

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9

As I write this report, we are coming up on our first-year anniversary of being in Covid-19 lockdown. This time last year, many of us would never have imagined all things that we've had to do this year in order to stay safe and yet continue doing what needs to be done. It has not been easy for many but we journey on.

Like many people, Zoom meetings and gatherings became my reality very quickly. After holding smaller meetings on Zoom, Regional Council 15 decided to hold our Annual Meeting in June. We were the first Region in Canada to hold their annual meeting electronically. Many Regions waited until the fall to hold their meetings in hopes that they might be able to meet in person but they had to meet virtually as well. There were a few lessons we learned but we got the job done. By the time we held our Recall Meeting in November, things ran more smoothly. I would like to thank all the staff members and members of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee who helped out behind the scenes to ensure that people were heard and that the lines of communication were kept open.

The Regional Council 15 Executive met in June, October, December and March. They were all held via Zoom. I would like to thank all those who serve on the Executive for their contributions to the life and work of The United Church of Canada in Region 15. Their leadership and dedication to the work they have been given is exemplary. I have had the opportunity this year to sit in on some Division meetings where I have met the Committee chairs. Once again, we have wonderful people in leadership throughout our Region. There is so much work to do and I know the Nominating Committee has had difficulty filling positions on committees. If you are a member of the Regional Council (or not) and are not involved in a committee, please consider membership in an area that suits your interests and talents.

Covid-19 restrictions meant that I was not able to travel as much as last year. While I missed not meeting with people in person, I was able to meet more people and attend more events through tele-conferencing. I was privileged to be invited to be part of weekly check-in calls with ministry personnel in our Region during April, May and June. This not only gave me a chance to meet many of our ministry personnel but also allowed me to hear their realities, their concerns and their ideas. There have also been meetings, webinars and workshops on a regional level, tri-regional level and national level in which I have participated. I view this increased access to the people and the work of the church as a 'silver lining' to the cloud of Covid-19.

I have continued working on the Bermuda Task Force. I have enjoyed the discussion and the camaraderie that has developed with the six of us on the task force. It is regretful that I have not been able to travel to Bermuda and visit the churches there. I have appreciated the invitations to preach or send messages to churches within Region 15 celebrating special milestones. Ecumenical invitations have been limited due to Covid-19 but I did get to virtually attend the installation of the Anglican bishop in our region.

The highlight of my year was the Celebration of Ministry Service which we were able to hold on November 8 in Truro. It was indeed a privilege to ordain and recognize four people into the ministry vocation of The United Church of Canada and celebrate with them.

In closing, I would like to thank our Executive Minister, Faith March-MacCuish and our Regional Minister, David Hewitt for their leadership through this difficult year. They are knowledgeable in their positions and a great source for guidance. All the staff members that work in our Region enrich us with their expertise in their particular areas. Thank you to each and every one of them. As I complete my second year of my one-year term, I have so much for which to be grateful. It has been quite an experience watching a newborn Region grow and develop. We have proven that we can be flexible with our governance structure and with the way we conduct our work. Looking forward, we have committed to work on anti-racism. I urge every Community of Faith within our Region to commit to this journey. We are also engaged in a Strategic Plan which will help guide our path forward. It will be interesting to see where this work leads and how our Region continues to evolve in its mission and ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

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President, Regional Council 15