

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 28

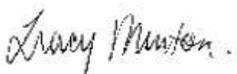
Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk! As the weather starts to cool and the leaves start to fall, we all seem to hunker down a little further in our cozy spaces. Here are some updates to distract you while you sip a warm drink:

- 1. Annual meeting exemption** – the General Council Executive has extended the suspension of the requirement for an annual meeting and allowing the governing body of the community of faith to make a decision on the annual draft budget to June 30, 2022. Stay tuned for further information regarding modified requirements for an annual report. If your community of faith has already planned a meeting for this fall or spring and the pandemic situation in your context seems stable, please feel free to meet safely.
- 2. Vaccine expectations** – as mentioned in the Rambler, last week the Board of Vocation announced the expectation that ministry personnel be vaccinated against COVID-19. This is one of the topics that will be discussed in the M&P Committee refresher workshop next month. If your community of faith has questions about this expectation for ministry personnel and its implications for other staff, please contact me.
- 3. Clergy Appreciation Month** – the Rambler outlines some suggestions for ways to show gratitude for the contributions of your ministry personnel. More than ½ of the communities of faith in Living Skies Regional Council are without called or appointed ministry personnel and are currently being supported by Pastoral Charge Supervisors. There are both lay leaders and ministry personnel serving in these roles, and so I would like to encourage you to show your appreciation to the person who enables quorum for your governing body!
- 4. Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence Prevention and Response Policy** – this is a policy created to respond to concerns regarding safety in our places of worship and work. You can find the [full policy here](#). It is currently being revised to include Regional Council-specific information. Stay tuned next spring for learning opportunities for M&P Committees, Ministry Personnel, and lay leaders on how we can continue to create safe communities for all. Any questions in the meantime, contact me.

A further 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, October 29** for the next meeting on November 4.

As we continue to make modifications to the way in which we function as communities of faith, I want to highlight the fact that we are continuing to be faithful followers of the One who walks the journey with us. I am inspired by questions that explore ways to adapt sacred rituals and awed by the leaders, both lay and ministry personnel, who are dedicated to the task of providing safe and meaningful ways to be the body of Christ. May we continue to find meaning in our work and to find ways to connect with our local communities that support the path of justice and peace.

Blessings and peace,



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