
SPRING GENERAL MEETING**Session one
Friday, May 5, 2023**

The East Central Ontario Regional Council of The United Church of Canada held its Spring General Meeting at Trinity United Church (Cobourg, Ontario) in two sessions, on Friday, May 5th and Saturday, May 6th. Registration began at 9 AM and the call to order at 10 AM. Following session-two on Saturday, a Celebration of Ministry Service was held at 2:30 PM. The theme for this general meeting was Unity, Diversity, and Love – Unleashing the Power of Spiritual Gifts. Participants were invited to join together and explore how to use spiritual gifts to spread love, promote unity, and celebrate diversity.

THE FOLLOWING REGISTERED THEIR ATTENDANCE AT THE BUSINESS MEETING**Ministry Personnel (77)**

Aruna Alexander, Stephen Ambury, Mark Arnill, Kristiane Black, Elizabeth Boehm-Wilson, Mary-Margaret Boone, Wendy Bullock, Sharon Campbell-Rayment, Nancy Clarke, Karen Croxall, Steven Davis, Terrence (Terry) Deline, Jeff Doucette, Michelle Down, Lawrence Doyle, Catherine Duggan, Deborah Elliott, Catherine Elsdon, Kim Falls, Sandra Farrow, Bruce Fraser, Sherry Fugard, Susan Genge, Caroline Giesbrecht, Margaret Goodwin, Cathy Gradante, Katherine Gregory, Anja Guignon, Anja Guignon, Elaine Hall, Richard Hamilton, Jackie Harper, Svinda Heinrichs, Phil Hobbs, Mary-Jane Hobden, Lynda Hodgins, Elaine Kellogg, Leslie Elizabeth King, Kim Lawrance, Kim Lawrance, Nancy Lester, Andrew Macpherson, Cheryl McMurray, Ryan McNally, Sylvia Anne Meredith, Jeannette Millar, Kevin Moore, Harold Morgan, Brian Nicholson, Kerrie Perry, Paul Reed, Stephanie Richmond, Michelle Robinson, Bob Root, Margaret Scott, Christine Sloan, Karen Smart, Norma Lynn Smith, Allan Smith-Reeve, Steve Spicer, Calvin Stone, Wanda Stride, Jennifer Uhryniw, JULIE VAN HAAFTEN, Max Ward, Lynn Watson, Daryl Webber, Ned Wells, Barbara Willard, Donald Willmer, Jean Wilson, Marybeth Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Phil Wilson, Jamie York, John Young and Marilyn Zehr.

Lay (79)

Margaret Akey, Judy Amsbury, Karen Bates, Donna Bignell, Paul Binkley, Darlene Brown, Donna Budgen, Freda Burns, Stephen Coles, Kimberly Collins, Paul Cornish, Krista Coughler, Jeanette Cournoyer, Garry Culverson, Penny Culverson, Carol Cunday, Margaret Curtis, Ian Deslauriers, Phyllis Elvidge-Bell, HelmutEnns, Peggy Fillier, Joanne Gray, Anthony Griffith, Darlene Hallett, Christine Hammond, Donna Henderson, Tina Hiddink, Carolyn Holmes, Bruce Hutchinson, Linda Hutchinson, Brian James, Patti James, Kerri Jebson, Elaine Kellogg, Tracy Kent Hillis, Neil Killens, Carl Kimmett, Suzanne Langsford, Winston Le Grand, ColinLeonard, Patricia Long, Dianne McCracken, Dorren McHolm, Margaret Merkley, Ted Meyers, Nicolette Mitchell, Cheryl Mound, Marie Northey, Joyce Payne, John Payne, Shirley Penny, Elizabeth Pereman, Susan Pettersone, Susan Pleasance, Elaner Pound, John Purdon, Catherine Redden, Norman Rice, Marilyn Rodger, Randy Scott, William Sheaves, Debbie Sherwin, Thomas Smart, Arthur Smith, Terry Souch, Jack Soule, Shane Suepaul, Leigh Tamlin, Phyllis Tamlin, Patricia Teskey, Norma Thompson, Carrie Thompson, Linda Walt, Sally Weir, Ralph Werry, Kathleen Whyte, Marie Williams, Steve Williams and Sharon Woodrow.

Candidates serving in an Appointment (5)

Doug Ferris, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Aaron Miechkota, Kaitlyn Ostrander and Mark Kenneth Sturman.

Regional Council Staff (7)

Rev. Éric Hébert-Daly (voting clergy) Sharon Hull, Rev. Darren Liepold (voting clergy) Joel Miller, Martha Pedoniquotte, Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley (voting clergy) and Karen Wilson.

Guests of the Regional Council (8)

Andrew Aitchison, Amanda Ellman, Stephon Farrow, Sharmada Kommabathula, Wenda Lalande, Caroline Rev. Penhale, Karen Valley, Michele Whitney.

Regrets (13)

Shirley Baster, Rev. Kirby Breithaupt, Rev. Michelle Brotherton, Don Green, Rev. Lesley Hamilton, Rev. Isaac Mundy, John Payne, Peter Renaud, Grace Stanley, Rev. Janet Stobie, Rev. Julie Van Haften, Christopher White and Rev. Jamie York.

Quorum

This meeting had quorum.

In-Person Registration/Zoom Meeting Room Opens

Delegates invited to join meeting at 9 AM via Zoom and in person

Land Acknowledgement and Welcoming to the Land

Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley acknowledged the land,

We begin this meeting by acknowledging that we are meeting on aboriginal land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. Those of us who are settlers in Canada, or whose ancestors were settlers in Canada, acknowledge, with gratitude, the land and the First Peoples who traditionally walked the land in the area where we live and work. The traditional territories include the Wendat, the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Mississaugas of Scugog, the Hiawatha, the Alderville, and the Métis Nations. The Williams Treaties were signed for this area of land. We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. We express gratitude for the opportunity to meet here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land - for thousands of years.

Rodney introduced Chief Mowat, from Alderville, ON, who provided some of the history of this community leading up to the Williams Treaties; highlighted missing and murdered indigenous women and the continued call for justice; also highlighted how poverty remains a significant problem amongst communities today.

Rodney also introduced Martha Pedoniquotte, Community Capacity Development Coordinator. Martha was invited to speak and shared some of her personal history as well as her role with Indigenous Ministries (full description is on the ECORC website: <https://ecorcuccan.ca/about-us/staff/martha-pedoniquotte/>).

Words of Constitution / Instructions

Paul called the meeting to order: "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Sovereign head of the Church, and by the authority of the Inaugural Meeting of the East Central Ontario Regional Council of the United Church of Canada, I hereby declare this fall general meeting duly constituted and to be in session for conducting the business which will properly come before it."

Paul explained some of the proceedings for the day, and highlighted that this meeting was hybrid, offering those attending remotely full participation by zoom.

Opening Worship

The opening worship was led by Affirm Forum and included Communion. The liturgy that was used is provided here below:

UNITY, DIVERSITY AND LOVE – UNLEASHING THE POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Prelude

Welcome Michelle Down

Lighting the Christ Candle Michelle Down

Musical Introit: MV 2- Come All Ye People (vs, 1) sing twice

***Calling in a Blessing (adapted words from Kate Bowler
Co-Chairs of the Affirming Forum Joyce Payne and Sharon Woodrow***

*Joyce: Blessed are we, living in this small space called planet earth,
in these bodies we now inhabit,
within the walls of circumstance,
in these short years and finite strength,
and with these eyes that see only so far.*

We are fragile, and celebratory beings.

***ALL: Blessed are we,
recognizing that it is our limits as well as our gifts
that can shape the natural contours of what is possible,
that guide us to and through our mission and ministry.***

We are fragile, and celebratory beings.

*Sharon W: Blessed are we when it is not our greatness that speaks,
but instead, our littleness.*

*For it is our vulnerability that is the truest thing about us;
the place where mutual connection is possible,
where competition ends and community begins.*

***ALL: Blessed are we in our fragility, and dependence,
Blessed are we in our strength, and independence,
knowing that You, O God,
have created us in your image,
to be disciples of Unity, Diversity and Love.***

Centring Prayer: (not on screen)

Joyce: will you pray with me?

*Holy God, as we gather as your people, here to do the work of our regional council, we ask for your blessing
to be around us and within us.*

*We pray that you might unleash upon us the power of your Spiritual Gifts, and that we might share them within
this meeting, and beyond.*

*Sharon: Holy Spirit, shine upon us your Unity, Diversity and Love,
so that in our blindness we might see you ... and your works;
in our deafness we might hear you ... and your call;
and in our unknowing, we might come to know you ... in everyone, and all our relations.
Ignite within our hearts, your passion of Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship and Daring Justice.*

*Opening Hymn: Sing a New World (from resource: SFTHO Songs For The Holy Other)
New words to a familiar tune. (on screen please)*

SING A NEW WORLD INTO BEING by: Mary Bringle to tune: 8787D

*Sing a new world into being, sound a bold and hopeful theme.
Find a tune for silent yearnings, lend your voice and dare to dream.
Dream a church where all who worship find their lives and loves belong.
Sing a new world into being, sing as Christ inspires your song.*

*Sing a new world into being, where each gender class and race.
Brings its rainbow gifts and colors to God's limitless embrace.
Where the lines that once divided form instead the ties that bind.
Sing a new world into being, Risk transforming heart and mind.*

*Sing a new world into being, where the homeless find a home.
Where no children ever hunger, but are filled with God's shalom.
Where all people work for justice, where all hate and vengeance cease.
Sing a new world into being, raise the harmonies of peace.*

*Sing a new world into being, Join the ancient prophets' cry.
For a time of health and plenty, when all tears have been wiped dry.
When compassion flows like waters, pouring balm for all who grieve.
Sing a new world into being, live the promise you believe.*

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12 Unity and Diversity in the Body (pre-recorded video)

Kimberly: Today's scripture is coming from 1 Corinthians 12:12 where we hear about the Unity and Diversity in the Body

Maggie: Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

Kimberly: Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

Maggie and Kimberly together: Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

Maggie: May this scripture lesson today touch our hearts, so that we as the body of Christ might indeed to unified within our diversity.

Blessing and Dedication of Holy Saints: Darren Liepold

Recognition, Memorials and Retirees (information and bios in 2023 Report Book, see **Appendix B**)

Blessing and Dedication of God's People (adapted from words by HP Rivers. HP Rivers (they/them/theirs) was raised on love and coffee by Westside UU Church in Knoxville, TN. They are a Master of Divinity student at Starr King School for the Ministry and serve as Director of Religious Exploration at the UU Church of Tallahassee.) **ON SCREEN PLEASE**

Mary Margaret: Today we bless and dedicate God's People to the work of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, peace, activism, and Grace.

Blessed are the wanderers,

Seeking affirmation.

**ALL: Blessed are the worshipers,
Praying from closets,
Pulpits, pews, and hardship.**

Mary Margaret: Blessed are the lovers of leaving –

Leaving family and familiarity,

Leaving tables

Where love is not being served.

**ALL: Blessed are those who stay.
Blessed are those**

***Who hunger and thirst for justice –
For they will be satisfied.***

*Mary Margaret: Blessed are the queer, the straight, the binary and non
For together we make up the:*

***ALL: Disciples of Truth,
Living, Breathing, Sacred
Reflections of Holy and Divine Love
Who are ... the disciples of Unity, Diversity and Love.***

Blessing and Dedicating Rainbow Flags to Celebrate Affirming Ministries within ECORC

Sharon Hull as ECORC Staff: Naming the 27 Affirming ministry units within ECORC and as you read the list of names have a rep come forward to receive their flag from Sharon Woodrow and Joyce Payne Co-Chairs of Affirming Forum.

Joyce Payne: Today we bless and dedicate these rainbow flags.

*May these flags be used in your communities of faith, as:
a symbol of both justice and hope to all who see it flying;
a blanket of protection for all those who are being marginalized or ostracized
And a cape of power for all those whom we are being called to encircle, support, affirm and empower!*

*Sharon Woodrow: Today we bless and dedicate these rainbow flags
So that they may be a symbol of our conviction and commitment to
Provide safe and safer spaces for all peoples, for all expressions, for all orientations.
May they fly proudly throughout our Region
as a symbol of our commitment to follow in the ways of
Hope and Peace, Reconciliation and Justice, Compassion and Love.
For surely these are the ways of Jesus.*

*Joyce Payne: Holy Spirit be thy will
Be thy will Holy Spirit.
Bless these Rainbow Flags,
and all who fly them,
and all who bear witness to them,
and all who are protected by them.*

*Sharon Woodrow: Bless these rainbow people,
And all who love them,
All the Clergy and all the Laity,
And all who serve in your name.*

*Joyce Payne: May these rainbow flags be used throughout our region
and the United Church of Canada,
as symbols of justice, and peace, and love.
May it be so.
And All Gods people can say:
AMEN.*

Blessing and Dedicating an Affirming Fabric Runner

***Judy Amsbury: The Affirming Forum of East Central Ontario Regional Council commissioned the creation of a table cloth and a table runner to celebrate the Regional Council becoming an Affirming Ministry. Today we receive the Table Runner as created by Jackie Harper and Judy Ormshaw, for a blessing and dedication.
The background colours of the table runner represent the colours of the pride rainbow and include the colours***

of the Progressive flag. Appliqued onto these background colours is a meandering vine reminding us that we are all connected, but may take different routes as we explore what radical hospitality, inclusion, justice and welcome look like in our particular contexts, within the United Church of Canada. Also along the vines are tulips in varying stages of growth and colour reminding us of the broad and wondrous diversity of each flower, each person, each wonderful unique creation, and that all stages of growth are necessary for the fullness of life God longs for all of us to know. The names of the Affirming Ministries and Communities of Faith within the East Central Ontario Regional Council appear on the table runner witnessing to the growing ministries committing themselves to justice, inclusion and welcome.

(ON SCREEN STARTING HERE PLEASE)

Judy: Today we bless and dedicate this beautiful table runner for the blessing of the Affirming Ministries within East Central Ontario Regional Council. May this be a symbol of our work and commitment to share our faith of inclusion and affirmation with all.

ALL: We add our blessings to this table runner, and pray that it will weave us together as a region to share in the good works that we are all called to: Faith, Justice, Reconciliation, Peace, Compassion, Joy, and Unconditional Love.

Judy: May this blessing remain not in this place, but be woven into the very fabric of our beings, so that wherever we go, this blessing goes also.

ALL: We pray it to be so. Amen, and Amen!

Hymn #2: As Colors in the Sky (SFTHO)

BY [DANIEL CHARLES DAMON](#)

*As colors in the sky,
we move and blend in love,
a touch of this, a mix, a match,
as gifts from heaven above.*

*Our genders may seem fixed,
but even these may change
as we find beauty in-between
that may at first seem strange.*

*Our bodies may not match
the way we feel inside,
but we can change, transform, and find
your love still deep and wide.*

*So if we break the mold
traditions put in place,
let us with courage live our lives
with kindness, love, and grace.*

*Creating God, you dance,
you move as one in three.
Come show us, by your rainbow light,
our shared humanity.*

*The heavens and the earth
are made new every day,
help us discover by your grace,
new truth, new life, new ways.*

Passing the Peace of Christ: Modified- stay in seats- turn to greet

(Play in background-MV 182 Grateful Just Refrain)

Holy Communion: (adapted from Affirming Connections) on screen for first two segments

Joyce: *The Holy One be with you*

ALL: *And also with you*

Michelle: *Open your hearts to the One who is Love*

ALL: *We open our hearts to you, O Sacred and Holy Creator*

ALL: *Sing together: MV 79 – Refrain only*

Spirit open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,

Spirit, open my heart.

(not on screen after this. Camera on Joyce and Michelle)

(can musician please play MV 79 gently underneath while Joyce and Michelle speak)

Joyce: *We gather here, each a beloved miracle of Divine creation.*

God have given us so much: We have each other.

We have beauty, and courage, and the capacity to dream.

We have these precious lives of ours - so short and vulnerable -

they are meant to be lived abundantly,

rich in joy, meaning, and connection.

Michelle: *Today we gather at the table. To recommit to the God that illuminates possibilities for collective liberation.*

At this Table, we feast on reminders of God's presence with us.

We taste. We eat. We feel. We encounter

Christ among us and within us.

Joyce: *Here, too, we remember all who go without food,*

without safety,

and in search of belonging.

The bread of life nourishes us for the work of justice.

The cup of blessings revives and restores us for the work of loving.

ALL: *Sing together: MV 79 – Refrain only*

Spirit open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,

Spirit, open my heart.

Michelle: *When Jesus was his friends,*

he took bread, blessed it, broke it, and said,

This is my body broken open for you.

(Joyce breaks bread)

Friends take the bread that is before you, knowing that it is blessed in love

And hearing the words of Jesus, Take, eat, and do this in remembrance of me

Joyce: *After supper, he did the same with the cup, saying,*

This is my love being poured out for you.

A symbol of our new covenant.

(Michelle pours cup)

Friends take the juice that is before you, knowing that it is blessed in love

And hearing the words of Jesus: Take, drink, and do this in remembrance of me.

ALL: *Sing together: MV 79 – Refrain only*

Spirit open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

***As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.***

Prayer after Communion: (pre-recorded video)

*Maggie: We thank you O God for the feast of your table.
May we be filled with your Grace and Mercy.*

*Kimberly: We pray that: From this bread we might rise in goodness and Grace.
And from this cup, we might pour out your compassion upon all the world.*

*Maggie: Holy God, we pray that in this moment, you might unleash within us, the powerful spiritual gifts that
you have already planted within us.*

*Kimberly: The gifts of unity, Diversity and Affirming Love.
May it be so.
And all God's people can say:*

Maggie and Kimberly together: AMEN.

Closing Hymn VU 481: Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Commissioning (adapted from words from Cricket Hall)

Michelle: May the road rise to meet you

Sharon W: May the world rise to accept and embrace you exactly how you are

Joyce: May the rainbow of love enfold you

Judy: May your fluidity never be hindered

Sharon H: May your pronouns always be supported and your deadname always forgotten

Mary Margaret: May those you invite into your life remain loyal

Sharon W: May your chosen family lift you up and catch you when you need it

Joyce: May you be able to catch others when they need it

*Judy: May you remember sensitivity is not weakness,
but instead a great strength welling up inside you*

*Sharon H: And until we meet again,
May you be held in the palm of God's hand,*

*Mary Margaret: and may you remember that you are loved
And filled with divine love*

ALL: For we are ...

Living, Breathing, Sacred

Reflections of Holy and Divine Love

Who are ... the disciples of Unity, Diversity and Love.

Michelle: And for that ALL God's people can say:

ALL: AMEN!

ALL Sing: Choral Amen VU 967

A-men, A-men, A-men

Opening Motion

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister, presented the opening motion:

Omnibus Motion

2023-05-5-6-001_CONSENT MOTIONS (E. Hebert-Daly/A. Miechkota) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council move the following:

1. That the agenda as circulated be adopted;

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2. That the minutes of the East Central Ontario Regional Council General Meeting of October 29, 2022 be accepted as circulated (see *Fall General Meeting of October 29, 2022*; see as **Appendix A**);
 3. That the Report Book 2023 be received for information (see *Report Book 2023*; see as **Appendix B**);
 4. That the audited 2021 Financial Statements be received (see *2021 Financial Statements*; see as **Appendix C**);
 5. That the Equity Monitor Support Team for this meeting consist of Rev. Phil Wilson, Rev. Max Ward, Kaitlyn Ostrander, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Rev. Nancy Clarke, Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Cunningham, Nancy Wilson and Karen Wilson;
 6. That the Scrutineers for this meeting be Rev. Phil Wilson, Karen Wilson, (online) and Rev. Ned Wells, William (Bill) Sheaves (in person);
 7. That the Discernmentarian/Parliamentarians for this meeting be Steve Coles and Rev. Jean Wilson;
 8. That the Chaplain for this meeting Caroline Giesbrecht;
 9. That this meeting includes the behavioral covenant – Holy Manners *The 2021 Manual, Appendix, 2*:

“We will

- keep God at the center of everything we do;
- each speak for ourselves;
- speak for a purpose;
- separate people from problems;
- allow for full and equitable participation;
- attend to others carefully without interruption;
- welcome the conflict of ideas;
- take a future orientation;
- demonstrate appreciation;
- honor the decisions of the body;
- commit to holding one another to account when we do not keep our holy manners;
- keep the discussion at the table;
- be mindful of our body language;
- check in about good use of time;
- allow the quiet people to speak, with an invitation to speak; and
- sincerely say what we really feel.”

The Very Reverend Marion Pardy introduced Holy Manners as a resource for the 38th General Council 2003. Holy Manners has been used as resource for the conduct of meetings by subsequent General Councils and their executives. It has been adapted here for use as a resource by all councils and church bodies.

CARRIED

Equity Leadership Team Reporting

Paul introduced members of the team, and reminded participants that any equity issues (for this meeting or for others) could be forward to ecorcequity11@gmail.com.

Covenant with New Executive Minister, Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly

Here below is the liturgy that was led by Rev. Paul Reed, Speaker for the Assembly of Elders and Chair for this meeting:

Relations Minister	<i>“Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand - shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven” – Matthew 5:16, The Message</i>
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<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Members of the Regional Council, I present to you, Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, who has been called to the position of EXECUTIVE MINISTER. We believe he is well qualified and has been prayerfully selected. A covenant is a promise we make with God and with one another, a promise to live God's Way. We are about to enter into a new covenant relationship with God, with you Eric, and with you the people of Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council. Eric, will you take up and continue your Christian ministry with Christ's people in this new relationship.</i>
<i>Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly</i>	<i>I will, God being my helper</i>
<i>Speaker</i>	<i>(ask that the Rc open their mics) Do you, the members of Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council promise to support this ministry which will be exercised on your behalf and to commend and support Eric within this Regional Council</i>
<i>ECORC</i>	<i>We will, God being our helper.</i>
<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Eric, we welcome you as you enter into this covenant with us and we look forward to the ministry which you will exercise among and with us.</i>
<i>TBD</i>	<i>Closing Prayer</i>
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Halle, Halle, Halle</i>

Presentation of Prayer Shawl

Cheryl Mound, representative for Prayer Shawl Ministry, gifted Eric with a prayer shawl.

Lunch Break

Attendees took their lunch in the hall.

Moderator's video and Greetings from General Council Representative

Karen Valley, Office of Vocation Minister introduced herself, shared details of her role, brought greetings from the General Council office, and introduced the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator and shared the Moderator's video message.

UCRD, Bookroom, Fair Trade

Paul introduced various groups to make small presentations:

- UCRD – see Video presentation
- Bookroom – Pat introduced herself (from Grand River Books), and announced that books are on display, that anything ordered today would not have shipping charges, and shared some books of interest.
- Fair Trade -Marylynn introduced herself, some fair-trade products, and invited all to peruse the fair-trade products.

Mission Through Property (MTP)

- see 2021 Financial Statements; see as **Appendix C**)

Ted Meyers, Chair of MTP highlighted this leadership team's report (see 2023 Report Book as **Appendix B**) and Brian James, Regional Council Treasurer highlighted the 2021 Financial Statements.

Toronto United Church Council (TUCC)

Ted introduced the TUCC and informed that there is room for two members to service, and interested parties are encouraged to submit expressions to the Assembly of Elders.

Nominations

- see 2023 Report Book as **Appendix B**

Mary-Jane Hobden, highlighted the Nominations Report in the report book and then presented the following motion:

2023-05-5-6-002 MOTION (Mary-Jane Hobden/S. Heinrich) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council receive and approve the recommendations of the Nominations Leadership Team to appoint the following people into leadership positions on ECORC leadership teams for three-year terms, from the rise of the spring 2023 meeting until the rise of the spring 2026 meeting:

Kaitlyn Ostrander	to the Assembly of Elders
Rev. Lynn Watson	to the Assembly of Elders
Stephen Coles	to the Assembly of Elders
Kevin Fitzpatrick	to the Assembly of Elders
Rev. Stephanie Richmond	to the Covenant Support Team
Rev. Phil Hobbs	to the Covenant Support Team
Randall Scott	to the Covenant Support Team
Paul Kneebone	to the Covenant Support Team
Debra Fortin Brown	to the Equity Team
Kevin Fitzpatrick	to the Equity Team
Adele Boy	to the Formation, Nurture and Justice Team
Darlene Hallett	to the Formation, Nurture and Justice Team
Bruce Hutchinson	to the Mission through Property Team
Kendall Begbie	to the Mission through Property Team
Rev. Dr. John Young	to the Nominations Team

CARRIED**Student Bursaries**

Mary-Jane Hobden highlighted the availability of bursaries.

Discerning Currents (Strategic Planning Group)

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister, introduced Discerning Currents (the strategic planning group) and provided an explanation for how the name 'Discerning Currents' came into existence. Members of newly formed group were introduced and were given the opportunity to highlight what will be happening in the coming year, in particular, consultations/town halls. The Strategic Plan was described in fuller detail, and it was explained that it would be used to establish the priorities directing the Regional Council. An in depth explanation can be found on The United Church website: <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/our-call-and-our-vision>).

Following introductions and presentation, attendees were dispersed into breakout room for 30 minutes to discuss various aspects of the strategic plan – each group was to focus on one different aspect of the strategic plan.

Bio Break

A break was had by all for 20 mins.

Discerning Currents (Strategic Planning Group) cont'd

Rev. Larry Doyle invited groups to share what struck them from their table group times. Participants were invited to post thoughts on a share board that had been set up in the hall.

Office of Vocation

Rev. Caroline Penhale introduced herself and highlighted that she currently shares her position with Rev. Lillian Roberts; Caroline focuses on candidacy pathways and Lillian on personnel oversight. In July Caroline will be taking on both roles. Following these introductions, Caroline presented a power point presentation on behalf of the Office of Vocation (see EOORC website: <https://ecorcuccan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Slide-Deck-for-ECORC-May-2023-CP.pptx.pdf>).

Meet the Ordinands

Rev. Caroline Penhale introduced the candidates for ordination (Kevin Fitzpatrick and Kaitlyn Ostrander), who then took the opportunity to share about their journeys that led them to respond to their calls:

Ministry in Changing Times

Sharon Hull, Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationships and Justice with All Ages and Rev. Darren Liepold, Pastoral Relations Minister presented with the help of the following people:

- Rev Bob Root identified different types of ministries: Contract Ministry; Shared Ministry; Cooperative Ministry; Part-time Ministry
- Rev. Max Ward provided a personal example of contract ministry.
- Rev. Elizabeth Cunningham provided a personal example of Collaborative ministry.
- Rev. Bob Root provided a personal example of part-time ministry.

Following the presentation, it was announced that there would be upcoming workshops to further inform of the different types of ministries presented. It was also announced that a video series existed that sums up these ministry types.

Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization

A video presentation and slides were used to provide background information concerning “Remit 1- Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization”. This was followed by Kaitlyn Ostrander and Rev. Rodney McNally introducing and explaining the wording used in the motion; Ryan McNally recounting the history and commitment to Calls to the Church; and Rev. Tom Smart explained the Remit Process. Following the presentation, the motion was voted on.

2023-05-5-6-003 MOTION (K. Ostrander/W. Stride) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect:

1. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council*; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
2. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union**; and
3. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

** The "Denominational Council" and the "General Council" are often used interchangeably.*

*** The detailed proposed changes to the Basis of Union are listed in a chart on page 5 of the Study Guide, under the section heading "Frequently Asked Questions".*

Yes 118; No (none) to Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For additional information visit: <https://generalcouncil44.ca/council/remit-1-establishing-autonomous-national-indigenous-organization>

Additional Reporting

The following announcement were made:

- El Salvador mission trip, Rev. Ryan McNally and Rev. Wonda Stride
- Bay of Quinte United Church Women Regional Council, Chery Mound

Concluding Session

Rev. Paul Reed concluded this first session of the meeting by announcing some of the local restaurant, by reminding attendees that session two would beginning the next morning at 10 AM (to allow for viewing of the coronation), and by wishing all a good night.

Celebration of Ministry Rehearsal

Following the conclusion of session one, there was a brief rehearsal for those involved in the Celebration of Ministry Service. For others it was a free evening; an opportunity for fellowship and networking.

Saturday, May 6th 2023

Session two

Rev. Paul Reed, Speaker of the Assembly of Elders and Chair of this meeting welcomed all attendees to session two of this annual General Meeting.

Old Hay Bay Church

Rev. Phil Wilson shared details about Old Hay Bay Church. Flyers were handed out with more information

Formation Nurture & Justice

- See detailed reporting in the *2023 Report Book* as **Appendix B**

Rev. Ned Wells, Patricia Long, on behalf of the Formation, Nurture & Justice Leadership Team, extended thanks and appreciation towards Sharon Hull and Rev. Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley, in their roles as staff support to this leadership team. Ned and Pat introduced a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the scope of this leadership team and the various Forums which fall within it:

1. **Affirm Forum:** Sharon Woodrow, co-chair, expressed gratitude to all that have shown support to this forum and highlighted details from the Affirm Forum report contained in the report book.
2. **Indigenous Justice & Respectful Relations Forum:** Helmut Enns and Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley, Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice announced that The Dixie Shilling Memorial Student Bursary (Marilyn and Fair Trade donated \$2000). Rodney also announced that a travelling library of indigenous writings and resources is available for Communities of Faith within the region council.
3. **Anti-racism, Interfaith, Intercultural Forum:** Rev. Dr. Aruna Alexander, chair, extended gratitude to

all that have been supporting this forum and highlighted details from the Anti-racism, Interfaith, Intercultural Forum contained in the report book.

4. **First Thirds Ministry:** Sharon Hull, Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationships and Justice with All Ages, highlighted upcoming events.

Covenanting Support (CST)

- See detailed reporting in the *2023 Report Book* as **Appendix B**

William (Bill) Sheaves shared descriptions of the kinds of work the Covenant Support Team does, and also highlighted its Forums (Retirees Forum, Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Forum, Liaisons Forum – reporting for these forums are also contained in the report book).

Rev. Darren Liepold, Pastoral Relations Minister announced some upcoming events and highlighted that the Pastoral Relations Newsletter is being circulated every second month.

Cathedral of the Trees

Rev. Marilyn Zher and Rev Svinda Heinrich shared details about the ongoing work of Cathedral of the Trees and the steps individuals can take for reserving time in Algonquin Park. See the Regional Council website for more information: <https://ecorcuccan.ca/application-to-lead-worship-at-the-cathedral-of-the-trees-algonquin-park-trailer/>

Bedford House - Bridges out of Poverty (Peterborough)

- See detailed reporting in the *2023 Report Book* as **Appendix B**

Rev. Paul Reed, Speaker, highlighted that the definitions for Community Faith is being stretched in terms of structure, and introduced Bedford House Ministries as an example. Reverend Lynn Smith-Reeve and Reverend Allan Smith-Reeve shared a PowerPoint Presentation highlighting some of the experiences of this ministry. <https://bedfordhouse.ca/>

Equity

- See detailed reporting in the *2023 Report Book* as **Appendix B**

Rev. Phil Wilson shared details of the ongoing work being done by the Equity Team, and invited all to make use of the email to submit comments, not just for general meetings, but also for other meetings where support may be needed (ecorcequity11@gmail.com). Phil reminded all to always name an equity support person during meetings. The following acronym was shared: Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI). It was felt this is a great way to quickly name what is important when considering Equity as a whole.

- **Equity & Facilitation Team**

Phil highlighted how Equity has played a major role when planning general meetings.

Thanks to Our Host: Trinity United Church, Cobourg

Gratitude was expressed to members of Trinity United Church for their gracious hosting.

Sharing-time

A time was allotted for sharing from the floor of the plenary, and participants were invited to highlighting ministries that are happening throughout the Regional Council; including announcements of upcoming events. Sharing/announcements included:

- **The Water Walker (book)**

The Water Walker, Written and Illustrated by Joanne Robertson. The story of a determined Ojibwe Grandmother (Nokomis) Josephine-ba Mandamin and her great love for Nibi (water).

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- **Picton United Church**
Brian Nicholson, DLM, highlighted how Picton United Church is repurposing its building space.
 - **Rural Connect**
Rev. Ryan McNally Shared details of the Rural Connect Program.
 - **Bridgenorth United Church**
Role of music in Ministry.
 - **Bridgestreet United Church**
Outreach and expanding Ministry through music.
 - **Rural Congregation**
Sharing knitted stars throughout the community, ignited many questions and led to conversation and community building.
 - **Axe throwing**
Building community through fun activities.
 - **Centennial 2025**
Invitation to submit ideas to the planning team.
 - **House Keeping**
Rev. Christine Black, thanked all for attending and provided some information for preparing for the Celebration of Ministry service this afternoon.
 - **Change of Speaker in Coming years**
Rev. Paul Reed, Speaker, announced that this would be his last meeting as Speaker and chairing general meetings. Paul encouraged the members of the Regional Council to afforded the next Chair that grace that was afforded to him.

Covenanting with Assembly of Elders, Leadership Teams and Promises of the Regional Council

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly led the Covenanting service; it began with calls and responses to members of the Assembly of Elders and Leadership Team, and then by the promise of support of Regional Council members to those serving. The service had interspersed within it scripture readings, including: 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24; and Romans 15:13. The service closed with a prayer of thanksgiving for all those willing to serve.

Celebration of Ministry Service

The Celebration of Ministry Service was held in the Sanctuary at Trinity United Church, situated in Cobourg, Ontario, and began at 2:30 PM. The officiants for the service were the Executive Minister, Rev. Éric Hébert-Daly; the Speaker, Assembly of Elders, Rev. Paul Reed; the Pastoral Relations Minister, Rev. Darren Liepold; the General Council Guest, Karen Valley; the Minister for the Office of Vocation, Rev. Caroline Penhale; the host congregation Minister for Trinity United Church (Cobourg) Rev. Kristiane Blackand; and the Music and Choir Director Debbie Fingas. The officiants and candidates entered the sanctuary to the processional hymn 'Let Us Build a House' (MV1). The service opened with words of welcome and the land acknowledgement, followed by the Call to Worship, lighting the Christ Candle, the Prayer of Approach, and an anthem (sung by members of *High Spirits* (youth choir at Trinity United Church). The Scripture reading was 1 Corinthians 12: 12-30, and the theological reflection was shared by Rev. Dr. John H. Young. Following the reflection, the hymn "I Have Called You by Your Name (MV 161) was sung. The Offertory was followed by the hymn "For the Gift of Creation" (VU 538, a time of prayer led by Rev. Dr. John. H. Young, and an anthem.

A Celebration of New Ministries began with the singing of hymn “Here I am Lord” (VU 509) and then the reciting of “Our Affirmation of Faith”. The candidates were presented by Rev. Caroline Penhale, Office of Vocation Minister for the Regional Council. Following the declaration of vows by the new ordained candidates, each of them was presented with a bible and certificate. Family and friends presented a stole. Those in attendance responded with Halle, Halle, Halle (VU 958). The Ordinands:

Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care within
The United Church of Canada

Rev. Kevin Fitzpatrick Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care within
The United Church of Canada

Holy Communion liturgy included a Call and Response, the singing of hymn “One Bread, One Body” the reciting of the Prayers for the Community and The Lord’s Prayer, and The Great Thanksgiving (adapted from the World Council of Churches 10th Assembly Resources for Prayer and Praise book. 2013. Prayer #52.). This was followed by the Remembrance & Blessing, Sharing of the Elements, the Prayer following Communion and the singing of hymn “Sent Out By God’s Blessing (VU 481).

The Celebration of Ministry Service ended with the closing benediction, then followed by the recessional hymn ‘Let All Things Now Living’ (VU 242).

A reception was held in the Hall following the service.

Closing Motions

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister moved the following motions:

2023-05-5-6-004_MOTION (P. Wilson/E. Hebert-Daly) that following the rise of this general meeting of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, all powers of the Regional Council be granted to the Assembly of Elders until the next Fall General Meeting, on October 28th 2023 at Emmanuel United Church, Odessa, ON. **CARRIED**

2023-05-5-6-005_MOTION (P. Wilson/E. Hebert-Daly) that the meeting be adjourned following the rise of the Celebration of Ministry service, and that the Speaker declares this general meeting of the East Central Ontario Regional Council duly concluded. **CARRIED**

Gratitude to Speaker

Thanks, and appreciation were extended to Rev. Paul Reed for his tenure serving as Speaker of the Assembly of Elders as well as serving as Chair during the Regional Council’s general meetings over the past three years

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned following the rise of the Celebration of Ministry Service (4 PM).

Rev. Paul Reed
Speaker

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly
Executive Minister

Joel Miller
Recording Secretary

2023-17

The United Church of Canada

East Central Ontario Regional Council
Spring General Meeting

May 5-6, 2023
Trinity United Church,
Cobourg, ON

Appendix A

East Central Ontario Regional Council Fall General Meeting of October 29, 2022

Appendix B

Report Book 2023

Appendix C

ECORC Audited 2021 Financial Statements

*All appendices located at:

<https://ecorcuccan.ca/2023-ecorc-spring-annual-meeting-may-5th-and-6th/>