

## REPORTS – STANDING COMMITTEES of the REGION

### NOMINATIONS

First off, I want to start by saying a big THANK YOU to all of those who have served this past year on one of our many regional council committees. We are so lucky to have so many of you answer the call to serve, often in multiple roles, and we understand the time commitment that is required for all your work.

The full nominating slate is available in the Appendix of the workbook. Our slate is continually updated as new members step into new work, and throughout the year we add folks to committees with the approval of the regional council executive. We will continue to share new opportunities throughout the year on the website and through the weekly news, so keep your eyes peeled for work that may interest you and that you may find life-giving.

We continue to face headwinds when it comes to recruiting volunteers to serve all the roles that we have available. Part of this challenge has been the pandemic and the inability to reach people face to face at meetings such as we are having this weekend, but we are also cognizant that we have fewer hands doing more work these days. We continue to look for new ways to reach out and engage folks, but we also rely on you and the membership of the regional council to help light the way as we seek to reach new people. You all play a vital role in this work, and we welcome your feedback and wisdom.

Prairie to Pine Nominating Committee consists of Teresa Melnychuk, Anna Stewart, Frances Flook, Joey Dearborn, and Betty Kelly. We are also ably supported by Julie Graham and Cherry Abad. We could not do our work without them and their technical expertise in the background. Julie's input about what the nominating committees in other regions are doing is an added gift.

The Nominating Committee would be delighted to talk with you further and help you discern where you might comfortably volunteer. Contact us at [p2p.nominations@gmail.com](mailto:p2p.nominations@gmail.com).

*Respectfully submitted,  
Joey Dearborn, on behalf of P2P Nominating Committee*

### PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

In some ways, the work of the Pastoral Relations Commission during this past year has been quite similar to our work in previous years. In our monthly meetings held by conference call or Zoom:

- we received reports from those working with Communities of Faith as Liaison volunteers and provided ongoing training
- we reviewed Ministry Profile documents for those places in transition, sometimes because of the request of Ministry Personnel for a change or because of a need to evaluate financial resources and ministry time
- we provided training for Communities of Faith as they began creating a new Ministry Profile document and again as they prepared to search for new ministry staff
- we supported Communities of Faith as they engaged with Church Hub at various stages in the pastoral relations process

- we responded to requests for assistance in times of conflict within a Pastoral Charge or Community of Faith
- we reviewed and approved call/appointment forms when completed through Church Hub for non-Indigenous Communities of Faith and paper documents related to Indigenous Ministries.
- we received the news of changes in the Cost of Living categories from the UCC and answered questions from Communities of Faith
- we received, reviewed, and approved re-appointments when documents were received from Communities of Faith
- we encouraged Communities of Faith to seek options for Collaborative Ministry in order to create more full-time equivalent ministry positions which have more options for Ministry Personnel including Admissions applicants

I am grateful for the work of the members of this Commission: Elsie Douglas who ensures we have accurate minutes, Harold Kenyon, Linda Buchanan, Sherri McConnell, Aileen Urquhart, and Lorraine Kakegamic, each of whom contributes wisdom to our work and their skills also as Liaison volunteers.

In addition, this group of dedicated volunteers enhances the work of our Commission through their work as Liaison volunteers: Kathy Platt, Elizabeth Brown, Mona Denton, Patrick Woodbeck, Paul DuVal, and Virginia Coleman.

Finally, while it is our role to support the work of Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Minister, we are grateful for her support in all of our work. Together, our team is stronger!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Best, Chair  
Pastoral Relations Commission*

**COMMITTEE ON  
COMMUNITY OF FAITH SUPPORT  
(aka CCFS)**

***Do you have those Covenants of Mutual Commitment, Accountability, and Support finally done?*** Yes! Well, except for one pastoral charge that consists mostly of summer cottagers whose covenant work is still in process.

***A neighbouring congregation did some sort of self-assessment report last year. Will we have to do one too? If so, when?*** All communities of faith are now expected to do regular self-assessments. This is instead of presbytery oversight visits. In P2P “regular” is being interpreted as every three years. In 2022 nearly a third of our pastoral charges were asked to complete a self-assessment report. Committee members have read and responded to each of them, and the reports are filed in the Regional Council office. The plan is to do about a third each year, so yes, you will be asked to do one! If not this year, then maybe next year . . . unless you are busy with writing your ministry profile, or actively engaged in a search process, or working toward an amalgamation, etc. The CCFS has revised the Self-Assessment Resource based on feedback from last year’s experience. It will be sent out in early September to about 45 pastoral charges.

***Are there many places working on an amalgamation?*** No, just two groups at present. In the past year, Rainy River & Stratton were the only ones to celebrate an amalgamation. But there are several others that may be considering it as an option if collaborative arrangements or other plans aren’t feasible. The committee has written a resource for those who are “just wondering” about amalgamation and another for those who are actively working on an amalgamation agreement. Please ask for it if you might be thinking of amalgamation!

**What about disbanding?** Oh, yes, disbanding! We could say a lot about that! Our committee members are presently supporting six congregations that have made the decision to move toward disbanding and are in various stages of disposing of their property, dealing with memberships, gathering records for the archives, and other details. It usually takes 12-18 months for the process to be completed. There are a handful of others considering disbanding as an option. Since our last annual meeting in 2022, the Regional Council has disbanded three communities of faith: Central (Brandon), Kildonan (Winnipeg), and Rossendale. If your congregation is wondering if they should be thinking of disbanding, please contact the Regional Council office so the Committee on Community of Faith Support can provide information and support that may help your discussion and decisions.

***I read something about a United Church that seemed to have an Anglican priest – how does that work?***

I expect it was an Ecumenical Shared Ministry (ESM). We have several ESMs, with both Anglican and Lutheran congregations, and another with about four denominations. ESMs are developed when local congregations believe they could do better together than apart, and the judicatory bodies give approval. Our Committee works closely with the group developing the agreement, which likely takes 6 – 12 months to develop. As this report is being written we have one United Church congregation considering this option. It is important to contact Judy Hare if you are thinking of an ESM because she must make the initial contact with the other denominational officials.

***What else do you do?***

We normally meet monthly by ZOOM for three hours in the morning, as well as meetings (in person or telephone or ZOOM) as needed with the community of faith members. There is also some reading and writing of letters or reports. Sometimes lots of it!

We help communities of faith to revise or review their governance documents (which some still call a constitution). Any governance structure that is not a simple church Board or Council (or the older model of Session, Stewards, and Official Board) must be approved by the Regional Council. CCFS does the reviewing, commenting, and recommending. We worked on two or three governance documents last year. This is time-consuming, detailed work.

We also support communities of faith wondering how to manage various situations that arise within their congregations. Often it involves working closely with the Pastoral Relations Commission and the Property Commission, with Cherry Abad (administrative support) and of course, Judy Hare.

Occasionally it is necessary for our committee to help a pastoral charge complete and submit its annual statistical report. We also receive and file electronic and print copies of Community of Faith Annual Reports, so they are available for reference if necessary during the year. **You could help, by making sure your congregation's Annual Report has been sent!**

Sometimes we recommend particular webinars on CHURCHx or United in Learning when a community of faith is looking at a specific issue. (<https://churchx.ca/login/index.php>) We may invite a special guest to join us for part of a meeting – recently Vicki Nelson told us about the work she does in support of stewardship in communities of faith.

In other words, we do our best to support communities of faith in ways required by our mandate and as needed by congregations and their leaders. In the process, we grow in faith and wisdom and in appreciation for the good & faithful work being done in our Regional Council.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Heather Lea (Acting Chair), Cheryl McKittrick (Note Keeper),*  
*Pat Bird, Silas Lee, Heather Sandilands, Irene Chabluk,*  
*Bill Millar and Judy Hare (Staff Support)*

**COMMITTEE ON  
LAY LEADERSHIP / LAY MINISTRY  
SUPPORT**

The Committee on Lay Ministry and Lay Leadership Support is responsible for supporting, licensing, re-licensing, and tracking information for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWL), training related to Sacraments Elders, and tracking related to Congregational Designated Ministers (CDM). More detail on our role, including a link to our mandate, can be found at <https://prairietopinerc.ca/about/governance/committees-on-support/clls/>.

This year we have licensed two new LLWLs, Shirley Martin (Cadurcis) and Rita Swan (St. Andrew's -River Heights United Church, Winnipeg). We anticipate more requests for licensing soon as we are made aware of others who have completed the training program and are seeking licensing.

The process of relicensing LLWLs has begun. We have identified 18 individuals who are eligible for and have requested relicensing in the first year of a three-year cycle. Motions approving the relicensing of nine of those have been made by the Executive of Prairie to Pine Regional Council and nine need to complete a boundaries refresher or add their names to the pulpit supply list before being relicensed. We currently have seventeen LLWLs available for pulpit supply throughout various areas within Prairie to Pine Regional Council: [LLWL-Pulpit-Supply-List-February-14-2023.pdf \(prairietopinerc.ca\)](#)

The Committee has plans for a gathering of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders in the fall of 2023 (September 23 or October 14).

Many thanks to Rev. Jeff Cook for serving as our chaplain this year during our interview sessions. With Jeff retiring, we are currently looking for someone to serve in this capacity.

In this Pastoral Year on October 29, 2022, and April 29, 2023 training was held via ZOOM for those seeking to become sacraments elders and as a refresher for those whose previous training was received through former presbyteries sometime in the past. Licensing is done annually based on the Pastoral Year, so licensing and relicensing are underway. There were forty-two sacraments elders providing sacraments to the twenty-five communities of faith where their membership is held at various points in time the 2022-2023 Pastoral Year.

Many communities of faith face the reality of being without called or appointed ministry personnel. Others have ministry personnel less than full-time. This leaves a hole that lay leadership tries to fill. One of the challenges we have is trying to fill the need while respecting the rules we live with. Some of these rules are set by the Church and others by the Canada Revenue Agency. Some of the rules related to LLWLs and Congregational Designated Ministers (CDMs) and those sections in The Manual have recently been changed allowing for greater flexibility in some cases depending on the needs of the Regional Council. The committee is awaiting some details so we can best help communities of faith to meet their needs. We hope to have information for you in the near future.

My thanks go out to our staff resource, Judy Hare, and to all the committee members who help to make lay ministry and lay leadership a reality in so many places where it is much needed.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Don Schau, Chair*

*on behalf of the Committee*

*(Jim Warburton, Hope Mattus, Doug Neufeld,*

*Marg Scott, Dianne Kowalchuk, and Judy Hare (Staff Support))*

**COMMITTEE ON  
MINISTRY PERSONNEL  
SUPPORT**

The Committee on Ministry Personnel Support is comprised of the following people: David Howell, Beth Rutherford, Chris Davis, Susan Tilleman, Cathy Maxwell, Joan Jarvis, and Judy Hare (staff). We were very happy to finally hold a face-to-face meeting in September 2022. Due to the pandemic, meetings had been via Zoom. We determined we would budget for one in-person meeting each year and the others would continue via Zoom.

Our Committee mandate is to offer support to those in active ministry, as well as retired folk. We have a responsibility to help facilitate "health, joy, and excellence" in ministry.

A common concern that we have heard from our Region is the loss of mechanisms to provide collegial connection and support to one another. Covid lockdowns have challenged this as well. In the past, Presbyteries provided the opportunity to be together. We do recognize that in some geographic areas, on their own initiative, ministry personnel are choosing to gather together.

In order to address this desire for connection, we surveyed both Retired Ministry Personnel and those in active ministry, seeking their input on whether they had a preference to gather in person or by Zoom in 2023. Following a positive response to gather in person, we began to budget and plan for such events. At the time of the writing of this report, we are looking forward to a day-long event to be held in Winnipeg on April 26th for those personnel in active ministry. We are happy to note that Laura Fohse, Minister of Vocations for our Region accepted our invitation to provide leadership on this day. Our overall theme will be re-connecting with one another and focusing on the impact Covid has had on ministry both then and now.

We are also hosting an opportunity for retired ministry personnel to gather for a luncheon on June 1st prior to the start of the Prairie to Pine Annual Meeting. This gathering will be a social time and an opportunity for retirees to reconnect with one another.

Our MP2MP (Ministry Personnel to Ministry Personnel) Connectors continue their work. This program was begun in the midst of Covid as a way of offering support for ministry personnel who wished to have support and regular contact with a Retired Ministry Personnel Connector. Navigating in the midst of Covid and its aftermath provided unique challenges to those in paid accountable leadership. Our Committee will soon be assessing what is next with regard to this program of support.

Our Committee is tasked with the responsibility of finding someone to facilitate the Retiree Celebration portion of each Annual Meeting. We are pleased that Cheryl Kinney Matheson and Irene Greenwood agreed to co-facilitate at this year's Annual Meeting.

Our Committee offers thanks to Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Minister for the strong leadership and guidance she provides as staff support to this Committee. We appreciate all that she does to keep us on track and to update us on the work that is happening within our Region and the wider church. We also offer our thanks to Cherry Abad for her organizational and administrative skills. The administrative support provided by Cherry is much appreciated by our Committee.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*David Howell, Cathy Maxwell, Beth Rutherford, Chris Davis,*  
*Susan Tilleman, Joan Jarvis, Judy Hare (Staff Resource)*

**PROPERTY COMMISSION**

The Commission members are Ken Thomas (Chair), Keith McFarlane, Chuck Ross, and Wayne Sanderson, with Dwight Rutherford as a corresponding member.

The commission continues to be busy. The work is not only vital, but at times, an interesting journey into the history of our church in this region, especially in rural areas where older, small churches continue to close, and we are cleaning up old files never properly completed

The commission meets at the call of the chair by conference call in order to respond quickly to requests. From March 31, 2022, our last report, to March 31, 2023, the commission met eight times and passed fifteen motions regarding church property in the Region. These included the sale of three church buildings, and four parcels of land of varying sizes, mostly to the municipalities. There were four requests to list property, and four others dealt with the approval of major renovations. Three of the land sales were cleaning up transactions originally approved by the appropriate Presbytery and never fully completed, one going back to 2004. This has resulted in several requests for searches in the archives and we thank our archivist, Erin Acland for her assistance.

We also responded to numerous property-related questions. We currently have four new items pending.

The Regional Council continues to have three permanent regional trustees to be available when dealing with properties that are still in the name of the church, but no longer have congregational trustees.

The commission wishes to remind everyone that all United Church properties are governed by the United Church of Canada Act. Proper procedures must be followed and proper documentation completed for transactions to be registered by Provincial registries. The processes are not difficult and can be completed quickly if followed properly. We recommend consultation with the commission prior to proceeding with any property-related transactions, major renovations, or financing.

The commission continues to recommend that all communities of faith who anticipate selling or renovating property in the future ensure that the title is brought up to date.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Ken Thomas, Chair*

**EQUITY AND DIVERSITY  
COMMITTEE**

As a standing committee of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council, part of our Action Plan commits to:

- Encourage all Communities of Faith, Outreach Ministries, and other Regional members to celebrate diversity and the intercultural membership of our Region by involvement in such areas as truth and reconciliation, racial justice, abilities, and mental health. Assist Communities of Faith and other church bodies within the Region to obtain and maintain Affirming Ministry status. Assist the Prairie to Pine Regional Council in its worship, work, and decision-making to use an intercultural lens to include diverse orientations, genders, races, cultures, and other communities that need to be integrated into our lives.
- Conduct two Regional educational events on inclusion topics

*After what we felt, as a committee, was a very successful 2021 – our committee structure faltered in 2022 somewhat and as we lost members and some focus – we are still trying to bolster our committee capacity with great HOPES for new recruitment.*



- Most committee members participated in the online Prairie to Pine Region Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 6 & 7, 2022.
- We were invited by Affirm United to provide content to the Kitchen Sink Series which was tabled.
- We shared information for the Service of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, May 17 -[video link here](#):
- Jamie initiated a committee to look at Racial Justice Training 3 & 4 within Prairie to Pine which has paused. Committee members were encouraged to participate in Racial Justice training sessions 1&2 the first weekend of October if needing a refresher.
- A letter of support was sent to Rev. Lee Dong-hwan, the Korean Methodist Minister that was disciplined for giving a blessing at a pride gathering in Korea which was also highlighted in the Regional newsletter.
- Information included in the Prairie to Pine Newsletter varied from month to month - we included some infographics, dates, and information for various workshops and information sessions throughout the year. We encouraged all congregations to send in information about their Pride Sundays and PIE events. Some sharings (many AFFIRM United events) included:
  - [International Transgender Day of Visibility](#) dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, as well as a celebration of their contributions to society.
  - The Black Clergy network of the United Church of Canada shared information about a panel discussion and worship to Celebrate and Observe Emancipation Day 2022 – July 31 & Aug 1
  - United Against Hate: faithfully responding to anti-2SLGBTQ+ actions
  - The anti-racism network of the United Church
  - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
  - new project - Pastoral Relationships Equity Research Project
- Although we did provide financial support to a few projects from the Equity and Diversity Committee in 2021 – no funding was provided in 2022 due to a lack of identified opportunities. The committee declined to support the movie 1946 for several reasons including its heavily weighted American content, length, production timing, etc.

The committee encouraged:

- *all Communities of Faith to hold a service for Pride Sunday - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in June, (if unable to do so, then any other Sunday in June).*
- *all Communities of Faith and the Regional Council to send a representative to local Pride Day celebrations*
- *all Regional Council, Regional Council Executive, and Regional Standing and Ad Hoc Committee meetings use an intercultural lens in preparing and conducting meetings*
- The committee supports gathering with Affirming Ministries via Zoom and Communities of Faith in our Region to implement an Affirming Network.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Jamie Miller, Alan Gershuny, Hope Mattus, Cathey Day,  
Kyle Kellar, Linda Rodgers, Meghan Chorney, and  
Julie Graham, Staff Support)*

**UCW - BURSARY**

The **Prairie to Pine Regional Bursary** has been funded by donations to the Prairie to Pine Regional Council, by UCWs or Communities of Faith, and by some Interest paid from the F. B. McArthur Estate Trust. The Prairie to



Pine Regional Bursary has been administered by a Committee within Prairie to Pine Regional UCW Network and usually meets in person twice a year, and by teleconference in June. In 2022, because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, we met via Zoom to make decisions regarding the Bursaries.

The purpose of the Prairie to Pine Regional Bursary has been to financially assist promising candidates for the Order of Ministry (ordained or diaconal) from our Conference who are registered in theological studies, as well as persons in the Designated Lay Ministry Training program qualifying for leadership in the Church.

Because of the Pandemic, and the difficult position all our Communities of Faith found themselves in, our financial resources for the Bursaries were sorely lacking. In 2022 we were pleased to award three applicants a total of \$4,000 in Prairie to Pine Regional Bursaries:

Damber Khadka	\$500.00	Master of Divinity program at AST
Tanis Podobni	\$2,000.00	Designated Lay Ministry; 1 <sup>st</sup> year at STU Saskatoon Theological Union

We sincerely thank all UCWs and Communities of Faith for their contributions and ask for their continued support. If your Community of Faith no longer has a contributing UCW, our committee requests that you consider including this in your future yearly budget.

The **UCW Bursary** of \$800 is awarded annually from Prairie to Pine Regional UCW funds to persons, at least 18 years of age, (and not in, or studying towards, paid accountable ministry). The applicant must be actively involved in, and taking a course that would benefit, a local United Church Community of Faith. For this year we had no applicants. Please encourage members of your Community of Faith who would benefit from this bursary, to apply in the future.

As well, the **Agatha Kaasa Bursary**, established in 2003 by the National UCW is available to women for leadership training, continuing education or projects/events that would benefit United Church work. This bursary application form can be found on the National site "search."

There is another National Bursary, the **Dorothy Amos Fund**, for any woman who is a UCW member, and not in paid accountable ministry. This Bursary was founded in 2012 in honour of Dorothy Amos using proceeds from the UCW 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Both these National Bursaries can be found by searching under the particular Bursary/Fund name.

Our Bursary Committee wishes to thank both Judy Hare and Cherry Abad and the Prairie to Pine Regional Council office for their years of work on our behalf. Our committee also works with Laura Fohse, Minister for the Office of Vocation, and Heather Dootoff, Financial Administrator, both representatives for our Prairie to Pine Region. Thank you all for your patience during these trying times.

Respectfully submitted,

*Darlynne Smith*

*Darlynne Smith, Convener*

*Prairie to Pine Regional Bursary Committee*



## YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS (YAAY)

Although the YAAY Committee had begun a cautious return to in-person programming in 2021, with a surge of COVID-19 cases in early 2022, Zeebu, in February, was held online as a games night rather than a full weekend retreat. 41 young people joined Zoom for a fun night of connecting over some virtual games.

In May, 40 young people went bowling in conjunction with our YAAY Youth Leadership Recruitment Event. The recruitment event, held at Churchill Park United Church, drew a group of 25 youth grade 9+ to develop leadership skills, encouraging them to provide leadership at youth retreats and other events.

In Sept 2022 we held our first in-person YAAY meeting in three years graciously hosted by Rosser United Church. This was a combined YAAY meeting and Planning Team meeting for ALF 2022. It was great to bring some new members into the committee, as well as celebrate the leadership that had been offered by members who are moving on to new adventures.

The YAAY Committee was thrilled that ALF 2022 in October was able to be a full weekend retreat. We are grateful to Carman United Church for hosting 29 participants and 18 young leaders exploring the theme “We All Dream Big”. It was so exciting to have our community of youth and young adults back under one roof to learn, worship, and have fun together. By implementing a policy of COVID-19 testing before entry to the event and mandatory masks, we were able to successfully ensure that everyone left ALF just as healthy as they were when they arrived... but maybe a little more tired!

Travelling Youth Group (Friday evening events planned and hosted by Communities of Faith, but open to youth from the wider church) met in April 2022 at the United Church in Meadowood to explore some activities around Holy Week and then again in October, hosted by Rosser United Church to play gym games and create skits based on parables.

Other activities this year included “Walking with the Thunderbirdz”, where youth and young adults joined an existing group offering sandwiches to unhoused folks in Winnipeg. Members of YAAY also collaborated with Knox United in Winnipeg to offer “Sharing Across Cultures: Food, Fun, and Faith”, which was a special event for youth who self-identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) to explore the diversity that exists within the United Church community. Our young adults’ group, YARG, met several times in 2022 for activities including skating at the Forks and a bonfire!

Since April 2021, a group of 8 young people have been working on projects supported by the Winnipeg Foundation “Walking Together” Grant which supports youth-led Truth and Reconciliation projects in Winnipeg. This group was awarded a \$10,000 grant to fund three proposed projects: a healing garden, a mural, and activities to build connections with the [Thunderbirdz](#) group and those experiencing houselessness in Winnipeg. In 2022, the team continued collaborating with Knox & Harrow United Churches in Winnipeg as partners on the garden and mural projects. The Winnipeg Foundation granted an extension as well as a redistribution of funds to cover only the walks and a much greater than estimated cost of the mural. The group then began to seek other funding for the healing garden. We hope to see these projects continue to flourish and build community in the coming year.

The YAAY Committee would like to thank all of our volunteers for the work they do, as well as Regional Staff Twila MacNair for her ongoing support. If you have youth or young adults in your community of faith who are looking to connect with other United Church youth, please direct them our way!

For more information about YAAY’s activities, see the YAAY page on the Prairie to Pine website:

<https://prairietopiner.ca/programs/young-adults-and-youth/>

Wishing our Prairie to Pine community all the best in 2023!

*Julia Antonyshyn and Lilja Best*

YAAY Co-Convenors