

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 22

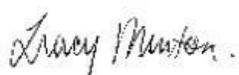
Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk! I hope this finds you healthy and well, waiting for your turn on the vaccination list so that you might spend time with family and friends safely. Here are a few updates from the work of the Pastoral Relations Commission. Policy links are embedded accordingly:

1. [Appointment policy](#) – as mentioned last month, the *Pastoral Relations Commission* crafted a policy to help communities of faith in the re-appointment phase. If the retired supply or Designated Lay Minister serving your community of faith is in an appointment needing renewal, please review this policy. The 5-year financial viability review tool may be found [here](#).
2. **Voluntary Associate Minister (VAM) policy** – in recognition of the unique challenges brought on by the pandemic, the *Pastoral Relations Commission* granted sacramental privileges to all designated lay ministers and diaconal ministers who have retired but are not in an appointment, provided they continue to remain accredited. This motion is valid until **June 30, 2021**. If you are a retired minister in Living Skies, please review this policy in preparation.
3. **The Manual, 2021** – As a special gift for your Lenten journey, the next edition of the United Church manual is available to download on the national [website](#). As with the previous edition, a printed version will **not** be made available. The new Manual comes into effect March 1, 2021.
4. **Ministry and Personnel Committees** – the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support conducted a wellness survey of ministry personnel in the Regional Council. There are many things to continue to learn from this but the most important is the significance of support from M&P Committees for the health and wellness of our ministry personnel. Please contact me for ideas of how this support might be enhanced for your ministry personnel and lay staff.
5. **Care for the Pastoral, Prophetic, and Priestly Self in a Pandemic** – ministry personnel, if you are looking for more information regarding the content being offered during the retreat in March by Diane Strickland, check out this 5 minute [video preview](#) of the content and the resources used.

A reminder that the Pastoral Relations Commission generally meets on the first Thursday of each month; therefore, we require any paperwork 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 **Friday, February 26** in order to be considered on March 4.

The season of Lent provides an opportunity for reflection, challenge and learning, walking the path through the wilderness, together while apart. May you take some time to acknowledge the travellers on the journey, offering support, care and faithful accompaniment.

Blessings and peace,



Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister
tmurton@united-church.ca; 306-966-4861