings is recommended. Our regional council requests all resources be emailed 48 hours in advance to allow time to preview and process information. Hosts, facilitators, presenters and participants need to be adaptive in remembering those phoning in also do not have access to screen share content or chat bar information. This Zoom resource is not a comprehensive guide but is an accessibility support.*

*Always Check for Latest Updates and Information for Tips and Tricks*

Go To Zoom.us For Latest Updates:

Check in at zoom.us for new accessibility features as well as security protocols and expectations that may provide revised information. Ensure you have the latest zoom version.

***Software and Apps:***

Download the Zoom software onto all your platforms (PC/Mac Computers, tablets, iPhone/Android to assure you access on whatever device you have. To do this in advance of a scheduled meeting, for computer access on PC or MAC, go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) and download zoom. If you do wait until the meeting time and log in, your system should prompt you to download the zoom software as soon as you log in usually by clicking on or hitting enter key on your invitation link. For devices, a Zoom app is available for IOS in the Apple store and for android at the Google playstore. Caution on IOS, to avoid going through all the permissions from Safari, go to the Applestore and search for Zoomcloudmeeting. This is a standard process download for software and should not take very long, depending on your internet speed. Clicking on the link or inputting the ten-digit ID number is the access code provided. This invitation is specific to your event and the host/facilitator's account) This will allow you full access to audio, video, screen sharing and ability to participate in the large group as well as break-out groups (depending on what the host is permitting for the specific meeting).

***Phone-IN Options, Things To Consider***

Note there is a phone in option and phone numbers for specific areas are provided in the invitation. If sharing information from an email invitation to someone with no internet, please provide the information:

Time and date of meeting (noting what it means for your time zone)

ID # for the meeting

Phone number for area. Numbers will vary, default when scheduling is United States, the person scheduling will hopefully have selected Canada).

The password for phone in access.

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Phoning in will not allow you to have video or screen shared information or access to the chat box but you will be able to hear what is being said, and can contribute by speaking if the host has not blocked participants from speaking. (Host mutes all attendees) When you can only connect while on the road, giving you a commuting option using your hands free blue tooth access in your vehicle and may also be helpful in circumstances where the internet connection is less stable. In some cases the participant with low bandwidth may phone in for audio and also log in on their computer to access chat box and content on screenshare.

If the account holder has paid for the toll free number to be available, that will be a preferable option, where it exists to avoid long distance charges. Be aware that some cell phone packages may require paying for toll free. Using a landline, the toll free number should be free.

Quick tips for phone-in: \*6 to mute and unmute and \*9 to raise and lower hand)

***Sample of steps using a computer PC for the first time to log-in, but without the Zoom software*** having been previously downloaded :

You will have received an email invitation.

The meeting will be either in progress (already started) or the email will indicate in the invitation the date and time of the meeting (Be mindful of time zones).

We will assume this is a meeting either in progress or about to start.

Click on the URL provided for the meeting or press enter.

The window will indicate “launch zoom meeting.” If using a screen reader such as Jaws or NVDA for those needing accessibility support for vision, the screen reader will speak “launch zoom meeting” along with a few details such as browser

Most systems will log in directly.

Depending on the browser you will see the option to run or save zoom launcher.

If your browser does not offer a run option and only provides the save option, select save. The file will be saved to your default downloads folder. This can be accessed by opening your file explorer on a PC using Windows 10 to locate the file and run it.

Keyboard shortcut:

ALT r (Press ALT and r together.) to run the zoom launcher (either as option when browser first opens at Zoom launcher or if file was saved and it is being accessed with file explorer using screen reader. For those using a screen reader, the per cent increments for the download should be announced but don't worry if you don't hear this, depending on speed and how your system is configured. Listen for the prompt to enter your name.

Prompt for name, type name in the edit field using first and last name. Tab and you will get a prompt asking if you want to remember for future meetings. This is a check box and can be toggled using space bar to select or deselect.

With recent security protocols, you may be placed in a waiting room and the host will need to admit you to the zoom meeting. This has been done as an extra step to minimize risks of “zoombombers”.(see below)

If you do not get a message (waiting for host” you can Tab again and you will get the prompt to “join meeting.” Press space bar to select this.

If the full version of software is downloaded, you can automatically join with audio, otherwise if just joining for the first time without downloading full Zoom software, you will need to respond to these prompts. You can tab through for joining using computer audio, testing microphone and speakers, join automatically using audio. This toggles on and off. If you press space bar to select the feature to join automatically using computer audio, this will simplify steps for future meetings that you join.

Try to join a meeting a few minutes previous to call, especially in a small group gathering such as for small group study.

When you log-in, type in your first and last name (does not apply to phone in attendees). You can click on the button to have Zoom remember your name each time and you can skip this step in the future.

Otherwise you will be a digital phone number or an access code information rather than have a human name.

***General Guidance for Attending Meeting by Zoom link, ID and phone in options:***

You will likely receive an invitation provided by a host or forwarded to you. It is a numeric digital code for access to the specific event. If phoning in you will be provided with a phone number for your area. Often the phone lists are extensive if they are international zoom meetings. Be aware that a person phoning in will be subject to the costs for the call according to their individual phone plan. For those accessing by computer, tablet or cell phone, there will be an active link to click on which will go directly to launch zoom meeting.

Password protocols may require a password, check the invitation. In some situations, the host has embedded the password into the URL (option available in settings).

When scheduling an meeting, a host can create a password such as a key word otherwise a password will be generated by Zoom. Those calling in by phone will be given a digital password to use, provided in the invitation.

To prevent unwanted attendees and hijacking, you can require that attendees use a password. Passwords can be set at the individual meeting, user, group, or account level for all sessions. In order to do so, first sign in with your account going to the web portal zoom.us. To set up a password at the individual meeting level. Go to settings tab and enable "Require a password when scheduling new meetings", which will ensure a password will be generated when a meeting is scheduled. All participants require the password to join the meeting. Subscription holders can also choose to go into "Group Management" to require that everyone follows the same password practices.

Some hosts will allow their personal ID to be used for meetings. For security, some people scheduling a meeting request Zoom generate a random ten digit number specific to the meeting. This is important in situations where a recurring meeting takes place.

This can be confusing if joining a meeting by utilizing the

History Feature. Accessible method for accessing the history of meetings is Open your Zoom client on computer (enter your name or id.) Tab to join button. Press enter. Tab once to get to the zoom history. Hit enter on Zoom

history which is a dropdown. Down arrow through list. press enter when you get to the meeting that you would like to join.

Before Meeting Begins, Within Zoom:

Check your microphone before the session starts to ensure you can be heard and you are comfortable toggling on and off the microphone, monitoring its status.(keyboard command alt a (as in audio) is the toggle. If microphone is off and you want to speak briefly you can press and hold the space bar to speak) Note that the facilitator/host does have the ability to turn on and off microphones.

Inquire if video is on and check your own view, as you will see yourself among the participants.If you are a person with no sight, you may opt for no video or ask for adjustment help if you have not predetermined how your device should be positioned for benefit of those with eyesight. Note, the more the participants, the smaller the photo image will be. Again, ensure you are comfortable to toggle the video on and off (keyboard command is alt v (as in video) There may be times when the video is requested to be turned off if internet stability is an issue, or you may wish to turn off your video sometimes, should you need to attend to another focus temporarily.

### ***Quickstart Keyboard Accessibility Shortcuts:***

ALT a(Press ALT key to left of space bar and the letter a together for PC; COMMAND SHIFT a on a MAC) This toggles audio on and off

ALT V (Press ALT key to left of space bar and the letter v together for PC; COMMAND SHIFT v on a MAC)This toggles video on and off

Keyboard Shortcut for changing Font Size:

You can change the font size for closed caption and view keyboard shortcuts you can use with Zoom.

- **Closed Caption Font Size** - Click and drag slider to make closed captions smaller or larger.

Control + will increase the font size.

Control -will decrease the font size.

Keyboard shortcut:

ALT y Press ALT key to left of space bar and the letter y together to raise and lower hand on a PC, and option plus y together MAC) This toggles raising and lowering of hand. When your hand is raised, the host/facilitator is signaled on their computer. The host/facilitator has the ability to lower hand when responding to the participant with the raised hand, but you can't always count on this being done.

Keyboard command for leaving meeting is alt q for PC.(unconfirmed for MAC command shift q)

Call-in by phone: pound sign/star and the numeral digit 6is the mute for audio when using phone.\*9 for raising and lowering hand on a phone.

### ***Accessibility For Host -- Raising/Lowering Hands:***

Those with hands raised are listed just below any hosts or co-hosts and are sorted based on when they raised their hands in chronological order. It is a good idea for the host to let participants know that they will be called on in order and not to lower their hands. Once a hand is lowered, the sorting of that participant will change so it is a best practice to let the host lower the hands in order to control this so focus can remain on the raised hand speaker until they are done talking.

The host sees the list of raised hands immediately below his or her name in the participants list. The first hand that was raised is at the top and the remainder are listed according to when they raise their hand. If there is a cohost, that person shows up immediately below the list of raised hands, and anyone who has their microphones on muted show up in a list immediately below the cohost. Followed by an alphabetical listing of those who have their microphones muted.

As a matter of equity practice, please identify yourself when speaking. The more this is modelled, the easier it will become. Those on phone in, commuting, those with video turned off, those set to gallery or focused in the chat bar may have difficulty multi-tasking to go look at who is speaking, some users may be taking notes in another screen and not focused on the zoom room speaker, those with vision needs all benefit. For large groups monitoring the thumbnail video pictures to see who is speaking (watching lips moving) is challenging depending on their presentation setting.

When in screen share, the video presentation of all who are gathered is not visible.

### ***Equity Practices for Virtual Meetings***

Meeting should include an opening with acknowledgement of lands, opening prayer naming of an equity monitor for the group and any determination of holy manners/special instructions.

If the group is reasonably sized and there are not concerns for time with regard to the rest of the agenda, invite participants to introduce themselves, including preferred pronouns. Pronouns may be she/her/hers; he/him/his or they/their. A genderized voice does not mean that represents their identity and we don't know who might be most comfortable using they. The more we can model this expectation to identify pronouns the more it will become part of our regular introductions.

ECORC is an affirming ministry and we are encouraged to be mindful and committed to living into our commitments as an affirming ministry. If a Community of Faith is not affirming, these are still best practices to model.

When sharing PowerPoints as part of a meeting, using screen share, please observe the guidelines of our regional council to keep the fonts simple and contrasts clear. Avoid having text overlay on images or other elements that make a slide busy and less easy for some to follow.

Keep in mind that not everyone has English as their first language, be sensitive to the presence of those who may have other languages as their first language.

People process information at different speeds.

Do not make PowerPoint slides too text heavy as it can be difficult to follow.

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Use a reasonable font that is easy to see. While 40 is the recommended for screen projection, that is designed for large venue such as a worship or meeting space. Keep in mind if this is only for viewing on small screens and ease of reading access, you may want to check by testing on screens available to you (desktop, laptop, tablet, cell phone).

Use inclusive language.

If there is concern that some language used is particular to the comfort of the person leading, such as in language of prayer, provide that acknowledgement and encourage each participant to embrace according to their own comfort and situation. It is preferable to acknowledge concerns rather than ignore possibilities that there are concerns as to whether all language is inclusive.

In daily prayer meetings with ministry personnel, the , moderator at the beginning of the meeting, invites participants to use their own personal prayer language (God images, may or may not include use of pronouns for God), reminding all participants to adapt the prayer language for their own comforts, and invites participation in languages other than English.

Facilitators/hosts may need to adapt their presentation style to account for people accessing in both the phone access, those not using video access, and those using audio and visual internet participation which will require awareness of participants on phone, not just scanning the visual images of participants. The content of slides on the PowerPoint, information on the chat bar will need to be shared verbally. This may be highlighting as opposed to reading fully.

Where possible, sending out a PowerPoint previous to a gathering will be useful for access, especially for those who know they will be reliant on a phone connection for their participation. ECORC guidelines request all resources be shared 48 hours in advance where possible, with equitable distribution to all known participants. Some people like to print out slide deck and make their own notes, do highlighting, flag areas where questions. With more people utilizing two screen access, some participants may be working split screen and the availability of the slide deck on a separate screen can be helpful.

### ***Security ID Numbers, Passwords, Waiting Rooms, Zoombombers:***

Note: To enhance the security of single-seat Pro accounts, starting **April 5th**, meeting passwords and Waiting Rooms will be turned on by default. As the meeting host, there are some steps you may need to take to familiarize yourself with these changes and ensure that your attendees can join your upcoming meetings

For account holders, you can change your personal ID to a ten digit number not already in use. Suggestion, use your phone number for ease of remembering.

To add security when setting up meetings, within scheduling the ID can create a random ten digit number for each new meeting scheduled as an added security feature.

For added security, Zoom has relocated the button to invite others to join your Zoom meeting. It is now available at the bottom of the Participants panel.

The meeting ID will no longer be displayed in the title bar of the Zoom meeting window. The meeting ID can be found by clicking on **Participants**, then **Invite** or by clicking on the info icon at the top left of the client window.

Some meetings are set as one time only and others might be set as recurring meeting. In April 2020, some ministries are reporting that the recurring scheduler is not always consistently working. Go to latest invitation if recurring meeting URL and ID are not letting you in meeting.

Some hosts have meetings set to not allow attendees join the meeting until the host has arrived, others turn this off allowing participants arriving early some fellowship time.

Some hosts are using security protocols requiring each attendee admittance to the meeting only with permission of the host. This is referred to as being in a waiting room.” One might think of it as waiting to be called in for an appointment, staying in the waiting room until directed to the room where the meeting will actually take place. If utilizing waiting rooms, communicating what is happening will reduce stress for attendees by providing a “Waiting for host message when attendees are placed in a waiting room, prior to the meeting. They will know they are waiting for authentication by host so no unwanted visitors attend.

Brian Hartjen, who provides accessible scripts for JAWS screen readers (accessibility for those who are low vision and blind) and provides additional scripts for purchase, describes waiting room features as they can be accessed by JAWS screen reader for blind and low vision user.

<http://www.hartgen.org/zoomsecurity>

Waiting Room is one of the best ways to control who’s entering your Zoom meeting by giving you the option to admit participants individually or all at once. Zoom highly recommends using this feature to secure your meetings and prevent unwanted participants if a link is shared publicly. If you do not want to use Waiting Room, you can disable it for your own meetings, an individual group on your account, or the entire account. This can be achieved in Settings for your account described below. Waiting Room can also be enabled or disabled at the time of scheduling and during a meeting.

Should you choose to use the Waiting Room feature, here is how to admit people using JAWS.

When a person attempts to join a meeting, he or she is placed in the Waiting Room. If screen-reader alerts are enabled, you will hear that a person is in the Waiting Room.

Press ALT+U so as to display the Participants Panel. You should be focused in the list of participants.

Press Shift+Tab repeatedly from the Participants List. If people are in the Waiting Room, you should hear JAWS announce the presence of one or two Buttons: Admit All and Admit. If only one other participant is waiting, only the Admit button is spoken.

Pressing Shift+Tab once more will set focus to the list of people in the Waiting Room. This works in exactly the same way as lowering hands or unmuting users in the Participants List. Press Down Arrow so as to select the name of the person to admit to the meeting, then press Tab once to reach Admit. Finally, press the Space Bar.

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Please note: there is no spoken alert advising you that a person is now in the meeting. You will need to Tab repeatedly until you reach the Participants List and check this.

Finally if necessary, press ALT+U to close the Participants List.

#### People Who Have Raised a Hand.

If people have raised hands during a meeting, it is worth noting that they should appear close to, or at the top of, the Participants List. Press the Home key by itself to reach the top of the list. The JAWS scripts now contain an audio cue as you move through the list to advise you of those people who have their hand raised. This should provide a blind person with a very quick overview as to the status of raised hands and is highly effective in managing large conferences.

Locating a participant with a hand raised can be achieved with the arrow keys, whereupon you can press Tab once to lower the hand or, to unmute or apply other options. As a side note, in the Other Options category, you can send a person back to the Waiting Room should you wish to do that.

#### Disabling Text Chat.

Particularly when working in large groups, it may be prudent on your part to disable text chat messages. If for example you have a guest speaker, it is extremely disconcerting for that person if messages are appearing in the text chat area which are disrespectful and can spoil the delivery of such a presentation. The JAWS scripts provide a high level of control over alerts and messages, so they can easily be filtered out globally if desired. It is when these messages are reviewed later that it could be embarrassing.

To disable chat, select the General category from Settings in the Zoom Meetings Client.

When selected, press Shift+Tab once to reach the link entitled "View More Settings Open in your default browser". Press Enter.

If worried about unwanted participants a host can lock a room. A caution if a room is locked and a participant loses their connection, they cannot reenter a locked meeting after intentionally or unintentionally leaving a meeting in progress that the host has locked.

The meeting can be locked by the host. go to the Security button and press the space bar. One of the options is Lock meeting. Alternately go to manage participants tab. Click more. Lock meeting is one of the options. Press enter on that option and the meeting is locked; press enter on the option again to unlock the meeting.

If there is concern that participants might share inappropriate content using screenshare, the ability or attendees to share their screen can be disabled by a host during an active meeting. This is found under the security tab.

If you find that someone is disrupting a meeting, you can remove them under the "Participants" tab. Hover over the name, click "More," and remove them. You can also make sure they cannot rejoin by disabling "Allow Removed Participants to Rejoin" under the "Settings: Meetings - Basic" tab.

The act of “Zoombombing,” wherein someone joins a call uninvited just to be inappropriate and create chaos, led to increasing security enhancements. As of April 26, 2020, Zoom supports allowing inappropriate users to be reported to Zoom. a dedicated 'report user to Zoom' button will allow the host of a meeting to report a user by clicking on the Security icon, then Report.

"This feature will generate a report that will be sent to the Zoom Trust and Safety team to evaluate any misuse of the platform and block a user if necessary,"

### ***Transcription Tool:***

For those with access issues, needing transcription, this tool is available as of late April 2020. Sharon has not used. Benefits: if you are not able to hear the meeting because of a hearing impairment (deaf and deaf-blind support). A transcript supports reading script with a Braille display. A transcript is a searchable record. Those with attention deficits or other learning disabilities can find a transcript useful. If part or all of a meeting has been missed, a transcript can often be skimmed more quickly than listening to the entirety of a meeting. Transcripts are good resources for summary/highlighting notes and for the recording secretary to verify accuracy. To conserve bandwidth you can email transcripts to people, since many email systems will not permit large attachments. Sharon is quoting from The Verge - Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 9:00 AM shared in accessibility list)

### **This tool automatically transcribes your Zoom meetings as they happen**

Automated transcription service Otter.ai now integrates directly into Zoom calls to transcribe meetings on the fly. During a meeting, anyone on the call can click the “Otter.ai Live Transcript” button within their Zoom window to open up the Live Video Meeting Notes on Otter.ai’s site, and participants can then annotate them on the fly. Otter.ai quietly announced the new feature in a blog post earlier this month.

Otter.ai has had the ability to transcribe recordings of past Zoom meetings for a little while now. The live transcription feature should make the process quicker, and make highlighting and editing important sections easier while they’re still fresh in your mind. Here’s a video from Otter.ai showing the feature in action:

In order to use the new feature you’ll need to be subscribed to Zoom’s Pro tier or higher, and you’ll also need an Otter for Teams subscription. Otter.ai’s Teams subscription normally costs \$20 per use per month, but the service is currently offering two months for free if you use the code COVID19OTTER. You can find instructions on how to set the live transcription feature up on Otter.ai’s website.

Stephen Fetter (UCCAN General Council Office) sent this link on April 24, 2020

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/23/21232385/otter-ai-live-video-meeting-notes-zoom-transcription-annotation-teams>

### ***Zoom Worship:***

If you are interested in using zoom for worship check out George Bott’s YouTube video on zoom in worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IIqTsXoHQ0>

### ***Keyboard Commands Summary--All Platforms***

The latest keyboard shortcuts can be found on the Zoom site or under settings.

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Zoom's keyboard shortcuts for Mac, PC, Linux, and iOS on the Zoom desktop client itself. If you are running Zoom on your desktop computer, log in to *Zoom*, then click on your profile photo in the upper-right corner, select *Settings* from the drop-down list, and click *Keyboard Shortcuts*.

Below is a list available as of March 2020 provided with thanks to Ryan Fleury of Canadian Assistive Technologies in British Columbia.

Compiled by Ryan Fleury, Trainer at Canadian Assistive Technologies ([www.CanAssTech.com](http://www.CanAssTech.com)).

### **PC Computers:**

Zoom Windows Built in keyboard commands

Available Keyboard Shortcuts

F6: Navigate among Zoom popup windows.

Ctrl+Alt+Shift: Move focus to Zoom's meeting controls

PageUp: View previous 25 video stream in gallery view

PageDown: View next 25 video stream in gallery view

Alt: Turn on/off the option Always show meeting control toolbar in Accessibility Settings

Alt+F1: Switch to active speaker view in video meeting

Alt+F2: Switch to gallery video view in video meeting

Alt+F4: Close the current window

Alt+V: Start/Stop Video

Alt+A: Mute/unmute audio

Alt+M: Mute/unmute audio for everyone except host Note: For the meeting host only

Alt+S: Launch share screen window and stop screen share Note: Will only work when meeting control toolbar has focus

Alt+Shift+S: Start/stop new screen share Note: Will only work when meeting control toolbar has focus

Alt+T: Pause or resume screen share Note: Will only work when meeting control toolbar has focus

Alt+R: Start/stop local recording

Alt+C: Start/stop cloud recording

Alt+P: Pause or resume recording

Alt+N: Switch camera

Alt+F: Enter or exit full screen

Alt+H: Display/hide In-Meeting Chat panel

Alt+U: Display/hide Participants panel

Alt+I: Open Invite window

Alt+Y: Raise/lower hand

Alt+Shift+R: Gain Remote Control

Alt+Shift+G: Stop Remote Control

Ctrl+2: Read active speaker name

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+H: Show/Hide floating meeting controls

Alt+Shift+T: Screenshot

Switch to Portrait/Landscape View: Alt+L

Ctrl+W: Close current chat session

Ctrl+Up: Go to previous chat

Ctrl+Down: Go to next chat

Ctrl+T: Jump to chat with someone

Ctrl+F: Search

Ctrl+Tab: Move to the next tab (right)

Ctrl+Shift+Tab: Move to the previous tab (left)

**Zoom Mac keyboard commands**

Available Shortcuts

Meeting Shortcuts

Command(⌘)+J: Join Meeting

Command(⌘)+Control+V: Start Meeting

Command(⌘)+J: Schedule Meeting

Command(⌘)+Control+S: Screen Share via Direct Share

Command(⌘)+Shift+A: Mute/unmute audio

Command(⌘)+Control+M: Mute audio for everyone except the host (only available to the host)

Command(⌘)+Control+U: Unmute audio for everyone except host (only available to the host)

Space: Push to talk

Command(⌘)+Shift+V: Start/stop video

Command(⌘)+Shift+N: Switch camera

Command(⌘)+Shift+S: Start/stop screen share

Command(⌘)+Shift+T: Pause or resume screen share

Command(⌘)+Shift+R: Start local recording

Command(⌘)+Shift+C: Start cloud recording

Command(⌘)+Shift+P: Pause or resume recording

Command(⌘)+Shift+W: Switch to active speaker view or gallery view, depending on current view

Control+P: View previous 25 participants in gallery view

Control+N: View next 25 participants in gallery view

Command(⌘)+U: Display/hide Participants panel

Command(⌘)+Shift+H: Show/hide In-Meeting Chat Panel

Command(⌘)+I: Open invite window

Option+Y: Raise hand/lower hand

Ctrl+Shift+R: Gain remote control

Ctrl+Shift+G: Stop remote control

Command(⌘)+Shift+F: Enter or exit full screen

Command(⌘)+Shift+M: Switch to minimal window

Ctrl+Option+Command+H: Show/hide meeting controls

Ctrl+Shift+R: Gain remote control

Ctrl+Shift+G: Stop remote control

Ctrl+,: Toggle the "Always Show meeting controls" options in Settings/Accessibility

Command(⌘)+W: Prompt to End or Leave Meeting

Chat Shortcuts

Command(⌘)+K: Jump to chat with someone

Command(⌘)+T: Screenshot

General Shortcuts

Command(⌘)+W: Close the current window

Command(⌘)+L: Switch to Portrait or Landscape View, depending on

Current View

Ctrl+T: Switch from one tab to the next

**Using Jaws with Zoom**

Pressing Insert W will bring up this list of commands

General keystrokes:

Mute or unmute audio: Alt+A works with nvda

Raise or lower your hand: Alt+Y works with nvda

Open the Invite window: Alt+I works with nvda

Show the In-Meeting Chat panel: Alt+H works with nvda

Show the Participants panel: Alt+U works with nvda  
Move between Zoom popup windows: F6 works with nvda

#### Recording Keystrokes:

Start local recording: Alt+R works with nvda but nothing is spoken as guest you get prompt to ask permission to record from host  
Start cloud recording: Alt+C as host works with nvda as guest no feed back  
Pause or resume recording: Alt+P works with nvda but doesn't say anything

#### Video Meeting Keystrokes:

Switch to active speaker view: Alt+F1: no feed back  
Switch to gallery video view: Alt+F2 no feed back  
Start or stop Video: Alt+V works with nvda

#### Meeting Organizer Keystrokes:

Mute or unmute audio for everyone except the host: Alt+M: works with nvda but no feed back it worked  
Switch camera: Alt+N no feed back  
Enter or exit full screen: Alt+F works with nvda  
Gain remote control: Alt+Shift+R not sure if it works with nvda  
Stop remote control: Alt+Shift+G not sure if it works with nvda

The following keystrokes are available when the meeting control toolbar has focus.

Launch share screen window and stop screen share: Alt+S works with nvda  
Start or stop new screen share: Alt+Shift+S works with nvda  
Pause or resume screen share: Alt+T works with nvda but nothing is spoken

Using Jaws Pressing Insert H will bring up this list of commands

These are the commands associated with the Jaws scripts included in Jaws and don't work with NVDA.

To enable or disable alerts, press Alt+Windows+S.

To hear the most recent alert, press Alt+Windows+A.

To be reminded of whether alert announcements are enabled or disabled, press JAWSKey+Tab.

To review the last 10 alerts or messages, press Control+1 through to Control+0. Press twice quickly to virtualise.

To only allow chat messages when pressing Control+1 through to Control+0 press control+F5.

### **IOS and Android**

Phone controls for meeting host

If you have entered the Host Key to start the meeting, you will have host controls available to you by entering DTMF tones on your dial pad. To hear all available commands, enter \*\* on your phone.

\*4 - End the meeting for all participants

\*5 - Lock or Unlock the meeting

\*6 - Mute or unmute yourself

\*7 - Start or Stop Recording

Note: all participants in the meeting will be notified when recording is stopped or started.

\*# - Hear the number of participants in the meeting

99 - Mute or unmute all participants

Phone commands available for meeting participants

The following commands can be entered via DTMF tones using your phone's dial pad while in a Zoom Meeting:

Star (\*) 6 - Toggle mute/ un-mute

Star (\*) 9 - Toggle raise/ lower hand

Last updated April 30 2020 Contact Equity Team Chair Sharon Ballantyne [sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com) 705  
875-8837

## Appendix N

**Template Equity Checklist Planning and Hosting Events)****Name of Community of Faith:** \_\_\_\_\_

This equity checklist is designed to be multi-functional to help us be pro-active hosts who offer radical hospitality to welcome all at our table.

**PRE-PLANNING FOR AN EVENT:**

- ☐ All groups and event organizers are asked to decide what is needed on promotional material, social media and invitations to help facilitate equity.
- ☐ Try to host only in accessible venues. If only partially accessible ensure that it is stated
- ☐ If accessibility support is needed (operator for lift, key for elevator) is pre-arranged for availability with a named person and contact (avoid vague assurances someone should be there).
- ☐ Ensure all invitations have a contact cell number for someone at event so a person has a contact if needed when arriving to event (directions, parking issues, entrance locked)
- ☐ Provide contact name for those who may need transportation to an event, arranging for volunteer drivers as part of pre-event planning
- ☐ If persons with disabilities are known to be attending, contact the individuals before the event to ask them about their needs and how to best plan for their inclusion (if Communion, how would they like to receive)
- ☐ If anyone has a service animal, pre-arrange with person prior to event requesting service animal expectations be shared when the handler is doing introductions (if introductions not feasible for size of group, invite the service handler to provide information during sharing of housekeeping)
- ☐ Include all appropriate symbols that identify features of the location on invitations, announcements and promotions e.g. (affirming, accessible, gender neutral washroom, hearing assists available, scent free, nut free)
- ☐ Anticipate diversity of participants and plan with full participation as a goal (consider complexity of language, attention spans, movement, interactive, learning styles, able to speak in groups, stand, move, hear or see)
- ☐ Be adaptive and creative
- ☐ Include acknowledgement of lands as part of opening of event.
- ☐ Name an equity monitor for the event, introduce at beginning and explain role so all participants have a safe "go to" person and review norms or holy manners, confidentiality expectations for gathering

**PRESENTATION:**

- Projection - font size minimum 40 clear easy to read font (Aerial or similar), strong visual contrast, reduce clutter/ busyness, limit content per slide, use color contrasts for speaker and large group (white presenter/yellow all, or similar), inclusive wording, attention to complexity of language, add pictures or symbols to clarify such as praying hands to show a time of prayer, use multi-racial images for inclusivity
- distribute 48 hours in advance, documents, handouts, agendas and PowerPoints to allow for additional processing time and accessibility, participants understand there could be some last minute adjustments
- Have large print copies and leader copy of detailed presentation available
- Use existent microphone system consistently (be mindful of placement for lip readers)
- If a person uses a wheelchair, sit when possible to converse so all are face to face,
- Say name when speaking, some may not see, some may forget names or come in late
- Provide clear, large font name tags and ensure people wear name tags and/or use table name plates
- use alt tag labels for graphics and images, use closed captioning and described video features
- get permission for use of photos, video, quotes or other specific needs, to be used on social media, websites and future related events
- use a feedback or evaluation form that combines paper and on-line option, include request about equity (consider using survey monkey so non-anecdotal can be summarized by survey monkey)

**BUILDING FACILITY:**

- Offer accessible parking places and clear signage for directions to key rooms (if especially complex, consider making a brief video to give participants a preview tour of building and what to expect) that is posted on social media or website
- Check if site has any directions regarding best place to relieve service animal and directions, if there is an outside waste receptacle.
- Include in invitations special instructions for accessible access if needed, ensure door is unlocked and that signage is available from that entry point
- Accessible, gender neutral and family friendly washrooms with clear routes to washrooms, and if needed designating a temporarily labelled gender neutral washroom for event if not pre-existing
- Arrange seating to optimize all hearing, seeing screen, movement in the space, interaction and participation for all (ensure tables and arrangements allow space for those who use wheelchairs or other assists)
- Ensure passageways in room, to washrooms, quiet space, food and exits are accessible and kept clear

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- Clarify procedures and comfort to avoid centering out, such as requesting if people will want to be served Communion at their seats or come up and individual preference, in planning, talk to individuals anticipate what will be most inclusive and accommodating for all to take part
  - If family friendly, ensure spaces and activities are appropriate for all
  - Ensure greeters have sense of inclusive design of building to best recommend seating but respect requests of individuals and do not move mobility assists to back or side of a venue, stranding the person
  - Declare a quiet room space, with directions and sign on room
  - Donated and catered food needs labels (gluten free, dairy free, vegetarian, vegan,) ingredient list, recipe as appropriate, placed by dishes for self-serve, on wall or clearly communicated to servers, determining if/when separate serving tables might be needed for special diet items
  - Have water available, include which beverages are decaffeinated, sugar -free or other dietary identifiers
  - Remind those bringing their own food to observe dietary needs

**Last updated April 26, 2020** – working document, share/adapt for use.

Contact [sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com) 705 875-8837 with suggestions.

## Appendix O

**Template Equity Checklist Planning and Hosting Virtually)****Name of Community of Faith:** \_\_\_\_\_

This equity checklist is designed to be multi-functional to help us be pro-active hosts who offer radical hospitality to welcome all at our virtual table. Zoom is being used as the basic context)

**PRE-PLANNING FOR AN EVENT:**

- ☐ All groups and event organizers are asked to decide what is needed on promotional material, social media and invitations to help facilitate equity including directions to access meeting, directions if there is a way for those without internet to access, such as phone in on Zoom platform
- ☐ Arrange for a co-host who can monitor chat box, receive any private messages and troubleshooting, and bring to attention any questions for conversation (ensure the cohost has a good sense of the flow and content for event so they can have a good sense of timing and assess and prioritize information to be shared(curating questions and posing to the presenter(s)))
- ☐ Plan for engagement, time for conversation and response to facilitate relationship building and interaction with participants, encouraging engagement and feedback using chat box, ensuring those on phone get opportunity to provide their feedback as they won't be using chat box
- ☐ Watch others, talk with other people and get their feedback of best practices -- tips and tricks, what has been helpful or not in experiential context
- ☐ Ensure all invitations have a contact cell number, email in case there are questions or an internet invitation is giving a participant issues.
- ☐ Provide an agenda in advance and screen share it or put in chat box at time of event(some people uncomfortable to move from the virtual focus to email or documents on different screen)
- ☐ Include in invitation/promotions any items that persons may find it helpful to have at the virtual gathering (hymn book, Bible, candle, documents, food/drink if doing on-line Communion)
- ☐ Providesome basics beforehand, inviting hosts, presenters and participants who want to, to join event early orhave a practice-troubleshooting session, reviewing how to access a meeting (passwords, waiting room, muting and unmuting, using chat box, changing font size, changing from speaker view to gallery view,--troubleshoot turning on and off microphone, video, raising hand, screen share, understand about breakout rooms, or other features being utilized
- ☐ Encourage everyone to visit Zoom.us and review support information/tutorials, help videos and Q and A, google search with a specific question often directs a person right to relevant help resources(or to other platforms)
- ☐ Plan for a few minutes of quick review of basics of virtual gathering. Be clear to indicate if the event is being recorded and will be available post-event, made public or only for participants so all are aware of

their pictures, chat box conversation, participation is being shared and its planned uses so there are no surprises

- When planning be clear about security protocols that may be needed (host present before meeting begins, use of password, use of waiting room, and whatever safety protocols are being utilized)
- If persons with disabilities are known to be attending, contact the individuals before the event to ask them about their needs and how to best plan for their inclusion
- Include all appropriate symbols that identify features of the ministry/group/organization on invitations, announcements and promotions e.g. (affirming logo, United Church of Canada logo, if closed captioning is being used during the Zoom, if the event is being recorded and the link for later review and access will be provided post-event)
- Anticipate diversity of participants and plan with full participation as a goal (consider inclusive language, attitude, complexity of language, attention spans, movement, interactive, learning styles, able to speak in groups, some with and without video access(screen share, access to chat, seeing fellow participants, those on phone call-in, ability to hear or see)
- Be adaptive and creative
- Include acknowledgement of lands as part of opening of event.
- Name an equity monitor for the event, introduce at beginning and explain role so that person is known if needing to provide polite feedback for equity matters arising, all participants have a safe “go to” person(can private message if concern arises)
- Review norms or holy manners, confidentiality expectations for gathering

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Review with participants how to make adjustments on their own screens if wanting to change presentation format, adjust font size on their monitor)and explain why all microphones are muted, how to raise hands (varies on screens, “alt y” keyboard, \*9 on a phone), how to temporarily unmute (different places on screen depending on device, “alt a” keyboard, or press and hold space bar, \*6 on a phone,) to speak
- Projection – font, check presentation on various devices – laptop, desktop computer, cell phone, tablet
- consider what will need to be spoken for those unable to see screen (on phone, joining while commuting, video off to save bandwidth, using phone as audio due to unstable internet, visual impairment of participant)
- Review font size clear easy to read font (Aerial or similar), strong visual contrast, reduce clutter/busyness, limit content per slide, use color contrasts for speaker and participant responses (white presenter/yellow all, or similar),
- Ensure all interactions (written, spoken) assure inclusive wording, attention to complexity of language, add pictures or symbols to clarify such as praying hands to show a time of prayer, use multi-racial images for inclusivity

- 
- distribute 48 hours in advance, documents, handouts, agendas and PowerPoints to allow for additional processing time and accessibility, participants understand there could be some last minute adjustments
  - Have large print copies and leader copy of detailed presentation available to send out in advance if requested
  - Test microphone system of host, facilitator and other presenters (headset and microphone is usually clearest), invite a participant to test session who is just observing for clarity, background noise, hollowness/tunnel effects) be mindful of microphone placement for lip readers)
  - Say name when speaking, some may not see, some may forget names or come in late to meeting, or not have access to nametags on screen (phoning in, no screen access, visual impairment, too many participants to focus if in gallery mode)
  - use alt tag labels for graphics and images, use closed captioning and described video features
  - get permission for use of photos, video, quotes or other specific needs, to be used on social media, websites and future related events
  - use a feedback or evaluation form that combines paper and on-line option, include request about equity (consider using survey monkey so non-anecdotal can be summarized by survey monkey)

#### **BUILDING FACILITY:**

- check the setting for virtual gathering, time of day for lighting, amount of light on speaker/presenter (glare and shadows), background clutter, distractions/interruptions in space selected)
- Clarify procedures and comfort to avoid centering out individuals or using language like (we need to say our names because \_\_\_\_\_ is only able to join us by phone today)
- Troubleshoot in advance all tech pieces and consider various platforms that are being used(livestream platforms such as Zoom, Go To Meeting, Facebook and YouTube live, or others

Refer to Equity Accessibility Considerations for Meeting Virtually, as additional resource document.

**Last updated April 26, 2020** – working document, share/adapt for use.

Contact [sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com) 705 875-8837 with suggestions.

## Appendix P

**Equity ECORC Strategies For Connecting Without Internet Access April 2020**

At a time when we have become more reliant on virtual communication than ever before from conducting the business, work and decisions of our governance for ministries, to worship and small group gatherings, refreshments and fellowship times, visiting with virtual check-ins, a great inequity emerges in every community of faith, for those in retirement communities and long term care facilities as to how to stay connected. This compilation is a starting point, with most ideas being simple and common sense, but collectively perhaps offering some new possibilities for ministries to be creative and adapting to their individual contexts.

This list has been developed during the time of a state of emergency during the COVID19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 when restrictions are the most limiting, directing people to stay at home as much as possible.

Creation and use of a phone tree to do telephone call outs to all people associated with ministry. Include neighbours, community members and connect with area churches and community partners.

Print out and mailing of letters, spiritual nurture, orders of service, resources that are being distributed by email, on social media, websites and from the broader church such as networks, clusters, regional councils, nationally and globally. Consideration for people at all ages and stages should be taken into account, ensuring that chairs or team leaders are part of the communication strategies developed by each ministry

-Snail mail

-Printing and delivery to mailboxes or porch drops

-Create internet update buddy between a person with internet and one without internet. Someone who has internet to phone and update, read materials, invite to join in via livestreams or prerecorded resources (Zoom, YouTube, Facebook and other on-line platforms)

Person A with internet calls person B who does not have internet(or stable internet) using their speaker phone. Person A(with internet) plays the internet feed (e.g. Worship service, virtual meeting) and Person B(no internet) participates using their phone hearing what is being streamed through person A's speaker phone.

Enhancement that could be helpful is if person A(with internet) can connect their computer or device to an external speaker. Person A(with internet) can act as representative for person B (without internet). In Zoom meetings person A(with internet) might temporarily change their name on the zoom session to reflect their own and their buddy connecting by shared phone so that those on Zoom will be more likely to remember and include person B (no internet), as present and part of the group.

For people phoning in to on-line options where that is possible such as zoom, an internet buddy or some member of a group will need to ensure the person without internet gets the phone number, ID number and with increased security protocols the security password so they can call in if that is feasible (long distance charges apply depending on the zoom package of the host, but for most communities of faith, if they have a basic free account or the first level professional account, long distance phone charges will apply)Larger organizations may have long distance toll free as part of their subscription package. Those phoning in should check their long distance plans.

Those calling in by phone will be identified as a phone number, the host might wish to assign someone for accountability and equity to ensure everyone is remembered. Those with video turned off and calling by phone sometimes are not as easily remembered by other participants).

If worship services are being recorded, explore if someone in congregation has the technology to record services on to CD audio or DVDs to provide for those without internet

Establish a safe pick up at the church building (a closed, weather-resistant plastic bin housing take-away resources, communication in individual large ziplocks)

Pinning take-away resources with a clothes pin to a railing or “pick-up line”

Establishing a schedule to arrange for safe pick up such as (Person A without internet comes Wednesdays at 10:30 for pick-up of communication, resource is left on porch or designated location for 10:30; or person A comes to parking lot and calls to alert of their arrival so “take away” can be set outside door

Distribute Voices United/More Voices and Bibles from sanctuary to those who don't have a copy at home to be able to use for duration

Write positive messages of hope on driveway or sidewalks to share outreach to community

Alert of radio or television broadcasts people may find helpful for worship/spiritual nurture (be mindful of diverse theology)

Establish a secure mailbox at the community of faith for dropping off materials (individuals dropping off cheques should call office administrator or designated person to alert a cheque is being left as buildings are empty, reduces vulnerability of secure mailbox contents)

Put special directions on external sign, telephone answering machine

-partner with other close by businesses or agencies to share information and communication updates

Arrange for a conference call to bring people together (national church has some numbers if contact to arrange a time for access)

Set up a phone callout automated calling for short messages

This is one automated calling service that was suggested (free for up to 25 callouts up to 30 seconds, with pricing service packages available)

<https://www.dialmycalls.com/pricing>

Send a daily encouraging text message

Post encouraging messages/symbols in windows, doors, in a rear window of a vehicle

Arrange for “drive by” vehicle parades to acknowledge special days (birthdays, anniversaries, show of support, way to visit)

Create a notification system to connect people who might need support with essential needs while staying home (grocery and pharmacy deliveries)

Use gift cards as a way to ease exchange for cash to reduce banking needs. If community of faith is small and can accommodate creating a tab or tracking if deliveries are done in support of individual without a way to reimburse money immediately

If programs like fundscripsts are not being used, maybe a time to explore some sort of gift card fundraiser program—to set up, arrange for card ordering and distribution

Encourage connection with a child or grandchild of someone without internet to provide information to the person, gives family members something to share, draws circle wider for spiritual outreach

Contact activity director at a retirement community or long term care facility to be a navigator to perhaps be able to play services for residents, share notes and greeting

Encourage family to arrange to facetime with loved ones in care homes so family can see each other

Send short videos to the phone of a staff to play for a family member when they can

Partner with other local church to reduce workload and share skills

**Last updated April 26, 2020** – working document, share/adapt for use.

Contact [sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.ballantyne@gmail.com) 705 875-8837 with suggestions.

## Appendix Q

This booklet offers a reference to a scripture verse, working alphabetically, "a" through "z", using each letter twice to provide fifty-two reflections. Following each verse reference is a short quote drawn from within the pages of the September 2013 report to the Permanent Committee, Programs for Ministry and Mission, as prepared and submitted by Adele Halliday, Team Leader for Discipleship & Witness; Church in Mission, United Church of Canada (UCCAN). The report was prepared following a Consultation for Persons with Disabilities and their Allies held in July of 2013. This report reflected the work of the consultation and made recommendations to the United Church of Canada, inviting us all to embrace equity, with its particular focus on experiences with persons with disabilities and their allies. After each quote from the report is a brief reflection and at the end of each reflection, are a few brief words, quoting people who have shared their experiences of marginalization as compiled from interviews done by Sharon Ballantyne in 2019 for research that is part of the generous award of a McGeachy Sr. Scholar research project(2018) from the United Church Foundation, on the topic of equity, granted to Rev. Dr. Sharon Ballantyne.

Each entry concludes with "We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches."

This resource can be used as a personal devotional, be shared in small group meetings or be integrated into use in worship similar to the way a Minute for Mission might be shared.

May we all embrace what God reveals for our own reflection, learning and living into being equitable and being church together.

God of all love, breathe on us your spirit of compassion.

Open us to receive you, communicating through us.

Open us to find you in the face of each person.

Open our hearts and minds to experience your presence.

Guide and direct us with your wisdom.

Help us discern how to live into creating an equitable and just world, embracing all creation.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

## A

Cast all your anxiety on him. 1 Peter 5:7

From the UCCAN report: "church has not been a positive experience."

These words echo the feelings of so many, those who have left, have persevered to stay involved but are feeling frustrated. Our ministries are inequitable. More work is being done, can and will be done if we all work together. Empower people to be confident and advocate, not having to do all the work themselves, but in solidarity with all of the ministries. How can we empower each other?

For those who say:

"I feel inspired to speak up when situations are inequitable and just wrong."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## B

Blessed are they who trust in the Lord. Proverbs 16:20

From the UCCAN report: "living with grief and pain because of exclusionary attitudes experienced within community of faith."

We'd like to think that people will come together to really support others. This is not lived experiences. "Welcoming" is often words on signs, screens, and in documents, but care needs to be taken to continually and intentionally assess lived practices. We still have a long way to go to live into ensuring all belong, are valued, included, needed, enabled as leaders, all intentional and committed to ensure everyone has a place at the table. What are our lived practices?

For those who say:

"I loudly heard him speak to me at my age and stage to remind me of the need to pray for and with others for my own needs."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

C

Commit to the Lord whatever you do. Proverbs 16:13

From the UCCAN report: "“important space where transformative change can take place.”"

Communities of faith and other ministries have the potential to really be models for transformation and models of transformation. With growing affirming ministries, people developing equity teams, using equity monitors, doing accessibility audits and figuring out how to keep drawing the circle wider, there is encouragement. Needing all at the table means actively engaging everyone directly, consulting, co-creating best action plans together. How are we actively drawing our circle wider?

For those who say:

"No one has actually come to me and said hey, what would be helpful?"

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

D

Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.  
Psalm 37:4

From the UCCAN report: "I felt that I wasn't what she was looking for in a new member."

Too often lack of knowledge and breakdowns in communication leads to greater marginalization. People need to continue to be aware of biases, attitudes and ways in which inequity, power and privilege get transmitted through language, body language, actions, and behaviours that are culture of a community but not necessarily recognized within, both positive and negative. Taking action is vital. How are we communicating?

For those who say:

"I did report this to two ministers but it did no good."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## E

His love endures forever. Psalm 136:1

From the UCCAN report: "(Don't)only think about physical spaces, such as building a wheelchair ramp"

People fail to look at all the ways to be accessible to all, to level the playing field and ensure all have a place at the table. Somehow equity and accessibility has been focused on a physical building when it needs to focus on all practices, attitudes actions and planning. Equity for all does not begin with dollars. Like the strength of communities of faith being rooted in relationships, not a building, equity is about relationships. How can we build bridges of relationships?

For people who say:

"If church can't be a safe place then where can we go?"

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## F

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

From the UCCAN report: "it is really about attitude, and not about money."

Openness to learning, to journey the path together, accompanying one another to discover inequities, gaps in knowledge and understanding will move us towards everyone growing together. Affirm United's resource "Open Hearts" invites learning about LGBTQIA2S+. To grow and learn together, people need to learn about all the ways in which people can be marginalized. Explore and learn about people who are marginalized and not represented in your community of faith. Explore how to reach out to those who are marginalized and invite them to help you learn. What can we learn and who can we invite to help us?

For those who say:

"Their failure to address this with the appropriate group was never done."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## G

My grace is sufficient for you. 2 Corinthians 12:9

From the UCCAN report: "how you treat people is more important than whether you have a ramp or stairs."

Many people who are marginalized are forced to keep their true selves hidden as they fear being ridiculed or treated differently. Non-visible disabilities, being, LGBTQIA2S+, living with certain allergies and sensitivities, socio-economic status might be hidden. Visible disabilities, racialized groups and other groups experiences often get spoken about more because of visibility. The challenges of finding full acceptance are very difficult. Do we let people be their true selves?

For those who say:

"I offered so much leadership, pastoral care and devoted so much time to giving, but now no one is offering me any support as I live with disability."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## H

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Psalm 139:23

From the UCCAN report: "inclusion is when people make room for you. Belonging is when people go looking for you."

Dr. Thomas Reynolds, Emmanuel College, U of T, challenges people to break the "cult of normalcy. He speaks of belonging in which people will be longing for those not present. He speaks of witness adding an "h" to live into "with-ness", people with one another. We need to ensure all people really belong and experience with-ness. Are we committed to belonging and with-ness?

For those who say:

"Coping with mental illness is not something medical field or church wants to hear about."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

J

Do not judge. Matthew 7:10

From the UCCAN report: "There are power imbalances implied in the word and process of "inclusion."

Inclusion is too limiting. It has become a word to use but often no time is given to unpack all of the ways in which there are inequities and what to do about them. Like being "welcoming," being "inclusive" needs a lot of education, learning and intentional commitment to understand and live into the fulsome of claiming to be welcoming and claiming to be inclusive. Conducting an accessibility audit, reviewing the template for equity, can help ministries discern strengths and needs. How do we understand power imbalance?

For those who say:

"(There is) no real support not in a church, isolated."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

I

Invite everyone. Matthew 22:9

From the UCCAN report: "When one is "Included," it means that someone else has the power to include—and exclude"

Inclusion is a challenging word. It sounds like it would be a good thing but sometimes it is really binary, those "in-cluded and those ex-cluded. It is like the "them" and "us" divide, when describing a group, it can create negative differentiation. To lump everyone together can also be devaluing of parts of who a person is, or try to mask or diminish part of who they are. Receive and accept all as whole, and receive wholeness of each, unique, diverse and all part of the body of Christ. How do we understand inclusion and wholeness?

For those who say:

"You can't have my abilities without my disabilities."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

K

Be kind to one another. Ephesians 4:32

From the UCCAN report: "To say that someone can be included names a particular place of privilege."

As soon as we are saying who can or cannot be included, there is hierarchy, some spoken or unspoken privilege system, which invokes power and privilege. How often have people disappeared from a community of faith or other ministry and no follow-up is done to actually find out why, if harm was experienced, or if something can be learned, or healing of relationships, breaking down of stigmas, addressing barriers and inequities. We need to talk about who is present, who is not, and explore why they are or are not apart of our community of faith. Until we understand why people are missing or not represented, we will have no adequate strategies to consult or processes to resolve the inequities. Who is missing among us?

For those who say:

"(I) left church, no place (for me)."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

L

Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105

From the UCCAN report: "saying that another is welcome into their space—it implies a host and a guest."

Host and guest hierarchy is unwittingly evidenced in so many ministries. People sit in particular places, connect and visit with those familiar but do not invite full participation. People do not speak to visitors. It can be the responsibility of everyone and no one, meaning people assume others are doing it. The collective "we" can translate into no one taking initiative or responsibility. Sometimes visitors are singled out, special name tags, even guest mugs, in the name of creating welcome but can actually create separation and discomfort. Everyone must be intentional, committed and consistent for all to belong. What evidence of the host and visitor hierarchy exists here?

For those who say:

"People did not engage."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## M

Act justly and love mercy. Micah 6:8

From the UCCAN report: "To say that someone can be included names a particular place of privilege."

Too often people have very closed mindset. A child who communicates non-verbally, has mannerisms and behaviours that are their personal expression, may be viewed as cute. Grown up however, less tolerance is the reality. People might not "mean what they say" and provide indicators both positive and negative toward the differently expressive child or adult. If the customs and experiences within a community of faith are so ritualized, we can miss the movement of the Spirit and diversity of worship expression and full participation! Families still report being ridiculed with "looks" and comments which make them feel reprimanded, judged or worse. What does our behaviour transmit and how is it received?

For those who say:

"stared at or shushed, body language communicates wish to remove the worshipper"

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## N

A good name is more desirable than great riches. Proverbs 22:1

From the UCCAN report: "Someone can offer to include another, without making any other changes in their way of being."

Getting "out of the box" is easier and, at the same time, more difficult than you think. Openness to change requires a growth mindset willing to figure out new ways of being together and belonging together. Conversation is needed to develop equitable practices. Good for one, is good for all is often the reality, though not discussed. Singling out individuals that something is for their benefit is not equitable. For whose benefit need not be voiced, judged or assessed. Just do it! What language do we embrace?

For people who say:

"It's to the point where I'm going to give up."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

O

If anyone loves me (s)he will obey my teaching. John 14:23

From the UCCAN report: "a social justice perspective on initiatives regarding inclusion, belonging and accessibility."

It is still surprising when we experience so many teachings of Jesus telling stories of equity and modelling in story after story, to love everyone, including those who are marginalized. We read the stories and feel frustration and angst when the people of Jesus' day did not get it, did not understand, exercising harmful judgements and pain, plotting to intentionally set Jesus up to test if he would demonstrate love. How can we more authentically relate to the teachings of scripture?

For those who say:

"They just keep making excuses."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

P

I give you peace. John 14:27

From the UCCAN report: "Often, instead, a minority person (or community) is invited into a culturally dominant space, without any other changes to help them feel at home."

Why is it that so often people do not see themselves represented in photos/images, songs chosen, words of liturgy, stories messages conveyed? When the focus is only on a majority perspective when minorities are smaller in number or not representative at all, habits can unintentionally lead to no representation. Voices need to be lifted up and kept being lifted up. Family configurations, promotional literature, newsletters, web and social media presence, worship practices, meeting planning and implementation needs equity. Review whatever is being shared from bulletin boards to junior church curriculum, in the mindset and role of equity monitor. What needs changing and monitoring?

For those who say:

"It would take great courage to attend."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## Q

Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly. Luke 18:39

From the UCCAN report: "find only minimal inclusion or worse."

In children's education, "bullying" is often the focus of learning to be good citizens, with the hope of deepening relationships, building bridges and facilitating safe space. By-stander behaviours are also addressed. Do we advocate for situations that need addressing, confront inappropriate language choices, confront inequities, stand up against bullying behaviour and name harmful practices. Too often people know something is not right but say or do nothing! Taking action will tear down and facilitate the building up of equity! No more silence! How will we speak up?

For those who say:

"He sits alone."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## R

Refuge in the shadow of your wings. Psalm 36:7

From the UCCAN report: "ability' to participate in congregational life wanes as disabilities increase"

We do not notice needs that do not impact us. The Rev. Dr. Bill Smith, past executive secretary for Bay of Quinte Conference, shared this list on perspective:

- We do not notice smaller fonts when we can see them
- We do not notice softer sounds when we can hear them
- We do not notice stronger scents when we do not re-act to them
- We do not notice the harmful/deadly effects of nuts or shellfish or many other foods when we do not re-act to them
- We do not pay attention to washrooms when they are accessible or welcoming to us

- We do not recognize 'privilege' when we are the privileged
- We do not worry about stairs when they don't hamper us.

We need to keep adding to this list and commit to noticing, to looking beyond ourselves, realizing the many barriers we do not know about, and then work to take those barriers down so all can joyfully be safe and fully participate. What barriers do we need to notice and take down?

For those who say:

"The church remained silent."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

S

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. Matthew 25:35

From the UCCAN report: "opened the door to talk about the topic"

What people yearn for is empowering change, and reflecting God at work in all people, their attitudes, words and actions. People who are marginalized, their families and allies are constantly advocating. If our communities of faith learn about, anticipate, plan and prepare, modelling everyone is safe here, visitors will experience safety. Communities of faith become brave space to explore and ask questions, safe spaces where people have permission to truly be themselves, trusting their needs will be heard and who they are will be honoured and represented. Are we a safe space?

For those who say:

"You are showing me that I have a voice and a right to explore."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

T

Trust in the Lord and do good. Psalm 37:3

From the UCCAN report: "difficulty in taking communion"

People with the best of intentions help without first asking what help is needed. An usher takes a way a person's walker, setting it off to the back or the side out of the way, not realizing they have removed a person's mobility, trapping them in place. A person is directed to be seated in a designated space because of their mobility support. Communion is brought to a person without consultation about what is best for the person. There are no "cookie cutter" ways to address people's needs, what is supportive.

Talk directly to the people whose need you are thinking you are

accommodating. Make sure all have a voice and are on the teams or committees to have on-going voice as planning and programming is decided. We should not assume what another person needs, or that someone with a particular disability will need or want the same support or in the same way, as another individual with that particular disability. What is helpful?

For those who say:

"You can ask if I would like help."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## U

I trust in your unfailing love. Psalm 13:5

From the UCCAN report: "developed a disability later in life, the congregation was not able to cope with the impact of progressive degenerative condition."

We actually don't know enough about interests, abilities about anyone in our community of faith. We often discover people who did not know their skill was important and did not sense it would be needed or be helpful so they did not contribute to share their gift. Others have not known about the gift or how it might be used. People are usually not as fully active as they might be, perhaps because they have not been invited, or brainstormed and discussed how they can contribute their gifts and leadership. People can too easily make assumptions. Some brainstorming discussion can really energize everyone to find ways to make things work and offer creative suggestions that will benefit everyone. Combining skills and strengths can lead to innovative new projects and new energy and enthusiasm, bringing people together. New ministries are waiting to be born. What gifts will we share?

For those who say:

"it makes it hard to get involved"

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## V

Over all these virtues put on love. Colossians 3:14

From the UCCAN report: "Church did not make any changes to enable me to continue to participate in congregational life."

Most communities of faith can address so many needs that will help everyone. Use a font large enough for all to see (40 is basic). Don't clutter slides with extras or too many words making it hard to follow. Use bold yellow font for participant response. Use language that honours everyone. Review language and explain or adapt, don't just ignore it but bring attention openly to it. Put a sign with picture symbol on accessible, gender neutral, family friendly washrooms. Use clear name tags, including preferred pronoun identification. Say name when speaking in meetings, modelling the practice of self-identifying. Design seating plans for all to be comfortable and fully participate. Have food ingredients available so all can eat. Request all to be scent free. Review what you do and explore from different perspectives and implement plans to do better! What do we do?

For those who say:

"No one listens anyway."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## W

Live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Ephesians 4:1

From the report: "if the church is not willing to change for me, then who will they change for?"

Treated equitably means everyone has the same opportunity. Empowering everyone to feel safe will energize ministries to reflect faith. Even if all issues and needs are not able to be addressed, people respect and support living into the continued learning and efforts. Action plans that are being lived into are evidenced in the everyday life and work of ministries. If people are engaged, making changes, trying different things, everyone is part of the equity journey, and are part of the evolving process. No one is left out. What are our action plans?

For those who say:

"I am too tired to try to address problems of church."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## X

You are my God and I will exalt you. Psalm 118:29

From the UCCAN report: "When I could no longer reach the pulpit, my voice was no longer heard reading scripture." (person who needs or is seating in a wheelchair)

I ask myself where am I at? Where do I think my community of faith is at? Who might help me? Have brave conversations! Some people who have been left out are so frustrated and angry that they do not feel empowered or that they have a choice. People leave or limit their participation. They don't feel like they are really needed or belong. Having just one safe person, one advocate who will support and empower can be transformational, energizing everyone to work through changes, adjustments and address necessities to build vibrant, thriving ministries. What brave conversations are we having?

For those who say:

"I'd love to go, I can't drive now, and no one will take me."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## Y

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me ... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:29

From the UCCAN report: "My participation in congregational life was restricted by the limited accessibility of the building, and by the attitude of those who scheduled 'all inclusive' meetings in places I could not reach."

Inclusive design recognizes one solution won't fit everyone. People can think a place is inclusive when it is not. A basic necessity like an accessible washroom might include: gender neutral, family friendly, independent clear barrier free pathway, distinct symbol/print signage, independent door access, widths for full size electric power chair, walkers, strollers and cleaning carts. Within washroom, consider: safety bars, attendant support access to toilet, sink, faucets, door handles, soap, paper towels, waste baskets, provision of large change table. When planning any renovations or new construction, consult those who regularly need accessible features and ensure they are on the planning teams. Are we all able to be here?

For those who say:

"I am treated like I am a burden."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## Z

Never be lacking in zeal. Romans 12:11

From the UCCAN report: "it did not have to be this way."

Imagine yourself as a person who is marginalized in some way. Go with whatever comes to mind. It might be a group you represent, know someone who is a part of or something you have not thought about much before. As that racialized person who is part of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, a person who is differently abled, person with invisible disability, person who has a less represented family configuration, one with no faith background, grieving person, homeless person...what do you anticipate that person's experience of this ministry would be? Are there gaps between theology and practice? What do we need to discuss and what changes need to be implemented?

For those who say:

"I don't go and I used to be so active."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

A

Ask and it will be given to you. Luke 11:9

From the UCCAN report: "experienced barriers in society and in other parts of the church, local congregation a refuge."

We all need to be each other's equity monitors! If we live into building each other up, not tearing down, exercising non-harmful judgements, we can create space for everyone at the table. We don't want to just sing "there is room for all," "draw the circle wider" or "let us build a house where all are welcome." We really need everyone to "come in, come in and sit down, we are part of the family!" and mean it! Are we ensuring everyone can come in?

For those who say

"Ask if you can do anything to facilitate the process"

We are hopeful. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

B

I the bread of life John 6: 35 am

From the UCCAN report: "add stories of hope and encouragement"

As people of faith, we need to be walking and talking our faith, which requires advocacy for full participation in all areas of life. The United Church of Canada identifies as an intercultural church, an identity some communities of faith are just beginning to explore, with others having done more intentional work, but all of us having much work to do to understand and live into this identity. We must be constantly inquiring, confronting, challenging assessing and evaluating. We need to ensure we use our mirror. How does our mirror reflect us? We need to learn new things, or learn differently and take action.

For those who say

"I feel pitied."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## C

Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."  
Matthew. 11:28

From the UCCAN report: "people share their stories."

As an intercultural church, the United Church of Canada asks us to use the intercultural lens tool. The intercultural lens invites us to aim for equity, live out our commitments, question biases, challenge assumptions, notice who is missing, and value all voices. As we invite stories and actively listen, we engage different lenses of perception opening us up to infinite possibilities. How are we using our tools?

For those who say

"It just feels like I don't get to be real."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## D

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Luke 6:31

From the UCCAN report: " 'disability' is only one identity that people hold."

We are very organic, learning as we go. Our equity focus includes focus on all the ways people might experience being on the margins – Indigenous, racialized, LGBTQ2 spirited of any sexual orientations and gender identities, those with disabilities, those visible and the often more complex invisible disabilities and all the ways they intersect. Over time this has come to include so much more than the accessibility of buildings, though that is still a real need. Keep thinking and working outside the box, let it be organic! Are we organic?

For those who say

"Come on, can't I just be accepted and seen for the human I am?"

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## E

You have established equity. Psalm 99:4

From the UCCAN report: "practice full belonging"

Ideally, our volunteer equity monitors across our region are asked to help explore equity but it is everyone's responsibility. Think equity when planning events, during and after. Equity monitors are introduced at the beginning of meetings, often wearing multiple hats as participants or leaders, but are the equity "go to person". Equity monitors can provide safe listening ears and observation to advocate for people assuring space is accessible, people identify themselves when speaking, microphones are being used, Power Points adhere to standards of a minimum 40 font or greater, materials are sent out 48 hours in advance, a gender neutral washroom is named, if even temporarily for that meeting, inclusive language is being used, a quiet space is identified and available for those who might need that, dietary considerations are being met, foods labelled or ingredients known by volunteers serving, people are scent free, people are informed about service animal protocols. We are learning to live into all these practices. Who are our designated equity monitors?

For those who say

"What would it take for you to understand what it is that I truly need?"

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## F

Forgive one another. Ephesians 4:32

From the UCCAN report: "We need practical ideas of what people can do."

We constantly discover that inclusive design benefits everyone. When something is close captioned, for example, this supports those not hearing well, visual learners, those with learning and attention challenges, those for whom the speaker is not speaking in their first language. Offering a quiet space may offer some respite for those needing a space to address physical comfort needs, those with mental health concerns to be in a less busy or anxious environment, those for whom sensory stimuli can become too much, a less confronting place to participate in. It is often not about willingness or attitude but simply not having thought about the need, not identifying with it and obviously not anticipating the consideration. Having someone to brainstorm ideas with, helps to open doors and widens the welcome. What needs are we addressing?

For those who say:

"No one asked."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

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"No one asked."

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We will do better together.

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J

Judge not. Matthew 7:1

From the UCCAN report: "considering the able-ist system which causes exclusion"

We can so often perpetuate able-ist attitudes and practices. A person who has a disability can be perceived as disabled, in the way a vehicle is disabled, not working; something dangerous is disabled, being dismantled or taken a part. These are not helpful images and the language we have, never quite fits. We are challenged by what is politically correct. "We often label those who are marginalized as having a disability, further demonstrating our struggle with language. What if we all embrace that we are temporarily able bodied? What labels are we using?"

For those who say

"So why do you think I am doing so well?"

We are hopeful. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

I

Only God gives inward peace. Psalm 62:6

From the UCCAN report: "I need some accommodations to enable me to do that work effectively."

Everyone is welcoming, right? This is a wish, a hope, a dream but rarely evidenced in our day and within communities of faith. Consider inviting a visitor to come and be a "mystery shopper" kind of visitor. Perhaps work in cooperation with another local community of faith, inviting visitors to come and experience your community of faith and give feedback. We need to know what people really think. How do visitors experience us?

For those who say

"I get comments which mostly fall off my back, but..."

We are sorry. We are trying.  
We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## K

Knock and the door will be opened to you. Luke 11:9

From the UCCAN report: "could I really become an ordained minister when I had a disability?"

Risking taking up a new interest, a new relationship, life adventure, career or vocation is a big deal! For those who are marginalized, the undertaking of something new usually means having to prepare oneself for obstacles, challenges and "push back" leaving one facing so many disadvantages. Being qualified, of good character, having strong ethics, skills, strengths and gifts can get dismissed if you are a person who is marginalized. Who will give me a chance, not make harmful judgements? We cannot assume equity, acceptance or opportunities. Do we embrace all people?

For those who say:

"I most certainly don't feel cared for and nurtured at this moment."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## L

Love your neighbour as yourself. Mark 12:31

From the UCCAN report: "(need) role-models of people actively engaged in ministry."

People we lift up as role models usually are seen as mentors for the qualities and characteristics they have. These attributes make others want to emulate their attitudes, behaviours and the love they share. People who are marginalized struggle when they are lifted up as inspirational, elevated on a pedestal. Real inspiration is in loving people for who they are and being in relationships.

If the focus is on how a person is marginalized and overcoming, thriving the person and who they are is being missed. People are not heroes based on the ways they are marginalized. Who are our role models?

For those who say

"That's not what I signed up for."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

M	N
<p>Be mindful. Jude 1:17</p> <p>From the UCCAN report: "Creating a matching process between students with disabilities and ministry personnel with disabilities."</p> <p>We all need people in our lives who we feel we can trust, who truly "get us" and can relate. It does not mean they necessarily have similar experiences, but sometimes. It's not because we share the same form of marginalization, it is that we engage in deepening relationships of trust and seek to receive each other's story. In the sharing of stories trust and knowing is developed and the deepening of relationship continues. Do we share stories?</p> <p>For those who say:</p> <p>"Now I can't be honest with you."</p> <p>We are sorry. We are trying. We will do better together.</p> <p>We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.</p>	<p>Do not neglect the gift that is within you. 1 Timothy 4: 14</p> <p>From the UCCAN report: "because of their deep sense of call continued to persevere."</p> <p>Sometimes despite the odds, we have to persevere, to follow our heart, the dream, what God is calling us to do! It is not easy but persistence and determination can continue to light the path forward. If we have the support and encouragement of our community of faith, we are taking faithful footsteps together. Honouring what we are called to do and be is not a singular effort. It is the support of our "village" that encourages and support us. How do we respond to being called?</p> <p>For those who say</p> <p>"God doesn't put this desire on my heart for no reason."</p> <p>We are sorry. We are trying. We will do better together.</p> <p>We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.</p>

## O

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Revelation 21:6

From the UCCAN report: "need to get rid of the concept that there is a normal"

Experience teaches there is no "normal" and there is no going back. The resurrected Jesus did not return to who he was before his crucifixion. We are forever changed by significant events and experiences. Accepting change moving forward are continual life lessons. It is not as we thought, but as community, in relationship we go through it together. Do we accept what is new?

For those who say:

"I truly feel alone like no one wants this for me."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## P

Love is patient. I Corinthians 13:4

From the UCCAN report: "good enough for God."

People who are marginalized often take longer to accomplish a goal, not because of lack of ability or determination or skill, but largely because the world does not treat all people equitably. Competition for the job, housing, life-partner opportunities continues to often be binary of people treated as part of an "in-group" and "out-group," or among the "haves" and "have nots". Opening the doors is never as easy as it sounds. How do we break binary habits?

For those who say

"I may not be given another chance at something because the world assumes I'm not capable."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

Q

Be quick to listen. James 1:19

From the UCCAN report: "challenging the cult of 'normalcy'."

The pandemic of COVID-19 that began in the spring of 2020 called everyone into confronting their sense of normal. The world was turned upside down and everyone was in it together, realizing a deeper connection with people everywhere. We thought the mold was broken and that we finally understood there was no going back, that normal as we understood it was a myth, but have we retained this? What do we need to remember and recommit to living into in our attitude and practice?

For those who say

"I keep everything inside because that's just what everyone needs."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

R

Do this in remembrance of me. 1 Corinthians 11:24

From the UCCAN report: "break the silence."

There is so much that we do not talk about. It is known matters within a family, a workplace, a community of faith, where we live... we think it, we feel it, we know it needs to be addressed, but we stay silent. We hope the burden of the silence will lead someone else to speak, to start the conversations, to dare to discuss it. If "it" is on our heart, shouldn't that be enough to make us do it? We have all lamented to God asking why God did not do something and we know the response is God did. God created you, me, us! So do something! What is "it" that we need to talk about?

For those who say

"This is the time to advocate."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## S

The glory of the Lord is shining upon you. Isaiah 60:3

From the UCCAN report: "resists being reduced."

Think of a time when you were bullied, made fun of, or a hurtful comment was made. These experiences become etched into our experiences, so strong, that it is hard to receive the positives and efforts of others to build up, to undo those words, those hurtful actions. We find it hard to let go of the hurt. Gossip, sharing someone's story that is not done in loving compassion, lifting up, body language, those gestures and nuances, lack of holy manners, add up to bad behaviours that we can redirect to let Jesus shine. Pause in prayer, think before you speak, transform a negative thought into a positive action. How are we living holy manners?

For those who say:

"I have no idea if others pray for me."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## T

Take heart. Psalm 27:14

From the UCCAN report: "what if God were a quadriplegic?"

We, ourselves, our parents and grandparents may have grown up with an image of God in very human forms, perhaps a wise elder, maybe a long beard, maybe twinkling eyes of compassion or fierce judge. Through the centuries, the God image has been patriarchal, a male, a father, a king, a son. These are very difficult images for many in the inequity that is evoked, the "boxing in" and "labelling" of the holy that may not fit our sensing of the divine. Because the images have been long a part of our rituals, scripture words, prayer language and hymn lyrics, we can fail to assure that our practices are inclusive and honouring. We need to understand, appreciate and respect each other's images of God, without harmful judgement. How do we share images of God?

For those who say

"I'll never trust you."

We are sorry. We are trying. -

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## U

Understanding is a fountain of life to the one who has it. Proverbs 16:22

From the UCCAN report: "where anyone can belong."

Everyone is received for who they are. Their gifts are nurtured and people strive to support one another, exercising patience and caring as people discover, explore and develop their gifts. Leadership is expected and accepted by all. We all function as ministers, with personal ministries, small group ministries and outreach. We are one body, all Christ's body. We are Jesus' hands, feet, heart and voice in the world. Is this our community of faith?

For those who say

"Everyone finds different things helpful."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## V

Value truth. Proverbs 16:13

From the UCCAN report: "What if we, therefore, are God's able-bodied personal assistants in the world?"

Can we conceive that our abilities, whether influenced by a visible or invisible disability or any other factor, that as beloved children of God, our job title is to be personal assistant to God. Our words, actions and attitudes, choices and action plans all are embraced as serving God as God's personal assistant. How might our ministries, our personal way of being be experienced? Truly serving, living into an identity of everything we do, is our way of being a personal assistant to God. How are we living as God's personal assistants?

For those who say

"Don't assume you have to do all the things you read about in terms of how to help."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## W

Wonderful are Your works. Psalm 139:14

From the UCCAN report: "change our image of God."

What are the images of God that are most meaningful to you? In what ways do the images of God we hold individually influence our collective behaviour as a community of faith? Do we discuss and know what images people find helpful and hurtful or do we just assume them? Images of God are very diverse and reflecting diversity creates a greater opportunity to understand equity. What images might need to be added to reflect a broader sense of the divine?

For those who say

"Nothing has nurtured me spiritually."

We are sorry. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## X

Strive to excel. 1 Corinthians 14:12

From the UCCAN report: "change our image of ourselves."

We so often hold ourselves back from what we think we can do. We cannot imagine ourselves in certain roles, taking on certain responsibilities and yet if we look back, we realize that life has required us to do and be more than we could have imagined. Can we look towards the next steps of our personal faith journey, and as a community of faith, with an openness to possibilities, rather than holding back, not letting fear or negativity take hold? Re-imagine and live into new possibilities. What are we re-imagining?

For those who say

"Ask if you're curious"

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## Y

My soul yearns for you. Isaiah 26:9

From the UCCAN report: "talk more about mental health."

To be truthful and honest is such a challenge, and this does not just apply to tough conversations. Sometimes it is hard to be honest with ourselves and with each other. Once opening up conversations we find people really can relate, and are so grateful. Talking about challenges invites people to really know each other and deepen relationships. The stigma is broken and people learn it's "okay to talk about." Are we talking?

For those who say

"I deserve the dignity."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

## Z

Be zealous for the good. Galatians 4:18

From the UCCAN report: "network with one another."

We are invited to connect with scripture, with song, with prayers that draws us deeper into relationship with God. As a community of faith, we gather in worship, in person and virtually to build community, a community that models loving God and one another, treating others the way we want to be treated; being mentored by Jesus, our true equity "monitor" and model of full acceptance, equity and belonging. What kind of community are we?

For those who say

"I'm not your next project to be helped."

We are hopeful. We are trying.

We will do better together.

We pray for justice and equity. We seek to love God and love people as Jesus teaches.

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Appendix R**PR Temporary Amendment Resource****The context**

The COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the way the entire world conducts its affairs, and the communities of Faith of The United Church of Canada are not exempt. Communities of faith are not able to gather, and this has made it difficult for decisions which need to be made by the communities of faith, to be taken.

In this highly technological age, the possibility of having electronic meetings exists, and is permitted (teleconferencing, zoom). However, there are some communities of faith which lack adequate capacity to hold meetings in this way, and all communities of faith are striving to continue the work of the Church as best they can.

**What has changed**

The governing body, or its equivalent, in each pastoral charge may temporarily make decisions in regards to pastoral relations which normally require a vote of the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting. The governing board is usually small enough to met by telephone conference call or video conference to fulfill the responsibilities of the communities of faith for making pastoral decisions.

It is in this context that a temporary amendment was made to The Manual, to help to facilitate the work of the Church when decisions must be made at this time:

- Acting on the Search Committee's recommendation to call or appoint a member of the order of ministry
- Requesting appointment of a designated lay minister
- Approving new terms of a call or appointment
- Temporarily amending the terms of a call or appointment because of the pandemic
- Ending a pastoral relationship.

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All such decisions must be made in consultation with and the concurrence of the appropriate regional council body.

### **Funding Resources**

Compliance with emergency measures enacted by the governmental authorities has meant that some communities of faith are in dire financial straits. Dealing with this reality has meant that some communities of faith must give serious consideration to temporary changes of terms of call or appointment of ministry personnel. Even as these measures are being considered, the Regional Council must be consulted. The Regional Council has information which may lead to another plan being adopted.

Material produced by the Finance and Philanthropy Units of our Church point to sources of funding from the government, and from the Church, as well as strategies to continue to receive financial support during this time of crisis. These resources are highlighted below.

- Planning as a community of faith  
<https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/make-plan>
- Staying financially viable during this time  
<https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/congregational-finances-and-covid-19>
- Government Funding  
<https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/government-emergency-programs>
- United Church emergency support  
<https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/united-church-emergency-support>

### **How it affects pastoral relationships**

It is hoped that with the use of the wage subsidy option and emergency loan funds, in addition to some of the other strategies, that a plan can be made to sustain the work of

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the community of faith and the ministry which can still be offered, and which is most critically needed at this time.

To lose ministry personnel at this time, means a community of faith will lose the person who would provide pastoral care in a time when many persons are in critical need of care. Ministry personnel have been taking advantage of online training resources and information surrounding support of persons during these crises. This care and support is being offered in very unique ways by ministry personnel, to persons who are members of their communities of faith, and to persons in our communities who would not ordinarily have been in contact with ministry personnel.

The reality is that if a person is laid off, they cannot offer these services.

### **Health and Vitality of Ministry Personnel**

With ministry personnel doing incredible work during unprecedented circumstances, there is the risk that they may feel overwhelmed. Resources are also available to help ministry personnel in the areas of information provision, support and training.

- Regional Councils have all implemented various strategies to support the health and vitality of ministry personnel. Networks have been established, and access has been made to helpful links and programs which would maintain mental wellness during these times. Please see the web page of the specific Regional Council for details of these programs.
- The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available to ministry personnel who are members of the Benefit plan and their families. Immediate and confidential support to help resolve work, health, and life challenges will be provided. <https://www.workhealthlife.com>
- The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers
  - 24/7 confidential access to professional support to help employees manage stress, anxiety, grief, financial concerns, and much more Connect to support by phone, video, or chat anytime, anywhere

- Vast library of online resources for coping with trauma, building resiliency, self-care, managing change, along with others.  
<https://www.lifeworks.com/ca/solution/employee-assistance-program-eap/>
- Workplace Learning Solutions (WLS) offers
  - Two 60 minute bilingual webinars that address the reality of the present situation and strategies to boost resilience through thought and daily habits:
    - [Building Resilience while under Quarantine](#)
    - [Building Resilience in Uncertain Times](#)
- First Access offers:
  - Counselling and traumatic event support to address unique prospect and customer needs worldwide
  - Allows support of situations outside the presence of a formal contract to access support services as needed to ensure timely and effective issue resolution. Contact the [First Access team for more information](#)

### **Procedures for Change in Pastoral Relations**

The decision to temporarily lay-off ministry personnel, to change the number of hours in a call or appointment, or to end a pastoral relationship due to COVID-19, is a monumental decision. As these decisions are being contemplated, the Regional Council must be consulted. Every effort will be made to give communities of faith the support which is needed.

### **Temporary Layoffs**

Each province has very specific legislation with respect to temporary layoffs as a result of COVID-19. The Regional Council has these details and are available to guide you through this process. The Regional Council will ensure that there is a declared intention to recall the minister upon cessation of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the community of faith has exhausted all funding sources.

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Amending terms of Call/Appointment.

The Regional Council must be contacted to determine if the proposed changes meet the criteria of being urgent and cannot be dealt with under any other bylaw or policy.

Consultation

1. The governing body must consult with the community of faith before making a decision about a pastoral relationship, to the extent reasonable and practicable in the circumstances to the satisfaction of the Regional Council. Here are some considerations as communities of faith seek to consult and make decisions in a time when gathering is not possible.
  - Consultation can be via email or phone.
  - As many members can be notified as possible. If the members of the community of faith have the practice of giving adherents voting rights, adherents should be notified as well. Otherwise, adherents don't need to be notified.
  - Everyone notified needs to be given the same options: respond via phone/email.
  - When the governing body is making a pastoral relations decision, the ministry personnel in the pastoral charge will have the same right to notice of the virtual meeting and an opportunity to respond. In this case section B.5.4.2 of The Manual shall be interpreted as 9 days where it is not practicable to read during public worship on 2 Sundays.
2. The Regional Council must ask the ministry personnel affected if they support the request. If the ministry personnel do not support the request, the requirement that the minister is given 90 days notice or salary and benefits in lieu of notice (Manual I.3.1.6) will continue to apply. The only exception to this is a temporary layoff related to COVID-19

**Finally**

It is important to remember that this is a temporary amendment, with a scheduled end-date of August 31, 2020, or earlier cancellation or extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council.

We pray for safety for all as we navigate this unprecedented crisis and we affirm that we are not alone.