

LLWL Forum Meeting – Thursday, March 24th, 2022, at 7pm on Zoom

Attending: Cathy Gradante, Paul Kneebone, Kathy Bates, Cheryl McMurray, Nancy Payne, Richard Weigand, Kathleen Whyte

Regrets: Carol O'Neil (she resigned earlier today as a LLWL Forum member)

Welcome: Cathy Gradante

Opening Prayer & Land Acknowledgement: Cathy Gradante

Minutes of the January Meeting

(Motion approved by: Cheryl McMurray, seconded by: Nancy Payne)

Business Arising: if any. Nothing besides a typo or two.

LLWL Network – update from last gathering. Nothing of note that anyone could recall.

New Business:

New LLWLs: Kathleen Whyte, Lisa Norman

- Response from CST: made official at their last meeting! Now, clarification on the process. Now what when? LLWL Forum should receive something in writing from CST. **Action: Cheryl will follow up on this. Action: Paul then can add their two names to the list of approved ECORC LLWL list for Sunday pulpit supply.** [*After meeting concluded last evening, Cheryl sent Paul confirmation of their two approvals at Feb CST meeting.] Is there a liturgy to celebrate this in new LLWLs' home congregations? Not that we're aware. LLWL Forum should send a letter to their home churches, incl. any available liturgy content (one we can use from Pacific Mountain RC) – PK to respective home church(s). **Action: Cheryl will review PMRC website document about such liturgy, then forward to PK to send to 2 respective home churches (Coe Hill and Tyrone-Enniskillen UC's).** Both Kathleen & Lisa, plus renewing LLWL's, will all receive their new LLWL certificates at the Fall ECORC meeting.

Pending Approval: Shawn Pearce Chambers

- Mentor assigned: Rev. Jeff Doucette with approximate 6–12-month time frame, but to-be-determined (TBD).

ECORC LLWL Terms of Reference (Nancy): first, welcome to Richard Weigand as latest new LLWL Forum member!

- See attached draft [See [Appendix 1](#) below] Nancy quickly reviewed purpose of this draft document. Where do we go next? Suggested that some content should go on website and other details perhaps more suited for revised LLWL Policies & Procedures Manual. At the same time, we will further review existing content on LLWL Forum and LLWL Network tabs of ECORC website – including some core content Nancy has presented. Paul also gave quick overview of new content changes, as of this week. **Action:** Nancy will bring up this draft document at next LLWL Network meeting (April 4th) – and we will go from there.
- Nancy also brought up topic of when we tackle revising the LLWL Policies & Procedures Manual. **Action:** Nancy will do a similar review and then bring forward at an upcoming LLWL Forum meeting. Possibly also at upcoming LLWL Network gathering/meeting.

License Renewals

– Divide into teams and schedule zoom meetings for May/June. Paul reported that 10 renewal packages have been received, two with outstanding elements (i.e., full Police Check and/or retake of Boundaries course). Neither of these outstanding items should hold up their ongoing renewal process, incl. scheduling interviews. Suggestion that perhaps we have (at least partially) different questions for these renewal interviews, vs. new candidate interviews. Maybe better categorized as a chat. Some discussion followed about importance and role of these renewal interviews.

“Divvying up” the list (28 names): **Action:** Paul will go through the list and do so. Cathy or Cheryl will be part of each interview, plus one other. **Once team lists (Cathy or Cheryl, plus one other) are made up, Paul will send to all Forum members.** Interviews will start after Holy Week and be finished up on/before June 8th ---- day before our next LLWL Forum meeting.

Other business – if any:

- Nancy brought up matter of possible PD session for larger LLWL Network. **Action:** She will send out something to all and we can discuss at June Forum meeting, as well as upcoming April 4th Network meeting. Whatever is decided should be driven by wider LLWL Network.
- Kathleen talked about background and presentation last evening at GC44 session [see [Appendix 2](#) below]. Still a lot of questions, such as sacramental elders, funerals. These two, as well as number of Sundays in one church, have been tabled at last 2-3 LLWL Network gatherings/meetings. Re. number of Sundays, note Kathleen got back from Erik Mathiesen at General Council (GC). Over \$500/year from any one church, you need a T4A issued by that congregation, which could easily raise red flags at CRA.

Next Meeting ---- **Thursday, June 9th**. The day after all renewal interviews will be finished!

Appendix 1

ECORC Licensed Lay Worship Leader Network

Membership: all Licensed Lay Worship Leaders and students training to become an LLWL, who live and plan to serve in the East Central Ontario region of the United Church of Canada

Purpose: an informal group to enable LLWLs and students to stay connected, share ideas and support each other in their ministry

Meetings: minimum of two a year, with two additional LLWL Forum-organized learning opportunities every year for professional development and personal spiritual growth

ECORC Licensed Lay Worship Leader Forum

Membership: two ordained clergy serving in the East Central Ontario region, the ECORC pastoral relations minister, and a minimum of three LLWLs (one of whom may be a student) serving in the region. The LLWLs serving on the Forum are chosen by members of the Network and should represent a range of geographical locations.

Purpose: overseeing the licensing and license renewal process for LLWLs in the East Central Ontario region. Members of the Forum conduct interviews with new LLWL candidates and recommend individuals for licensing and renewal to the Covenant Support Team, provides recommendations to the CST on policies and procedures related to the work of LLWLs, and receives and responds to input from the LLWL Network. The Forum helps ensure clear communication and accountability, linking LLWLs with other levels of the ECORC. The Forum supports the Network by organizing two learning opportunities a year for LLWLs and students. It is the main official channel of communication between the LLWL Network and the Covenant Support Team; LLWL members of the CST will also provide information to the Network.

Meetings: minimum of four a year in addition to any meetings required for the licensing of new LLWLs, organizing learning opportunities, etc.

Volunteer LLWL Network positions

The chair, co-chair and secretary of the LLWL Network are chosen by a vote of members of the LLWL Network present at the first meeting of a calendar year ending in an even number. Should a chair, co-chair or secretary opt not to renew their license or not have their license renewed by the Forum, they must step down from their position with the Network. In this event, there will be a special meeting of the Network to elect a replacement for the person who has stepped down.

Chair: This person must be licensed as an LLWL in the East Central Ontario region. The chair is responsible for drafting agendas for and chairing Network meetings. They may receive questions and suggestions from Network members at any time, and respond to these communications or take them to the Forum for discussion. A term as chair lasts two years, after which the person may not be elected as chair or co-chair for at least four years. The chair is automatically a member of the LLWL Forum.

Co-chair: This person may be an LLWL or a student who has completed at least three modules of the LLWL program. They fill in if the Network chair is unavailable for a meeting, in which case they may be responsible for drafting the agenda for that meeting. Provided they have become licensed by the time the chair's term ends, the co-chair will typically become chair when the chair's term expires. A term as co-chair lasts two years, after which the co-chair will either become chair or step down from the role. If they choose to step down, they may not be elected as chair or co-chair for at least four years.

Secretary: This person must be licensed as an LLWL in the East Central Ontario region. The secretary is responsible for a wide range of tasks, including but not limited to: circulating agendas to Network members, taking notes at Network meetings and circulating to members, circulating minutes of the Forum to Network members, communicating requirements and timelines for license renewals, compiling Network members' renewal applications supporting material and forwarding them to members of the Forum, communicating important dates to Network members, responding to or forwarding inquiries from Network members, and, in consultation with the chair of the Forum, taking minutes for Forum meetings. A term as secretary lasts two years; a secretary may serve as many consecutive terms as they wish, but must be confirmed by a vote of the Network at the start of each term. The secretary is automatically a member of the LLWL Forum.

Appendix 2

44th General Council, February-August 2022

For Action GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020s

- Page 1 of 6 GCE06 MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH IN THE 2020s

Origin: Executive of the General Council

- 1. What is the issue?** The 43rd General Council (2018) received several proposals in response to concerns that the vocational ministry needs of smaller, often rural, ministries are not being adequately met in these changing times.

As well, other issues related to designated lay ministry and licensed lay worship leadership were recognized as relevant to the concerns for vocational ministry service in rural and smaller communities. The Executive of the General Council directed the General Secretary to conduct a comprehensive study on these issues and develop a strategy for meeting the ministry needs of all communities of faith, including access to the sacraments. A task group was established in 2019 to engage in this comprehensive study. The task group has concluded that it is not reasonable to assume that every pastoral charge can have a pastorate without interruption (Basis of Union Section 10.10.2) as it might have been imagined or intended in 1925. The contexts and expectations in our communities, in Canadian society, and in ministry personnel lives have changed dramatically since union. Despite these changes, or because of them, even where our policies or expectations have not kept up, vibrant faithful ministry is happening in rural and smaller communities of faith, led by vibrant and faithful lay members and by generous, resilient, and theologically astute ministry personnel, active and retired. These proposals imagine that Section 10.10.2 of The Basis of Union can be fulfilled in new and different ways ninety-seven years later.

- 2. Why is this issue important?** The task group has understood the purpose of the Church is to be a community that embodies "*Christ's presence in the world*" [A Song of Faith], seeking to love God and to love neighbour. That purpose is lived out through its communities of faith. Those communities of faith are where the faith tradition is taught and nurtured, where "*gifts are shared for the good of all*" [A Song of Faith], where persons are strengthened to resist the forces in our world that would marginalize, exploit, and destroy. Christian tradition has seen the Church as an instrument "*of the loving spirit of Christ*" [A Song of Faith] for the mending of creation. The church has said that we

believe that *“for the sake of the world, God calls all followers of Jesus to Christian ministry”* [A Song of Faith].

Each of us has a call that sets us apart for a particular task or tasks. Call can take different forms at different times in our lives. That call can be as a teacher, a pharmacist, a janitor, a nurse, a farmer, and the list goes on.

As a denomination, we have not honoured these various calls as much as we could, especially given some reflection in Scripture about the Church, reflection that reminds us of the variety of gifts God has given (e.g., I Corinthians 12). Some persons are called to exercise their ministry in and for the service of the Church.

Such leadership is necessary if the Church is to fulfill the role God has for it, by helping to create and nurture the community that teaches, comforts, confronts, serves, and witnesses to the wider world concerning God’s creating, redeeming, and abiding love. In the community of faith, some leadership is volunteer, involved in its educational, outreach, and governance activities, and accountable to the community of faith.

Some leadership is paid and accountable to the denomination. It focusses on equipping the saints for their ministry in the world.

Designated lay ministry was established by the 37th General Council in 2000 as a continued evolution of lay ministry. It was expected that it would meet the localized needs of smaller rural congregations, thus site-specific and time limited.

In practice, however, it opened vocational ministry to a significant cohort of called, faithful leadership that had previously felt that they had no access to vocational ministry, effectively establishing a third stream of paid accountable ministry largely indistinguishable in call and function from ordered ministry.

Most designated lay ministers describe a lifelong call to vocational ministry in the whole of the church. The church has been more than willing to bend the definitions and limitations of designated lay ministry to call up and appoint designated lay ministers into traditional pastoral ministry roles.

Remit Six authorized by the 42nd General Council, however, rejected the inclusion of designated lay ministry as a stream into the Order of Ministry. The task group and GCE have had to honour this decision of the church. This has left designated lay ministry in a sort of limbo.

Designated Lay Ministers are drawn on to fulfill all the functions of ministry in pastoral charges and in serving the wider church but are not granted the same status as ordered ministers. The designated lay ministry educational pathway/pedagogy is not dissimilar to that of other theological programs that integrate academic study and practice of ministry (for example, the **Centre for Christian Studies** and the summer distance program at the **Atlantic School of Theology**).

The task group concludes that there is a role for the original conception of designated lay ministry (from the 37th General Council) while noting there are educational avenues of theological formation for ordered ministry that were not as accessible in 2000.

The task group also heard that the designated lay ministry program was not accessible for some lay people who wish to offer trained ministry in their home communities of faith (often rural and/or smaller communities of faith).

These realities led the task group to recommend refocusing the Designated Lay Ministry program on the original intention to prepare paid accountable lay leaders for ministry in their home community of faith.

The task group and the GCE recognize the long and faithful ministry that current designated lay ministers offer to the church, in all councils of the church, and thus propose to the 44th General Council that the church develop pathways that recognize the experience, service, and commitment of individuals currently serving as designated lay ministers, in meeting the criteria for Testamur and, thus, **eligibility to be commissioned or ordained.**

These pathways to ordination or commissioning will be optional for current designated lay ministers.

- 44th General Council, February-August 2022 For Action GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020s - Page 3 of 6 The full report of the task group may be found [here](#).

3. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity? The task group met from December 2019 through July 2021 and consulted with approximately 350 people from all regional councils:

- § lay leaders of congregations without ministry personnel for extended periods of time (two consultations with members identified by regional council ministers);
- § designated lay ministers (two consultations self-selected from an open invitation plus a survey [128 responses to the survey]);
- § diaconal ministers (with experience in rural and urban communities of faith identified by regional council pastoral relations ministers);
- § ordained ministers (with experience in rural and urban communities of faith identified by regional council pastoral relations ministers);
- § staff of field-based theological education programs (Atlantic School of Theology summer distance program for ordination; Centre for Christian Studies for diaconal ministry; program for designated lay ministry at St. Andrew's College);
- § community development capacity coordinators, regional pastoral relations and community of faith support ministers; § Indigenous Ministries and Justice and Indigenous Office of Vocation staff;
- § Christine Jerrett, Network and New Ministries Animator, General Council Office;
- § Éric Hébert-Daly, Ministères en français.

4. How might the General Council respond to the issue? ***Note: It is suggested that the General Council consider Section A and Section B separately.**

The Executive of the General Council proposes that the 44th General Council could:

A. Better Supporting Rural and Smaller Communities of Faith

1. Lay-led Communities of Faith

- a) affirm the importance and value of “lay-led congregations” (a descriptive term, not a formal “class”, loosely describing a congregation without called or appointed ministry personnel for more than a year) continuing to be linked to the denomination and supported in governance by a regional council appointed pastoral charge supervisor;
- b) oversight of any person paid for services (custodial, administrative, ministry, etc.).

2. Licensed Lay Worship Leaders

- a) reaffirm that licensed lay worship leaders continue to be limited to worship leadership on an occasional basis, “occasional” determined by the regional council; 44th General Council, February-August 2022 For Action GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020s - Page 4 of 6
- b) revise the policy with respect to Licensed Lay Worship Leaders to require that where the community of faith requires a larger scope of service, or more than “occasional” leadership, than is within the scope of a licensed lay worship leader, the regional council work with the community of faith to develop either a collaborative ministry or a congregational designated ministry role with its attendant accountabilities and ensure adequate training and oversight of congregational designated ministry.

3. Congregational Designated Ministry

- a) revise the policy with respect to congregational designated ministers to require that
 - i. if a congregational designated ministry position includes worship leadership the congregational designated minister must successfully complete the licensed lay worship leadership program of that regional council, or an equivalency determined by the regional council, and be a full member of The United Church of Canada;
 - ii. if the congregational designated minister is the primary individual leading worship, then they must be a full member of The United Church of Canada;
 - iii. revise Section I.1.11.4 d) of The Manual to delete the requirement that there be a ministry personnel appointed or called to the community of faith and replace it with the requirement that the regional council ensure that there is adequate and appropriate support and oversight of the ministry.

4. Pastoral Charge Supervisors

- a) affirm the importance of the role of pastoral charge supervisors to nurture the connection with and support of the United Church with churches that do not have appointed or called ministry personnel;
- b) direct the General Secretary, with the regional councils, to consider how the role of paid pastoral charge supervisors may support the development and evolution of collaborative ministries.

5. Technology

a) encourage regional councils to give priority to and encourage leveraging technology to support communities of faith in the provision of worship and pastoral care and for supporting oversight, supervision, and governance.

B. Designated Lay Ministry - in light of the rejection of the One Order of Ministry remit proposal in 2018:

1. For Current Designated Lay Ministers

- a) direct the General Secretary, in consultation with Designated Lay Ministers, to develop a proposal to enable current recognized Designated Lay Ministers to meet the Testamur requirements for ordering (commissioning or 44th General Council, February-August 2022 For Action GCE06 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of the Church in the 2020s - Page 5 of 6 ordination). Such a proposal will recognize the lifelong vocational call of many current designated lay ministers; honour and value their many years of service to the church; and credit their theological education and formation for ministry. These criteria should form the basis for any prior learning assessment that may form part of such a proposal. Such a proposal should also take into account that there may be current recognized Designated Lay Ministers who already meet the criteria for Testamur and qualify for immediate transition into ordered ministry; and
- b) direct the General Secretary to consider recognition of status of Designated Lay Ministers who are retired.

2. For Future Designated Lay Ministers

- a) limit designated lay ministry to that which was conceived by the 37th General Council;
- b) refocus the designated lay ministry program to reflect the specific original focus;
- c) refocus designated lay ministry as a lay practice of ministry specifically on localized and time-specific appointment within their community of faith, or the current community of faith appointment;
- d) articulate the distinction between those called to ministry in the community of faith or pastoral charge where their membership resides and those called to life-long denominational vocational ministry;
- e) encourage the Board of Vocation and candidacy boards to direct people discerning a call to life-long church-wide ministry towards ordered ministry preparation and formation;
- f) the church stop “using” designated lay ministers as if they are ordered ministers with privilege of call, lifetime service throughout the church and recognition in retirement while at the same time restricting them to appointment, providing no status between appointments or in retirement, and paying them less;
- g) in consideration of the localized character of the practice of designated lay ministry, request that regional councils not approve appointments of designated lay ministers to communities of

faith that are not the home communities, or current site of appointment, of the designated lay minister.

3. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council: The United Church—through its faith statements, practices, and policies—has made theological affirmations about the paid, accountable ministry that is carried out in and for the service of the Church:

- God calls individuals to ministries of Word, Sacrament, Education, Service, and Pastoral Care.
- Call has both an inner dimension (the individual must believe themselves called to such a ministry by God) and an external dimension (others must see in the individual the gifts 44th General Council, February-August 2022 For Action GCE06

March 24th --- Emailed by Kathleen Whyte. Paul Kneebone then transferred to Word file, with some added formatting. Also, some shading was added.
