

## Committee on Lay Ministry and Lay Leadership 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/cls/>.

This year we have licensed two new LLWLs, Irma Nadeau (Trinity United Church, Winnipeg) and Diane McKenty (Grey Street United Church, Winnipeg). At the time of writing this report we have additional requests pending. We have also made some small revisions to the interview process as we learn each time we do this what is effective and what might need to be improved.

Last year was a busy year for relicensing LLWLs. Now that we have caught up on the initial round of relicensing post-restructuring we are into our regular three-year cycle. We currently have 16 LLWLs and 4 retired designated lay ministers available for pulpit supply throughout various areas within Prairie to Pine Regional Council: [LLWL-Pulpit-Supply-List-February-14-2023.pdf \(prairietopinerc.ca\)](#)

We held two gatherings with the LLWL community this past year. On December 14, 2023 we gathered via Zoom. On May 3, 2024 we met in person at Trinity United Church in Winnipeg. Our thanks to those who helped with programming on that day: Erin Acland, the Keeper of the Archives who spoke about archives in advance of this year when the United Church of Canada will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary; Caryn Douglas and Karen Tjaden, diaconal ministers who engaged the gathered group in some exercises to help LLWLs to engage communities of faith in matters related to creation and climate change including sharing a method that can be used in worship preparation to explore scripture with an eye, ear and heart for Creation. Both events were well attended by LLWLs and feedback was generally positive.

One of the topics discussed at the LLWL gathering was some of the rules governing LLWLs. As a committee we have tried to strike a balance that gives as much freedom as possible while limiting risks of going against CRA policies. In response to the discussion we made two changes to the policy within Prairie to Pine Regional Council: <https://prairietopinerc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024-Revised-Policy-Prairie-to-Pine-LLWL-Pulpit-Supply.pdf>. We increased the maximum number of services offered by one LLWL in any one particular community of faith in a calendar year to 12 from 10. If more frequent services are desired in the one location, LLWLs must become employees of the Pastoral Charge /Community of Faith as Congregational Designated Ministers – Worship Leaders. We also removed the restriction of 3 consecutive services in one location during the seasons of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter to allow for more consistent worship leadership during these seasons. We hope these two changes will address most of the concerns.

Many thanks to Rev. Lynne Sanderson for serving as our chaplain this year during our interview sessions. We are grateful that Lynne is serving in this capacity.

Interest was expressed by some in pastoral care training. Although pastoral care is not a function of LLWLs it is something that can be offered by lay leadership in our communities of faith. As there has been interest in training for pastoral care we looked into offering some

training on this topic. On June 12, 2024 Judy Hare and Rob Reed met via ZOOM with some people who had expressed interest in this this topic. Plans are underway to offer session/s this fall.

On January 20, 2024 training was held via ZOOM for those seeking to become sacraments elders and as a refresher for some who had been previously trained. Licensing is done annually based on the Pastoral Year. There were sixty sacraments elders providing sacraments to thirty-eight communities of faith where their membership is held at various points in time during the 2023-2024 Pastoral Year. As of September 15, 2024, there are fifty sacraments elders licensed associated with thirty-four communities of faith.

Recently, General Council gave the Regional Councils some flexibility regarding the rules and structure in place for Congregational Designated Ministers (CDMs). By a joint effort of ourselves and the Pastoral Relations Commission, a [policy on "Lay-led Communities of Faith with Congregational Designated Ministers"](#) was developed and subsequently adopted by the regional council executive on April 02, 2024.

Earlier this year we were greatly saddened by the loss of Marg Scott. Marg contributed so much to our committee and to people and communities of faith she served and supported. She will be missed.

Recently, we said goodbye to Doug Neufeld. He leaves our committee to take on other important tasks. We wish him well and thank him for his many contributions to our committee and lay leadership in this region.

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

(Dianne Kowalchuk, Hope Mattus, Doug Neufeld, Marg Scott (deceased), Jim Warburton, Judy Hare (staff resource), and Lynne Sanderson (chaplain))