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**SPRING GENERAL MEETING**

The East Central Ontario Regional Council of The United Church of Canada held its Spring General Meeting at Cambridge Street United Church (Lindsay, Ontario) in two sessions, on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Registration began at 9 am and the call to order at 10 am. Following session one on Friday, a Celebration of Ministry Service was held at 7 pm.

**THE FOLLOWING REGISTERED THEIR ATTENDANCE AT THE BUSINESS MEETING****Ministry Personnel (64)**

Stephen Ambury, Mark Arnill, Sharon Ballantyne, Donna Bignell, Mary-Margaret Boone, Michelle Brotherton, Wendy Bulloch, Sharon Campbell-Rayment, Karen Croxall, Elizabeth Cunningham, Steven Davis, Terrence Deline, Jeff Doucette, Michelle Down, Lawrence Doyle, Catherine Elsdon, Kim Falls, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Sherry Fugard, Susan Genge, Caroline Giesbrecht, Margaret Goodwin, Cathy Gradante, Donald Green, Jacqueline Harper, Svinda Heinrichs, Phil Hobbs, Michelle Hofman, Elaine Kellogg, Gregory King, Nancy Lester, Norman Long, Joanna MacQuarrie, Robert Matheson, David McMaster, Cheryl McMurray, Ryan McNally, Sylvia Anne, Meredith, Aaron Miechkota, Jeannette Millar, Don Misener, David Moore, Brian Nicholson, Kaitlyn Ostrander, Kerrie Perry, Paul Reed, Stephanie Richmond, Robert Root, Christine Sloan, Karen Smart, Norma Lynn Smith, Allan Smith-Reeve, Stevan Spicer, Janet Stobie, Wanda Stride, Max Ward, Lynn Watson, Edward Wells, Barbara Willard, Don Willmer, Nancy Wilson, Jean Wilson, John Young, Marilyn Zehr.

**Lay (65)**

Leanne Ashbridge, Shirley Baster, Adele Boy, Elizabeth Gail Brimbecom, Joanne Brown, Freda Burns, Linda Church, Stephen Coles, Kimberly Collins, Paul Cook, Krista Coughler, Luc Coutu, Margaret Curtis, Phyllis Elvidge-Bell, Helmut Enns, Peggy Fillier, Ian Finlay, Sharon Goulding, Sharon Green, Anthony Griffith, Doreen Hallé, Darlene Hallett, Frank Hiebert, Paul Hillier, Susan Hogan, Carolyn Holmes, Brian James, Kerri Jebson, Patricia Long, Derek Marsellus, Dianne McCracken, Ted Meyers, Evelyn Mitchell, Cheryl Mound, Marie Northey, Elizabeth Pereman, Carol Peterson, Susan Pleasance, Elaner Pound, John Purdon, Catherine Redden, Brian Reid, Norman Rice, Marilyn Rodger, Margaret Scott, William Sheaves, Debbie Sherwin, Tom Smart, Arthur Smith, Terry Souch, Jack Soule, Grace Stanley, Leigh Tamlin, Kim Teatro, Patricia Teskey, Carrie Thompson, Norma Thompson, Samantha Varty, Ralph Werry, Shirley Whitely, Stephen Williams, Marie Williams, Ruth Wood, Sharon Woodrow, Sheila-Mae Young.

**Candidates serving in an Appointment (2)**

Mark Sturman., Kathleen Whyte.

**Regional Council Staff (9)**

Rev. Éric Hébert-Daly (voting clergy) Sharon Hull, Rev. Roger Janes, Rev. Darren Liepold (voting clergy) Joel Miller, Rev. Tori Mullin, Rev. Caroline Penhale Lukacs, Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley (voting clergy), and Karen Wilson.

**Guests of the Regional Council (18)**

Robert Bennett, Dianne Bennett, Susan Bunting, Janet Enns, Carolyn Hicken, Larry Hurley, Patricia James, Neil Killens, Wendy LaLonde, Margaret Merkley, Bonnie Misener, Gwendolyn Olson, Nancy Payne, Randy Scott, Alydia Smith, Thomas Stobie, Phyllis Tamlin, Joe Tompkins.

**Regrets (11)**

Deborah Elliott, Doug Ferris, Katherine Gregory, Bruce Hutchinson, Bonnie Kelly, Susan McAllister, David McMaster, Nicolette Mitchell, Harold Morgan, Joyce Payne, Linda Walt.

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SESSION ONE  
FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2024

**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 at Cambridge Street United Church, Lindsay, Ontario.

**Land Acknowledgement**

Rev. Rodney Smith Merkley Minister for Respectful Relationship and Indigenous Justice, led the land acknowledgement, recognizing that this meeting was being held on the traditional lands of the Mississauga Peoples covered by the Williams Treaties.

**Welcoming to the Land**

Chief Knott of Curve Lake First Nations welcomed the Regional Council.

**a) Sharing and Teaching from Chief Knott of Curve Lake First Nations**

Chief Knott shared some history of the relationship between newcomers (or settlers) and First Peoples.

First Peoples welcomed newcomers and taught them how to survive on the land, holding on to the firm belief that Creator had one purpose for all peoples, which was to get along with each other and share with each other. The 1763 Royal Proclamation guaranteed certain rights and protections to First Peoples and was a tool of negotiating on a nation-to-nation basis. However, this treaty has not been followed. What exists today is *The Indian Act* - legislation to administer Indian status - which places First Peoples under control by the Federal Government.

During the war of 1812, First Peoples were called upon to help the fight. It could be said that the battle was won because of the participation of First Peoples. During WWI, First Peoples could not be drafted because they were not Canadian Citizen. Consequently, First Peoples volunteered to fight and followed suit of their friends and neighbors. The veterans when they returned, sent a letter to Indian Affairs, wanting to be recognized as Canadian citizen, and having the same rights. The answer was no. First Nations continued to volunteer during WWII and the Korean War. All this while not being recognized as Canadian Citizens.

Other mentions: Residential Schools and the 60's Scoop - the torture and anguish that little children suffered. First Peoples helping to fight famine in Ireland in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Nogies Creek in Bobcaygeon is named after Peter Nogie (Nogee) who is credited with leading First Peoples to help fight the famine in Ireland). Trent University: First contributions came from First Peoples. Curve Lake had the first woman Chief in Canadian 1952; also has had the youngest chief (21).

First Peoples are a strong, humorous and self-taught people. First Peoples still feel for others, build relationships and enjoy others company, despite the hardships endured. Reconciliation is not going to happen overnight. It will take many years to reconcile what First Peoples have gone through and what they are going through. First Peoples are not 'Indian'. There are Anishinaabe. They do not consider themselves as Indigenous or Aboriginal; these names are not correct.

Nation-building is when people can sit down and discuss things. There is an answer to everything. Creator has placed human beings on Turtle Island to enjoy their surroundings and to be grateful for what Creator gives. There is no need for poverty. It is the belief of First Peoples that all possess everything it need.

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**b) Response to Welcome**

Rev. Rodney Smith Merkley, thanked Chief Knott for his teaching and welcome, and gifted him with a bottle of maple syrup as thank you.

Wanda shared that she enjoyed listening. gifted maple syrup (how to make syrup was given as a gift). “Share your knowledge.” Rodney share some history of Bobcaygeon and how it took hundreds of year to name John Hogie Creek as a thank you to First Peoples.

**Words of Constitution**

Rev. Wanda Stride, Speaker 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 East Central Ontario Regional Council of the United Church of Canada, I hereby declare this spring annual general meeting duly constituted and to be in session for conducting the business which will properly come before it.”

**Welcome to Cambridge Steet United Church**

Rev. Sharon Campbell, Minister at Cambridge Street United Church, welcomed all in attendance. Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister shared the translated version of the Bible into Mohawk (translated by Harvey Satewas Garbiel) and provided some background information which led to the creation of the ‘Mohawk Bible’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FEpnF-CMwC>.

Wanda also shared details regarding Worship, Communion, the Celebration of Ministry service and accompanying musicians.

**Opening Worship**

The Call to Worship was an adaptation of Psalm 100 from The Inclusive Bible. The opening hymn was ‘Come, Let Us Sing (VU 222). Scripture was taken from the Book of Acts 2:42-47, and the Sung Response was adapted from Psalm 150. A musical interlude was led by Erwin Stroobach, Director of Music at Cambridge Street UC and the Cambridge Street Bell choir. Rev. Dr. Alydia Smith, Identity and Mission Network Coordinator, The United Church of Canada, shared a reflection on her participation in the creation of The United Church of Canada hymnal resource *Then, Let Us Sing!* The hymn ‘Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ’ (VU 468) was sung. The offering was collected. Communion: Following the singing of *Sanctus and Benedictus* ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’ (MV 203), the Consecrating of the Elements, the singing of the ‘Memorial Acclamation’ (MV 204) and singing of the ‘Great Amen’ (MV 205), all were invited to come to the Table of Jesus Christ and share in Communion. Worship concluded with a Prayer of Thanksgiving, the singing of hymn ‘Open Our Hearts’ (MV 21), a Closing Blessing and a postlude improvisation on Psalm 150 by Erwin Stroobach).

**Housekeeping**

Rev. Paul Reed, Chair of the Facilitation Forum, shared some housekeeping information and familiarized folks with the church (rooms, halls, bathrooms, gymnasium, other spaces that could be used). Those in attendance were encouraged to view the bookroom and other displays.

**Virtual Manners Skit**

Rev. Dr. John Young played the role of a person presenting during a meeting, and Eric and Wanda played the roles of people talking in the background during John’s presentation. This skit was used to demonstrate that using the chat during a presentation is an interruption. This led to acceptance of what is referred to as Virtual Manners in the Omnibus Motion.

**Omnibus Motion and Behavior Covenant**

**2024-04-19-20-001\_CONSENT MOTION** (E. Hebert-Daly/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council move the following:

1. That the agenda as circulated be adopted;
2. That the minutes of the East Central Ontario Regional Council fall general meeting of October 28, 2023 be accepted as circulated - see **Appendix A**;
3. That the ECORC Report Book 2024 be received and accepted as circulated - see **Appendix B**;
4. That the Equity Monitor Support Team for this meeting consist of Deb Fortin Brown, Karen Wilson, (online) and Rev. Kevin Fitzpatrick, Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander, Rev. Nancy Wilson and Rev. Elizabeth Cunningham (in person);
5. That the Scrutineers for this meeting be Karen Wilson, (online) and Rev. Darren Liepold (in person);
6. That the Discernmentarian/Parliamentarian for this meeting be Steve Coles;
7. That the Chaplains for this meeting Rev. Sharon Campbell Rayment (in-person) Ruth Wood (online)
8. That this meeting includes the behavioral covenant – *Holy Manners*; and the *Virtual Holy Manners*:

**Holy Manners**

One Voice: Called together by Christ as a community of broken but hopeful believers, striving to be faithful servants of God in our time and place as we offer our varying gifts,

Many Voices: We commit to keeping God at the center of everything we do;

One Voice: We confess, that we have not always lived up our vision of community, we need the Spirit to reorient us, to live an emerging faith, challenging us to live by grace rather than entitlement,

Many Voices: We commit to be truthful in our communications by: speaking for ourselves; and speaking purposefully;

One Voice: We are called as a diverse community of people celebrating our differences;

Many Voices: And so, we commit to honouring our intercultural vision through welcoming the conflict of ideas; making space for the full and equitable participation of all, enabling especially people who are quiet to speak; being mindful of our body language; listening carefully without interruption and separate people from problems;

One Voice: We are called to be bold disciples,

Many Voices: As we live into our call to discipleship we will hold one another to account when we do not keep to our commitments; We will take a future orientation in our discussions and imagination; demonstrate appreciation; And honouring the decisions of the body;

One Voice: We are called to lead in hope with purpose and vision as members of a community held and inspired by God, partnering with God in the mending of the world

Many Voices: So, we commit to keeping the discussion at the table and to be faithful stewards of our time.

All: We affirm that we are Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, to offer leadership to The United Church of Canada as it seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice. Amen

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*In the 2023 Manual (see page 192), the expression Holy Manners is translated as rules of conduct based on respect and benevolence.*

### **Virtual Holy Manner**

- use the Chat feature of Zoom appropriately:
  - understanding that speaking in Public Chat is equivalent to speaking out loud in a meeting and is disruptive and rude and should be directed to the Chair of the meeting and used for Points of Order and/ or matters of personal privilege;
  - responding in Chat when invited to do so by the Chair;
  - using direct messaging when desiring or needed to engage with another
- use of transcription not for use outside of the meeting/event;

### **CARRIED**

#### **Lunch Break**

Wanda shared a Grace before lunch before delegates were led to the gymnasium to be served a prepared meal by the members of Cambridge Street United Church.

#### **Gathering Music**

Rev. Larry Doyle led Gathering Music while playing his guitar: hymns: 'Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak', 'Hallelujah (Your Love Is Amazing)' (MV 26).

#### **Greeting Mayor of City of Kawartha lakes**

Mayor Doug Elmslie Doug brought greetings from Kawartha Lakes city council. Doug expressed how the city looks forward to engaging with communities in faith-based events. Doug reminded that members in the community don't have to go it alone, and that there are many in the community who are willing to help. Covid was a difficult time and there are many in the community who have experienced loss and anger. Faith-based events (like this regional council gathering) are like a breath of fresh air. The Church was commended for finding new ways to provide services and reach others. The mayor said that the Council is very supportive of the Church and would like to know when more gatherings take place. Doug shared how the women's resource center 'A Place Called Home' got started in Lindsay, and hoped there would come a time in the future when services like these will no longer be needed.

#### **General Council Office Greetings**

Wanda welcomed back Rev. Dr. Alydia Smith to the podium and thanked her for the message shared during the opening worship. Alydia asked delegates to 1. think about ways to engage with the centennial celebration of The United Church of Canada. Newsletters from The United Church of Canada (UCC) will be sent out with updates. The centennial kickoff event is happening in June 2024 and each subsequent month there will be celebrations of different aspects of the UCC. An opening worship service will take place June 9<sup>th</sup> at Metropolitan United Church; the liturgy for June 9<sup>th</sup> is available on UCC website. The UCC continue to be a united and uniting church with its full communion of partners and other of good will. 'Rendezvous' is taking place on July 3-6 at Brock University; it no longer is called Rendezvous, instead 'Audacious Hope. 3. The hymnal resource 'Then, Let Us Sing!' has curated 150 songs, copyright permission is underway. Hymns-sings, festivals and events are being planned. The Calvin Institute has been a tremendous support. A newsletter is also being circulated with updates. The hymnal will be available online, and hard copies will be available in July 2025.

#### **Moderator Greetings video**

The Right Reverend Dr. Carmen Lansdowne extended greetings from the office of the Moderator of The United Church of Canada, expressed appreciation for the unique public witness of The United Church of Canada provided through regional Council, and acknowledged with gratitude the many invitations received to come to this regional council. Carmen highlighted that time was approaching to prepare for General Council 45 (starting

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online June 14, 2025 and continuing in person in Calgary August 7-11, 2025) and invited all to consider submitting their names to be Commissioners (with a special invitation extended to youth of the regional council).

Wanda reminded that ECORC has made commitments to youth and climate and that it was time to lift up what has been done and still needs to be done.

### **Stewardship and Philanthropy Unit**

Rev. Roger Janes, Community of Faith Stewardship Support Staff, Philanthropy Unit, introduced himself, expressed his joy for being present, and shared the geography which his role covers. Roger's area of work includes: 1. Connect with Communities of faith, 2. Animating Mission and Service and 3. Planned Giving. Roger shared why people might want to approach him: 1 They have the question in mind: "How do we increase generosity?" 2. They are considering a legacy gift. 3. They are looking to reach out to members in the community. 4. They want to know how to effectively to recruit new people. Roger provided his own contact information and shared the online resource of new programs offered on the CHRUCHx platform. Programs: Getting Started in Stewardship, Changing the View Stewardship (i.e. from fundraising to spiritual practices.), stewardship Best Practices, Bequest and Estate Giving. Roger shared other resources like the Stewardship Toolkit, Planned Giving (events on April 24 and May 8<sup>th</sup>), Bequest and Estate Giving, Will Workbook.

Across the country Mission & Service surpassed budget expectations and giving in 2022. All regional council have provided generously. ECORC in 2023 gave 1.4 million (increased by 2% from 2022).

Roger introduced his colleague Lindsay Vautour, who is the Donor Engagement Stewardship Associate; her email is - [lvautour@united-church.ca](mailto:lvautour@united-church.ca) – she is very interested in sharing stories – and shared a video presentation of stewardship support staff within the Philanthropy Unit sharing thanks for stewardship work done throughout congregations.

### **Transformational Ministry**

Rev. Tori Mullin Growth Animator for Eastern Ontario Outaouais, Nakonha:ka, East Central Ontario regional councils shared that there has been a decline in church attendance. On any giving Sunday, there are 350,000 people attending a community of faith of the United Church of Canada. There 1.2 million Canadians identify with UCC. Many are witnessing the closing of churches, the amalgamation of churches for lack of resources and those who may have got there start in the UCC but have chosen somewhere to be their spiritual home. These observations have an impact when faced with the question "Do you have hope for the future of the Church". As encouragement Tori invited all to look at Jeremiah 29:11 "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope". General Council has hope for the Church as well, and it has developed a Strategic Plan, inspired by a call of Deep Spirituality, Bold discipleship Daring Justice, and which sets a plan to focus on several objectives. Tori's focus is on the objective of Growth and identifies three aspects: 1. Renew, 2. Create and 3. Invite (Acts 2 "God added to their numbers"). There are six Growth Animators that have been hired across the country, and each brings with them an understanding that in order for the Church to grow, there needs to be a sense of welcome, an attraction, a retention and a transformation. This calls on Communities of Faith to discern their activities and strengths which they have to offer. A Growth Animator's role consists of helping Churches improve their welcome and getting them to think about who is present and who is missing; working with research and development teams; providing demographic information about neighborhoods; presenting questions like what does strengthening invitation look like? 'What makes a community of faith more than just a social gathering?' 'what is the good news we have to share!?', 'how do we share our vision of hope and good news with others?'. There is a deep hunger for spirituality, in and outside the church.. Sometimes churches forget they have good news to share with neighbors, perhaps because they are more focused on buildings and governance structures. Tori invited delegates to be in touch and to attend a workshop in the afternoon where these themes will be explored even more.

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**Accountability Reports**

- see *ECORC Report Book (2024)* as **Appendix B**

Past Speaker Rev. Jean Wilson assumed the role of Speaker for the duration of the Assembly of Elders report.

- a) **Council of Elders** (formally know as the Assembly of Elders) – Rev. Wanda Stride, directed participants attention to the Council of Elders report in the report book and highlighted that the Strategic Plan Monthly Objectives Report is an appendix to the Council of Elder minutes. Wanda shared that lots of work is undertaken by the Council of Elders (all of the decisions taken since the previous AGM are in the report book), and one recent area in particular has been revising the regional council’s governance handbook. The Council of Elders meeting agenda has evolved to include more discerning alongside the regular business and reporting.

Wanda was thanked for assuming the role of Speaker on the Council of Elders (her term came to an end at the rise of this AGM). A Question was asked where to get the Equity Score Card? It is located on the website and links are provided in the Equity Leadership Team report (see report book).

Wanda resumed acting as Speaker.

- b) **Executive Minister** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister shared his joys of connecting and getting to know members of the Regional Council (RC), and its beautiful diversity. Eric announced that Remit 1 passed. Less than 100 communities of faith out of 2700 voted no. Gratitude was to those who were personally involved in encouraging Pastoral Charges to vote. The Equity work that is being done in this RC is leading the way and is inspiring equity work in neighboring RC. There are strong reconciliation efforts being done in this regional council, including the 35 years of relationship established in El Salvador; these are things that should be celebrated. Strategic Plan: At the end of the year, a full report will be rendered. Things to ponder: Congregations are the access point to The United Church of Canada. All the communities of faith are the RC. How does the regional council strengthen this touch point? Eric highlighted the group ‘Ministers for Minister’ which is providing leadership, building on strength and giving amplification to the kind of support Communities of Faith are in need of.

Eric thanked the staff for the tremendous amount of work they do. Eric Shared that Rev. Darren Liepold, is moving into a new role of Congregational Minister, Rev Debbie Roi has been hired as Pastoral Relations Minister (Official begins on the 22 of July).

The question was raised about the Congregational Minister and the Pastoral Relation Minister roles, and Eric highlighted the differences between job description. Eric is embarking on the Camino Pilgrimage on his sabbatical, and while he is away, for the first two months Darren will be acting as Interim Executive Minister and Rev. Dan Haward will take on the role for August and half of September.

**Rev. Jan Stobie, Author**

Rev. Jan Stobie expressed her gratitude for all who have responded positively towards her ministry of writing and who have purchased her books. She has sold over 10,000 books throughout the last fifteen years. Jan is hoping that by the fall she will have completed a new book, either a second version of *Dipping Your Toes*, or a third novel (both are currently in the works). Jan shared that \$1 of every book sold goes to the Mission and service fund (that is \$10,000 thus far). Jan highlighted that writing is her ministry, and she is so thankful that she has been able to spread the Good News in this way. Jan reminded participants of her book entitled *Break Trough Moments* (short stories), and her two novels, *Fireweed* and *To Begin Again*. Jan has also written a collection of kids’ books. All were invited to visit Jan at her display table during the breaks.

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### **Equity Book Study**

Rev. Nancy Wilson, Member of the Equity Forum (formally a Leadership Team) shared that Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Cunningham had referred to the book My Body Is Not a Prayer Request: Disability Justice in the Church, by Amy Kenny, and this has led the Equity Forum to hosting a book study..

### **Emmanuel College**

Andrew Aitchison, Admissions Counsellor & Recruitment Coordinator at Emmanuel College, shared that the college is the closest theological college in the region (Toronto). It is the only multifaith college in Canada. 1/3 of studies can be completed in-person and the other 2/3 online. There are also programs available for ministry personnel.

### **Then, Let Us Sing!**

Rev. Dr. Alydia Smith shared details about Then, Let Us Sing! a new hymnal resource being created by the UCC. The hymnal is in a digitized format containing all the hymns of current hymnals (1,200) and 150 hymn additions. Enrollment will take place through *One License* and will allow for all the copyright (to project and livestream) Current One License subscribers will get a cheaper subscription if they enroll with Then, Let Us Sing! This subscription will also be compatible with Gathering Worship. Other publishers covered include Hope Publishing and GIA Publications. Other partners in the project include full communion partners United Church of Christ and Christ Church (Disciples of Christ). Ecumenical collaborators: Anglicana and Presbyterian Church.

The 150 new hymns are chosen to fit the ethos of the United Church of Canada, and according to guiding principles. I have decided to follow Jesus (Nepali is the original language) is an example, being popular in all circles. Rev. Larry Doyle provided accompaniment on the guitar while Alydia led participants through the first verse of the following examples: 'I have decided to follow Jesus', 'Who Will Speak a Word of Warning', 'For Everyone Born'. New hymns address classism and poverty, speak about mental health and mental wellness, speak about fear, lift the intercultural, call for anti-racist and anti-oppression, priorities diversity, celebrates diversity and many other themes. Parts of the new collection have been Commissioned. The hymns use more contemporary language, to uplift and amplify. The hymnal will be is accessible (languages, sign-languages)

In the future there will be regional hymn-sings, webinars, videos teaching and explaining the context of the music. Alydia shared that the Education Justice and Ethos group is a constant resource for theological information. Many resources, brochures, and information will be made available in the future.

### **Educational Sessions**

Education sessions were held throughout the church building and made accessible for Zoom participants between 4 and 5 PM (30 min duration per session). The four topics were:

- a) Then, Let Us Sing!
- b) Growth Animation
- c) Kindred Works
- d) Stewardship

### **Dinner**

Dinner was served in Cambridge Street Hall.

### **Celebration of Ministry Service**

The Celebration of Ministry Service was held in the Sanctuary at Cambridge Street United Church, situated in Lindsay, Ontario, and began at 7 PM. The officiants and candidate entered the sanctuary to the processional hymn 'God is Here' (VU 389). Rev. Rodney Smith-Merkley welcomed all, led the Call to Worship, lit the Christ Candle, and led the Prayer of Approach. Brian Nicholson, candidate for ordination, read from the Scriptures: Ecclesiastes 3: 1-13. Rev. Darren Liepold shared a sermon entitled "It Is Time", which was followed by the



singing of hymn 'I have Called You by Your Name' (MV 161). Rev. Darren Liepold Led the Offertory, followed by the singing of hymn 'What Can I do' and the Offertory Prayer. The anthem 'Fill-A-Me Up' sung by members of the Cambridge Street United Church Choir, led by Erwin Stroobach, Director of Music. Bill Sheaves led all in the reading of 'Our Affirmation of Faith', and in memoriam honored the following ministry personnel: Rev. Elizabeth Paasma, Rev. George Lavery, Rev. Barry Goodwin, Rev. E. Lois Wilson, Rev. Don Matheson, Rev. David McKinnell, Rev. Douglas Robert Blair, Rev. Joan Marrs Hughes, Rev. David Spivey, Rev. James Moulton, Rev. John Gordon Sloan, Rev. Ruth Muriel Hudgins. Rev. Caroline Giesbrecht announced all ministry personnel who are retiring: Rev. Dr. J. David McMaster, Rev. G. David King, Rev. Elaine Kellogg, Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle, Rev. Lynn Smith-Reeve, Rev. Nancy Clarke. Patti James announced all ministry personnel who were celebrating anniversaries this year (those who have landed on a 5-year increment of serving a ministry personnel; see Report Book, pages 53-55).

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister and Rev. Wanda Stride, Speaker of the Council of Elders (formally the Assembly of Elders) led the opening of the ordination. Rev. Dr Elizabeth Cunningham, representative of the Office presented Brian Nicholson to be ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care within The United Church of Canada. The Regional Council was asked for its pledge of support and Brian declared his ordination vows. This was followed by the laying on of hand and the placing of the stole. After Brian had been declared ordained, he was presented with a Bible, a certificate, a chalice and paten, a gift from the youth of the regional council, a prayer shawl, a Mission & Service pin and a stole from Cambridge Street United Church. Following this, all in attendance responded with Halle, Halle, Halle (VU 958). The Ordinand:

Brian Nicholson	Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care within The United Church of Canada
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The Holy Communion liturgy was led by Sharon Campbell Raymont, minister at Cambridge Street United Church and Elizabeth Cunningham, and included the Call to the Table, the singing of hymn 'One Bread One Body' (VU 467), the reciting of the Lord's Prayer, the Great Thanksgiving, a Sung Refrain 'Though I May Speak' (VU 372, verse 3), the Remembrance and Blessing, the sharing of the elements, the Prayer After Communion, and the singing of hymn 'River' (MV 3).

The Celebration of Ministry Service concluded with a closing benediction led by Stephen Coles (in-coming Speaker), followed by the recessional hymn 'Draw the Circle Wide' (MV 145). The Postlude was performed by Erwin Stroobach.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup> 2024  
SESSION TWO

**Praying for the Living Water** – Participants were invited to join Dorothy Taylor (Curve Lake) at 7:30 AM on the Trent Severn Waterway to pray for the living waters.

**In-Person Registration/Zoom Meeting Room Opens**

Participants were invited to join meeting at 8 AM via Zoom and in person at Cambridge Street United Church, Lindsay, Ontario.

**Gathering Music**

Gathering Music was led by Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle (with guitar) and included: 'Called by Earth and Sky' MV 135, 'Like a Healing Stream' (MV 144) and 'All Who Are Thirsty'.

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**Morning Worship**

Rev. Jean Wilson, Past-Speaker welcomed all and led the Call to Worship, followed by the singing of hymn 'Let us build a house' (MV1). After the Opening Prayer, selected verses were read from Scripture Ecclesiastes 3 (The Message), followed by a Litany for Changing Times and a Sung Response: 'Our God Goes With Us' (So Long ago) by David Kai, led by Cambridge Street United singers. The following Churches building were recognized as having closed: Mount Pleasant United Church, Stirling; Peniel United Church, Kawartha Lakes; Zephyr United Church, Zephyr; Ingoldsby United Church, Minden Hills; Gooderham United Church, Haliburton; Saint Andrew's United Church, Beaverton; Simcoe Street United Church, Oshawa. Rev. Darren Liepold led the Prayer of Blessing. The closing hymn was 'We Shall Go Out With Hope of Resurrection' (VU 586). Rev. Darren Liepold led the Closing Blessing.

Dorothy Taylor Curve Lake First Nations

Amin'bozhoo. Lighting of Christ Candle. Early morning worship and teaching down by the river. Dorothy. Anashnabe traditional elder, hand drummer, water activist. Prayers for Living Water. Women's walk around Pigeon Lake. Dorothy has visited before. The seven Grand Father revisited.

**The 7 Grandfathers Teachings**

Dorothy greeted the assembly in her native language (Mississauga, Ojibway) and explained that in her address she shared which clan she is from, her role, and where she is residing (Curve Lake). Dorothy also explained the meaning of the "Bozhoo", which is an Ojibway word, like saying hello in English. Dorothy is an Anashnabe traditional elder, hand drummer, water activist. She leads the Prayers for Living Water and organizes the Women's Walk around Pigeon Lake. This is the second time Dorothy has brought teachings to the regional council.

Before Dorothy began this teaching, she paid tribute to Elders Ron Wakegijig and Dr. Dave Courchene who came before her, with prayer, and drumming while singing amazing grace in Ojibway. These teachings are followed to renew all of God's creation; bring balance to the world. Love like a river will cut a new path whenever it meets an obstacle. The Seven Grandfather teachings are considered the guiding principles for everyday life and are taught to the children in the school - one month is dedicated each year: Love (represented by the Eagle); Respect (represented by the Buffalo); Bravery (represented by the Bear); Truth (represented by the Turtle); Honesty (represented by Sabe); Humility (represented by the Wolf); Wisdom (represented by the Beaver).

Dorothy also shared a saying of Chief Crowfoot (1830-1890) 'Go forward with Courage. Hold on to what is good. Even if it's a handful of earth hold on to what you believe'.

We all have tremendous gifts to bring forward with kind, soft hands and a good heart. Ana Bozhoo walked all of created and named all the animals, then departed, never to be part of same circle again why no dogs at powwows. The wolf was hunted almost to extinguished. Now they a thriving. They are also in arts, in pictures, .... Like the Anishinaabe People.

Following The 7 Grandfathers Teaching, Dorothy was presented with a colorful table runner from El Salvador, Maple Syrup and a copy of translated of Bible into Mohawk (translated by Satewas (Harvey) Garbiel).

Rev. Elaine Kellogg, Chair of the Indigenous Justice and Right Relations circle announced that she is stepping down as Chair, as she moves into retirement. Elaine displayed the Three Sisters Stole (created by Judy Montgomery), which is given to the Chair of the circle, and explained its design: the Three sisters stole (represented by Corn, beans squash); the three figures of women (set as a reminder of missing and murdered First Peoples women).

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**Greeting to folks on Zoom**

Wanda acknowledged those present on Zoom and invited them to be seen on the screens and say hello, and for them to see all who were present in person at the meeting.

**Covenant Support Leadership Team Accountability Report**

- see ECORC Report Book (2024) as **Appendix B**

William (Bill) Sheaves introduced himself and shared where in the report book The Covenant Support Leadership Team report could be found. Bill emphasized the need for Pastoral Charge Supervisor and reminded that anyone who is a member of the regional council, can become a pastoral charge supervisor. Part of a supervisor's role is to add your presence during meetings in order to establish quorum (as required in the manual).

Strategic objectives set out in the strategic plan: There are 16 activity streams being worked on by the Covenant support team. One in particular is the Self-Assessment Toolkit. There have been a few drafts, and the goal is for it to be available on the website next month. This self-assessment tool asks congregations to take an hour and look at each of the tools, and eventually submit the assessment with annual reports. Once received, a team will look at them to see if they can provide support wherever needed.

Information Session on how to use Church Hub: Church Hub is still proving to be difficult to navigate. An information session will address how to search, how to appoint, how to show that your community of faith is searching for a minister, etc.

Collaborative, Shared and Renewed Ministry Resources: a number of people have been participating in meeting sessions throughout the regional council. The resource is designed to help congregations who have an interest in collaborating with other congregations in some form or another. The Format: 1. Talk about strengths (i.e., foodbanks, programs for women and seniors, etc.). 2. Look at weaknesses, or areas of struggle and ask, 'what are things we would like to do better?' Give voicing to these things with neighboring congregations and see what sharing possibilities exist (i.e., M&P's join, sharing Christian Education animators, identifying other possibility of working together, etc. This is not to amalgamate, but to work together - feasible cooperation. Group to group discussions provides options for possibilities, using concrete examples of existing joint ventures between communities of Faith. Rev. Darren Leipold invited folks to communicate with him. Darren also mentioned that information sessions are taking place, where all kinds of possibilities for collaborative, shared and renewed ministry resources are being presented.

Churches that have closed, disbanded, amalgamated: There are resources available, and the website is being reorganized so that it is easier to navigate and arrive at specific information.

Mentoring laity, clergy with resources and developing a lay mentoring network: Work in under way and collaboration is in the works with a neighboring regional council (EOORC). Association of Clergy. An event is being planned soon. Clergy support: Clergy gatherings (Monday mornings in Oshawa, monthly lunches, monthly breakfasts, Zoom check-ins).

Governance Structure model kit: No resource currently but is being worked on in collaboration with other RC across the country. Should be available by the end of June.

M&P Refresher Kit: Pastoral Relations Minister leads twice-yearly workshops for M&P committees. Next session is May 11. Registration will be available in the news. 3-hour workshop. Content includes roles, work of the M&P, relationships via human resources, addressing common issues that arise.

Healthy Connections Forum. Collection of people who can answer questions, i.e., 'soft-connectors' 'wise-friends' to walk with congregations, and find resources that are needed more quickly. Sections of the regional council

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would be broken into sectors, i.e., Durham Clarington area Churches, Northwest Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, east etc. Eric and Darren will be seeking people with skillset to fulfil the role of ‘connectors’.

Good News Pieces: Good news from congregations for the newsletter, i.e., Faithful Footprints projects, saving money on electricity, food program, etc. When people are looking for a church home, having access to this information is very useful. Send good news stories to Karen Wilson and Darren for the Newsletter.

Centennial Celebration of UCC. A group is reaching out to congregations in the region to learn about what is being done at the local level, and what folks are looking forward to.

Question: It was acknowledged that communications have improved and that concerns are being listened to; gratitude was expressed for the efficiency that is emerging.

It was highlighted that there is room for synergy between the public and church. Free content to newspapers about the church. In the Strategic Plan, there is a plan for earned media strategy. Ultimately, when we are seen and heard, people will know we exist. A media training workshop is already happening in Nakonha:ka Regional Council, there is the same possibility to have a workshop in this RC.

Gratitude was extended to Covenant Support Team for all the work that they do.

### **El Salvador Mission Trip**

Helmut Enns invited those who participated in the trip to El Salvador to share some of their experiences during their recent trip. Helmut shared some of the background information on when and how this relationship began: People from El Salvador arriving at Emmanuel United Church, who were escaping the country’s civil war. This year, 23 pilgrims from this regional council to El Salvador, were accepted by Miguel, a direct disciple of Óscar Romero. The pilgrims learned the history of El Salvador’s past and witnessed how they are living a liberation theology. The youth in EL Salvador were most enjoyable and had an amazing energy. Gifts were brought from the regional council (including 6 computers for school). Schools are available for children; however, many children don’t attend school because they are working to help support their families. Helmut shared many photos, i.e., of school children, of pilgrims helping to build waters systems (digging holes) septic system, photos of the entire group, the amazing EL Salvadorean art that was everywhere, Centre where travelers stayed. The group was blessed with drivers and guides, and new relationships. An Invitation was extended to all to join this trip in the coming years. It is a life changing experience. Gratitude was extended to all who helped support this ministry with gifts, prayers, and accompanying the travelers’ online via blog page.

### **Health Break**

A health break was had by all for 20 mins.

### **Gathering Music**

Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle led gathering music (with guitar accompaniment): ‘The Way (New Horizon)’ written and arranged by Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle; ‘My Love Colours Outside the Lines (MV 138);

### **Governance Review**

- See *Governance Review Proposal* as **Appendix D**

Rev. Paul Reed acknowledged members who participated in preparing the governance review proposal and provided some background information which led to this work (in particular, the plan for revisiting governance every 5 years). The task group received lots of feedback, which went into the creation process. Paul highlighted that ECORC has been unique in areas of its work as a regional council. It was highlighted that the current governance structure has moved away from representation by committee (as was the Conference model) to having more representation throughout all the regional council. There has been a deep commitment to equality and diversity (credited to the work of a dedicated Nominations Leadership Team). There are still some struggles but

learning and growth has taken place. There was an information on April 16, and Paul extended thanks to those who participated to support the process. Paul explained that the changes being proposed also outline processes for when things will take effect. Paul reminded all that, while the RC's governance structure is not the end all and be all, it is a structure that allows for collaboration.

*Executive Committee*

**2024-04-19-20-002\_MOTION** (P. Reed/ K. Ostrander) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that the executive committee of the Regional Council, currently known as the Assembly of Elders be renamed the Council of Elders and that the presiding officer relating to the General Council be called the Lead Commissioner. These changes to be in effect upon the rise of this Spring 2024 meeting of the Regional Council. **CARRIED**

*Speaker*

**2024-04-19-20-003\_MOTION** (P. Reed/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that the Regional Council elect annually an individual to serve a three-year term on the Assembly of Elders/Church Council as Speaker designate, Speaker, past Speaker.

And further,

That the Nominations Team receive expressions of interest and that the first Speaker -Designate be elected in the Fall of 2024 to assume the role of Speaker Spring 2025 and thereafter elect a speaker designate at each Spring meeting starting in 2025. **CARRIED**

*Adding clarity and consistency to governance structure*

**2024-04-19-20-004\_MOTION** (P. Reed/S. Coles) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that:

1. The terms of reference of the Formation Nurture Justice, Covenant Support, Nominations, and Mission through Property Team be revised for consistency, accuracy and thoroughness by:
  - a. Confirming the number and role of elected (voting) members determined through the Nominations process and distinguishing from the non-elected, non-voting corresponding members serving by appointment.
  - b. Including within the Terms of Reference sections describing and answering questions relating to Purpose, Accountability, Membership, Meetings, Quorum (50% elected members plus 1), Role of Members, Chairperson (selected from elected members), Vacancies, Forums, Duties, Mandate.
  - c. Removing sections that are solely descriptive of process (how to) and expanding upon those that describe outcome (the what).
2. The terms of reference of all Forums be revised for consistency, accuracy, and thoroughness by:
  - a. Including within the Terms of Reference sections describing and answering questions relating to Purpose, Accountability, Membership, Meetings, Role of Members, Responsibilities.
  - b. Removing sections that are solely descriptive of process (how to) and expanding upon those that describe outcome (what).
3. The Governance Review Team in consultation with the Teams prepare the revisions for approval at the Fall 2024 meeting of the Regional Council and that the Teams may be guided by the revisions prior to approval. **CARRIED**

*Changes to reflect current practices*

**2024-04-19-20-005\_MOTION** (P. Reed/L. Watson) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that the Governance Structure be revised immediately to reflect the adopted practices of the Regional Council, namely.

- a. the Terms of reference of the Nominations Team be revised to clarify that the Team is not responsible for naming Team Chairs and Forum Members.
- b. that the Facilitation Team become a Forum accountable to the Council of Elders
- c. that the Equity Team become a Forum accountable to the Council of Elders.

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- d. That the membership of the LLWL (Licensed lay Worship leaders) Forum be limited and appointed by the Covenant Support Team and to be inclusive of both LLWL and others.
  - e. That the accountability of the Affirming Forum be to the Formation Nurture and Justice Team. **CARRIED**

#### *Granting Commission Powers*

**2024-04-19-20-006\_MOTION** (P. Reed/K Ostrander) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that:

1. the Covenant Support Team is granted Commission powers for specific matters, namely,
  - a. The appointment of Liaison Officers
  - b. The appointment of Pastoral Charge Supervisor
  - c. The approval of a vacancy and the initializing of a search when the needs of the Community of Faith/Pastoral Charge have not changed.
  - d. Approval of a Call when it matches the terms set out by the approved Search. These powers do not extend to any circumstance that emerges from conflict, uncertainty or deviates from precedent.
2. the Mission through Property and Finance Team is granted Commission powers to conclude the sale of Property declared surplus by the executive body of the regional council when the sale meets any imposed criteria and falls within 20% of the proposed sale price. **CARRIED**

#### **Lunch Break**

A catered lunch was served by volunteers from Cambridge Street United Church.

#### **Gathering Music**

Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle led gathering music (guitar accompaniment): ‘Dance With The Spirit’ MV 150; ‘Draw the Circle Wide’ (MV 145); ‘How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place’ (MV 29); ‘All I Know’, a praise song written and arranged by Rev. Dr. Larry Doyle.

#### **Accountability Reports Continued**

- See *Governance Review Proposal* as **Appendix D**

#### *New and revised Policies*

**2024-04-19-20-007\_MOTION** (P. Reed/S. Coles) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that:

The Governance Review Task Group in consultation with the Teams and others deemed necessary to develop and present to the Regional Council for approval, no later than Spring 2025,

1. New Policies
  - a. Regional Meeting Guidelines - to name objectives, agenda items etc.
  - b. Reimbursement of costs - incurred by leadership required to be physically present at Regional Council Meetings.
  - c. Investment guidelines- addressing ethical investment practices.
  - d. Use of investment funds – sustaining the present activities and protecting future resources
  - e. use of surplus properties – (manse, churches, cemeteries) balancing land and financial options
2. Revised current policies.
  - a. Travel reimbursement – updated to reflect approved budget
  - b. Voluntary Associate Minister (VAM) – separate from Marriage Policy
  - c. Marriage – separate from VAM Policy
  - d. Retired Ministers – provide guidance for engagement in communities of faith.
  - e. Policy for Electing Commissioners – to reflect practice
3. And further provide links to Denominational Policies. **CARRIED**

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*Directed Actions*

**2024-04-19-20-008\_MOTION** (P. Reed/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council approve that:

1. The Covenant Support Team ensure that the terms of Call/Appointment include.
  - a. in the position description, expectation of participation within the Regional Council, local Clusters and Networks, and that it reflects an appropriate percentage or hours of time:
  - b. in the terms of remunerations and support, community of faith responsibility for costs to attend Spring and Fall meetings of the Regional Council be included. **CARRIED**

*Use of Word 'Mission'*

**2024-04-19-20-009\_MOTION** (P. Reed/K. Ostrander) That the Regional Council respond to the request of the Indigenous church to avoid the use of the word 'mission', replacing it as appropriate with alternatives such as 'purpose' or 'ministry'. **CARRIED**

**Nominations** – Rev. Svinda Heinrichs, podium

- see ECORC Report Book (2024) as **Appendix B**

Rev. Svinda Heinrichs, Interim-Chair, shared the names of those serving on the Nominations Leadership Team and expressed gratitude to these volunteers. The team shared some concerns: Low number of expression of interests' application have been received; therefore, please prayerfully consider how you can serve, as there are still vacancies. Observation: Only men applied to Future through Property and women to Formation, Nurture, and Justice. It was strongly recommended that leadership teams follow the lead of the Council of Elders (by naming Past-Chair, Chair, Chair Elect – it is always important to have a succession plan.

**2024-04-19-20-010\_MOTION** (S. Heinrich/S. Coles) 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 Assembly of Elders and leadership teams for three-year terms, from the rise of the spring 2024 meeting until the rise of the spring 2027 meeting:

**Assembly of Elders**

Rev. David King  
Dr. Sheila Mae Young  
Rev. Brian Nicholson

**Mission Through Property Leadership Team**

Jeff Julian  
Rev. Isaac Mundy  
Ron Trewin

**Covenant Support Leadership Team**

Patti James  
Rev. Cheryl McMurray

**Formation, Nurture, and Justice Leadership Team**

Patricia Teskey  
Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander  
Rev. Wanda Stride

**Equity Leadership Team**

Rev. Nancy Wilson

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**Nominations Leadership Team**

Rev. Svinda Heinrichs

Rev. Wanda Stride

**CARRIED****Invitation to Become a General Council 45 Commissioner (In Calgary)**

Svinda highlighted that the Nominations leadership team is preparing an expression of Interest form nominations to become a General Council 45 Commissioner. Watch for more information in the newsletter. Voting on nominees will happen at the fall general meeting.

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive minister also highlighted that proposal will also be received and decided on at the Fall general meeting.

**Ministry Through Property & Finance Leadership Team (MTP&F)**

- see ECORC Report Book (2024) as **Appendix B**

Ted Meyers, Chair, directed participants to the Ministry Through Property & Finance Leadership Team (MTP&F) – formally known as Mission Through Property) – report in the Report Book, and highlighted the team is witnessing a number of congregations being forced to decide their future due to rising operational expenses – including capital improvements (as required by insurance coverage) – and declining attendance. MTP&F is encouraging congregations to keep up their insurance requirements and suggests consulting with HUB Insurance provided through the UCC. Congregations are looking at different alternatives for worship and shared ministries do address declining enrollment, and potentially create a surplus property. However, MTP&F encourages congregations to hold property (working with Kindred Works) and not get rid of buildings. The Regional Council has a Land Trust, and congregations have alternatives: 1. Kindred Works is looking at all properties in surplus category, to see if property development is a possibility. If a feasible outcome cannot be developed, the RC will then consider how to use the property, i.e. 2. rental facility for community. If this alternative is not able to then 3. the building will be sold. MTP&F works with congregations to sell buildings. Congregations are reminded that there is a policy for the distribution of sale proceeds. Ted explained that when proceeds come to regional council they are used for seeding new ministries. Many churches have closed this year, and it is a sad occasion when communities of faith must shut down. Ted highlighted that members on the team represent a wide geographical area and diversity.

**a) M&S Grant Recipients (Reporting)**

Ted provided Mission & Service grant distributions throughout the year and invited recipients (who were present) to provide some details for how funds are being used. The other grant (offered through the regional council) is the Doing Mission Together Grants. Ted invited applications.

**1. Lakefield UC – Community Hub Ministry**

Transformation Team Project has established 5 priorities for becoming a community hub. Lakefield United Church recognized that it has the largest building for holding gatherings within the community, outside from the local arena. There are currently two projects under way: 1. PA Day Program, for children up to grade six (follows Messy Church program) – older children are invited to provide leadership. Lots of volunteers from the church. 2. MVP Athlete training (Mental Fitness, Values Identity and purpose and Physical Fitness) Elite athletes are invited to come and provide key notes, a dietitian is invited, a series of workshops are held, there is a focus on mental health for athletes, physical fitness - of ice training, and there is a fitness and spiritual workshop.



## 2. Bedford House

A video presentation was shared highlighted the ministry of Bedford House, which is volunteer-driven, provides a working learning center for faith-based community services. There are currently 6 workshops on CHURCHx. Bedford House provides alternatives for how people can contribute to the life and work of their church and community when they are not able to provide funds for the collection plate. Bedford House brings together people from different classes and creates a diverse community; creates a pace to learn from each other, practices hospitality dignity and curiosity, bridges teambuilding between gender, race and physical abilities (workshops are designed to provide bridging exercises). As an outcome, Bedford House creates in people a sense of belonging.

## 3. Camp Quin Ma Lac

The camp has suffered through covid, is lacking in leadership, has experienced low enrolment, and capital improvements currently exceed hundreds of thousands of dollars (more information about Camp Quin Ma Lac will be circulated in the newsletter).

### **Finance: A Presentation from the Regional Council Treasurer**

- Audited 2022 Financial Statements as **Appendix C<sup>1</sup>**;
- Financial Statements as of April 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 as **Appendix C<sup>2</sup>**;
- Q1 Budget to Actual Report as **Appendix C<sup>3</sup>**;

Brian James, Regional Council Treasurer, shared income vs. expenses for the year (2023), and provided updates for 2024. Brian also highlighted that reserves are being increased, there has been a reduction in Mission & Service this year, and it is uncertain if there will be a reduction next year.

**2024-04-19-20-011\_MOTION** (B. James/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council receive and approve the audited 2022 Financial Statements as circulated. **CARRIED**

**2024-04-19-20-012\_MOTION** (B. James/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council receive for information the Full Financial Statements as of April 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 as circulated. **CARRIED**

**2024-04-19-20-013\_MOTION** (B. James/T. Meyers) that the East Central Ontario Regional Council receive for information the Q1 Budget to Actual Report as circulated. **CARRIED**

### **Formation, Nurture and Justice Leadership Team (FNJ)**

- see ECORC Report Book (2024) as **Appendix B**

Rev. Wendy Bulloch invited all to view the Formation, Nurture and Justice Leadership Team report in the report book, and thanked members of the staff for their support on the team. The RC has an anti-racism policy; lay leaders (including LLWL) are required to take training. Training is available through CHURCHx. FNJ is working with teams and forums to encourage that anti-racism training is completed.

Rev. Susan Genge shared that a workshop is being offered on September 28<sup>th</sup> at St-Matthews UCC, Belleville, and will have two guest speakers, Paul McKenna and Cathy Murtha. The themes are Transformation of Consciousness, Discovering Spiritual Treasure in the World's Religions, The Golden Rule Forms the Basis of All World and Religions and Spirituality.

Kimberly Collins (Affirm Forum) reminded of pride-events in the future. Gratitude was extended to Rev. Elisabeth MacDonald and Sharon Woodrow for their serving on the Affirm Forum through the past few years. More news to come in newsletter.

Rev. Elaine Kellogg (Indigenous Justice And Respectful Relationship Forum) highlighted the travelling library which Helmut Enns coordinates. Reminder that June 21 National Aboriginal Day of Prayer. Orange Shirt Day is September 30. All were encouraged to support by attending Powwows in the region. Curve Lake holds its Powwow on September 21. Check newsletter for more information.

Sharon Hull, Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationships and Justice with All Ages (First Third - children, youth, young adults and their leaders). *Gibimishkaadimin-Youth Paddling Together Towards Truth and Reconciliation* will take place August 20 -28. Check newsletter for upcoming events. Funding is available for many youth activities, including applying for government funding. There will be a 'Confirmation and Affirming Your Faith' activity at Cambridge Street UC. Churches in the area encouraged to send youth and minister interested in participating and/or lead during the activity. The project and details are being fully announced on May 5<sup>th</sup>

(Justice Forum) Reminder that there exists the Justice Calendar with monthly focus of a justice issues.

(Climate Forum) and invitation to the next gathering has been circulated. Reminder that is currently Earth week. It was reiterated that 20 years ago the youth Bay of Quinte Conference prepared a litany and motion, calling upon every congregation to reduce its carbon footprint annually by 5%.

I was shared that other forums and network not present (as well as the UCW) are in the report book:

### **Other Business**

It was highlighted that in the past and present, the regional council has provided meals at its general meetings (cost of the regional council) However, many registrants did not show up in person to receive their meals. Please give consideration if providing meals is sustainable.

### **Concluding Session** – Rev. Wanda Stride, podium

- a) **Equity Report** – Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander, member of the Equity Forum, shared that this meeting was respectful, honest, and there is a lot to discuss. Everyone was reminded to use mics when speaking, to be aware that there is online presence, and to always name yourself when speaking.
- b) **Dates of upcoming meetings**
  - November 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 Fall Meeting, Brighton, ON
  - May 23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> 2025 Annual Meeting, Spring, St. Paul's United Church, Bowmanville, ON
  - October 25<sup>th</sup> 2025 Fall Meeting, Location TBD

### **Closing Worship**

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly led the closing worship which included recognizing past Council of Elder members and covenanting with the newly formed Council of Elders and members of Leadership Team, Forums and Networks. After the Opening Words. Rev. Paul Reed read the Scripture Ruth 14b-17. Bill Sheaves, Paul Reed, Ted Meyers and Wanda Stride were called forward; these were the members of the Council of Elders whose term has ended. The Regional Council expressed its gratitude for their service. The assembly sang the hymn 'Dance with the Spirit' (MV 156). Rev. Wanda Stride (now-Past Seaker) was gifted with Maple Syrup in gratitude for her role as Speaker. All of the members of the newly formed Council of Elders were called forward. Vows were exchanged and members of the regional council made their promise to support each member in their role. The assembly sang the hymn 'Lord, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary' (MV 18). Members serving on Leadership Team, Forums and Networks. Promises. Vows were exchanged and members of the regional council made their promise to support each member in their role. The assembly sang the hymn 'I Have Called You by Your Name' (MV 18). Following the Closing Prayer, the hymn 'Peace Be With You' (MV 215) was sung, and the Closing Benediction was offered by Stephen Coles.

2024-19

The United Church of Canada

East Central Ontario Regional Council  
Spring General Meeting

April 19-20, 2024  
Cambridge Street United Church,  
Lindsay, ON

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**Adjournment**

The Chair declared that all the business having come before this meeting of the regional council has duly concluded at 3:37 PM.

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Rev. Wanda Stride  
Speaker

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Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly  
Executive Minister

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Joel Miller  
Recording Secretary

\*All appendices located at:

<https://ecorcuccan.ca/2024-ecorc-spring-annual-meeting-april-19th-and-20th/>

Appendix A	East Central Ontario Regional Council Fall General Meeting of October 28, 2023
Appendix B	ECORC Report Book (2024)
Appendix C <sup>1</sup>	ECORC Audited 2022 Financial Statements
Appendix C <sup>2</sup>	Financial Statements as of April 7 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Appendix C <sup>3</sup>	Q1 Budget to Actual Report
Appendix D	Governance Review Proposals