

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 12

Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk. As Lent begins next week, I hope you are contemplating how you might deepen your relationship with the Holy through the 40 days of journeying in the wilderness. I intend to find time each morning for prayer and reflection.

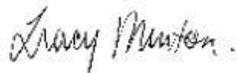
1. **Support to Communities of Faith** – the *Committee on Community of Faith Support* is deep in the midst of reading annual reports. The goal for this year is to help with the development of Covenants in time to celebrate together at the Regional Council Gathering in Humboldt in May. Therefore, the deadline for completion is **April 30, 2020**. Contact me for more information or to receive background material.
2. **Support to Ministry Personnel** – the *Committee on Ministry Personnel Support* has developed the policy to support the requirement in the Manual (I.2.5.3) that Ministry Personnel not in a call or appointment be in a formal association with a community of faith in order to perform any of the functions of ministry. Stay tuned for further information regarding the criteria and application process for this work.
3. **Support to Lay Leadership** – the *Committee on Lay Leadership Support* will be reviewing the training options available for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders. If you have taken the program in-person or online, or if you are interested in becoming Licensed in the future, please contact me to participate in the conversation.
4. **Sabbatical information** – if you or the ministry personnel you are in pastoral relationship with is planning a sabbatical, information regarding best practices may be found in this resource: https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/pastoral-relations_supporting.pdf. You will find guidelines for timing and reporting in both the planning and completion stages.
5. **Pension Information** – the next Pension Information Seminar has been posted: <https://www.united-in-learning.com/index.php/webinars/118-pension-information-seminar>. For those ministry personnel and lay employees thinking about retiring, this is a great way to have your pension questions answered. If you have questions related to the process for requesting retirement from the Regional Council, please let me know.
6. **Re-appointments** – if the pastoral relationship with your ministry personnel is due for renewal this June, it must be completed via ChurchHub this year. This requires that both ministry personnel and communities of faith have active ChurchHub accounts. If you have questions regarding your ChurchHub account as a community of faith, please contact me. Further direction regarding the re-appointment process will be distributed within the next few months.
7. **Mandatory training** – if you need to update/ complete your mandatory training (Boundaries or Racial Justice), new dates have been set for 2020. If you are unsure as to whether you need to complete either of these, feel free to contact me. However, please check United in Learning for more information regarding upcoming webinars: <https://www.united-in-learning.com/index.php/webinars/upcoming-webinars>

- 8. Regional Council contribution** – if you are interested in becoming a Pastoral Charge Supervisor or a Regional Council Liaison (like the former presbytery JNAC representative), please contact me. We are looking for folks with an ability to help explain and interpret policy, and a willingness to walk with communities of faith during transition and change. Many ministry personnel have “support to wider church” written into their position descriptions – we would be happy to help you fulfil that particular outcome.

A reminder that the Pastoral Relations Commission generally meets on the first Thursday of each month; therefore, we require any paperwork (i.e. ministry profiles, letters requesting retirement) to be submitted to Bev Diebert (bdiebert@united-church.ca) the Friday before the meeting. For the next meeting of the PRC, any paperwork needs to be received by **February 28** in order to be considered on March 5. As always, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We are nearing the end of Shannon McCarthy’s sabbatical time, which will hopefully coincide with the completion of the new website. On behalf of the staff, thanks for your patience during this time of transition and focus. As we head into Lent, may you find companions on your journey to deepen your experience and strengthen your faith.

Peace,



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