

## **Governance Document of ECORC: Covenant Support Team**

Purpose: To provide terms of reference for the Covenant Support Team.

### **Purpose**

The Covenant Support Team is a Leadership Team that supports and nurtures the relationships between the East Central Ontario Regional Council and Communities of Faith, Ministry Personnel (Active, Retained, and Retired), and Licensed Lay Worship Leaders. The Covenant Support Team supports and nurtures the covenant relationships within the Regional Council.

### **Membership**

The Covenant Support Leadership Team shall consist of 12 elected voting members as recommended by the Nominations Team following recruitment and discernment practices. The members serve a three-year term with an annual rotation of 1/3 of the members.

The Regional Council Pastoral Relations Minister and the Regional Council Congregational Support Minister are Ex officio members of the Leadership Team.

The Office of Vocation Minister, The Regional Council Executive Minister, Council Elder appointments, and Chairs of the Forums may serve as corresponding members.

### **Role of Members**

Members of the Team make decisions and recommendations upholding the overall vision and mandate as given by the East Central Ontario Regional Council and reflected in polity and policy. Team Members are expected to prepare for meetings of the Team and participate fully in the

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deliberations of the Team. Members may expect to be given specific assignments for completion such as assignment to work with a Forum.

When representing a Forum or presenting a report the Team member should voluntarily limit participation to the nature of a corresponding member to avoid the perception of bias.

### **Role of Corresponding Members**

Corresponding members do not vote and do not participate in discussion unrelated to the area of representation. Corresponding members provide a specific and contextual knowledge and level of awareness that is important to the deliberations of the Team. Corresponding members share make sure the elected members have the information they need to discern a course of action.

Corresponding members also have the responsibility to ensure that the body they represent is informed of the work and decisions of the Leadership Team.

### **Meetings**

The Covenant Support Team shall convene every other month and/or as required. The meetings may be in person, telephone conference call or web based. At least three meetings a year will be in-person meetings held at a mutually convenient location.

### **Quorum**

Quorum shall be 7 elected members.

### **Chairperson**

The Leadership Team shall select from among the elected membership the Team Chairperson and a Chairperson Designate, and a Secretary. The names of the individuals to be reported annually to the Council Elders and the Nomination Team. The Chairperson shall not serve more than two consecutive years. The three-year term of an elected member may be extended by one year if serving as the Chairperson.

The Chairperson and the Secretary shall be responsible for reporting Team activities and actions to the Council Elders monthly as required. They shall attend Council Elder meetings upon request of the Council Elders.

### **Vacancies**

A member of the Team unable to fulfill their term may resign. A member failing to fulfill the responsibilities may be removed from the position by a 2/3 majority decision of the remaining members.

Vacancies are filled by the Nominations Team during an annual election cycle.

To provide continuity of task, or for the purpose of securing a chairperson, the Team may request of the Nominations Team to extend the membership of a member by one year.

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### **Forums**

The Covenant Support Team may be assisted in the work by creating Forums of knowledge and expertise to support and undertake directed work. Forums may consist of one or more individuals and be short term or permanent. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to determine the Terms of Reference of the Forums, to recruit and appoint Forums. Forums may be authorised to undertake necessary steps to complete the assigned activities but may not make decisions on behalf of the Leadership Team. Forums shall report to the Leadership Team regularly.

### **Authority as a Commission**

The Leadership Team may be appointed by the Regional Council as a Commission for designated matters of a routine nature that are supported by policy and precedence. Commission powers shall be noted in the Mandate printed in italics with the date granted.

### **Duties**

The Covenant Support Team shall have responsibility for the completion of the mandated duties, making decisions as authorized<sup>1</sup> and recommendations to the Council Elders as required. The responsibilities shall include:

Oversight of Communities of Faith and Pastoral Charges.

Ministry Personnel, active, retained, and retired.

Pastoral Relationships

License lay Worship Leaders

The Team shall have responsibility for the establishment of Forums and the oversight of same. The Team shall appoint Chairpersons of the Forums. The Covenant Support Team shall have a Liaison Forum and is encouraged at minimum a Retirees Forum and an LLWL Forum.

The Covenant Support Team is accountable to the Council Elders for all activities and decisions (with exception of those for which it is empowered to operate as a commission); and shall report annually to the East Central Ontario Regional Council.

### **Mandate**

The mandated duties of the Covenant Support Team include:

Communities of Faith and Pastoral Charges

Supporting and encouraging healthy communities of faith.

Encouraging congregation in the exercise of Stewardship and Visioning.

Ensuring Community of Faith compliance with the policies and polity of the United Church and reviewing any relevant records.

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Exercise oversight of communities of faith.

ensuring that Communities of Faith have a current and accurate Community of Faith Profile

providing support to emerging new ministries.

providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters.

providing ongoing leadership training for ministry personnel and lay people [The Manual C.2.2].

provide Pastoral Charge Supervision as required by:

recruit and train Pastoral Charge Supervisors.

assign a Pastoral Charge Supervisors to Pastoral Charges without a minister or during sabbaticals. 1

Propose recommended actions to the Council Elders

Of Communities of Faith in extraordinary circumstances where the Community of Faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies.

the appointment of Interim Ministers.

the creation of a “congregational designated minister” position.

regarding amalgamations, realignments, and disbanding of communities of faith [The Manual C.2.1]

when requests are made for the acquisition of property, major renovations, or the sale of properties deemed as surplus.

Whenever there is concern regarding the wellbeing of a community of faith, pastoral charge, or pastoral relationship.

### **Ministry Personnel.**

Encouraging and supporting ministry personnel

Providing measures to sustain health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice;

assist with informal conflict resolution processes as required.

celebrating the life occasions and accomplishments of ministry personnel.

Providing directly or with a Retirees Forum the support of ministry personnel approaching retirement and maintaining a relationship with pensioners

Propose recommended action to the Council Elders

for the granting of a license to administer the sacraments to diaconal ministers, designated lay ministers, people who retired while serving as designated lay ministers, and sacrament elders.

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Requests to serve as a Voluntary Associate Minister

Whenever there is concern for the well being of the pastoral relationship or ministry personnel.

### **Pastoral Relations:**

Oversee changes in Pastoral Relationship

Refer requests for change to the Liaison Forum to appoint Liaison Officers to work with Communities of Faith in transition.

notify the Council Elders of requests for changes in pastoral relationship.

receive recommendations from the Liaisons Forum regarding the self-assessments of Communities of Faith and Community of Faith Profiles

make recommendation to the Council Elders for the approval of vacancies and the initializing of a search.

when a vacancy is declared, direct the Liaison Forum to guide the community of faith in the process of search.

Receive recommendation upon completion of search.

Make decisions and reporting to the Council Elders when the call or appointment is consistent with the declared vacancy.

recommend action to the Council Elders when the result of the Search differs from the intended vacancy.

### **Propose recommended action to the Council Elders:**

For the approval of vacancies and the initializing of a search when the result of the Search differs from the intended vacancy.

Of the ending or continuing of appointments.

Licensed lay Worship Leaders: Exercise oversight of LLWLs, Providing directly, or with a LLWL Forum, to ensure training for LLWLs, conduct annual evaluations, approve annually the licensing and relicensing of LLWLs (Manual I.1.11.5)<sup>1</sup>

*Items printed in italics are decisions the Covenant Support Team may take on behalf of the Council elders and Regional Council*