

## MINUTES – Woodlawn United Church Council December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Acting Chair Brian Moors called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring WUC follows the recommendations of our federal, provincial and municipal leadership to refrain from public gatherings and meetings, Peter Woods coordinated a video conference so we may continue the work of Woodlawn United Church.

**IN ATTENDANCE VIA VIDEO:** Barry Zwicker, Bob Watt, Brian Moors, Cathy Kay, Helen Dixon, Jim Allen, Keith Musselman, Kerri Graham, Rev Mary Lynne Whyte, Paul Whyte.

**Guests:** Katie Logan      **Regrets:** Kelly MacNeil

**OPENING PRAYER** – Brian Moors led the meeting in an opening prayer.

**WELCOME:** Brian welcomed all to the meeting.

**AGENDA** – The agenda was modified and approved with the addition of New Business #4; Trustees Sanctuary Project

**TIME OF ADJOURNMENT** – It was agreed to a 9:00 p.m. adjournment.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – All correspondence received for information. (Copies attached)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – The minutes of November 18<sup>th</sup> were approved as circulated. The minutes of November 25<sup>th</sup> were approved with correction. (Identify Goals & Transition Minister Position Description as a ‘living document’)

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1) **Transition Minister Goals & Position Description:** Brian presented a proposal of how and when the congregation would be informed and invited to provide feedback on the Goals & Job Position for the Transition Minister. Prior approval of the process is required by the Region before WUC Council can act on behalf of the congregation, as provided by Temporary Amendment of By-Laws (Correspondence #4). It was recommended the proposal be broken into two parts; 1) Process, 2) Timeline.

**Re: Process** – It was agreed that the congregation would be informed, by email, of the recommendation approved by council that Woodlawn United proceed towards requesting Region 15 approve the appointment of a Transition Minister as per the Goals & Position Description included in the congregational email; AND that hard copies be available at the office; AND that the congregation be requested to direct any questions and/or concerns, to the CoFP email address; AND that Barry would answer, by email, any questions received and copy council members; AND that, at a yet to be determined date, a facebook live stream would be scheduled where Barry would provide a summary to the questions and answers provided.

**Re: Timeline** – It was agreed that, pending approval from Region15, the initial email to the congregation be sent early in the week of December 21<sup>st</sup>, AND that the same email be sent to the congregation a second time during the week of January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021; AND the congregation be requested to direct any questions/concerns to the CoFP email address by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021; AND a ‘facebook live stream’ be schedule after January 15<sup>th</sup>.

2) **Transition Team** – It was agreed that when Barry & Paul prepare the congregational email notification re: Transition Minister, that they ALSO include information that a ‘Transition Team’ is required to work with the Transition Minister AND invite members of the congregation to consider if they may volunteer to seve in this capacity. (To be followed up in January)

Brian agreed to contact David Hewitt regarding the above process and timeline and to seek approval from Region 15 for council to move forward with it's plans to notify and provide congregational approval as regards the Transition Minister proposal to the Region. Brian will inform Paul, Barry & Bob as soon as approval is provided.

**3) Governance Document – Deferred.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1) In Person Services –** The most recent recommendations for Dept. of Health is that church can, with limited capacity, return to in-person worship. Discussion followed on whether or not Woodlawn should hold in-person worship on Christmas Eve. It was agreed that the 4:00 p.m. service be live streamed without audience in the sanctuary. **It was moved by Keith, seconded by Jim, that pending the availability of ushers, that the Woodlawn United 8:00pm service be open and in-person while respecting stated guidelines. Motion was carried.** Jim agreed to confer with Alan Ellis regarding ushers, etc.. It was suggested that to ensure seating in a timely manner those that pre-register should plan on arriving at the church by 7:30.
- 2) Annual General Meeting –** Brian reminded the council that the 2021 Budget can be approved by the council on behalf of the congregation (Temporary Amendment of By Laws) and that the AGM itself could be postponed until later in the year. (Topic for January council meeting)
- 4) Trustees – Sanctuary Project –** Jim informed the meeting that the Trustees have been consulting with a couple of firms regarding the painting of the sanctuary. Council agreed that the project is past due and the suggestion made that it could be considered as a capital project.
- 3) Proposed 2021 Budget –** Keith began his presentation by stating the budget was prepared with the assumption the church would be 'back to normal' by September. Keith presented the Income Budget with explanations as required and noted the CEWS was set at \$0.00 due to uncertainty that the program would continue. Keith presented the Operating Disbursement Budget and, with the agreement of the respective committees, suggested a couple of minor changes. The budget, as presented, proposed a \$13.9K deficit. Council was advised that the Region Assessment would see a noted increase in the near future.

Keith noted that the United Church of Canada was offering a maximum \$60,000.00 loan, with a \$20,000.00 forgivable, if repaid within an agreed time period. Council requested A&M to further investigate this offer and report back to council at the January meeting.

**It was moved by Paul, seconded by Jim, that the council approve the proposed budget, with changes, and recommend that A&M present the final draft for the January meeting.**

**Round Table –** There was no 'Round Table' discussion.

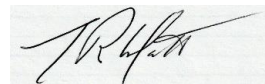
**Next Meeting –** January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Keith Musselman will be acting chair.

**Closing Prayer –** Brian asked that Rev. Mary Lynne offer a closing prayer.

**Adjournment –** Brian adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

**Brian Moors**

Brian Moors – Acting Chair



Submitted by: J Robert Watt – Secretary, WUC Council

# **Woodlawn United Church Council - AGENDA**

**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**7 PM – ZOOM Video Call**

**Call to Order – Acting Chair Brian Moors**

**Opening Prayer – Brian Moors**

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Approval of Agenda -**

**Time of Adjournment –**

**Correspondence –**

- 1) email D. Hewitt re: Transition Minister (\*\*\*) New
- 2) Brian Moors memo to Congregation (Circulated - Info)
- 3) Freda Rogers letter to Council (Circulated – Info)
- 4) Region 15 Memo re: Temporary Amendment (Circulated – Info)
- 5) Region 15 Covid update November 25 (Circulated – Info)
- 6) Region 15 Covid update November 30 (Circulated – Info)
- 7) Region 15 Ideas For Advent (Circulated – Info)

**Approval of Minutes of:**

- 1) Regular Meeting – November 16, 2020
- 2) Special Meeting – November 25, 2020

**Old Business & Business Arising:**

- 1) **Transition Minister Goals & Position Description** – Announcement to Congregation  
[ a) determine process, b) request approval from Region, c) involve congregation
- 2) **Transition Team** – Determine process to select team
- 3) **Governance Document** - Deferred

**New Business:**

- 1) **In Person Services** – Motion to follow Dept of Health advisory
- 2) **Annual General Meeting** – Consider date
- 3) **Proposed 2021 Budget** – Administration & Management
- 4) **Sanctuary Project** - Trustees

**Round Table**

**Next Meeting – January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Closing Prayer – Brian Moors**

**Adjourn**

**Reports:            Membership Clerk            Policies            United Churches For Dartmouth**

<b>MEMBERSHIP CLERK REPORT – NOVEMBER 2020</b>	
Congregational Roll – Deleted	Bob & Jean Chapman – Attending Knox United
	David, Terrilyn, Lillian, Lia, Kennedy
	Rev. Phillip & Rev. Valerie Kennedy - Moved
	Shannon, Julie, Grace MacLean & Jack Bowen- MacLean - Moved
	Rhoda Borden – Deceased – November 11, 2020
	Vivian Hill – Deceased – November 16, 2020
	Joyce Taylor - Deceased – November 17, 2020
	Randy Murray - Deceased – November 20, 2020
	Gloria Rutledge – Deceased – November 24, 2020
Historical Roll – Deleted	Vivian Hill - - Deceased – November 16, 2020

**Policy Review Update**

During the September 2019 Council Meeting the secretary circulated a schedule of the Woodlawn United Church Policies. It was agreed that the Teams responsible for initiating a specific policy would review the policy and report back to council if the policy was still relevant, recommended change etc.

Currently the following policies have not yet been brought back to Council.

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Responsible Team</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Date Revised</b>
Animal	Stewardship / Trustees	1	Sept 15 2015	
Screening of Volunteers	Community Care & Youth	2	Apr 21 2010	Feb 21 2018
Facility License & Space	Admin & Management	5	June, 2017	
Communication	Communication	2	May 20 2015	
Conflict Resolution	Ministry & Personnel	1	Apr 19 2017	
Personnel Policy	Ministry & Personnel	10	Jan 20 2016	
Sabbatical Leave	Ministry & Personnel	3	2013	
Baptism	Worship	1	May 20 2015	Jul 15 2020

# United Churches for Dartmouth

Minutes of Meeting held Thursday November 5, 2020 by Zoom (@10:30 am).

Attendance	Regrets
Mark Hazen, Grace United Church (chair)	Mary Lynn Whyte Woodlawn United
Shirley Hazen, Grace United Church	Krista Elizabeth Winn Cole Harbour Woodside
Jim Bauld, Stairs Memorial United Church	Stephen Fram Grace United Church
Murdock Morrison, Woodlawn United	Pat Cleave, Grace United Church
Ivan Gregan; Port Wallis United Church	
Catherine MacDonald, Stairs Memorial United Church	
Mac MacLeod, Region15/Port Wallis United Church	
Michael Mugford, Cole Harbour Woodside	
Bruce Fraser, Stairs Memorial Church	

**Call to Order:** Mark Hazen, Chair, at 10:30am

**Welcome and Opening Prayer** Mark led off with a short prayer.

## **Check In:**

### **Woodlawn**

Murdock – Mary Lynn Whyte continues as the primary minister. They have been using some retired ministers to supplement Rev Whyte. They intend to have an interim minister over the next year. Katie (the youth minister) has been working out well, but will have AST classes. Pastoral Care continues to be difficult, using Newsletters and emails instead of visitation. Looking into working with the Chaplain at Dart. General. They intend to continue their White Gift campaign, but with fewer families (combination of Sobeyes/Walmart groceries/giftcards) Sunday Inperson services with streaming (25-30 attending). Working on what they might do around Advent.

### **Stairs Memorial:**

They have now had two In Person + streamed services from the Sanctuary - ~30 at each service. The first on the last Sunday in October was their Anniversary Service with the President of Region 15. Message was to challenge us to look at the Truth and Reconciliation Report and what we can do. They are not using their elevator – for many it has been a joy, and relief, to get back into the church. They now have a Rainbow flag over the door, although they are not “officially” affirming. This has gone over well. Catherine’s interim ministry contract has been extended to Dec 22, in order to complete the transition work that has been interrupted by the Pandemic. Catherine will soon present the results from the Listening circle work from late 2019 and then they can start on plans of how to live into that vision. Nothing in this pandemic is easy – even presenting reports. They are planning for Advent and Christmas, and have ordered some streaming equipment.

Bruce noted that the foodbank clients are now being allowed inside (with masks, first into the Sanctuary and then 12@time to the lower hall to pick up food.) Mark noted that numbers are trending up at the moment.

### **Cole-Harbour Woodside**

They have begun integrated services LiveStream (~60) + InPerson (~20). Reasonably successful. Michael has found a way to integrate Zoom with YouTube – there is an option within the Zoom account to send

the stream directly to YouTube. They have been doing Sunday school via Zoom (1/2hr before service). In the midst of planning for Advent.

### **Port Wallis**

Ivan is looking at what they will do for Christmas (usual was 3 services plus morning). Using Zoom Webinar with the choir in the sanctuary (masked), and Zoom meetings afterward (although low attendance to afterwards). No in-person at this point as they can only fit about 21 people in Sanctuary and Choir is currently there. Finances seem to be ok. Concerned about Christian Ed. Some outreach using the videos from UCfD, there is a Tuesday evening discussion group and Thursday morning virtual coffee time. They have (re-)started the Affirming process – sent off a mission statement. This is a congregation led effort. Their student will be studying issues wrt affirming.

Takeout Turkey supper this weekend, also did a Fish cake dinner and a Book sale.

For Advent they will have a Family craft pack to go with a Zoom event.

Ivan is talking to Darlene Brewer at Wyndhome Christian about a number of Zoom sessions on Reconciliation. Register with the church office. They will also be putting in a bulk order for Church Calenders. Ivan is concerned both with clergy burnout and also how to reach people who do not have a computer. [Catherine responded that Stairs has identified those without computers and sends a Canada Post pkg (including sermon text) each week].

Mark asked about process for Book sale and Dinners. Dinners are done as a drive through – pre-ordered; given a pickup time. Met as they drive in; cellphone/walkie-talkie to team; delivered out the side door as they pull up. Book sale, was \$5/bag of books, masked, max 20 people at a time in room; in one door, out another (made ~450).

### **Grace**

Pat and Stephen sent their regrets. Shirley gave a report. Combination InPerson (~20) and Streaming (~50 during, 50-80 later in week) since 15 September. In person is mostly ones/twos. Have had first InPerson/Stream funeral – learned a lot from that. Note; funeral home music may cause problems with YouTube/FBLive copywrite algorithms. Zoom Sunday School before service, Zoom fellowship after (numbers way down on fellowship after service from summer). Holding monthly Mens and Womens virtual breakfasts (good turnout). Have started “Walk with Grace”, hosted neighbourhood walks to give people a chance to socialize (and exercise).

The choir is back practicing (with muzzles) and on Wed held a workshop with a Director from Nebraska (two-way streaming). Rental income is inching back up, but have had few fund-raisers (Do it Yourself Sea Glass kits). Nov 15 is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dedication of the current building (rebuild after Explosion). Ross Bartlett will be the speaker, and there will be special music from choir, and some other things. The Sunday school held a picnic in the commons, well received by families. Have started thinking about Advent and Christmas. Financially Grace is breaking even due to some generous donation. There will be a soft stewardship letter included with the Anniversary letter.

### **Region 15**

Mac Macleod – very few applications for Region loans. Not much new. This evening is the Region 15 recall virtual meeting. Note, national church continues with Wed evening Webinars on a variety of topics. This week it was about the loan programs from the federal government.

### **Old Business**

1. Spiritual Reflections – Currently SR takes place Mon/Wed/Fri at 10am. This will be continued – the Chair has been doing up monthly schedules.
2. Kids’ Corner – as with SR, KC is operating three days a week for the summer (Tues, Thurs, Sat) Tuesday has been crafts, Thursday meditations and Saturday Bible stories. Shirley has enough Sat material to continue until middle of Dec. We desperately need other people to generate content. As part of this, Shirley is developing a Toilet Paper Roll Nativity set (three levels of difficulty for each character in the set). Wanda has found a new source of Meditations. But all of the material is reliant on these two people.
3. Shirley will continue to put up area church service schedules on the UCfD Facebook page each weekend. Please let her know if there are any changes or special services.  
(mhazen@ns.sympatico.ca)
4. Region 15 workshop on developing Church vision statements for ChurchHub. Nothing has been heard on from Region on this initiative.
5. Workshop on Grant Proposal writing: Stays in abeyance until Pandemic situation resolves.
6. Catherine reported she is looking at a Joint effort around a book entitled “Biblical Experiments in Decolonization: Unsettling the Word” She is hoping a couple of the other ministerial personnel will join in – would be offered after Christmas.

Mark will conduct a doodle poll in early December for a zoom meeting early January

Submitted by:

Mark Hazen, Chair

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**Hewitt, David**

to Linda, catherine, me, Brian  
Hi folks,

I hope we are all eager to see the Woodlawn Transitional position posted as soon as possible. Do you imagine that it will be the intention of Council to approve the position on behalf of the congregation at the meeting on December 16? If that is the case, it would be important to prepare a summary that outlines how the congregation has been consulted with respect to the Transitional ministry. This summary should serve to satisfy Council members that an appropriate level of consultation has taken place as they consider giving approval. This Summary will also serve to satisfy the Region that appropriate consultation has taken place as the Region is requested to offer approval.

I would be happy to consult with those who are preparing for this meeting. I have another Zoom meeting scheduled for Dec 16, but could probably be able to join your meeting at a specific moment, if necessary.

In Peace,  
David Hewitt

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**catherine kay**

Dec 9, 2020, 1:38  
PM

to David, me, Brian, Linda  
Good Afternoon David:

Thank you for your email. In response to your question, we are not seeking approval from Council on behalf of the congregation at this meeting. The plan is to ask the Council to think about how we roll out the information and next steps in the process.

In speaking with Brian who is chair for December, the intent is to share the information with the congregation in early January with the opportunity for response from members and then seek regional approval by the end of January. Prior to the rollout we will inform the region of the plan and make sure it meets expectations. It is our goal to spread the message through many platforms. When is your Pastoral Relations meeting scheduled in January? We will be seeking your input as we move through this process.

Cathy

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**Hewitt, David**

to Linda, catherine, me, Brian  
Hi Cathy,

That sounds like a good plan.

The Region Pastoral Relations Committee has not set a date for their January meeting. They will do so when they meet next week. It will likely be Friday, January 22, with the February meeting approximately a month later. Depending on the roll-out of the Woodlawn plan, even if you are not able to complete in time for January 22, if I am able to give a progress report on January 22, the committee may be willing to give conditional approval.

I'll be happy to consult throughout.

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In Peace,  
David Hewitt

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# WOODLAWN UNITED CHURCH

1532 Woodlawn Road, Dartmouth, NS B2W 2S1

December 8, 2020

## NOTE TO CONGREGATION

At this time of Advent, I wanted to bring you, the congregation, some "glad tidings" concerning the good work your church council has completed over the last couple of months.

The Ministry and Personal co- chairs and Program chair struck a search committee with council's approval, which has resulted in a temporary appointment of a minister for three months who will assist Rev Mary Lynne starting February 1, 2021. Once Regional approval of this appointment is received in mid December, we will be in a position to announce this individual's name.

The Community of Faith Profile Committee has met many times in the fall with Region 15 representatives, to formulate goals and a position description for a Transitional Ministry of 12-18 months at Woodlawn United, following the above-mentioned three-month appointment. This document was recently unanimously approved by Council in a joint meeting of Council, Community of Faith Profile Committee and Regional representatives David Hewitt and Rev Dr. Linda Yates. The document will go out to the congregation for review in January 2021 and then to Region 15 for acceptance. Once approved a Transitional Minister will be called to Woodlawn United.

At the same meeting Council approved the Community of Faith Profile Committee's Report which is a large document outlining the Woodlawn Congregation's staffing and ministry needs for the long term. This document is the result of over a year work by Barry Zwicker and his hard-working committee and outlines the way forward for Woodlawn United Church. This will be presented to the congregation later in 2021 and then forwarded to Region 15 for approval.

As you can see from the above, Woodlawn United Church is moving toward three stages of ministry, a temporary three-month appointment, a Transitional Ministry of 12-18 months, and then a long-term call. The length of stages is variable based on progress and need. Remember you can stay up to date on Council Approved Minutes by accessing them on Woodlawn's Website. Up to date financial information is also available there.

I hope this information will help you understand announcements and notices of meetings that will come forth in the New Year.

December Rotating Council Chair,

Brian Moors

To Bob Watt, Secretary, Woodlawn United Church Council  
Attention: Council, Woodlawn United Church

Dear Council members, as Covid 19 prevails and the task of Council to deal with its ongoing issues continue, especially in seeking out an addition to the ministry team, I would like to bring something to your attention.

In early September, our son-in-law, Rob, was diagnosed with a very aggressive brain tumor. Later in September, I went to pick up a dish at Don Hill's and, of course, conversation was the usual; "how are you and how is everyone doing"? We exchanged information on each of our families and the health concerns each were experiencing with the big 'C'. Don Hill being the thoughtful Christian man that he is, forwarded an email to Mary Lynne and that very afternoon, she called me. Mary Lynne has called me several more times and has ended each call with a prayer and left me with a message that if I need to talk, to please call her.

I want to point out that Rob and our daughter, Charlene, attend the Catholic church and while Mary Lynne has never met them, they were always the center of her prayer. I was extremely touched and humbled by her caring.

The purpose of my letter to Council is to inform you of the personal and compassionate caring that is so freely provided by Mary Lynne and to express how fortunate we, members of Woodlawn United, are to have pastoral care provided by Rev. Mary Lynne.

Thank you for listening and please stay safe everyone,

Freda Rogers

185 Mount Edward Road

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**GS 81 EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS RE: PASTORAL RELATIONS; TEMPORARY AMENDMENT RE: CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING**

**Origin: General Secretary, General Council**

**1. What is the issue?**

In April, 2020, the Executive of the General Council approved a temporary change in pastoral relations policies to allow the governing bodies of communities of faith to make urgent pastoral relations decisions on behalf of the community of faith within strict parameters and under the oversight of the regional council, expiring August 31, 2020 (see attached copy of decision). The Executive of the General Council later extended the expiry date to December 31, 2020.

The need for this temporary change in pastoral relations policies continues. Under current public health restrictions across Canada, communities of faith are not permitted to meet in person. The current restrictions have also prevented many congregations and pastoral charges from holding an annual meeting as required under *The Manual*. Some communities of faith have held meetings through teleconferencing or other virtual means but for many others, this is not a realistic option. The decisions to be made at the annual meeting include approval of an annual budget. This decision could be delegated to the governing body of the congregation or pastoral charge. Other decisions - the election of the governing body and the board of trustees - may not legally be delegated but *The Manual* already provides a means for filling vacancies in those bodies between congregational meetings.

**2. Why is this issue important?**

Communities of faith need a mechanism to make urgent pastoral relations in the coming months. They also need to have an annual budget in place for the coming year so that they can continue to function

effectively.

### 3. How might the General Council Sub-Executive respond to the issue?

The Executive of the General Council has responsibility for dealing with all emergency work of the General Council between meetings of the General Council [D.5.3]. It has authorized its Sub-Executive to deal with such matters that may arise prior to the next meeting of the Executive of the General Council.

**The General Secretary recommends:**

**That the Sub-Executive of the General Council:**

- a) extend the temporary amendments to pastoral relations policies that were originally adopted in April, 2020;
- b) temporarily suspend the requirement in section B.5.1 of The Manual for congregations or pastoral charges to hold an annual meeting; and
- c) temporarily amend the responsibility of the congregation or pastoral charge to make a decision on their annual draft budget by allowing the governing body of the congregation or pastoral charge to fulfil this responsibility where necessary, **and permitted by the regional council.**

with each of the foregoing to be in effect until June 30, 2021, subject to earlier cancellation or further extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council.

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**Motion: Jane McDonald/Mitchell Anderson**

**2020-04-15-066**

The Executive of the General Council approve a temporary amendment to pastoral relations policies in *The Manual* to enable the governing body or equivalent of a community of faith to make urgent decisions on behalf of the community of faith with respect to initiating a call or appointment, revising the terms of a call or appointment, or ending of a call or appointment in circumstances where it is not practicable to follow those policies outlined in *The Manual*, on the following basis (underlined text for emphasis only, in order to note the significant central role of the regional councils):

- i) for the purposes of this motion, “urgent” effectively dealt with under any other bylaw or policy of the United Church, as determined to the satisfaction of the regional council;
- ii) the governing body will consult with the community of faith in advance of making a pastoral relations decision to the extent reasonable and practicable in the circumstances to the satisfaction of the regional council;
- iii) when the governing body is making a pastoral relations decision, the ministry personnel will have the same right to notice of the virtual meeting and an opportunity to respond as provided in section I.3.1.6 of *The Manual*; in this instance, section B.5.4.2 shall be interpreted as nine days where it is not practicable to read during public worship on two Sundays;
- iv) when the governing body of a community of faith requests a change of pastoral relations, the regional council will ask the ministry personnel affected if they support the request. If the ministry personnel do not support the request, the requirement that the minister is given 90 days’ notice provided in section I.3.1.6 will continue to apply, save for the following circumstances, where notice may be abridged or waived by the regional council upon recommendation of the governing body of the community of faith:

- if the change to the terms and conditions of the call or appointment is the temporary layoff of the ministry personnel relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the governing body of the community of faith has:
- a) declared its intention on behalf of the community of faith to recall the affected minister upon cessation of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
  - b) demonstrated to the satisfaction of regional council that it has exhausted all funding sources;
- v) all other requirements for making a pastoral relations decision, including minimum advance notice of the meeting and notice to the regional council, will apply to the extent possible, and with only such modifications as may be necessary in the circumstances as permitted by the regional council;
- vi) the regional council must ensure all of the requirements set out in this motion have been fulfilled to its satisfaction before it makes a decision on any pastoral relations matter;
- vii) except to the extent modified by this motion, the regional council continues to have the same role and decision-making authority on all pastoral relations matters; and
- viii) this change will be in effect until August 31, 2020, subject to earlier cancellation or extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council.

**Carried**

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# The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

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Regional Council 15  
21 Wright Street, Sackville, NB E4L 4P8  
Tel: (800) 268-3781 ext. 6142 • Email: 4rc15@unitedinfo-church.ca

November 25, 2020

Dear Members of Regional Council 15,

As we are now in a situation where in certain parts of the Province of Nova Scotia COVID cases are on the rise, it is very important that you check the Nova Scotia COVID-19 website on a regular basis to see the updated in restrictions.

Dr. Strang and Premier McNeil have just announced significant changes for the western and central HRM area (which is defined as HRM from Hubbards to, and including, Porters Lake and the communities up to Elmsdale and Mount Uniacke in Hants County). These new restrictions will come into force at 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, November 26, and continue for two weeks until midnight December 9, with a possibility of extension.

Significant for our churches is the following:

- d) the gathering limit in public is five (or up to the number of members of an immediate family in a household)
- e) faith-based activities are paused
- f) Dr. Strang said faith-based gatherings can still happen but only with five people, so in essence they are closed.

Dr. Strang:

*"Of likely greatest importance to you is the fact that, in the geographic Halifax areas, the maximum number of people allowed in any gathering, including faith services or gatherings is five (5). I recognize the impact that this will have due to the significance of the coming weeks to many religions and I truly wish that these restrictions were not necessary. However, we are in the midst of a second COVID 19 wave and we need to prioritize the need to rapidly [get] this under control"*

For the areas affected, this will be the same as we were back in March-April. Worship services should revert to being on line again.

Please also note the restriction for the whole province with respect to long term care homes. The following new restrictions apply across the province:

- v) To protect our most vulnerable, there will be no visitors except volunteers and designated caregivers to long-term care facilities and Adult Residential Centres and Regional Rehabilitation Centres licensed by the Department of Community Services.

From Dr. Strang at the November 25, 2020 news conference:

*"COVID-19 loves social and group activities because Dr. Strang. "These measures are targeted-19 to red thrives. Go to work or go to school, then go home and stay there. One family member can shop for necessities. It will likely get worse b public health measures."*

For more information please go to the new releases:  
[New Restrictions to Reduce Spread of COVID-19](#) , and  
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): restriction updates](#)

Dr. Strang has asked that we care for each other and, in caring for each other, keep everyone COVID Safe. While we understand that this is difficult, it is what is needed at this point.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to be in contact.

Blessings,

*Faith*

Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Minister

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## The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

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Regional Council 15  
21 Wright Street, Sackville, NB E4L 4P8  
Tel: (800) 268-3781 ext. 6142 • Email: [4rc15@unitedinfo-church.ca](mailto:4rc15@unitedinfo-church.ca)

November 30, 2020

Dear Members of Regional Council 15,

I would like to provide you all with the following update. In conversation with Dr. Strang today, some of our questions have been answered, as follows.

**g) If you, as clergy, are sick with symptoms what do you do:**

If you have two or more symptoms, as with the general population please stay home and call 811, they will give you advice about testing.

If you have been tested because you have symptoms and you have a negative test, you are free from COVID. You then must realize that you have another illness that can be spread. So, you can return to work when your acute symptoms have been gone for 24 hours (ex. fever, cough)

If you test positive, public health will advise you about the next steps.

If you have to be tested because you have been contacted by public health about being in the presence of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, public health will advise you about the regulations.

In the case of any of the above, please be in touch with your M&P Committee as well as your Regional

Minister.

**h) When should we as a congregation shut down completely? Are there guidelines to know when?**

The public health authorities, Dr. Strang, and the government will advise when there is a need to shut down completely. Otherwise we are free to follow the gathering number and limits that are set. If there is a need to completely shut down in an area we will be advised to do so. If the governing body of a community of faith wishes to take extra precautions when in an outbreak area, that is completely up to the governing body to do what you feel is right for your congregation. However, you must follow the restriction that are in place, please do not look for ways to get around the restrictions.

**i) Microphones:**

It is recommended that we not share microphones. If you have to share because you do not have enough mics for all of those taking part in the service, it is recommended that you not hold the microphone in your hands, and that you have your mouth back from the mic. Wipe the mic after use with a certified sanitization wipe. If that is not possible, and you have to hold the mic in your hands, you must sanitize your hands before and after handling the microphones. The microphones should then be wiped with a certified sanitizing wipe before the next person uses it.

**Will there be a possibility of an extension of the Restriction for the HRM area:**

Currently the restrictions are in place until December 10, 2020. Dr. Strang feels that the restrictions that are in place for the HRM area (5 people inside and 5 people outside) and the limits on gathering for those other places in the province (50% capacity up to 100 people inside and 150 people outside) will remain in place for a week to two weeks after December 10 (current two week period). The opening up, once it is deemed appropriate to do so, will be in small increments, rather than being all at once. We will need to check the website for the updates as they come.

**4. Have the screening questions changed:**

No, if you are sick stay home and take the online screening test.

**5. What about once a week programs like Sunday school:**

Dr. Strang said these programs are considered faith-based gatherings, and have the same regulations for gathering limits.

**6. Congregational singing and Choirs:**

Are still not recommended. If there are small groups or soloists who are leading singing for the worship service, they should remain masked while doing so, and be physically distanced. If you decide that you are going to have congregational singing, then all people in the church must be masked for the full service.

**7. Take out Fundraisers:**

Take out dinners are permitted. You need to follow the government guidelines for food handling as well as have the appropriate license for the temporary event. You would have to make sure that you have a plan to keep those who are preparing the meal safe with COVID protocols, limiting the numbers preparing the meal and distancing, masking, sanitizing etc. are in place. When people come to pick up the meals you will again need to make sure they are masked and that they come to the door or the window of the church with a mask on. If you have people enter the building to pick up the dinners, have the dinners laid on a table and only have one

person at a time picking up a meal. Sanitizing the table after each pick up. Make sure those who are giving out the meals are masked and sanitize their hands as well after each pick up.

**8. It is still very important to have a list of those who are entering your building with the date and the contact information so if the need arises contact tracing can be done quickly and efficiently.**

**9. The Choral Federation and Dr. Strang's office**

**Community, which will also be of use for congregations.** As this is a busy time for Dr. Strang, they will get that to us as soon as it is possible.

The next conversation with Dr. Strang will be on December 14, 2020 at 10:00am (Atlantic) If you have any questions for me to ask at that time please send them to my email at [fmaccuish@united-church.ca](mailto:fmaccuish@united-church.ca) .



Faith March MacCuish  
Executive Minister

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## The United Church of Canada L'Eglise Unie du Canada

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First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council

Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council

Regional Council 15

### **Ideas and Information Advent and Christmas Generated from the Town Hall Webinars**

#### **Decorating for Advent and Christmas:**

It is perfectly fine to decorate for Advent and Christmas.

Once the decorations are in place they should not be touched until it is time to take them down.

#### **How can we decorate and keep those decorating safe?**

You can have one family bubble do all of the decorating.

You can choose different families to do different parts and this way you will be including more people in the festivities. (ex. If you ask a family to hang the greens and put up the empty Christmas tree, then you can leave that for 72 hours and then ask another family to put up the lights and the ornaments, etc.)

Each family would be given a schedule and be given instructions to wipe down the places they have touched. (ex. The pews they sat on or laid the boxes of decorations in, light switches washroom is



used, etc.)

### **Ideas for services:**

- j) Online services pre-recorded
- k) Livestream services
- l) Drive in services
- m) Outside services
- n) Services through Zoom
- o) Multiple services in the sanctuary
- p) A week of Christmas Eve services

Have parent video their children doing their part in a service from home and put all of the pieces together (reading scripture, sing a song) for a pre-recorded white gift service to show in church for white gift.

Have children draw pictures to illustrate the Advent/Christmas season, and then turn that into the service, through PowerPoint etc.

Have three Christmas Eve services starting on Dec 22, 23, 24 to accommodate as many as possible. You can potentially have the same service each night, or have a theme for each service.

Have people sign up, so we know how many people we will need to prepare for, and how many services to have.

### **Advent Candle Lighting:**

Have families record themselves lighting the Advent candle and show it in church.

Ask the families/people who are lighting the advent candle, to tell their story, offering witness to each other and to community about something that has given them (Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace) during this difficult time of COVID.

### **Worship Ideas:**

Christmas Eve: three services in one day. Possible to give people an opportunity to worship at Christmas time, provided that all of the cleaning protocols can happen and still have the balance of care for the clergy, lay leaders and volunteers.

How do we accommodate those who we only see at Christmas time and make sure they are included when we have small churches? Can we have more than one service the same day?

Yes. You can have more than one service a day. It is important to clean in between the services. Allow 30 minutes after the service for the aerosols to settle after people leave and then clean (this will give a little extra protection to your cleaners. Cleaners should be masked and gloved while cleaning). If you are able to leave 30 minutes for the surfaces to dry before the next service that would be a bonus.

Outside services for hanging of the greens singing carols; outside masked and distanced.

Decorating outside of the church and have some Christmas music playing.

Outside Tree lighting.

Walk through nativity scene as the service.

Send out battery lighted candles and liturgy so families can have an at home liturgy.

Propane fire in the parking lot. Have people gathered to celebrate. (Masked and distanced)

Recording service (The Christmas pageant) in a barn to be shown later. The service can be put in PowerPoint and shown on Christmas Eve.

What do we do with people after the service, who do not want to leave and are wanting much needed social time? It is a good idea to have as part of your plan ushers who have people start from the back of the church pew by pew letting people leave. If people wish to chat they can do so outside, with a reminder to remain masked and to distance from those not in their bubble. It might help if this were part of the announcement a few times before the service.

FM Transmitter might work for extra people in the fellowship hall, extra screens for viewing. Drive in service might work well, use the FM transmitter so people can be in church and in their cars.

If you do not have the volunteers to do multiple services on Christmas Eve, maybe do more services over the Advent season.

Christmas Eve through zoom. That way everyone can come into the service together and experience worship at the same time.

In the smaller country church setting, an idea is to have a torch lighting and go from house to house outside and share the Christmas story, sing carols outside, masked and physically distanced. Then move to the next home. At the last station, provide cocoa or cider, so that people can have a social time at the end. You must have a small group of servers, masked and with sanitized hands. The participants would have to stay in their car and be served, or be two meters apart while they drink unmasked

Is there a recorded Christmas Eve Pageant that congregations can use and have space for the congregation to add their own scripture readings? Would there be a more commercialized service we could use? There are ready to go pageants but would have to record your own. You can record through Zoom, then you could share it as a pre-recorded service. There may be Christmas YouTube videos that might be available. This may require some time searching those out.

Don't forget to check in with your Sunday School teachers and your youth and your youth group leaders to see what ideas they have for programing for Advent and Christmas. They are very creative.

### **Communion:**

Is it ok to have a hybrid of ways to do communion? ex. 1/3 of the congregation on line, 1/3 in person and those who cannot do either have the service in written form to follow at home and have communion from home at the same time as church. It was felt that this was a viable option.

### **December 27<sup>th</sup> Service:**

Worship Service developed by the Regional Council Presidents and staff for December 27<sup>th</sup>, for use in the Regions.

Recordings at each congregation on the Pastoral Charge, readings etc. and have the choir record singing (physical distancing and masked). Put all the pieces together to be aired on December 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Outreach:**

Food Bank: Each day in advent have people put an item in a box a then at the end of Advent giving the box to the food bank.

Have a pre-recorded white gift service and ask families to contribute each part. Then on Sunday have congregational members watch the service and ask people after the service to drive up to the church and drop off their white gifts in a bin. Put the bin aside for 72 hours and then you can distribute the items to the ministries that need them.

**Fundraisers:**

Packages of Christmas Cards made from the scenes from the Christmas Pageant in the Barn.

## Registering for church:

Have people call the church and sign up, sign up through email, or use a program such as **Eventbrite**. A program that you can use for people to sign up for events and church services. Does *Eventbrite* have a free option? Yes! Both the Essentials and Professional products are free for **free** tickets — you are only charged each time you sell a paid ticket. Organizers with only **free** events have access to everything in Essentials, and everything in Professional except for phone, chat, or email support.

Questions for further deliberation:

How to clean microphones in an effective way during the church service when having to share microphones?

<https://www.guitarcenter.com/Microphone/Microphone-Foam-Sanitizer-Bottle.gc>

<https://www.amazon.ca/Hosa-GLS-104-Microphone-Accessories/dp/B0042Y57U8>

<https://churchtechtoday.com/2020/03/20/7-steps-to-a-clean-microphone/>

When people are asked not to come to church when they are sick does that also apply to staff? What if you have symptoms and you have a COVID test which comes back negative but you still have symptoms, do you still stay home? When the minister gets sick, how do we handle the situation? Does the governing body have a plan?

*Yes, it does. Stay home, if you have more than one symptom call 811 and they will direct you. I will seek further clarification as to when you should return to work. My understanding to date is 24 hours after you are symptom free, even with a negative COVID test.*

*It is important for the Pastoral Charge to have a plan in place for when the minister gets sick. Who will lead the service and handle the Pastoral Care.*

## Staying in touch with the Congregational Members:

- vi) Some are using daily/weekly blogs
- vii) Some are producing newsletters for distribution
- viii) Some are using phone calls and phone trees for checking in
- ix) Some have been using Mail Chimp to communicate with their members (This is also the tool used for the Wednesday announcements for RC15 and FSLDW)

## Future Town Halls:

Request to have a check in like this in a couple of weeks just to see how everyone is doing. After Christmas, have a Town Hall about how to have Annual Meetings in the pandemic.

## Live Streaming:

Question about children and Livestreaming. Permission and policies on how to do that, as well as permission for children taking part in pre-recorded services.

We have been asked about whether there are guidelines for Pastoral Charges who would like to live stream their worship services and those who wish to post services on the Facebook page. The Copyright Guidelines document of the United Church, while it covers copyright permissions related to music, it does not cover the issue of permission of people in the congregation during the live stream.

**Permission:**

It is important that members of the congregation are aware that the service is being live streamed. If the congregation has agreed to live stream the service, generally the only people on camera are those that come to the front.

Those coming forward to take part will need to know they will be seen over the internet. If they do not wish to be seen on the live cast they should decline taking part. For those under 18 taking part during children's time, pageants, or reading a consent, either verbally or in writing. If a parent does not give consent then the child cannot be part of the live streaming or Facebook posting. If posting pictures on the church's website or Facebook page it is important to have the verbal or written permission from the parents if the children are under the age of 18.

**How to choose a Mask:**

**Non-medical masks should:** allow for easy breathing, fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops, maintain their shape after washing and drying, be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty, be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment, be made of tightly woven material fabric (like cotton or linen), be large enough to completely (and comfortably) cover the nose and mouth without gaping.

A mask should be made of at least 2 to 3 layers of material (3 layers is best, but masks with 2 layers are still effective). Consider wearing a mask that includes a pocket to accommodate a filter or filter material like a paper towel to provide another layer.

**Non-medical masks shouldn't:** impair vision or interfere with tasks, be made of non-breathable materials, be made of plastic, be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials, be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues, be shared with others, have exhalation valves. Masks with exhalation valves are not recommended, because they don't protect others from COVID-19 and don't limit the spread of the virus.

**Resources****Copyright:**

Copyright Guidelines: [https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook\\_copyright-guide-congregations.pdf](https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook_copyright-guide-congregations.pdf)

Voices United Hymn in the Public Domain: [https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/voices-united\\_pd\\_the-united-church-canada.pdf](https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/voices-united_pd_the-united-church-canada.pdf)

More Voices hymn with United Church Copyright: [https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/more-voices\\_the-united-church-canada.pdf](https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/more-voices_the-united-church-canada.pdf)

**Worship:**

The United Church of Canada Advent Unwrapped: <https://www.united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped>

The Uniting Church in Australia: <https://sa.uca.org.au/intergen/church-resources/all-age-worship/all-age-church-season-worship/christmas-services>

The United Church of Christ: <https://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/year-a/ace>  
<https://adventconspiracy.org/>

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/spirited-reflection-celebrating-advent-peace-and-international-human-rights>

Canadian Churches that Live-Stream Facebook group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/676613006560597>

**Other Resources:**

The Prayer Bench: <https://prayerbench.ca/>

Ukulele Church:  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10158857593362250&set=gm.1782865048532236>

For the zoom link, email Catherine Stuart [cstuart@united-church.ca](mailto:cstuart@united-church.ca)

The Go Project: <https://ucrdstore.ca/.../the-go-project-advent-curriculum...>

United Churches for Dartmouth on YouTube:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOFRVVaqpZZd5gjmFyFgMsA?fbclid=IwAR0WujFDDp\\_vmcuoxKDG\\_oKouLyzRqC\\_OQWQ2zLizhTLsyGaz3DUESwcTo&app=desktop](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOFRVVaqpZZd5gjmFyFgMsA?fbclid=IwAR0WujFDDp_vmcuoxKDG_oKouLyzRqC_OQWQ2zLizhTLsyGaz3DUESwcTo&app=desktop)

Pacific Mountain Region: <https://www.pmrfirstthirdresources.ca/> Advent in a  
Box: <https://buildfaith.org/advent-in-a-box/>

Flame: <https://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/search?q=Christmas>  
Illustrated Ministry: <https://store.illustratedministry.com/>

Stone Nativity: [https://frugalfun4boys.com/nativity-story-stones/?fbclid=IwAR3CUrFARbjedq1111hIEC7cYgVEikFfNuiSy4cgULN-RuQGt-8z\\_5kAWkA](https://frugalfun4boys.com/nativity-story-stones/?fbclid=IwAR3CUrFARbjedq1111hIEC7cYgVEikFfNuiSy4cgULN-RuQGt-8z_5kAWkA)

Praying in Colour: <https://prayingincolor.com/the-season-of-the-nativity?fbclid=IwAR0w5RyCNyXLcEooCjJhwUt5uuiID7twPrdrRQ9Kp6n1AB1IoEC6ezEPlqq>

Messy Church: <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/tags/advent> Art Spark:  
<https://artsparkca.wordpress.com/>

United Church Pen pal Project:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZMMYSaoWpXVqmWzhhFIZbpsBmbRF8yDEiYc\\_0KFgcsXV4Og/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZMMYSaoWpXVqmWzhhFIZbpsBmbRF8yDEiYc_0KFgcsXV4Og/viewform)

Sackville United's Zoom [zoom2020santa@gmail.com](mailto:zoom2020santa@gmail.com) Email:

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Masks Information:  
<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/masks/>