

DIVISION OF REGIONAL COUNCIL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Mandate: To provide oversight, leadership and guidance to Communities of Faith within Regional Council.

Membership:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Convenor – Communications Team
- Convenor – Faith Formation, Christian Education and Leadership Development Team
- Convenor – Justice, Mission and Outreach Team
- Convenor – Stewardship Team
- Convenor – Regional Council Program Team

Duties:

- To ensure that all teams under its Division are fulfilling their mandates
- To ensure that the team handbooks and resources are up to date
- To ensure that the teams are providing appropriate training to the designated volunteers needed to fulfill each team's mandate
- To ensure consultation between Divisional Teams and with other Divisions as necessary and appropriate
- To provide information and advice for Regional Council Executive and to make recommendations on all issues coming within the ambit of the Division of Regional Council Services and Support

TEAM ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD (2020-2021)

1. FAITH FORMATION, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

CLERGY RETREAT/DLM EDUCATION EVENT

Wednesday, October 21, 2020 to Friday, October 23, 2020 online

Theme: Celebrating Ministries and Working Toward Vitality

Open to order of ministry—active, retired, inactive

Presenters:

- Janice MacLean, host of Prayer Bench online ministry at prayerbench.ca, who provided an online meditation and reflection resource “Sounding Vitality” for each of the three days of the retreat that attendees could access as they wished during the retreat and for several weeks after
- Moderator Richard Bott

This event was held in a series of Zoom gatherings:

- Opening worship led by Heather and Catherine with Janice MacLean, including an introduction to the “Sounding Vitality” resource – a moving worship that set the tone for the rest of the gathering
- A reflection by the Moderator on discipleship with time for questions and sharing – a really beautiful and helpful reflection, and very heart-felt sharing
- Morning worship on Thursday led by Catherine – wonderful music and prayers
- Kitchen party with music and story-telling shared by the attendees – lots of laughter and conversation, a very welcome coming together of people isolated for far too long

- Debrief and closing worship with communion led by Heather, Faith and Catherine – a grace-filled time of prayer, music and reflection with the added gift of sharing in communion together in our separateness
- 30 people registered for the retreat
- An earlier request to add a specific DLM-focused component was postponed indefinitely, as after surveying the DLMs in the region, it was determined that there was not sufficient interest at this time

Financial

- The only costs for the event were \$500 to Prayer Bench for the “Sounding Vitality” resource and \$75 for incidentals
- Funding for the total cost was provided through the Coughlan College Fund
- No registration fee was charged to participants

FALL LEARNING EVENT

Date: November 5, 12, 19, 2020 from 11:30am to 1:00pm

Location: Online

Topic: Pastoral relations process in the new structure

Open to accountable ministry and laypeople

A series of three “Lunch and Learn” sessions were held online:

- Protecting the Faith: An introduction to the United Church policies that protect your church from harassment, violence and discrimination presented by Andrew Richardson. OV Minister
- ChurchHub: Your questions answered presented by Deb Kigar of the General Council Office
- Pastoral Relations: From beginning to end
- An average of 15-16 people attended these sessions

Financial:

- As there was no cost for the sessions, no registration was charged

Long-Term Planning

- Proposed follow-up event by the Faith Formation and Mission Team at General Council Office
- Expanding the 2019 presentation on the Prayer Room and the Presence Project-Noticing the Presence of God Everywhere
- To be held in 2021
- Current Action: no further action has occurred at this time

2. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

No activities were recorded during the period under review except a few meetings to discuss the future of the Communications Team. I am happy to report to the Regional Council that starting this year, 2021, in the Fall, the Communications Team will begin publishing an online version of the connector called E-Connect whose communication will be linked to the Regional Council’s website. This platform will share material of interest and importance that will offer hope and encouragement to those who subscribe. Subscription would be free. Communities of Faith would be forwarded a copy of the stories – to seek out members who do not have access to computer technology – special printed versions can be made and would also be accessible through the Regional Council Office.

3. JUSTICE, MISSION AND OUTREACH TEAM

The team has been constituted. There is a lot of work for this team in the year ahead. Please look out for the work of this team with the Regional Council and individual Pastoral Charges and Faith Communities and get involved.

4. STEWARDSHIP TEAM

We do not have a convener for this team hence no activity to report.

5. REGIONAL COUNCIL PROGRAM TEAM

We do not have a convener for this team. However, most of the work we see has been carried out by committee members through the Regional Council Office.

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to thank all team convenors who have been involved in the work of the Division. Your work is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank our outgoing President the Rev. Peggy Johnson for her support during a difficult year. I wish her well in her future endeavors. Lastly but not the least I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Rev. Faith March-MacCuish, our Executive Minister, and the Rev. Heather Sandford, our Regional Minister, for their guidance and inspirations. Respectfully submitted.

Rev. Dr. Simon Muwowo
Chair