

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 48

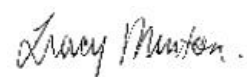
Welcome to the work of Pastoral Relations in Living Skies Regional Council. This is the place to find the most recent information about the Committees and other significant updates in this portfolio.

1. **An update from the Committee on Community of Faith Support** – hopefully you read in the Rambler the reminder from the Committee to review the self-assessment that your community of faith created in order to assess progress on goals and adjust your vision for ministry in the future. This will be an important task prior to or as part of your annual meeting in 2024. Early in January, the annual report best practices will be updated and made available for the development of your annual report.
2. **An update from the Committee on Lay Leadership Support** – the revised policy for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders has been approved by the Executive, and will be effective January 1, 2024. If your community of faith benefits from the worship leadership of a LLWL, you will want to review the policy ([found here](#)) to ensure compliance with remuneration, preparation of tax receipts, and other details. Early in January, highlights from the policy and recommendations for communities of faith will be made available.
3. **An update from the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support** – the role of the Voluntary Associate Minister in communities of faith is varied across the Regional Council. The Committee reviewed the policy in the hopes of providing support, clarity and consistency for both VAMs and the communities of faith to which they are accountable. Early in January, highlights from the policy and recommendations for both of these groups will be made available.
4. **A note for ministry and personnel committees** – A gentle reminder to ensure support is in place for those providing leadership in your community of faith, including staff and people providing pulpit supply. Advent is busy with extra services, increased demands on the building, and additional expectations – be sure you are checking in with folks as we near the end of this season to offer the care and affirmation they need.

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.

Last month I commented on the unusual weather in Saskatchewan. I'm certain no one needs a reminder that things are amiss for those dreaming of a white Christmas (at least here in Saskatoon). And yet we are a people of hope! Whether your community of faith celebrated the theme of Joy last week or you are anticipating this theme for this Sunday, there is no question that the preparation of our minds, hearts and spaces for the coming of the Christ-Child is filled with mystery, faithfulness, and a call to justice as we hear the ancient and sacred story again. May the familiar celebrations and spiritual practices be a reminder of others who join the mighty chorus, knowing we are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Blessings and peace,



Tracy Murton,
Pastoral Relations Minister
tmurton@united-church.ca
1-800-268-3781 ext. 6322

