

## Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 13a

Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk. I wrote last week's Ponderings on March 12 before leaving on holidays out of the country for a week. In the time between my writing and the Rambler's distribution on March 18, the world exploded with a virus, and every.single.thing in the Ponderings has changed. So, if you were wondering at the relevance in the midst of crisis, that's why!

1. **Support to Communities of Faith** – the *Committee on Community of Faith Support* continues to read annual reports; if you have not already submitted yours, please send **one** copy to me by email or by mail. If you have not held your annual meeting yet in 2020, please see the information in the Rambler regarding the requirements and options for hosting an annual meeting during this time. The Committee is still receiving Community of Faith covenants – if you are able to gather a small group remotely (by Conference Call or online), you can still complete this piece of work as there is no expectation that it be approved by the full Community of Faith. The deadline for completion is **April 30, 2020**; we will celebrate these covenants whenever the Regional Council next gathers. Contact me for more information or to receive background material, including a sample covenant to review.
2. **Support to Ministry Personnel** – the *Committee on Ministry Personnel Support* is working on ways to support ministry personnel to provide leadership during this time. They will be creating a system of volunteer chaplains to check in with folks around the Regional Council. Stay tuned for more details. Implementation of the Voluntary Associate Minister policy has been temporarily suspended.
3. **Support to Lay Leadership** – the *Committee on Lay Leadership Support* will continue to receive applications for the renewal of Sacraments Elders, should worship begin anew. The requirement for the governing body to support the application continues – see the information in the Rambler for guidelines for meetings during this time.
4. **Re-appointments** – if the pastoral relationship with your ministry personnel is due for renewal in 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, please contact me. The process will not be available on ChurchHub until after April 1 when ministry personnel will be able to complete the Annual Declaration online. If there are no changes to the terms of the appointment, the re-appointment requires approval from the governing body **only**, so again, see the information in the Rambler about guidelines for those meetings.

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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca)) the Friday before the meeting. For the next meeting of the PRC, any paperwork needs to be received by **March 27 (in two days)** in order to be considered on April 2.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. These are extraordinary times, and with the majority of staff working from home (like me), my response time is delayed. The best way to reach me is by email as I can read and respond whenever my self-isolated family schedule allows. Please ensure that in addition to washing your hands, you are connecting with others remotely to be the church in the world and to one another.

Blessings and peace on your Lenten journey,

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