

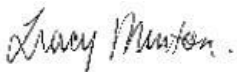
Pastoral Relations Ponderings – Volume 67

Welcome to the work of the Pastoral Relations desk in Living Skies Regional Council. This is the place to find the most recent information about the support Committees and updates for M&P Committees. Happy reading!

- 1. An update from the Committee on Community of Faith Support** – The Committee has been responding to questions and concerns that were raised in the self-assessments that have been received. They also look forward to receiving and reading annual reports for 2025 in order to offer support as needed, holding them in connection to the self-assessment tool just reviewed as the same person will read both for your community of faith. The [guidelines found at this link](#) include the content for annual reports, and a requirement for financial statements to be independently reviewed. Please send the report to me, by email, as soon as it is available.
- 2. An update from the Committee on Lay Leadership Support** – The Committee will be offering an online Sacraments Elder training session on March 28. This will be open to both current and new Sacraments Elders – contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca to register. If your community of faith does not have ministry personnel, tapping someone for this leadership is a great way to ensure participate in this important spiritual practice of our faith.
- 3. An update from the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support** – The Committee is discerning how best to support ministry personnel at this time. While weekly online Zoom gatherings met a need for support and information-sharing during COVID, this need has tapered and therefore the Zoom gatherings will occur monthly. This year the focus for the Committee will be on folks who have retired, and especially those who have chosen not to become Voluntary Associate Ministers. If you have suggestions for how this might happen, let me know!
- 4. A note or two for ministry and personnel committees** – A reminder that it is the season to schedule the annual review of your lay staff and ministry personnel. There are resources available for your use, [found at this link](#). If you regularly engage the services of a Licensed Lay Worship Leader, it is also highly recommended that you schedule a conversation with them to check in. An opportunity to received feedback helps all of us to feel valued and appreciated, which in turn helps us to feel motivated to perform our jobs with enthusiasm, dedication, and care. Contact me if you have questions about this important responsibility.

The season of Lent begins today. This is a time when faithful people journey for 40 days toward the light of the cross. Some folks give up something (meant to clear the path for a deepening relationship with the Holy), while others take on a particular practice for the same purpose. It is my intention to be more attentive to the social media content that I consume (with the goal of reduction) while also taking on daily reading of something to fuel my mind. I wonder what your Lenten journey holds? I know that this is a challenging time to be church as we navigate stories of racism, violence, and injustice within our communities and around the world. Engaging the discipline of Lent may help ground you in your capacity to encounter these stories and accept the call to action accordingly. May you find companions who hold you accountable, challenge your assumptions, and provide spiritual nurture on the journey, even when the way does not seem clear.

Blessings and peace,



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