



V7

AGENDA & REPORTS

PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL | MAY 30 – JUNE 2, 2024
ST. ANDREW'S-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH, VANCOUVER BC | WHOVA



V2

2024
PMRC
AGM
MAY 30
- JUNE 2



Pacific Mountain Regional Council 6th Annual General Meeting
St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church | Vancouver BC & Online Via Whova

AGENDA

THURSDAY MAY 30

1:00pm Registration Opens
2:00pm New Regional Representatives Orientation;
Children & Young Teens Program Begins
3:30pm Opening Music & Gathering
4:00pm Opening Remarks; Land Acknowledgement
4:30pm Introductions to Business
5:30pm SUPPER ~ provided
6:30pm Gathering Music
7:00pm Opening Worship; Building Community; Theme
Introduction: Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu
8:30pm Sending Out

FRIDAY MAY 31

8:30am Opening Music
8:45am Gathering & Announcements
8:50am Worship
9:20am Theme & Engagement: Patty Krawec
10:40am BREAK
10:55am ProVision
11:25 Proposals: Learning Phase
12:15pm LUNCH ~ provided
1:15pm Gathering Music
1:30pm General Council Guest: Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu
1:50pm Business: Nominations; Discussion Phase
2:55pm BREAK
3:10pm Stewardship: Vicki Nelson
3:25pm Regional Priority: First Third Ministries
3:50pm Retirees ~ Prayers & Blessings
4:00pm Theme & Engagement: Patty Krawec
5:30pm SUPPER ~ provided
6:30pm The Rainbow Chorus; Affirming Connections:
Pam Rocker; Film Screening: 1946 The Movie ~Event
9:00pm Sending Out

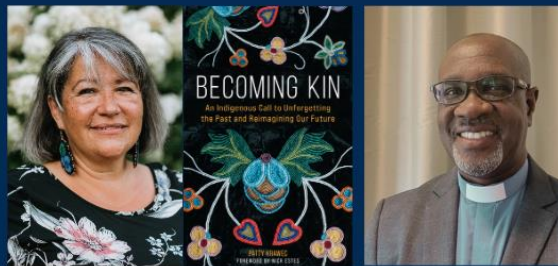
SATURDAY JUNE 1

8:45am Opening Music
9:00am Gathering & Announcements
9:10am Worship
9:30am Theme & Engagement: Patty Krawec
11:00am BREAK
11:15am General Council Growth Animator: Rev. Scott
Reynolds
11:30am Executive Accountability Report; President's
Address
12:15pm LUNCH ~ provided
1:00pm Gathering Music
1:15pm Archives
1:25 Executive Minister: Updates
1:45pm Office of Vocation Report
2:30pm Business - Decision Phase: Voting;
Nominations; Proposals
3:15pm BREAK
3:45 Gathering Music
4:00 Theme Engagement
4:30pm Closing Worship
5:35pm SUPPER ~ provided
7:00pm Sing Sing Sing ~ Event

SAT JUNE 2 ... Continued

8:15pm Rehearsal (1hr) ~ Celebration of Ministry: Presiders, Candidates,
Retirees, Celebrands, and Laying On of Hands

CONNECTING COLLABORATING CULTIVATING



KEYNOTE: PATTY KRAWEC
SPECIAL GUEST: REV. DR. JAPHET NDHLOVU

QUICK RESPONSE CODES

AGM 2024 WEBPAGE

PacificMountain.ca/
pmrc-agm-2024



WHOVA AGM 2024 EVENT WEBPAGE

Whova.com/portal/we
bapp/ucocj_202406

GOOGLE MAP ~ ST. ANDREW'S-WESLEY UNITED'S LOCALE

Google.ca/maps/dir//
49.2811369,-123.1 ...



CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY

YouTube.com/live/
PgMmvxhk6XA

10:30 AM (Pacific) SUNDAY JUNE 2, 2024
With Worship & Communion
In-Person & Live Streaming from
St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church

How to use a Quick Response (QR) Code! 1) Open your camera app. 2) Focus on the QR Code.
3) Notice the website name pop up on your screen. 4) Tap the site name to open the page.



CONTENTS

THE ONE-PAGE AGENDA.....	1	Campus Ministry	74
CONTENTS.....	2	Community of Faith Council & Pastoral Relations	78
MESSAGES	3	First Third Ministry	80
President's Message	4	Indigenous Ministry	82
Executive Minister's Report	6	Justice Ministries	85
CELEBRATIONS.....	8	LeaderSHIFT	87
Celebrands	9	LeaderSHIFT Church Planting Project	89
Newcomers	21	Regional Camping Ministry	94
Retirees	25	Western Intercultural Ministry Network.....	95
Anniversaries	30		
Memorials	31	CENTRES OF EDUCATION.....	98
BUSINESS.....	38	Centre for Christian Studies	99
Mission.....	39	Naramata Centre.....	100
Regional Executive Accountability Report ...	40	Vancouver School of Theology.....	102
Ends Policy Summary	44	FINAL PAGES	107
Ends Policy	45	We Are the Church colouring page (artwork by Emily Thiessen)	108
Guidelines for Business Procedures 2023-24	49	Staff List.....	109
Business Committee Motions	51	Record of Edits to GM2024 A&R.....	111
Proposals Guidelines	53	Draft Minutes of PMRC GM 2023.....	112
Proposal Form	55	PROPOSALS RECEIVED	123
Nominations Committee Report	58	PMR 24-01 Truth Telling and Reconciliation Action	124
FINANCE.....	59	PMR 24-02 Emerging Communities of Faith in The Manual	128
Finance Advisory Council	60	PMR 23-03 Facing Every Emotional Limit (FEEL)	132
Property Resource Team.....	64	PMR 23-04 UnSettling Goods Campaign Reinstatement	136
ProVision	65	PMR 24-05 Non-Violent Economic Advocacy Responses	139
Stewardship Animator	67		
MINISTRY AND MISSION	68		
The Archives and History Committee.....	69		
Camp Spirit.....	71		



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MESSAGES

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Friends,

It is that time of the year again when our Community of Faith representatives from across the Region are able to connect at our Annual General Meeting. The AGM will be held from May 30 – June 2, 2024, at St. Andrew's Wesley United Church, in Vancouver, on the unceded traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓íl̓wətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Some may not be able to join us in person and we look forward to your participation via our online option.

The theme for this year's meeting is '**Connecting, Collaborating, Cultivating**'. The supporting bible text is Ecclesiastes 4:12 (The Message):

¹² By yourself you're unprotected.
With a friend you can face the worst.
Can you round up a third?
A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.

This theme emerged early in the planning process as we considered how we could use the rich feedback we received during the Executive Engagement time at the 2023 meeting. At that meeting the engagement question was: *What adaptive strategies could the region consider over the next three to five years to support communities of faith in their ministries and the region in its work?*

The feedback overwhelmingly highlighted:

- Collaboration
(to learn from each other; to strengthen connection and relationships between communities of faith; strengthen communication)
- Creative expressions of Church
(to actively engage the communities around us)
- Care and resourcing
(to support flourishing UCC presence in the region)

As the United Church of Canada enters its 100th Anniversary year, and as we respond to the myriad ways in which we live out our calling to be Disciples of Christ in the world, it seems fitting that we should focus on the relationships that need tending, the connections that need to be made or strengthened, so that we can continue to support collaboration in new ways to foster the presence of a flourishing United Church of Canada in the region into the future. This is also a time for us to discern the many ways in which we are called to foster connection, collaborate, and cultivate (re)newed relationships to realize our call to deep spirituality in support of bold discipleship and daring justice in our ministries.



Deborah (right) and Treena (left) at last year's AGM 2023

During the meeting we will engage in discussion of the theme, hear stories of different collaborative initiatives in the Region, and immerse ourselves in music and other creative expressions of the theme. Our time together will be enriched by the participation of persons of all ages and will include connecting



with children, youth, and young adults of the region, as well as members of the Youth Council of PMRC and Chinook Winds.

We are excited to have Patty Krawec as our keynote presenter. Patty is an Anishinaabe and Ukrainian writer from Lac Seul First Nation, and author of *Becoming Kin – An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future*. Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu, Executive Minister for the Church in Mission Unit of the General Council Office will be our Special Presider and Guest. Rev. Dr. Ndhlovu will be the preacher at our opening session and at our Celebration of Ministry service on June 2. We look forward to hearing his message for a church that wants to be relevant and transformative in our communities today and in the future.

At this year's Celebration of Ministry service, we are likely to celebrate the ordination or commissioning of a larger number of persons than we typically have had in the past. This is in response to the decision at the October 2023 Annual Meeting of the 44th General Council, where the General Council offered individual Designated Lay Ministers a pathway to commissioning or ordination.

At this meeting we will be conducting business sessions (including making decisions about proposals which will move forward to GC45), nominating Commissioners to GC45, as well as nominating representatives to the Regional Executive.

Our time together will be enriched by different musicians performing each day, offering us the opportunity to sing together on the evening of June 1 during *Sing, Sing, Sing*. There will also be an opportunity, for those of you who have not yet seen it, to see the documentary film "1946 – The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture".

We're packing in many activities into a few days together!

I look forward to our time together.

Yours in Christ.

Deborah Richards
President
Pacific Mountain Regional Council



EXECUTIVE MINISTER'S REPORT



In the past couple of months, this 2024, we have had the privilege of bearing witness to some amazing phenomena: a rare solar eclipse and an opportunity to view the Northern Lights in many places across Canada. It created a sense of excitement and togetherness; social media was flooded with images and stories. For me, viewing the Northern Lights is a profound experience, one that transcends words and brings people together in collective awe and wonder. This celestial display, where the night sky is painted with vibrant greens, purples, and reds, evokes a sense of unity and connection. This shared witness created a moment of wonder that spanned the vast distances of our country.

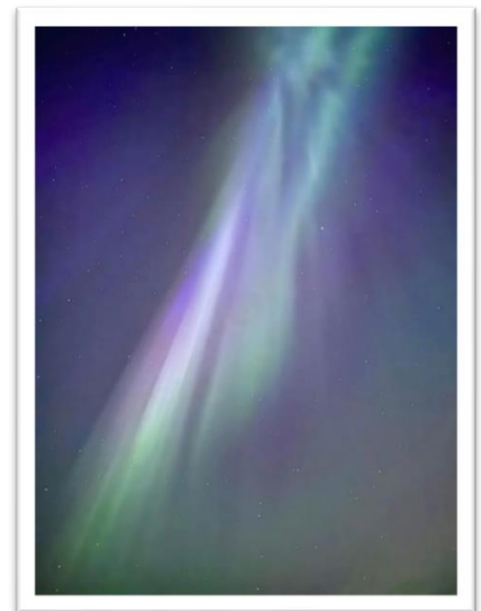
As I write this we have just entered into the season of Pentecost. This experience of the Northern Lights parallels the essence of Pentecost in many beautiful ways. Pentecost was a moment of divine connection, empowerment, and unity, bridging gaps and bringing people together in a shared understanding and purpose. Just as the Northern Lights can be seen and appreciated by people from all walks of life, regardless of their background or location, so too did the Holy Spirit at Pentecost transcend barriers, bringing people together in a common They remind us that, despite our differences, there are moments of grace and wonder that connect us all.

As I reflect on these experiences, I am reminded that connection, collaboration, and cultivation are at the heart of our faith journey. The Northern Lights and Pentecost both serve as powerful symbols of the divine light that shines in our lives, breaking through the darkness and illuminating the path before us. They encourage us to open our hearts to the wonder around us, to nurture our relationships with one another, and to work together to cultivate a world that reflects the love of God.

In witnessing the Northern Lights, we are not just spectators of a natural phenomenon; we become part of a larger story of beauty and connection. Similarly, in celebrating Pentecost, we are participating in the ongoing story of God's work in the world, a story that calls us to be agents of connection, collaboration, and cultivation in our communities.

Over the past year, there have been many 'bright lights' throughout our Region and some amazing examples of Connection and Collaboration that can serve to strengthen our Region. Some highlights include our ongoing partnership with Chinook Winds Region, where we are sharing our resources and building community in new ways. Youth Trek, Young Adult retreats, Campus Ministry, and Camp Spirit are all amazing examples of ways in which we are investing in the future of our Region. LeaderSHIFT initiatives, the Christmas Open House, the Retiree luncheon, Kootenay Faithfest and the Anti-Racism Work & Action Leadership Conference.... All of these are moments of connection, collaboration, and cultivation of an amazing and wonderful ministry here in the Pacific Mountain Region.

I am grateful to our hard-working Regional Executive and for the leadership of President Deborah Richards. They are doing the challenging work of thinking and dreaming about our future, asking the hard questions, and identifying strategic priorities.



The work of the Region is centered around three priorities:

Healthy Communities of Faith: Strong relationships within and between our communities can really make a difference. Healthy relationships are the foundation for everything we do. This year has been all about strengthening the bonds within our communities and with the wider region. Through our First Third Ministry program, we are investing in young leaders because that is investing in our future as a church. I'm excited about the energy, ideas, and vision that young people bring to our communities.

Effective Leadership: From the ground up, leadership matters. Our Regional Ministry team is available to connect and support Leaders and Communities of Faith. We've invested in training, which is designed to support our leaders, both lay and ordered. Programs offered through LeaderSHIFT offer many ways to learn and develop together. Ministry leadership is about how we all step up, speak out, and lead with heart in our day-to-day lives.

Faithful Public Witness: Standing up for what's right is at the core of who we are. Living into our commitment to be an Affirming Region, considering ways to reduce our environmental impact, and being committed to learning, growing, and walking the path of reconciliation. Our efforts are ongoing, and we're ready to adapt as we learn more about what true reconciliation looks like.

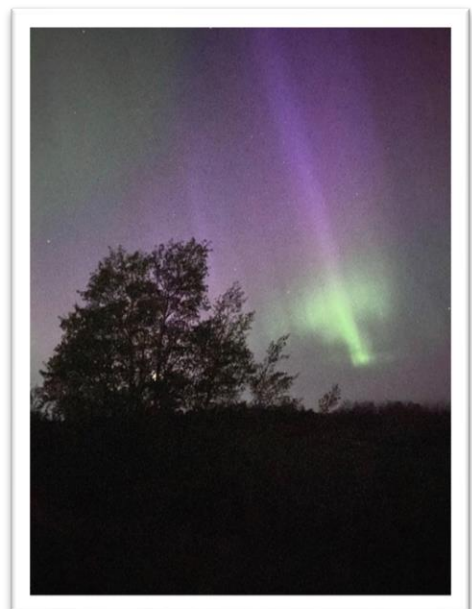
These goals are not just strategic directions but invitations to witness and participate in the unfolding of God's kin-dom through our collective action and faith.

Perhaps the most significant 'bright lights' in the Pacific Mountain Region are the staff and volunteers who are the backbone of the administration for the Region, not only because they are good leaders, but because they carry a bold, positive vision for the work in front of them. We are indeed blessed. As your staff, we have worked hard to facilitate opportunities for connection to each other, and to the community.

Interestingly, when you look at the Northern Lights, it is sometimes hard to see all the colours, it can be right there in front of you, but your eye requires some help to be able to truly see the magnificence. If you don't pause and watch, you might even miss it. Sometimes it takes an external force, such as a camera lens, to help us see what is right there. In our own lives and in our lives together, we may encounter moments of despair, doubt, and uncertainty. Yet, it is precisely in these moments that we are called to look for the light – the signs of God's presence and grace at work in our midst. It may be found in the kindness of a stranger, the beauty of creation, or the love of friends and family.

As we journey through the Pentecost season, let us open our hearts to the connections, collaborations, and cultivation that surround us. Let us engage in the wonder and awe. Let us embrace the hope and promise of resurrection, knowing that God is always with us, leading us from darkness into light, and from death into life.

Treena Duncan
Executive Minister
Pacific Mountain Regional Council



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CELEBRATIONS

CELEBRANDS

BEING ADMITTED

Rob SHEARER

BEING COMMISSIONED

Kerry CHILD

Kendra MITCHELL-FOSTER

BEING ORDAINED

Hilary BITTEN

Colleen BLAIR

Mini CHOI

Cathy CRYDER

Jennifer CUNNINGS

Anne ELLIS

Pamela EVANS

Elizabeth PARSONS

Marie PAUL

Rhonda THORNDAL

Nancy WALKER

Shelley WORTHINGTON

ROB SHEARER, ec (HE/HIM)

My faith is forged in the fires of childhood Pentecostalism, grassroots and anarchist activism, living in a Catholic Worker house of hospitality, street ministry, neo-monasticism and intentional Christian community, experiencing the witness of the global church in West Africa and Latin America and from Indigenous and BIPOC Christians here in North America, in contemplative, Ignatian and liturgical prayer, in African-American gospel and praise music and chanted psalms and soaring hymns - and in poetry too. In pilgrimages to Taizé, Greenbelt, School of the Americas, Iona, Assisi and elsewhere - and in the liturgical, sacramental, radical and mystical traditions of Christianity.



My people are The United Church of Canada, going back to a line of ministers, including my circuit riding Presbyterian great-grandfather and UCC great-uncle on my dad's side - so this is a homecoming after my years seeking to serve God as an Anglican deacon and priest. The Wesley's - Susanna, Charles, and John (presente!) - have been one important bridge back to, this, my 'Methodist' home - which I've admittedly had at least one foot in for well over 30 years now.

I'm a co-founder and member of the monastic-inspired Emmaus Community (that's the 'ec' after my name) and The AbbeyChurch here on ləkʷəŋən territory (Victoria, BC). I support church plants with the



Pacific Mountain Region in my full-time work. I'm passionate about forming and supporting Jesus-centred, Trinitarian, radically-inclusive and affirming communities of faith.

I am a parent to two amazing teenagers, am bisexual, make electronic and church music, love the ocean and mountains – and, above all, love Jesus' blessed and very broken Church.

I could use lots of words around what I believe are our greatest challenges: decolonizing colonial structures and relationship to land (#LandBack), addressing this interrelated housing, loneliness and opioid crisis and ecological and social/institutional collapse all around, becoming truly anti-racist, anti-oppressive and economically and socially diverse, re-rooting into the many latent jewels of our UCC and 'catholic' heritage. Becoming deep, bold and daring.

At the end of the day, Beloved Community, I ultimately believe that we need a Holy Spirit revival which opens our hearts anew to respond to God's unfathomable grace, love and faithfulness - which roots ourselves back into God's unfolding Story in Christ Jesus – and in that sure grace we can then respond by simply loving God and loving our neighbours. ~

KERRY CHILD

I began my ministry journey in 1997 at Canadian Memorial United Church with Rev. Barry King. I was 17 years old. Over the last 30 years I have served in leadership at West Point Grey United Church, Wilson Heights United Church, Northwood United Church, and Gilmore Park United Church (twice!).

As a Sunday School Leader, Youth Group leader, Staff Associate and Designated Lay Minister I have primarily served the church within ministry with children, youth, and families. In the wider church I've participated in 3 General Councils, 1 World Council of Churches Assembly (Brazil) and represented the United Church at CANACOM (Caribbean and North American Conference on Mission).



In more recent years I've shifted into a stronger call within pastoral care ministry. I have passion for offering opportunities for older adults to deepen their faith while enriching us with their faith stories. I feel called to create safe space for difficult conversations about end-of-life care, hospice, funeral planning, aging, dementia and mobility. God is ever so present in our pain and suffering and I feel honoured to walk with anyone in this season of life. As a Death Doula I am passionate about tending to people in their final weeks, days, and hours.

I was baptized and confirmed at Gilmore Park United Church (thanks to Rev. Bob Miller and Rev. Ed Searcy), where I was deeply rooted in my faith and leadership journey and where I am now serving today.

In my community, I recently completed three years on the school PAC (Parent Advisory Committee) and prior to that served three years coordinating an infant/toddler loss support group at my local hospice. I am a busy mom, an avid gardener, a good cook, and world traveller. I feel grateful for the abundance of it all. ~



KENDRA MITCHELL-FOSTER

My story is coming to a full-circle moment this Sunday on the sacred, unceded ancestral territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people. I lift my hands and heart in gratitude to them as an uninvited guest, who is nourished by the land and their relationship with it. I am amazed to look back on my journey from the vantage point I now have; God's plan for my life is always infinitely brighter and broader than anything I could have envisioned with my mortal mind and heart. In the deepest gratitude and humility, I step forward this Sunday to offer myself in service of our loving God, in ministry to the Body of Christ on Earth, and within the relationship of Diakonia in the United Church.



I was baptized at 30 right here in the sanctuary of St. Andrew's-Wesley, by the beloved Very Reverend Gary Paterson. This was a profoundly life-changing moment for me, I felt a shift in my spirit much like the sprouting of a seed that catapulted me into a different kind of life. A mosquito biologist specialized in tropical neglected diseases and diseases of poverty, I had spent my life in the intricate logic of science, finding awe in the beauty of creation, and seeking justice through the work of global health research and advocacy. The morning of my baptism, I came to understand that the fire for justice within me, and my fervent desire to serve those at the margins was a call from God that remained only half-answered. In turning the fullness of my humanity toward God, and abandoning myself to this call, I continue in the "becoming" of servanthood, of holding the door open, and of the spiral relationship with God in creation.

Life and my candidacy path took me to the sacred unceded ancestral territory of the Lheidli T'enneh, currently known as Prince George, where I now live with my wife and children, and where I serve as a Campus Minister at the University of Northern British Columbia, and as the Regional Minister – Justice for the Pacific Mountain Region. I look to the path ahead with curiosity and excitement, knowing that the unknown is where all of creation began. We as a church are walking, praying, singing, dancing, and connecting in a moment characterized by questions of "What is to come?" and "What are we to become?" The challenge of these questions is to continue to nourish and cultivate relationships: with one another, with creation, building peace, seeking justice, resisting empire, and remembering that we walk on Holy Ground. My journey has been shaped and lifted up by the community at Trinity United Church in Prince George (to whom I am eternally grateful), by the Interfaith Spiritual Care Centre community at UNBC, by the community at the Prince George Regional Correctional Centre Chaplaincy, and by the DUCC Community and the Centre for Christian Studies. Most of all, I have been shaped, taught, and healed by the territory upon which I make my life, for which I am grateful to God and to the generations of Lheidli T'enneh people who have cared for this land since time immemorial.

St. Andrew's-Wesley was the first church to support my discernment and candidacy journey, and now I have returned to take this next step, and humbly offer myself to the covenant of Commissioning. Thanks be to God. ~



HILARY BITTEN

I left a career in Social Work to follow a call to ministry in 2001. After a year and a half of discernment entered training as an LPMIT and began to serve in the Arrow Lakes Pastoral charge. Three years later I completed training and continued to serve in the same pastoral charge for the next twenty years. When I look back over that journey, I realize that a lot of it has been about relationships.

The highs, the lows have all been wrapped up in relationship to God and to each other. I believe the biggest challenge for leadership in the future is to present a new path while still being able to recognize it as church. ~



COLLEEN BLAIR

I began serving in ministry in 1995, building and supporting a ministry with children, youth, and families at St. David's United Church. For nearly twenty years I delighted in creating curricula and building a team of teachers who offered their faith and friendship to one another and to the children, youth and families they served. In 2012 I was appointed to Highlands United Church as their first Minister of Seniors and Hospitality. In this ministry, mutuality is plainly evident to me as people offer and demonstrate a gracious and generous vulnerability and wisdom in the life of the community. This ministry, like First Third Ministry, awakens in me an appreciation for the gift of each season of life, just as the seasons of the earth's year ground my Celtic-rooted faith.



Beginning in the early 2000s, I served the then BC Conference, and later Pacific Mountain Region's Candidacy Board. This ministry of discernment offered me the gift of countless testimonies of faith and commitment to ministry which were a great inspiration, and I am grateful to have been part of that holy work for nearly 15 years.

When I think about the church the candidates entered and the leadership challenges we face together, I am mindful of what our faith and the earth teach together in harmony, that we are not alone, that we belong to a communion of life. Every step we take away from isolation and toward community, away from monoculture and toward diversity, away from self-protection toward sheltered vulnerability, the more life, faith, and the church will flourish. I trust we are on the path to such a time.

I am thankful to my family and the unique tapestry of love, support, and encouragement they represent. I am grateful for a faith that is a refuge for the heart, a challenge for living and a promise of presence and belonging. I am deeply thankful for the privilege of being in ministry in the United Church of Canada. ~



MINI CHOI

Born in Hong Kong and later moving to Vancouver during my teenage years, God has orchestrated my life miraculously. After earning my bachelor's degree at Simon Fraser University, I began a career in broadcasting in Vancouver. I went to Hong Kong and thrived in mass media, working as a radio DJ, TV host, program producer, content development strategist, and music director. My creative palette expanded to include painting, videography, and writing lyrics. I've published over three hundred song lyrics along with five books, all reflecting my Christian faith. Additionally, I've co-curated numerous art exhibitions with my husband, Michael.



Feeling a deeper calling, I pursued theological studies at the University of British Columbia, including Regent College and Vancouver School of Theology, upon returning to Vancouver. While pursuing my studies, I remember the sweet memories of Michael and me attending lectures together, with our daughter, Mikayla, leaping in my tummy. When I graduated with a Master of Arts in theology, our daughter was just 8 months old, witnessing the culmination of my academic journey as I walked across the graduation stage. Under God's providence, I have journeyed through broadcasting studios, the realms of art galleries, and seminaries, each step deepening my call.

Today, as an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, I am grateful for the diverse experiences that have shaped my faith journey. Rooted in deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice, my ministry is a canvas blending priestly care, pastoral nurture, and prophetic calling to reflect God's love and beauty. ~

CATHY CRYDER

I think I was well into my thirties when I realized that my first call to ministry with children and youth happened in the basement of St. Helen's Anglican Church when I was 8 years old. I was confirmed there when I was 13 years old and then went on a 10-year journey to find a faith community where I could lean into my faith – as a youth... and then a young adult. I found my way to the United Church of Canada during the summer of 1984. I was hired as the Assistant Director of Cultus Lake United Church Camp. Within a year I was fully immersed in the UCC's ministry with Youth and Young Adults. I had discovered the church and the people with whom I was meant to live out my call to ministry with children, youth, and families... but I didn't know it at the time.



My first formal job with the United Church of Canada began in 1987, when I was hired as the Fraser Presbytery Youth and Young Adult Facilitator. In 1989 I left the Lower Mainland for Vancouver Island, I taught a grade 5,6,7 class at the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School in Port Hardy. I lead life-skills and anger management programs for children and teens with the North Island Crisis and Counselling Centre. Then, I moved into the public alternate school system to work with teens.

By May 1996, I had 3 daughters between the ages of newborn and 3 years old. I loved (and still do) being a mom. I wanted to spend as much time as I could with these three wonderful, lovable, spirited humans.



So, I started looking for part time work with alternate school programs. Instead, in October 1996, I began working 8 hours a week with Shaughnessy Heights United Church as their Children's Ministry Coordinator. By the spring of 1997 I was .5 FTE Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator. When I left SHUC in 2004, I was a Staff Associate, working .75 FTE as the Minister with Children and Families.

My bachelor's degree in physical education, Small Business Development Certificate, work and training in the public education system, and faith formed from childhood were a helpful foundation for the important work I was called to. However, it was places like Naramata Centre, VST, Princeton Theological Seminary, and so much reading that helped to ground and grow my capacity for ministry with children, youth, and families. I was mentored and worked alongside brilliant lay people and clergy whose passion, wisdom, persistence, and deep commitment to ministry with those in the first third of their life modelled what it looks like to respond faithfully to God's call to congregational ministry with children, youth, and families.

After leaving SHUC in 2004, I began a 17-year pastoral relationship with Dunbar Heights United Church (eventually Pacific Spirit United Church) as .5 FTE Minister with Children, Youth and Families. What a gift to be able to participate in the sacrament of Baptism with babies in my early years at DHUC and in 2019 lead a faith exploration process that guided them through discernment for Confirmation at Pacific Spirit United Church. Over the 25 years I spent in congregational ministry I was blessed to accompany and lead people of all ages in worship, community building, faith formation, justice seeking and pastoral care. In times of great joy and deep sorrow I have been invited into peoples lives to pray, bring a word of hope, be present, and hold space for sacred, holy encounters with God. What a blessing!

These days, I work with the Pacific Mountain Regional Council's First Third Ministry Team as the Camp Spirit Regional Minister. I engage with Communities of Faith throughout the region that are seeking to build meaningful connections with children, youth and families in the neighbourhoods that surround their buildings. I work with youth and young adults who offer compassionate, faithful, and transformational leadership in our church and in the world.

In 2013 I attended a workshop at the International Godly Play Conference called, "The Sacrament that Won't Sit Still," led by the Rev. Cannon Andrew Sheldon. What a brilliant way to engage with the notion that the transformative and grace filled nature of the sacraments is inherent in children. Since 1984 I have been blessed to see how children and youth bear the divine in our midst. I am grateful to be called to engage and illuminate the responsibility we have – as a church – to come close to God with the children and youth we are blessed by. If we do, we might catch a glimpse of God's dream for all of humanity and feel compelled to be a prophetic, grace filled presence in a world in deep need; in ways that we might never have imagined. ~



JEN CUNNINGS

From the first time my father took my brother and my 4-year-old self to church I have found a place of hope and belonging in the United Church of Canada. I come to this moment in my life with a grateful heart, having been marked and shaped by the blessing of sacred community and beloved mentors of all ages.



My Dad was raised United and my Mum Anglican and our church family growing up was North Surrey United Church. There, in loving community, I was baptised, confirmed, and nurtured as a child and youth to explore, to question, to deepen and to live my faith. With encouragement and nudging this church gave me opportunities to share my gifts and develop my leadership. When my youth leaders dragged and pushed me to a presbytery youth retreat, they could not have known what a gift they gave me as it was one of the most transformational moments in my life. There in community, surrounded by the beauty of creation, I experienced a closeness to the Holy that I had never felt before and my passion for serving the church was really ignited. Inspired by that moment, and aware and in awe of the great cloud of witnesses surrounding me, I joyfully became a “church geek,” a title that I share with others and treasure profoundly. Volunteering as a youth group leader, Sunday School Teacher, and church committees, serving as a presbytery youth and young adult rep to BC Conference and more, gave me a deeper understanding and awareness of the presence of Christ in our midst and a call to ministry that I could not deny.

I have been in paid accountable ministry in the United Church since 1992, serving congregations around the lower mainland, as well as being a Presbyteries Youth and Young Adult Minister. Presently I am thrilled to be in ministry with St. Andrew’s Wesley United as the Minister with Children and Families and Pastoral Care. My path to this moment of ordination has taken many a route and detour, however my call to sharing and living the Word, Sacrament and Pastoral care has not faltered with a devoted focus on children, youth, and young adults. Experiences, learning alongside mentors of all ages and studies at university, VST, AST and Princeton Theological Seminary, the Justice Institute and course work through Naramata Centre have formed me.

With a passion for creating welcoming and faithful spaces of community where all ages care for, and learn from and with one another, I am a believer that faith is formed through personal trusted relationships, and I am devoted to intergenerational ministry. I will continue, as long as I breathe, (and have so generously experienced) to be someone who shares the love of God and the teachings of Christ, encouraging, supporting and celebrating with children, youth and their families as they make a home for their faith, live it and engage it with the world.

With deep gratitude and love for those who have shown and accompanied me along the way,
Jen. ~



ANNE ELLIS

Not All Who Wander are Lost. - JRR Tolkien

I grew up in the United Church of Canada and for me Mount Seymour United Church, in North Vancouver was a second home. It was a place I felt safe and loved by a large extended family. For a time, I left the church to explore other traditions and religions in the world, yet eventually I was called back to the church of my childhood.



Not long after that I began to hear the call to ministry, but like Samuel who misunderstands, or maybe deliberately disbelieves, I didn't answer right away. I completed a Bachelor's in Divinity from Heythrop College, England in 2011. And was encouraged to consider my options by attending a "Thinking About Ministry" weekend retreat at Naramata Centre. There, the green round door of Bag End, Frodo, and Bilbo's home in The Shire, opened for me and I was on my way. The message I received that day was to watch out for dragons.

Dragons can take many forms, and cause detours along the road. I completed the CCS LDM and attended CCS in Winnipeg for a year. Then life's dragons flew in, shifting priorities and rerouting my life for a time. Never once in all those years did I feel I was avoiding or denying my call. Rather, I felt the presence of God in all my choices, all my decisions.

I moved in Kairos time, giving so much of this call to God. Knowing that when the time was right, I would continue the journey. I know this to be true because all along the way, through the dips and hills, detours, and scenic routes, I met people and learned things that acted like signposts and guides pointing me in the next direction.

In 2018 my guides led me back to the path of ordination candidacy and I began my studies in earnest. I spent a year at VST and in the spring of 2020 I transferred to the AST Summer distance program because who wouldn't want to spend summers at a waterfront campus in Halifax?

Covid 19, had other plans for all of us that year, but regardless of the difficulties the pandemic caused for so many, my online time with AST was full of joy and some very intense learning. I have no words to describe how much my time at AST means to me, nor the words to describe how much I've grown to care for the people I met there.

In 2022, I moved to Summerland BC, to do my SME at Summerland United Church and here I have found yet another place to call home. Being a part of this thriving community of faith has brought me so much happiness and hope.

Over the years of wandering along the path, stopping to rest at the waysides and inns along the road I've learned so much. Back at the start of this road, in the gentle rolling hills of The Shire, I was handed a seashell and told to watch out for dragons. The road took me to some dark places of despair, grief, torment. The road also took me to sparking waters, glorious mountain peaks and lush green places full of laughing children. It turns out, some dragons need to be slayed, some dragons are to be befriended and become companions to take you where you would otherwise not go.

Six years ago, sitting in the Sanctuary of Mount Seymour United Church, with dragons befriended, on a day that was calm and bright God said, do not be afraid to do this. And I said, Ok. ~



PAMELA EVANS

My mom recalls a time that as a very young child I had escaped from the nursery at Colebrook United Church to find my parents in the sanctuary. I entered from stairs connected to the back of the chancel coming in behind the Rev. Jack Hooper as he finished his sermon to the surprise of everyone!

The United Church of Canada has been the heart of my life. It has been “home”, supporting me in my faith formation and leadership development, being a place of sanctuary and deep care in my life. I am always in awe of the folks who can declare their call story tied to a singular moment of knowing confidently what God was calling them to be and do. I do not have such a moment and instead have many moments with significant relationships of mentoring and inspiration throughout my ministry - people who encouraged, questioned, shaped, mentored, inspired, affirmed, and supported me. I would not be here without them. Colebrook United Church shaped my leadership by providing opportunities for me to assist and then teach Sunday School, lead the Explorer group, and later, lead youth group. There were many weeks in the year when I would be at church up to three or four nights a week. I remember the day I received my very own key to the church and was taught how to use the security system, it was a big deal for this 16-year-old!



From 1990-1991, I coordinated the work of Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT) across British Columbia. My first ‘paid accountable ministry position’ was at South Arm United Church in Richmond BC as their children and youth ministry coordinator from 1992 – 2000. I served Shiloh Sixth Ave United Church from 2005-2007 and Shaughnessy Heights United Church from 2007-2019. Most of my ministry has been focused on children, youth, and family ministry. I had the privilege to serve as lead minister at Shaughnessy Heights United Church for the last three years of my time there. In April of 2019, I moved to the region to support First Third Ministry for Pacific Mountain Regional Council.

All my training and education has been done specific to the communities and ministries I have served, and the Spirit led needs that surfaced. I strongly feel that for me, there has been no better teacher than these communities of faith. So many of the leaders have encouraged and led me into places, conversations, deep thinking, and reflection about how God is at work in the world, what it means to be a leader in the church within the current context of our world and my life as a disciple of Christ. I am grateful for the learning journey I continue to be on.

I am excited and called to keep open to what might emerge as I live into a new part of my journey as an ordained minister for The United Church of Canada. ~



ELIZABETH “BETH” PARSONS

My ministry began 20 years ago as a child and youth minister. In the beginning, I felt like a fish out of water. While offering leadership at Camp McDougall in Sault Ste. Marie, I felt a strong sense of God’s call. I then knew that ministry was where I was meant to be.

In 2013, I became a recognized DLM. With courses to fulfill at Huron College, I also was advised to enroll in a Clinical Pastoral Education Unit at Victoria Hospital in London, Ontario. That year was one of the most important and spirit-filled experiences of my life. Sharing in one’s life journey is so meaningful to me. Connectedness is such an important part of my ministry every day.



I then began solo ministry, serving two country churches. My husband Glenn and I moved to Victoria, BC. in 2022, and I began a new ministry with Cordova Bay United Church. I am honoured and blessed to be in ministry with this community of faith. They are a wonderful family who care for one another, serve their community, and celebrate and praise God!

With everything in life, there are always challenges. I watch the world become increasingly more polarized and unsettled. Above that din, my challenge is how to continue to bring people together, drawing attention to the life and teachings of Jesus. My ministry is to remind people to live a life of justice, equality, and love for all people. We are not alone. Thanks be to God! ~

MARIE PAUL

It is a joy to come from faith families in congregations to return to congregational ministry, sharing God’s hope and love. My husband Brian and I raised our two children at Deer Lake United Church, where Rev. Scott Turnbrook invited congregation members to cover pulpit supply. I loved doing pulpit supply throughout Westminster Presbytery and people affirmed that I come ALIVE when I lead worship. I am so grateful for the presence of God’s Spirit when we pray.

My discernment and candidacy pathway within the United Church of Canada was a long journey of accompanying others and taking the next faithful footstep. As a mother and a part-time librarian, I studied part-time at Vancouver School of Theology. After seven years I graduated in 2020 and in 2021 got to wear my daughter’s graduation gown and cap in my home as we watched my graduation ceremony online.



I am grateful for community inclusion at Eagle Ridge UC with Rev. Dave Anderson in Coquitlam and Jubilee UC with Rev. Graham Brownmiller in Burnaby. Rev. Janet Cawley taught me about interim ministry and transition teams. I learned compassion with Wanda Mulholland and the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness. With Rev. Doug Longstaffe and Arun Chatterjee in Clinical Pastoral Education at Vancouver General Hospital it was a relief to finally learn how to say thank you for critical feedback.



Celebrating ministry with me are three siblings from Ontario; also friends from Gibsons and St. John's United on the Sunshine Coast, and friends from Bowen Island. I am forever grateful for the Supervised Ministry Experience completed in Osoyoos and Oliver United Churches, where my mentor Rev. Laura Turnbull became my friend. I dug deeply into rural metaphors of vineyards while drinking local wine.

To all my library and book club friends - thanks for your encouragement. Special thanks to my library job share partner and best friend Lise Kreps who talked me past procrastination for many, many, (too many) VST papers.

I'm grateful to share hope and build bridges into new sustainable ways of living as Christ's body. I humbly learn from our indigenous and intercultural neighbours and affirm people who identify as Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+. Alongside pastoral care, ministries of justice and reconciliation bring healthy changes and new life to the church. I'm excited to be on this ministry journey with you. ~

RHONDA THORNDALE

Hello, my name is Rhonda Thorndale. When I retired from ministry in 2014, I never thought I would be called for another Celebration of Ministry or to serve in a more permanent way in a community of faith. Although I must admit I have thoroughly enjoyed doing supply up and down the Okanagan Valley for the last ten years. God does work in surprising and mysterious ways.

I'm a wife, mother of four totally awesome children and their partners, grandmother to six, with the oldest graduating high school this year and the youngest not one year old yet. Music, art, gardening are all things I enjoy. As a piano and violin teacher, I see the joy as my students develop a love of music, a gift that will always be with them. The same would apply to our acoustic string jam group, where music brings people of all ages and walks of life together. Feeling the life-giving soil between my fingers is very sacred to me. Some would call it playing in the dirt, and I suppose there is something to that too, but I feel a very special connectiveness there.

Going back on a regular basis does feel a little daunting to me at times. I'm older, slower, and mellower but still feel guided by the call of the Holy and have the wonderful support of my husband and the people within the church I will be at. It's been my home church since the 70's, so what a privilege to serve there. There are challenges though, how can I best serve within the limited hours, how do we encourage more volunteers, how can I share the challenges of our world today to inspire and many others. Yet what I hear most, playing in my head is "you are not alone, I am with you." So, I embark on this exciting new phase of my life. ~



NANCY WALKER

Nancy was raised in Abbotsford, BC and grew up in Mt Lehman United Church. Along with Mt Lehman and her family, Fraser Presbytery Youth Council and Cultus Lake United Church Camp were important parts of her faith formation and leadership development.

Nancy has worked in Kent Presbytery (London Conference) as camp director and presbytery youth minister. She did children and youth ministry at Parkminster United (Waterloo, ON). After 10 years in Ontario, she returned home to BC and began her time at Cordova Bay United Church (Victoria, BC) focused mainly on children and youth ministry, but also alternative worship services and preaching. In September of this year, Nancy began ministry in Bella Coola. She enjoys being part of the community and the learning that she is experiencing there. Everyday is a new adventure.



Nancy is grateful for all the mentors and examples of faithful discipleship in her life. ~

SHELLEY WORTHINGTON

It is difficult to nail down when this particular journey toward ministry started. I would say when my parents taught me the Lord's Prayer and prayed with me at bedtime. Or maybe it was when I was in trouble as a little girl and believed "Son of God" meant "Sun of God" and I would find a sunny spot outside to cry to God. My journey has continued to include moments of turning to God and finding Christ in my suffering. I realized later in life that I cannot be alone in this experience of needing Christ and that church was the only place I could share this experience with others. It was also a place where I learned how my spiritual journey and community development work overlap and connect. I became hungry to explore this deeper and was supported by my husband, friends, and church family to learn in a more formal setting at Vancouver School of Theology. As I step into this next part of this journey, I continue to see my primary challenge for leadership as remembering I am not alone and to explore opportunities with others to creatively open our imaginations to the presence of Christ. ~



[JUMP TO TOP
OF THE DOC](#)



NEWCOMERS

*Paul ALLARD
Dale BURKART
Gregory GLATZ
Samuel GROTTENBERG
Frances KITSON
Andrew MACPHERSON
Jeffrey ROCK*

PAUL ALLARD

SERVING KNOX PC, TERRANCE BC



I was born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario on Oct. 11, 1965 (Thanksgiving Day). I grew up a French Roman Catholic in Kirkland Lake, Ontario and was educated in the French separate school system. I then went on to Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology in Kirkland Lake and obtained engineering technology diplomas, in electrical and electronics. I then started work in local broadcast radio as an assistant engineer and part time radio announcer in 1988. A year later, I was hired by Ontario Northland Telecommunications where I spent the next 24 years as a telecom tech. While stationed in Timmins, Ontario, I met my wife Karen, and we married in 1994 at the Swastika United Church (her home church). In 2000, I left the Roman Catholic denomination and joined the more progressive and justice oriented United Church of Canada where I became involved at the Swastika U.C.

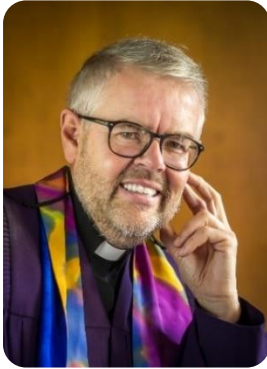
On August 1, 2013, I quit the telecom industry to answer God's call and started my vocation at St. Paul's United Church in Cochrane, Ontario as a full time Designated Lay Minister (DLM)-in-training. In April of 2017, I completed the DLM Program based at St. Andrew's College and was formally recognized as a DLM. On July 1st of 2017, I moved on to the Little Current & Sheguiandah Pastoral Charge on Manitoulin Island, ON. I served that pastoral charge for three joyful and memorable years. Following that, I began my four-year tenure as minister at Hardisty & Hughenden PC on July 1, 2020. Part-way through my tenure at HHPC, I took on further duties as minister for the Sedgewick and Loughheed Pastoral Charge (SLPC). My time in Alberta has been a very enriching experience on many levels. As my tenure approached its conclusion, I again searched for a pastoral charge to serve. After consideration of a few ministry opportunities and some discernment, I was led to Knox United Church in Terrace, B.C. where I will begin my next faith filled journey in July of 2024.

I believe one of the greatest challenges facing the church will be to remain relevant in this ever-changing secular society. As leaders in the church, we must seek and embrace community engagement in as many creative ways and fashions that we can in order to demonstrate that the love, guidance, and compassion of God is open and readily available to all who earnestly seek it. ~



REV. DALE BURKART

SERVING BOUNDARY PC, GRAND FORKS, BC



I was born in Medicine Hat, Alberta and grew up in manse in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Graduate Studies in Political Science took me to Ottawa during which time I worked on Parliament Hill and in thirteen elections in four provinces.

Out of the blue I received a call (telephone) inviting me to apply for a Staff Associate position in a downtown Ottawa church. Following five years in that position I enrolled at Queen's Theological College and upon ordination have served pastoral charges in Montreal, Sarnia, Etobicoke, Ontario and currently Grand Forks. ~

GREGORY GLATZ

SERVING PENINSULA PC, WHITE ROCK, BC



I work and play on the Semiahmoo Peninsula and live in Ocean Park (South Surrey, BC). I've been in full-time, paid, accountable ministry for over 30 years. I was ordained as a minister by the North American Baptist Conference in 1993. My search for a progressive and inclusive denomination led to my admission to ministry in the United Church of Canada.

I was born and raised in Winnipeg, did my M.Div. at Sioux Falls Seminary (South Dakota), and have ministered in rural South Dakota, Winnipeg, and Calgary. In 2014, I completed doctoral studies with Leonard Sweet at Portland Seminary. My dissertation, "The Great Co-Mission: A Postmodern Missiology," was informed by and has informed my ministry with congregations.

My partner is a school teacher with Surrey School District. We live with two Egyptian street cats and an outnumbered but friendly dog named Geddy Lee. I enjoy playing guitar, making coffee, riding my bike(s) year-round, and boxing. I'm looking forward to getting to know people in the Pacific Mountain Region. ~



SAMUEL GROTTENBERG

SERVING NORTH LONSDALE PC, NORTH VANCOUVER BC



Samuel is coming (back) to us from Calgary, where he served two United Church congregations between 2017 and 2023. He was ordained in June 2019 by the Pacific Mountain Regional Council and prior to this pastored in two other denominations. Alongside of his congregational ministry, Sam is also currently a PhD candidate at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. He previously studied at VST, Regent College, and Rocky Mountain College.

Sam is a self-described “Bible nerd” whose heart for ministry is centred around the interpretation of biblical texts for life in today’s world and shepherding people in discipleship to Jesus. He seeks to be used by the Lord in helping people to integrate the Christian tradition with intellectual rigour and robust spiritual formation, while also equipping them to live out God’s mission in their communities.

Together with his wife, Stephanie, Sam has three energetic young children. Outside of being a massive geek who loves reading theology books, he can often be found brewing speciality coffee, writing, cycling, or playing a round of golf. ~

FRANCES KITSON

SERVING WHITEHORSE PC, WHITEHORSE YK



Having been ordained at last year’s PMR AGM (defs one of the top ten moments of her life), Frances is delighted to be now in ministry with Whitehorse United Church, the only United Church congregation in the Yukon and (for now) the second-most northern in Canada.

Highlights of the past year include marching in the Whitehorse Pride Parade, welcoming the Moderator (on her second Sunday – no big deal), hosting WUC’s first Camp Spirit, discovering the local cheese shop, walking along the Yukon River (it’s gorgeous), learning about fireweed (the territorial flower; pops up everywhere, and when the last blooms are gone, you know it’s fall), blessing the return of the swans in April (did you know that Tundra swans migrate south to California and return to nest on the Alaskan coast??

Exhausting!) and meeting the Territorial Commissioner. Lowlights include the sudden death of her beloved 3 year old cat (unsuspected heart issues), missing a flight from Toronto to Vancouver (crying in airports is the worst), 11am sunrises in December (not depressing, just highly unmotivating), and getting a stomach bug before Holy Week and Covid right afterwards. Through it all, the folks of Whitehorse United Church have been stellar.

And yes, she did see the Northern Lights, but only once – for the really good sightings, you must go out of the city and be willing to stay up until 2am. Frances will happily undertake this with anyone desirous of visiting between October and March, but she hasn’t got the willpower to do it alone. ~



ANDREW MACPHERSON

SERVING KAMLOOPS PC, KAMLOOPS BC



Rev. Andrew Macpherson is grateful to be serving at Kamloops UC and graduated from Emmanuel College, University of Toronto in the M.Div., MPS in Muslim Studies Program, and Buddhist Studies Mindful Meditation program (or trinity Program:) He enjoys experiences of the divine expressed in music and food. His ministry began at Saint Luke's United Church in Toronto and has completed 1800 clinical hours towards the completion of his Certified Spiritual Care Practitioner designation.

The two aspects of ministry Andrew enjoys most are: pastoral relations and preaching. Andrew describes his pastoral identity as preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in a multi-religious and secular world. Andrew adds a sense of humour to his ministry and loves inter-faith collaboration. Andrew will never stop travelling and has visited over 100 countries. He enjoys a diverse range of music, food, and likes to play the piano and saxophone. He is currently in the process of obtaining his drone pilot's license. His favourite snacks are samosas and chai. 😊 ~

JEFFREY ROCK

SERVING CANADIAN MEMORIAL PC, VANCOUVER BC



Jeff really loves people - as a believer in the power of community, connection, and collective action. He is passionate about the intersections of faith, politics, spirituality, psychology, science, religion, human rights, and sexuality.

Born and raised in Sudbury, Ontario with deep roots on Manitoulin Island, Jeff's childhood involved hockey on Saturdays and United Church services on Sundays. He attended a Performing Arts High School and Majored in Drama and Minored in Music. In University he completed a Bachelor's in Microbiology and Immunology at McGill in Montreal. But he found his true calling when he completed a Master's of Divinity at The United Theological College and was Ordained in The United Church of Canada.

His studies also led him to a Residency in Clinical Pastoral Education at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto where he was a hospital chaplain; as well as an Internship at McClure United Church in Edmonton. There he fell in love with the west and upon Ordination was called to serve with the people of Gaetz Memorial United Church in Red Deer, Alberta. Next, Jeff returned to Ontario to serve as the Senior Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto; a 2SLGBTQ+ centred congregation. Most recently he's served in Spiritual Care/Chaplaincy at several downtown Toronto hospitals.

Jeff has long been involved in HIV/AIDS activism and harm-reduction, he's served on many boards and committees, and is passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion. He even ran as a candidate in the 2015 Federal Election.

Jeff has always felt a draw to the west coast vibe and is thrilled to be in Ministry with the people of Canadian Memorial United Church. He lives with his partner Casey. When not busy with work and school they can be found hiking, camping, and keeping busy with a myriad of outdoor activities. ~

[JUMP TO TOP
OF THE DOC](#)



RETIREEES

*David BOYD
Elise FELTRIN
Robert GILBERT
Daniel KIRKEGAARD
Brenda MILLER
Ivy THOMAS*

David Boyd, Retiring Summer 2024



As I was growing up in Kenora, ON, at Knox United Church where my dad was minister, I kept getting asked, “Are you going to be a minister like your dad and grandfather?” My quick answer was always a definite NO! Because I needed to say something, I said that I was intending to become a doctor.

This same question about vocation was asked of me—interestingly, not of my older sister (?)—when we moved to Vancouver Island and Brechin United Church in Nanaimo. My answer was still NO! But life has a way of throwing us curve balls.

My first year of marriage also saw us have our first child; we also mourned the death of my partner’s paternal grandparents and struggled with the sudden serious illness of my father. That year was 1982. It was a fateful year and with all that happened, it seemed that the door to medicine was closing and the window to ministry opening. I climbed through the window.

As the process was in the 1980’s, I became an Intended Candidate from Brechin, then a Candidate for ministry, and after 4 years at VST, was ordained in Terrace in 1989. It was an exciting time. Our family had grown to 5 and we packed up our Vancouver home, crammed into a station wagon, and headed off on the adventure of ministry—I was settled in Manitou Conference in northern Ontario. We spent 6 years at St. Andrew’s United Church in Matheson, a wonderful pastoral charge and Conference in which to begin.

1995 saw a return to BC to Nelson (our family now 6), to a newly amalgamated congregation called Nelson United Church. And here I’ve stayed—it will be just over 29 years of ministry with the folk at NUC when I retire. I’m deeply grateful for the years of ministry in Nelson and the many challenging and faithful ways we’ve engaged in ministry.

I can’t tell my story without offering my deep gratitude to my parents and grandfather who were United Church ministers. My parents met at Union College in Winnipeg in the 50’s; at that time, the United Church didn’t ordain married women (a terrible policy that changed, thankfully!) so mom became the church musician at the churches my dad served. After a time spent in rural Manitoba, my parents and older sister moved to Hazelton, BC, where dad became the minister at Kispiox, Gitsegukla, and Hazelton. I was born in Wrinch Memorial Hospital. At that time—after many years working for Eaton’s—my grandfather was the minister in Skidegate, Haida Gwaii; he went on to be ordained in 1963 while serving Brighthouse United Church. Mom was ordained in 1993 in Naramata as she came full circle back



into ministry after my father's death in 1985. So, our ordination family tree: dad, 1958; grandpa, 1963; me, 1989; and mom, 1993.

It's a truism to say that it is a very different church today than it was in 1989. I think one of the biggest challenges today for leadership in the Church is intersectionality. There are many overlapping social issues and the key leadership question for the Church is proclaiming hope at the intersection of these issues. A leader in today's church must have knowledge of how the many issues overlap—climate emergency, gender, sexuality, interfaith relationships, poverty, racism, ableism, violence and war, to name a few—and learn to partner with other agencies to work towards distributive and transformative justice. And one of the important supports for our ministries is spiritual practice—meditation, mindfulness, yoga, Qi Gong, Tai Chi, breathing. Leadership that arises out of spiritual practices and that is progressive and contemporary will succeed, but the Church will look very different than it has during my active ministry. ~

Rev. Elise Feltrin, Retired December 31, 2023



Entering into ministry later in life following a variety of other jobs, I quickly learned that my ministry would be shaped by my previous work and life experiences. Having spent almost four decades in various capacities of the restaurant industry including owning a bakery and catering company, it is therefore not surprising that my ministry was always deeply rooted in hospitality.

As with any carefully planned function, I put my organizational skills to work crafting worship services that were welcoming and inclusive with sermons that were accessible and relevant. I took pride in ensuring small groups were safe circles of caring and sharing. And I enjoyed stepping into the role of host at any event involving food – including the celebration of communion. Even pastoral care and hospital visits were experienced as opportunities to nourish and nurture others in ways that were memorable and meaningful. And perhaps not surprisingly, I soon learned that it was often I who was the one being fed! What a gift in this vocation to hear people's stories, to be invited into the intimate moments of their emotional and spiritual lives and to sit together in rich silence filled with the sacred presence.

Music has also always had an important role in my life and when I joined the Bayfield Ukulele Society as a social opportunity within my community, little did I know how profoundly that fun little four-stringed instrument would influence my ministry! Not only did our continually growing group provide rollicking gospel singalongs at the occasional church service, but we also performed at nursing homes, long term care facilities and the residential hospice. The infectious joy of music touched everyone who heard us play and was a wonderful form of outreach while also providing an amazing opportunity to build relationships within the diverse and supportive community of its members.

During my sabbatical in 2019 I travelled to Costa Rica and Panama while studying Spanish – but most importantly, I stopped wearing a watch and learned to appreciate the real value of time. My personal spirituality deepened with the awareness of living in the here and now and I felt something shift. Feeling called to more one-on-one spiritual companioning, I enrolled in and completed the Haden Institute program in Spiritual Direction.



Feeling restless after 7 years serving at St. Andrews in Bayfield, ON, I re-located to Chemainus, BC during the pandemic to be closer to my two grown daughters. It was a challenging time to meet and engage with a congregation from behind a mask or from within Zoom boxes onscreen, but I admit to enjoying the creativity allowed in videotaping worship services, which I often did 'on location' in front of some of Chemainus' famous murals.

With Chemainus United facing uncertainty and the need for transformation in the future, I felt it was the time for me to step back, retire and focus on being a Spiritual Director and sharing my gifts within other means in the community.

Thus far, retirement life suits me fine – and I am gainfully 'volunteered' at the local food bank, on the Neighbourhood House Board of Directors, as well as providing grief counselling at Hospice. That, along with learning to play pickleball, and of course, playing more ukulele!

The biggest challenge I see for church leaders today, is discerning how to realistically partner with and remain relevant to the wider secular community. Too often, especially in smaller towns and rural areas I have sensed a 'clubbiness' in congregations, with people taking good care of their club members, repairing, and maintaining their club house, but not necessarily integrating with or being integral to those who don't attend worship. The silo walls must come down allowing 'church' to flow outward into the community, where in encountering others we will most certainly encounter God. I see no future for a church that exists only to serve the needs of its members. ~

Robert "Bob" Gilbert, Retired December 31, 2023



As I reflect upon my 'journey to retirement', I am so grateful to God and, as well, grateful to all those persons God has led me to serve since my ordination in 1995. I have been so blessed to have served in places and among people I have cherished and loved: Miami Pastoral Charge in Manitoba for 7 years (rural congregational ministry); West Broadway Community Services Inc. in Winnipeg for 10 years (inner city community ministry); Augustine United Church in Winnipeg for 8 years; (inner city congregational ministry) and finally Central Saanich United Church on Vancouver Island for 31/2 years (rural congregational ministry).

I was greatly blessed to have lived with such a variety of experiences. All of them have enriched my life in so many ways. I greatly appreciate sharing, with so many other followers of Christ, the ministries and service to which we were called by God. In the wider church I thank my colleagues and the people I served for their support, challenge, and shared ministries in my time serving as Chair of Agassiz Presbytery in Manitoba and as Conference President in the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.

For God's call and leading I give God heartfelt thanks and praise.

I think of the sacred privilege of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ every Sunday morning; the privilege of journeying with so many persons, families, and communities as 'pastor' in their individual and collective lives in times of joy, (including weddings, baptisms and other significant life events); in times of sickness, dying, grieving, or in times of struggle or trouble – offering pastoral support and counselling. And I am so grateful that in such pastoral interactions there were made available divine guidance and wisdom. And finally, I am so grateful for all the wisdom, affirmation, challenge, growth and



love I received over the years from those I served, as well as from mentors, colleagues and earlier on from instructors and professors at Emmanuel College, the University of Winnipeg, and Sunnybrook Health Science Centre (Clinical Pastoral Education program) for shaping my God-given gifts into skills, attitudes, and ministerial identity.

Discerning that it was time to retire at 71 years of age, I retired at the end of December 2023 and moved to the north end of Vancouver Island where I am now sharing a home and life with my best friend who also served the church for many years as Music Director. I am thoroughly enjoying this stage of life where I have discovered more time for such things as: traveling, reading, walking, on-line and in-person educational events, and volunteering. Once again, I offer my gratitude to God for continuing to share this part of the journey with me as I attend a local joint Anglican-United Church and engage more regularly in my Centering Prayer practice and spiritual studies.

I have been asked to comment on the biggest challenge for leadership in the coming time. One of the biggest challenges, I believe, is willingness to 'put new wine into new wineskins'. Christianity should be a dynamic faith, maintaining the core of the Christian message, yet changing, adapting, morphing so as to truly be able to 'love as Christ loves' to truly 'love our neighbour as ourselves' (including our enemies) in contextually meaningful ways for today's world. We have to be more concerned about being faithful to the Ways and Teachings of Christ as they apply to the world today, than adherence to so-called right beliefs; or to those age old creeds and traditions that are no longer appropriate, life-giving, or relevant; or struggling to maintain or build expensive church buildings; or allowing our faith communities to succumb to the temptation to be self-serving silos or self-concerned spiritual oases set apart from the wider world rather than being the body of Christ in the world. And most importantly future leaders must be exemplars of hope and trust in the Spirit's guiding and empowering presence. Such leaders should be concerned to assist those they lead and serve to experience the mystery of God in new ways and to discern and enact ways to contextually and meaningfully connect to the secular world for God's good purposes in the non-church communities in which we live.

Thank you for allowing me to share this reflection with you. I pray for God's presence of wisdom to guide you at the Regional AGM in your discussions, deliberations, and decisions.

Sincerely,
Rev. Bob Gilbert ~

Daniel Kirkegaard ~ Retiring June 30, 2024



I am Reverend Daniel Kirkegaard; God has blessed me with a wonderful wife, Sandra, and four super children, Nathan, Kristin, Joshua, and Tiana. I'm passionate about music and theatre, and have a love of physical labour doing renovations, carving, and whittling. I'm very grateful to tie it all together in expressing and sharing the Gospel Message of Jesus love and blessing.

During my earlier years, and continuing to present day, I have had the opportunity to be involved in many forms of ministry which included four years of travelling with The Covenant Player Christian Theatre out of Los Angeles, CA and then on to the Canadian Covenant Productions (Canada) Inc Board. Being blessed with Active involvement with L'Arche Communities in Canada for 35 years and being involved with university ministry at Inter-Varsity Christina Fellowship has brought me so much pleasure. I am proud to have had a significant ministry presence in



community engagement with the 1999 Lobster Wars in Burnt Church, inclusion of persons with diverse abilities in local congregations, and enactment of the BC Conference UCC Apology to the Japanese United Churches. I'm grateful to have met and welcomed so many wonderful people in the community such as youth through a church theatre, community musicians through a monthly Jazz Vespers Service, community artists through Annual Art Fair weekends, and community gardeners by establishing a community garden and a partnership with a local farmer and his program called Project Pickle.

I was ordained into The United Church of Canada in 1997 through BC Conference, and it has been my privilege to serve as a minister in several united churches in New Brunswick as well as at East Burnaby, Vancouver Japanese, and Tsawwassen United Churches. I am also grateful to have served as Pastoral Oversight for 36 congregations in transition or conflict under UCC Maritime Conference, BC Presbyteries, and Pacific Mountain Regional Council. After a long discernment I have decided to retire at the end of June from Tsawwassen Pastoral Charge. It has been a great honour to serve so many people and communities for so many years. ~

Brenda Miller ~ Retired July 1, 2023

No bio or photo. ~

Rev. Ivy Thomas ~ Retiring July 31, 2024



Ordained in 2006 as a "mature" ordinand, I was privileged to serve and learn in the North Thompson Pastoral Charge of Barriere/Clearwater for three years, journeying with them into a Shared, Ecumenical Pastoral Charge. I then shifted my ministry focus to Regional (formerly) Conference staff, taking on the role of Conference Minister for what was known as Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery. (So much has changed and I feel old just having to refer to what was and is no longer!)

After seven years, I left my role as Conference Minister to serve as a two-year Interim Minister for First Metropolitan in Victoria, then moved on to Kelowna to serve St. Paul's United for these past six years. In that time, we worked with the other United churches in the area, and over the last three years, amalgamated Rutland United, First United, St. Paul's United, and Westbank United to establish Central Okanagan United Church. There is much excitement, hope and anticipation for all that this new congregation can accomplish, God being their helper. I look forward to watching from a distance as LeAnn and I move to the Calgary area and I shift my ministry focus to family and grandchildren, with a good dose of kayaking, gardening, cycling, and crafting thrown in.

It is my hope and prayer that the church, as a whole, endeavours to be flexible and open to the rapid changes and innumerable opportunities to be the presence of God in new, creative and meaningful ways, while respecting and honouring the traditions that have brought us this far. It is a fine line we are being called to walk. May we trust that wherever we go and whatever we do, God is there waiting for us.

~



ANNIVERSARIES

70 Years

Frederick Cline
Kenneth Wotherspoon

65 Years

Herbert Bradley
Robert Bob Burrows
S. Jean Sherwood
S. Ray Brandon

60 Years

Bruce Gunn
Daniel MacQuarrie
David Stephens
G. Cameron McMillan
Robert Miller
Winston Stokes

55 Years

Albert Fowler
Douglas Bacon
Frederick Kingston
Gregory Darjes
Norman Greene
Peter Packham

50 Years

J. Clark Saunders
James Lindenberger
Larry Todd
Mark Malek
Mollie Williams
Stephen Hershey

45 Years

Heather Lindstedt
Janice Guthrie
Kathryn Guthrie
Larry Scott
Masao Iwasawa
Moses Chuk

Ralph Spencer
Stuart Appenheimer

40 Years

Kathleen Hogman
Kathleen Jones
M. Dorcas Larson
Murray Groom
Patricia Baker
Paul James
Wendy Bily

35 Years

David Boyd
Douglas Lobb
Edward Roworth
J. Gordon Verplank
Janice Young
Karen Dickey
L. Dawne Taylor
Sarah Harris

30 Years

Brenda Riley
Diana Sung
Gloria Christian
Lorraine Powell
Richard Potter
Sharon Copeman

25 Years

Dale Burkart
Gail Miller
George Allan
Judith Stark-Sayers
Katherine Brittain
Michelle Slater
Richard Chung
Susanne Abbuhl
Wallace Wally Hargrave

20 Years

Bobby Fillier
Janice Bihl
Margaret Harper
Suzanne Sykes
Teri Meyer

15 Years

Alyssa Lebidowski
Betty Anne Dempsey
Brenda Miller
Donna Ziegler
Elaine Diggle
Graham Brownmiller
Heather Holness
Keith Simmonds
Nicholas Judson

10 Years

Barbara Hansen
Donna Dinsmore
Ha Na Park
Jacqueline Samson
Jennifer Swanson
Kathryn Self Ransdell
Ryan Slifka
Susan Breisch

5 Years

Carla Wilks
F. Hati Mvundura
In Lee
Laura Hermakin
Lynn McGrath
Samuel Grottenberg



MEMORIALS

Samuel Stanbury 'Stan' BAILEY
Rev. Dr. Mark Theodore BEDFORD
James Arthur CHISHOLM
Rev. Michael Gordon COLLISON
Gordon CRAIG
Oakley DYER
Rev. Kris JENSEN
D. Gordon LAIRD
Rev. Dr. Mervyn LUTES
Robert 'Bob' Dunsmuir NORRIS
Norman PETTERSSON
Robert 'Bob' SCALES
Lillian Mae SOGA

SAMUEL STANBURY 'STAN' BAILEY

FEBRUARY 16, 1932 – DECEMBER 12, 2023



Born February 16, 1932, in Devon, Alberta, died unexpectedly on December 22, 2023, at Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, BC. He was predeceased by his father Samuel Berriman Bailey and mother Annie Elizabeth Lee. His siblings Robert (Maria), Doris, Gordon (Helen), Phyllis (Rudy), sister-in-law Ethel, and beloved wife Sharon Robinson. He is survived by brother Lloyd, and children (from marriage to Marilyn Fischer), sons Paul (Tracy) and Alan, and daughter Elizabeth (Greg). Also by grandchildren Brandon (Serenna), Ryley (Madison), Ethan, Maverick, Tressa, Grace, Brynn, and Evie. Stan was a jack of all trades and had a variety of jobs before finally settling into his final calling as an ordained United Church minister in May of 1983. Stan touched the lives of many whether it was through congregation, counselling, baptisms, weddings, or funerals. He spent his early life in Alberta but made the move to BC in the late 1960's to settle there. In 2003, Stan and Sharon moved to Kamloops where they spent the remainder of their days living at RiverBend Seniors Community with their dog Pumpkin. Stan will be dearly missed and remembered by all his family, immediate and extended, as well as by friends around the country. ~

REV. DR. MARK THEODORE BEDFORD

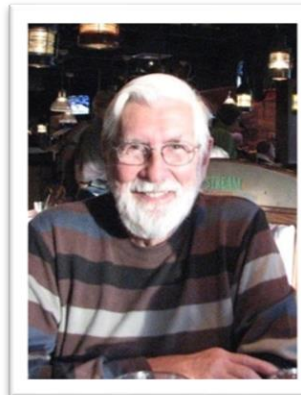
SEPTEMBER 13, 1930 - SEPTEMBER 10, 2023



The family of Mark Bedford of Penticton, BC is saddened to announce his passing on September 10, 2023. He passed into the presence of Jesus at the age of 92 years. Mark will be remembered and sadly missed by his loving wife, Josephine (Jo); children, Evan (Denise) of Red Deer, AB, Kathy (Jim) of Calgary, AB and Mary-Ann of Calgary, AB; grandchildren, Alex, Emily, Sophie, and Mark; step-grandchildren, Amy and Zachary; brother, David (Margaret). He is sadly predeceased by the mother of his children, Mair, and siblings, Lewis, and Mary. A Celebration of Mark's Life was held on Saturday, October 7, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at Oasis United Church, Penticton, BC. Keri Wehlander officiated. In lieu of other tributes, please consider donating in Mark's memory to the Oasis United Church Foodbank or to The Canadian Red Cross. ~

JAMES ARTHUR CHISHOLM

DECEMBER 30, 1934 ~ OCTOBER 27, 2023

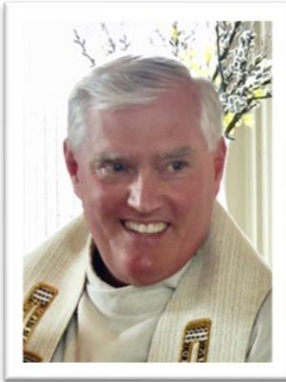


It is with deep sadness that the family of James (Jim) Chisholm, a resident of the Sunshine Coast for the past 13 years, advises of his death on October 27, 2023. Jim was born in Toronto, Ontario on December 30, 1934, to parents Morley and Florence Chisholm. Jim was predeceased by his daughter Kim of New Westminster, BC and brothers Bruce of Lindsay, Ontario and Jack of Okotoks, Alberta. Cherishing family memories are Ann his loving wife of 37 years; son Ken (Norma) of Summerland, BC; son Jeff of Surrey, BC; daughter Lisa Martens (Doug) of Surrey, BC; three grandchildren Natasha (Eli), Shawna and Lindsay (Drew); ten great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Jim was always at his best as a husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and friend to so many. In the late 50's Jim was a manager in the plastics industry in Ontario and transferred to British Columbia in 1961. In the early 70's Jim

followed his heart and was hired as a staff member of the BC Conference of The United Church of Canada serving in the areas of finance, property stewardship and administration. In the 80's Jim was Special Gifts Officer for the General Council residing back in Toronto. In the late 80's Jim and Ann, along with Lisa, returned to Surrey, BC. Jim served as an elected School Board Trustee for District 36, Surrey from 1991 to 1999. In retirement Jim served a 36-month term as a lay minister at Northwood United Church in Surrey, BC. He also served as a volunteer on the Sunshine Coast with Arrowhead Clubhouse Society, Sunshine Coast Festival of the Performing Arts, and St. John's United Church in Sechelt. In lieu of flowers, you may wish to make a gift to The United Church of Canada, Mission and Service. A celebration of Jim's life was held on November 24, 2023, at 11:00am at St. John's United Church in Sechelt, BC. ~

REV. MICHAEL GORDON COLLISON

MAY 21, 1950 – JANUARY 19, 2024



It is with deepest regret that we announce the passing of Rev. Michael Gordon Collison into the arms of his loving Lord on January 19, 2024, at White Rock, BC. Michael was born on May 21, 1950, to Gifford and Mona (Votier) Collison at Brockville, ON. His early years were in the village of Mallorytown, ON where his father was the village storekeeper, and his mother was a homemaker. In his intermediate & secondary school years, the family lived in Brockville, ON, where his father became a member of the Ontario Provincial Police. It was in the nurture of Christ United Church in Lyn, ON that Michael's spiritual roots were planted. Following graduation from Wilfred Laurier University, he began his theological education at Queens University in Kingston, ON for his Master of Divinity degree, with additional studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago, IL.

Michael's first pastorate was in North Bay & Port Loring in northern Ontario. His next phase of ministry was Pelham Centre United Church in Fenwick, ON. During this time Michael married Valerie Parker (of Kingston, ON) in 1987. In 1989, the opportunity arose for a year's exchange in Invercargill, New Zealand (South Island) where he served a Presbyterian congregation and then returned to Pelham Centre. In 1991, Michael & Valerie came west to Vancouver, BC where both pursued further graduate studies at Regent College. Sadly, Valerie passed away in 1995 following graduation with her Master of Divinity degree. In 1997, Michael returned to Invercargill, NZ and the Presbyterian churches he had served earlier. On his return to Vancouver, he continued his Regent College studies. In 1999, Michael married Christine Easton (of Seattle, WA). Both of them completed their additional Masters degrees from Regent and Michael resumed pastoral ministry at Hope United Church in Hope, BC. A further call from New Zealand arose and in 2001, he served as Interim Minister at Knox Presbyterian Church in Dannevirke, NZ (North Island). Soon after he returned to Vancouver, Michael was called to serve Mount Lehman United Church in Abbotsford, BC in 2002, the beginning of his nearly 20-year pastorate of this congregation in the Fraser Valley. He brought together his gift of preaching, love of history & teaching, deep sense of cultural & global impact of Christian faith, and sensitive pastoral care in faithful service to God and his community, in loving partnership with Christine. Over these years, Michael also combined his congregational ministry with service at Regent College's theological bookstore - and its unique mission of providing teaching, resources, and support for global Christian outreach. A Memorial Service for Michael was held at Mt. Lehman United Church on Saturday, March 16th at 1:00pm. Thanks be to God for the life and service of Rev. Michael Collison. ~

GORDON CRAIG

MARCH 28, 1934 - AUGUST 27, 2023



Gordon and his wife Agnes served with the United Church of Canada in several communities through the years before his retirement in the late '90s. Several of those communities included Berens River, MB, Hearst ON, St. Bruno, QB, and Gilbert Plains, MB before they retired to Victoria, BC. Gordon and Agnes were very involved in Gordon United Church in Langford, and Gordon rarely missed a Presbytery meeting. They shared a passion for social justice and the care of creation, taking an active part in the local KAIROS chapter. Predeceased by his loving wife Agnes Campbell Craig (2021), his parents Margaret Pagan Craig and Murray Craig, and his "adapted" brother Donald Moorcroft (Regina). Gordon is survived by his sisters Peggy Craig Taylor (Larry), Carol Craig Miles (the late Glen), nephews Craig & Todd Taylor, Kevin Miles (Karen), niece Laura Miles, and his cousin

Jim Craig (Jane). A special thank you to the staff of The Priory, and Reverend Heidi Koschzeck of Gordon United Church in Victoria. Cremation has occurred. A graveside service and interment took place at 1:00 on Friday September 22nd, 2023, at Hatley Memorial Gardens, Victoria (Colwood). In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations be made to Gordon United Church, Langford BC. in Gordon's name. ~

OAKLEY DYER

FEBRUARY 4, 1931 – JULY 12, 2023



Loving father of Stephen, Sheila, and Patti. Proud grandfather of Lachlan and Calum; Brynley and Alexander. Loved Great grandfather of Charlotte and Holden. The relatives and friends of Mr. Oakley Dyer are respectfully advised that his Funeral Service was conducted in its entirety at the Tumby Bay Uniting Church, Spencer Street, July 21st at 2pm. His Service was live streamed at williamsfunerals.com.au. In lieu of floral tributes, donations can be made to the Eyre Peninsula Parkinson's Support Group. ~

REV. KRIS JENSEN

APRIL 29, 1940 – MAY 13, 2024



With hearts full of gratitude for a life well lived, we share the news that Rev. Jens Kristian Jensen passed on to that mysterious promise of life after death, on Monday May 13, 2024. Kris lived a life full of adventure. His great story telling and appreciation for life every day will live on in our hearts forever. Kris is remembered with love and joy by his wife, Peggy, and his Edmonton family: daughter Heather and Scott Rempel and grand-daughter, Sarah Rempel; son Shaun and Rachel Jensen; grand-children Tyler, Kyle, and Sarah Yakiwchuk; and sister Inger Marie Morris, Ontario. Kris is remembered with gratitude by his extended family: Michael Peterson and Shannon Piedt, granddaughters Taryn and Hanna (Emma); Chris Peterson and Mary Martin and grand-daughter Katie; Brother-in-law Paul Attwell and Deborah Marshall. Kris was preceded in death by his daughter Lisa Yakiwchuk. Kris began life on

April 29, 1940, and grew up on the family farms in Dunvegan and Maxville, in Eastern Ontario. You can take the boy away from the farm, but you can't take the farm away from the boy. Kris always talked about farming as if it was yesterday. Kris was an enthusiastic member of the Vintage Tractor Club MIVTEC in Nanaimo. He proudly displayed his 1944 Farmall A, known as "Holy Smoke" at the VIEX. Rev. Kris served the United Church of Canada from Coast to Coast. Kris graduated from Queens Theological College with a Bachelor of Divinity Degree and was ordained in Lennoxville, QC June 2, 1971. With his first wife, Jeanne, he began ministry in Norman's Cove-Dunville pastoral charge in Newfoundland. After his year of penance, as he always called it, the family returned to Western Ontario and Kris served Oakland, Brantford, and Welland UC. In 1983 the family relocated to Edmonton and Kris was the minister at St. Andrews UC for 7 years. BC was next, after a year at Penticton U.C., Kris was called to Gordon Head UC in 1991. A new life of adventure began when Kris and Peggy were married in 1993. They moved to Langley where Kris served Cloverdale United Church. A window of opportunity opened for Peggy to attend the

Vancouver School of Theology. She was ordained in 2000. Kris was so proud and supportive. A move to Penticton UC for Peggy inspired Kris to take up a career of turning water into wine. Kris opened The Jolly Friar U-Brew in Okanogan Falls. When Peggy was called to Smithers UC, Kris followed her up "north" and offered ministry in Hazelton and Prince Rupert UC. A call for Peggy to Trinity UC in Nanaimo brought Kris to retirement. With more time for hobbies, he started a lawn-cutting business, continued to make wine, restored his tractor, and preached anytime he was invited! Kris and Peggy's adventures included family reunions in Denmark, volunteering at IONA Scotland, and a trip to the Holy Land. They enjoyed several trips across Canada to visit Katie and family in New Brunswick, sister Marie in Ontario, and the Edmonton family. Brechin United Church became their church home after they both retired. Last year, they settled in the Brechin Residences, with good friends and opportunities to serve their local church community. Donations in Kris name to the "Friends of Brechin": donatebrechin@shaw.ca will be appreciated instead of flowers. A Celebration of Kris's life will be held Saturday June 8th at 2:00 PM at Brechin United Church. Life is an Adventure, appreciate it every day. ~

REV. DR. MERVYN LUTES

JULY 4, 1935 - AUGUST 2, 2023



It is with deepest sadness that we announce the passing of Mervyn on August 2nd at the age of 88 at Peace Arch Hospital. He died peacefully surrounded by his loving family. He lived a full and happy life devoted to his family, friends, his church and community. Beloved husband of 62 years to Barbara, devoted father to Steve (Lynette), Sandra (Craig) and Margaret (Leon); cherished grandfather to Vanessa, Connor, Erin and Shayla. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends. He is working in God's garden now and has added his wonderful voice to the Heavenly choir. A Celebration of Life was held September 3rd at 2:00 pm at Peninsula United Church, Surrey, BC. Online condolences may be left at myalternatives.ca ~

ROBERT 'BOB' DUNSMUIR NORRIS

JUNE 9, 1928 - JULY 2, 2023



Robert Dunsmuir Norris was born in Ayr, Scotland, on June 9, 1928. He died peacefully on July 2, 2023, in Duncan, BC. The son of Stephen and Margaret (Peg) Norris, he grew up with 5 siblings. After a tour in Royal Navy, he emigrated to Canada in 1948. Bob made his way to Calgary, AB, where he met Ellen Sara Campbell. They married in Calgary, on May 5, 1950. Before long, they started their family and had four sons - Craig 1951, Bruce 1953, Rob 1955, Jeff 1957. Bob worked for Imperial Oil in Calgary and Edmonton, starting in the mailroom, eventually becoming a computer systems manager. In 1975, he went to university for his Education degree and then to Vancouver School of Theology to obtain his Masters of Divinity degree.

He and Ellen settled on Vancouver Island in 1980 where they built a beautiful house on an acreage near Mill Bay. Bob devoted himself to many years of meaningful service, ministering on the island as a pastoral care counsellor with IPCSA, pastor to United Church congregations in Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Duncan, and chaplain at Broadmead Veterans Lodge. Bob's love of music and theatre maintained a constant backdrop of entertainment - operas, musicals, plays, church choirs, and choir direction. He sang in operas from Aida to Tosca, and acted in Shakespeare plays from As You Like It to Twelfth

Night. He had been a much-loved member of the Calgary and Edmonton Opera Societies as well as the Shawnigan Players in Duncan, BC. Bob was pre-deceased by his wife Ellen in 2003, and by son Bruce in 2017. He is survived by sons: Craig (Brenda), Rob, and Jeff (Yvonne); 6 grandchildren: Stephen (Jana), Andrea (Brad) Hurton, Matthew (Leslee), Aaron (Jeni), Sherisse, Jason; and 9 great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The BC Mental Health Foundation: bcmhf.ca. The family held a Memorial Gathering at 2:00 pm on Saturday, August 26, 2023 at the Kerry Park Centre Lounge, Mill Bay, BC. To express condolences, share memories and photos, please visit: sandsduncan.ca ~

NORMAN PETTERSSON

JANUARY 13, 1937 – FEBRUARY 10, 2024



We remember and celebrate Norm Pettersson's life, who was born and grew up in Edmonton, AB with two brothers and one sister. At the age of 14 he was involved in the Alberta Youth Parliament. It was at this age that he decided he wanted to become a Minister. His first job in ministry was at age 18 in Namu, BC where he would work at the fishing cannery there 6 days a week and preach on the seventh day. From an early age he had a talent for drama which he developed at Highlands United Church where he loved singing, music, and storytelling. This led him to become involved with drama where he directed and starred in several plays, and even received the best actor award in the annual drama competition held by the Young People's Union in Edmonton. He got married in 1960 to his wife Anne and had two girls. He went on to become the Director of a United Church camp in Ontario and then an Ordained United Church Minister. He ministered in several towns and cities all over BC, Alberta, and Ontario. He also went as a Missionary with his wife Anne, to Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago for 9 years and afterwards returned to minister a church in Whiterock, BC until his retirement. He loved getting his congregations involved in putting on plays, community events, singing, picnics, and pot-luck suppers. One of his favourite things was telling the children stories at church, making them come alive with fun, exaggerated drama in his actions and voice. Everyone, especially the kids, were always completely engrossed. He was always trying to help with whatever was needed if it was in his power. Even in retirement he kept busy including becoming the liaison and travel coordinator of a Russian girls' choir where he travelled with them all over Russia, the US, and Canada. He had a lot of fun playing Santa at Oakridge and several of the Lower Mainland malls during the Christmas season. He would grow out his beard and mustache longer each year for the occasion. There was a newspaper article in the Vancouver Sun about him on Dec 9, 2006, that even made its way across Canada! He had a wonderful, full life. ~

ROBERT 'BOB' SCALES

MAY 18, 1928 - NOVEMBER 5, 2023

1930-2023 ~ Robert Ernest Harold Scales, known to everyone as Bob, passed away in his hometown of Salmon Arm, BC on November 5, 2023, after a short illness. Bob was predeceased by his wife Martha, younger brother Jim, and stepson Chris. He leaves behind his daughter Karen (Robert), and sons Alan (Tami) and Paul (Melanie). He is fondly remembered by his stepchildren Susan, and Gord (Mila). Bob's family included grandchildren, Caitlin, Giordano, Kendra, Anna, Aaron, Jennifer, Allison, Terrell, Trenton and Taiysha, and great-grandchildren Kaiden, Austin, Adelyn, Iris, Daisy, and Kai. Bob was born in Revelstoke, BC and grew up in Salmon Arm. As a young man, Bob worked at many of his father's and uncle's businesses, set type for the Salmon Arm Observer



and picked fruit, before joining a family friend's company as an electrical apprentice. Working for various electrical firms, Bob travelled and lived throughout BC, including in Cranbrook, where he met and married his first wife Mardy in 1955. While wiring the new church in Smithers, Bob spent evenings in conversation at the home of the local minister and his wife which ignited his desire to join the clergy. Early postings for the United Church of Canada included Texada Island, Port McNeil, and Alert Bay. After completing his studies at Vancouver School of Theology, Bob was officially ordained as a United Church minister in 1962. Bob served in the United Church Central Mainland Marine Mission on the Robert C. Scott, the Thomas Crosby IV, and the Thomas Crosby V. in various capacities, including Skipper, Missionary, and Mate. On the land, he served congregations in Smithers, Houston, Telkwa, Kelowna, Prince George, Gibsons, Davis Bay, and Surrey and was Presbytery Officer, based in Terrace. In addition to these pastoral charges, he worked at a wide variety of jobs, including millwright, warehouseman, and cabinetmaker. When Bob retired from the Ministry, he and Martha built their dream home in Halfmoon Bay, where they spent several years running a bed and breakfast before returning to Salmon Arm. A true carpenter at heart, Bob always had home projects on the go, often involving removing walls and replacing windows, decks, and kitchen cabinets. Even while vacationing at the family cabin in Sunnybrae, he kept busy making home and property improvements. Retirement meant that Bob could spend even more time in his meticulously organized workshop, doing fine woodwork projects which were gifts or donations to worthy causes. His knowledge of church business and construction, combined with a passion for social issues, made him an invaluable member of various church committees. He also enjoyed making wine (served for Happy Hour promptly at 4:00), reading, doing crossword puzzles, spoiling his dogs, and reflecting and reminiscing of the time spent in the misty fjords of the north coast. The family is deeply appreciative of the staff of Piccadilly Terrace, who created a comfortable, caring environment for Bob over the last few years. A celebration of Bob's life took place at First United Church in Salmon Arm, on Sunday, November 26 at 1:30 p.m. with a reception that followed in the church hall. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the SPCA or the Shuswap-Revelstoke branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. ~

LILLIAN MAE SOGA

SEPTEMBER 5, 1930 – JULY 29, 2023

No Obituary ~



The background features a solid teal color. On the left side, there are stylized, layered green leaves of varying shades. One leaf in the upper right quadrant contains a white graphic of a window pane with a cross pattern.

BUSINESS

MISSION

The work of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council executive, sub-councils and staff is directed by the Mission and Vision of the PMRC executive:

Healthy Communities of Faith and Ministries

Effective Leadership

Faithful Public Witness

ABOUT PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Visit We Are The Church: PacificMountain.ca/about-pacific-mountain-regional-council



REGIONAL EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

On behalf of the Executive of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council, I am pleased to bring you this written report, about the activities of the Executive, since we met in Abbotsford in June 2023.

The Executive's work has continued to focus on how to effectively support our Communities of Faith as they continue to adapt to what ministry looks like in their context as we approach the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada. As noted in last year's report the Executive continues to 'hold' the tension of tending to 'the current' yet 'anticipating and preparing' strategically for the future.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The three regional priorities (i) Identity: Reconciling, Affirming, Anti-Racist; (ii) Healthy Communities of Faith, and (iii) First Third Ministry continued to be the focus of staff work during the year. Highlights of our engagement with these priority areas include:

- Staff, along with representatives from the Communities of Faith Council faithfully followed up on the gathering, reviewing, and responding to the self-assessments done by Communities of Faith in the last few years, and the Executive was pleased to receive the Communities of Faith Assessments Summary Report at its February 2024. The completion of this report provides a baseline of information about the state of Communities of Faith and is particularly insightful about how resilient and responsive they have been to the changing environment they have faced in the last 3 – 4 years in particular, as well as information on their needs. Highlights from this report will be shared during our time together at the Annual meeting.
- During the past year the Executive has intentionally invited representatives from a Community of Faith to share their story of how they are living out their call to be Disciples in their communities. Through this process we have gratefully welcomed and heard from the minister and representatives from St. George's United Church in Courtenay, and Crossroads United Church in Delta.

ACTIONS ON PROPOSALS

Six proposals were approved at the 2022 Annual meeting. Our 2023 report highlighted that most of those proposals were completed or implemented. The status of the one proposal reported last year as being 'In progress' is below:

2022

Proposal #	Decision at Meeting	Current Status
22-02	M/S/C (K. Simmonds / B. Fillier) that the Executive examine and report to the Regional Council the types of support needed for Communities of Faith to flourish, what strategies are being taken to provide that support, and the strategies to ensure ongoing evaluation of what supports are needed.	In progress The first round of Community of Faith assessment reviews was completed, and a qualitative and quantitative report was received by the Executive at its February 2024 meeting. Key findings of the report will be presented at our 2024 Annual meeting. The information from this report, as well as the governance review will be used to inform strategies and supports for the key areas of required support outlined in the report.

2023

Proposal #	Decision at Meeting	Current Status
WF23-01: Youth's Addition to Spirit-full Speech (YASS)	<i>that Pacific Mountain Regional Council of The United Church of Canada set a requirement that at least five percent (5%) of registered voting delegates at any PMRC Annual Meeting be 30 years of age or younger.</i> CARRIED	Being implemented for 2024 AGM
WF23-02: Get Rid of Greenhouse Gases (GROGG)	Proposal: That Pacific Mountain Regional Council perform an energy audit of emissions produced in the course of its work (including Regional Gatherings, staff travel, events), including through buildings, transportation, and waste; and that the Region strongly encourage Communities of Faith to provide an energy audit to be included with their 2024 self-assessment/annual report provided to the Region; and that the Region report on its carbon emissions and on all audits reported from Communities of Faith at the 2024 Regional Gathering. Decision: <i>that we refer this proposal to the Executive for decision with the feedback from this session.</i> CARRIED	The Executive provided direction to the REM to move forward with this initiative with a limit on expenditure of \$30K. The audit is in progress. The budgeted amount for this work is under \$10K.
WF23-03: A Regional Staff Position for Seniors' Ministry	Proposal: That Pacific Mountain Regional Council establish a Regional Staff position for ministry for and with seniors, including retired ministers beyond pastoral care; and establish a task group to create a job description for this position and move into immediate implementation of this proposal. Decision: <i>that we refer to the Executive for decision with the feedback from this session.</i> CARRIED	There is dedicated staff support in place for 4 th Quarter initiatives. Recognizing that there are already existing staff resources supporting ministry for and with seniors and having received and reviewed the feedback from AGM the Executive decided to take no further action.
WF23-04: Sabbatical Fund Relief	Proposal: that Pacific Mountain Regional Council establish a fund that can be drawn on by any faith community providing time for and support to a sabbatical period granted to qualifying personnel; and that the fund be open to applications from qualifying personnel as they seek enhanced opportunities during their sabbatical; and that a sabbatical be recognized to be any five year period of qualifying employment whether continuous in one community of faith or not; and that the fund be created out of contributions from communities of faith and qualifying personnel in equal amounts. Decision: <i>that we take no action on 23-04 Sabbatical Fund Relief.</i> CARRIED	No action was required by the Executive.
WF 23-05 Unsettling Hewlett Packard	Proposal: <i>that Pacific Mountain Regional Council divest from or cease any activity / investment / purchase agreements that support Hewlett Packard; and encourage its communities of faith to do the same; and request the</i>	PMRC has no investments in Hewlett Packard. PMRC Office will make no new



	<i>General Council of The United Church of Canada to add Hewlett Packard specifically to the Unsettling Goods Campaign.</i> This proposal was not dealt with during the Business session at the 2023 AGM and was referred to the Executive for decision at a future meeting. <i>Decision by the Executive:</i> <i>That the Executive approve proposal 23-05 and assign part 1 to the Executive Minister for implementation and part 2, a letter from the President to CoF and that a request be sent to the General Council Office to take similar action as outlined.</i> CARRIED.	purchases of Hewlett Packard products. The request to add Hewlett Packard to the Unsettling Good Campaign has been sent.
WF 23-06 Advocacy & Action for Guaranteed Livable Income	Proposal: <i>that Pacific Mountain Regional Council initiate, encourage and assist its communities of faith to engage writing campaigns requesting their municipal council and/or regional districts to pass resolutions calling on the federal government to implement a Guaranteed Livable Income; and provide a guideline to communities of faith for identifying and approaching their municipal council along with templates to submit.</i> This proposal was not dealt with during the Business session at the 2023 AGM and was referred to the Executive for decision at a future meeting. <i>Decision by the Executive:</i> The Executive requested that the Executive Minister implement this in her ministry plan for 2024.	Staff in the Justice Ministry area is taking follow up action on this proposal

STRATEGIC PLANNING

During the past year the Executive has been moving forward with initiatives to support strategic planning for the region. The two main inputs that will guide this strategic planning work are (i) outcomes of the governance review of the Region as directed by the Executive last year; and (ii) baseline information from the completion of the report of first round of completed Community of Faith Self Assessments. As noted above, the report of the Community of Faith Self Assessments has been completed and recently received by the Executive. The external organizational review is in progress with review of governance documents started, and interviews and Communities of Faith survey to be conducted over the next few months. A report from the external organizational review will likely be completed in fall 2024 and presented to the Executive for consideration and action. It is hoped that strategic planning discussions can then commence in earnest later this year.

One of the significant areas of request from Communities of Faith to the Region is for support with making decisions about property. Buildings are aging. Some Communities of Faith are choosing to amalgamate or close, etc. As different requests come forward to the Executive for discussion, discernment or decision, and the Executive continues to work through property issues with various regional property projects in progress, we see the need to articulate a strategic framework more clearly to address how we deal with property issues moving forward. Any framework that is developed must balance the needs of Communities of Faith, regional priorities, and our fiduciary responsibilities as a board. Members of the Executive agree that there is a need for the Region to provide a service to assist



Communities of Faith with options about their property and to not focus only on housing. Discussions are continuing on what that strategic framework for addressing property issues will look like.

GOVERNANCE

The organizational review focussed on the Executive's work and whether the current structure is working for the Region, is underway. Fall 2023 was spent creating the terms of reference for this work, undertaking the request for proposal process, and choosing the external reviewer. The review is essentially asking if we have the right structure, decision-making processes, policies, and operational support etc. to address big issues and the strategic needs of the Region moving forward. The review of governance documents is underway, and selected interviews with individuals in the Region, as well as an online survey to stakeholders will commence in June 2024. As mentioned above, the outcome of this report together with data from the Communities of Faith Self-Assessment Report will inform future planning for the region.

In late 2023 the Executive formed a Property and Assets Commission to support discernment and decision-making around property and assets in the Region.

TRANSITIONS OF REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Some of you may recall that in the 2022 Accountability Report reference was made to the need to support succession planning for the Executive in the new regional structure. To support succession planning for the Executive staggered terms of leadership on the Executive was introduced and will continue. This year we will see one member of the Executive who has served since 2019, Rev. Katherine Brittain, rotate off the Executive. One other member, Rev. Ivy Thomas, will be leaving the Executive after two years of service, as she retires and moves out of the region. We want to thank Katherine and Ivy for their active engagement in, and dedication to, the work of the Executive during their terms. We will miss their voices and insights at the table. At the end of this AGM, Deborah Richards ends her term as President, and will continue for one more year on the Executive as Past President.

Rev. Simon LeSieur commences his two-year term as President after the 2024 AGM. We look forward to Simon's leadership of the Executive and to welcoming new members to the group after the AGM.

GRATITUDE

As I end this report, I want to take the opportunity on behalf of the members of the Executive to thank our Regional Executive Minister, Treena Duncan, and the amazing staff who support the work of the region. I never cease to be amazed by the breath of issues that they hold and tend each day, and how they do so with care and love for the ministry in which they are engaged. THANK YOU!

Regional Executive Committee Members (2023-24)

Jim Angus	Deborah Richards, President	Laura Hermakin
Katherine Brittain	Thea Sheridan-Jonah	Joseph Kyser
Jenny Carter	Ivy Thomas	Simon LeSieur, President Elect
Ibi Chuan	Johannes Van Kessel	Treena Duncan, PMRC Executive Minister
Bob K. Fillier	Claire Joy (Corresponding member)	Mauricio Araujo, PMRC Assistant to the Executive Minister

Submitted by Deborah Richards, President, PMRC



ENDS POLICY SUMMARY

Ministries of Pacific Mountain Regional Council are effective in fulfilling their call and mission at a cost not to exceed the resources available to the Region.

A. VALUING HUMAN DIVERSITY

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council will uplift and value the diversity of expression embodied in all of humanity.

B. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

Communities of Faith are effective in fulfilling their call and mission.

C. LEADERSHIP

ministry personnel and lay, who are supported, connected, and engaged.

D. OTHER RECOGNIZED MINISTRIES

Ministries, other than Communities of Faith, that are recognized and in relationship with the Region are supervised and supported at levels appropriate to each.

E. COVENANTAL MINISTRIES

The diverse covenanted ministries of the Region will receive oversight and support in ways that hold them accountable, while also encouraging partnership and full participation in the life of the church and Region.

F. COST

The cost of achieving these Ends is not to exceed to resources available to the Region.

G. PROPERTY

Property and other real assets within the Pacific Mountain Regional Council will be utilized in an equitable manner across The Region to forward the Priorities and Ministry Plan of the Executive.



ENDS POLICY

Ministries of Pacific Mountain Regional Council are effective in fulfilling their call and mission at a cost not to exceed the resources available to the Region.

A. VALUING HUMAN DIVERSITY

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council will uplift and value the diversity of expression embodied in all of humanity.

1. The Region will live out its call of loving neighbour by actively working against racism.
2. The Region will only support and enter into covenants and agreements with groups that do not devalue, undermine, limit, or negate a person's identity.

B. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

Communities of Faith are effective in fulfilling their call and mission.

1. The Regional Council will support emerging initiatives towards the formation of Communities of Faith and will ensure equitable access for all members of the Region to connect to a Community of Faith which provides the opportunity to deepen their relationship with God and become disciples of Christ.
2. Recognized and covenanted Communities of Faith will have equitable access to trained, theologically grounded and accountable leadership.
3. The Regional Council will undertake a tri-annual health assessment of all the communities, ministries, and programs within its bounds. The assessment will minimally include areas related to:
 - a. Mission
 - b. Worship and Spirituality
 - c. Leadership
 - d. Evangelism
 - e. Fellowship
 - f. Discipleship
 - g. Outreach and Service
 - h. Organizational Structure
 - i. Stewardship
 - j. Property
4. All Communities of Faith are part of a Regional strategy. All real property and financial assets are:
 - a. an asset for ministry and mission;
 - b. protected to avoid unintended loss;
 - c. stewarded to provide benefit for future generations;
 - d. one means to respond to the "Calls to the Church" (2018).
5. Recognized and covenanted Communities of Faith will have equitable access to financial and practical support to develop and connect to clusters.
6. Recognized and covenanted Communities of Faith will be supported equitably in accessing existing and emerging networks.
7. The Regional Council will provide oversight to ensure that recognized and covenanted Communities of Faith are supported in embodying the ethos and articulated faith of The United Church of Canada, and in governing themselves in alignment with United Church of Canada polity.
8. The Regional Council will ensure that all the Responsibilities identified in the Manual section C.2 are executed.



9. Communities of Faith will be informed about matters that allow them to participate fully in the life of the church in the world, and the ministry of the Region and The United Church of Canada, including:
 - a. referral to resources for worship and ministry;
 - b. interpretation and advice on the United Church of Canada Manual;
 - c. advice on governance;
 - d. access to professional archival materials;
 - e. facilitation of connection to information from the wider denomination.
10. The Regional Council will support Communities of Faith in their discernment of becoming an Affirming Ministry within The Regional Council and The United Church of Canada.

C. LEADERSHIP

To effectively meet the demands of a changing church and world, the Region has leaders, both ministry personnel and lay, who are supported, connected, and engaged.

1. Ministry personnel are:
 - a. Supported
 - i. Persons are recruited for ministry.
 - ii. Ministry Personnel are called, appointed and compensated.
 - iii. Ministry Personnel have quick access to professional assistance and support in matters related to ministry;
 - iv. Have access to resources related to anti-racism, affirming ministry, and reconciliation.
 - b. Connected
 - i. Ministry Personnel are connected to colleagues and the wider church.
 - ii. Ministry Personnel gather for collegueship and cooperation with others in the Region.
 - iii. Ministry Personnel have access to a Regional Council Affirming Network.
 - c. Engaged
 - i. Ministry Personnel have ongoing training that provides knowledge and skills for ministry including areas of reconciliation, anti-racism, and Affirming Ministry.
 - ii. Ministry Personnel have opportunities for personal spiritual growth.
2. Lay leaders are:
 - a. Supported
 - i. Persons are identified and encouraged to provide leadership in areas of church life related to their spiritual gifts and skills.
 - ii. Lay leaders have quick access to professional assistance and support in matters related to ministry.
 - iii. Have access to resources related to anti-racism, affirming ministry, and reconciliation.
 - b. Connected
 - i. Lay leaders are connected with others that share similar work, interests and gifts in church leadership.
 - ii. Access to a Regional Affirming Network.
 - c. Engaged
 - i. Lay leaders have the opportunity of ongoing training that provides the knowledge and skills that allow them to carry out their work effectively, including areas related to anti-racism, Affirming Ministry, and reconciliation.
 - ii. Lay leaders have the opportunity for personal spiritual growth.
3. Other Recognized Ministries
Ministries, other than Communities of Faith, that are recognized and in relationship with the Region are supervised and supported at levels appropriate to each.



- a. Societies incorporated in the United Church:
 - i. follow the policies and practices associated with the Manual C.2.13;
 - ii. are able to access the governing structures of the church in an efficient and timely manner.
- b. All non-incorporated and recognized ministries have access to the Region office for advice and guidance;
- c. Ministries (other than Communities of Faith) covenanting with the Region receive a level of support determined by the Regional Council Executive.

4. Regional Ministries

The diverse covenanted ministries of the Region will receive oversight and support in ways that hold them accountable, while also encouraging partnership and full participation in the life of the church and Region.

- a. Covenantal Ministries will receive quick access to assistance and support via regional staff and communities of faith.
- b. Covenantal Ministries will receive quick access to assistance and support via regional staff and communities of faith.
 - i. Relationships will be governed by an attitude of reconciliation, as described in the “Calls to the Church” (2018).
 - ii. Ministry personnel with appropriate training and abilities are recruited.
- c. Non-English speaking and intercultural ministries are treated as partners in ministry.
 - i. Cultures, history, and present contexts are respected.
 - ii. Ministry personnel with appropriate training and abilities are recruited.
- d. Children, youth, young adults, and their families will be offered opportunities to be engaged in intentional faith development.
 - i. Ministry and programs will be high quality, Christ centered, and inclusive of a diversity of Christian theologies.
 - ii. Ministry personnel/leaders with appropriate training and abilities are recruited.
 - iii. Ongoing appropriate training and education is provided to equip people for ministry with children, youth, young adults, and their families.
- e. Region Camps will be mission-oriented, of high quality, well maintained, and sustainable.
 - i. Programs are high quality, Christ centered, and inclusive of a wide diversity of Christian theologies.
- f. Justice-oriented ministries and networks will be supported and developed in accordance with the strategic priorities of the Region.
 - i. There is an inclusive environment for safe participation.
 - ii. Particular attention will be given to needs related to race, culture, identity, orientation, health, ability, and age.
 - iii. An Affirming Ministry Action Plan will be developed and reviewed regularly in consultation with people who are part of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.
- g. Ecumenical Shared Ministries will be supported as they live out complex interdenominational relationships with a variety of expectations and requirements.
 - i. Inter-denominational realities will be considered.
 - ii. Denominational identities are respected.
- h. Cost of participation will be equitable.
 - i. Barriers are eliminated.
 - ii. Rural and vulnerable communities will not bear disproportionate financial cost of full participation.

5. Cost

The cost of achieving these Ends is not to exceed to resources available to the Region.



- a. The cost to Communities of Faith for supporting the operation of the Region will be 10% of the General Council's Community of Faith assessment;
- b. Costs of special programs and training will be borne by participants at a rate comparable to, or lower than, rates charged by similar organizations.

D. PROPERTY

- Property and other real assets within The Pacific Mountain Regional Council will be utilized in an equitable manner across The Region in alignment with the Priorities and Ministry Plan of the Executive:
 - a. The distribution of wealth throughout The Region will be a priority;
 - b. Leases will be in alignment with our values, priorities, and ministry plan;
 - c. New development and re-development will be in alignment with the values, priorities, and ministry plan of The Region.
 - d. Priority will be given to increasing the ministry impact of the Region; and
 - e. Agreements cannot encumber the Region with excessive management requirements.
- The Regional Council will develop a property strategy to ensure an acceptable level of United Church presence and service throughout the region.
- The determination of whether a Community of Faith already has assets equal to or greater than the need identified in its ministry plan will be determined by a Commission of The Executive.

The executive delegates its authority to The Property and Assets Commission to exercise its role. (The Manual 2023, G.2.3.2)

The Property and Assets Commission will comprise 3 members of The Executive representing a diversity of geographical contexts.

In fulfilling its mandate, The Property and Assets Commission will, in addition to other criteria, consider if:

- a. There is a high degree of potential partnering with other Communities of Faith.
- b. There is a high potential for program and service duplication in the ministry plan.
- c. The Community of Faith already has assets equal to or greater than the need identified in its ministry plan.
- d. The ministry plan of the Community of Faith for the assets does not include:
 - I. an amount for reconciliation ministry.
 - II. an amount for regional financial equity and support of the Region's ministry plan.
- g. There is property that has significant historical, landmark, or geographical importance to The Pacific Mountain Region Council of The United Church of Canada.

GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESS PROCEDURES 2023–24

1. MOTION:

- The mover states the motion.
- A seconder is named.
- The mover has the privilege of speaking at the beginning and end of discussion of their motion.

2. DISCUSSION:

- Start by identifying yourself (name, community of faith).
- All discussion should be directed to the President.
- The correct manner in which to address the President is: “President ...”
- Each person may address the President only once on a motion, except the mover, who may speak both first and last.
- All discussion should be clear and concise and deal only with the motion.
- The time allowed each speaker may be limited to two (2) minutes by the President or the Council.

3. AMENDMENTS:

- An amendment is a recommendation to change a motion by:
 - i. removing words and replacing them with others, or
 - ii. adding or deleting words.
- An amendment cannot simply negate the motion.

4. AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT:

- A motion to change the amendment.
- Follows the same procedures as a motion when being considered and voted upon.

5. VOTING PRIORITY:

- Amendments (including Amendments to the Amendment) must be voted upon before the original motion.
- Voting shall be carried out by members using Simply Voting (www.simplyvoting.com) an electronic voting system that will send out electronic ballots using the emails voting attendees registered with.
- All those with voting privileges are expected to indicate their vote in favour of or opposed to a motion. Abstentions are not requested nor recorded in the minutes unless requested for conflict-of-interest reasons.
- Those who voted in opposition to a motion may request that their names be recorded in the minutes.
- If there is a tie, the President will cast the deciding vote.

6. POINT OF ORDER:

- A point of order can be made by anyone at any time if the rules of the Council have been or appear to have been broken. It is recommended to check with the Business Committee to confirm a Point of Order.

7. POINT OF PRIVILEGE:

- A person may rise at any time during business proceedings to state a personal concern or a concern relating to the whole community, yet only if that concern jeopardizes the good functioning of the Council.



8. BUSINESS COMMITTEE:

- To sort and clarify issues when things get bogged down in procedure wrangles or wording problems.
- To deal with changes to agenda during the General Meeting.

9. PROPOSALS:

- See the explanation on Proposals on the next page.

10. OTHER:

- Other Rules of Order are contained in the Appendix in the Manual (2024) and further clarified in Bourinot's Rules of Order. In general, the conduct of business is at the discretion of the President. The President may seek the advice of the Regional Executive Minister or the Business Committee.



BUSINESS COMMITTEE MOTIONS

M/S (Mark Green/G. Brownmiller) that:

1. The Roll of the 6th General Meeting of Pacific Mountain Regional Council shall be members arriving prior to 12:00 p.m., Friday, May 31, 2024. (The Manual 2024 C.1.1 and C.1.2.). Those arriving after that time shall not be included on the Roll or entitled to payment of travel expenses.
2. Quorum will be set at a minimum of 20 members which must include at least one ministry personnel and one lay member, not including Corresponding Members (The Manual 2024 C.4.3), and that at least five percent (5%) of registered voting delegates at the PMRC Annual Meeting be 30 years of age or younger (PMRC WF23-01).
3. The Bounds of The Pacific Mountain Regional Council shall be St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church, 1022 Nelson St, Vancouver, BC; the Zoom™ digital meeting room assigned and shared with registered members; and any telephone connections established.
4. The Business Committee for this General Meeting shall be Mauricio Araujo (Secretary), Mark Green (Chair), Ibi Chuan, Lauren Kirkey, Graham Brownmiller, Treena Duncan (Executive Minister), and Deborah Richards (President).
5. The agenda as posted on www.pacificmountain.ca shall be the order of business, subject to those changes that are recommended by the Business Committee. Revisions will be announced, and an update posted on the website.
6. The President shall have the authority to recess the Regional Council when business, as ordered, is completed, until the next order of the day.
7. The minutes of the 5th General Meeting of The Pacific Mountain Regional Council held June 1 – 4, 2023 in Abbotsford, BC, be received for information.
8. The Regional Council Executive Minutes: received for information and included as part of the Record of Proceedings. (The Manual 2024, C.3.1.4)
9. The Plenary portions of the agenda will be recorded within the Zoom™ platform and made available on The Pacific Mountain Regional Council website and YouTube Channel.
10. In order to facilitate the formulation of motions and discussion of matters raised in business, the President may, at their discretion, suspend the ordinary rules of parliamentary debate and engage in a different process. All final decisions of the council shall follow the rules of debate and order as summarized in the Appendix of The Manual (2024) or Bourinot's Rules of Order.
11. At the discretion of the President, speakers can be limited to two minutes each.
12. All registered voting members who are online and onsite will vote using the simplyvoting.com. An email will be sent to each voting member using the email provided at registration for each vote.
13. All motions having significant budget implications for the Region (defined as \$2,000 or over) shall be considered "in principle only" and, if adopted, be referred to the Executive for consideration within adopted budgetary constraints.
14. In accordance with Section C.1.2(b) of The Manual 2024, Regional Executive Minister Treena Duncan be named as member of Pacific Mountain Regional Council with full voting privileges.
15. Corresponding Privileges be granted to all invited guests, registered visitors, and staff (other than those who are full voting members of The Region) with voice, yet no voting privileges.
16. The Chairperson of the Business Committee or their designate will present proposals. The President will invite prayerful discernment and discussion on the wisdom of the proposal. A speaker from the body making the proposal will be permitted to speak to it. When the President discerns that the sense of the meeting is such that it is ready to hear a motion on the proposal, the President will invite the Chairperson of the Business Committee or their designate to put forward the motion. Once the motion has been moved and seconded, Rules of Debate and Order shall be followed.
17. Proposals directed to the General Meeting must be received by the Business Committee prior to Friday, May 17, 2024. The Business Committee may recommend editing or clarification before the Proposal comes to the floor. Proposals dealing with matters not noted on the agenda shall be dealt



with in an order as determined by the Business Committee. Similar proposals may be grouped together at the discretion of the Business Committee.

18. If the Pacific Mountain Regional Council does not agree with a proposal where the General Council is the court of action, it will not be sent on to General Council.
19. In the case of limited time for business, items will be dealt with in the following order: Proposals to The General Council, Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council, Reports requiring a decision of the Regional Council, Reports for Information.
20. The procedural and prayer microphones shall be labeled on the floor of the plenary space and the chat box in Zoom. For a procedural point of order members of the council are to show the "Point of Order" card that is on your table as you proceed to the microphone, if onsite or type "Point of Order" at the start of their statement on Zoom™. For a prayer request, members onsite are asked to identify they are making a prayer request. On Zoom® members are asked to use "Prayer:" Members are encouraged to consult with the Business Committee before making a point of order, requesting prayer, or making a point of personal privilege.
21. All unfinished business, including non-General Council proposals, shall be referred to the Regional Council Executive.
22. Verbal and written reports be accepted as presented.
23. Requests to withdraw from the meeting shall be submitted to, considered, and granted by the Business Committee. Members leaving before 5pm on Saturday, June 1st without the consent of the Business Committee shall not be entitled to have travel expenses paid.³
24. Payment of member expenses shall be made as specified in the travel claim form. Late claims submitted after July 15, 2024, shall not be paid.
25. Nominations close for Commissioners to General Council 45 and two (2) vacancies on The Pacific Mountain Regional Council close at 9:00 pm (close of day) on Thursday, May 30, 2024

ENABLING MOTIONS

M/S (Mark Green/G. Brownmiller) that:

1. The Regional Executive Minister be authorized to edit reports and minutes for the Record of Proceedings of this meeting.
2. The Regional Council Executive be authorized to transact all business of the Regional Council until the next General Meeting of the Regional Council, except those matters prohibited by the Constitution and Bylaws of The United Church of Canada.
3. All remaining ballots be destroyed – including any digital results.
4. The meeting adjourns following the completion of business as ordered and the benediction concluding the Celebration of Ministry service, June 2, 2024.

TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE:

- please email <mailto:pmrcbusiness@gmail.com>, or
- see the business table in The Plenary



PROPOSALS GUIDELINES

PROPOSALS TO PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

We recognize that individual members, Communities of Faith, Covenantal Ministries, Regional Committees/Councils/Groups, and Regional Council Members may want The Pacific Mountain Regional Council or Executive to take action on a specific issue or concern. You desire a conversation about a specific topic. You might want to have some education and conversation about a topic leading towards a decision. A “proposal” is the formal request for any of these.

The Manual (2024), Section F, describes in detail how a proposal may be submitted. The template below also provides a way for creating a proposal.

Proposals must be submitted by May 17th, 2024. Any proposals received after the deadline will be forwarded directly to the PMRC Executive.

All actions resulting from proposals are sent to the Regional Council Executive. That action will be part of subsequent accountability reports from the Executive to the Regional Council.

WHO CAN MAKE A PROPOSAL?

Proposals by Member(s) of a Community of Faith (F.1.2.1).

Any Full-member of The United Church of Canada through their local Community of Faith Governing Body. The governing body has several options to choose from when evaluating a proposal. (See section F.1.2.1 and F.1.3.1)

Proposals by Others (See section F.1.2.2)

A proposal may also be started by:

- a member of the Regional Council; (F.1.3.3)
- a committee or other church body of the Council; (F.1.3.4) or
- the Regional Council. (F.1.3.2)

HOW DO I/WE CRAFT A PROPOSAL?

We are asking you to submit your proposal in a very focused way.

Name the solution your proposing up front. This way we can read the rest of the proposal with the solution in mind.

Name the type of proposal.

- Conversation – the major intention is for the Regional Council to discuss a question or concern.
- Decision – the desire is that a decision will be made to take action. You must have a clear outcome or solution including financial implications and linkages to Regional priorities.

Why is this issue important? Provide the background needed to consider the proposal in two (2) pages or less. What’s the issue or challenge or gap being identified? Why is that the case? What ENDS Policy supports the proposal? Is there a need for a revised or new ENDS Policy? Is there a need for a new ministry priority? Why is the region the most effective space to undertake the proposed ministry/action.



What might the cost be? Estimate the potential cost. Everything we do has a cost. It might be time from staff and volunteers. It might be budgetary. Being mindful of the cost is an important part of every proposal. Proposals that do not include a cost or assume “within existing budget/resources” will automatically be sent back to the person/council or origin for additional discernment.

What’s the Priority Level? There is a limit to what the region can do. Our existing governance, administration, and finances are operating at full capacity. To take on something new means something else must be paused, given a lower priority, or stopped or the capacity of the Regional Council must be increased. You must identify how you propose any new ministry initiative will impact the existing ministry plan.

Why the Regional or General Council? The United Church of Canada is governed with overlapping spheres of power and authority. Part of any proposal needs to acknowledge why the council of action identified is the most effective place for this proposal. Please give careful consideration as to why the proposal should be enacted by the Regional or General Council, especially given the finite resources available to both Councils. You must provide this rationale as part of your proposal. Any proposal that is missing this information will be sent back for further discernment.

Is there a required format for a proposal? Yes, to help people engage the topic as easy as possible all proposals must use the found below.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

The Policy Committee of the Executive and the Business Committee are available at the General Meeting to help ensure your proposal is clear and focused enough to achieve the good conversations the meeting wants to have. (PMRCBusiness@gmail.com)

In order to make the best use of the meeting’s time, The Policy Committee may also group together Proposals that deal with the same issue or topic, have the same purpose, or desired outcome. The Committee may generate an Omnibus Proposal that address the matter raised.

Proposals from individual community of faith members or governance groups must follow the steps in F.3.1.1 and include a copy of the motion to transmit with the proposal.

ONLINE PROPOSAL FORM LINK

- <https://form.jotform.com/240814103498253>



PROPOSAL FORM



Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal Form 2024

Submission Deadline: May 17th, 2024

Name of person submitting this proposal *

First Name

Last Name

Email *

example@example.com

Phone Number

Area Code

Phone Number

Proposal Name *

A brief name that identifies your proposal.

This proposal is for: *

- ☐ Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal
- ☐ GC45 - Proposal
- ☐ Pacific Mountain Region and GC45 - Same proposal for both levels of governance.

What is the issue? Why is it important? *

Briefly describe (approximately four sentences) the issue and its significance. Sample wording: We believe God/Jesus/The Holy Spirit is calling us to: - Do something about... Engage the topic of... Respond to the challenge of...



What is happening now? *

Provide a description of the current practice or policy in question, identifying/citing the source of the information.

Sample Wording:

The General Council or the Region Could:

A. Study/discuss the issue:

- The General Council/Region could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.

B. Act on the issue, which could include:

- General Council/Region directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
- General Council/Region adopting a policy position/strategy
- General Council/Region encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

What is the recommendation? *

Describe how the General Council might respond to the issue. To avoid being overly prescriptive, please offer multiple options of how the General Council might respond. Commentary may be offered on the project outcome of adopting each option

Background Information *

Provide details the General Council needs to make an informed decision on the proposal. What is the History of this Issue? What are the key underlying theological, ecclesiological, missional, or justice considerations? What are the principles informing this issue?

Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming an [intercultural church](#);
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).

Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed "with" people, or "on behalf of" people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity? *

Describe in broad terms how this proposal engages with the United Church's established principles and position on equity.

Confirmation *

- ☐ Proposal is complete and I am ready to submit it.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominations Committee exists to help Councils, Committees, Working and Advisory Groups to discern fulsome membership. There is active recruitment to seek expressions of interest from within the Region, and we review them with a number of guiding principles to lead our work.

Our discernment of those who are equipped to serve is done prayerfully and strives to meet the church's commitments to becoming an intercultural church, confronting anti-black racism, developing new and young leadership, full inclusion of people with disabilities, and seeking and encouraging indigenous participation recognizing UNDRIP and the Calls to the Church.

The Nominations Committee takes seriously the task before us, and so we ask that when filling in your Expressions of Interest, you clearly articulate what it is that you feel you bring to the work you're looking to do. The more information we have, the better we are able to discern who to select and how to develop effective groups.

Currently we are seeking members of the Regional Council who are interested in serving the following appointments:

- Lay Leadership Support
- Approvals Working Group
- Centennial Planning Group
- Finance Council
- First UC
- St. Michael's Board
- CRS
- 3PHS

If you're interested in submitting an expression of interest, please see the website:

<https://pacificmountain.ca/administration/volunteer-with-the-regional-council/>

Thank you for your continued assistance in populating the Region, and helping it to function well, and faithfully.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marina Lecian or Graham Brownmiller (chair)

Respectfully Submitted by: Graham Brownmiller, on behalf of the Nominations Committee: David Boyd, Jennifer Goddard-Sheppard, and Jane Harding a





FINANCE

FINANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mandate: The Finance Advisory Council advises and is accountable to the Executive Minister. We normally meet three times a year to advise on finance policies and to monitor financial results and investments. Since the last Region General Meeting the Council has met three times.

Membership: Katie Bowyer
Ibi Chuan
Treena Duncan, Executive Minister
Ken Fanning, Chair
Jane Harding
Houston Mo, Director of Finance and Property
Dennis Riley
Gordon Robinson

My thanks to all the Council members for their continuing dedication and the contribution of their time and expertise. On behalf of the Council, I would also offer special thanks to the Finance staff - particularly Christina Debruyn, Houston Mo and Lishia Wang for their ongoing hard work and 'wizardry' with the Region's complex financial management requirements.

2023 FINANCIALS (FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING DECEMBER 31ST)

Fiscal year 2023 saw significant improvement in both revenue and operational stability compared to the previous years. This improvement can be attributed to a significant recovery in investment income and grant contributions.

Excluding Amortization	OPERATING FUND			PMRC
	Budget	Actual Surplus (Deficit)	Under (Over) Budget	Total Net Assets
2019	(420,675)	174,326	595,001	46,612,074
2020	(427,675)	513,883	941,558	50,040,491
2021	(510,400)	428,752	939,152	53,798,071
2022	(499,000)	(1,309,033)	(810,033)	43,751,649
2023	(400,000)	260,392	660,392	44,750,195
Total	(2,257,750)	68,320	2,326,070	

Net assets for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023, increased, driven by a surplus of \$998,546, mainly due to a positive change in the fair value of investments amounting to \$2,218,565. This marks a substantial recovery from the previous year's significant deficit.

Under the Operating Fund, the 2023 actual operating surplus (before amortization) of \$260,392 is a marked improvement over the projected deficit, contributing to a total net asset position of \$44,750,195, which continues to show growth despite economic uncertainties.



The financial results of the Region are meticulously prepared by our staff and are presented in adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. These results have undergone thorough examination by external auditors, Rolfe Benson LLP, resulting in a favorable "clean" audit opinion. No material misstatements, weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations were identified during the audit.

It's important to highlight that the Region's financial statements are compiled on a non-consolidated basis. According to pertinent accounting standards, the Region holds direct and/or indirect controls over three other organizations: the British Columbia Conference Property Development Council of The United Church of Canada (PDC), the British Columbia Community Renewal Society of The United Church of Canada (CRS), and the Three-Point Housing Society (3PHS). While the Region's non-consolidated financial statements do not incorporate the financial outcomes of these entities, detailed disclosures regarding their total assets, liabilities, revenue, expenses, and cash flows from operating, financing, and investing activities are provided in the Region's notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

The Region is fortunate to possess substantial financial resources, which it manages with a long-term perspective, enabling it to navigate any short-term financial challenges that may arise. We are dedicated to utilizing these resources judiciously and consistently in support of our members and communities of faith, while simultaneously safeguarding their value for future generations.

A SUMMARY OF THE FINANCIAL POSITION AND OPERATIONS OF THE REGION IS AS FOLLOWS:

Summarized Non-Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

	2023	2022
Assets		
Current	1,393,759	1,657,725
Investment	54,754,473	53,513,494
Loans	2,889,066	2,653,492
Due from Community Renewal Society	2,151,078	-
Capital Assets	9,491,347	9,853,324
TOTAL ASSETS	70,679,723	67,678,035
Liabilities		
Current	173,055	193,462
Funds held in trust	22,988,754	22,129,648
Deferred capital contributions	1,190,331	1,264,726
Due to Property Development Council	1,577,388	338,550
TOTAL LIABILITIES	25,929,528	23,926,386
Fund Balances		
Invested in capital assets	8,301,016	8,588,598
Restricted	30,155,930	29,504,167
Unrestricted	6,293,249	5,658,884
TOTAL FUND BALANCES	44,750,195	43,751,649
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES	70,679,723	67,678,035



Summarized Non-Consolidated Statement of Operations

	2023	2022
Revenue		
Grants and contributions	4,198,396	3,083,614
Investment income	1,576,671	675,347
Jardine, VanDusen and RM Cherry Funds	1,266,096	1,229,550
General Council Office	673,375	780,375
Loan interest and other	292,997	249,335
Regional assessments	117,900	63,044
Programs	61,629	87,886
TOTAL REVENUE	8,187,064	6,169,151
Expenses		
Grants	3,215,844	5,063,021
Programs and committees	3,024,339	2,275,760
Salaries and benefits	1,694,043	1,668,774
Office and sundry	258,265	224,896
General Meeting	235,427	216,410
Investment fees	220,274	250,540
Professional fees	32,203	37,610
Executive	20,057	39,166
Amortization	706,631	701,271
TOTAL EXPENSES	9,407,083	10,477,448
Surplus (deficit) before the following	(1,220,019)	(4,308,297)
Change in fair value of investments	2,218,565	(5,738,125)
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	998,546	(10,046,422)

Complete audited statements available on request.

Investments: In 2023, the Region witnessed a resurgence in investment returns, playing a pivotal role in the year's overall financial upturn. The net investment returns for 2023 stood at 10.2% (compared to a negative 10.9% in 2022) across total investments managed for Core Operations, Camping, ProVision, various communities of faith, and other entities affiliated with or supported by the United Church of Canada. Additionally, Internal and External Funds earmarked for specific purposes were included. Over the period from 2019 to 2023, the Region maintained an average annual investment return rate of 8.5%. To accommodate the considerable fluctuations in annual investment returns, the Region employs a 4.5% "spend rate" for budgeting purposes.



Property Development: The Finance Advisory Council remains informed about property development initiatives. Oversight and management of the diverse array of projects are entrusted to PDC, CRS and 3PHS, as outlined in the Property Resource Team section of the Agenda Book.

Mission Support: In 2023 Mission Support grants to indigenous communities were made by the National Indigenous Council. The Region distributed Mission Grants to First United Church Mission (Vancouver) and various shared ministries.

Naramata Centre: The Finance Advisory Council is fully apprised of the mission and objectives of the Centre and acts in an advisory capacity on assessing the Centre's business planning. Previously, the former Conference Executive had agreed to waive the interest payment of \$776,921 spanning from 2013 to 2018 on the outstanding loan of \$2.75 million. Subsequently, in 2019 and 2020, the Region received interest-only payments on the loan. Commencing in 2021, the Centre has been repaying both principal and interest on a monthly basis, structured with a 25-year amortization schedule.

ProVision Funds: Substantial grants persist in being allocated to communities of faith and other groups embarking on innovative new ministries and programs, facilitated by ProVision funding. For further details on the ProVision fund, kindly consult the dedicated section in the Agenda Book.

We welcome comments and questions. Please call or email the Council Chair, Ken Fanning.

E-mail: kfanning@shaw.ca
Phone: 250.248.2490

Respectfully Submitted: Ken Fanning, Chair



PROPERTY RESOURCE TEAM

BUILDING COMMUNITY

In Spring of 2016, the Property Resource Team began a partnership with BC Housing to finance the redevelopment of a portfolio of congregational properties into mixed-use redevelopments featuring new church space and affordable rental housing. The project was officially launched Housing's new housing initiatives.

THE PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio refers to congregational properties currently being redeveloped by the Region in partnership with BC Housing and/or CMHC. Each of these mixed-use redevelopments will result in custom-designed, multi-purpose church space and purpose-built affordable rental housing. There are currently three projects in the Portfolio.

1. Como Lake United, Coquitlam - Completed July of 2022
2. Brechin United, Nanaimo - Completed December 2022
3. Lakeview United, Vancouver - Projected Construction Start November 2024

NEW CHURCH SPACE

Each mixed-use redevelopment will feature customized, multi-purpose church space, designed in consultation with congregational leaders.

PURPOSE-BUILT AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

While it is imperative that we use United Church assets to meet the challenges facing the church today, we also want to provide a benefit to the wider community. In this case, that benefit is the provision of much needed purpose-built rental housing. The projects contribute hundreds of units of rental housing across BC. The purpose of this endeavour is to provide affordable housing for low and moderate-income households. The income from the rental housing will be used to repay the mortgage. The housing will be owned by BC Community Renewal Society, a charitable organization or the Three Point Housing Society, a non-profit organization, both with a direct relationship with the Pacific Mountain Region of The United Church of Canada.

PROJECT UPDATE

Mountain View Suites at Como Lake United and the Residences at Brechin Hill are fully occupied. The Brechin project won an environmental and sustainability award for its passive house design. Construction financing for Lakeview United is expected to be in place by this Fall with construction start in late 2024. The Region is currently looking at proposals for Penticton, Queens Ave, and First Met. The higher interest rates and inflationary pressure on construction costs are making it more difficult to achieve funding for redevelopment projects. Current government funding programs will likely need to change for new church redevelopment projects to be viable.

Respectfully Submitted by Don Evans, Executive Director, BC Community Renewal Society of The United Church of Canada.



PROVISION

In 2023, the Region's ProVision Fund operated within a reduced budget because income from investments in 2022 was greatly reduced compared to the previous 10 years. However, the Fund was still able to make 17 new grants totaling \$294,781. Included was a large grant to Camp Spirit (First Third Ministries) and funding to Comox UC for a Caregivers Retreat, to Nelson UC for a Community Engagement program, to First UC, Vancouver for a Volunteer Coordinator, to several small United Churches on northern Vanc. Island for a rural network, to St. John's Church Port McNeill for a community garden project, to Brechin UC, Nanaimo for congregational development in their new facility, to Alberni Valley UC for indigenous engagement ministry and to St. John's UC Sunshine Coast for a three-pronged community engagement and animation ministry. There nine other grants awarded.

At present, the Endowment Account of the ProVision Fund holds \$3.57 M. These funds can only be used to generate investment income. There is an operating account of approximately \$1.5 M which only last three years unless further income is realized.

In assessing Applications for Grants, the committee is guided by the general ProVision Fund reason d'être: for the PM Region to be able to make grants to its Communities of Faith, etc. as they consider launching "new ministry" programs and projects for which financial assistance from the wider church is needed and appropriate. The committee carefully assesses all Applications in the light of the stated criteria and procedures (as outlined on the Region's website.)

Applying ProVision Fund criteria and procedures has meant that the committee has:

- honoured the priorities of the Region.
- not approved requests that would encroach upon other Region program financing, namely: camping, new church plants, leadership programming.
- held steadfastly to not funding capital costs. (It is aware that three church roof-replacements or numerous online equipment grants could bankrupt the Fund).
- held steadfastly to not funding on-going ministry costs.
- not made grants to individuals.
- not funded continuing education, sabbaticals, nor artistic or writing proposals.
- provided many grants for starting programs and ministries.
- approved some grants for a program for two or three years running. (There are a few grants that have had more years of funding, but these tend to be related to community service ministries which have no hope of other funding and are essential to the wider community.)
- made grants to Communities of Faith and Ministries to enable service in the wider community.
- required an articulation of i) plans, ii) strategies of proposals, iii) intended evaluation process of results, iv) the extent to which a proposal relates to the stated ministry and mission of the unit and v) where applicable, the transformative benefit of the proposal.
- insisted on support and funding from the applying Community of Faith and has been impressed with Applications which also show financial support from other sources.
- appreciated Applications which demonstrate administrative and planning expertise.

The committee is diligent in avoiding conflicts of interest in relation to Applications and ensures that the Fund operates with both excellent records and annually audited accounting. It meets three times each year. Committee members are Dr. Michael Caveney, Chair, (Kamloops UC), Beryl Itani (Central Okanagan UC), Sandi Parker (Central Saanich UC), Rev. Sarah Fanning (St. Andrews, Nanaimo UC) and Rev. Gordon How, Secretary, (Vancouver).



The committee noted the concern that following the pandemic years of 2020-2022, Communities of Faith could benefit by learning more about the opportunity offered through the ProVision Fund. Therefore, it created a 22-minute video which, after the General Meeting, will be available for use in congregations, etc. that are wanting to consider new ministry projects. It provides several excellent examples of successful ministry programs.

This report is respectfully submitted by the committee's Secretary.



STEWARDSHIP ANIMATOR

This QR code will take you to a digital filing cabinet of [stewardship](#)



I am delighted once again to bring news from the stewardship support team and Mission and Service to the good people of Pacific Mountain.

Over the past couple of years, I have had the honour of meeting with many of you, whether as participants in a *Called to be the Church: The Journey* program, through a town hall, or simply because we connected via email or over the phone. If we haven't yet met, my role is to provide resources and support to individuals, communities of faith, and other ministries in the areas of generosity, congregational giving, Mission and Service, and the work of the United Church Foundation. If you have ideas, questions, or inspiration to share, please get in contact [with me](#).

One way I would love to connect in 2024 and beyond is through the learning programs, *Called to be the Church: The Journey*. We currently have 4 course offerings that provide training and support for different parts of the stewardship journey. Whether you want to learn some stewardship-first principles, get resources to run a congregational Giving Program, or are hoping to set up a Legacy Giving Program in your community of faith, we have training options for you!! One participant provided this program feedback, "*Fear no more! Your stewardship questions answered! Deep insight AND solid skill building! A must for ministries of every description!*" [You can learn more here](#).

Speaking of gratitude for shared abundance, Mission and Service is our Church's most powerful vehicle for helping to transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and build a better world. Together we do more. Thanks to generous people like you 2023 saw \$20.8 million raised, including Mission and Service givings totalling \$17 million and bequests, Foundation and other planned gifts totaling \$3.7 million. Locally, Mission and Service funds supported a number of amazing ministries in Pacific Mountain. First United, and several shared ministries around the Region are directly funded through your generosity. And these are just some of the transformative programs supported with your Mission and Service donations. Thank you!

Setting giving goals and sharing inspiring stories about Mission and Service are effective ways to hold up and celebrate this amazing work, and to encourage deeper generosity in your community of faith. New Stories of our Mission are [posted monthly](#). If you want to bring more conversations about stewardship, gratitude, generosity and Mission and Service into your community of faith, consider signing up for the monthly newsletter [God's Mission, Our Gifts](#).

Finally, I want to share some of the exciting work of the United Church Foundation. Among the regular work of the Foundation (like providing grants to programs like Campus United, Wild Church BC and Camp Spirit, and more), 2023 saw some exciting new developments. There are now twice-monthly webinars to share stories and build skills. The Foundation also hit the milestone of \$100 million invested. Going into 2024 there is also a special granting program to support communities of faith with their centennial events. Thank you, Pacific Mountain Region friends. I am so grateful for your spirit, creativity, generosity, and thoughtfulness. I look forward to learning together in 2024.

In gratitude,
Vicki Nelson, Community of Faith Stewardship Support Staff for Pacific Mountain Region
VNelson@united-church.ca
1-800-268-3781 ext. 2045





MINISTRY AND MISSION

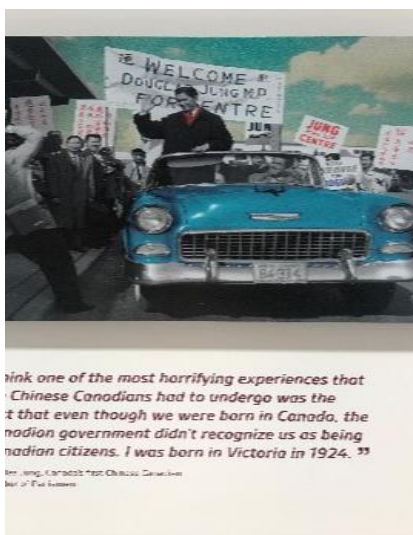
THE ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMITTEE

The past two years have witnessed a growing collaborative relationship with Chinese and Japanese Canadian communities, particularly in Vancouver. The marking of 100 years since the *Chinese Exclusion Act* (July 1, 1923) and the inspiring work of the *Chinese Canadian Museum/Chinatown Storytelling Centre* have presented opportunities for the Archives to support—through research and digitization—Chinese Canadians telling their own story.



Images from the Chinese Canadian Museum (Vancouver), L-R: Catherine Clement, curator of the main exhibit, telling one of countless stories associated with the *Chinese Exclusion Act*; a sample of the

identity certificate used to track Chinese Canadians (1923-1947); Hon. Doug Jung, the first Chinese Canadian MP, whose family stayed at the Methodist "Oriental Home and School." Note: these images/documents are not from our Archives.



ACQUISITIONS

The Archives acquired over 30 linear metres of records through transfers in 2023. The bulk of these records relate to the closure of two communities of faith: Queens Avenue (New Westminster) and First Metropolitan (Victoria). Both trace their roots back to the earliest Methodist congregations in our Region and share the same life dates, 1859 – 2023.

RESEARCH SERVICES

During 2023, the Archives provided research services for 193 researchers, and welcomed 36 in-person visitors. As has been true for the past several years, approximately 20% of requests related to

First Nations in BC or Indigenous-related research in general. There was a jump in research activity relating to Chinese and Japanese Canadian communities, from 6% in 2022 to 15% in 2023. The relationships we are building are bearing fruit.

RECONCILIATION AND DECOLONIZING THE ARCHIVES

Digitization Project

As we reported last year, the Archives is part of a multi-phase digitization project across the United Church to identify and digitize all archival documents relating to Indigenous communities, day schools, hospitals, and missions. This effort will take several years but will allow us to provide better access for Indigenous peoples and ultimately repatriate records as we work with communities.

PROJECTS AND SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

Chinese and Japanese Canadian Archives Digitization Project

Originally focused on the “Oriental Home and School” collection, the scope of this project has expanded to include records—mainly photographs—of Chinese and Japanese Canadians found in community of faith archives and personal papers. Digital copies have been uploaded to the [United Church Archives online catalogue](#) and community members have collaborated to provide an accompanying narrative. Special thanks to professional experience student June Chow and contractor Marina Mayumi de Souza, who digitized the collections so professionally.

Film inspired by United Church clergy correspondence

One of our researchers, Chad Townsend, who purchased the Turner Memorial United Church building in New Denver in 2014, has produced a film about a United Church minister. Rev. Kyuichi Nomoto served the Japanese congregation at New Denver during the internment period. Inspired by correspondence discovered at our Archives, and narrated by Japanese Canadians, this film raises questions about the mental health effects of internment, both historically and intergenerationally. The film was shown at the 2023 Powell Street Festival in Vancouver and is available via Knowledge Network.



Summer Co-op Project – Naramata Centre archives

During the spring and summer of 2023, the Archives was blessed to have the scholarly assistance of UBC Archival Studies masters student, Grace Park. Grace processed a significant accrual (over 60 boxes) of [Naramata Centre records](#), now properly preserved and accessible.



Marina Mayumi de Souza (digitization assistant), Blair Galston, and Grace Park (co-op student).

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Gear Chambers, Chair, Archives and History Committee

Blair Galston, Regional Archivist



CAMP SPIRIT

ROOTED AND GROWING IN LOVE

CAMP SPIRIT'S VISION

In partnership with local United Church congregations, Camp Spirit provides equipped leaders to nurture the spirit of each child, to support children and families to live lives of faith, hope, and compassion in the world.

LOOKING BACK

Camp Spirit had another busy summer in 2023. There were areas of growth, opportunities to learn, and the imminent need to change plans. In some of the more remote locations, we saw a growth in both numbers and relationships of trust. In total, 28 Camp Spirits were held in 27 Communities of Faith in the PMRC. There were 643 registrations – which translated to 559 campers and LIT from 352 households. Of the registrants, 77 were LITs from 58 households. An analysis of this information revealed that overall, Camp Spirit was at 72% of capacity for campers and 39% for LITs. As is always the case, some Camp Spirit locations quickly fill each spring, while other sites experience minimal online registration, relying more fully on in-person registration on the first day of Camp Spirit. We are constantly striving to assess the best ways to promote Camp Spirit – and support the registration process – in locations that are slow to fill.



During the 2023 season, the 4 Camp Spirit Summer Staff Teams logged an impressive 12,202 kilometres of travel to locations outside the Lower Mainland. This travel primarily involved rental vans, flights, and ferry trips. In the Lower Mainland, staff members travelled primarily by carpool or public transit. This travel is not included in the above kilometre count. The 2023 summer wildfires had a significant impact on Camp Spirit. Four flights were cancelled as a result of wildfire smoke. One camp was cancelled (when a wildfire jumped the highway) as the Summer Staff Team was enroute to First United Church in Salmon Arm. The team was rerouted to the Lower Mainland. They led a Camp at Jubilee United Church with 36 hours notice. Encountering these challenges amidst full days and weeks of work further highlighted the understanding that emotional dexterity and an ability to communicate clearly are essential tools for Camp Spirit Summer Staff and those who support them.

FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

Camp Spirit continues to prioritize financial accessibility for all families and ensures that any camper who wants to attend camp can do so. We have a low registration fee for Campers and LITs. We also offer low barrier access to partial or full bursaries. Our bursary program is supported by church grants and gifts as well as by donations from participating Communities of Faith, individuals, and generous donors. In 2023, of the 643 registrations, 418 bursaries were granted, totalling \$62,272.50. This has significantly depleted our Camp Spirit Bursary Fund and so we continue to explore how we might grow the fund for the upcoming season.





Donations to the [Camp Spirit Bursary Fund](#), combined with government and Provision Grants – and significant gifts from some Communities of Faith – have helped us to keep Camp Spirit financially accessible. Camp Spirit has also been able to create significant, fair, reliable employment opportunities for numerous youth and young adults over the past 13 years. As a result, Camp Spirit has engaged with children and youth in ways that honour and prepare them to respond faithfully to God's call to leadership inside and outside of the United Church of Canada. We are deeply grateful to all that have

contributed generously to Camp Spirit's bursary and operating funds.

MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

During the summer of 2023 Camp Spirit engaged 22 youth and young adults in summer employment. Camp Spirit employed 1 Summer Administrator; 2 Co-Directors; 3 Directors; 3 Assistant Directors; 3 Senior Coordinators; and 10 Junior Coordinators. In total, Camp Spirit received \$119,078 in Canada Summer Jobs Grants to help offset the salary cost of this amazing team. We also trained and engaged 55 Youth Crew (ages 15-17) who participated in 1 to 6 weeks of camp over the summer. Youth Crew offered program support and one-on-one camper care at camps throughout the region. In 2023 Camp Spirit also employed Kimiko Karpoff and Sandy Hwang, who accompanied the two travelling teams as adult mentors.



Cathy Cryder and Lisa Munro continue to work full-time year-round as Camp Spirit Regional Minister and Camp Spirit Coordinator, respectively. They have been brilliantly supported by Mary Nichol in her role as PMRC F3 Regional Minister over the past number of years. Mary's wise, non-anxious presence is missed since she moved into the role of Field Education Supervisor at the Vancouver School of Theology in February. Pamela Evans, PMRC F3 Ministry Team Lead continues to support Camp Spirit with passion, extensive knowledge and experience, and financial management leadership.

SUMMER 2024

As has always been the case with Camp Spirit, many of our senior leaders are at a point in their lives where they are moving into full-time careers. Several of these folks discovered their vocation or call through their experience with Camp Spirit. We celebrate and give thanks to God that they carry the values, practices, faith, and skills that they have honed through their time with us into a world that desperately needs them. Camp Spirit is committed to providing staff who are prepared, grounded, and offer inspired leadership for every Camp Spirit Summer Staff Team. For Summer 2024, we made the very

difficult decision to adjust our initial hiring plan from four teams to three.



We are delighted with the three strong teams (19 individuals in total) that we have hired and are confident that within the next 2 summers we will once again have a larger pool of skilled senior leaders to draw from. We are deeply grateful to the Communities of Faith that were able to be flexible, and in some cases step aside for the summer. The sites that stepped aside for 2024 will go to the top of the list for hosting in 2025. In total, Camp Spirit will happen in 21 locations throughout the Pacific Mountain Regional Council. Among the Communities of Faith that we are partnering with, 3 sites

will be new locations; 11 sites will be outside the Lower Mainland; and most will be areas where Camp Spirit is considered a lifeline for campers and their families each summer.

HOMESTAY PROGRAM



During the winter of 2024, the CW-PMRCF3 Ministry contracted with Madison Cullen to create a First Third Ministry Homestay Guide. Camp Spirit will pilot the new homestay program during the summer 2024. This extensive piece of work will help us to explore new ways to accommodate, feed and provide transportation for the Camp Spirit Summer Staff Teams as they travel throughout the region. It is our hope that this program will help to reduce the costs of travel; provide greater opportunities for the staff to rest between

workdays; and expand opportunities for members of Communities of Faith to engage further with Camp Spirit. Madison will stay on with Camp Spirit through the summer to act as the Homestay Coordinator. There are many places built into this new endeavour to evaluate the program throughout the summer and into the fall. We are excited to see what emerges.

On May 13th, Camp Spirit Directors, Assistant Directors, the Summer Administrator, and the Indigenous Mentor & Wellness Support person join Cathy and Lisa at the PMRC Office in Burnaby. So much work has already gone into being ready for the summer that lies ahead. We are appreciative of the youth and young adults who will step into these important roles and carry Camp Spirit throughout the region.



We are grateful for the Communities of Faith that have fundraised, prepared their building, gathered volunteers, strategized, showed up to meetings, and will welcome and partner with Camp Spirit this summer. Finally, we give thanks to God for the many ways the Spirit enlivens, deepens, and inspires the ministry of Camp Spirit in 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Cryder, Regional Minister, Camp Spirit



CAMPUS MINISTRY

Campus United 2023 in Pacific Mountain Region was an amazing success in so many ways. We more about the highlights from each campus below. Regular updates can also be found at our website at www.campusunited.ca

CAMPUS UNITED COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PROGRAM

2023 was the second year of a very successful Community Connector program where two students per campus (five campuses in total) were employed to support and serve their post secondary institution alongside the campus minister and/or the community of faith located close to the institution. These connectors developed leadership skills, a greater awareness as to the United Church of Canada and plans for the fall and winter terms so that the wider student body might come to know Campus United as a safe, affirming place for faithful conversations, community and connection. As you can read from Andrew Kim, a Community Connector at SFU, and Nicole Purvis at Nelson United Church, this program has had impact on not only the staff but all students. Unfortunately, despite the benefits all the campuses are experiencing because of the Community Connector program, we are struggling to find sustainable funding for the long term and may not be able to continue the program past the 2024-2025 school year. Currently this program costs about \$12500 per student. Finding funding for this program continues to take a considerable amount of time and energy from our campus ministers and First Third staff.



CAMPUS UNITED, SFU

From Andrew Kim, Simon Fraser University Community Connector

Throughout 2023-2024, my opportunity to be a Community Connector at SFU has been profoundly rewarding and a transformative endeavour. From organizing events such as Art Therapy sessions, Movie Nights, Lyrics for Life, Lunchtime Meditations, Food Pantry, to participating in various Multi-Faith Centre events, our journey has been a vigorous exploration of connection and growth, both within the SFU community and beyond.

As Luna departed to pursue her Ph.D., Nina and I harbored concerns about the future and potential changes that were to inevitably follow. However, our apprehensions were swiftly dispelled by the amazing leadership of Lydia. She is not merely our supervisor but an intrepid, vigorous, and dynamic leader and mentor who has vividly illuminated our path forward. She infused our endeavors with positivity and transformative accessibility for all students while upholding the core values of community, formation, social justice, and spirituality that Nina and I hold dear.



One highlight that deeply resonated with me occurred during our Food Pantry event when a fellow SFU student tearfully shared her gratitude, revealing her struggle to afford food. She stated that she did not have enough food to last her two day's and thanked us, Campus United, and the United Church to help herself and other students. Her testimony highlighted the significance of our efforts and fueled our determination to do more and to help a wider range of students.

Nonetheless, while there weren't any specific challenges faced by the work itself as my team is absolutely amazing, one incident that we faced was with a group of high schoolers during our 1946 movie night event. They came in and attempted to steal snacks by the box full. This tested our quick responses to resolve this case as we addressed them safely and smoothly which ensured the continuation of our mission and goal to not only help those in need, but to love one another as stated by Jesus.

Despite this hurdle, the interactions and connections forged have been nothing short of enriching and rewarding. Our diverse events and inclusive environment have piqued interest and fostered belonging among those who got to know us. As I reflect on our core values of community, spirituality, formation, and social justice, I am compelled to dive deeper into the value systems of social justice and formation in the upcoming year of 2024-2025. I envision this as an opportunity to strengthen our ties with other United Churches and advance our initiatives to the Becoming Church project. This is my personal goal to further my commitment to holistic growth and inclusivity.

CAMPUS UNITED, UVIC

Rev. Min-Goo Kang, Campus United Minister, University of Victoria (UVIC)

My heart is full of gratitude as I reflect on the incredible year we had as Campus United UVic. Working with Community Connectors has been the highlight for me! They each brought different gifts and strengths to the community we were creating. Thanks to their leadership, we were able to serve the needs of the students from around the world. Students often told us they felt at home while cooking and eating together. The kitchen turned into a place of belonging, where stories were told, and friendships were formed. Over the course of the two terms, the students naturally built an inclusive and vibrant community.

Here are some examples of the kind of community we have become.

- More than 100 students attended Belonging Dinner over the last two terms, with many attending regularly, forming a sense of community.
- Regular attendees invited their friends to our programs – both Belonging Dinner and Art Studio – so more students could experience what they received.
- Some students took on leadership roles by being “the chef” at Belonging Dinner.
- Many students volunteered to clean up after each session – both at Belonging Dinner and Art Studio.
- Some of the students shared their experiences with the UVic communication department and helped raised \$16,684.12 during the Giving Tuesday campaign in 2023. More than half of the money will go toward supporting UVic Multifaith programs including Campus United programs.

To learn more about the impact the campus ministry at UVic has been making, including videos and newsletters, please visit <https://campusunited.ca/university-of-victoria>.



CAMPUS UNITED, SELKIRK COLLEGE

Nicole Purvis, Nelson United Church

As a faith Community, Nelson United Church has worked alongside the Community Connectors with Selkirk College since they joined the Campus United program here in the West Kootenays. As with many faith communities across Canada, we struggle to welcome new young adults to our Worship services, community gatherings and events. Collaborating with local Selkirk College Community Connectors has opened doors to fresh mentorship of children and youth in our Sunday School and Youth programs, as well as the launch of a new Young Adult program for post secondary students and others in this age demographic.

I feel strongly that Campus United Community Connectors are congregational support. This age group is necessary and unique to our communities for many reasons. They connect us to the vital energy and wisdom so prevalent in this diverse generation, known as generation Z, who are quickly becoming leaders in technology, boundary setting and stress management. Through spiritual practice and faith formation, (shaped in faithful lives lived, and actively supported by the First Third Team of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council) they have grown into young adults confident in Indigenous reconciliation, queer pride, anti-poverty work and peacebuilding. They care for one another and with these unique gifts; they are natural leaders for both our youth programming but also with our senior community members. This work is richer in partnership with our Campus United Community Connectors.

CAMPUS UNITED, UBC

Rev. Aaron Miller, Campus United Minister, University of British Columbia (UBC)

The Campus United Ministry at UBC has a long history of invitation and creating space for students to discover, explore, and deepen Christian faith. As the only active affirming Christian ministry on campus, we take seriously our responsibility to be a community where a diversity of people can experience the grace of God in the way of Jesus. We serve those who study, work, and live at UBC through regular gatherings, meals, studies, and other opportunities to connect with others who are figuring out how faith in Jesus informs what they will do with their lives, both as students and beyond.

Some highlights from the past year were vocational discernment studies (discoverment.org), the Sanctuary Mental Health course, a viewing of the film *1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture*, a “Spiritual Spa” during exam season. We also had the chance to meet students at the Chaplains in Residence table, in support of the University Multifaith Chaplains Association, where we gave away all sorts of food and goodies (thanks to the generosity of a number of local United Churches), connecting with students and making sure they were able to find the spiritual communities that they need.

Over the past two years, it has been such a blessing to have Community Connectors, students hired with Canada Summer Jobs grants, to help us connect with students, as well as organize and promote events. Because the student body is always changing, every year is a new opportunity to support people seeking a progressive Christian faith, and to welcome new United Church of Canada students to UBC!



CAMPUS UNITED, UNBC

Kendra Mitchell-Foster, Campus United Minister, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)

UNBC Campus Ministry has had a fruitful and action-packed year! Campus Minister Kendra Mitchell-Foster and Community Connectors Madi Kopp, Myers Illes, and Amaan Hingora have nurtured a ministry honouring Spirit through coffee times and meals, food events, interfaith events, ecojustice hikes, food drives, Wild Church worship, labyrinth meditations, weekly chaplaincy hours and worship, and weekly interfaith yoga in relationship with the UNBC First Nations Student Centre.

Highlights of the year include:

- our annual booth at the Prince George Pride Picnic and Parade, welcoming all, and making connections as the only affirming ministry presence on UNBC campus
- our annual saskatoon-berry jam-making events that we lovingly name “Jam Sessions” that we offer in relationship with the UNBC First Nations Student Centre
- our monthly hikes around Lheidli T’enneh Territory, building spiritual connections with the land, being healed through Spirit in creation, and nourishing our commitment to EcoJustice and Creation Care initiatives
- our annual series “Neighbours in Worship” where over the month of December, we coordinate with member groups of the interfaith community in Prince George to open their worship to those who are seeking to connect with the interfaith community for their own spiritual growth, and for peace-building
- our annual Lenten series “40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism for Lent” and Ashes to Go on Campus
- our documentary screening of the film “1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture” in partnership with Trinity United Church
- re-igniting the youth group Trinity Youth For Justice, and coordinating an interfaith walking team for “The Coldest Night of the Year” fundraising walk for AWAC Prince George for which we raised over \$3000.
- Two very successful food drives to fill the food bank at UNBC, monthly soup and buns community meals, and partnering with the Prince George Native Friendship Centre food bank to support food security efforts on campus and in the community

UNBC Campus Ministry is looking forward to another year of building relationships, welcoming all to the table, and connecting students’ passions with support for a strong, vibrant community where we all know that we are not alone. ~



COMMUNITY OF FAITH COUNCIL & PASTORAL RELATIONS

Greetings all,

2023 marked our first full year as a combined Community of Faith Support and Pastoral Relations Council. One of the tasks still to focus on is to come up with a shorter name!

We met four times virtually and in person in the fall for a two-day retreat to assess how the combining of the two councils has gone and to set key priorities for 2024.

One of the highlights of each meeting is hearing directly from the ministers in the field, either hearing a story from a community of faith or a pastoral relationship. We feel this gives us a glimpse at the richness and diversity of ministry through our Region and we are grateful for it. As part of our planning session in the Fall, each member of the council reached out to 3-4 communities of faith throughout our region as another way to check in and get a sense of how things were going. This proved to be a rich experience for Council members who appreciated listening to those in ministry around the Region.

2023 also marked the third of the three-year cycle that we set to review all of the self assessments from the communities of faith in this region. We are grateful for the work of staff, members of our Self Assessment team and the members of the Communities of Faith who worked diligently to complete these assessments. In total, we reached out to 147 communities of faith to complete the self assessment and we received 109 completed within the reporting period. We deeply appreciate the work and discernment that goes into completing them, especially since we know that human resources are usually stretched. This is important work which helps us understand the success and challenges being experienced and detect trends and ways to better support your ministry.

Some of the key trends that we see arising are:

- A renewed focus on refining vision and purpose to guide future endeavors effectively.
- Increasing adoption of digital engagement strategies to reach broader audiences.
- Heightened emphasis on community care and support initiatives amidst evolving societal needs.
- Innovative approaches to worship and outreach to meet the changing needs of congregants.
- Renewed commitment to spiritual formation and discipleship within congregational life.
- Emphasis on adaptive leadership and collaborative ministry models to navigate complexities.
- Firm commitment to social justice advocacy and inclusivity within congregational contexts.
- Ongoing challenges related to financial sustainability and resource management, requiring strategic planning and support.

In addition to the Self Assessment Team there are other task groups under the umbrella of the Community of Faith and Pastoral Relations Council which meet regularly. The Approvals Working Group meets at least once a month to review and determine whether applications for sales of church property, renovations and lease agreements should be approved. The Pastoral Relations Working Group often meets several times a month to review and approve Ministry Profiles and Search applications, ministry position descriptions, calls and appointments. We are grateful to this team for all the work they do in assisting congregations going through the many steps involved in a change of pastoral relationship.

As the name suggests, the Ministry Personnel Support Team offers spiritual support to ordered ministers in the region, including retired ministry personnel. Two task groups support Lay Leaders in PMR: The Lay Leadership Support Team offers support to self-identified congregational lay leaders while the Lay



Leadership Working Group deals with practices and procedures for licensing Lay Worship Leaders, Sacrament Elders, Designated Lay Ministers, and Congregational Designated Ministers. Some of these policies and procedures are in the process of being developed by the Community of Faith and Pastoral Relations Council.

We also spent time this year developing and updating policies and procedures in the areas of Ministry Plans and considering how to support ministries in small towns and rural areas. Our priorities for 2024 are to continue to develop procedures and practices that support rural and isolated communities of faith, educate ourselves on what it means to decolonize our practices, and improve communication and access to procedures and policies.

We are grateful for the leadership of Jim Simpson, who stepped down as Chair in November 2023. Also stepping down from the Council this year are Ruth Stebbing and Donna Ziegler. These three individuals have all been on from the initial creation of the preceding councils and we appreciate their support of this ministry.

We are also grateful for our Regional Staff: Treena Duncan, Victoria Andrews, Kathy Davies, and Marina Lecian for their wisdom, faithfulness, and invaluable support for the work of this Council.

It is a privilege to work with Council members, Simone Carrodus, Heather Clarke, Joseph Kyser, Keith Simmonds, Shannon Tennant, and Laura Turnbull supporting ministry personnel and communities of faith in the Pacific Mountain Region.

Janice Young
Chair



FIRST THIRD MINISTRY

What a whirlwind 2024 has been in First Third Ministry! Our Inter-Regional Ministry for Children, Youth, Family, Young Adults, Camps and Campus Ministry continues to build relationships with communities of faith across British Columbia, southern Alberta, and Yukon, and we're so grateful to have the support of generous regions, staff, and champions.

Late 2023 and 2024 saw several changes to our First Third Ministry Staff team; Rev. Mary Nichol accepted a new role at The Vancouver School of Theology, Lindsay Veenstra began a law degree, Sarah Prestwich began her education degree, and Daniel Martin is continuing his journey towards ordained ministry. We are so grateful for the ministry of these amazing First Third Staff and wish them the very best in the next phases of their professional lives.



We hope you will join us in welcoming some new and familiar faces to the team and shuffles in roles; Sarah Provan and Nik Sloat have joined the First Third team as animators, Natalia Cabrera has moved from the lower mainland to Vancouver Island and now works part time in an animator role, and Alexandra Barr joins us as our administrator and communications coordinator. Rev. Blair Odney has joined the teams as Camping Ministry Consultant.

First Third Ministry continues on our epic quest to resource, equip and connect children, youth, family, young adult, camps and campus ministry in our regions. Some of our highlights from 2023 and early 2024 include:

- Childrens Retreat 2023 saw over 30 children and their leaders play, worship, sing, create together at Camp Fircom in March break. One of the highlights was the time with Squamish First Nation including a canoe trip. Our Children's Retreat in 2024 was at the end of February at Camp Alex in Crescent Beach.
- Family Retreat 2023 – over 80 people in all shapes and sizes of families participated in the annual Family Retreat held at Camp Pringle in July of 2023. It was a beautiful weekend! We collaborated with Wild Church from the Okanagan for an amazing time together. In 2024, we will have the Family Retreat back at Pringle in July of 2024 and a new offering of Family Retreat at Camp East Kasota at the end of August.
- YouthTrek 2023; we welcomed 30+ youth and leaders to our second annual YouthTrek (our regional youth event) in Drumheller at Knox United Church and 75+ youth and their leaders Duncan United Church on Vancouver Island. This year we explored our Reconciliation Journey with Indigenous leaders in both regions.



- Young Adult Retreat 2023; around 35 young adults from across our regions were joined by musical guests from across Canada to explore the Enneagram with Allison Rennie at Loon Lake Retreat Centre in BC.
- We had various Youth Adult events in 2023 including supper events, cake ball decorating and online conversations. We continue to discern how to best serve young adults who want to be involved in the church but are currently not involved in any one local community of faith.
- We held our second Youth Council Retreat at Camp Fircom, bringing together youth leaders from our two regions for a weekend of leadership development and planning.
- First Third Ministry writers and contributors from across Canada produced another great season of the Faith@Home magazine.
- We partnered with Leadershift at the Rural Ministries Conference in Alberta, hosting discussions on seeding and revitalizing youth ministry in rural areas.
- In partnership with Leadershift, VST, The National Church and Chinook Winds and Pacific Mountain Justice Ministries we hosted a first for The United Church of Canada, a First Third Anti-Racism Conference hosted at VST. This was a successful endeavor, and we look forward to finding ways to continue this learning and work together.
- Our programs at PMRC's AGM continue to support children and youth in participating in the wider church's life.



We are eagerly planning our 2024 and 2025 calendars, including YouthTrek and our Young Adult Retreat this fall, General Council Youth Forum 2025, camping ministry resources, Campus Ministry Connector training and much more.



We are blessed by resources to answer God's call to serve young people in and around the United Church of Canada in Pacific Mountain Region. We are thrilled to be able to do this ministry with you and look forward to the ways we might support you in your community's ministry with those in the first third of their lives. ~



INDIGENOUS MINISTRY

The perfect confluence of disconnecting and disengaging energies have moved like a river flowing backwards from the sea these last several years; flowing away from the sea, the river divides into simple creeks and trickling rivulets; separating further until they disappear underground or fall upwards as raindrops. Between the transition from four courts into three courts, marking the demise of the Presbyteries to which, and through which, Communities of Faith directly connected on the ground; the global pandemic which kept people locked in, locked down and locked out; the struggle to find and/or train ministry personnel to serve in the villages and small communities; and, unfortunately, spending many months through 2023 missing PMRC's Indigenous Minister, John Snow (whom we continue to hold in prayer), due to health concerns, expressed feelings of isolation, abandonment, grief and disconnection cannot be understated in regards to Indigenous Ministries throughout the PMRC.

That is why, serving as PMRC's Acting Indigenous Minister since the start of January 2024, my priorities predominantly fall under the category of "Reconnection." I have spent most of my time reaching out and getting connected with the Indigenous Ministries within PMRC; coordinating visits, visiting and planning follow-up time if needed; checking in on ministry personnel, or, active Councils and Boards.

I've also, thanks to people reaching out, supporting, as best I can, communities that have been actively seeking to become educated, or, lead education initiatives, in the areas of Racial Justice, Healing and Reconciliation, and Decolonization. Depending upon the questions and concerns, I've brought issues and ideas to the PMRC Executive Council. Sometimes, I have reached out to the UCC's National Indigenous Council, the Indigenous Office of Vocation; and, even the Indian Residential School Survivor Society (IRSSS).

For example, I am inspired by the work being done by non-indigenous CoF's, like, Smithers United Church and their Reconciliation Group, which seeks to 'unsettle the settlers' through exploring local stories; and, the "Reconciliation Seekers" group from Canadian Memorial, exploring ways to address Canada's colonial history reflected in their stained glass windows by engaging local Indigenous voices in the conversation; or, Crossroads United Church's search for information on engaging Karios' "The Blanket Exercise." Supporting such efforts, I have begun to work more closely with our Regional Justice Minister, Kendra Mitchell-Foster.

And, I cannot talk about my first three months serving PMRCs Indigenous CoFs without talking about "Remit 1". Along with, "How has it been going? When is a convenient time to come visit?" I was asking, "Have you heard about Remit 1? Did you get the information? Have you voted yet?" With Charlene Burn's (Western Canada Indigenous Ministries Community Capacity Development Coordinator) help identifying all active and eligible Indigenous Ministries, we were able to ensure that all IM CoF's in PMRC that could vote, did vote. With the affirmative vote to move ahead with the establishment of an autonomous Indigenous UCC, work and prayer continue in earnest.

1. **Anspayaxw (Kispiox):** Pierce Memorial UC – Herb Russel, DLM serving in an unofficial/no appointment capacity. Visited February 28. The church building is currently inaccessible due to needed Bell Tower renovations – Real Property is aware and work, hopefully, with commence this year. Other improvements to the building are necessary. Pierce Memorial members are looking at Fundraising for needed renovations beyond the Bell Tower. ChurchHub has proven to be a challenge to get Appointment papers for both the CoF and ministry personnel completed in a timely manner. This is a work in progress. A follow-up Admin visit is scheduled for April 18.
2. **Bella Bella:** GE Darby Memorial UC: (Church building is condemned); no active Ministry Personnel at the moment (Gilbert Jackson, retired 2024; David Clellamin, on a medical break);

but, a committed Board is in place that ensures an active Outreach Ministry continues. First visit since pre-CoViD in place for April 23- 25.

3. **Bella Coola PC:** *Emmanuel & Augsburg-Mackenzie UCs:* Nancy Walker, DLM/Candidate for Ordination in June. Visit scheduled for April 26-29 (includes a Sunday). Nancy's Covenanting Service was January 14, 2024. The Rev. Janice Young presided on behalf of the Region. We appreciate her willingness to fly into the, sub-zero (-27), Bella Coola Valley.
4. **Graham Island:** *Skidegate UC:* Russ Jones – Board Chair; Benedicte Hansen, Lutheran Supply. According to Benedicte, the wider Haida community very little contact with Skidegate UC. Few people attend. Many have returned to traditional spiritual and cultural practices and they have not invited the UCC into any healing or reconciliation processes or programs. I am scheduled to go over to Graham Island on June 19. I will be meeting with the CoF June 22-24, participating in worship with Benedicte.
5. **Hartley Bay:** *Emmanuel UC* - building but no lay or ministry personnel in place. No contact with anyone at this time. Emails left unanswered. (On the 'inactive' list)
6. **Hazelton PC:** *Gitsegukla & Mountainview UCs:* Rev. Peter Newbery – helping out...no appointment in place; almost ready to activity search for Ministry Personnel. (ChurchHub willing). February 25, I provided a worship service before meeting with folks from the village of Gitsegukla. My main contact with *Gitsegukla United Church* was Julia Walker since Elder and Chief, Ray Jones, PMRC-IM Executive Co-Chair, was in a serious MVA. The church is used for many things – mostly their renovated basement. They would like to have more worship services; they would like to have a Minister who visits them. They too have felt the drift and spoke of missing Presbytery connections. Their wheelchair ramp is in bad need of replacement. I met with *Mountainview UC* members on Zoom, prior to my in-person visit on February 26, to discuss Remit 1. Peter provides most, if not all, UCC leadership at funerals and weddings for Hazelton PC, as well as for the UCC folk in Anspayaxw. ChurchHub has also been an ongoing issue for them. I will be providing a follow-up Admin visit, April 18. He offers services online, and 1x/mth, and leads a service in Gitsegukla when he can. The *Mountainview* folk no longer worship in their church building. They have given it over to a local organization which provides learning space for children with physical and mental challenges. Instead, they gather at a local 'neighbourhood communal house.' They focus a lot of their time and energy in justice, healing and reconciliation initiatives.
7. **Kitamaat Village:** *Haisla UC* – Contacts, Minnie Rosso (former Lay Minister, Bill Wilson's daughter) & Roberta Grant. Over the last few years, I have provided the occasional Sunday service, funeral or wedding. Although Minnie and Roberta express a wish to rejuvenate the UCC's presence in the Village, getting scheduling information to the wider community has been challenging. Minnie and Bobbie have attended PMRC-IM meetings, and the most recent National Spiritual Gathering in Edmonton – summer 2023. Minnie has expressed on several occasions a need for help – a step by step, "What you need to put in place to have a functioning, bare minimum UCC church," outline. The local Pentecostal community was using the building – at no cost. The Band office had extra funds a couple years ago, so they redid their church basement. According to Charlene Burns, they will be receiving "supply" coverage via grant funding, through 2024.
8. **Klemtu:** no building – torn down, no leadership; contacts unknown. (on the 'inactive' list) At a recent memorial in Kitamaat Village, I met with a couple of people from Klemtu who used to be connected to the UCC. They advised me to contact the Band Office in Klemtu. They had no suggestions on contacts. Almost all funerals, memorials and other traditional activities are done through their (new) Big House.
9. **Lax Kw'alaams:** *Grace UC:* - building burned down a few years ago. Andrew Tait, Board/Council Chair. They have the plans to replace their former church building. They have the site cleaned and ready. But, cost of materials and the cost of transporting material to the site where Grace UC used to stand is prohibitive at the moment. Not much is happening with the UCC



community in Lax Kw'alaams. Conversations on a form of shared leadership haven't yet begun in earnest.

10. **Quadra Island: Cape Mudge UC:** Mimi Smienk, (in process for Ordination...; appointment pprwrk in process) Host for the upcoming PMRC-IM AGM, October 3-6/2024, I look forward to worshipping with the CoF on Quadra Island. I am already in conversation with people trying to work out how to get from the various ferry terminals and airports up to the meeting in October. Ministry in this space, under Mimi's spiritual guidance and leadership is also doing well.
11. **Vancouver: Longhouse Council of Native Ministry,** Rev. Barry Morris – retirement set for June 30, 2024. Jan. 14 – met with members of the LHCNM, along with Amanda Burrows (ED First United), Victoria Andrews (PMRC NRM). IM Executive member, Bev Brown (Co-Chair) was also present. Much of the conversation flowed around, 'next steps' as Rev. Barry retires after serving the Longhouse for 35 years. Amanda Burrows was there to answer questions about the possibility of 'sharing' ministry personnel since First United has many programmes and a housing initiative in place, or soon to be in place. But they are missing space for a worshipping centre. Brian Thorpe is now in place helping the transition conversations.
12. **Prince Rupert: First United Church** – Rev. Derry Bott, part-time Ministry Personnel – Not officially included as a CoF in Indigenous Ministries, I include it here because, for those of us who used to be part of Prince Rupert Presbytery, we know that people up and down the coast of BC see First United as the "Indigenous Cathedral". Derry has been serving this CoF for many years as a DLM; and, in recent years, in his role as Ordained ministry personnel. Within the last year, Prince Rupert's First UC also became an official Affirming Ministry.

Also, I want to offer a word of encouragement and gratitude to the members of the Communities of Faith within the PMRC who, despite many challenges, have continued to be Church in their context; serving their communities in faithful, loving ways; people have been doing the work and pray of Church despite ongoing trauma and grief experienced through the pandemic; because of the recent and continuing opioid crisis; and, the lingering emotions raised following the 2021 revelation of unmarked graves on residential school properties. The work of seeking justice, living, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with the Creator is on-going and is more needed than ever, it seems.

Finally, huge, heartfelt words of support to our IM Executive Co-Chair, Ray Jones, who has been working hard to get himself back from a very serious MVA early in 2024; and to IM, John Snow. Our continued prayers for full recovery wing your way every day from not only the PMRC, but from all corners of Turtle Island.

For all they do, "Thank you" to the members of the Indigenous Ministries Executive: Co-Chairs Beverly Brown & Ray Jones, and members, David Clellamin, Mimi Smienk & Keetah Levan. As I begin in this role, thank you to Mauricio Araujo, Marina Lecian, Alexandra Barr, Tressa Brotsky, Salem Shaik and Lixin Wang for all their Admin/Set-up expertise and depth of patience. And, gratitude, to, Treena Duncan –EM, and, Victoria Andrews –RM, for their commitment to the well-being of the Indigenous Ministries in PMRC during such a pivotal time on our collective healing journey. Thank you and Blessings to everyone who has supported, what was formerly BC Native Ministries and is now, PMRC Indigenous Ministries over the years.

Submitted by Teri Meyer – Acting Indigenous Minister



JUSTICE MINISTRIES

“In everything do to others as you would have them do to you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12

“So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God.” Hosea 12:6

As people of God, we are called to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to seek justice in the world. The prophetic voice of Hosea is echoed by the teachings of Jesus, both reach back to the Torah’s greatest command: to love God and those we encounter in our daily lives. Encountering one’s neighbours has changed from the times of Jesus and Hosea, we can encounter one another now over vast geographies and stretches of time that would have been unfathomable two thousand years ago. Yet, the question of “Who is our neighbour?” remains central to the living out of Christian faith.

PMR Justice Ministry is an intersection of our theme elements this year: connection, collaboration, and cultivation. Our primary aim is to support Communities of Faith in their justice work, as well as connecting with justice work in non-congregational settings and in the wider community. Connecting people and communities through communication and resources, connecting with justice issues locally, regionally, nationally, and globally, and making connections between our passions for justice and to the places we hear the groans of the Spirit and the cries of creation. We also connect to The United Church of Canada’s Strategic Plan 2023-2025 in which we find the justice priorities of Indigenous justice and right relations, becoming an intercultural and anti-racist church, becoming accessible and barrier-free, and welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

This has been a year of transitions for the PMR Justice Network; in 2023 we said goodbye to and offered blessings and prayers for our beloved leader, Rev. Jane Dawson, as she continued on to new chapters in her journey. Beginning in 2021, Jane has offered guidance, inspiration, and connection through her justice work, and we send our deepest gratitude for her time with us.

Kendra Mitchell-Foster was welcomed as Regional Minister – Justice in December 2023, just in time to join the mounting and momentous work of ensuring votes were submitted for Remit 1. Connecting with pastoral charges across the region to share information, tools and to support with submitting votes was the lion’s share of work from January to March 31. Praise be to God, Remit 1 has passed, and we as a denomination have embraced this opportunity to live into Right Relations and to walk the path of Reconciliation with the Indigenous Church. This is a powerful witness to the “holding fast to love and justice” that thrives in our region, and throughout the United Church of Canada. Further to Indigenous justice, PMR Justice has partnered with PMR Indigenous Ministries to create book studies and liturgical resources for Indigenous People’s Day, Orange Shirt Day, and Red Dress Day. These resources will be released over the summer of 2024.

We are an Affirming Region, and as such we continue to collaborate with communities of faith in their Affirming journeys, and in their work living into community life as part of these journeys. In a new collaboration beginning in 2023, PMR has partnered with Affirming Connections (affirmingconnections.com) to bring more resources, campaigns, educational series and events to the people, families, and communities in our region. As well, we hosted a multi-community, region-wide movie date for PIE Day, screening the documentary 1946 at Whitehorse United, Trinity United in Prince George, Central Okanagan United in Kelowna, Broad View United in Victoria, and Jubilee United in Burnaby. This film has prompted questioning and examination around affirming exegesis and queer theology and features the courage of a United Church minister to speak truth to power. A tradition that we continue to live into today in solidarity with our siblings of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.



In response to three proposals approved at the 2023 AGM in Abbotsford, we have begun work to spark new initiatives and to continue to cultivate the vision, direction and commitment on initiatives that remain central to our relationships with those relegated to living at the margins through oppression and violence. A proposal brought forward by the PMR Youth Council asked us to undertake a climate audit as a region, to support the larger work of reducing our emissions by 80% by the year 2030. Partnering with Faithful Footprints and the Green Action Centre, PMR has designed and is undertaking a climate audit, and is committed to showcasing, promoting, and creating resources that would encourage and support communities of faith across the region to do the same. In response to a second approved motion, we have begun a region-wide effort to divest from Hewlett Packard to stand in solidarity with Palestine and to hold accountable industries complicit in their oppression. This campaign began with invitations to communities of faith and continues with resources and connections on our website. In response to a third approved motion, we have begun a letter-writing campaign to urge municipal governments to support Guaranteed Livable Income platforms and programs in their areas, and to pass resolutions calling on the federal government to implement a nation-wide GLI.

In April 2024, PMR Justice partnered with First Third Ministry, LeaderShift, the Vancouver School of Theology, and the national church to hold the Anti-Racism Work & Action Leadership Conference 2024 at Epiphany Chapel in Vancouver, BC. This conference sought to resource church leadership with tools, community, and vision to support robust Anti-Racism work, programs, resources, and connections in our ministries. This conference was a great success, with involvement from youth and Indigenous leaders at the centre of the learning and work.

In the coming year, PMR Justice Ministry is looking forward to strengthening our ongoing projects, to live into the regional priorities for justice, and to listen deeply in relationship and in community to the prophetic voices that offer ways that we might continue to hold fast to love and justice, with eyes and hearts open, and our faces turned toward God. ~



LEADERSHIFT

Supporting those who are doing the inspiring and challenging work of leading, building and supporting communities of faith.

LeaderSHIFT is an initiative of the Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regional Councils, of The United Church of Canada. Our ongoing work is the discernment, offering and sponsoring of leadership formation resources, for ministry personnel and lay leaders alike.

We offer these resources through...

RETREAT & RENEWAL

- Spiritual retreats in small, professional cohorts
- Combines personal reflection and professional growth
- Encourages development of peer-accountability
- Intentional post-retreat integration skills building
- Like “Evolving Faith: the Group Experience” and “Deep Dive for Ministers: a Pre-AGM gathering”

DEEP LEARNING

- Conferences featuring leading theologians, educators, authors
- Workshops engaging provoking topics, current church issues
- Training days for practical skills building
- Intentional post-event integration & follow up
- Like “Leading Through Conflict, with Susan Nienaber”, “Culture Shift: A Part-Time Ministry Project, with G. Jeffrey MacDonald”, “Rural Ministry Conference”, and “Daring Justice: Uniting Reflection and Dialogue”

SUSTAINING PRESENCE

- Connecting church leaders with coaches and mentors who are firmly grounded in progressive Christian, United Church of Canada contexts
- Liaising with Regional ministers and staff
- Networking, online learning
- Providing resource and support materials
- Like “the Theological Banquet”, an inspiring, video-based Workshop Series for communities of faith and their leaders that fosters language, identity and understanding in your church community, with Rev. Janet Gear

INTENTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Sponsoring, supporting and amplifying the offerings of partners
- Offering seed funding for new initiatives
- Like “Anti-Racism Work and Action Leadership Conference”, with First Third Ministry and Justice Ministry
- Like “Living Generously: A Stewardship Webinar Series” with Stewardship Support





Since the last General Meeting, our focus at LeaderShift has been on offering opportunities to grow in the leadership of Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship and Daring Justice. We've also focused on creating opportunities for ministry leaders to gather for encouragement, renewal, and community-building as we learn together. We've done this through a group travel experience, a Zoom book study, and several online courses together. What other ways could LeaderShift help enliven and support you in ministry?

In January 2024, Rev. Michelle Slater transitioned to Regional Minister for LeaderShift, after a year of interim leadership. Michelle served in congregational ministry for 24 years, in small and medium congregations, both part-time and full-time. She is committed to continual learning about and improving her practice of ministry and leadership and is looking forward to sharing the learning journey with you.

LeaderShift has also taken on responsibility for online lay leadership training offered through the online Sage platform (www.sageonlinepmrc.ca). What areas of congregational leadership are you needing some training in?

OUR COMMITMENTS

We learn and promote learning.

We take time to apply learning within LeaderSHIFT and promote opportunities to equip and transform leaders in Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regional Councils. We make mistakes. We are committed to growing and changing along with all leaders in our Regions.

We believe in the wisdom of diverse voices in leadership.

We commit ourselves to giving profile to resource leaders who have been underrepresented or systemically marginalised. This includes increasing the numbers of black, indigenous, people of colour, and gender diverse resource people in our line up in the coming year.

We remove barriers to participation.

We use our resources to promote more equitable access to LeaderSHIFT experiences across the Regions we serve, by subsidizing workshop costs, using online platforms, increasing our financial support for travel, and hosting events in different geographical locations.

We are rooted in the diversity of theological identities and perspectives.

We offer experiences grounded in a spectrum of theological identities and perspectives, within the banquet of United Church of Canada faith and spiritual expression. The Theological Banquet developed by Janet Gear is an important lens for our planning.

We support transformation in leadership habits.

We promote initiatives that support leaders to make actual changes in leadership behaviour and practice through integrative and applied learning. We are committed to good content paired with strong support for applied learning using coaches, learning circles, and team learning.

We work with partners.

We develop program experiences in partnership with others in our Regions to strengthen the interlinked ecology of ministries and leadership. We give thanks for the First Third ministry team, for Indigenous Ministry and Justice Ministry colleagues, and for national and international leadership learning partners.

We would love to hear from you! How do you see LeaderSHIFT connecting with your work? Email us at leaderSHIFT@united-church.ca to connect with ways we can support your learning and growth in leadership, for this time and in your place.

THE LEADERSHIFT TEAM

Rev. Michelle Slater (she/her)- Regional Minister for LeaderShift
 Jes Beckerley (she/her)- Administrative Assistance & Registration
 Rev. Rob Shearer (he/him)- New Communities / Church Planting Project
 Tressa Brotsky (she/her they/them)- Communications



LEADERSHIP CHURCH PLANTING PROJECT

Beloved Community gathered at the Pacific Mountain Regional Council AGM!

I'm excited and humbled to bring this report of the good though challenging work that God's Spirit is animating and guiding across the region in new communities of faith (aka church plants)!

This is a longer and more detailed report than previous years, because I believe we are just starting to see the fruits of our work – and I wanted to share a bit more this time.

Here's what has been happening:

Cycles of Life and Death

In 2023 we started *one new community*: **Sanctuary on 6th** in New Westminster currently housed at the old Queens Avenue site. In April 2024 we approved **Becoming Church** – an inclusive, Jesus Centred community of faith which will start somewhere in the lower mainland near a Skytrain station or schools so as to be invitational to younger and multigenerational folks. In 2023 we also 're-booted' our Port Alberni plant as **Courageous Community** with gifted and creative new leadership after it had lay dormant for a few years.

Courageous Community has, alongside Alberni Valley United Church supported the Residential School survivors listening group **?aps ciik cha chim hiy ap** (Making It Right) – which I have attended quite regularly and also facilitated a session in April. This group has been an incredible and often challenging experience of grace amidst the pain of genocide – and has led to a request to amend and update our national apologies to survivors which we might be considering at this gathering.

We have also (finally!) posted a ¾ time position in **Pemberton** area thanks to the folks in the former UC church there committing funds from the sale of their building to start a new UCC expression in that context. We are praying for the right person or team to lead this work, which should by the time of the AGM, be up on Church Hub.

In 2023 we closed two plants: the CUP (Centre Uniting People) in Squamish and The Westshore Community of Practice. I'm deeply grateful for Rev. Karen and Rev. Greg's heartfelt attempts to plant with us – both starting as Covid lockdown was in full effect (how's that for courageous!?) I believe we have gained much from their experiences which we take with us in our own journey. Thank you!

In 2023, two of our plants have continued to move toward sustainability – both **Weird Church** in Cumberland and **AbbeyChurch** in Victoria make up about 2/3 or more of their budgets through either giving and space rental together (Weird Church) or giving alone (AbbeyChurch, who rent the old First Met building). Both are building on their youth ministry, administration and/or music leadership with our grants. Both communities get 35-50 people on a Sunday for worship as well as many other innovative mid-week offerings – doing so on less than full-time clergy leadership in both cases. Both communities are working on governance structures to align them toward becoming fully recognized communities of faith – and this governance work is (believe it or not!) very empowering and interesting. AbbeyChurch's monastic-inspired intentional community, the **Emmaus Community** are also renewed in their desire to build affordable co-op housing for intentional Christian community in a context where the housing crisis is horrific in its effects. I believe these communities (AbbeyChurch / Emmaus and Weird Church), though different in their theologies or expressions are both notable (albeit admittedly fragile and still *Mustard-seed small*) examples of how to build communities from scratch in surplus spaces in our post-Christendom era.





Liz Vice at Resurrect (singing from Voices United) – Photo Rev. Kimiko Karpoff

In early 2024, a few of our plants are now at a point where they are needing to pivot in their funding and staffing model. This includes **Wild Church** and **Oman's Nam'a** (Port Hardy – no website) – both of whom are coming to the end of their granting cycle and will need to move from current staffing models. The Wild Church plant now has multiple (up to 6) - expressions across BC. They, in conversation with Regional Staff are dreaming into what this next stage will look like, and I'm confident the plant will continue with a mix of ordained and lay leadership even after the granting ends.

Our **Feast and Fallow** Community has been tweaking their staffing model as a social enterprise with connected worshipping

community. So far, it's been a lot of incredible work on their part just to stabilize the social enterprise – but I'm grateful to report that, even as they move toward the end of their granting cycle, they are now moving beyond break-even into profit - which includes paying their staff. Their 'Good Table' (tentative name) worship will begin in the months to come. I'm grateful to Stevan for the leadership – and also Christina, Houston and the PDC wing of the Region who have been integral in this work.

In 2023 we welcomed Rev. Michelle Slater and Rev. Scott Reynolds onto our granting team. Michelle took the helm at LeaderSHIFT, and we blessed Allison Rennie on their way from both LeaderSHIFT and the Granting Team. Scott works as National Growth Animator for PMRC and Chinook Winds Region and we're grateful to have the energy and wisdom and Christ-centred spiritual depth that Scott brings to this – as well as more potential for cross-pollinating the work with the General Council Office Growth Initiative. After many years of service, Rev. Cheryl Black resigned from the granting team in December. I'm deeply grateful for Cheryl's passion for the church and her contributions. I'm also grateful to the LeaderSHIFT Team (Michelle, Jes & Tressa) for a weekly sounding board and check-in place of joys and hopes in our work.

In 2022-2023 I was 'seconded' onto the Strengthening Invitation team of the National UCC – which did much of the groundwork for the new growth initiative which is part of the national UCC strategic plan. This has helped me understand their call to plant 100 new communities of faith and support existing congregations. The awareness around diasporic communities and their networks that I gained there has been beneficial in shaping my understanding of next steps of our initiative. I've connected both with Cameron Fraser, the national lead on the Growth Initiative as well as Scott Reynolds, the bi-regional (Chinook Winds and PMRC) lead. In PMRC, Scott will mostly focus on renewing existing congregations – but we're already talking about some ways our work overlaps including the use of the collaborative-focused supervised ministry.

In 2023 we held the second **Resurrect Learning Party** – which, with 140 participants (about 100 of them UCC, by my estimation), was a grand success – but left me pretty exhausted as well. Speakers and artists such as Randy Woodley, Liz Vice, Michael Blair, Carmen Lansdowne, Amy Haynes, Denise Nadeua, Poor Claire (Lacey Brown), DJ AP and others led us resurrection-tinged worship resourced by our network of Church plants and planters. I was deeply grateful to work with the planning team, which included many of our planters – and most of our plants and planters were present. I'm currently dreaming about a smaller, more intimate face-to-face gathering of our planting network in the fall. This



would be a much smaller scale 2-3 day retreat for planters and significant volunteers later this fall as a way to reconnect.

In late 2023 I started a conversation with a network of UCC Filipino clergy around starting a new UCC Community of Faith – potentially in Victoria out of the former First Met building. There is at least one interested potential planter.

I also want to deepen our existing commitments to our Zimbabwean Church - Rev. Tazvi, their coordinator was at Resurrect. I'm often in touch with Emo Yango who leads this diasporic and intercultural work out of national and his input has been invaluable in connecting me with diasporic leaders in the UCC.

I continue to believe we haven't tapped the potential of diasporic communities in our local church planting and I'm working to be proactive in this respect. We are also in conversation about a new Korean Community of Faith in the Region. My feeling is that we have been weak on the diasporic church plants – and I'm excited to have more of these in our church planting portfolio.

In 2023 we started the **Vocare podcast** and recorded 7 episodes with my co-host Amy Haynes, who was also doing her seminary (VST) field education with my office. That was a lot of fun and we hope to re-start episodes in the spring. Amy was integral in planning Resurrect and really helpful around the virtual office as well as part of the network in our monthly zoom planter happy hours.

In late 2023 I started a couple of conversations with 'evangelicals at risk' – that is, those in evangelical churches or planters who are at risk of being excommunicated due to their affirming convictions. I attended **the Table** gathering with our friends in the New Leaf network, as well as a smaller connected event called The Good Table which is a network of 200+ affirming evangelicals at risk of being de-credentialed or excommunicated from their denominations. I've had conversations with a number of these folk who might be interested in bringing themselves or their communities into the UCC, though there are some systemic obstacles that the National Growth folks are working on!

I'm participating in **Centre for Missional Leadership's Arbour** program for planters - for my learning in my role with the Region. This is an online cohort of planters gathering ecumenically to strategize. Andrea Perrett, who is organizing this (along with Albert Chu) has been a good supporter of our work and our planters. I will also be attending their **Cultivate Church Planting Conference** in early May.

Change and Maturation

It definitely feels like a time of maturation and change in our plants...

Maturation, because a number of our plants are coming to the end of their grants and are either stable or need to pivot.

Change, because it feels like 'church', overall, as we know it – with full time positions, professionalized clergy, sole-building owners with lots of tenants (including, sometimes, our plants or diasporic churches) – these are coming to a rapid end in many places – at least for all but a handful of endowed or more recently amalgamated congregations.

I believe we are in a time of collapse (ecclesiologically, yes – but everywhere around us!) without too many folks willing to name it as such.

Of course, many who are planting new communities have lived with multi-vocationality and a post-Christendom way of being for quite a while now, and many have been without the blessing and burden of



a building. I recently attended a gathering of Victoria UCC church workers and not a single community has full-time clergy. The times they are-a-changing.

More Connection

One of the steps I've decided to take is to have a (lay/volunteer) regional liaison in each of our plants. As one might imagine, most of the plants don't have a M&P committee structure, so myself and the other Regional Ministers serve this by a yearly visit to all staff and significant volunteers. Having the liaison in each site will help us keep in touch with the communities and create clearer pathways for communication and accountability.

Re-imagining Buildings for New Communities

Speaking of buildings, in 2023 we approved some funds for how we might intentionally use surplus buildings and other spaces more effectively as new communities of faith. We haven't used those funds yet – but foundational conversations are happening.

Right now, we have 3 newer communities of faith operating in surplus UCC buildings: AbbeyChurch in the former First Met UC (and experiencing growth there!), Sanctuary in the former Queens Ave. UC and Weird Church in the former Cumberland UC. Becoming Church is also looking at using one of our surplus spaces. We also have Feast and Fallow operating in a redeveloped space (Oakridge UC).

I've met with the leaders of our plants in these surplus spaces to be intentional about this - with an intentionality to hold multiple new UCC and / or ecumenical or even interfaith communities in historic buildings which would be a huge loss to our neighbourhoods if we were to sell them.

At the same time, I'm seeing both great potential but also huge questions around how we view land, buildings and money for the present/future of the church. I recently attended the **Reimagining Church Land** conference happening this March in Vancouver and strongly believe we need an intentional and cohesive strategy around both land-back and supporting new / emerging communities of faith in using these spaces.

I'm not opposed to all sales (far from that – we do need to slim down) – but I also believe we need to prayerfully consider which spaces to hold and plant into, understanding that, with the real estate market being what it is, we will never get these spaces back.

I do believe we need new models for how we engage buildings to hold their legacy even as we develop new or renewed communities of faith. I believe that land trusts, cooperatives and land back should be part of the conversation as well.

I'm excited to see some of these 'prayed-in' spaces hold not one, but multiple new communities of faith!

God is good, as Rev. Tazvi reminded us at the Resurrect Gathering!

The Need for Worship and Explicit Discipleship

My own deepening conviction is that both for solid ecclesiology as well as practical reasons, we need to keep a galvanizing worshipping expression at the centre of what we do in UCC church plant. I'm more and more convinced that, whatever the 'form' or theology or expression of a plant - there needs to be a 'core' word and sacrament expression in some central, accessible way – even if it looks and feels very different than our dominant ethos.



To that end, the Church Plant Granting Team added these words to our terms of reference in our April 2024 meeting: *“All PMRC plants must have a clear plan to establish worship / prayer and discipleship. Though plants may start with and continue to include relational, social enterprise, listening or other social / artistic / social justice / eco-justice / interfaith or inter-spiritual elements, all PMRC church plants need to have a clear plan to establish regular Christian worship / prayer and discipleship in a timeframe that the Regional Minister approves...”*

I’m aware that in our current context, socially and politically, this is slow, fraught work that is hard on the ego for those on the ground. Imagine what it feels like to start from scratch!?

But I also believe it is the work to which we, as planters in this vineyard, are called.

Finally, me!

I spent a few weeks in January writing about 25,000 words of a possible book about all that is collapsing around us - tentatively titled *‘The Cathedral and the Apple Tree’* – partly inspired by Chris Corrigan’s sermon about the death of a beloved apple tree – given at Bowen Island United Church one of those Sundays.

My initial 3-year position (now at 6+) can likely continue for another 2-3 years, with still approximately 1 million dollars (not including my salary costs – nor Pemberton – that’s another \$450k+) to plant more communities.

In November 2023 I received a note that I’ve been accepted for *admission* into the United Church – and this ‘homecoming’ is scheduled to happen this Sunday at the AGM – and this work that I write about here has been a huge factor in this decision.

In Conclusion...

Again, God is so faithful.

The gift of Trinity-Grace and Van Burrard Presbytery (including the vision of many of you in this room) keeps giving beyond what we thought possible. Sure, alongside the joys of this work there are challenges, losses, and sometimes costly learnings, but these are all part of the beautiful ways that God is calling us to be God’s Beloved Community at this time.

Thanks for reading this report. Both I, and the planters / teams covet your prayers in our joys and transitions and challenges.

I also welcome conversation around how you might be called to plant, partner or dream together – please do email me at rshearer@united-church.ca or call / text my cell 778 977 7562 if you’d like to get together.

Many blessings in Christ Jesus.

*Rev. Rob Shearer
Regional Minister for Church Planting
The LeaderShift Church Planting Project*



REGIONAL CAMPING MINISTRY

Greetings beautiful friends of Pacific Mountain Region. Life has turned again, and I'm coming to you in a new role – coordinating and giving over-sight to the seven non-profit societies that operate United Church Camps in the region. I'm very excited to be in this role; it feels like a call.

It turns out that my own values match the values of the region. There is only one reason the church holds these seven properties. When a child or youth decides to come to camp, there will be a moment, when by the spirit of God, they will encounter something that shifts their sense of self, their relationships, their connection to something bigger than themselves. They will see something in the great outdoors, they will hear a story, they will watch a beautiful relationship. Something will happen, and when that child or youth is accompanied by a thoughtfully trained counselor, or cook, or life-guard who recognizes that moment for what it is, that child or youth will be changed for life. Let's describe this moment as a lived experience of Easter.

When these moments have the potential to change the church, Camping Ministry has now become recognized as a significant strategy in the purpose of First Third Ministry of the Pacific Mountain Region. I have argued that a week-long experience of overnight camping has been the church's most authentic relationship with children and youth, with lots to teach the church about how to be in ministry with children and youth. It's wonderful to be working with the First Third Ministry Team working hard to change that argument. Healthy congregations and communities of faith is the ultimate long-term outcome of our work. This makes everything we do, an experience of planting trees under whose shade we will not sit.

For several reasons, we work in partnership with non-profit societies who have the same values and the same purpose. As we have begun to undertake this work together, I have learned that dedicated volunteers and staff of the societies have the same perspective. They may not use the same language, but we all work together for that lived experience of Easter. In this, the societies are in varying stages of capacity. It is First Third Ministry's goal to develop a long-term strategic plan for the sustainability of our camps. This will in turn continue to help the church grow and sustain whole new relationships with the children, youth, and young adults of the region, who want to live lives of purpose and meaning in this confusing world.

I invite you to join me in establishing a relationship with the camp closest to you as a value-added component of your ministry with children and youth.

Blessings to you all in the name of the one who gives us Easter.

*Rev. S. Blair Odney
Regional Camp Coordinator
First Thirst Ministry
PRMC – UCC*



WESTERN INTERCULTURAL MINISTRY NETWORK

The Western Intercultural Network is a relatively ‘young’ network of communities in the United Church of Canada committed to a fully inclusive and intercultural church, covering the five Western Regional Councils.

The network holds gatherings, educational events and online conversations that focus on intercultural discussions and dialogue. Network members are engaging in and promoting action in their regions towards living out the UCC’s vision of being an intercultural church ([Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](#)). An executive composed of representatives from the five Western Regional Councils of the United Church offers us leadership.

Our vision of becoming an intercultural United Church encompasses:

- Racialized people and communities, which includes ethnic churches within the United Church, racialized lay leaders, and ministry personnel, and more.
- Indigenous people and communities, within the United Church and beyond, of all traditions.
- People with disabilities.
- LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people and communities.
- The privileged, yet broken, who are seeking wholeness and justice.

We are each worthy individuals and numerous cultural groups, and richer for our diversity. And we are at the same time engaged in a common pursuit of caring for each other and the planet. We honour our identities, and the spaces where they intersect. Our ministry includes courageous (and awkward!) conversations about our diversity, and about the social privilege and history that hinder right relationships. We believe the Good News of Jesus Christ calls us into such conversations, right relationship, and mutual transformation.

2023-2024 ACTIVITIES

- The Network held its first in person Network Conference since 2019 from October 19 – 21, 2023 at Star of the North Retreat Centre in St Albert AB, Treaty Six. The event was attended by approximately 30 persons. The group enjoyed the opportunity to connect in person with others from across the five western regions as well as one person from Ontario, around the theme ***Daring Justice: Intercultural and Decolonizing Lenses on Truth and Reconciliation***. We are grateful for the engagement of these presenters in making the event a success with their topic focus areas:
 - Russel & Charlene Burns: Protocol and Cultural Awareness
 - MiYeon Kim: “Magpie, You Bring the Good News: Interculturality and Creativity in Ministry”
 - Becca Whitla: “Singing and Praying Justly”
 - Lloyd Nyarota: “Toward a Better Society: The Church’s Mission and Ministry of Reconciliation: A study from Zimbabwe discussed in a Canadian Context”
 - Chris Pullenayegem: “Hiding in Plain Sight: the Impact of Immigration”
 - Murray Pruden: “The Act of Storytelling - Collective Street and Community Theatre, “Approaching Intercultural & Decolonizing Lenses on Truth and Reconciliation”
- Throughout the past year the Executive continued discussions on how well the network is addressing its Mandate and TOR. The discussions confirm that education on intercultural vision is key work of the network. This education focus is delivered through continuing Coffee Chai events and in person events, when possible.



- The network did not have its usual Coffee Chai sessions in the past year, choosing to focus on delivering this first face-to-face event since 2019.
- The network sees broadening its involvement in other UCC intercultural and anti-racism work as key. Members of the network have done so in various ways, including contributions of written reflections to the 40 Days on Engagement on Anti-Racism series.
- The Executive has been asked from time to time throughout the year to disseminate information to the network about opportunities to serve on UCC committees or working groups and to encourage persons in the network to discern their involvement and submit nominations to these groups.
- Since June 2023 the WIMN Executive has been liaising with Emo Yango, Identity and Mission Network Coordinator at GCO, and responding to invitations to participate, along with other ethno-cultural networks within the UCC, in discussions that contribute to the strategic plan development. Specifically, WIMN and other ethno-cultural networks have been asked to discern what a long-term national support would look like for these networks. These discussions included meetings of the network executive with Emo Yango, as well as participation of representatives from WIMN in online and a face-to-face discussion in Toronto in early October 2023 on this topic. WIMN has a unique voice at the table as the group is the only intercultural network that is formed across several Regions. The network is happy to contribute to this work. One outcome of these discussions is that moving forward, ethno-cultural network leads will meet online quarterly and there are plans in place to meet once per year (in October) in person.

ANNUAL MEETING

WIMN hosted its Annual meeting on October 20, 2023, at Star of the North Retreat Centre in St Albert AB, Treaty Six, in conjunction with its Network Conference.

At the meeting some edits to the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the network were approved. The updated TOR can be reviewed [here](#).

The members of the Executive that guided the Network's activities for 2022-23 chose to remain involved and to offer their gifts and stewardship for the work of the network for another year. Thank you!

The Executive for 2023-24 comprises:

Co-Chairs: Kathy Yamashita (Chinook Winds) and Deborah Richards (Pacific Mountain)

Secretary: Rev. Chelsea Masterman (Northern Spirit)

Pacific Mountain: Alwin Maben (past chair)

Chinook Winds: Rev. Dr. OhWang Kwon

Northern Spirit: Dorcas Muketha

Living Skies: Mathias Ross, Salesi Takau

Prairie to Pine: Damber Khadka, Bill Millar

Staff support: Julie Graham (Living Skies, Prairie to Pine and Northern Spirit Regions), Chris Mah Poy (Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Region)

The Executive has been meeting monthly for 90 minutes. In early 2024 we changed this schedule and will now meet bi-monthly for 60 minutes, with other planning discussions for events occurring as needed in between meetings. This provides an opportunity for us to connect about activities in our regions.



LOOKING FORWARD

The Executive will continue to build on its ongoing discussions on how the Network will engage in supporting and living out the call within our regions to be an Intercultural Church. The Network is also continuing to engage with other Ethnocultural groups within the UCC via the Ethnocultural Network Leads group.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee/Chai time series will continue in 2024 in September and November (in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting).

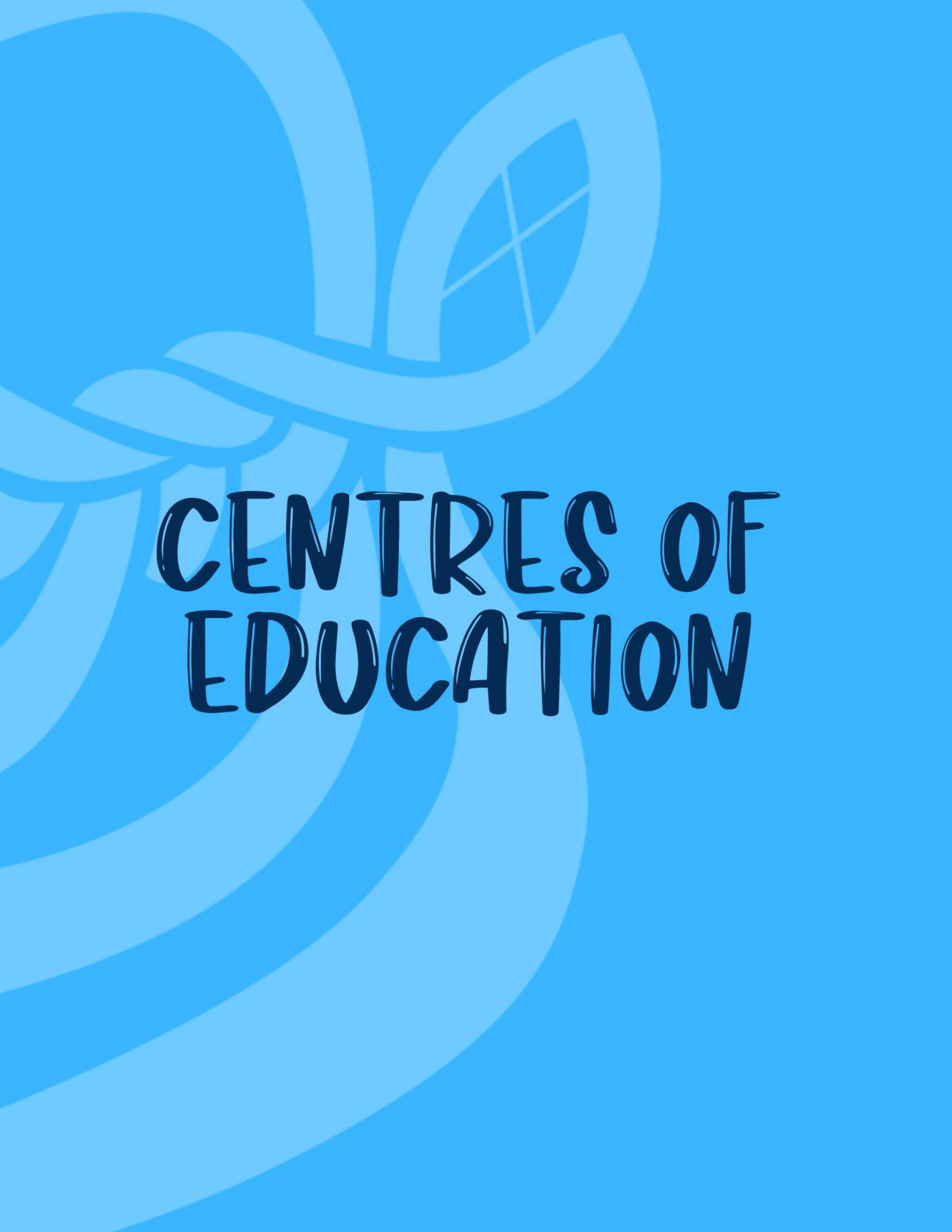
CONTACT US

If you would like to be contacted about WIMN events you can **sign up for occasional updates here**; you can unsubscribe at any time, and we don't share your information with anyone else.

Respectfully Submitted by

Kathy Yamashita and Deborah Richards, Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Executive of the Western Intercultural Ministries Network



CENTRES OF EDUCATION

CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

A YEAR OF DESIRE AND LONGING

The year 2023 was a year of desire and longing, and with some exciting events to help us feel energized. During the Black History Month, Alcris Limongi organized a lively panel discussion with black diaconal ministers; Principal Alan did something similar with Asian UCC friends during the Asian Heritage Month, with the panelists addressing the question: Who is Asian?

The two-day Con Ed event with Dr. Claudio Carvalhases on worship was refreshing. We rejoiced with The Rev. Dr. Wenh-In Ng during the Annual Service of Celebration when she received the Companion of the Centre Award. To add another layer of joy, the presence of the Moderator Carmen Lansdowne and her conversation with Dr. Ng on Indigenous relations was stimulating.

We began the year desiring to strengthen intercultural education. Conversation with the Executive Director of the Forum of Intercultural Leadership and Education elevated our imagination. As invited by the Office of Vacation, CCS conducted an Admission Orientation Circle in August. As far as longing goes, we hired Julie Ng-Leung to lead a strategic planning activity. It was a longing for direction and financial stability. After the pandemic, we are faced with the changing landscape in theological education and church life in general. There was a need to sort our priority, strength, and future path.

The strategic activity was completed. Julie has presented the school's leaders several options. The school has set up a special small team to study those findings, taking financial situation seriously. They will also study the recommendations and background information of the strategic plan of 2019. The goal is to provide a decisive strategic goal for the next two years. CCS is working hard to envision the future. We do not approach it with fear but with courage and understanding. We pray for and work towards transformation.

We are blessed with collaborative, generous partners, including:

Anglican and United Churches
 Diakonia of the United Church of Canada
 Anglican Deacons
 Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean
 Diaconal Mentors, Field Placements, Learning Facilitators, Local Committee members,
 Council and Committee volunteers
 St Andrew's College
 St Stephen's College
 Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre
 Strategic Charm (social media managers)

Our Yearbook, Financial Statements, and Annual Report may be found at: <http://ccsonline.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Annual-Report-2023.pdf>

Respectfully submitted,
 Alan Lai (Rev. Dr.)
 Principal

JUMP TO TOP
 OF THE DOC



NARAMATA CENTRE



Dan Hines leading Navigating Life in the Chapel

INTRODUCTION

2023 was a pivotal year for the Naramata Centre, marking 75 years of providing a safe, inclusive, sacred space for community, study, and faith growth. Throughout its history, the Centre has fostered personal and collective transformation inspired by Christian traditions, supported by dedicated staff, leaders, and the broader community.

NARAMATA CENTRE 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Opened in 1947 as a Christian Leadership Education Center, the Naramata Centre has continually adapted, offering progressive, leading-edge conversations and programs. Over the past decade, committed community efforts have revitalized the Centre, making it a vibrant space for spiritual growth, education, and personal development.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As we look to the next 75 years, the Naramata Centre has partnered with various organizations to promote values of diversity, inclusivity, reverence, and integrity. These partnerships help deliver our mission, providing opportunities for spiritual well-being, leadership development, and fostering a strong sense of community.

PROGRAMMING

The Naramata Centre offers diverse programs aimed at nurturing spiritual well-being, developing youth leadership, and empowering participants to be their authentic selves.

Child & Youth Programming

Generations of Naramata faithful have led our child and youth programs, guiding youth toward self-exploration, deep faith, and service to the world. In 2023, we piloted our first program for families with neurodiverse children, which will expand in 2024.



Adult Programming

For 75 years, Naramata Centre has offered programs nurturing creativity, community, and faith. 2024 will introduce new programs like Epicurean Week and Gospel Week, alongside beloved offerings like Wild Church and Music Week.

Community Life Programming

Responding to societal changes, the Community Life program offers informal opportunities for connection, including activities like Welcome Circle, Morning Music, Yoga, Drum Circles, and Indigenous-led programming.

Indigenous Led Programming

Honoring the Syilx people's traditional territory, the Centre benefits from the leadership of Anona Kempe, who educates and leads programs in land acknowledgment, traditional songs, and Indigenous storytelling. The Centre also hosts Indigenous women and youth retreats.

Volunteerism

In 2023, volunteers generously gave their time and resources. Events like Hearts & Hands saw nearly forty volunteers renewing the Centre, with local volunteers contributing to various projects throughout the year.

Program Partners

Program partners enhance our offerings, bringing mission- and value-led programming. Examples include United Church of Canada's Leader Shift retreat, Pacific Jubilee's spiritual direction training, and various retreats and workshops spanning diverse interests and communities.

Online Programming

The pandemic underscored the importance of connection. Our rich and diverse online programming allows for year-round engagement, creating a geographically distant yet connected community.

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

The Naramata Centre honors its role as steward of the land, historically home to the Syilx people. We are committed to truth and reconciliation, renewing our facilities and grounds for future generations. In 2023, we refurbished Cottage Courts and will continue upgrading campgrounds and infrastructure.

RENEWING OUR MINISTRY

With renewed programming, partnerships, and facilities, the Naramata Centre Society is poised to renew its ministry. The Centre invites deeper exploration of self, society, faith, and service, serving as a place for personal and global healing. For more information, visit www.naramatacentresociety.org. ~



VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THOUGHTFUL, ENGAGED, AND GENEROUS CHRISTIAN LEADERS

VST is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders for the church and the world. Our graduates are thoughtful people, reflective about how to interact with the large issues of our time out of the deep resources of faith. Our students are engaged, willing to get involved in the world, not just wait for the next one. Our theological ethos is designed to nurture practitioners who give their lives for God and the gospel. Our graduates are generous, able to find friends with whom to collaborate for the love of God and the good of the world. We go deep with God in Christ and so wide with the world God loves.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The academic year 2023-2024 has been a strong year. We were granted ten years of accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in June of 2023. This is longest possible period of accreditation granted and the longest period of accreditation VST has ever achieved. VST is also accredited by the Provincial Government, carries the Educational Quality Assurance designation provided by the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education and holds a degree granting charter through the province. VST is also a Designated Learning Institution, a federal designation that allows for welcoming international students. VST degrees are granted on the strength of its provincial degree granting charter, its status as an accredited and designation learning institution and as teaching college at the University of British Columbia.

We will enroll the first students in our Ph.D. program in conjunction with Pretoria University this year. Two new faculty hires, in preaching and field education, give us our full complement of faculty. In addition, VST has made a strong commitment to “students first” in new hires for student support and services and in robust financial support to our students. The numbers of students enrolled in our programs is back at all time highs – both head count (202) and credit hour enrollment. We have strong enrollment from the US and Asia, as well as Canada. Online students now makeup at least half of most classes. We are committed to first rate and up-to-date technology and pedagogy for online students so that their classroom experience is participatory and excellent. We are now into the second iteration of online classroom technology. We have a work plan to renew some classrooms and facilities every year in both our buildings. Pastoral courses are still taught in an intensive in-person format. Housing expenses for those occasions are underwritten by VST to 50% of costs through the generosity of donors. We have engaged our denominational partners to find suitable housing for non-resident students with some success. 24 students will convocate this year at Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church.

FACULTY/UNITED CHURCH FACULTY

Our United Church of Canada faculty include, The Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho, Director of United Church Formation and Studies, the Rev. Mary Nichol, Director of Theological Field Education and The Rev. Dr. Steven Chambers, half-time Director the Pathways for Tomorrow Grant. Steven retired from his excellent work as Director of Theological Field Education in January of 2024. We are very grateful for his dedication, clarity of thinking and outstanding leadership.

Faculty are productive as scholars and pastors, regularly publishing significant monographs and articles for the life of the church now. The faculty collectively published a volume of sermons on the Ten Commandments in 2023. All of our faculty are regular preachers across the country and around the world. The Rev. Dr Joni Sancken (Mennonite) and The Rev. Mary Nichol (United Church) began as professors - of Preaching and Director of Field Education - in January of 2024. This completes our complement of 11+ Faculty members, supplemented by highly experienced and credentialed Sessional lecturers. VST has committed itself to holding a course every semester taught by an Indigenous Instructor.



VST BOARD/EMPLOYEES

Bishop David Lehmann, Anglican) is the Chair of the VST Board. The Rev. Dr. Jean Morris (Presbyterian) is Vice-Chair. Ms. Catherine Evans (United Church) is the Chancellor at VST. We are well served by their excellent leadership. We are a theological school preparing Christian leaders for the United, Anglican and Presbyterian Churches and our board membership reflects that ecumenical composition and more. Our strategic plan was reviewed, updated, and approved in November of 2022 and will undergo subsequent revision in 2024-2025. UCC Board members at VST include Ms. Catherine Evans, The Rev. Dr. Doug Goodwin, The Rev. Michelle Slater and The Rev. Ryan Slifka.

PARTNERSHIPS

VST extends its reach and magnifies its impact through strategic partnerships. In addition to our core relationships with our Affiliate (Anglican and United) and Associate (Presbyterian) denominations, we work with UBC, the Sauder School of Business, Huron College at Western University, Durham University in the UK, St Mark's College and Regent at UBC, The Canadian Chinese School of Theology in Vancouver, and the University of Pretoria to deliver educational programs ranging from certificate to Ph.D. levels. Our relationships with Jakarta Theological Seminary, Indonesia, and St Andrew's, Quezon City, Philippines, continue with visiting faculty teaching in our summer school and making guest appearances in classes. These agreements help us deliver a theological education that is contextually appropriate and global in awareness.

GRANTS/FINANCES/FOUNDATION

Vancouver School of Theology has achieved a balanced operating budget for ten years in a row. Annual donations in the past three years average around 2 million dollars. Each year we plan for an increase of 5%. We have allocated annual surpluses to capital expenses and maintenance and use these funds every year. Our employees have received increases in each of the past nine years based on COLA, equity and performance standards. Our CFO and Vice-President, Ms. Shari Coltart, retired this year. She will stay on to direct HR and student awards. Mr. Eduard Gutierrez is our new CFO. He works closely with our Audit and Finance subcommittee of the Board, chaired by Mr. Rob Dickson. The VST Foundation is chaired by The Rev. Dr. Doug Goodwin, and it provides a significant revenue stream for the operations of the school drawn at 5% in keeping with federal legislation. Mr. Rudy Kerklaan and Dr. Joy Begley are also United Church Directors on the Foundation board.

We have undertaken to provide more student support, in addition to current scholarships, in the form of bursaries of up to 70% for students with financial need for the past and next academic years. In the academic year 2022-2023 VST provided students with over a half million dollars in bursaries, scholarships, and awards. We anticipate that significant additions to our endowment will be required to support the mission of VST – to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders - in the coming years. We do not want to borrow against the future, but to set up those who follow for success in the work of theological education. A campaign –Hope and Vitality: A Plan to Flourish Together has begun.

VST has completed the expenditure of a Luce Grant for Indigenous Ministry (\$400,000 US) through the Teaching House that Moves Around. The program will continue for one more year, in Northwest Communities in British Columbia, funded by a grant (\$225,000) through the United Church of Canada, and in Saskatchewan, funded by the Anglican Foundation of Canada (\$15,000). This important ministry is a continuation of a 35-year commitment to Indigenous Ministry by the Vancouver School of Theology through its Indigenous Studies Program, currently under the direction of The Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred. The Indigenous Summer School is unique in the country drawing Indigenous scholars who teach Indigenous students using Indigenous methodology and practice.

VST has received significant gifts in the recent past through the robust efforts of our Advancement team. The Lilly Endowment awarded the school a \$1 million (US) phase-two grant in 2023 to retool and



revitalize Field Education. We envision spending around \$500,000.00 this coming year for program development and as stipends for students doing field education. This is in addition to other student support. Our Sauder School of Business program is completely endowed so that students can learn finance, adaptive leadership, leading in times of transition, coaching and mentoring, excellence in administration **in addition** to their theological education. They receive the Sauder Certificate in Leadership Excellence through the completion of this program. Significant gifts from the Anglican Foundation of Canada (\$15,000.00) and two British Foundations (2X\$ 20,000.00) help fund the Indigenous Summer School program with particular attention to youth and children.

In 2022-2023, VST received over \$300,000.00 to endow the O'Driscoll Forum in Preaching and the Arts. This program, named in honour of The Rev. Herbert and Paula O'Driscoll, will take place each summer at VST in conjunction with the Summer School program. It is modelled after the College of Preachers which took place at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC., where Herb was leader. It gives preachers and liturgical leaders a chance to “workshop” with each other under the direction of a master preacher and liturgical artist. This year, summer 2024, the Forum will be facilitated by Bishop William Willimon and Mr. Lonnie Delisle on the theme of preaching as leadership. The Anglican Foundation made a significant donation for start up costs for this program (\$15,000.00). <https://vst.edu/odriscollforum/>

VST held the 2023 Inter-religious Conference, “Making Meaning in a Time of Media Polarization,” May 30-June 1. This annual conference includes presentations by leading practitioners and scholars and a series of student papers for which there is an annual prize. The 2023 winner of the Ruth and Bernard F. Duhan Inter-religious Student Essay Prize was Chanil Lee, who is a doctoral student at VST. In 2024 the theme is “Sacred Arts in a Pluralistic Society”, and the conference took place May 21-23. This event is funded by VST and through a series of donors and foundations (\$40,000.00). It took place in person and online. <https://vst.edu/inter-religious-studies-program/conference/>

Renovations in Epiphany chapel to green the space, update the technology and refresh the building are in motion. The roof has been replaced, students online can now share in services through participative technology and the sound and lighting systems in the building have been completely replaced. All windows and doors were replaced this spring and stain glass will be installed. This project is fully funded through a \$1.2 million legacy gift.

ACADEMIC ENROLLMENT

The headcount at VST for spring 2024 is 202. Our enrollment is very strong, the second highest in the last 20 years and up 24% from last year. The largest area of growth at the school in recent years is the numbers of student doing research degrees and students preparing as Spiritual Care workers. In the past 6 years, we have a 500% increase in research degree students. M.Div. students are still the largest cohort with the highest number of course registrations - followed by MAPPL, MATS, TH.M. and doctoral students. A discussion is under way about right-sizing our school.

Of the three historic partners of the school in the spring semester of 2024, the Anglican/Episcopal Church has the largest cohort at 40 degree students, the Presbyterian and United Churches both have 37. VST continues to expand its ecumenical bandwidth, in keeping with the vision of its founders: 52 degree students come from other Christian churches, 10 a variety of faith traditions, and 7 do not identify their religious background. Students at VST come from other denominations, including Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Baptist, Orthodox, Alliance, Mennonite, international Reformed and Quaker. 5 students are enrolled in the Ph.D. program, which VST offers in partnership with Durham University, UK. There are 35 students registered as auditors or for certificate level programs in the spring semester. We have new certificate/ diploma programs for training deacons and lay leaders for engagement in the church, with specialization in pastoral care, youth and children's ministry and preaching. VST has a joint BA-M.Div. program with St Mark's College. This combined program reduces the overall time to complete both degrees by one year. Two students are registered in this program.



VST has a robust online recruitment program, engages online international recruitment services, holds a VST Sunday once a year, in which over 50 churches across Canada participate, and hosts an Explorers Weekend at the school where students experience life as a student for a few days. Our Coordinator of Recruitment, Mr. Sam Andri, provides outstanding leadership. We are grateful to congregations where our students are welcomed. We are experiencing a solid influx of applications for the 2024-2025 academic year. VST has taken a “Students First” approach to the application process and is working hard at minimizing steps and supporting applications, including providing online seminars with legal and immigration experts. Once students arrive at VST, the school invests in coaching for writing and research, a buddy program for international students and assistance in finding housing. We recently established the position of Associate for Student Support and Services.

SPECIAL LECTURES/SUMMER SCHOOL 2023

Vancouver School of Theology welcomed a series of outstanding lecturers in 2023 and 2024.

- The Somerville lecturer in September of 2023 was led by Rev. Dr. Joni Sancken, Butler Professor of Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation at VST, who gave a lecture and workshop entitled, “All our Sins and Grievs to Bear – building resilience through faith practices.”
- Internationally renown professor of sociology, Prof. Hartmut Rosa, was our G. Peter Kaye Lecturer on the topic of “The Listening Society: Religion, Music and Democracy in Resonance.”
- Our Visiting Distinguished Scholar for July of 2024 will be Prof. Jehu J. Hanciles who will teach a course entitled, “Beyond Empire: Rethinking the History of Global Christianity” and give a public lecture June July 8 in our summer school on the theme of “Global Migration and Christian Witness.” Jehu was not able to come last year. We are glad he is able to do this summer.

All these lectures are fully funded through generous funding restricted for these events and held in the VST Foundation. All these lectures are recorded and available through our YouTube channel.

Summer School 2024 will be held July 1-12 in hybrid format with VST welcoming outstanding scholars, church leaders and students from around the world, including Prof. Will Willimon, Artist James He Qi and Prof. Angela Parker from Seattle School of Theology and Psychology - <https://vst.edu/vst-summer-school/>. Participation in these courses is possible both in person and through zoom.

In partnership with First Third Ministry Chinook Winds and Pacific Mountain Regions, LeaderSHIFT and Pacific Mountain Justice Network, VST is hosted a Anti-Racism Word and Action Conference, April 4-6, at our buildings.

CONVOCATION 2024

On May 7 we conferred degrees and certificates on 25 students. Our convocation was held at Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church, Vancouver. Four students received the Sauder School of Business Certificate in Leadership Excellence. We presented the TEG (thoughtful, engaged and generous) Christian Leader Award to the Rev. Andria Irwin, a VST alumni and United Church Minister. This award of \$2,000.00 is to encourage excellent leadership by clergy in the earlier years of ministry. VST awarded an honorary doctorate to Mr. Michael Francis for his nine years of wise and transformative leadership as Chair of the Board at VST. Prof. Norman Wirzba, Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology; Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics; Director of Research for the Office of Climate and Sustainability, was our convocation speaker.



Vancouver School of Theology is thankful of its relationship with the United Church of Canada. We pray that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit will be with and among you at the Annual General Meetings of Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regions.

Richard Topping, President



The Rev Dr. Steven Chambers and The Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho leading worship together



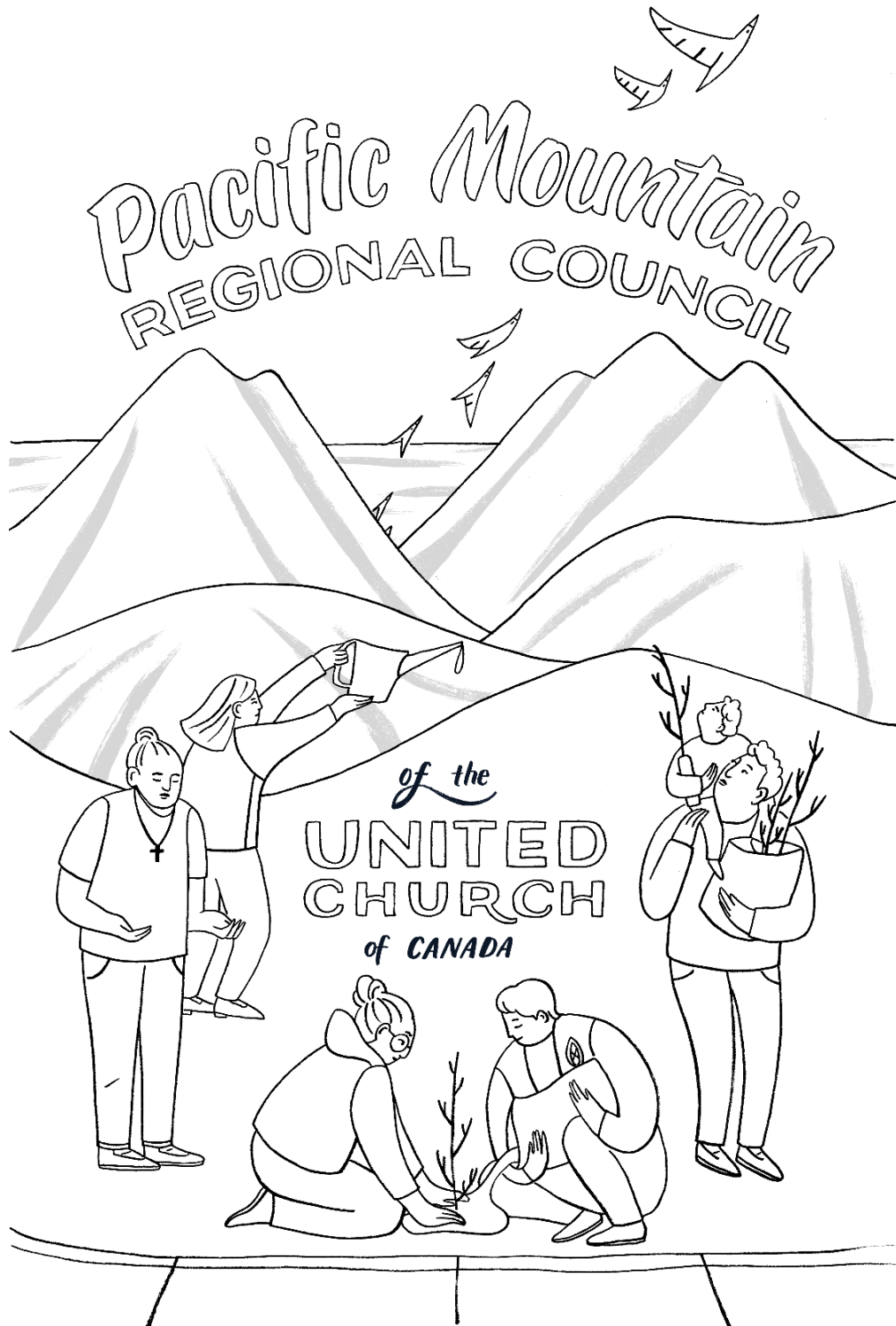
Students in a pop-up choir leading worship on PIE-day at VST with Keith Murray preaching and presiding.



The background is a solid dark blue. Overlaid on the left side is a large, stylized floral or leaf-like pattern in a lighter shade of blue. The pattern consists of several overlapping, rounded shapes that resemble petals or leaves, with some internal lines suggesting veins or structure. The text "FINAL PAGES" is centered horizontally and partially overlaps the floral pattern.

FINAL PAGES

WE ARE THE CHURCH COLOURING PAGE (ARTWORK BY EMILY THIESSEN)



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RECORD OF EDITS TO GM2024 A&R

V2 (Version 2) May 25:

- Addition of missing Proposals content, starting page 124

V3 (Version 3) May 27:

- Correction to typo in The One Page Agenda, page 1 (Saturday afternoon schedule 11:00pm Gathering Music changed to 1:00pm Gathering Music)

V4 (Version 4) May 29

- Typo corrections within Celebrands content
- Addition of missing words and corrected sentence structure within the Archives content
- Updating of event name and guests, Friday and Saturday evening in the Agenda

V5 (Version 5) May 30

- Correction to date in 1. of Business Motions, page 51
- Correction to The Manual version in 8. of Business Motions
- Addition of two proposals, starting page 135

V6 (Version 6) May 30

- Removal of proposal PMR-06 that added in V5: Arms Embargo Now Signatory

V7 (Version 7) June 1

Addition of Proposal PMR 24-05, beginning on page 139



DRAFT MINUTES OF PMRC GM 2023

**Minutes of the Fifth General Meeting
Pacific Mountain Regional Council
The United Church of Canada
University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, BC, and Zoom
June 1-4, 2023**

First Session, 6:00 P.M. Thursday June 1, 2023

Gathering	Music brought the Council together.
Introduction	The President, Deborah Richards, called members of the Council both in-person and online through Whova and Zoom to recognize the “Refining Fire and Living Stones” in our lives.
Authority	Pursuant to the authority of the fourth General Meeting of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council of The United Church of Canada (2022), the fifth General Meeting of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council convened at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), Abbotsford, BC, as well as on the online platforms Whova and Zoom™ and was declared open to conduct the business properly before it by President Deborah Richards. A quorum was present. Whova and Zoom™ are online platforms which allow members online to communicate with one another at the same time and to communicate with the business table present in Abbotsford, BC.
Welcome and Introductions	The President welcomed members of the Council to this meeting of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council. Members of the Region both in-person and online are called in this moment to a life of deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice. The President celebrated that at our last General Meeting, the Pacific Mountain Regional Council became an Affirming Ministry; she read the statement. She also named Holy Manners, the Seven Sacred Teachings, and Equity Aspirations that are part of the General Council and its Executive’s work and called the Region to accept them as guideposts for our work this weekend.
Indigenous Relations Acknowledgement	We acknowledge that the buildings and ministries of The United Church of Canada from coast to coast to coast are on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. The University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) recognizes that long before Canada was formed, the Stó:lō (people of the river) occupied the land on which UFV is located, living in the Fraser Valley and lower Fraser Canyon of British Columbia they spoke Halq’eméylem, also known as the upriver dialect. UFV recognizes and honours the contribution that Aboriginal people have made — and continue to make — to our community. UFV supports Indigenous learners and seeks to incorporate indigenous ways of knowing in the curriculum. The Pacific Mountain Regional Council is grateful for this acknowledgment and commits to continued reconciliation with indigenous peoples. Lindsay Veenstra led us through an embodied acknowledgment.
Moderator Video	The President welcomed a video from the 44 th Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne. In it, the Moderator offered a message which reflected on the strategic plan of The United Church and its call and purpose. The Moderator encouraged the Region to live into deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice.
City of Abbotsford Welcome	Tim Bowman introduced Abbotsford Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mark Warkentin, who welcomed the Region to Abbotsford. The President thanked the Deputy Mayor for their words.



Introductions	Table groups were invited to welcome each other to this space and time.
President's Address	The President, Deborah Richards, shared her reflections on her first year in office. She spoke with the Council about church plants, as well as congregations which closed and amalgamated and found new ways of being. She shared with us about the ground penetrating scans at the Alberni Residential Institution on the Tseshaht Nation and the possibility of seventeen unmarked graves, and the records of at least sixty-five deaths. The President reflected on the commitment to being an Affirming Region. She spoke about long awaited transitions to church space that have helped realize housing. At one such opening, an Anglican Priest offered the words that we have “taught each other what it means to be pilgrims on the journey.” Over this meeting we will hear about the transformative work that is occurring in our Region and in our Communities. She encouraged members of the Council to share their stories with each other; both where ministries flourish and where they struggle. She assured us that not one is walking alone on this journey, that we are together, and God is with us. The President acknowledged Treena Duncan, Regional Council Executive Minister, and introduced the Business Committee and Agenda & Planning Team. She also acknowledged the Regional Staff. The President named the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, our Keynote Speaker this weekend.
Opening Worship	Worship, focusing on Isaiah 43.1-2 & 15-19, was offered by Matt Emery from the worship team. Simon LeSieur preached, and the sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated. Throughout the weekend, the Canadian Memorial Band, led by Jay Esplana, offered musical leadership.
Theme #1 “Forged in the Fire: Tools for Living in these days”	Beth Hayward introduced the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis as our keynote speaker for the weekend. Jacqui comes to us with a desire to use her gifts to help create an antiracist, just, gun violence free, fully welcoming, and gender-affirming society. She is an author, activist, preacher, and public theologian. The Rev. Dr. Lewis is ordained in the Presbyterian Church and is the first African American and first woman to serve as senior minister in the Middle Collegiate Church, founded in New York City in 1628 and is the oldest continuous Protestant Church in North America. She wrote <i>FierceLove: A Bold Path to Ferocious Courage and Rule-Breaking Kindness That Can Heal the World</i> in 2021. Jacqui spent time over the weekend reflecting on the context of the past few years, naming the fire broke her (and the) church open. She asked the Council to name some of the issues that the Pandemic shone a light on within our churches. The fire scorched and singed us all. Jacqui encouraged us to be free to our authentic selves, speaking the truth always, laying down our baggage (“you don’t have to carry a trunk full of stuff around with you for the rest of your life”) and the Spiritual journey of loving ourselves. At our tables, Jacqui asked us to share with a neighbour which of those we may want to commit to working on. “You are a child of the most high God.” We are each uniquely positioned in the universe to experience what we have.
Announcements & Adjournment	Brief announcements were made regarding the following day and the Council adjourned for the evening. Second Session, 9:00 a.m. Friday June 2, 2023
Gathering & Announcements Worship	The Council gathered with music prior to the opening of the session. Announcements were shared. Aaron Miller presided at worship at which Lauren Kirkey preached on Philippians 1.3-11.



Business Committee Lori Megley-Best, Chair of the Business Committee, offered direction on the proposal business portion of our meeting. She explained that voting would be done using simplyvoting.com allowing all members in-person and online the opportunity to vote together. A test vote was done.

Lori gave an overview of the Business Committee Motions and the Enabling motions; these motions offered guidelines by way of which business, including proposals, would be conducted.

Business Committee Motions M/S (L. Megley-Best/G. Brownmiller) that:

1. *The Roll of the 5th General Meeting of Pacific Mountain Regional Council shall include members registered prior to 12:00 p.m., Friday June 2, 2023. (The Manual 2023 C.1.1 and C.1.2.) Those arriving after that time shall not be included on the Roll or entitled to payment of travel expenses.*
2. *Quorum will be set at a minimum of 20 members which must include at least one ministry personnel and one lay member, not including Corresponding Members. (The Manual 2023 C.4.3)*
3. *The Bounds of The Pacific Mountain Regional Council shall be the Athletic and Recreation Centre at the University of the Fraser Valley, 33844 King Road, Abbotsford, BC; the Zoom digital meeting room assigned and shared with registered members; and any telephone connections established.*
4. *The Business Committee for this General Meeting shall be Mauricio Araujo (Secretary), Lori Megley-Best (Chair), Beth Hayward (Theme & Worship), Tim Bowman (Local Arrangements), Graham Brownmiller, Pamela Evans (First Third), Treena Duncan (Executive Minister), and Deborah Richards (President).*
5. *The agenda as posted on www.pacificmountain.ca shall be the order of business, subject to those changes that are recommended by the Business Committee. Revisions will be announced, and an update posted on the website.*
6. *The President shall have the authority to recess the Regional Council when business, as ordered, is completed, until the next order of the day.*
7. *The minutes of the 4th General Meeting of The Pacific Mountain Regional Council held June 9 – 12, 2022 in Prince George, BC, be received for information.*
8. *The Regional Council Executive Minutes be received for information and included as part of the Record of Proceedings. (The Manual 2022, C.3.1.4)*
9. *The Plenary portions of the agenda will be recorded within the Zoom™ platform and made available on The Pacific Mountain Regional Council website and YouTube Channel.*
10. *In order to facilitate the formulation of motions and discussion of matters raised in business, the President may, at their discretion, suspend the ordinary rules of parliamentary debate and engage in a different process. All final decisions of the council shall follow the rules of debate and order as summarized in the Appendix of The Manual (2023) or Bourinot's Rules of Order.*



11. At the discretion of the President, speakers can be limited to two minutes each.

12. All registered voting members who are online and onsite will vote using the

simplyvoting.com. An email will be sent to each voting member using the email

provided at registration for each vote.

13. All motions having significant budget implications for the Region (defined as

\$2,000 or over) shall be considered “in principle only” and, if adopted, be referred to the Executive for consideration within adopted budgetary constraints.

14. In accordance with Section C.1.2(b) of The Manual 2023, Regional Executive Minister Treena Duncan be named as member of Pacific Mountain Regional Council with full voting privileges.

15. Corresponding Privileges be granted to all invited guests, registered visitors, and staff (other than those who are full voting members of The Region) with voice, yet no voting privileges.

16. The Chairperson of the Business Committee or their designate will present proposals. The President will invite prayerful discernment and discussion on the wisdom of the proposal. A speaker from the body making the proposal will be permitted to speak to it. When the President discerns that the sense of the meeting is such that it is ready to hear a motion on the proposal, the President will invite the Chairperson of the Business Committee or their designate to put the motion. Once the motion has been moved and seconded, Rules of Debate and Order shall be followed.

17. Proposals directed to the General Meeting must be received by the Business Committee prior to Tuesday, May 30, 2023. The Business Committee may recommend editing or clarification before the Proposal comes to the floor. Proposals dealing with matters not noted on the agenda shall be dealt with in an order as determined by the Business Committee. Similar proposals may be grouped together at the discretion of the Business Committee.

18. If The Pacific Mountain Regional Council does not agree with a proposal where the General Council is the court of action, it will not be sent on to General Council unless a separate motion to transmit with non-concurrence is made and passed.

19. In the case of limited time for business, items will be dealt with in the following order: Proposals to The General Council, Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council, Reports requiring a decision of the Regional Council, Reports for Information.



20. *The procedural and prayer microphone shall be labeled on the floor of the plenary space and the chat box in Zoom. For a procedural point of order members of the council are to use “Point of Order” at the start of their statement both onsite and on Zoom. For a prayer request, members onsite are asked to identify they are making a prayer request. On Zoom members are asked to use “Prayer:” Members are encouraged to consult with the Business Committee before making a point of order, requesting prayer, or making a point of personal privilege.*
21. *All unfinished business, including non-General Council proposals, shall be referred to the Regional Council Executive.*
22. *Verbal and written reports be accepted as presented.*
23. *Requests to withdraw from the meeting shall be submitted to, considered, and granted by the Business Committee. Members leaving before 5pm on Saturday, June 3rd without the consent of the Business Committee shall not be entitled to have travel expenses paid.*
24. *Payment of member expenses shall be made as specified in the travel claim form. Late claims submitted after July 15, 2023 shall not be paid.*
25. *Nominations for President-Elect close at 12:00 pm on Friday June 2nd, 2023 and nominations for two (2) vacancies on The Pacific Mountain Regional Council close at 8:15 pm (close of day) on Friday, June 2, 2023.*

Enabling Motions

1. *The Regional Executive Minister be authorized to edit reports and minutes for the Record of Proceedings of this meeting.*
2. *The Regional Council Executive be authorized to transact all business of the Regional Council until the next General Meeting of the Region Regional, except those matters prohibited by the Constitution and Bylaws of The United Church of Canada.*
3. *All remaining ballots be destroyed – including the digital results.*
4. *The meeting adjourns following the completion of business as ordered and the benediction concluding the Celebration of Ministry service, June 4, 2023.*

Carried

Proposals – Learning

The proposals were dealt with in a 3-stage process: learning, discussion (in small groups) and decision. Once discussion notes were received by the Business Committee, “way forward” proposals were presented to the Council for decision.

Remit #1

The President and Lori Megley-Best invited forward the authors of proposals to share, in brief, the proposal and direction they were desiring. The six (6) proposals coming to this Regional Gathering for which we engaged in learning:

- 23-01: Supporting Leadership of Adolescents & Youth (SLAY)
- 23-02: Get Rid of Greenhouse Gases (GROGG)



- 23-03: A Regional Staff Position for Seniors Ministry
- 23-04: Sabbatical Fund Relief
- 23-05: Unsettling Hewlett Packard
- 23-06: Advocacy & Action for Guaranteed Livable Income

Retirees Throughout the weekend the following retirees were recognized: Bill Booth, Jan Bihl, Beverly Brazier, Karen Dickey, Wayne Hughes, Julie Lebrun, Tammy Lindahl, Sally McShane, Alanna Menu, S. Blair Odney, Janice Young.
The retirees were invited to reflect on the question: “What do you see God building?”

Theme #2 “Unfinished Business?” Jacqui Lewis shared with us again about authentic truth telling. She shared the story of her community of faith and the fire they experienced and asked the question “what was forged in the fire.” She reminded us that the God we know is different than our closest people; which is the God you’re preaching about? What is true about God that if we said it more often, that it would change the world?

Adjournment Following grace, the Council adjourned for lunch.

Third Session, 1:15 p.m. Friday June 2, 2023

Gathering The Council gathered in music prior to the opening of the session.

The Work of the Region: First Third Ministry Pamela Evans introduced the work of First Third Ministry within the Pacific Mountain Regional Council, and she introduced the staff who work within this ministry. The work of this team is to lift up, inspire and renew the ministry of those in the first third of their life. Pamela invited communities of faith to share with the First Third team what can be done to support them.

Camp Spirit Cathy Cryder introduced Camp Spirit and shared the history of Camp Spirit beginning as a local initiative in 2012 and then becoming a ministry of the Region in 2021. In 2022, one hundred and sixty-eight (168) children, youth and leaders participated in Camp Spirit. The mission of Camp Spirit is “Rooted and Growing in Love” and a few Camp Spirit staff shared what this means to them.

Campus Ministry Daniel Martin shared about the work of Campus United. He shared that the work of Campus Ministry is to be aware of the radical, transformative love of Jesus Christ. He shared some of the struggles that students who are served by Campus Ministry and how this ministry helps build temporary faith community.

Remit: Autonomous National Indigenous Organization At the 44th General Council (2022) a Category 3 Remit was issued to create an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization. A Category 3 Remit requires that Regional Councils and Community of Faith governing bodies to vote on the remit, as presented.

A video prepared by the General Council to offer background to the Remit was shown. Charlene Burns, who is the Community Capacity Coordinator within the Indigenous Ministry unit of the General Council Office for Western Canada, joined us via Zoom to answer questions of clarification about the Remit.

Workshops The Council participated in workshops offered by members of the council.

Music Following the workshops and a break, music brought the Council back together.

Proposals – Discussion Session The Council went into table group time to offer comments and feedback on the proposals before it. Those comments and feedback will be reflected in the “way forward” proposals which came back to the Council on Saturday.

Nominations – President-Elect Beth Hayward introduced the nominee for President-Elect: The Rev. Dr. Simon LeSieur. Simon was asked “Where is the Holy Spirit at work in our churches?” The President declared Simon elected by acclamation, and the Council showed their appreciation for the new President-Elect.



Staff Introductions	Treena Duncan, Executive Minister, thanked the staff of the Pacific Mountain Region for all they do and how they show up in their ministry. A video was shown that introduced each member of the Regional Council Staff, reflecting on what God is inviting us to build with refining fire and living stones. Treena also offered thanks to the staff for the additional work that they picked up during her sabbatical this spring. Members of the Council showed their appreciation for all staff who serve the Region.
General Council Deployed Staff - Stewardship & Gifts	Treena Duncan introduced a video from deployed General Council staff Vicki Nelson who serves the Western Regions of The United Church of Canada as Stewardship Support person. Vicki thanked those who contribute to Mission & Service (M&S) and those who share the stories of Mission & Service in communities of faith. In 2022, M&S Raised \$24.5 Million Dollars, some of which went to Ukrainian relief. Vicki wanted the Council to know that she is available to help facilitate conversations regarding monies and other financial questions. She shared about “Called to be the Church: The Journey” and the program that helps communities of faith encourage deeper generosity.
Adjournment	Following brief announcements and grace, the Council adjourned for dinner.
Fourth Session, 6:45 p.m. Friday, June 2, 2023	
Memorials	During this worship we observed a beautiful tribute to those from the Region who have died.
Worship	Tony Snow, Indigenous Minister for Chinook Winds and Pacific Mountain Regional Councils led the Council in a worship of lament and remembrance, particularly of the findings at the Alberni Residential Institution in the Tseshah nation.
Adjournment	The Council adjourned for the evening.
Fifth Session, 9:00 a.m. Saturday, June 3, 2023	
Gathering	The Council gathered and a morning welcome was offered along with some announcements.
Worship	Worship was led by Rhian Walker and the Canadian Memorial United Church band.
Executive Report	Blair Odney, immediate past-President, took the chair while Deborah Richards commented on the report from the Executive found in the Reports & Agenda book. Deborah asked the Council to reflect on the question “What adaptive strategies could the region consider over the next three to five years to support communities of faiths in their ministries and the region in its work?” The Council was asked to identify strategies and common themes that arise from table group conversations which they submitted electronically for the Executive to consider.
Break	
General Council Deployed Staff - Office of Vocation	The President introduced deployed General Council staff Brenda Fawkes, the Office of Vocation Minister serving Mountain Candidacy Board, Pacific Mountain Regional Council and Chinook Winds Regional Council. Brenda explained the role of Vocational Minister which includes oversight and discipline, but also a support of the vocation of Ministry Personnel from the first request through retirement. So much of their work is done behind the scenes: policy, process and support work.



	The Office of Vocation and its staff hold as their purpose: Faithful, Well-Equipped Ministry Personnel. There are one hundred and seventy (170) members of the Boards of Vocation; Brenda asked anyone who serves on one of those committees, including the Mountain Candidacy Board to be recognized. There are fourteen (14) members on the Mountain Candidacy Board. Brenda highlighted some of the work that is being done in the review of the Office of Vocation. She highlighted Ethical standards which have been recently updated, candidacy pathway policy & procedures, and refining the work to support Lay Supervision Committees who support students in Supervised Ministry Education. Currently there is a pause in our Admissions process because the committee needs to reevaluate the program; there are one hundred and ninety four (194) people who have been admitted but do not have positions. There are forty (40) candidates that the Mountain Candidacy Board has under its supervision: twenty-eight (28) from PMRC and ten (10) from Chinook Winds. Twenty-four (24) are at Vancouver School of Theology, five (5) are at Atlantic School of Theology, two (2) are at Emmanuel, one (1) is at St. Andrew's, four (4) are at Centre for Christian Studies, and four (4) are in a reflection year or waiting for SME. Brenda introduced the candidates who will be received into ministry during the Celebration of Ministry: Frances Kitson and Derry Bott who will be ordained, and John Helps who will be commissioned. They shared with the Council about their call. Treena Duncan offered thanks to Brenda Fawkes, and offered blessings on the work she does. Brenda is a gift to the Region who does the work of supporting faithful, well-equipped ministry with grace, rooted and grounded in the Spirit, in purpose, and in mission.
The Work of the Region: LeaderShift	Michelle Slater, Interim Director, spoke about LeaderShift. Over the past year, three priorities have been set by LeaderShift: help and support in leading the church to rediscover the enlivening power of the Holy Spirit; help leaders reclaim our voice and presence in public theology; and help the church replant communities of Jesus followers. Michelle spoke about a few events and programs that are coming up and named an ongoing program that communities of faith can access to engage work around Janet Gear's book "Undivided Love."
Naramata Centre	Each year at the Regional meeting we heard about important work being done by ministries which are connected to us. Sasha Viminitz, Executive Director of Naramata Centre, shared with the council about the work of Naramata. This year is the seventy-fifth (75th) anniversary of the Centre, and Sasha shared about its past, future and current state. Sasha was new to the idea of Radical Hospitality, but trusts that the Centre is present to welcome people to the deep contemplative tradition and help provide entry into a life of faith. The Centre is committed to the mission and ministry of the church.
Indigenous Ministry	Tony Snow shared about Indigenous Ministry in Pacific Mountain Regional Council. While John Snow is on medical leave, Tony has been serving one quarter time (1/4) with PMRC to ensure that Indigenous Ministry has continued with support. Tony invited Jim Angus to join him as a sign of respect for his eldership and leadership. Tony shared history about Indigenous Day of Prayer on June 21st each year; the journey to that day began in 1971. He reminded folks of the Calls to the Church, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the journey towards reconciliation.



Tony invited members of the Council to join in the events that Indigenous Ministries continues to provide. Through relationship, reconciliation can continue. The Chinook Winds Indigenous Ministry has created an allyship resource and workbook. Tony shared of the tradition in which reconciliation comes from truth-telling and respectfulness.

Jim Angus shared his appreciation for the first nations in this area and shared about the hardship of death in their community, particularly those from the drug toxicity crisis. Jim believes that we are dying as a church in native communities, at the time when we really need the church. Jim and Doreen have worked hard to keep the church alive, but they feel isolated, and acknowledge the importance of the church. The change in the structure of the church has not helped. Jim also offered thanks to the church for what has been offered over the many decades. The court showed their appreciation to Jim for his testimony and his long service. Jim offered a prayer to the Council and blessed our meal.

Adjournment

Following that blessing, the Council adjourned for lunch.

Sixth Session, 1:15 p.m., Saturday June 3, 2023

Gathering

The Council gathered online prior to the opening of the session.

Welcoming Folks to PMRC

A video was shown to introduce some ministry personnel who have joined Pacific Mountain Regional Council over the past year. They responded to the question "Where do you see God building?"

Proposals – Decision

As we entered into our proposal session, Treena Duncan named that every change that we make is made on the solid ground that our elders have created for us; particular elders in the court were recognized such as Jim Angus and Don Robertson. Members of the Council were invited to name aloud some of the elders that helped them grow in faith.

The Business Committee met and received the feedback from the discussion sessions. Having considered all of that feedback received from the discussion sessions, the Business Committee presented Way Forward Proposals to the Court. Discussion was held on each proposal.

Remit 1: Autonomous National Indigenous Organization Do we agree with establishing an autonomous national indigenous organization within The United Church of Canada?

Organization

The Council voted Yes

Proposal WF23-01: that Pacific Mountain Regional Council of The United Church of Canada require **Supporting Leadership of** that at least 5% of the voting representatives be 25 years of age or under in order to pass motions for decision.

Adolescents & Youth

(SLAY)

The Way Forward M/S (L. Medley-Best / G. Brownmiller)

Proposal that Pacific Mountain Regional Council of The United Church of Canada require that at least 5% of the voting representatives be 30 years of age or under in order to pass motions for decision.

Defeated

Proposal WF23-02: that Pacific Mountain Regional Council perform an energy audit of emissions **Get Rid of** produced in the course of its work (including Regional Gatherings, staff travel, **Greenhouse Gases** events), including through buildings, transportation, and waste; and **(GROGG)**



that the Region strongly encourage Communities of Faith to provide an energy audit to be included with their 2024 self-assessment/annual report provided to the Region; and

that the Region report on its carbon emissions and on all audits reported from Communities of Faith at the 2024 Regional Gathering.

The Way Forward *M/S (L. Medley-Best / G. Brownmiller)*

Proposal *that we refer this proposal to the Executive for decision with the feedback from this session.*

Carried

Proposal WF23-03: That Pacific Mountain Regional Council establish a Regional Staff position for **Regional Staff** ministry for and with seniors, including retired ministers beyond pastoral care; **Position for Seniors'** and

Ministry establish a task group to create a job description for this position and move into immediate implementation of this proposal.

The Way Forward *M/S (L. Medley-Best / G. Brownmiller)*

Proposal *that we refer to the Executive for decision with the feedback from this session.*

Carried

Proposal WF23-04: that Pacific Mountain Regional Council establish a fund that can be drawn on by **Sabbatical Fund** any faith community providing time for and support to a sabbatical period granted **Relief** to qualifying personnel; and

that the fund be open to applications from qualifying personnel as they seek enhanced opportunities during their sabbatical; and

that a sabbatical be recognized to be any five year period of qualifying employment whether continuous in one community of faith or not; and

that the fund be created out of contributions from communities of faith and qualifying personnel in equal amounts.

The Way Forward *M/S (L. Medley-Best / G. Brownmiller)*

Proposal *that we take no action on 23-04 Sabbatical Fund Relief.*

Carried

Theme #3: A Bold New Thing on Earth, Can you see it? Jacqui Lewis shared for the final time. She asked the Council "If vision is the picture of a preferred reality, what's the most urgent thing you see, the most urgent sense of vision. What is calling you, provoking, annoying you?"

She ended by reminding us that we are coming out of the fires as people who have been forged in it and who are in fact living stones, with whom, through whom God is building a bold new thing on the earth.

Beth Hayward thanked Jacqui Lewis for her loving, faithful, prophetic witness over the weekend and a gift was offered. The Council showed their appreciation and Jacqui led a communal blessing.

Executive Nominations

Graham Brownmiller, chair of Nominations, spoke to the slate for the Regional Council Executive. There was one member of the Council Executive whose first term was up and was willing to be appointed for a second term. There were three expressions of interest for the two positions available. The Nominations Committee discerned that both youth might be appointed, with one of them serving as a corresponding member. If there is a vacancy on the Executive, that corresponding member would become a voting member of the Executive.

M/S/C (G. Brownmiller / J. Goddard-Sheppard) that

the Regional Council re-appoint Ibi Chuan to the Executive for a second term (2023-2026), and appoint Joseph Kyser and Johannes VanKessel Crozier to the Executive for a first term (2023-2026). Claire Roy will serve as a corresponding member.

Carried



Proposal 23-05 and 23-06

Having reached the order of the day Proposals 23-05 “UnSettling Hewlett Packard” and 23-06 “Advocacy & Action for Guaranteed Livable Income” were not dealt with, but the proposed way forward and the proposals were referred to the Regional Council Executive.

Proposal 23-05 “UnSettling Hewlett Packard”

that Pacific Mountain Regional Council divest from or cease any activity / investment / purchase agreements that support Hewlett Packard; and encourage its communities of faith to do the same; and request the General Council of The United Church of Canada to add Hewlett Packard specifically to the UnSettling Goods Campaign.

Proposal 23-06 “Advocacy & Action for Guaranteed Livable Income” *that Pacific Mountain Regional Council initiate, encourage and assist its communities of faith to engage writing campaigns requesting their municipal council and/or regional districts to pass resolutions calling on the federal government to implement a Guaranteed Livable Income; and provide a guideline to communities of faith for identifying and approaching their municipal council along with templates to submit.*

New 01: Youth’s Addition to Spirit-full Speech (YASS)

With the earlier defeat of Proposal 23-01, a new proposal was brought forward to the Council. While it did not follow the three stage process set for proposals, the Council entertained the proposal as it was presented.

M/S (B. Fillier / G. Brownmiller)

that Pacific Mountain Regional Council of The United Church of Canada set a requirement that at least five percent (5%) of registered voting delegates at any PMRC Annual Meeting be 30 years of age or younger.

Carried

Gratitude

Executive Minister, Treena Duncan, offered gratitude on behalf of the Regional Council to those who helped this General Meeting happen. An event like this takes a lot of planning over many months. She named members of the Regional Staff, the Agenda & Planning Team, Theme & Worship, the UFV Staff, Allan Buckingham and the AV Team. Treena also offered thanks to the President, Deborah Richards. In turn, the President offered thanks to Executive Minister, Treena Duncan.

Save The Date

The sixth General Meeting of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council will take place May 30 – June 2, 2024 at St. Andrew’s-Wesley United Church in Vancouver, BC.

Worship

Worship was led by Rhian Walker, and Ha Na Park preached on Isaiah 65.17-19, 21-23 and John 3.1-8.

Adjournment

Following announcements, the Council adjourned for a(n optional) celebration dinner and Silent Disco Dance Party!

Seventh Session, Sunday June 4, 2023

Celebration of Ministry

The Regional Council gathered in worship and provided access for communities of faith to stream. This Celebration of Ministry worship saw the commissioning of one (1) minister and the ordination of two (2) ministers. The Rev. Beth Hayward preached a sermon on 1 Peter 2.4-10 and the Sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated. Following a blessing and commissioning from the President, Deborah Richards, the meeting was adjourned.



PROPOSALS RECEIVED

- PMR 24-01 Truth Telling and Reconciliation Action
- PMR 24-02 Emerging Communities of Faith in The Manual
- PMR 23-03 Facing Every Emotional Limit (FEEL)
- PMR 23-04 UnSettling Goods Campaign Reinstatement

PROPOSALS RECEIVED



PMR 24-01 TRUTH TELLING AND RECONCILIATION ACTION



Monday, May 6, 2024

Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal Form 2024

Submission Deadline: May 17th, 2024

Name of person submitting this proposal	Ingrid Brown
Email	ingrid@weirdchurchcumberland.com
Phone Number	(250) 218-7641
Proposal Name	Truth Telling and Reconciliation Action
This proposal is for:	GC45 - Proposal

What is the issue? Why is it Important?

Between 1925 and 1969, The United Church of Canada operated a total of 15 institutions within the Indian Residential School system as part of the federal government's policy of assimilating Indigenous peoples. The 1986 Apology issued by The Rt. Rev. Bob Smith makes no mention of the violence perpetrated at Indian Residential Facilities ("School"). The 1998 Apology issued by The Rt. Rev. Bill Phipps affirms the pain and suffering experienced by students and their families, including the abuse inflicted on some students. It is time to update the 1986 & 1998 Apologies in light of the truths the church has learned since they were first offered.

The church is being asked by residential "school" survivors to explicitly name our denominational complicity in the deaths of babies and children who received improper burial and/or were incinerated – and who never came home.

It is important that we continue to heed the words in the 1988 response to the Apology by the All Native Circle Conference that expressed hope and prayer that we live into action and that the words are not symbolic only. As The Rt. Rev. Phipps expressed in his 1998 words, "we pray...that you will witness the living out of our apology in our actions in the future" we are calling on The United Church of Canada to undertake two actions: offer an additional apology in light of new truths or update existing ones; and lay out a national denominational strategy for living out our commitment to reconciliation in action.

We recognize that the apologies were acknowledged but never accepted.

What is happening now?

On May 27, 2021 the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc announced that the remains of 215 children were found buried at the former Kamloops Indian Residential "School". This affirmation of Elder's truths led to other investigations at former residential "schools" and the discovery of more unmarked graves and remains that were never returned to families and communities.

PROPOSALS RECEIVED



On June 4, 2021, The United Church of Canada issued a response. In particular Calls to Action 73-76 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report from June 2015 were highlighted. The United Church that the denomination affirmed that all materials related to residential “schools” were submitted to the TRC and are available through the National Residential Schools Memorial Register.

The Manual reminds us that it is the responsibility of every generation to articulate our faith in our time, and the same is true with respect to our ongoing work of reconciliation and decolonization. A new statement that articulates a revised understanding of the ownership of our faults/sins along with the hopes for where we might be going in the future is an important next step, in conjunction with a plan of action.

This is especially important right now as the settler church and the Indigenous church discern how we will relate to one another; the settler church must own our history if we are to craft a new future together. The actions being recommended will help us to come to a common, national understanding of where we have been, where we are now, and where we are going that is not subject to personal perspectives or opinions.

Sample Wording:

The General Council or the Region Could:

A. Study/discuss the issue:

- The General Council/Region could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.

B. Act on the issue, which could include:

- General Council/Region directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
- General Council/Region adopting a policy position/strategy
- General Council/Region encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

What is the recommendation?

1. The General Council of The United Church of Canada undertake an appropriate process to update the 1986 and 1998 Apologies in light of the Tk'emlups te Secwépemc First Nation discoveries and subsequent similar discoveries at other locations. The update is to include an acknowledgement of the babies and children who died and were denied proper funeral ceremonies, incinerated, and never returned home to their communities and families.

2. The General Council of The United Church of Canada in partnership with The Autonomous Indigenous Organization design, communicate, and implement a coordinated Truth and Reconciliation ministry plan for Communities of Faith and Regions to be presented to The General Council in 2028.

Background Information

In recent social media engagement, the Rev. Rob Shearer (PMRC) shared the following:



"I was honoured to be asked to be a 'witness' today at ?Aps Ciik Cha Chim Hiy Ap (Road to Reconciliation), a monthly gathering of survivors of the The United Church of Canada's Alberni Indian Residential 'School' (1892-1973) who join each month with settlers (like myself) who are there to listen. As a witness - which is a listening and sharing tradition in some Island Indigenous cultures - I've been asked (without using names or images of survivors, in this case) to share what I heard: that is, that the stories of resilience, bravery and healing in the face of violence experienced at these state and church-run institutions (and ongoing violence and lateral violence due to colonialism) is powerful and ongoing. Whenever I attend this group, the stories are beyond heartbreaking and beyond powerful. I never leave unchanged. I've never written about it publicly because I've never been asked to be a witness. But today, I was specifically asked by the survivors to do so - and to share on social media. Today's main speaker - who is a survivor who is about the same age as me - shared deep spiritual strength, powerful teaching about profound grief, loss (of her children) and relationship with Creator/God - and even a story of her physical resurrection after an incident of extreme violence many years ago. I am in awe of her. I am honoured, as a white settler, a male (on this International Women's Day) and Christian clergyperson, to be welcomed into this circle with such (unearned) grace, vulnerability, and strength on the part of the survivors. The group has asked me to use my voice send a note to the senior leadership of The United Church of Canada on their behalf, asking us to update our apology to survivors to explicitly name our denominational complicity in the deaths of babies and children who received improperly burial and/or, were incinerated - and who never came home. I will do so in the coming days."

In a follow up comment, the Rev. Tony Snow (CWRC) wrote, "This final point about updating the apology/apologies is critical. For so long, real reconciliation has been ad hoc and temporary, with some Indigenous communities with United Church buildings not even knowing that an apology has been made."

Can we finally have a coordinated strategy to deal with reconciliation nationally? Starting with building relationships in meaningful ways in all areas where this national church has a presence. We have a 2022 Response document that emerged after the 215 were found and 7 years after the TRC Calls to Action were adopted. But this document gives no direction and no metrics to show how we are moving the needle in community. This information is critical if we want to sustain our commitments intergenerationally. The United Church has been very good at making (and tweaking) apologies. And lacking in follow through to enact real, meaningful, partner-building change."

Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming an [intercultural church](#);
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).



Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed “with” people, or “on behalf of” people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal comes at the request of survivors and families of students who attended a residential “school” that was run by The United Church of Canada, as well as the Rev. Tony Snow, Indigenous Minister for Chinook Winds Region. It has been prepared and is presented by the Rev. Ingrid Brown and the Rev. Dr. Bob Filler, with the understanding that Indigenous people should not bear the burden of continuing to hold the settler church accountable for reconciliation. We believe that the actions outlined in this proposal are the necessary next steps in a journey that is already underway but is in need of rearticulation and concrete action.

Confirmation Proposal is complete and I am ready to submit it. ~

PROPOSALS RECEIVED



PMR 24-02 EMERGING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH IN THE MANUAL



Friday, May 17, 2024

Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal Form 2024

Submission Deadline: May 17th, 2024

Name of person submitting this proposal

Ingrid Brown

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Proposal Name

Emerging Communities of Faith in The Manual

This proposal is for:

Pacific Mountain Region and GC45 - Same proposal for both levels of governance.

What is the issue? Why is it Important?

We believe that the Triune God is calling us to (re)widen the structures of the church to make room for Emerging Communities of Faith within The Manual of The United Church of Canada.

The key missional issue is that The United Church of Canada's Emerging Communities of Faith are sprouting up all around us!

As this happens, The Manual (2024) has no category for the Emerging Communities to fit within or grow within the structures of the church.

The Strategic Plan of The United Church of Canada is calling for growth, a part of which is through the creation of new Communities of Faith like these - and some Regional Councils are engaging in this work within their own contexts.

There is an opportunity to start diverse new and resonant Emerging Communities which practice deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice, even as we, the Church, commit to renewing existing Communities of Faith.

What is happening now?

The Manual (2010) had a category of 'mission' (page 38, Bylaws) which could hold such Emerging Communities, though this category was removed in later editions of The Manual.



This removal means that there is no longer a place to hold communities that are not yet ready to become full Communities of Faith.

As The United Church of Canada seeks to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit and develop diverse decolonizing, post-Christendom expressions of Christ's church, these Emerging Communities are a way to explore what God's Spirit is doing in the church in both new and renewing ways.

However, these communities are struggling to find their place in the church.

Currently, Emerging Communities in The United Church of Canada are often left without a container to hold them in the church as they grow. This minimizes or complicates their capacity for representation and participation in the wider church, developing local decision-making and accountability structures, and even to explore membership paradigms or to baptise or marry folks.

This may stunt or marginalize initiatives to create new Communities of Faith, and even leave these new communities and the courts of the Church vulnerable to liabilities as Regional and Denominational Councils support and hold these communities in sometimes laissez-faire ways.

Sample Wording:

The General Council or the Region Could:

A. Study/discuss the issue:

- The General Council/Region could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.

B. Act on the issue, which could include:

- General Council/Region directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
- General Council/Region adopting a policy position/strategy
- General Council/Region encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

What is the recommendation?

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council proposes that the General Council draw upon and revise the category of 'mission' found in the 2010 Manual (page 39, Bylaws) into future editions of The Manual, amending the potentially problematic term 'Mission' to 'Emerging Community' and updating the language of the courts of the church. The amended definition would read:

"Emerging Communities of Faith" mean one (1) or more groups of people that are a part of The United Church and that meet for public worship, but not fully constituted as a Community of Faith that is a Pastoral Charge or a Congregation by the Regional Council."

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council proposes that the General Council add a section to the manual (B.9) for Emerging Communities of Faith with these or similar terms:

- An Emerging Community will exist as a ministry or expression of the Regional Council through a covenant with the ministry personnel and/or a wider group of leadership in the Emerging Community.
- The Regional Council will be responsible for the care, administration, and oversight of the Emerging Community.



- As an Emerging Community gains capacity, the Regional Council will have the authority to gradually transfer roles and responsibilities to the Emerging Community as it evolves toward becoming a fully recognized Community of Faith that is a Congregation or Pastoral Charge, provided the Emerging Community reports all relevant information to the Regional Council.
- The Regional Council will have the authority to accept voting delegates from Emerging Communities to the same ratios as established Communities of Faith at such a point as the Regional Council deems the Emerging Community is ready to do so.

Background Information

Though the language changes, the church is always called to new expressions of our ancient faith.

As it was in the old 'missions' within The United Church of Canada (and precedent denominations) the structures of the church should encourage both Emerging Communities as well as support existing / established ones. This reflects our Strategic Priorities (especially the Leading Priority: "Growth" see https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2022-12/strategic-plan-final_nov-2022.pdf)

This proposed change to The Manual allows for Emerging Communities of many expressions to find a place in the structures of the church, as well as to give them a flexible process to grow organically into full Communities of Faith.

This Proposal is coming from the on-the-ground experience of several 'maturing' Emerging Communities in the Pacific Mountain Regional Council, as well in consultation with regional staff who are working alongside ministry personnel, ministry teams and volunteers to establish these communities.

This proposal is being presented by Rev. Ingrid Brown from Weird Church and endorsed by The Emmaus Community / The AbbeyChurch, two of our earliest Emerging Communities in the Pacific Mountain Region. The experience of many of these communities and their ministry personnel is that they are operating on the margins of the church and are finding the gaps in denominational polity that are discordant with the support and enthusiasm that their work is generating.

On one hand leaders are being encouraged to create new expressions of Church and, on the other, there is no place or category in church polity in which to incubate these.

Though these communities are classified as "missions" on Church Hub, there is no comparable category in The Manual (2024).

This proposal would seek to empower these Emerging Communities, though not at the expense of existing ones. There are no immediate budgetary implications that are not already part of the Strategic Plan.

Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming an [intercultural church](#);



- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).

Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed “with” people, or “on behalf of” people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

Emerging Communities of Faith often have strong distinctions of identity; be they intentionally diasporic, affirming, first-third (younger), linguistic, etc. Many have BIPOC, differently abled and / or queer folks in leadership.

They often present new opportunities to be intercultural, intergenerational and/or entrepreneurial. These Emerging Communities offer a gateway into the church both for leadership and congregational adherents from diverse demographics who are not always represented or engaged as easily in established congregational cultures.

Empowering Emerging Communities can be an action to enhance and deepen our commitments to becoming a diverse, intercultural, intergenerational, creative, entrepreneurial, anti-racist and / or decolonizing church.

As such, they are an important part of the ecology of the church.

Confirmation Proposal is complete and I am ready to submit it. ~



PMR 23-03 FACING EVERY EMOTIONAL LIMIT (FEEL)



Friday, May 17, 2024

Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal Form 2024

Submission Deadline: May 17th, 2024

Name of person submitting this proposal

Lindsay Veenstra

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(604) 802-7610

Proposal Name

Facing Every Emotional Limit (FEEL)

This proposal is for:

Pacific Mountain Region and GC45 - Same proposal for both levels of governance.

What is the issue? Why is it Important?

Members of Youth Council are deeply concerned about the lack of accessible mental health services. Many people, particularly those in the first third of life, are facing mental health challenges but are not being adequately supported by the health care system. This is hurting our children and the children in our communities - there is not enough help coming from others, and we need all the help we can get.

There is a lack of adequate services for all mental health challenges, not just acute or life-threatening ones. Everyone deserves to thrive. This requires investment in mental health support services.

Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. So having the proper resources, destigmatizing the issue, and normalizing conversations about mental health can sustain a healthy life, and in turn healthy communities.

What is happening now?

The mental health of Canadians, and young Canadians in particular, has been declining since before the pandemic. 25% of youth in Canada are currently reported to be experiencing mental health challenges; challenges which have also been found to disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and racialized youth as well as youth of diverse gender and sexual identities (Globe and Mail Article).

There are many barriers to receiving mental health services. The lack of available resources means that people experiencing mild or moderate impairment of mental wellness may struggle to access services, until they are experiencing severe impairments or a mental health crisis. It feels dismissive to be told that you are not struggling enough to receive mental health services - everyone deserves to feel seen and heard, and to be supported when they reach out for help. Further, more robust mental healthcare solutions may reduce the severity of impairment and may pre-empt crises/hospitalizations.

Getting a diagnosis is challenging: it takes a long time, usually involves a waiting list, and is most accessible for those with severe conditions. See the above statistics and resources for more context:

Barriers reported by children and youth accessing mental health and substance use include:

- 86% said they were overwhelmed and didn't know how to continue
- 67% said the long wait times and services not being provided when needed were barriers
- 64% said limitations of when and where to get services
- 59% said being misunderstood or dismissed (including by provider)
- 54% said fear of what others would think

(Early Intervention for Mental Health and Substance Use Among Children and Youth Survey, 2022 - Canadian Institute for Health Information)

Over half of the people who visit the ER frequently for mental health and substance use help are under the age of 36 (CIHI 2022).

Data from the 2024 World Happiness Report shows that life satisfaction among those in North America has decreased since 2005, most sharply so for those between ages 15 to 24 (Chapter 3 + appendix, World Happiness Report 2024). Overall, the rankings from 2021 to 2023 show that the youngest age groups are the least happy in Canada (Table 14, World Happiness Report 2024).

Sample Wording:

The General Council or the Region Could:

A. Study/discuss the issue:

- The General Council/Region could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.

B. Act on the issue, which could include:

- General Council/Region directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
- General Council/Region adopting a policy position/strategy
- General Council/Region encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

What is the recommendation?

The Youth Council of Pacific Mountain Regional Council, in partnership with the Youth Council of Chinook Winds Regional Council, recommends that the Pacific Mountain Regional Council and the General Council of the United Church of Canada have a conversation about ways the church might respond to the ongoing mental health crisis.

Background Information

Part of the church's job is to counsel - given that Canada is underfunding mental health support services in ways that are harmful and unjust, Youth Council feels that the church is called to cry out in response. The church is called to be in healing relationships with others; and to advocate for justice and for those who need healing.



The United Church of Canada has a history of involvement in health care in Canada, including providing health care services, providing educational resources, or participating in advocacy. This tradition goes back at least as far as the 16th General Council in 1954, which passed policy in support of a national health insurance plan.

The 41st General Council directed specific actions on mental health, including requests to federal, provincial, and territorial governments to increase funding for mental health services and for the compilation of resources concerning mental health to be created for the benefit of the churches (Policy GC41 2012 - 032). The United Church has designated the first Sunday in May as Mental Health Sunday, since 2023.

Funding Implications

As the proposal is only recommending that the respective Councils engage in conversation, we anticipate no significant funding implications.

How does your proposal align with the priorities of the Region?

RE: Supporting healthy communities of faith

Healthy communities of faith are made up of people. The health of our communities is in this way inextricably linked to the wellness of the people within and around them. Promoting mental health of individuals will contribute to the overall health and vitality of our communities of faith.

RE: Growing faithful public witness

Mental health advocacy is justice work. The church's advocacy around health justice is a demonstration of faithful public witness, given the scope of the need and the severity of the harm, as outlined above. Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming an [intercultural church](#);
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).

Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed “with” people, or “on behalf of” people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal would help the church live into the commitment to be an open, accessible, and barrier-free church. Normalizing conversations about mental health helps the church destigmatize people struggling with mental health & opposes discrimination. And, encouraging an increase in mental health



resources and supports may address impairments that might inhibit participation in the full life of the church for those struggling with acute or chronic mental health challenges.

The proposal would also have implications for the church's commitments towards other equity-denied groups. See above background information on how children & youth who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ and racialized children & youth experience mental health challenges at heightened rates.

Confirmation Proposal is complete and I am ready to submit it. ~

PROPOSALS RECEIVED



PMR 23-04 UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN REINSTATEMENT



Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Pacific Mountain Region - Proposal Form 2024

Submission Deadline: May 17th, 2024

Name of person submitting this proposal Kendra Mitchell-Foster

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Phone Number (250) 552-9124

Proposal Name UnSettling Goods Campaign Reinstatement

This proposal is for:

Pacific Mountain Region and GC45 - Same proposal for both levels of governance.

What is the issue? Why is it Important?

This proposal is jointly presented by Rev. Keith Simmonds and Kendra Mitchell-Foster

In 2013 The United Church of Canada formally adopted a campaign to encourage Canadians to withdraw from supporting companies that participate in and benefit from the illegal occupation of Palestine by the government of Israel. Our 42nd General Council (2015) called on the United Church to develop and implement an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.

<https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/unsettling-goods-choose-peace-palestine-and-israel/what-are-united-church-and-others-doing-just-peace/global-church-actions-palestine-and-israel>

Boycott and divestment are identified as promising non-violent actions that can be taken to increase economic pressure on governments, industries and companies that support, profit from, and maintain the illegal occupation of Palestine by Israel, and the horrific violence that continues to be perpetrated against the Palestinian people by Israeli military forces. After more than 223 days of concentrated and targeted violence, after more than 35,000 people have been killed, we believe that God is calling us to respond to the cries for help and peace from the homeland of Jesus Christ, and to do so in a non-violent way that acknowledges both the urgency of the situation, and our responsibility to Costly and Prophetic Solidarity which urges us to speak and act prophetically against injustice in all forms, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls us to costly solidarity with the least of these, in living our discipleship in the world.

What is happening now?

At the Pacific Mountain Regional Council 2023 AGM, Rev. Keith Simmonds proposal "UnSettling Hewlett Packard" was passed as a regional campaign to add Hewlett Packard boycott and divestment to the PMR's regional Solidarity with Palestine justice work. As part of that proposal, PMR agreed to liaise with the General Council (44 or 45) of the United Church of Canada to add Hewlett Packard and its companies to the UnSettling Goods campaign that had been developed beginning 2013 following a motion by General Council in 2013, and featured in the 2015 report UnSettling Goods: Choose Peace in Palestine and Israel read and approved at GC41.

In attempting to fulfill this proposal, it was discovered that the UnSettling Goods Campaign was archived and is no longer part of the UCC's justice work in Solidarity with Palestine. At this time, it is crucial that the United Church of Canada do all in its power to pressure the Government of Israel to cease all actions of

violence, and military actions in Palestine, to end the siege of Palestine immediately, to allow humanitarian aid and safe passage, and to peacefully end the occupation.

Sample Wording:

The General Council or the Region Could:

- A. Study/discuss the issue:
 - The General Council/Region could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.
- B. Act on the issue, which could include:
 - General Council/Region directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
 - General Council/Region adopting a policy position/strategy
 - General Council/Region encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

What is the recommendation?

We recommend that GC45:

- 1) investigate and make public the reasons why UnSettling Goods Campaign was archived
- 2) Reinstate the UnSettling Goods Campaign as part of the United Church of Canada's justice work in Solidarity with Palestine
- 3) Make available again the report UnSettling Goods: Choose Peace in Palestine and Israel
- 4) upon reinstating the campaign, add Hewlett Packard and its companies to the campaign
- 5) create a mechanism through which communities of faith may submit requests directly to the campaign to add other companies to the list for boycott and divestment

Background Information

As evidenced by our sisters and brothers in the United Methodist Church in their Kairos response group, https://www.kairosresponse.org/hp_boycott.html Hewlett Packard is providing technology to the government of Israel that is used in the routine subjugation and brutalization of Palestinians. Hewlett Packard is fully aware of the use of its technology, of the effects of its technology and has refused to withdraw from that use. Purchasing products from Hewlett Packard, investing in Hewlett Packard and staying silent on Hewlett Packard enables and supports the physical, emotional and spiritual oppression of Palestinians. It is time, in line with existing United Church of Canada policy, to insist that Hewlett Packard withdraw from any provision of technology that subjugates Palestinians. To let them know that what they earn from Palestinian oppression will be lost as people around the world refuse to purchase their products.

This action was taken by the Presbyterian Church USA in 2015 and the United Church of Christ USA in 2016.

Funding Implications

There is no extra funding required for this proposal

How does your proposal align with the priorities of the Region?

Justice priorities in PMR include using the principles-based approach to justice and solidarity work:

The call to bold discipleship, deep spirituality, and daring justice means that the people of the United Church cannot remain silent in situations of injustice. Addressing injustice includes (though is not limited to) building:



- a. awareness and understanding of the injustices our neighbours experience
- b. analysis of the systems and forces that perpetuate injustice
- c. advocacy with those neighbours who are most vulnerable and marginalized
- d. action with those neighbours who invite/welcome our participation in their work

Particularly with these principles:

Respect for Human Dignity - Be in solidarity with those among us experiencing injustice, oppression, the denial of dignity, and violation of human rights. Affirm the right to resist, repudiate, and challenge any expression of injustice.

Full Participation and Decolonization - Challenge all expressions of colonialism through recognizing and naming colonial mentalities that are automatically replicated in our institutions and relationships with partners. Support community-based self-determination, including the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Listen attentively to social movements and groups of people who are historically marginalized and who are most affected by injustice. Engage in critical discernment about the best ways forward when called upon to speak and act for justice, to dismantle institutions and practices that are instrumental in replicating colonialism and usher a new mode of thinking and doing that decolonizes.

Costly and Prophetic Solidarity - Speak and act prophetically against injustice in all forms, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls us to costly solidarity with the least of these, in living our discipleship in the world.

Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming an [intercultural church](#);
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).

Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed “with” people, or “on behalf of” people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal aligns with the adoption of UNDRIP and our responsibility to work toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples globally. Palestinian people are Indigenous to the holy land, and as such we must act in solidarity with them against the oppression they have been living under for decades.

Confirmation

Proposal is complete and I am ready to submit it.



PMR 24-05 NON-VIOLENT ECONOMIC ADVOCACY RESPONSES

What is the issue? Why is it important?

** This proposal is jointly presented by Rev. Keith Simmonds and Kendra Mitchell-Foster**

In 2013 The United Church of Canada formally adopted a campaign to encourage Canadians to withdraw from supporting companies that participate in and benefit from the illegal occupation of Palestine by the government of Israel. Our 42nd General Council (2015) called on the United Church to develop and implement an ethical divestment strategy from companies that derive substantial financial benefit or that contribute significantly to furthering the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.

<https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/unsettling-goods-choose-peace-palestine-and-israel/what-are-united-church-and-others-doing-just-peace/global-church-actions-palestine-and-israel>

Boycott and divestment are identified as promising non-violent actions that can be taken to increase economic pressure on governments, industries and companies that support, profit from, and maintain the illegal occupation of Palestine by Israel, and the horrific violence that continues to be perpetrated against the Palestinian people by Israeli military forces. After more than 223 days of concentrated and targeted violence, after more than 35,000 people have been killed, we believe that God is calling us to respond to the cries for help and peace from the homeland of Jesus Christ, and to do so in a non-violent way that acknowledges both the urgency of the situation, and our responsibility to Costly and Prophetic Solidarity which urges us to speak and act prophetically against injustice in all forms, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls us to costly solidarity with the least of these, in living our discipleship in the world.

What is happening now?

At the Pacific Mountain Regional Council 2023 AGM, Rev. Keith Simmonds proposal "UnSettling Hewlett Packard" was passed as a regional campaign to add Hewlett Packard boycott and divestment to the PMR's regional Solidarity with Palestine justice work. As part of that proposal, PMR agreed to liaise with the General Council (44 or 45) of the United Church of Canada to add Hewlett Packard and its companies to the UnSettling Goods campaign that had been developed beginning 2013 following a motion by General Council in 2013, and featured in the 2015 report UnSettling Goods: Choose Peace in Palestine and Israel read and approved at GC41.

In attempting to fulfill this proposal, it was discovered that the UnSettling Goods Campaign was archived and is no longer part of the UCC's justice work in Solidarity with Palestine. At this time, it is crucial that the United Church of Canada do all in its power to pressure the Government of Israel to cease all actions of violence, and military actions in Palestine, to end the siege of Palestine immediately, to allow humanitarian aid and safe passage, and to peacefully end the occupation.

What is the recommendation?

In alignment with the findings and recommendations of the Just Peace report that invoke:



- Zero tolerance for all forms of racism including anti-semitism
- Willingness to step into costly solidarity as a result of listening to our Palestinian and other ecumenical partners
- Being open to fresh revelations of historic injustices which compel us to shape and re-shape our understanding of the demands of justice
- Affirming people's right to engage in non-violent resistance to injustice

In alignment with existing United Church Policy (2013) that encourages divestment from companies that benefit from and support the occupation of Palestine,

In alignment with current United Church Policy that seeks a position of positive, constructive economic measures such as educating our members on products that support the occupation and calling for effective labelling of such products while promoting products made by Palestinians,

And in alignment with the Just Peace distinction on non-violent mechanisms of resistance based in creating economic pressure:

"[The Principle of Speaking Truthfully] challenges us to honestly name what we believe and what we value. Our current policy adopts the strategies of BDS, without expressly using that label. It would be more honest to simply name that we support the tools of the BDS movement. Further, this principle calls us to continue supporting non-violent means of resistance utilized by ourselves or partners, naming the complexity of the situation: we can at times find ourselves similarly aligned with other groups on one issue, while not fully aligning ourselves with that group. Further, speaking truthfully, we can name the very real antisemitism in our country and around the world while at the same time holding the view of the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism that : 'Boycott, divestment, and sanctions are commonplace, non-violent forms of political protest against states. In the Israeli case they are not, in and of themselves, antisemitic.'"

We recommend that GC45:

- 1) in the full acknowledgment of the archiving of the UnSettling Goods Campaign, acknowledge the increasingly urgent call within the United Church for non-violent action in solidarity with Palestine that, among other strategies, includes mechanisms for creating economic pressure to support the end of the occupation of Palestine
- 2) Develop and make available information to support boycott and divestment actions against products, companies and institutions who profit from or derive benefit from the occupation of Palestine
- 3) Develop and make available in the same forum information to support positive economic action to support products, companies and institutions who support and directly benefit the Palestinian people, and products made by Palestinians
- 4) In the same forum make readily available the Just Peace final report as a resource to Communities of Faith with which to build their own justice work in solidarity with Palestine
- 5) Create a mechanism through which communities of faith may submit requests directly to the campaign to add other companies to the list for boycott and divestment

Background information

As evidenced by our sisters and brothers in the United Methodist Church in their Kairos response group, https://www.kairosresponse.org/hp_boycott.html Hewlett Packard is providing technology to the government of Israel that is used in the routine subjugation and brutalization of Palestinians. Hewlett Packard is fully aware of the use of its technology, of the effects of its technology and has refused to withdraw from that use. Purchasing products from Hewlett Packard, investing in Hewlett Packard and



staying silent on Hewlett Packard enables and supports the physical, emotional and spiritual oppression of Palestinians. It is time, in line with existing United Church of Canada policy, to insist that Hewlett Packard withdraw from any provision of technology that subjugates Palestinians. To let them know that what they earn from Palestinian oppression will be lost as people around the world refuse to purchase their products.

This action was taken by the Presbyterian Church USA in 2015 and the United Church of Christ USA in 2016.

How does your proposal align with the priorities of the Region?

Justice priorities in PMR include using the principles-based approach to justice and solidarity work:

The call to bold discipleship, deep spirituality, and daring justice means that the people of the United Church cannot remain silent in situations of injustice. Addressing injustice includes (though is not limited to) building:

- a. awareness and understanding of the injustices our neighbours experience
- b. analysis of the systems and forces that perpetuate injustice
- c. advocacy with those neighbours who are most vulnerable and marginalized
- d. action with those neighbours who invite/welcome our participation in their work

Particularly with these principles:

Respect for Human Dignity - Be in solidarity with those among us experiencing injustice, oppression, the denial of dignity, and violation of human rights. Affirm the right to resist, repudiate, and challenge any expression of injustice.

Full Participation and Decolonization - Challenge all expressions of colonialism through recognizing and naming colonial mentalities that are automatically replicated in our institutions and relationships with partners. Support community-based self-determination, including the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Listen attentively to social movements and groups of people who are historically marginalized and who are most affected by injustice. Engage in critical discernment about the best ways forward when called upon to speak and act for justice, to dismantle institutions and practices that are instrumental in replicating colonialism and usher a new mode of thinking and doing that decolonizes.

Costly and Prophetic Solidarity - Speak and act prophetically against injustice in all forms, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls us to costly solidarity with the least of these, in living our discipleship in the world.

How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal aligns with the adoption of UNDRIP and our responsibility to work toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples globally. Palestinian people are Indigenous to the holy land, and as such we must act in solidarity with them against the oppression they have been living under for decades.

The financial costs/investment required for this proposal would be time and energy of United Church of Canada national and regional staff, to create these resources and spaces within which to access these resources online.

