

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 29

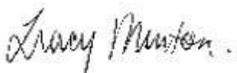
Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk! As I peer out my window at the beauty and awe of the first winter storm of the season, my thoughts turn to Advent and a hope that you all continue to be safe and warm as you wait for the light.

- 1. Annual meeting exemption** – a reminder that 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. The Committee on Community of Faith Support will be sending out further information regarding modified requirements for an annual report in the next Rambler. 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** – the Board of Vocation announced the expectation that ministry personnel be vaccinated against COVID-19. If your community of faith has questions about this expectation for ministry personnel and its implications for other staff, please contact me. If your community of faith is discerning the wisdom and implications of a vaccine mandate for your space, the Saskatchewan Health Authority has created a [Community Champions Toolkit](#) with guidance and resources for policy templates and communication strategies.
- 3. Support for Voluntary Associate Ministers** – in October, a group of Voluntary Associate Ministers in Living Skies gathered for support and conversation over Zoom. One of the outcomes of that gathering was a desire to regularize opportunities for connection. Therefore, on the 2nd Thursday, every other month, space will be made for folks to connect online with members of the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support. The next date is December 9 at 1:00pm. Connection information will be emailed separately to all VAMs.
- 4. An update from the Committee on Lay Leadership Support** – interviews with Licensed Lay Worship Leaders from around the Regional Council were conducted this fall by members of the committee and volunteers. Much gratitude to Debra Berg, Thom Carnahan, Sheila Lavender, Michele Rowe, and Brian Walton for their assistance in this important process of accreditation for these vital leaders in our Regional Council.

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, November 26** for the next meeting on December 2.

We have all experienced the challenges of navigating our personal and professional lives in the midst of a pandemic. As we approach our second Advent and Christmas season in the midst of restrictions, I urge you to find ways to help one another and continue to support those in leadership. Your ministers, licensed lay worship leaders, governing body members, musicians, custodians and other lay staff have all made adjustments over the last year. Let them know how much you appreciate it. May the practice of gratitude abound this advent season.

Blessings and peace,



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