

Governance Document of ECORC: Covenant Support Team

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

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 discerning practices. The members serve a three year term with an annual rotation of 1/3 of its members.

The Regional Council Pastoral Relations Ministers 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 Elders 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 deliberations of the Team. Members may be expected 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.

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 will meet at least every other month and/or as required. The meetings shall be in person, by telephone call or web based.

Quorum

Quorum shall be 7 elected members.

Chairperson:

The Leadership Team shall select from the elected membership of the Team a Chairperson, and a Chairperson Designate, and a Secretary. The names of the individuals to be reported annually to the Council of Elders and Nominations 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 a Chairperson.

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

Vacancies:

A member of the Team unable to fulfill their term may resign. A member failing to fulfill their 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.

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 be 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 authorized 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 the 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 mandated duties, making decisions as authorized and recommendations to the Council of Elders as required. The responsibilities shall include:

- Oversight of Communities of Faith and pastoral charges.

- Ministry personnel active, retained and retired.
- Pastoral Relationships
- Licensed Lay Worship Leaders

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

The Covenant Support Team is accountable to the Council of Elders for all activities and decisions (with the exception of those who 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 congregations in the exercise of stewardship and Visioning
 - Ensuring Community of Faith compliance with the policies and polity of the United Church of Canada and reviewing any relevant records
 - Ensure oversight of communities of faith
 - Ensuring that Communities of Faith have a current and active Community of Faith profile.
 - Providing support to emerging new ministries
 - Providing support, advice and services to the communities of faith in human resource matters.
 - Provide ongoing leadership training for Ministry personnel and lay people (The Manual C.2.2)
- Pastoral Charge Supervisors
 - Provide Pastoral Charge supervision as required by:
 - Recruit and train Pastoral Charge Supervisors
 - Assign a Pastoral Charge supervisor to Pastoral Charges without a minister or during sabbaticals
- Propose Recommended Actions to the Council of 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 denominational policies
 - The appointment of Intentional Interim Ministers
 - The creation of a congregational designated ministers position
 - Regarding amalgamations, realignments, and disbanding 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 surplus
- Whenever there is a concern about the well being of a community of faith, pastoral charge, or a pastoral relationship

- Ministry Personnel
 - Encouraging and supporting Ministry Personnel
 - Providing measures to health, joy and excellence in ministry practise
 - 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 of 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.
 - Requests to serve as a Voluntary Associate Minister
 - Whenever there is a concern for the well being of a pastoral relationship or ministry personnel.

- Pastoral Relations
 - Oversee changes in pastoral relationship
 - Refer changes to the Liaison Forum to appoint Liaison officers to work with Communities of Faith in Transition
 - Notify the Council of Elders of requests for changes in Pastoral Relationship
 - Make recommendations to the Council of 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 the search
 - Receive recommendation upon completion of search
 - Make decisions and reporting to the Council of Elders when the call or appointment is consistent with the declared vacancy
 - Recommend action to the Council of Elders when the result of the search differs from the intended vacancy

- Propose recommendation action to the Council of Elders
 - For the approval of vacancies and the initializing of the search when the result of a 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 the LLWL forum to ensure training for the LLWLs, conduct annual evaluations, approve annually the licensing and relicensing of the LLWLs (Manual I.1.11.5)

