
East Central Ontario Regional Council
Meeting of the Assembly of Elders
Friday, April 23, 2021 – 9:00 a.m.

Vision of the Assembly of Elders by which we evaluate progress based on:
Strengthened by God's grace and refreshed by the Spirit,
We follow the way of Jesus in healing our world.

IN ATTENDANCE

Rev. Paul Reed	Speaker
Rev. Don McLean	Member
Ian Robb	Member
Kathleen Whyte	Member
Marilyn Fortin	Member
Ted Meyers	Member
Nancy Sutherland	Member
Steve Coles	Member
Brian James	Member - Financial Administration
Rev. Lynn Watson	Member
Rev. David Timpson	Corresponding Member, Pastoral Relations Minister
Karen Wilson	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
<u>REGRETS/ABSENT</u>	
Rev. Phil Wilson	Member
Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley	Corresponding Member - Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice

Opening Devotions and Recognize the Land – After opening this time of devotion with prayer Nancy Sutherland used the resource *Beside Still Waters: More Meditations for Private and Group Worship* by Betty Turcott, reflecting on the seasons. This time of devotion was closed with the UCW Prayer.

Nancy acknowledged the land, paying homage to the shinning waters and the sacred ground.

Circle Time of Sharing – all were invited to share.

Appointment of an Equity Monitor for this Meeting

CONSENSUS MOTION That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders appoint Steve Coles as Equity Monitor for this meeting.

Agenda

2021-04-23_054 MOTION (T. Meyers/Steve Coles) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders accept the agenda as circulated. **Carried**

Minutes of March 26, 2021

2021-04-26_055 MOTION (B. James/K. Whyte) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders approves the Minutes of March 26, 2021 as circulated. **Carried**

Correspondence

- a) April 5, 2021 Gary Gaudreau. Chairman, Board of Trustees of Carlow United Church re copied on letter to the Pastoral Relations, titled Notice of Separation from the Bancroft / Carlow Pastoral Charge (*for information*);
- b) April 6, 2021 Rev. David King re Chalmers working team (*for action*);
- c) April 9, 2021 Gary Gaudreau. Chairman, Board of Trustees of Carlow United Church re copied on letter to the Chair of the Board, titled Notice of Separation from the Bancroft / Carlow Pastoral Charge (*for information*);
- d) April 9, 2021 Dave Fletcher, Kingsview United Church Council Chair re seeking help for a congregational self assessment (*for information*);
- e) April 12, 2021 Rev. Phil Wilson re Old Hay Bay Church Annual Report 2020 (*for information*);
- f) April 14, 2021 Rev. Will Kunder re reduction of the shared cost for SJNORC (*for referral to Treasurer*);
- g) April 14, 2021 Rev. Judith M. Evenden re intention to retire from Crossroads United Church effective November 1, 2021 (*for action*);
- h) April 20, 2021 Bev Oak, Program Coordinator, Duty of Care and Incorporated Ministries, General Council office re copied on letter to Bev Gough, chair of Camp Quin-Mo-Lac regarding required changes needed on the Camp Quin-Mo Lac Bylaws Draft (*for information*);
- i) April 20, 2021 Kathy McDonald, Legal Counsel GCO re Workplace Discrimination Harassment and Violence Prevention policy (*for information*);
- j) April 21, 2021 Bev Oak, Program Coordinator, Duty of Care and Incorporated Ministries General Council office re copied on letter to Bev Gough, chair of Camp Quin-Mo-Lac regarding law suit addressed to the Camp Quin-Mo Lac (*for information*);
- k) April 21, 2021 Randy Boyd, National Facilitator, Rural Connect re making rural connections for Hub running out of St. Mark's, Cannifton (*for referral*);
- l) April 22, 2021 Rev. David King re idea about potential new Team (*for discussion*).

Business arising grouped according to confirmed Guiding Principles***I. All Communities of Faith participate in ECORC meetings and initiatives***

Facilitation Team report – Joel will set up a doodle date to set an upcoming meeting. The Speaker reminded that there are upcoming workshops:

- RC Workshop on Affirm, Saturday, April 24th 9 am-noon
- RC Workshop on Nominations, Wednesday, May 12 7-9 pm

II. Clergy, lay leaders and communities of faith express satisfaction with the support, development opportunities and communication they receive

Communications – Karen Wilson highlighted items in report (see **appendix A**)

III. Those involved in any way with ECORC demonstrate awareness of our Vision and Mission statements, and express a feeling of connection to and commitment to the work of ECORC***IV. People in all roles and capacities within ECORC are aware of Council decisions and policies, and know where to find the information they need***

- i) **Governance** – Forums and Networks document pending work
- ii) **Pastoral Relations** – Pastoral Relations Minister reported that Pastoral Charges are finding the times difficult and many are in distress, in particular financially. Nonetheless there is still some

good news, at the beginning of the formation of the Regional Council, 25 churches were in transitions, this number drops to around 15 – the processes are working.

Covenanting Support Team – Change in Pastoral Relations:

Changes

Westdale Pastoral Charge Peterborough

2021-04-26_056 MOTION (S. Coles/I. Robb) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders, having received proper documentation on Church hub approves the call of Rev. R. Christen Matheson to the Westdale Pastoral Charge, Peterborough, full time ministry from 08/01/2021. **Carried**

New Hope Pastoral Charge and the Rural Faith Pastoral Charge

2021-04-26_057 MOTION (S. Coles/I. Robb) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders, having received proper documentation on Church hub approves the Call of Rev. Leslie Hamilton to the New Hope Pastoral Charge and the Rural Faith Pastoral Charge, both of Northumberland County, full time ministry from 07/01/2021. **Carried**

United Community Ministries

2021-04-26_058 MOTION (S. Coles/I. Robb) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders, having received proper documentation on Church hub approves the Call of Rev. Elisabeth Cunningham to the United Community Ministries, consisting of St-Andrews, Beaverton; Trinity United, Cannington; Woodville-Peniell Pastoral Charge; Cambay Community Pastoral Charge, and Oakwood Pastoral Charge, full time ministry from 07/01/2021. **Carried**

Marmora Pastoral Charge

2021-04-26_059 MOTION (S. Coles/I. Robb) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders, having received proper documentation on Church hub approves the appointment of Rev. Kirby Breithaupt retired supply minister to the Marmora Pastoral Charge, part time ministry 24 hours per week from 07/01/2021 to 06/30/2022. **Carried**

- a) Report from Liaison Forum – An update of the Pastoral Relations log sheet was provided.

Discussion: Liaisons are grappling with three points

1. Church Hub is being inflexible in ways it allows for ‘calling a minister’ which is posing difficulties. It was suggested that the Regional Council send a letter expressing disappointment and emphasize that Church Hub must serve the Regional Council.
2. Designation of pastoral charges vs. communities of faith is causing difficulties.
3. How to determine SME sites.

- b) Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Forum –waiting for Terms of Reference

- c) Retirees Forum – see **appendix B¹** / Bulletin – see **appendix B²**

iii) Supporting the life of Communities of Faith where ministry takes place

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- a. Spring Brook United Church – Conversations ensue, meeting that had been set was cancelled they are determined to meet in person.
 - b. Chalmers Review – two members of the three-member commission have to step down. It was previously reported during an executive meeting that there is a committee in place and the circle conversations have begun.

Discussion: It was suggested to repopulate the commission to allow the work to continue. It was also suggested to discern how the Regional Council could better support the commission. It was also suggested get a debriefing from two commissioners who stepped down, and to consult with group

- c. Carlow – seeking to remove itself

2021-04-23_060 MOTION (T. Meyers/K. Whyte) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders acknowledge receipt of correspondence dated April 9, 2021 from Gary Gaudreau, Chairman, Board of Trustees of Carlow United Church, which was sent to the Pastoral Relations Minister, and attests that the actions of the Board of Trustees of Carlow United Church are not in conformity with United Church polity, instructs the Executive Minister to formalize a response, copying Erik Mathieson, Chief Financial Officer of The United Church of Canada, and the Office of Vocation, and directs the Pastoral Relations Minister to meet with Carlow United Church, with consideration of formalizing conducting a review of Carlow United Church, part of the Bancroft/Carlow Pastoral Charge.
Carried (L. Watson abstains)

- V. The number of church buildings in our Regional Council that are accessible is increasing. There is faithful stewardship of property and finances

Mission through Property and Finance – Ted Meyers highlighted updates to the Property and Finance Control Log.

Discussion: Financial report to be sent to Joel for circulation to the Assembly of Elders for information. It was highlighted that anyone requesting funding from the 2022 Budget, said request needs to be formalized by September 2021 to this body.

- VI. ECORC events take place in a variety of geographic locations within our Region throughout the year

- VII. We hold events every year related to outreach and social justice within our Regional Council

- i) **Formation, Nurture and Justice** – Kathleen Whyte highlighted item in her report see **appendix C** / Anti-Racism Policy see **appendix D**
- a) Team Progress report – Assembly of Elder representatives –

2021-04-23_061 MOTION (M. Fortin/K. Whyte) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders receives the ECORC Anti-Racism Policy and recommends it to the Regional Council. **Carried**

Discussion: The document was amended on the second page of the policy removing the words “eastern” in front of Ontario, and adding the words ‘racism in all its forms’ in the same sentence.

- b) Report from Supporting Staff Member - Report of the Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages (see **appendix E**)

c) Social Justice Network of Ontario Regional Councils – see report as **appendix F**

ii) Doing Mission Priority Grants

2021-04-23_062 MOTION (M. Fortin/K. Whyte) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders extend the deadline to receive Doing Mission Priority Grants applications to September 15th. **Carried**

iii) Clusters and Network News

VIII. *We observe increasing use of land acknowledgments and more participation in learning opportunities related to Respectful Relations and Indigenous Justice*

Report of the Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice, see report directly below:

In addition to continuing work already reported on in the past, two things have emerged in the past month:

1) After participating in an Eastern Ontario and Outaouais webinar, I was encouraged to ask Paul Reed to continue our Regional Council (and prior to that Bay of Quinte Conference) practice of opening our Regional Council meeting with Indigenous voice. I have approached speaker Paul Reed about this.

2) I am working with Rev. Wanda Stride on connecting with Indigenous communities across Canada on a "Virtual Walk". Last week we met Doreen Bernard, a Micmac woman. Tomorrow, we'll have an hour long webinar with Satewas (Harvey) and Susan Gabriel from Kahnesatake. These webinars will be recorded and posted to our YouTube channel.

Towards Being Good Relations, Rodney

IX. *Children, youth and young adults are represented on all decision-making bodies*

X. *There are events planned for and by children, youth and young adults every year. A significant number of these events provide children, youth and young adults with leadership opportunities*

Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Report from Supporting Staff Member (*see appendix E*)

XI. *There is evidence that inclusive language is becoming the norm in the life and work of our church throughout our Regional Council, especially inclusive language and images of God in worship*

XII. *Reports from equity monitors and meeting notes give evidence of a growing awareness of equity standards*

Equity Team

Team Progress report – Assembly of Elder representatives

2021-04-23_063 MOTION (L. Watson/N. Sutherland) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders, on the recommendation of the Equity Team, emphasize that all videos that are used in ECORC meetings or produced by teams/forums for the Regional Council YouTube channel, must be subtitled/captioned. **Carried**

XIII. *The number of Communities of Faith designated as Affirming continues to increase*

Affirm Forum

Forum Progress report – Assembly of Elder representatives

XIV. *An increasing number of Communities of Faith, along with ECORC and the Assembly of Elders, are developing plans to increase their environmental stewardship*

XV. *We can document specific actions we have taken to become intercultural*

Nominations – Steve Coles spoke to the concern surrounding a lack of volunteers and asks that the nomination process be revisited to encourage more participation. This trend is apparent across the entire country throughout the Church.

Discussion: It was noted that expression of interest forms received are on the rise. Plans are underway for workshop to be held in May.

Additional Reports**New Business –**

- a) *Recommendation by Covenant Support Team* (via correspondence from David King) to create a task group to deal with emerging extraordinary matters (see **appendix G**)

Discussion: It was suggested the Leadership Teams recruit and name 4 or 5 people, have them approved by the Regional Council to be trained/established as rapid response groups, i.e. a pastoral oversight visit.

It was suggested that more focus be given to this topic (open the conversation between meetings).

- b) *Setting Priorities Report –*

The Priority setting event did conclude with priority recommendation for:

Diversity and Inclusion: supporting the full participation of all people – intersectionality (Anti-racism, Affirming, Interfaith, Intercultural, Right Relations)

Climate and environment: Living with Respect in Creation

Economic Justice and Community Development

Investing in new Church Development and Innovative Ministries.

Opening worship for next meeting – Don McLean

Equity Monitor Report - Getting better at waiting turn to speak, all were respectful.

Motion to adjourn

CONSENSUS MOTION that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Assembly of Elders adjourn this meeting at 12:30pm.

Closing Prayer – Nancy Sutherland closed the meeting in prayer.

Next Meeting Dates

- RC Workshop on Affirm, Saturday, April 24th 9 am-noon
- RC Workshop on Nominations, Wednesday, May 12 7-9 pm
- Friday, May 21, 2021, 9 am-noon ZOOM
- (AGM) Friday, June 4 – Sunday, June 6, agenda TBC**
- Friday, June 18, 2021 9 am-noon ZOOM

Rev. Paul Reed
Speaker

Rev. Rosemary Lambie,
Executive Minister

Appendices

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Appendix A

Communications Summary Report**Website Updates & Information:**

- Last month I had planned on including a “Call for Photos Around our Region” segment in the newsletter, as I thought this would be a great way to interact with people, but in lieu of the stay at home order, I have postponed it.
- I have been adding more information to the Home page under News and Events and I feel people are starting to use and look at the website a little more since I have been adding more links in the newsletters as opposed to full stories and reports. People have reached out via email in regards to events, news etc. that they have seen on the website.

Other Communications:

- Weekly newsletters are working out very well. I have had a lot of positive feedback.
- For the March gathering, this was my first-time being part of the Tech Support Team.
- This month I have been working with nominations for the forms and information on the website, as well as working with Affirming forum for the registration form for April 24th.
- Training – I attended the Racial Justice Workshops on April 19th and 20th and there will be two more workshops later this year.
- I have received two reports for the ECORC Spring Meeting – one from Emmanuel College and the other the Centre for Christian Studies which I have forwarded to Joel.
- An update for St. Mark's United Church Whitby is attached for your information.
- On Saturday, April 24th, I will be part of the Tech Team for the ECORC “Becoming A Permanent Affirming Regional Council” Gathering.
- I am also currently working on the information and registration form for the May 12th gathering. Once this is complete, we will start working on the information and registration form needed for the Spring Meeting.
- On Monday, April 26th, I have a meeting set up with my Communications colleagues, Anita Jansman and Judy Coffin. We plan to meet at the end of each month just to touch base and share ideas.

So far it has been a busy year and I feel it will be till the Spring Meeting in June, which will be here before we know it.

Karen Wilson

Appendix B¹**The Spring Edition 'News' of the *Retirees Forum* activities to date will help with information.**

We met as a steering group last Wednesday 14th. of April and had a long discussion which centered on the Spring Edition and also new developments leading, we hope, to small local or town groups of Ministry Retirees developing a common interest (In Kingston we have Wayne Hilliker and 5 colleagues who meet monthly to discuss theology)... and these new groups meeting, either on line, or personally when Covid-19 restrictions ease.

It is our Forums belief that we have made a good start with our "*We Are Not Done Yet*" interviews by Elizabeth Macdonald, and our "*Java With Jean*" monthly morning talks over a coffee, and discussing a current topic of interest.

Due to our difficulty and fragmentation of the Retired Clergy list (emails and/or addresses) our Secretary Caroline Giesbrecht and myself are having to review again and again our list of retirees.

We finally created 5 areas, and 1 Out of ECORC region/or address not known.

Area 1 is: Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Brooklin, Bowmanville.

Area 2 is: Peterborough, Barrie and Northern towns.

Area 3 is: Port Hope, Coburg, Grafton

Area 4 is: Brighton, Trenton, Belleville

Area 5 is: Marysville, Kingston, East and North of Kingston

Area 6 is: Out of the ECORC Region or address not known or specified.

Caroline Giesbrecht and myself have a further meeting scheduled at 1.30 p.m. Friday to jointly review the Areas and agree where snail mail will be appropriate to those without email.

I have spoken to David Timpson about the allocation of a budget for a years work... (printing costs, paper and postage costs.) for 4 issues of the Retirees Forum newsletter. (spring / Summer (post annual meeting) Autumn and Christmas. Each will contain information relevant to the season it represents and hopefully be a medium to encourage new ventures of a more local nature, perhaps guided by the Steering Group person in that specific area. We are looking for a new volunteer in the Peterborough/Barrie Area to Join the Steering Group mentioned above.

It is an enterprise which is slowly taking shape and will evolve over what has been, to say the least, a very challenging year to date.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Robb (for the *Retirees Forum*)

Appendix B²



This "WNDY" program is available on YouTube and features Elizabeth Macdonald (*professional interviewer in a previous life*) interviewing some of the many interesting people we have associated with The United Church of Canada. Among the recent interviews are ones of the Rev. Dr. Aruna Alexander, Rev. Ruth Wood, Rev. Donovan Brown, Rev. Dr. Wayne Hilliker, with many others. They can be viewed on the East Central Ontario Regional Council channel on YouTube. e.g., <https://youtu.be/zfKkg8jNRw0>



"Java with JEAN"



In her casual virtual Zoom meeting each month, usually starting just before 10.00 a.m., various topics of interest are discussed for about an hour over coffee/tea or a beverage of your choice. Recent topics have been: "

"What does it mean to be The Church today.... And is it relevant?"

"What does Lent mean to you? What, if any are your Lenten Practices?"

The next, Java with Jean will be held on May 13th, at 9.45 a.m.,. There will be a further meeting on June 10th. Hope to see you there.

A Warm Welcome to you !

Introducing

the

Retirees Forum

Spring Edition 2021

A Forum of the:



**East Central Ontario
Regional Council**
of the United Church of Canada



Strengthened by God's grace and refreshed by the Spirit,
we follow the way of Jesus in healing our world

Retirees Forum

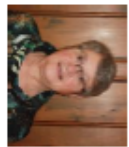
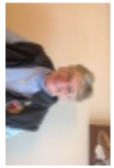
of the

East Central Ontario Regional Council

Our **Forum** Volunteers: Caroline Giesbrecht (Secretary)



Jean Wilson Elizabeth Macdonald Judy MacGillivray Caroline Giesbrecht



Ian Robb



Bob LePage



Wayne Hilliker

A part of our mission as the **Retirees Forum** is to maintain contact with the large number of Retired United Church Ministers in our area and/or their spouses who are currently in receipt of a United Church pension.

We are each resident in an area which covers our region, and as such, able to add a local flavour to what we do as a **Forum**. In addition, many of you will be personal friends or acquaintances of at least one of our volunteers, and in contacting you in this way, we are maintaining or renewing friendships with colleagues which might have been made over many years.

In our letter opposite, we have tried to personalize it in such a way that you are conscious of it being sent directly to you (which it is) and invites your participation in any way you may feel able. Please contact us through our Secretary's e-mail or alternatively through pastor.jan@gmail.com or through anyone else in our leadership team whom you may personally know. Our Secretary, Rev. Caroline can be reached by snail mail at: **1309 Moira Road, Roslin, Ontario, K0K 2Y0 or by email at:**

rev.carolineg@xplornet.ca

Date: **Spring 2021**

To: **Retired Ministry Colleagues**

Dear **Friend**,



It is a great pleasure to be contacting you in this way. We hope, and trust this will be the first, (Spring Edition) of many similar communications from us to yourself.

The pandemic of 2020/21 has radically altered our way of living and has affected some of our friends in a less than positive manner. Being unable to visit family and friends as one might normally do is especially trying as we seek community and togetherness. Your colleagues in retirement send you our hopes that you have been able to maintain contact through other means... phone, letter, e-mail, FaceTime or similar. While it has been profoundly difficult for our colleagues in ministry to maintain worship services, these and other functions of the Church have developed new ways to communicate with our members and congregations as not everyone is computer savvy.

It is the **Retirees Forum's** Volunteers intent to maintain a form of contact with our retired colleagues. To this end we would like to hear from yourself about how we may enhance this communication in a way that may interest yourself, and (spouse) where it applies. In addition to the programs we already offer, we would like your feedback on whether you may be interested in:

Small Group conversations around shared interests; Coffee/Lunch gatherings (pandemic permitting); sharing of special skills or knowledge with others and so much more besides. We wish to help you to retain your connection with the United Church and your retired clergy friends who may be facing similar difficulties.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Retirees Forum through Secretary, Caroline Giesbrecht, or another member of the Forum with whom you may be acquainted. In the meantime, we have listed on the cover of this card two of the projects which we have up and running and may interest you.

Health and Blessings, **The Retirees Forum**.

Appendix C**Formation Nurture and Justice Team Report**
April 23, 2021

We are thankful for the work that is being done by the forums in our region and I will highlight a few of the action items that are being worked on.

A Place at the Table – Meggin made note of the racial justice workshops that are coming up in our region.

Anti-Racism Forum – continue to meet and work on their Anti-Racism Policy for the ECO RC. The document continues to evolve and will be presented to The Assembly of Elders meeting on April 23, 2021.

Church and Community Partnerships - David noted that during this pandemic, many mission partners have stepped up to help feed and clothe and house the needy. Sports teams have been helping by selling merchandise and raising money. Funding continues. The Back Door Mission has been helped with both Federal and Provincial funds to keep it going. When David steps down from his part in this Team, he will try to find a successor to continue highlighting this Partnership.

Fair Trade and Mask update - Marilyn Rodger told us that she is still selling masks from Newfoundland to Calgary. Many congregations are not aware that they are available. \$500 has been sent to help food security with a fund-raiser for El Salvador. Marilyn's Fair Trade goods are a loss so she will put a list in the newsletter as to what is available because they have gone past their expiry date.

Palestine Network- Adele Boy. This is not an official network but Adele has joined our FNJ Team. Shining Waters are offering a three-part webinar to take part in an online tour to visit Palestine. There is also a book study ("Occupied With Non-Violence," written by a Quaker Palestinian, Jean Zaru.

IJRR Terms of Reference-- They are looking for one more Indigenous person on the forum. The Terms of Reference document is a helpful framework.

Retirements and Office Changes 2021-- Very few expressions of interest.

The deadline is April 17th!

Need new Team Chair-- Meggin King has offered to take this position.

Need a new Team Secretary.

Appendix D

POLICY REGARDING ANTI-RACISM
East Central Ontario Regional Council

POLICY NAME: Policy regarding Anti-Racism	<i>Date Approved:</i>
	<i>Review date:</i>
Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure behavior compliant with The UCC's declaration to becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination of October 2020	

Preamble

This document outlines the East Central Ontario Regional Council's policy and best practices regarding respect for the dignity and worth of every person and a commitment to eliminating racism in the life and ministry of the East Central Ontario Regional Council. This includes all communities of faith and those leading and attending gatherings of clusters, networks, staff-led training, and partner events.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of East Central Ontario Regional Council to acknowledge that racism exists and further, to enact its obligation to principles of procedural fairness and justice as defined by Church and protected by the Human Rights Code of the Province of Ontario.

The Regional Council acknowledge and reinforce that each person has the right to live, worship, receive services, and participate fully in an environment free of discrimination and harassment based on bias, bigotry or prejudice against a race or racialization of an individual or a group within Church and Canadian society. Racism will not be tolerated in ECORC and its member communities of faith. We are committed to eliminating racism.

Definitions and Understandings

The Institution/Structure – refers to The East Central Ontario Regional Council of The United Church of Canada.

Race - shall include: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship and religions, in accordance with The United Church of Canada's Anti-Racism Statement and the prohibited grounds of Ontario's Human Rights Code.

Racism - is alive in Church and Society; we begin by acknowledging that racism exists. It is a learned behaviour based on fear and ignorance of the unknown and personalized perceptions and assumptions. Racism can be blatant, subtle, hidden or internalized and is often denied. It can be practiced culturally, environmentally, structurally, and institutionalized.

Impact of Racism - It is our understanding that Racism will destroy the fabric of our pluralistic, multicultural society we live in, if it remains unchallenged and it is not stopped. ECORC faces its obligation to principles of procedural fairness, and Justice as defined by Church and protected by the Human Rights Code of the Province of Ontario.

The purpose of this Policy is:

To promote the vision and mission of ECORC towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Institution in this Region. To strengthen Church and Community awareness of the existence of racism in all its forms in Ontario, in order

that we can eliminate it; and To provide a model through behaviour and education, thereby creating the framework for all United Church of Canada members and adherents to work together in achieving the Strategic Directions of this Policy.

ECORC Commits to:

- * recognize racist attitudes and behaviours at all levels of the organization
- * recognize attitudes, language, humour that encourages racism
- * confront denial and micro aggressions in appropriate ways
- * address the issues of Anti-Racism and implicit bias at all levels of ECORC life (Regional Council, Teams/Forums, Communities of Faith, etc.)
- * unlearn racism
- * unite against racism
- * eliminate racism

Admit to and address the lack of knowledge of Canadian and Newcomer religious and cultural diversity

We encourage you to read the background information attached below.

Rationale and Background Information

“We are called to speak and act, not to be silent.....Today, and in the weeks, months, and years to come, our raised voices will articulate concrete actions for healing wounds and transforming systems and structures to a diverse and inclusive society”

ECORC statement of June 12, 2020

RACISM “is at its heart the belief that we are born different, deep inside our bodies, perhaps even in character and intellect, as well as in outward appearance. It’s the notion that groups of people have certain innate qualities that not only are visible at the surface of their skins but also run down into their innate capacities, that perhaps even help define the passage of progress, the success and failure of the nations our ancestors came from”.

An ecumenical partner of The United Church of Canada, defines Racism in the following way: Racism is the belief, reinforced by power and privilege that one race is innately superior to other races. Systemic racism occurs when the power and privilege of one racial group results in the exclusion, oppression or exploitation of other groups of different racial origin. Racism also manifests itself in individuals in the form of racial harassment when a person or persons belonging to a privileged group behaves in ways that intimidate, demean, or undermine the dignity of others on the basis of their race”.

Acknowledging and agreeing with ECORC’S declaration that “racism is present in our society and our church, and throughout time has manifested itself in many forms in varying degrees,” the core leadership anti-racism group of FNJT met in August 2020 to begin the process of standing together against racism in our Region. Following many discussions, we present to you the rationale, and an anti-racism policy, for consideration. Our assumptions and researched ideas are presented under the following categories:

The Theological case – through the lens of racism.

As believers our theological perspective is the foundation for understanding our solutions to racism and all forms of discrimination. Therefore, we offer three major areas of Christian thought, that contribute to our work in this area:

(a) The all encompassing nature of the Divine as understood in the Judaic-Christian Tradition. Living in the 21st century this leads us to recognize the integrity of the Search for God by those outside our Faith. (See General Council- “Report of the Commission on World Mission” - November 1966:137.)

(b) Created in the Image of God. Working against racism we do not view respect for human life as only one value among many. For us as Christians, being created in the image of God is a non-negotiable Theological principle. Our understanding of the sanctity of human life flows directly from the proposition that it was not we who created God in our image but God created humanity in God's image. This means that each of us in ECORC must wrestle with the sources of extremism, racism, and all other discriminatory practices that compromise human dignity. We apply this principle towards all immigrants and refugees living and working in East Central Ontario, (towns and rural areas) as well as established non-white citizens of various cultures and religions.

(c) The Trinity – through the lens of racism. As followers of Christ, and Canadian citizens, we live in an age in which several diverse destinies are interconnected. The same is true of East Central Ontario geographical region. Therefore, when difference leads to subtle segregation and obvious conflict, we all lose. When it leads to mutual enrichment, all sides gain. The concept of the Trinity supports our sense of enlargement by the presence of others. Each particular person lives in the conscious presence of difference, co-existing within the spiritual energy of the Divine, while remaining secure and connected with God's substance of Goodness and Wisdom.

The Trinity sustains and moves our body, mind, and spirit towards building concrete relationships with diverse neighbours throughout ECORC, making space for one another, overcoming long histories of estrangement and bitterness. Its spiritual power does not diminish difference. The three-persons are not threatened by one another's presence and thoughtful activity. Their inter-dependence is a model of balance, respect for the particular and unique contribution each offers. Here we witness unity within diversity.

God calls us to respect the goodwill and dignity of those unlike us. Our Trinitarian principles stir us away from racism and an artificial uniformity. Their strength and glory is Diversity. The communication of our spiritual and theological values underlying the work against racism is crucial. To be deprived of these resources is to disadvantage any significant movement for moral and social change.

The Biblical Case – through the lens of Racism.

A Church with Purpose: Towards an Ecclesiology for The United Church of Canada in the 21st century, the report to the 41st General Council (2012), declares: "The church does not belong to humans but to God through Christ.....The UCC is governed by scripture..."

Writing as an Orthodox Jew, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks reminds us that "every great faith has within it harsh texts which, read literally, can be taken to endorse narrow particularism, suspicion of strangers, and intolerance toward others. Every great faith also has within it sources that emphasize kinship with the stranger, empathy with the outsider, the courage that leads people to extend a hand across boundaries of estrangement or hostility. The choice is ours. Will the generous texts of our tradition serve as interpretive keys to the rest, or will the abrasive passages determine our ideas of what we are and what we are called to do? No tradition is free from the constant need to reinterpret, to apply eternal truths to an ever-changing world, to listen to what the message of scripture requires of us, here, now".

In our focus as UCC members *Becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination*, the East Central Ontario Regional Council will be inspired and sustained by scripture, its biblical principles of Justice and Mercy as found in the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Ezekiel. Within the **Hebrew Scriptures**, fertile interpretive potential exists in (a) the heritage of Abraham, which Jews, Christians and Muslims claim as their own, (b) the covenant with Noah – the moral basis of a shared humanity, (c) the story of Creation with its astonishing diversity of life forms, (d) the concept of covenant which became the central form of relationship, laden with religious and moral significance....Covenant is the attempt to create partnership without dominance or submission. In Deut. 29:14-15 we are handed an interpretive key for our day, by Moses showing that covenants are intergenerational, reminding us that we are guardians of the past for the sake of the future. (Sacks_2003).

Racism keeps people enslaved. Part of our journey in Becoming an anti-racist church is the awareness from History that the use of the Bible for slavery was both strong and consistent. There was, however, a moral case to be made, and the morality for that case was made from the Bible itself. Here, the Bible's moral principles stood against the social practices to be found within biblical stories. Principle took precedence over practice and claimed for itself the sanction of the Bible (Gomes 1996). Racism in Canada is connected to the history of slavery and colonialism -(note that in 2012 the United Church repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery). A key for reading, interpreting, and applying the **New Testament** in the context of racism, is the understanding that biblical texts used to justify racism were all historically, social and economically conditioned. Today, in the Canadian context, these need to be "overruled and superseded by the biblical principles of love and charity towards neighbours as exemplified in the teachings of Jesus."

English Methodist evangelist John Wesley made this case against the slave trade in English North America - "inconsistent with an understanding of the New Testament's paramount teachings on spiritual rebirth, sanctification, and evangelism....The Bible could not be used to justify actions contrary to the moral law of Christ" (Gomes 1996).

Both the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament provide the moral mandate, and clear moral principles for our Becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination. For us in East Central Ontario Region, UCC Theologian Robert C. Fennell provides clarity through his statement that "The UCC has not relegated the Bible to the status of "mere myth", one more curious document in the vast smorgasbord of spirituality. Indeed, it remains central for the denomination, its life and its work" (Schweitzer, Fennell, Bourgeois : 2019).

The Ecclesial Case: Drawn from the UCC Anti-Racism Policy Statement

We believe we are all equal before God.

We believe racism is a sin and violates God's desire for humanity.

We believe racism is present in our society and in our church, and throughout time has manifested itself in many forms in varying degrees.

We believe that the struggle against racism is a continuous effort. Therefore, our anti-racism policy statement is only a first step. It provides the basis for the creation of a Church (and a Regional Council) where all are welcome, where all feel welcome, and where diversity is as natural as breathing.

We believe change is possible. We believe in forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation and the potential to learn from stories and experiences.

We believe we are all called to work against racism and for a society in which the words of the gospel are realized among us.

We believe in a vision of society in which the words of the gospel are realized.

The Scientific case against Racism (one example)

The book *Superior* (2019) tells the disturbing story of the persistent thread of belief in biological racial differences in the world of science. "A worldwide network of intellectual racists and segregationists quietly founded journals and funded research, providing the kind of shoddy studies that were ultimately cited in Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's 1994 title *The Bell Curve*, which purported to show differences in intelligence among races"..... "At a time when racialized nationalisms are a resurgent threat throughout the world, *Superior* is a much-needed examination of the insidious and destructive nature of race science – and a powerful reminder that, biologically, we are all far more alike than different".

Author of the above mentioned book, Angela Saini is an award-winner. Her work has appeared on the BBC and in the Guardian, New Scientist, Wired, the Economist, and Science. A former Knight Science Journalism Fellow at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she won the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Kavli Science Journalism gold award in 2015. Saini has a Master's in Engineering from Oxford University.

Since the Province of Ontario is influenced by British History, and East Central Ontario is consciously aware of its past, the scientifically researched data presented by Saini keeps us relevant and informed on the topic of racism, and helps us promote The United Church of Canada's goal in Becoming an Anti-racist Church. You are invited to read her book, while I quote from one piece of scientific evidence for our document:

I saw it for myself at London's Natural History Museum in early 2018, a package no fancier than a bunch of old bones.

The skeleton is laid out neatly in a small corner of the museum....this is the frame of one of the oldest dead bodies ever found in the country, some ten thousand years old. And it's full of secrets. Almost as soon as the bones were discovered in caves in Cheddar Gorge in Somerset in 1903, giving their owner the name Cheddar Man, people began to wonder how this individual must have looked. They wanted to put a face to one of our early ancestors.

This is where the genetic study of the bones of our distant ancestors, of their ancient DNA, came in. It has achieved what the Human Genome Diversity Project couldn't. The DNA of living people offers a limited and fuzzy picture of the past. When it comes to tracking human migration patterns over thousands of years, even archaeology and linguistics can't provide all the detail that ancient DNA can. By around 2010 genetic sequencing techniques had developed far enough to tease out highly reliable samples of DNA from ancient specimens (a bone just behind the ear turned out to be best) and use them to help reconstruct entire genomes of long-dead people. The use of this technique has mushroomed in the last decade. It has been credited with solving historical mysteries at a stroke. Thousands of skeletons from all over the world have been analyzed already, and as the British public were about to learn in early 2018, Cheddar Man was one of them.

Scientists at the Natural History Museum and University College London revealed that Cheddar Man probably had blue eyes and curly hair – no surprise here. But what came as a real shock to many Britons was that his bones also carried genetic signatures of skin pigmentation more commonly found in sub-Saharan Africa. It was probable that Cheddar Man had dark skin. So dark, in fact, that by today's standards he would be considered black. The revelation.....made front-page news and television bulletins.

“The whole Cheddar Man thing, I was amazed initially at just how much press coverage it got,” I'm told by Mark Thomas, of University College London, who worked on the finding.....He is one of the world's leading experts on ancient DNA, and from this position of authority he has a tendency to tell it how it is. For geneticists like him, the Cheddar Man discovery was unremarkable given what they already knew. They had more or less expected it.....Evidence as it stands indicates that, like the Cheddar Man, many other pre-farming hunter-gatherers who lived in Western Europe during this time and at least up until as recently as seven thousand years ago would have had light eyes, dark hair, and dark skin, and that the first farmers to come into the region later from the east brought with them their lighter skin and brown eyes”. (*Superior*, pages 110-112)

The Historical Case – through the lens of Racism

All religious practice declares that we inherit certain kinds of insight and perspective; and that to understand why we think as we do, we need to be aware of History, reminds a former Archbishop of Canterbury. He invites us to acknowledge and accept the fact that for most of the human race the values of society are still shaped by one or another history of religious belief.

The United Church of Canada has reflected on its history of racism in church and society. The institution has been aware, since 1947, “of racism directed against Jews, Chinese, Japanese, East Indians, and Eastern Europeans”. While in the late 1940's the Church had spoken against

racial discrimination experienced by the Japanese, and Chinese, it had also “asked the Government to prioritize immigrants who were of British stock and were healthy and able to work.” (GC12:73).

The February and March 1956 publications of *The Observer* validate the fact that racism was well and alive in Canada. “It wasn’t until 1960 that it (UCC) first referred to racism against African Canadians.....When the Church began to realize that the problem lay more with the society at large than with African Canadians, presbyteries and conferences began to address this in 1963, although Ministers were less inclined to deal with it at a congregational level where action was needed.” (L.M. Shepherd). UCC Minister, Rev. L.M. Shepherd points out that during the early 1970’s the then Board of World Missions did see that congregations remained stuck in an outmoded sense of Mission in which “Missionaries go from the West to the rest, from superior to the inferior, from the religious to the pagan to convert and develop” (*The Observer* February 1971:24) Needless to say, these are some of the attitudes and habits of thought that contribute to racism in the church.

Racism against Indigenous Peoples in Canada is now well documented, as is the fact that they were sidelined at presbytery meetings because of language barriers and decision-making processes based on British parliamentary procedures while they came from Indigenous churches where the consensus-based governance structures were the norm. Support for the development of self-governance began rising. This initiative helped the church realize the impact of British culture upon its own practice of ministry and its imposition of British culture upon the First Nations.

It seems as though Saskatchewan Conference took the lead in recognizing that “the cost of giving up talking of truth (historical truth, in this anti-racism context) is high: it means admitting that power has the last word”. Acknowledging the existence of racism against Indian and Metis peoples, the Conference, in 1979 decided to call for one year of repentance. This year gave them the opportunity to prayerfully prepare for an apology and to make amends with Indian and Metis peoples. This precedent set the stage for the 1986 GC apology to First Nations. (L.M. Shepherd)

Rt. Rev. Bob Smith made the following statement at GC 1986: *We confused Western ways and culture with the depth and breadth and length and height of the Gospel of Christ. We imposed our civilization as a condition of accepting the gospel. We tried to make you be like us and in so doing we helped to destroy the vision that made you what you were. In her book A Church with the Soul of a Nation, Professor Phyllis Airhart informs us that beginning in the early 1970’s, the UCC began to uncouple Christianity from British Culture (page 223).*

Moderator Bill Phipps addressed the congregational reticence in the 1998 apology - “we know that many within our church will still not understand why each of us must bear the scar, the blame for this horrendous period in Canadian history. But the truth is, we are the bearers of many blessings from our ancestors and therefore, we must also bear their burdens”. (GC Executive 1998). A *Wall of History* slide show has been created by the National Church for education and training purposes. See also:

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/slavery-s-long-shadow-the-impact-of-200-years-of-enslavement-incanada-1.4733595> This is a 2 part series, CBC (Canadian context.)

The Educational and Training case – through the lens of Racism

Our East Central Ontario Region is in dire need of Cultural and Religious Literacy.

We need to build on our Church’s awareness and initiatives since 1947, and recognize Canada’s 1971 Multiculturalism Policy which moved away from concepts and practices for assimilation and integration of Indigenous and Immigrants into Anglo-Canadian culture (which is what the former UCC Board of Home Missions sought) towards Pluralism (The Observer, November 1978). UCC and Canadian History have brought us to consciousness of how we have engaged with those others who are now living in our midst throughout East Central Ontario. The Anglo-Saxon culture in Britain has also acknowledged that “a society in which religious and cultural diversity exists is invited to recognize that human history is not one story only. Even where a majority culture and religions exists, (as in East Central Ontario) it is part of a wider

picture. Education will open up and highlight the many ways in which diverse traditions share a heritage at various points in history". Faith Formation, in light of the Church's declaration to Become an Anti-Racism Denomination, will be impacted.

For Church and Society visions and mission, the work and recommendations of Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and UNDRIP recommendations as they pertain to systemic racism help church members participate in public discussions and engage in advocacy. When connected to Biblical principles and spiritual values, through Christian, and Inter-religious education and dialogue, the foundations are strong. "However, it was not until 1980 when the UCC, through DWO, recognized traditional Indigenous teachings not as superstition, but as another religion with which to dialogue" (The Theology of the United Church of Canada, 2019:299).

How a Cultural and Religious Literacy program in the context of East Central Ontario's lived realities can be effective, will be addressed in the Anti-Racism Policy, as well as in our list of implementation strategies.

The Legal case – through the lens of Racism

As the article *It Cannot Be Business as Usual* in the Anglican Journal (Oct. 2017) and the Picton Gazette, September 19, 2019 story *Hatred, bigotry and anti-Semitism have no place in the County* prove, as well as the incidents at Madawaska Pastoral Charge in 2020, we as Church and Society- East Central Ontario Region need to maintain high vigilance regarding racism in our Communities. In addition, through the Holocaust story we are reminded that this historical evil took place in one of the most educated, most progressive, most cultured countries in the world. Biblically, we are aware that the Ministry and education of Jesus was carried out within the Jewish culture and tradition. Abrahamic, and non-Abrahamic communities of faith are spread across cities and rural areas of East Central Ontario Region. (see www.bancroftthisweek.com/?p=11153)

Promotion of all National (Church, and Government) Provincial and Municipal legal documents/rules against racism – both individual and systemic are crucial. They protect the legal rights and freedoms of all Citizens. One example – The Ontario Human Rights Commission and its publications. Nationally – the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. On a wider level – The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, authored by Canadian lawyer and scholar, John Humphrey.

The Business Case – through the lens of Racism

Orthodox Jewish Rabbi Sacks is clear about the fact that "the world is not a single machine. It is a complex, interactive ecology in which diversity – biological, personal, cultural and religious – is of the essence.....A primordial instinct going back to humanity's tribal past makes us see difference as a threat. That instinct is massively dysfunctional in an age in which our several destinies are interlinked. Oddly enough, it is the market – the least overtly spiritual of contexts – that delivers a profoundly spiritual message: that it is through exchange that difference becomes a blessing, not a threat.....we must attend to the particular.....we will make peace only when we learn that God loves difference and so, at last, must we. God has created many cultures, civilizations and faiths but only one world in which we live together – and it is getting smaller all the time".

Our Ecumenical partners, The Anglican Church of Canada, published two articles of interest through the anti-racism lens. Please read *IT CANNOT BE BUSINESS AS USUAL* (page 4) by M.N. Sison and *AN UNHOLY TRINITY* (page 5), by Bishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada – at the link below.

<https://www.anglicanjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/aj-oct2017/-web.pdf>

May God grant The United Church of Canada in the East Central Regional Council wisdom to do the right thing with Faith, Hope, Grace, and Love.

Acronyms used:

DWO

Division of World Outreach (former)

ECORC

East Central Ontario Regional Council

FNJT

Formation, Nurture and Justice Team

GC

General Council

UCC

The United Church of Canada

UNDRIP

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

.....

Appendix E**Report of the Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages****Formation, Nurture and Justice Report**

- Anti-Racism Interfaith/Intercultural Forum- book studies, edits to the Anti- Racism Policy brought to this meeting- motion
- IJRR - See Rodney's report
- Guaranteed Living Income Network - 3 showings of the video and pictures shared of the vigils on April 8th. Free mailchimp account and sign up for the mailing list on the ECORC website is working well.
- National Conversation on For the Love of Creation - info in newsletter to start a network and national conversation in April
- National Conversation on Long term Care Crisis- National event on April 27th, info in newsletter to start a network, mailing list on ECORC website
- Book Study for GLI - was well attended
- Palestine- Adele Boy - hosting an online Tour of Palestine with Shining Waters RC, also doing an ECORC book study on Occupied with Non Violence by Jean Zaru

SJNORC

- online meeting in April- see report from Marilyn and minutes from the SJNORC

Doing Mission Together Grants

- Next grant application deadline April 7th- no applications received

Motion to have another round of grant applications for 2021- advertise now with a deadline of September 15th.

Children, Youth and Young Adults

- Connecting with youth, young adults, children and youth leaders
- Using the ECORC website to gather more children, youth and young adult leaders in our RC, including permission to create a contact list to share
- Gathering with ECORC Children, youth and young Adult leaders to share information,resources and talk about Youth Forum at GC44
- Forming a First Third's Ministry Forum (put in newsletter)
- Quin Mo Lac - AGM was held on April 10. Hoping to offer a CIT program- maybe online, continuing with fundraising ideas, further work on updating bylaws
- VIBE- waiting to hear about Gov grant application - for program online

UCW

- Holding meetings and Presbyterials on zoom, AGM is May 6th online
- continuing outreach projects
- New masks with UCW crests being made by Marilyn with the funds going towards the UCW 60th Anniversary project "Change for Women of Zambia" which ends in July 2022

Equity Team

Bring forward a Motion: That all videos that are used in ECORC meetings or produced by teams/forums for the RC YouTube channel, to be subtitled/captioned.

- Next meeting- April 29th- planning for items for the You tube channel
- Still need to schedule a meeting to discuss the proposed Policy update that was sent from Sharon B- perhaps-Phil, Nancy, Lynn, Sharon's and Paul

Affirming Forum

- Continued to Meet with teams and forums
- Preparing for pre-meeting gathering zoom on April 24th

Appendix F

Social Justice Networks of Ontario Regions
Report to Assembly of Elders
April 23, 21

Sharon Hull provided a written report:

We are thankful for National groups having conversations; it has sparked an interest in Networks in our Regional Council. It has been great to collaborate with other Regional Councils and do this work together.

- Guaranteed Livable Income
 - 3 co-ordinators, 1 co-ordinator is part of the national group
 - Staff supported to get it going- gmail account, free mail chimp, sign up for mailing list on the RC website- having a spot for permission for a contact list and to share info with National network
 - Vigils
 - Zoom screening- The Manitoba Story: A Basic Income Film, taped interview with the film maker
- Long Term Care Crisis
 - Connecting to national group- looking for Regional Council co-ordinators, mailing list form on our RC website
- Love of Creation
 - Connecting to the national group and trying to get our own network going.
 - Palestine
 - Adele Boy- joint with Barbara Lloyd, Shining Waters Regional Council for virtual tours.
 - Book Study- Jean Zaru, *Occupied With Non-Violence* in our Regional Council.
 -

Indigenous Justice and Right Relations Forum

- Monthly Zoom Webinars partner with the Anti-Racism/Interfaith/Intercultural Forum to offer webinars on language with a teaching. The Belleville chief of police had been a guest recently.

- Walking across Canada- Community of Faith in Brighton on a pilgrimage across Canada between now and June 21st, with learning opportunities along the way. (updating a map to show progress)

Anti-Racism/Interfaith/Intercultural Forum

- Have been working on our ECORC Anti-racism policy. The policy will include an action plan with initiatives and education.

- PHASE 1 - Formation of groups for study and discussion

- PHASE 2 - Church and Community projects.

Leadership Summit on Inclusivity

- Supporting a webinar on March 18 with community partners to raise awareness. Guest Speaker- Belleville's new Chief of Police

Affirming Forum

-
- Meetings with all of our teams/forums and Assembly of Elders for education
 - Two Information gathering sessions – one for the community and one for friends of the community to see how we are doing as a Regional Council.
 - Holding a pre-meeting webinar before our vote to become a permanent Affirming Regional Council.

Equity Team

- Making videos to put on the ECORC You tube channel to explain Equity.

David Moore commented on the Community Hubs which have been developed across the Region to meet the needs of street people. They experience particular vulnerabilities. The following have been created by various community organizations:

- o Community Hubs for Durham Region--Pickering, Ajax, Oshawa-Back Door Mission, where 250 people are being served.
- o Belleville-In from the cold, Thank God it's Friday, End of the month
- o Peterborough

Among the remarkable donors are various providers of food and a sports equipment supplier who has given them pallets of t-shirts and other clothing.

Ren Ito asked Sharon about the Leadership Forum in March, and Sharon said that it had been carried out by volunteers through the Anti-Racism/Interfaith/Intercultural Forum. The Regional Council had provided technical support.

Appendix G

For Consideration

As the Covenant Support Team has tended to its pastoral relations responsibilities over the past almost 2 years, discussions have arisen as to how the region can best address the increasingly complex, and varied, needs that a seemingly increasing number of faith communities have with respect to vitality and viability.

Mindful of the rather piece-meal capacity and approach that the Region is equipped to offer presently, Covenant Support believes that a more holistic and integrated response needs to be employed when faith communities are facing operational challenges that have the potential to radically change, or end, their contextual mission and ministry.

Recently, when considering its own mandate, and that of the other regional bodies, Covenant Support came to believe that a unique opportunity exists in which a co-ordinated and co-ordinating body ought to exist such that urgent or emerging matters can be identified and responded to expeditiously.

As a nimble and highly responsive point of contact, this body would offer an array of relevant support to those communities of faith that either seek help from the region, or whose possible need of it is made known to the region – think here of the work that was done in part by former pastoral oversight committees.

Using the region's existing bodies to populate it (i.e. a representative from Covenant Support, Finance & Property, Assembly of elders, et. al. – as thought helpful/necessary), such a 'task force' would work to understand the challenges being faced, consider and recommend solutions to the body being supported and/or the Assembly of Elders, as necessary).

Circumstances depending, this body might also be designated a commission.

G. David King,
Chair – Covenant Support