

**Crucial Clips** for Clergy and Communities of Faith  
Volume 1, 2022: March 18, 2022

Greetings from the office of Prairie to Pine Regional Council! As you are aware there have been some changes related to the Prairie to Pine Weekly News rotating what is included each week and maximizing the use of links for detailed information in an attempt to make it more compact to be viewed by those through their phones. At the same time there have been requests for more detailed information more widely available in a time sensitive way to those may need it. To address that, I, as Pastoral Relations Minister will try to circulate to all active Ministry Personnel and Pastoral Charge Supervisors, via email, a ‘lengthy’ email every couple of months containing some information that will impact the life and ministry of the Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges and/or its Ministry Personnel. Some of this information may also appear in the Weekly News on occasion before or after it appears in *Crucial Clips*. This initial edition is quite lengthy but it is anticipated that future editions will be much shorter.

Because we do not necessarily have up to date email addresses for chairs of governing bodies in Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges, I ask that you pass these emails or relevant portions of them, on to various people in the Pastoral Charge where you are the Pastoral Charge Supervisor or the Ministry Personnel.

Thank you for being a link in our communications system.

**Content of this edition**

Updates on work related to the Pastoral Relations Commission, support committees and Pastoral Relations Minister:

- **Committee of Community of Faith Support**  
(Covenants of Mutual Commitment, Accountability and Support; amalgamations and disbanding; governance documents; Annual meeting and annual reports) ..... page 2
  
- **Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support**  
(interviews and recognition of new Licensed Lay Worship Leaders; follow up on sacraments Elders training and mentoring) ..... pages 2-3
  
- **Committee on Ministry Personnel Support**  
(MP2MP Connectors; bi-weekly Ministry Personnel ZOOM; gathering of ministers in formal association relationships; celebration of retirees) ..... page 3
  
- **Pastoral Relations Commission**  
(Joint Community of Faith Profile training; renewals of appointments; follow -up on initial Collaborative Ministry conversations- new policy, Congregational Designated Ministers; Zoom gathering of Pastoral Charge Supervisors) ..... pages 3-5

**Other:**

- Annual Declaration related to Criminal Charges and Criminal Records ..... page 5-6
- Process and timelines related to requests for retirement..... page 6
- General Council 44 ..... page 6

**Committee on Community of Faith Support:** Contact -Acting Chair: Heather Lea [hthrlea@gmail.com](mailto:hthrlea@gmail.com) or Secretary Cheryl Mckitrick [cemckit@gmail.com](mailto:cemckit@gmail.com)

The Committee on Community of Faith Support is currently working with those Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges in the process of completing their **Covenants of Commitment, Accountability and Support** so that they can be celebrated at the Annual Meeting of Prairie to Pine Regional Council. Having already celebrated some Covenants previously during Lent, 2021 and at the Annual Meeting in 2021 this will be the last scheduled celebration. Related to these Covenants, the Committee is beginning to design a tool and process related to **self assessment** (sections B.2.1.1, C.2.3 and G.1.2.2 & G.1.2.3) for Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges for implementation in early, 2023.

The Committee also has been busy resourcing and supporting several Communities of Faith as they journey through processes related to **amalgamation and disbanding**. They have reviewed a few governance documents /bylaws and structure.

At this time of year Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges are busy preparing their **Annual reports and holding their Annual Meetings**. Annual meetings for 2020 and 2021 must be held by June 30, 2022 in accordance with temporary amendments to the requirements in The Manual. These Annual Meetings can be held in person (when and as Public Health Orders now allow), via Zoom, via Conference Call or any combination of these mediums. If you require assistance accessing technology or a conference call account, please be in touch with Cherry Abad to check the availability of the Regional Council Office accounts (1-204-233-8911).

Hard copies of Annual Reports can be sent by mail to Prairie to Pine Regional Council for filing and consultation by the various committees/commissions. Mailing address: Prairie to Pine Regional Council 60 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, MB R3G 1K7 Reports can be sent by email to Cherry Abad: [cbad@united-church.ca](mailto:cbad@united-church.ca)

**Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support:** Contact person: Don Schau, Chair [don.atlanticgcuc@mymts.net](mailto:don.atlanticgcuc@mymts.net)

The work of the Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support continues in arranging for connections for those completing online Lay Worship Leadership course and requesting **interviews for initial licensing as Licensed Lay Worship Leaders**. They have also designed **process for the re-licensing** of those who continue to function as Licenced Lay Worship Leaders within some portion of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council. **An email has been circulated to all Licensed Lay Worship Leaders** who were on the lists of the previous six presbyteries in the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario to clarify their intentions related to continued functioning after which a **re-licensing process cycling over three years** will be put in place.

It is the hope of the Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support that during one of the worship services at the annual meeting of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council on May 06 & 07, 2022 to be able to **celebrate/recognize those licensed as LLWS since January, 2019 and re-covenant with those continuing to exercise their ministry as LLWLs.** An email will go directly to these people in the coming weeks with details.

Given that Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges are beginning to return to in person worship, a **Sacraments Elders training/refresher workshop** was held on Saturday, March 05, 2022. Those attending the training will be **approaching some Ministry Personnel to provide mentoring** for their initial experiences around baptism and communion. In some cases, those trained are in communities of faith/pastoral charges that do not currently have called or appointed Ministry Personnel and are therefore, with **the support of the governing body of the community of faith where their membership is held and the completion of the form, are eligible to request licensing as Sacraments Elder.** These licenses are renewed annually at the end of each Pastoral Year (June 30<sup>th</sup>) if/until the Community of Faith/Pastoral Charge does not have Ministry Personnel in place. There are currently 36 Sacraments Elders licensed and functioning in Prairie to Pine Regional Council in 23 different places. Twenty people participated in the training session on Zoom on March 05, 2022, five of whom took the course as a refresher.

**Committee on Ministry Personnel Support:** Contact person: David Howell [peacefullonedh@gmail.com](mailto:peacefullonedh@gmail.com)

The Committee on Ministry Personnel Support continues to provide support to those in active ministry through a program called **MP2MP Connectors**, where some nine ministry personnel most of whom are not in an active call or appointment offer regular connection and support to those non-Indigenous Ministry Personnel who have expressed an interest in having support in this way. **ZOOM connections offered every second Tuesday afternoon by the Pastoral Relations Minister** offer the opportunity for any/all Ministry Personnel to gather in unstructured time for conversation and mutual support. Plans are in process **to gather via ZOOM on April 26, 2022** those ministry personnel who are not in an active appointment or call but continue to offer their gifts and skills to exercise ministry through **“formal association”** with Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges. Details will go out in an email to those individuals in the coming weeks. There are currently about 55 Ministry Personnel who are in formal associations who are either collecting pension and/or employed in settings that are not communities of pastoral charges. The Committee on Ministry Personnel has agreed to arrange a celebration during the Annual Meeting of the Regional Council of those who will be “retiring” from active ministry prior to September 1, 2022.

**Pastoral Relations Commission:**

The Pastoral Relations Commission and the Pastoral Relations Liaisons continue to be involved with communities of faith /pastoral charges who are completing their Community of Faith Profile documents to post a ministry position and then engage in a search process for ministry personnel. AT the present time work is happening with 35 pastoral charges. Because there are only 11 Pastoral Relations Liaisons functioning at the present time (with one of those getting ready for a sabbatical soon) the pastoral relations commission will be offering the **next training for Community of Faith Profile development as a ZOOM webinar on April 09, 2022 from 9:30 to noon.**

Invitations have been sent directly to those pastoral charges required to take this training but the training is open to others those interested in the process. Contact the Pastoral Relations Minister or Regional Council Administrative Assistant, Cherry Abad if you are interested.

We are always looking for new people to train and function as **Pastoral Relations Liaisons**. Please contact me or the chair of the Nominating Committee, Betty Kelly ([betty@the-kellys.ca](mailto:betty@the-kellys.ca)) for more information. This handbook gives you a general sense of what is involved in the role: [Pastoral Relations: Regional Council Liaisons \(united-church.ca\)](#)

It is that time of year when **Appointments are up for renewal**. An email has been sent directly to Ministry Personnel requiring renewal outlining details related to timelines, deadlines, processes and documents. Ministry Personnel have been asked to pass this on Chairs of governing bodies and/or Ministry & Personnel Committee Chairs.

The other role that the Pastoral Relations Commission is always looking for people to function within is the role of **Pastoral Charge Supervisor**. We currently have over 60 people functioning in this role supporting the governance structures in pastoral charges without called or appointed members of the Order of Ministry of the United Church of Canada or recognized Designated Lay Ministers or during sabbatical periods of those Ministry Personnel. Four of these Pastoral Charge Supervisors are supporting Communities of Faith or Pastoral Charges where there are Candidates for Ministry or Ministers from another denomination in the Admissions process. Prairie to Pine Policy/Protocol related to Pastoral Charge Supervisors is available through:

The Committee on Community of Faith Support and the Pastoral relations Commission will host a **ZOOM gathering of Pastoral Charges Supervisors on the evening of April 21, 2022**. Details will be sent soon to Pastoral Charge Supervisors along with the template for the Annual Reporting of Pastoral Charge Supervisors for the 2021-2022 Pastoral Year. More on the role of Pastoral Charge Supervisors in Prairie to Pine Regional Council please consult:

<https://prairietopinerc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Pastoral-Charge-Supervisor-Policy.pdf>

### **Collaborative Ministry Follow Up**

Thank you to the over 180 people from over eighty Communities of Faith who participated in the initial Collaborative Ministry Conversation on January 29, 2022. Information on options were discussed (PowerPoint available for any who did not attend). After that session Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges were encouraged to discuss with the governing body collaborative opportunities for ministry and mission, one time connections or longterm more extensive sharing with neighbouring charges, either United Church or other mainline denominations.

The Executive of Prairie to Pine Regional Council on March 03, 2022 at the recommendation of the Pastoral Relations Commission approved the following Policy to encourage the consideration of Collaborative Ministry Arrangements:

#### **Background:**

Having held an information and conversation session via Zoom on January 29, 2022 attended by over 180 people from over 80 Communities of Faith/Pastoral Charges on the need for greater

collaboration between communities of faith and pastoral charges in order to carry on the mission and ministry of the United Church of Canada in this Regional Council

Having discussed some of the possible next steps to promote the exploration of collaborative arrangements of various kinds especially when communities of faith/pastoral charges are without paid accountable ministry and are seeking new ministry leadership,

The Pastoral Relations Commission of Prairie to Pine Regional Council at its meeting on February 08, 2022 (**MOTION 2021-2022 # 19**) approved the following addition to the profile and search policy and processes within Prairie to Pine Regional Council and seeks the support and approval of the Executive of Prairie to Pine Regional Council for this addition effective immediately:

**Policy on the consideration of Collaborative Ministry within Prairie to Pine Regional Council**

That communities of faith in a Profile or Search process presently or in the future, considering less than a full-time ministry position, be required to engage in conversations regarding possible collaborative ministry arrangements. These conversations could be with neighbouring United Church of Canada communities of faith or with ecumenical partners, and they must take place prior to submitting Profiles or Records of Appointment or Call for any part-time ministry position to the Pastoral Relations Commission of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council of the United Church of Canada for approval. **CARRIED**

The Pastoral Relations Commission at its meeting on March 08, 2022 approved the posting of the **Collaborative Ministry** in South East Manitoba to be called **United in Spirit** involving Steinbach and Niverville. We are aware of some Communities of Faith experiencing changes in pastoral relations who are seeking out neighbours to begin profile processes together. We have also been told that some groupings of pastoral charges are “**clustering**” to share leadership resources for study groups and services during Lent.

We have also received some communication from places interested in exploring the hiring of **Congregational Designated Ministers**. The processes associated with this vary depending on whether a charge has a Called or Appointed Minister onsite, has a Called or Appointed Minister as a Pastoral Charge Supervisor currently or has a lay pastoral charge supervisor. We are asking for patience as we sort through how we can respond to these requests especially in the latter circumstance. Another thing complicating the processing is that some changes may come as the result of General Council 44 (February 13 – August 07, 2022) which may impact what we can do beyond that related to Congregational Designated Ministers. Stay tuned.

Please keep the Pastoral Relations Commission aware of any collaborative ministry initiatives that you are exploring or engaging in.

**Other matters:**

**Reminder to All Ministry Personnel-Annual Declaration from Karen at the Office of Vocation.** We are now into March and you may have noticed that the portal for the Annual declaration related to Criminal Charges and Criminal Record is now open on the Church Hub accounts of ministry personnel. After some consultation about when is the best time to complete the AD, it is now active from January 1 to May 15 this year. It is hoped that this will be a more convenient time to complete this. You do not need

to get a new police records check done each year. A new police records check is only required if you are declaring new criminal charges or if your police records check is older than 2011. If you need assistance with completing your Annual Declaration please contact me at [kmedland@united-church.ca](mailto:kmedland@united-church.ca).

### **Requests for retirement**

Ministry Personnel who are wanting to begin to collect their United Church of Canada Pension on or before September 01, 2022 should begin the process of requesting so soon. It is no longer mandatory to stop working and begin to collect your pension at age 65. After age 65 you are not eligible for Restorative Care Support or Longterm Disability. You can continue to work and pay into the UCC pension plan until the December 1 in the year in which you turn 71. Even beyond age 71 you can continue on in the same job in the same place.

IF at any point after age 65 you want to make any significant change to the terms of your call/appointment, the percentage of time worked or the place where you work, then you will need to begin to collect pension AND take a break of 13 weeks before returning to employment. Return to the same pastoral charge requires significant change in terms and cannot be negotiated or approved before you begin collecting pension.

Options, required documents and process related to “retirement “ are outlined in a policy passed in 2018 and available through : <https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/retirement-pastoral-relations.pdf> and in the handbook [Pastoral Relations: Additional Resources for Retirement \(united-church.ca\)](#)

If you are currently working in a Call or Appointment with a Pastoral Charge and want to end working in order to begin collecting your United Church Pension, you will need to give at least 90 days notice to end that pastoral relationship for the purpose of retirement.

Prairie to Pine Regional council acknowledges and celebrates retirees each year at the Annual Meeting of the Regional Council. The requests of those to be celebrated at the meeting on May 6 & 7, 2022 need to be known by April 15 ,2022 at the latest. Those known after that date will be celebrated in 2023.

### **General Council 44**

You may be aware from reading the Prairie to Pine Weekly News or the website that General Council 44 has begun. This virtual meeting began with worship and introductory session on February 13, 2022 and will continue with Commissioners gathering weekly each Wednesday through March and April for learning /listening session; May and June for discussion sessions, decision -making sessions in July and final worship service on August 7, 2022. There will be seven sessions over this time period. Each session will be 90 minutes in length (beginning at 4pm PT / 7pm ET / 8:30pm NT) and will be held in worship. Everyone is welcome to view on YouTube. If you are unable to attend a particular session, there will be recordings of the session available to you for review. [Click here for full details.](#)

Please keep the commissioners in your prayers especially those from Prairie to Pine Regional Council.