

DIVISION OF MINISTRY RESOURCES

The mandate of this Division is to provide leadership, oversight and guidance to the activities of the Committees that support Human and Ministry Resources in Region 15.

The five Committees of this Division are Faith Story Community Covenant, Future Directions, Licensing, Pastoral Relations and Retiree Support.

The members that serve on this Division are Anne Cameron, Chair; Nan Corrigan, Secretary; Heather Fraser, Chair of Faith Story Community Covenant; Carol Smith, Chair of Future Directions; John Moses, Chair of Licensing; Tom Woods, Chair of Pastoral Relations and Ruth Gamble, Chair of Retiree Support. Region 15 Staff Support are David Hewitt and Faith March-MacCuish.

The Division of Ministry Resources met regularly during the year. These meetings were by Zoom. The five Committees of this Division are actively carrying out their mandate according to the Governance Handbook for Region 15. A reminder that the list of Pastoral Charges/Faith Communities and Ministry Personnel can be found on the Region 15 website(uceast.ca). Information on the Division and its Committees can also be found on the Region 15 website.

Special thanks and appreciation to our Region 15 support staff - Faith March-MacCuish, David Hewitt, Jennifer Whittemore and Tracey Rose. Thank you to the members of the Division for your commitment, time, leadership and patience. Our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Committees and the Liaisons who work on the behalf of this Division and Region 15. Special thank you and appreciation to our secretary, Nan Corrigan, who will complete her term as secretary of this Division. You will be missed!

Let us continue our journey in faith trusting where the Holy One will lead us!

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Cameron, Chair

Faith Stories and Community Covenants Committee Annual Report

Faith Stories and Community Covenants moved this year to the Division of Ministry Resources, a realignment that allows the Region to do the same work with one less Division. Our work lies mainly in the connections between Communities of Faith and the Region when Communities are not in a Pastoral Relations Process. Things weren't made any easier by Covid, which put any plans for face to face meetings on hold.

We began in the fall by inviting the Rev. Ivan Gregan to do some brainstorming with us to decide what parts of the work to do. We decided to take on two projects this year. The first was to provide a liturgy for a covenant between the Regions and the Communities of Faith, to be included in worship at the Regional Annual Meeting, and also used in Communities of Faith on the same week as the Annual Meeting. (I will include that prayer at the end of my report, for your use in your Community of Faith). This is a simple and worshipful way to remind us in a pandemic year that

we are a covenant people, in community with many others who we don't always see, but are always there.

The second project was to provide a Self-Assessment tool for Communities of Faith in the Region. According to the Manual, instead of site visits every three years, each Community of Faith is asked to provide an Annual Self-Assessment, with the format left up to the Region. This wasn't something assigned to any of the Committees in the Region 15 structure, but it seemed like a natural fit for our Committee. We asked each of the Divisions and Committees within the Region to contribute questions for this year's Self-Assessment, which we are making available to Communities of Faith on the Region 15 website.

You should already have received a letter from the Region about how to find the form and fill it out. We are asking every Community of Faith to please submit by 30 June 2021. Your help is very much appreciated.

In addition to these projects, we continue to encourage all Communities of Faith to send Annual Reports to Tracey Rose at the Regional Office. Annual Reports are used from time to time in the work of Committees, and they are required to be kept in Archives as a record of our history as a denomination.

We have also received a few Faith Stories from Communities of Faith. All Communities of Faith should have a Living Faith Story which describes their mission and ministry focus, and are asked to review it regularly. For the past two years, Pastoral Relations has been assisting CoFs in their process to create a Living Faith Story. In the next year, we will be looking into providing educational opportunities to help CoFs develop their Faith Stories without the time pressure of a Pastoral Relations process.

We have done all this work with a small group of people and through a number of changes of personnel. We have three new members to replace two who have left, and have room for one or two more. In particular, we would love to have some lay people to join us, to contribute that perspective to our work. If you are interested in helping faith communities discern their mission in the world, this might be the Committee for you.

I leave you with this prayer for all our covenants in the name of the one who walked this way of faith before us, Christ Jesus. Blessings on you wherever that road might take you.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Fraser,
Chair, Faith Stories and Community Covenant Committee

A Covenant Prayer:

Christ's body is composed of many parts. Christ has many ministries. Some are easy, others are difficult. Some bring honour, others bring reproach. Some are suitable to our natural inclinations and temporal interests, others are contrary to both. Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in Christ, who strengthens us.

To be said in the Communities of Faith (in unison):

We **the people of X Pastoral Charge / Incorporated Ministry / Community of Faith** renew our covenant of mutual responsibility with **Region 15 of the United Church of Canada**

We will seek after God in all we say and think and do and live in communion with God and each other.

We will search for what God wants through Prayer, in Scripture and by fellowshiping with each other as we listen to God through many media.

We will celebrate God's Presence in worship, music, life passages, and Sacraments.

We will invite others to join us in our journey with God.

We will do all things for the glory of God and the good of God's World.

We give ourselves to God and rededicate ourselves to live in covenant as the people of God and the Living Body of Christ.

To God be all glory, praise, honour and thanksgiving, now and forever, Amen.

Future Directions Committee Annual Report

Last April the Future Direction Committee started off by moving to a different division. We are now part of the Division of Ministry Resources.

Shortly following last year's annual meeting, our committee took part in organizing an event to consider the long term future of Region 15 and how we might proceed with responding in a positive way to the many challenges and the hopes of the communities of faith in Region 15. The event was held on Zoom, May 20 and 27. Eric Tusz-King facilitated the two meetings and we thank him for his leadership. As a result of the two meetings, the Executive of the Region struck a task group to work on a Strategic Plan.

The Future Direction Committee as a whole agreed to serve on this task group, with the addition of two members from the Executive: Leslie Hamilton and Shannon MacLean. Jeff Chant took on the role of Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee.

It was decided by the Future Direction Committee to put our other duties on hold and concentrate on the development of a Strategic Plan for Region 15. Our staff support, Regional Minister David Hewitt, has kept us informed on any matters related to our FD work during this time period and we thank him for his support and guidance.

The Future Direction Committee members have faithfully attended the meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee. We have had six meetings, one in person, the rest on Zoom. The result is a draft report which Jeff has recently presented to the Region 15 Executive for study and feedback.

Now that a draft of the Strategic Plan is in the hands of the Executive, the Future Direction Committee will be resuming regular meetings and moving forward with our duties. We are off to a good start within the Division of Ministry Resources in terms of sharing information and ideas with the other committees in the division. Thanks to Anne Cameron, chair of the Division of Ministry Resources, for her leadership and her frequent calls to check in with us between meetings.

The members of the Future Direction Committee members are: Alison Etter, Catherine MacDonald, Jeff Chant, Don Sellsted, with Staff Support David Hewitt.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Smith, Chair

Licensing Committee Annual Report

Although 2020 was a year of restricted mobility and almost non-existent in-person meetings, the Licensing Committee was able to continue its work online.

We held two Zoom meetings on January 21 and September 18.

Much of our work consists of reviewing applications for licensing or relicensing of Lay Worship Leaders and interviewing the applicants. We also receive and review applications for sacramental elders and conduct appropriate interviews. Quite often pastoral charges request sacramental privileges for student appointees or Designated Lay Ministers and this also requires review of applications and interviews.

The applications for licensing and re-licensing of Lay Worship Leaders are on the Region 15 website. There are currently 16 Licensed Lay Worship Leaders within Region 15. It would seem that a number of people who held licenses from various presbyteries did not seek re-licensing under the new governing structure. Please note that all licenses issued by presbyteries have now expired. We would encourage any of you who are still leading worship for compensation to apply to Region 15 for licensing. There are plans for a refresher event (not training) in Tatamagouche in September if pandemic conditions permit.

To see a list of currently-licensed LLWLs in Region 15, please follow this link:

<https://2nzmqb15rsia42ye60q9xk0j-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Current-LLWL-With-Region-15-Website-List-FEB-3-2021.pdf>

The membership of the Region 15 Licensing Committee in 2020: Helene Burns, Dale Crawford, Hubert den Draak, Dave Forbes, Joan Griffin, Wayne Jarvis, Faith March-McCush (staff), John Moses (chair). I want to thank everyone for their perseverance during these challenging times.

Respectfully submitted,
John Moses, Chair

Pastoral Relations Committee Annual Report

This committee met a total of 10 times since the last annual meeting and continues to meet on a monthly basis to deal with the ongoing changes in Pastoral Relationships. There continues to be a strong trend in Ministry personnel being appointed to Pastoral Charges as many are parttime and fewer going the route of Call. The pandemic seems to have added an extra level of stress in some Pastoral Charges, with a noticeable uptick in people seeking changes in Pastoral Relationships. Perhaps this is the greatest loss in our new governance structure where the ability to keep abreast

of what is going on in our Pastoral Charges, both emotionally, spiritually and financially has been diminished and left to our Regional ministers to decipher. Many thanks to our regional minister and liaisons who now have those conversations which at times can be difficult. All of these changes, calls, appointments, motions made at each of our meetings can be found on the e-announcements sent out from Reg 15 office, the first week of each month. Thanks to David Hewitt, our regional minister, for sending these along. Members of this Committee are: Sean Boulger-Middleton, Sheila Stewart-Berwick, Jennifer Robarts-Advocate, and Rev. Tom Woods-Berwick.

Also, David includes some recent and encouraging initiatives this past year:

1. 7 out of 12 invited pastoral charges have selected representatives to participate in an initial Zoom webinar with respect to part time ministries on the South Shore. The webinar will take place on Saturday, January 23.
2. Riverport Pastoral Charge has initiated a conversation with the 11 congregations in Lunenburg County about possible collaboration. A first meeting was held in Riverport on January 13, and a next meeting has been scheduled for Bridgewater on February 10.
3. Regional Ministers David Hewitt, Heather Sandford and Kendall Harrison are cooperating on a webinar workshop for M&P Committees on managing conflict. Over 30 people are registered for the webinar to take place on February 20.
4. Regional Minister David Hewitt has had a couple of conversations with Lisa Vaughan, Parish Vitality Coordinator for the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island regarding the possibility of Ecumenical cooperation in local congregational ministry. We have identified several places in the province where ecumenical cooperation might be feasible.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Woods, Chair.

Retirees Support Committee Annual Report

The Retirees Support Committee created a proposal to be sent to the General Council Executive – ‘Review of the Green Shield Benefits Plan with respect to Retirees Benefits.’ We were grateful for the input from the Rev. Faith March-MacCuish, Executive Regional Minister, prior to submitting our document.

Living Skies Regional Council, Saskatchewan also submitted a proposal.

A letter was received from The Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary General Council, dated February 8, 2021, stating that a review of the plans provisions and prospective service providers is scheduled to be undertaken in 2022. The Executive decided not to initiate an earlier review in 2021 as proposed.

As Region 15, the Retirees Support Committee meets via email, and a general email is sent to the Retirees listed in our Data Base about every two months. Many people respond, grateful for the connection. Several share their concerns, frustrations with various issues. I respond, suggest, as I’m able, and seek help if the need arises. The challenges are many and varied for Retirees.

The image of cluster gatherings is off in the distance at the current time, with Covid-19 still very evident in our areas.

We celebrate those lives that are no longer with us, their Sprit gives us hope and guidance, going forward.

If you are not currently receiving our emails as a retired ministry personnel, secretary, and custodial staff, please get in touch with me as seen below.

Wanalda Parsons is our Secretary. Wanalda sends sympathy cards, thinking of you cards etc., to those of Region 15, as the calls or emails come to her for action.

Our committee consists of Wanalda Parson, Glenn MacLean, David Hann, Linda Winton, and David MacLean when called upon, and myself as Chair, and we are a member of the Division of Ministry Resources.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Ruth Gamble, Chair, Retirees Support Committee – 902-660-2699 or via email at kathjohngamble@gmail.com