

# **PROPOSAL**

**PROPOSAL NAME:** A call for FDEE Regional Council, through its Executive, to begin discussions with Designated Lay Ministers (DLMs) to address issues being felt by them, especially as it pertains to policy around sacraments and licencing, and how FDEE Regional Council might best represent DLMs at the General Council level.

**ORIGIN:** Alice Moores, Designated Lay Minister, DLM (*retained*) William Matchem, DLM, James Martin Carter, DLM (*Not Recognized*), Susan Sheppard, DLM, Georgina Parsons, DLM, Ray Case, DLM, and Emma O'Rourke, DLM

**TO: First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council (FDEE RC)**

## **1. WHAT IS THE ISSUE?**

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us to address:

- The lack of representation of DLMs at the executive level of FDEE Regional Council.
- The lack of a designated DLM seat on the executive to represent the interests of DLMs and to be a voice to the DLM community when change happens.
- The lack of emphasis placed on the DLM pathway of ministry at regional meetings.
- The feeling for DLMs of being lesser than other streams of ministry within the FDEE Region and at the General Council level.
- The lack of representation by FDEE Region on behalf of DLMs as it pertains to policy change at the General Council level, especially regarding DLM licensing for sacraments.

## **2. WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT?**

- There is an overwhelming presence at the executive level of one stream of ministry. C.3.1.2 Membership “The executive must consist, to the extent possible, of a balance of ministry personnel and lay members who are not ministry personnel.”<sup>1</sup>
- Little is known about the DLM pathway to ministry, yet approximately 17% of our ministry personnel in FDEE region are DLMs.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Page 81, [The Manual, 2021 \(united-church.ca\)](http://united-church.ca)

<sup>2</sup> There are currently 149 Ministry Personnel in FDEE (Active, Retired and Students) with 25 of those being DLMs (including Active, Retired and Students). Therefore, approximately 17% of the Ministry Personnel in FDEE are DLMs. (4 Ministry Personnel are Diaconal (students, active, retired = 3%), and 120 are Ordained = 80%). The margin of error is 1-2% as numbers have been rounded up in all cases.

- All ministers (for the most part) are seen as equal in the view of congregations, yet when not employed or retired, DLMs lose privileges of ministry, especially the administration of the sacraments, which is often very confusing to members of congregations who request sacraments but are denied because of policy.
- There is a need to move forward and recognize that all who are called to ministry are called by God.

The Manual H.2.2 “For people whom God calls to and endows for the order of ministry and designated lay ministry, offering leadership in Christ’s diverse ministries contributing to God’s mission in creation.”<sup>2</sup>

Here it clearly states that the United Church of Canada recognizes DLMs as being called, yet in other areas of the United Church a different interpretation is given. “Designated lay ministers (DLMs) are lay ministers, recognized by a regional council and accountable to the [Office of Vocation](#), who accept a leadership role for defined periods of time for defined forms of service.”<sup>3</sup>

### **3. HOW MIGHT THE COUNCIL OF ACTION RESPOND TO THESE ISSUES?**

- We, the above named DLMs, are requesting that FDEE Regional Council begin discussions with DLMs on the issues stated above to clarify and understand the frustrations that are being felt in the FDEE Region. There are many misconceptions around the areas of study and education and the qualifications of DLMs.
- We, the above named DLMs, are requesting that FDEE Regional Council began discussions with DLMs on policy around sacraments and licencing and how best the FDEE Regional Council might represent DLMs at the General Council level.

---

<sup>2</sup> Pg. 130, [The Manual, 2021 \(united-church.ca\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Designated Lay Ministry | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](#)