

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 39

Greetings from the Pastoral Relations desk! I hope you have entered fully into the joy of the Advent season, anticipating the return of the light on Christmas! Here is an update on the work of Pastoral Relations in Living Skies Regional Council.

- 1. An update from the Committees** – as you can well imagine, there is a great deal of work that these committees have accomplished this fall, much of which was mentioned in the last Ponderings. They are populated with dedicated, faithful, compassionate, and competent folks, and I am so very blessed to work with each of them. At each meeting, there are always ideas of things that could be accomplished, if there was extra time and resources. If you have some time to spare and want to offer it to the work of the wider church, contact me to discuss where your gifts might fit best in the work of supporting communities of faith, lay leaders, or ministry personnel. We would be happy to welcome your presence and contribution.
- 2. A note for M&P Committees** – In the same way that your family has additional expectations and commitments during this season that you might be struggling to match, so are there extra pressures on your staff. There are many ways to express gratitude throughout the year but perhaps an additional gesture might be welcome this season. An offer of assistance, a word of thanks, or extra time off are all examples of possibilities.

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. For the January 5, 2023 meeting, we will need the paperwork by the end of December.

Christmas Eve is 10 days away. This past year has seen so many challenges as we have collectively navigated the return to worship and activities with the release of COVID guidelines. This has caused both anxiety and peace for all of us, and we know that 2023 will bring its own share of concerns for the safe gathering of our communities. I am grateful for the myriad of ways you have all navigated these waters and look forward to what new opportunities might come. As you and your family enter the final preparations for Christmas, may you resist the temptation to be busy and embrace the invitation for peace. Let our celebration of the birth of the Christ-child follow the words of the angels to not be afraid, and include a commitment to broadening our circles of ministry and vision with justice, compassion and love.

Blessings and peace,

Tracy Murton.

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