

East Central Ontario Regional Council
Meeting of the Council of Elders
Tuesday, February 4, 2025 – 1 PM

Vision of the Council of Elders by which we evaluate progress based on:

Strengthened by God's grace and refreshed by the Spirit,
 We follow the way of Jesus in healing our world.

IN ATTENDANCE

Stephen Coles	Member
Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly	Member, Executive Minister
Rev. Kevin Fitzpatrick	Member
Brian James	Member, Financial Administration
Rev. David King	Member
Patricia Long	Member
Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander	Member
Rev. Brian Nicholson	Member
Rev. Edward (Ned) Wells	Member
Rev. Lynn Watson	Member
Sheila-Mae Young	Member
Sharon Hull	Corresponding Member - Minister for Spiritual Nurture, Respectful Relationship and Justice for all Ages
Rev. Darren Liepold	Corresponding Member, Congregational Support Minister
Joel Miller	Corresponding Member, Program Assistant to Executive Minister, Recording Secretary
Karen Wilson	Corresponding Member - Communications and Administration Assistant

REGRETS/ABSENT

Joyce Payne	Member
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This meeting of the Council of Elders of the East Central Ontario Regional Council (ECORC) will deal with regular business, but will focus on the following key areas:

- Discern next steps: ECORC Strategic Plan
- Discern a response to the growing anxiety around immigration

Land Acknowledgement & Opening Devotions – Sheila-Mae Young led the land acknowledgment (highlighting Treaty 20 and the William's Treaty) and acknowledged the bountiful gifts that all the land provides to us. Sheila-Mae called all to be grateful for the many gifts bestowed upon us daily. Sheila-May shared and exert from the Canadian Family Physician Journal, Section: The Art of Family Medicine, "One Way Ticket into Faith", by Sharlene Habibi (<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11634254/>).

Circle Time of Sharing – All were invited to share a moment when their faith had been recently challenged.

Appointment of an Equity Monitor for this Meeting

2025-02-04-001 MOTION (N. Wells/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders appoint Sharon Hull as Equity Support Person for this meeting. **CARRIED**

* The equity score card can be used following this meeting and submitted to the Equity Leadership Team:
<https://ecorcuccan.ca/resources/accessibility/>

Minutes of December 3, 2024

2025-02-04-002 MOTION (S-M Young/K. Ostrander) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders approves the Minutes of December 3, 2024, as circulated. **CARRIED**

Minutes of January 7, 2025

2025-02-04-003 MOTION (S-M Young/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders approves the Minutes of January 7, 2025 as circulated. **CARRIED**

Business Arising

- a) **Ministry Personnel and Lay Representatives Who Do Not Attend Regional Council Meetings (Strategy for Increasing Participation)** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly highlighted a list of actions that will occur as a strategy to increase participation.
 - See 2025-02-04 *Increasing Participation and Involvement in the Regional Council - Proposed Actions* as **Appendix A**
- b) **Governance Review Process**
 - i. Policies to be reviewed by relevant Leadership Team by end of February 2025. Revisions can be sent to Joel Miller.
- c) **Revisiting Motion:**

2024-11-05-009 MOTION (P. Long/N. Wells) Whereas the April 2022 Governance Handbook states, “The Executive Minister of the East Central Ontario Regional Council, East Central Ontario Regional Council Staff and East Central Ontario Regional Council Treasurer shall be corresponding members of the Assembly of Elders”;

Whereas the context is that the Nominations Leadership Team was asked to clarify whether the treasurer position, as a corresponding member, was a position with voting privileges.

Whereas it is a good time to clarify if in the future corresponding members to the Council could attain voting privileges by going through the election process and holding both the position of corresponding member and elected member;

The East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders approves the recommendation of the Nominations Leadership Team that these corresponding members be ineligible to be elected as elders of the Council of Elders effective at the rise of the Spring Annual General Meeting 2025. CARRIED (B. James abstains)

2025-02-04-004 MOTION (N. Wells/K. Fitzpatrick) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders rescind motion 2024-11-05-009. **CARRIED**

2025-02-04-005 MOTION (S-M Young/D. King) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders uphold that the East Central Ontario Regional Council Staff and East Central Ontario Regional Council Treasurer shall be corresponding members of the Assembly of Elders;

Whereas the context is that the Nominations Leadership Team was asked to clarify whether the treasurer position, as a corresponding member, was a position with voting privileges.

Whereas it is a good time to clarify if in the future corresponding members to the Council could attain voting privileges by going through the election process and holding both the position of corresponding member and elected member;

The East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders approves the recommendation of the Nominations Leadership Team that these corresponding members be ineligible to be elected as elders of the Council of Elders effective at the rise of the Spring Annual General Meeting 2025;

And that the East Central Ontario Regional Council amend the Governance Handbook to reflect that the Executive Minister's role is reflective of what is stated in the *The Manual*. **CARRIED (B. James Abstains)**

Agenda

2025-02-04-006 MOTION (L. Watson/D. King) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders accept the agenda as amended:

1. Addition of correspondence e

CARRIED

Incoming Correspondence

- a) December 12, 2024, copied on a letter from S. Kaitlyn Patterson and Shawn Krall, All Our Relations Land Trust, to Ron Ewart, Executive Director, Toronto United Church Council, re Gift letter regarding transfer of real property and cash to All Our Relations Land Trust (*for information*);
- b) December 16, 2024, Ron Ewart, Executive Director, Toronto United Church Council, re Transfer of 1501 Highway 15 Land (*for information*);
- c) January 10, 2025, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Senior Governance Support Lead, re UCW Centennial Service (*for information*);
- d) January 22, 2025, Susan Jackson, Information & Statistics Coordinator, Organizational Development and Strategy, The United Church of Canada, re Disbanding of Little Britain PC (*for information*);
- e) January 30, 2025, Kim Gretton, Chair and Karen Archer, Secretary-Treasurer, Woodville United Church, re disbursement information and financial remuneration following sale of church property in June 2024 (*for information*).

Outgoing Correspondence

- f) February 4, 2025, Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister, responding to Rev. David Watson letter of Oct. 1, 2024, re Congregational Review (*for information*).

2025-02-04-007 MOTION (L. Watson/S-M Young) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders confirm that Lillian Pattison can occupy a congregational board position at Coe Hill Community of Faith should she be elected. **CARRIED**

Business arising grouped according to confirmed Guiding Principles

- I. All Communities of Faith participate in ECORC meetings and initiatives

- a) **Facilitation Forum** – Stephen Coles has recently met; Rev. Wanda Stride is currently chairing the Facilitation Forum; Deadline is May 2nd for reporting to the Regional Council through the annual report book. Team chairs are encouraged to contact Wanda if forums or teams are wanting to request agenda time.
- b) **Dates of future meetings and information sessions (for information):**
 - **(Date to be determined)** Special (in-person) meeting of the Council of Elders to receive (*Towards 2035* statistical projections)
 - **May 23rd - 24th, 2025** Annual Meeting, Spring, St. Paul's United Church (in St-Andrew's Presbyterian Church), Bowmanville, ON
 - **October 25th, 2025** Fall Meeting – in Alderville, ON
- c) **General Council 45 Commissioners (orientation session)** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly March 19th at 7 pm there will be an orientation session for GC 45 Commissioners. Rev. Ryan McNally will be co-officiating this session.
- d) **Youth Forum Expression of Interest** – Sharon Hull explained what Youth Forum entails (<https://generalcouncil.ca/councils/general-council-45/youth-forum-gc45>)
2025-02-04-008 MOTION (S-M Young/N. Wells) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders recognize the following people as youth forum participants from East Central Ontario Regional Council: Sofia Entzin-Telford, Evan McNally and Petra Smith-Merkley. **CARRIED**

A letter is being prepared to go out to these participants informing them of their recognition.

II. Clergy, lay leaders and communities of faith express satisfaction with the support, development opportunities and communication they receive

III. Those involved in any way with ECORC demonstrate awareness of our Vision and Mission statements, and express a feeling of connection to and commitment to the work of ECORC

- a) **Strategic Plan – Follow Up from Staff and Speakers Meeting** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly highlighted meeting (staff and Chairs/Speaker of regional Council), where stats were looked at (*Towards 2035*) and discussion was had about projections learned. The next step is to determine a date when the Council of Elders can gather in person to receive the information and absorb it collectively.

After having received the information of *Towards 2035*, the staff looked at the strategic plan to see how it aligns. It was highlighted that regarding the Lay Mentorship Program: Should this be offered nationally having local content? Therefore, a potential proposal to GC 45 may come to the next Council of Elders meeting for consideration.

IV. People in all roles and capacities within ECORC are aware of Council decisions and policies, and know where to find the information they need

- i) **Covenant Support Leadership Team (CST)**
 - see CST minutes of January 21, 2025 as **Appendix B**
2025-02-03-009 MOTION (P. Long/K. Ostrander) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders receive for information the CST minutes of January 21, 2025. **CARRIED**
- ii) **Pastoral Charge Supervisor – Arden Pastoral Charge**

2025-02-03-010 MOTION (N. Wells/K. Ostrander) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders recognize Rev. Jean Brown as pastoral charge supervisor at Arden Pastoral Charge. **CARRIED**

iii) **Review of Grace United Church** – Rev. Darren Liepold highlighted that the congregation's Board met in January to deal with issues and the file is now completed.

iv) **(Investigation) Cambridge Street United Church** – An oral report was rendered from team. **2025-02-03-011 MOTION** (L. Watson/K. Ostrander) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders recommend in response to the Cambridge Street United Church investigation:

1. That the Regional Council ensure pastoral care for parties involved.
2. And if needed, following pastoral care, conflict resolution services be engaged through a third party to help resolve issues;

CARRIED (P. Long Abstains)

2025-02-03-012 MOTION (D. King/S-M Young) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders communicate to Cambridge Street United Church that the Council of Elders has received findings from an investigator's report under The United Church Workplace Harassment, Discrimination and Violence Response Policy, and submitted on December 5, 2024 and concurs with these findings:

1. That the claim of harassment has not been substantiated by the complainants,
2. That it is substantiated that there has been a repetitive pattern by the respondent of improper and unwanted comment and conduct by the respondent when such conduct "might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offence or humiliation to another person." **CARRIED (B. Nicholson abstains, P. Long opposed, one more opposed)**

v) **Emmanuel United Church (Peterborough)**

2025-02-03-013 MOTION (B. Nicholson/K. Fitzpatrick) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders name the following people to serve on the Commission to Emmanuel United Church (Peterborough) with the option to add to the Commission in the future: Stephen Coles, Sue Pettersone and Sheila-Mae Young. **CARRIED**

V. *The number of church buildings in our Regional Council that are accessible is increasing. There is faithful stewardship of property and finances*

a) **Ministry Through Property and Finance Leadership Team (MTPF)** – Sheila-Mae-Young

Windsong United Church

We will need to amend our motion regarding the formation of Wind Song United Church. Smith's Post United Church continued after the sale of the building in 2015. Therefore, it needs to be included with the amalgamation motion:

2024-12-03-009 MOTION (S-M Young/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders receive the recommendation of the Ministry Through Property & Finance Leadership Team and approve the amalgamation of United Churches of Maynooth,

Madawaska and St. Paul's of Lake St. Peter amalgamate effective Dec 1, 2024. The new name will be Windsong United Church. CARRIED

2025-02-04-014 MOTION (S-M Young/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders rescind motion 2024-12-03-009. **CARRIED**

2025-02-04-015 MOTION (S-M Young/B. James) That the East Central Ontario Regional Council of Elders receive the recommendation of the Ministry Through Property & Finance Leadership Team and approve the amalgamation of United Churches of Maynooth, Madawaska, St. Paul's of Lake St. Peter and Smith's Post amalgamate effective Dec 1, 2024. The new name will be Windsong United Church. **CARRIED**

- VI. ECORC events take place in a variety of geographic locations within our Region throughout the year*
- VII. We hold events every year related to outreach and social justice within our Regional Council*
- VIII. We observe increasing use of land acknowledgments and more participation in learning opportunities related to Respectful Relations and Indigenous Justice*
- IX. Children, youth and young adults are represented on all decision-making bodies*
- X. There are events planned for and by children, youth and young adults every year. A significant number of these events provide children, youth and young adults with leadership opportunities*
- XI. There is evidence that inclusive language is becoming the norm in the life and work of our church throughout our Regional Council, especially inclusive language and images of God in worship*
- XII. Reports from equity monitors and meeting notes give evidence of a growing awareness of equity standards*
- XIII. The number of Communities of Faith designated as Affirming continues to increase*
- XIV. An increasing number of Communities of Faith, along with ECORC and the Council of Elders, are developing plans to increase their environmental stewardship*
- XV. We can document specific actions we have taken to become intercultural*

New Business –

- a) **Concern for Immigration Status – Canadian Student Visas / Temporary Foreign Workers (discernment of what comes next)** – Rev. Darren Liepold shared some of the concerns he has received around immigration status and temporary foreign workers, and that regional council support is encouraged.
 - See template letters: 1. Letter to John Nater (House of Commons) as **Appendix C¹**, 2. Guide on how to write about need for more expansive Temporary Foreign Worker as **Appendix C²**

It was decided to give time on the agenda at the next Council of Elders meeting to discern further possibilities of support.

- b) **Incorporated Ministries Supervision** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly highlighted that it is the regional council's legal obligation to oversee its incorporated ministries. A list is being updated. There is a service that is

being offered through the General Council office that the regional council could engage in. A recommendation will come to the next meeting from the Ministry Through Property Leadership Team.

- See 2025-01-28 ECORC Incorporated Ministries as **Appendix D¹**
- See *Services Offered through National Program (Incorporated Ministries Supervision)* as **Appendix D²**

Equity Monitor Report – Sharon Hull shared a summary for how this meeting scored based on the m'eting equity scorecard'. There was room for a little bit of improvement for self identifying when speaking into the meeting.

The Speaker declared that all the business having come before this meeting of the Council of Elders was duly concluded at 4:11 PM.

*Reminder to watch for doodle poll for a special meeting to receive statistical projections *Towards 2035*.

Closing Prayer – Sheila-Mae Young closed the meeting in prayer.

Next Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, March 4, 2025 (1PM) Zoom
- Tuesday, April 1, 2025 (1PM) Zoom
- Tuesday, May 6, 2025 (1PM) Zoom

Steve Coles
Speaker

Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly
Executive Minister

ECORC Assembly of Elders - Participation Roster

	Opening worship/Land prayer	ack/closing	Equity Roles	Monitor
<i>March 4, 2025</i>	Rev. Ned Wells		Lynn Watson	
<i>April 1 2025</i>	Joyce Payne		Brian Nicholson	
<i>May 6 2025</i>	Kaitlyn Ostrander		Kevin Fitzpatrick	
<i>June 3 2025</i>	Kevin Fitzpatrick		Pat Long	

Appendices

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Appendix C ¹	Letter to John Nater (House of Commons	Pages 12-13
Appendix C ²	Guide on how to write about need for more expansive Temporary Foreign Worker	Pages 14-15
Appendix D ¹	2025-01-28 ECORC Incorporated Ministries	Page 16
Appendix D ²	Services Offered through National Program (Incorporated Ministries Supervision)	Page 17

Appendix A

Increasing Participation and Involvement in the Regional Council's work

Following the December meeting of the Council of Elders and the discernment conversation that took place at that time, the staff team have provided the following measures we are taking to address this issue:

1. The Connectors will be reaching out to the communities of faith for which they are responsible to check in and see what, if anything, is preventing participation from their representatives and ministry personnel. They will report back to the Council of Elders and the Facilitation Forum.
2. A short, one-page summary of our meetings will be shared with Regional Council members after each meeting, which will enhance their ability to share information with their communities of faith.
3. A report will be prepared by the Regional Council that can be easily included in Annual Reports at the congregational level.
4. The Annual Report Book will be shared with all congregations and we are exploring an info-graphic for progress on the Strategic Plan.
5. Lynn Watson has agreed to prepare a worship service that can be used by congregations on the Sunday that follows Regional Council meetings. When the service is shared with congregations, a note will be included to ensure that they are aware that they should not be expecting their ministry personnel to lead worship on Regional Council weekends.
6. Consider an annual orientation meeting for new representatives to the Regional Council (both clergy coming into our region and new reps that were elected at their congregational meetings).
7. Prepare a set of short videos that help explain the role of Regional Council members, how things work.

We will explore other possible actions once we have heard back from Connectors and see how this approach impacts involvement.

Appendix B

East Central Ontario Regional Council Covenant Support Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2025

A meeting of the Covenant Support Team was held by Zoom on Tuesday January 21, 2025 at 2:30pm.

Present: Donna Bignell, Freda Burns, Caroline Giesbrecht, Philip Hobbs, Sue Hogan, Patti James, Paul Kneebone, Cheryl McMurray Anne Meredith (scribe), Stephanie Richmond Randy Scott, Bill Sheaves (Chair)

Regrets: Steve Coles, David King, Ted Myers, Lynn Watson

Darren Liepold was present for ECORC.

Bill Sheaves opened the meeting. Stephanie Richmond led the opening prayer. The agenda was approved by consensus. Corrected Minutes are with the removal of the line regarding the previous minister's change in pastoral relations at Consecon as unnecessary. This was agreed to by consensus.

Reports**LLWL**

Paul Kneebone reported their three-year cycle of renewal was up and running with ten interviews happening this year. Some resignations had occurred.

There was no report from Liaison, Retirees or Mission through Property forums.

Calls or Appointments

It was moved by Stephanie Richmond and seconded by Randy Scott that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the call of the Rev. Karen Hammond Croxall, OM, to the Trinity Uxbridge Community of Faith. Effective: January 1, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Philip Hobbs and seconded by Sue Hogan that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the appointment of the Rev. Beverly Sumbler, Retired Supply to the Westdale Peterborough Community of Faith. Effective March 1, 2025-March 1, 2026. Carried.

It was moved by Donna Bignell and seconded by Paul Kneebone that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Bryan Ransom, Retired Supply to the Newcastle Community of Faith. Effective January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Philip Hobbs and seconded by Cheryl McMurray that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Lynda Hodgins, Retired Supply, to the Harmony Community of Faith, Bailieboro. Effective February 16, 2025-May 31st, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Patti James and seconded by Stephanie Richmond that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Robert Root, Retired Supply, to the Bobcaygeon-Providence Community of Faith. Effective January 1, 2025-June 30, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Cheryl McMurray and seconded by Donna Bignell that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Stevan Spicer, retired supply, to the Wooler Community of Faith. Until June 30, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Stephanie Richmond and seconded by Cheryl McMurray that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Li Armstrong, retired supply, to the Sandford Zephyr Community of Faith. Effective January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Randy Scott and seconded by Sue Hogan that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the appointment of the Rev. Nadene Grieve-Deslippe, retired supply, to the Crossroads Community of Faith. Effective January 1st, 2025-June 30th, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Cheryl McMurray and seconded by Donna Bignell that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the re-appointment of the Rev. Svinda Heinrichs, United Supply to the Bancroft Community of Faith. Effective January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025. Carried.

It was moved by Stephanie Richmond and seconded by Paul Kneebone that, upon confirming eligibility on ChurchHub, the Covenant Support team approve the appointment of the Rev. Don Wilmer, Retired Supply, to the Dunbarton Fairport (Pickering) Community of Faith. Effective January 1, 2025-June 30th, 2025. Carried.

Other Matters

Cheryl McMurray spoke to a matter at St. Paul's Warkworth that is working itself out.

A request was put forward by Li Armstrong regarding membership on the Sandford-Zephyr Council. More information is needed to complete the request. This will be addressed at our next meeting.

A minister's Retreat is being planned for May just before the spring Regional Meeting.

Reviews are in process at Cambridge Street, Dunbarton-Fairport, Emmanuel, Campbellford, St. Andrew's by the Lake, and Lakefield Communities of Faith.

It was moved by Donna Bignell and seconded by Stephanie Richmond that Nancy Lester be the Regional Representative to the Cold Springs Annual General Meeting. Carried.

The Covenant Support Team endorsed the possibility of an Ecumenical Shared Ministry with Princess St. United, Kingston and the Anglican Church people with whom they currently worship.

Bridgenorth and Grace United, Peterborough are formalizing a fee for service agreement with Cathy Gradante.

Issac Mundy at Trenton United has requested a reduction in his hours of work. A formal change of covenant agreement is in process.

Ministry in Changing Times has events working with Trent River, Tweed, Brighton, Cobourg, Sunderland, and Dunsford.

Donna Bignell inquired about Centennial-Albert United's request for Mark Sturman to conduct sacraments. That will come when Mark enters second year of his Student Ministry Educational Experience.

The next meeting of the Covenant Support Team is February 18, 2025 at 2:30pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Meredith

Appendix C¹

January 8, 2025

Mr. John Nater, M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Nater,

I am writing today with deep concern about the impact of recent changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers policy on small rural churches. Without a minister to oversee the day-to-day operations of these small non-profit organizations and offer the services that generate the donations they need to support their work, many small rural churches have to close. As an increasing number of small rural churches find that the only applications they receive are from international ministers, increased restrictions around immigration will result in some small rural churches having to close because they can't hire qualified professionals without undue stress resulting from delays and denials by Immigration Canada. I assume that wasn't the government's intent and I wonder if, after considering my concern, you might be willing to speak to the Ministers of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship about this matter.

I'm concerned about this reality because I work remotely from my home in Listowel as coordinator of the Admission program of The United Church of Canada. The Admission program provides a robust selection and orientation process through which churches in hamlets like Alma to the east of us and Pine River to the west of us have found a minister in recent years.

In rural areas like these, the ministry of these leaders reaches beyond the local church out into the community. The community may turn to them for spiritual care in the nursing home, to officiate a wedding or funeral service for a community member, to hand out food hampers when someone is hungry in the community, when a community group needs a low to no cost meeting space, if a person needs help with addictions or leaving a situation of domestic violence, etc. They are also a person that small communities with few other professionals rely on when a tragedy occurs and people need support.

Yet all too often lately, after carefully and prayerfully selecting an international minister, the excitement for our rural churches turns to frustration as their new minister encounters delays and denials in their conversation with Immigration Canada. This week for example, I heard from a church in northern British Columbia who selected their new minister in July 2024 and prepared for them to arrive in October 2024 given the three month timeline then in place; they have now been waiting six months and are worried about their viability given that they are paying out \$2000 a month to maintain the rental home they found and furnished for their minister even though nobody is living in it and their donations are down significantly because they have no minister there to offer services. Where it used to be the exception that we needed to seek legal counsel to help in a situation like this, it has now become the exception if we don't need to seek legal counsel to help congregations get their new minister's visa approved.

I know you will share my concern because this reality does not align with the Immigration Principles outlined in the Conservative Party of Canada's Policy Declaration. That document states clearly that the CPC values ***“a non-partisan, welcoming and well managed immigration system for Canada”***. It further expresses that this system should offer a ***“a fair, transparent and efficient process that earn(s) the respect and confidence of Canadians as well as the international community”*** and ***“ensur(es) that Canada is successful in encouraging skilled***

immigrants and their spouses and children to make Canada their destination of choice". Given the CPC's values around immigration and your own commitments to the vitality of rural communities, I wonder if you might be willing to raise this issue with the Honorable Marc Miller?

Trusting you will respond favorably to my request, I have attached a copy of a letter The United Church of Canada sent to Mr. Miller a month ago now as further background into the issues we have observed, particularly in response to recent changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program that our churches use when they select an international minister. That letter not only outlines our concern, but also offers two solutions. We are asking government to:

- 1) **Institute an immediate carve out to create an exception for clergy coming into Canada** through programs such as the United Church of Canada's Admission program.
- 2) **Rethink the reforms to Canada's immigration policy and make Canada more, rather than less, open to immigrants.** Clergy from other denominations who immigrate to Canada as temporary foreign workers are just one example of the many ways in which (im)migrants make important contributions to the fabric of Canadian society.

Thank you for your ongoing care and commitment around the vitality of rural communities in this riding and across the country. I know that you will understand the important role that small rural churches have in these places and the great loss it can be for a community to lose one. Your response to my request to help us protect these churches by not letting current immigration practices hamper their ability to find suitable, professional leaders is appreciated. I would be grateful if you could keep me informed of the steps you take and any results they might inspire.

Blessings,

Rev. Sarah Bruer
410 Elma Street East
Listowel, ON N4W 2E5

Cc Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship)

Appendix C²**Don't close our churches!**

A guide to write about the need for a more expansive Temporary Foreign Worker (High Income Stream) program. This program includes United Church of Canada admission ministers and as a result of changes to the program they are now being negatively affected by Canadian government changes to migration rules.

Why we write

Canadian politicians are elected by us and they know that in order to continue doing their jobs they need to effectively represent the people of their riding. It is within our power as individuals to share our opinions and expect governmental action on our subjects of concern.

In this particular case churches who are not able to welcome an admission minister or who are at risk of losing their minister because of the program changes may need to close and will cease supporting their communities. Your MP will want to know about how their community will suffer as the church and minister cease to provide services.

If you are part of the process who screens and welcomes admission ministers your MP will want to know why you do this work and the benefits that you see these ministers providing to Canada as whole even if the church is not in their riding.

How to write**Be Clear!**

We are asking the government to:

1. Institute an **immediate carve out** to create an exception for clergy coming into Canada through programs such as the United Church of Canada admission process.
2. **Rethink the reforms to Canada's immigration policy and make Canada more, rather than less, open to immigrants.** Clergy from other denominations who immigrate to Canada as temporary foreign workers are just one example of the many ways in which (im)migrants make important contributions to the fabric of Canadian society.

We are asking this because they have recently changed the rules which is making it more difficult for approved admission ministers to come to Canada and for ministers currently here to have their permits renewed. These expectations include:

1. A requirement for the employer to have three full-time Canadian staff
2. The newly increased pay rate threshold for the Temporary Foreign Workers Program – High Income Stream is above what some clergy would receive as take-home pay due to our practice of providing housing, especially in location where admission ministers are welcomed.
3. Meeting a minimum financial requirement that is not realistic for clergy who do not amass financial assets or own property as housing is often provided
4. Specific countries have had the number of people coming from them capped and that may not be known or obvious as the United Church of Canada process considers potential candidates

*You can read about these changes in the recent United Church of Canada letter to the government provided to you and on this government of Canada website - <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2024/10/minister-boissonnault-announces-further-temporary-foreign-worker-program-reforms-to-better-protect-the-canadian-labour-market-and-workers.html>

Be persuasive!

- Write an original letter using your own words (Use the sample letters written by Sarah Bruer and the official letter sent to Minister Miller by the Moderator and General Secretary as guides)
- If you are able, write it by hand on distinctive letterhead or print it out and mail it. It will get more notice that way.
- If email is what you can manage, by all means do that instead – use a catchy subject line “Don’t close our church!”
- Invite them into relationship with you and tell them about your relevant experience that might resonate with them. (A brief Google search will tell you a bit more about them and you may find commonalities if you do not know them yet)
- State the purpose of your letter and then detail your concerns, including how they affect you and your community
- Share our two requests found above
- Thank them for any action they have already take on this or related issues
- Ask them to be in touch with Minister Miller about your concerns
- Ask them to get back to you with a response
- Close your letter in a cordial manner

Be focused!

- Keep your letter concise – one to two pages is best. You can attach or include the longer United Church of Canada letter if you want to provide more background
- Share your letter with someone who knows little about the subject. Do they understand it? Is it compelling? Strengthen it as needed

Be complete!

- Include your full contact information
- Date the letter
- Address the letter to your MP
 - You can find them via their name or your address/postal code
<https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en>
- Copy Minister Miller

The Honorable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration and Citizenship Canada - Marc.Miller@parl.gc.ca OR

House of Commons * (mail sent here is postage free) Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0A6

- Keep in mind that letters to MPs do not require postage
- You can hand deliver the letter to your MP’s local office as a way of meeting their staff and further building relationships.
- Let us know you have written by sending an email to takeaction@united-church.ca

Appendix D¹

Region	Corporation	Incorporated	Status	Legal Name
11	AOTS Community Homes	TRUE	Active	AOTS Community Homes Inc. - Peterborough Housing Complex
11	Back Door Mission for the Relief of Poverty	TRUE	Active	Back Door Mission for the Relief of Poverty
11	Bridge Street United Church Foundation	TRUE	Congregation	Bridge Street United Church Foundation
11	Camp Quin-Mo-Lac	TRUE	Active	Bay of Quinte Conference Camp Corporation
11	East Central Ontario RC	FALSE	Active	East Central Ontario Regional Council
11	Ecumenical Ministry of the Deaf	FALSE	Active	Ecumenical Ministry of the Deaf
11	Four Winds Property Development Council	TRUE	Active	Four Winds Property Development Council
11	Friends of the Spire	TRUE	Unrelated	Friends of the Spire
11	Kingston Presbytery New Development Corporation	TRUE	Active	Kingston Presbytery New Development Corporation
11	Lakeridge Presbytery Church Extension Council (formerly Oshawa Pre	TRUE	Active	Lakeridge Presbytery Church Extension Council of The United Church of Canada
11	Manning Mews	TRUE	Active	Manning Mews Non-Profit Homes Corp,
11	Peterborough Presbytery Extension Council	TRUE	Active	Extension Council of The Peterborough Presbytery United Church of Canada
11	Quinte Living Centre	TRUE	Active	Quinte Living Centre Inc
11	RC 11 Congregation Foundation	TRUE	Congregation	
11	Trinity-Providence Seniors Housing Corporation	TRUE	Active	Trinity-Providence Seniors Housing Corporation
11	Wall Street Village	TRUE	Active	Wall Street Village Inc
11	Zion United Church Foundation Incorporated	TRUE	Active	Zion United Church Foundation Incorporated

Ministry Type	Comments	Item Type	Path
Seniors		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Comm Min		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Comm Min		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Outdoor Ministry		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Regional Council		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
UCC Admin		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
	Related to Sydenham Street United Church		
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Seniors		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Seniors		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Seniors		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Financial		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List
Seniors		Item	sites/IncorporationFiles/Lists/RC11Corporation List

Appendix D²**Services Offered through National Program**

1. GCO will receive and read all material required from the incorporated ministries
 - Minutes of board meetings
 - Minutes of annual meeting
 - Financial statements - audited or independently reviewed
 - Membership of the board OR
 - Proposed board nomination list for approval
 - Evidence of insurance coverage including naming of The United Church of Canada as additional insured
2. GCO will follow up with the IM's as necessary
 - Indications where follow-up is required may include: lack of reporting, incomplete information, etc.
 - Such follow-up would be via email and/or phone call
3. GCO will communicate with the regional councils immediately if there is a significant issue that needs to be addressed
 - Indications where follow-up is required by the region would be anything related to the supervisory role of the region. Examples may include: failure to make quorum, failure to meet, concerns identified in board minutes, financial statements, annual report or similar related reports.
4. GCO will review the financial statements
 - Any concerns that may be identified from the review will be communicated to the regional council
5. GCO will prepare a report, as required, for all motions requiring approval by the regional councils as the supervising court. Such motions would include:
 - Approve majority of directors
 - Approve capital fundraising initiatives and appeals
 - Indebtedness levels as may be required within the corporation's by-laws
 - Consent to sale, transfer, mortgaging, acquisition or leasing of land
 - Consent to the voluntary winding up of the corporation
 - Change or modifications to by-laws (UCC requirements)
 - Changes to articles of incorporation
 - Any other items requiring approval as may be included in the corporate by-laws
6. GCO will maintain a database to track receipt of reporting
7. GCO will review the by-laws and advise the regional council when they are ready for approval
8. GCO will consolidate and maintain all corporate files
 - Regional councils will have access to files via a digital mechanism
9. GCO will be the lead for all Release Agreements
10. GCO will take the lead for all Legacy Agreements that the Regional Council brings forward