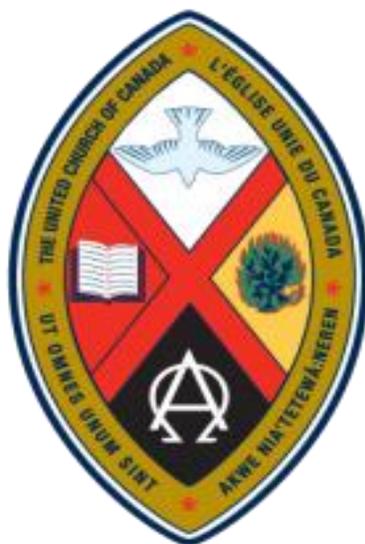


WESTERN ONTARIO WATERWAYS REGIONAL COUNCIL

Connecting, Supporting, Transforming

GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK

FEBRUARY, 2021



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

WESTERN ONTARIO WATERWAYS REGIONAL COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK

Purpose of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council *Connecting, Supporting, Transforming*

The following governance model has been designed to:

- 1) Serve the purpose of the regional council.
- 2) Support communities of faith in naming and claiming their role in God's mission.
- 3) Provide support for the formation of healthy pastoral relationships.
- 4) Keep before communities of faith the call to be the church.
- 5) Promote an open healthy and strong relationship between the regional council and communities of faith.
- 6) Offer regional council representatives a variety of ways of serving.

The Regional Commission has adopted this governance on an experimental basis until the spring 2022 meeting of the regional council.

There will be an evaluation of the model in the spring of 2022 to which all regional council representatives and communities of faith along with other potential stakeholders (United Church Women; youth, etc.) will be invited to participate with the feedback leading to revisions/reworking that will be presented to the regional council for consideration and approval.

As the regional council experiments with this model, there may be refinements along the way due to insights learned. There will be no change in the delegation of responsibilities of *The Manual, 2019* Section C, without the approval of the regional council.

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GOVERNANCE SCHEMATIC

Regional Council (RC)

(see The Manual, 2019 C.1 for Membership)

Elects

Regional Council Executive

(12 members plus President, President-Elect or Past President, Treasurer and Executive Minister)

RC also elects

Covenant Commission



Covenant Commission Resource Pool

Staff Resources:
Minister, Congregational Support and Mission

Human Resources Commission



Human Resources Commission Resource Pool

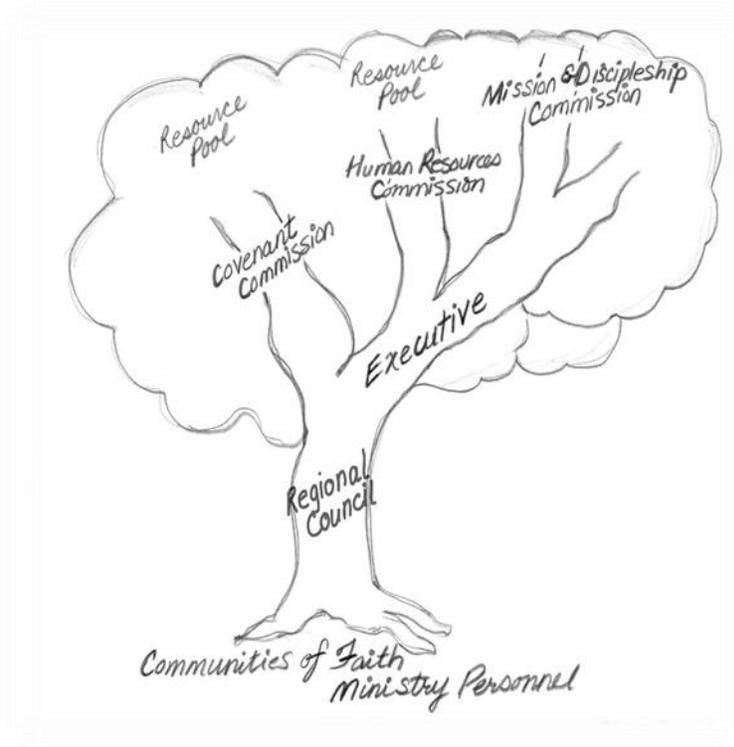
Staff Resources:
Minister, Pastoral Relations (primary)
Minister, Pastoral Support (more limited)

Mission and Discipleship Commission



Mission and Discipleship Commission Resource Pool

Staff Resources:
Minister, Faith Formation
Minister, Right Relations and Indigenous Justice
Minister, Social Justice



POSITION DESCRIPTION: REGIONAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Membership of the Regional Council can be found in *The Manual, 2019 Section C.1* (see following link) [The Manual, 2019](#)

Skills and Gifts

A combination from among the following:

- 1) An interest in fostering connections within various parts of the church.
- 2) An interest in the life and work of the United Church.
- 3) Energy and time.
- 4) Curiosity and a willingness to learn.
- 5) Interpersonal skills.
- 6) Experience in wider church work would be helpful but is not required.

Requirements of Position

- 1) For lay members - must be a full member of a community of faith within the regional council.
- 2) Attend and participate in the regional council meetings
- 3) Serve as the connection in the covenant between the regional council and the community of faith bringing the experience of each to the other
- 4) Serve in one of either the two following ways:
 - A. Commitment of 3 years, renewable once as a member of:
 - i. Regional Council Executive OR
 - ii. One of three Regional Council Commissions (Covenant Commission, Human Resources Commission, Mission and Discipleship Commission)
 - OR**
 - B. Short-Term Volunteer working as the representative of the regional council with communities of faith OR working in the organizing and delivering of regional council events.
- 5) Have access to technology along with a commitment to learn how to use it.
- 6) A current police record check may be required for some roles.

Time Commitment

This is an estimate and will be tracked and adjusted based on experience.

An average of two half days/evenings per month. Depending upon the role chosen, the time commitment may be spread consistently over the year or may involve more intense involvement for a briefer period of time during the year.

Support and Benefits for regional volunteers as they serve the church

- 1) Training to cover the role chosen and to improve use of technology.
- 2) Opportunity to develop skills that will strengthen the life of the representative's home community of faith.
- 3) Opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- 4) Opportunity to deepen and widen relationships across the church.
- 5) Opportunity to learn from one another.

REGIONAL COUNCIL

Mandate

The regional council will fulfill the following responsibilities as outlined in *The Manual, 2019* Section C.2 (see *The Manual, 2019* pages 76-80).

Delegation of Responsibilities

Appendix A reflecting Section C.2 of The Manual, 2019 (Manual pages 76-80).

Responsibilities are assigned to: Regional Council (full meeting of the region): RC

Executive: EX

Covenant Commission: CC

Human Resources Commission: HR

Mission and Discipleship Commission: M&D

Please note the following responsibilities as outlined in sections G, H, I and J of The Manual, 2019.

- **Section G:** Any references to the regional council in Section G are the responsibility of the Covenant Commission.
- **Section H:** Any references to the regional council in Section H are the responsibility of the full regional council.
- **Section I:** Any references to the regional council in Section I are the responsibility of the Human Resources Commission, with the exceptions of I.1.3.2a), I.1.4.1 concerning community of faith profiles which are delegated to the Covenant Commission.
- **Section J:** Any references to the regional council in Section J are the responsibility of the regional council Executive.

In some cases, two bodies share responsibility for the effective fulfillment of *The Manual, 2019* requirements.

Officers

President *4-year term in total: serving as President-Elect for 1 (one) year, President for 2 (two) years, Past-President for 1 (one) year

The Regional Council will elect a President for a two-year term. The President will:

- a) Preside at the communion table and business table of the regional council and its Executive.
- b) Serve as the spiritual leader for the region, offer a theme and vision for the regional council.
- c) Serve, along with the Executive Minister, as the official representative of the regional council.
- d) Strive to inspire the members of the regional council and its communities of faith toward health, joy and excellence.

During the two-year term as President, the President will receive a personal honorarium. The home community of faith of the President will receive an honorarium.

During the one-year term as Past-President, the Past-President will receive a personal honorarium. The home community of faith of the Past-President will receive an honorarium.

Travel expenses of the President, President-Elect and Past-President associated with the fulfilment of their roles will be reimbursed.

Treasurer

The regional council will elect a Treasurer for a three-year term, renewable once. The Treasurer will:

- a) Serve as one of the signing officers for financial matters of the regional council.
- b) Oversee the financial management of the regional council in partnership with the Executive Minister.
- c) Assist with the preparation of the budget for the regional council in partnership with the regional council Executive.

The Treasurer will have travel expenses associated with this role reimbursed and will receive an honorarium annually.

Membership

See *The Manual, 2019* Section C.1, pages 75-76.

Under section C.1.2b, the following are also members of the regional council:

- 1) Any Past President of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council.
- 2) Any past president of Hamilton or Toronto or London Conference or past chair of Bruce, Huron-Perth, Northern Waters, Waterloo Presbyteries who is a member of a community of faith in the regional council.
- 3) Any Retired Designated Lay Minister who retired while serving a community of faith in the region who is a member of a community of faith in the regional council.
- 4) Provision will be made for youth and young adult members. This process is still being developed.

Under Section C.1.2, the Regional Council recognizes the following as members:

- 1) Any past President of one of the Conferences (Hamilton, London, and Toronto Conferences) that became part of the region along with any past Chair of one of the Presbyteries (Bruce, Huron-Perth, Northern Waters, Waterloo) that became part of the regional council, who is a member of a community of faith in the regional council.
- 2) Up to 10 youth (up to age 19) elected by the youth at a gathering prior to the Annual Meeting; and
- 3) 50% of the Young Adults registered for the Annual Meeting to a maximum of 10 to be elected from among the Young Adults attending. The balance to be corresponding members.

To honour the separation of oversight and discipline of ministry personnel established by the Office of Vocation and in recognition of the workload attached to Office of Vocation roles, those members serving with the Board of Vocation or the Committees of the Office of Vocation will not be considered for decision-making responsibilities in the regional council. Their involvement as members of a resource pool would be most welcome if their Office of Vocation duties allow for such a time commitment.

Meetings

The regional council shall have at least one in-person meeting per year.

REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Mandate

The regional council Executive will fulfill the following responsibilities as outlined in *The Manual, 2019*, Section C.3.1. (see *The Manual, 2019*, page 81)

The regional council Executive will also:

- 1) Keep the purpose statement before the regional council and evaluate the life and work of the region and its commissions against this.
- 2) Hold accountable the Covenant Commission, Human Resources Commission and Mission and Discipleship Commission for the responsibilities delegated to each respectively.
- 3) Deal with any matter referred to it for action by one of these three commissions.
- 4) Oversee the finances of the regional council including preparing a budget for the consideration of the regional council and taking responsibility for the administration of the assessment funds, Mission & Service grants and other resources of the regional council.
- 5) Be accountable for the number and position descriptions of regional council staff.
- 6) Serve as the Nominating Committee preparing a proposed slate for the consideration of the regional council.
- 7) Work with the Executive Minister to ensure clear and timely communication within the regional council.
- 8) Meet annually with the Executive of the neighbouring regional councils served by the same Executive Minister and Executive Assistant.
- 9) Facilitate an annual event with the Covenant Commission, Human Resources Commission, and Mission and Discipleship Commission to focus on purpose and planning.

All members of the Regional Council Executive will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement concerning any information to which they may have access regarding pastoral relationships.

Membership

12 Members, plus President, President-Elect or Past President, Treasurer, Secretary and Executive Minister.

To be elected to the Executive by the regional council.

A. 4 to be named by office or other

3 – 1 representative from each of the Commissions

Note: Commission members are elected by the regional council.

The members of the Commission will name their representative to Executive.

1 representative to be chosen by the Indigenous Ministries who belong to the regional council

B. Of the remaining 8 positions, 3 are preferred positions:

1 position reserved for a youth or young adult

1 position to ensure racialized representation

1 position to represent sexual orientation/gender identity diversity

Any nominee not elected on the preferred position ballot, will be placed on the ballot for the election of the remaining four positions.

Any groups not named specifically, including the United Church Women (UCW) are encouraged to complete an expression of interest through the nomination process.

Nominations will be encouraged in advance of the annual meeting and from the expressions of interest received this way, a slate of nominees will be presented to the regional council for election.

Two key principles will be considered when preparing the list of nominees:

- 1) Living into the mandate of diversity adopted by the preceding Conference(s) in the process by which it/they were named an Affirming ministry; and
- 2) supporting the development of leaders by providing opportunities and support.

Meetings

The schedule for meetings will be reviewed following the election of new members and set for the coming year with a view to workload and personal schedules. The majority of meetings happen virtually.

COVENANT COMMISSION

Mandate

The Covenant Commission carries primary responsibility for the relationship between communities of faith and the regional council, and their partnership on matters requiring a decision by both the community of faith and the regional council, other than the pastoral relationship.

The responsibilities of the Commission include:

- The articulation of ministry and mission.
- The use of financial and property resources.
- Local governance.
- The overall health and well-being of communities of faith, such as changes in the life cycle, dealing with real property etc.

The Covenant Commission assigns a member of the resource pool to resource a community of faith on matters requiring a joint decision.

The Covenant Commission will meet with representatives from a community of faith before acting on requests from the community of faith or exercising oversight and discipline of it.

See *The Manual, 2019* Section C.2 references for responsibilities delegated to the Covenant Commission (CC).

The Commission is accountable to the Executive through:

- a) A representative of the Commission who also serves as a member of the Executive (may be the Chair but not necessarily so); and
- b) the timely provision of minutes of its meetings according to the format established by the regional council Executive.

Membership

Minimum of 7 members and a maximum of 12 members, at least one-third of total membership to be ministry personnel and one-third of membership to be lay, elected by the regional council, one of whom serves on the Executive.

Meetings

The schedule for meetings will be reviewed following the election of new members and set for the coming year with a view to workload and personal schedules. The majority of meetings happen virtually.

COVENANT COMMISSION RESOURCE POOL

The Covenant Commission may create different resource pools. It assigns trained volunteers to accompany, resource and support communities of faith during times of self-assessment, change or struggle.

Members of the Covenant Commission Resource Pool assigned to be with a community of faith assists them to consider options. Members of the Covenant Commission Resource Pool can be available to the community of faith to assist with the preparation of documentation to make a request of the Covenant Commission on matters that require a joint decision. The member of the Covenant Commission Resource Pool who has worked with a community of faith will accompany community of faith leaders when they meet with the Commission.

These volunteers are resource people who have been trained in and can assist with matters such as:

- a) Changes in the Life cycle of a congregation. Helping a congregation assess its health and plan for its future and hold the required meetings to facilitate change.
- b) Articulation of mission. Working with a congregation to identify its ministry, preparing the Living Faith Story documentation.
- c) Using the documents prepared in b) to identify its capacity to support ministry personnel.
- d) Assessing the use of resources for the fulfillment of mission, including property both real and personal.
- e) Reviewing proposed governance models for compliance with United Church requirements and helpful advice.
- f) Reviewing annual self-assessments from communities of faith and providing feedback.
- g) Reviewing record keeping and archives for communities of faith.
- h) Pastoral charge supervision when a community of faith is without called or appointed ministry personnel.

Training will be provided specific to the task requested. Resource pool volunteers report to the Covenant Commission.

Note: The foregoing is a list of possible roles. Other roles may be identified by the Covenant Commission.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION

Mandate

The Human Resources Commission carries responsibility for:

- The formation and nurturing of healthy pastoral relationships.
- The equipping and licencing of lay worship leaders.

The Human Resources Commission may create different resource pools.

In light of the sensitive nature of its work, all members of the Human Resources Commission and Human Resources Commission Resource Pool(s) are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

The Human Resources Commission will meet with representatives from a community of faith before acting on requests from the community of faith.

See *The Manual, 2019* Section C.2 references for responsibilities delegated to the Human Resources Commission (HR).

The Commission is accountable to the Executive through:

- a) A representative of the Commission who also serves as a member of the Executive (may be the Chair but not necessarily so); and
- b) the timely provision of minutes of its meetings according to the format established by the Regional Council Executive.
- c) A Commission can choose to refer any matter delegated to it to the regional council executive.

Membership

Minimum of 7 members and a maximum of 12 members, at least one-third of total membership to be ministry personnel and one-third of membership to be lay, elected by the regional council, one of whom serves on the Executive.

Meetings

The schedule for meetings will be reviewed following the election of new members and set for the coming year with a view to workload and personal schedules. The majority of meetings happen virtually.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION RESOURCE POOL

The Human Resources Commission Resource Pool assigns trained volunteers to accompany, resource and support communities of faith in the pastoral relations search and selection process and in the formation and care of pastoral relationships. The member of the Human Resources Commission Resource Pool is available to communities of faith to assist them with pastoral relations matters and accompanies the community of faith when it meets with the Commission to discuss matters requiring a shared decision.

These volunteers are resource people who have been trained in and can assist with matters such as:

- a) Functioning as the liaison in the search and selection process and related congregational meetings.
- b) Facilitating United Fresh Start programming to support a new pastoral relationship.
- c) Serving as the regional council representative to an interim ministry setting to assist with goal setting and working towards identified changes.
- d) Resourcing a community of faith ending a pastoral relationship.

Training will be provided specific to the task requested. Resource pool volunteers report to the Human Resources Commission.

Note: The foregoing is a list of possible roles. Other roles may be identified by the Human Resources Commission.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMISSION

Mandate

The purpose of the Mission and Discipleship Commission is to provide information, education and opportunities for communities of faith and their members to deepen faith and strengthen service and witness.

The Mission and Discipleship Commission may create different resource pools.

The Commission provides both training and development opportunities as well as offering informed and timely responses to enable communities of faith to respond to emerging social and political situations.

The Commission encourages and equips communities of faith to enable their members to discern God's call to different ministries and ways of service.

See *The Manual, 2019* Section C.2 references for responsibilities delegated to the Mission and Discipleship Commission (M&D).

The Commission is accountable to the Executive through:

- a) A representative of the Commission who also serves as a member of the Executive (may be the Chair but not necessarily so); and
- b) the timely provision of minutes of its meetings according to the format established by the regional council Executive.

Membership

Minimum of 7 members and a maximum of 12 members, at least one-third of total membership to be ministry personnel and one-third of membership to be lay, elected by the regional council, one of whom serves on the Executive.

Meetings

The schedule for meetings will be reviewed following the election of new members and set for the coming year with a view to workload and personal schedules. The majority of meetings happen virtually.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMISSION RESOURCE POOL

Volunteers provide leadership by researching information and opportunities and engaging communities of faith or their members with the same. This covers a wide variety of roles.

Volunteers working with children and youth will be subject to additional screening.

Volunteers may be involved with any of the following:

- a) social justice initiatives and outreach and living out the Affirm mandate
- b) living into right relations and Indigenous justice
- c) support for ministry with children and youth
- d) youth events
- e) camping ministries
- f) chaplaincy
- g) living into the call to become an inter-cultural church
- h) U.C.W. and local A.O.T.S.
- i) research and promotion of study resources
- j) refugee work
- k) white privilege
- l) provide support for communities of faith to become an Affirming ministry, along with other important possibilities.

Volunteers will meet with the Commission when needed concerning activities they are undertaking.

Training will be provided specific to the task requested. Resource pool volunteers report to the Mission and Discipleship Commission.

Note: The foregoing is a list of possible roles. Other roles may be identified by the Mission and Discipleship Commission.

STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE MANDATE

The Staff Support Committee oversees the implementation of the Ministry Sharing Agreement signed by Antler River Watershed Regional Council, Horseshoe Falls Regional Council and Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council as that agreement pertains to staff positions.

The Ministry Sharing Agreement states:

Staff Support

A staff Support Committee will be formed to:

- a) Resource the Executive Minister in discussions of staff complement, recruitment, oversight and development;*
- b) serve as the caring presence of the regional councils with their staff.*

The Staff Support Committee will consist of six (6) members, two (2) from each regional council who are appointed by the regional council Commission or the regional council Executive and who serve for a period of three (3) years renewable once. Each regional council commits to provide the Staff Support Committee with a budget of \$1,000 per year.

Resourcing the Executive Minister

The Staff Support Committee will meet with the Executive Minister regularly to review:

- a) Position Descriptions
- b) Staff Changes: resignations, recruitment
- c) Staff Development: supervision, performance reviews
- d) Staff Team Building: meetings, retreats

Any changes/decisions arising from the foregoing will be taken to the regional council Executives for action.

Serving as the Caring Presence of the Regional Councils

The Committee will consider ways to express care and appreciation:

- a) To the staff as a whole (e.g. such as at Christmas time).
- b) To assist the Executive Minister with recognizing individual staff at particular milestones (years of service, life events, resignation, etc.).
- c) To individual staff by serving as a liaison. Each member of staff support will be available to up to two staff to meet with them one-on-one for support and also available to accompany to performance reviews.

Concerns re: Performance

If concerns about the performance of a member of the staff team are brought to the attention of the Staff Support Committee, the Committee member will share them with the Staff Support Committee and Executive Minister to enable the Executive Minister to follow up on the matter.

If the concern involves inter-personal conflict, efforts will be made to facilitate face-to-face mediation between the individuals involved with the Staff Support Committee's assistance.

If the concern involves the Executive Minister, the Staff Support Committee will bring this to the attention of the Executive Minister for discussion. Any matter not resolved in this way will be forwarded to the General Secretary as the supervisor of the Executive Minister.

FUNDS AND GRANTS

Engaging Stewardship Fund

Opening Fund Balance: Approximately \$2,750

**The monies in the fund will be expended and not replenished.*

Terms of Reference

Granting Body and Oversight

WOWRC Executive

The Treasurer and Executive Minister are advised to record the expense.

Criteria

Funds to be made available to the WOWRC Mission and Discipleship Commission for events promoting stewardship and supporting Mission & Service.

Procedure

The decision to access the fund for an event will be made by the Mission and Discipleship Commission.

Kitchener-Waterloo Post-Secondary Chaplaincy Fund

Terms of Reference

Available Funds

Up to \$4,000 expended from the fund annually.

Granting Body and Oversight

WOWRC Mission and Discipleship Commission

- 1) Approved applications be forwarded to the Treasurer and Executive Minister for payment and tracking.
- 2) The Mission and Discipleship Commission will report annually, starting in 2021, to the regional council on how the funds have supported post-secondary chaplaincy in Kitchener-Waterloo.
- 3) The purpose of the fund will be reviewed in spring 2025 to determine the future of any unspent balance.

Criteria

To support ministry that connects with the students attending Kitchener-Waterloo post-secondary institutions.

Procedure

- 1) Invite applications from communities of faith in Kitchener Waterloo for this ministry.
- 2) Applications to be received and approved by the Mission and Discipleship Commission.
- 3) Approved applications to be forwarded to the Treasurer and Executive Minister for payment and tracking.

Learning Grants Fund

Terms of Reference

Available Funds

The balance of the account to be topped up to \$30,000 in November of each year for the following year.

Granting Body and Oversight

WOWRC Executive

Criteria

To provide financial assistance for learning events for lay leaders and ministry personnel within Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council to help recipients grow in leadership so they can assist their communities of faith in connecting, supporting and transforming their mission and ministry.

Grants will be limited to one-third (1/3) of the associated costs of a learning event, to a limit of five hundred dollars (\$500), including any associated travel costs. (While Communities of Faith are encouraged to invest in educating their leaders, there is no expectation that the Community of Faith and applicant must share the remaining costs equally). (See: Learning Grants Fund Application on website for detailed criteria and application procedure)

Ministry with Children, Youth, and Young Adults (Under 30)

Opening Fund Balance: Approximately \$400,000

Terms of Reference

Available funds

All prior year interest earned plus up to 15% of principal to be granted annually.

Granting Body and Oversight

Mission and Discipleship Commission, WOWRC (Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council)

The Mission and Discipleship Commission will report annually, starting in 2021, to the regional council on how the funds have supported ministry with children, youth and young adults.

Criteria

Ministry with children, youth and young adults.

- 1) Grants will normally be one-time grants to a maximum of \$10,000.
- 2) Grants in excess of this amount or for a multi-year project will require the applicant to meet with the Mission and Discipleship Commission.

Procedure

Applications to be submitted to the Mission and Discipleship Commission.

The Mission and Discipleship Commission will design the application form as best suits their needs.

Grant Payment

Approval will be forwarded to the WOWRC Treasurer and Executive Minister for payment and tracking.

Ministry Preparation Fund**Terms of Reference****Available Funds**

A ministry preparation fund with two streams, each of which will be topped up annually in November to a minimum balance of \$30,000.

Granting Body and Oversight

Stream One: WOWRC Covenant Commission

The Covenant Commission advises the Treasurer and Executive Minister for payment and recordkeeping.

Stream Two: WOWRC Executive Minister and Treasurer

The Executive Minister and Treasurer will confirm candidacy status and school enrolment with the Office of Vocation.

Criteria

Stream One: Support for Ministry Education Sites

Communities of Faith needing financial assistance to provide a ministry education experience for a candidate.

Stream Two: Support for Candidates

Candidates pursuing theological studies in a recognized United Church of Canada program.

Procedure

Stream One: Support for Ministry Education Sites

- 1) Communities of Faith needing financial assistance to provide a ministry education experience for a candidate make application to the fund through the Covenant Commission.
- 2) The Covenant Commission advises the Treasurer and Executive Minister for payment and recordkeeping.

Stream Two: Support for Candidates

- 1) Bursary provided in the amount of \$2,000 per year for a maximum of three years for candidates pursuing theological studies in a recognized United Church program.
- 2) Applications to be made to the Executive Minister and Treasurer who will confirm candidacy status and school enrolment with the Office of Vocation.

Rural Ministry Leadership Fund

Opening Fund Balance: Approximately \$71,000

Terms of Reference

Available funds

Prior year interest earned plus up to 15% of the principal per year.

Granting Body and Oversight

WOWRC Executive

The Executive to report annually, starting in 2021, to the regional council on how the funds have supported rural ministry leadership.

Criteria

Licensed Lay Worship Leader (LLWL) leadership, and rural ministry

- 1) Up to 30% of the annual grants will be made available for LLWL leadership training;
- 2) Resource opportunities focused on rural ministries.

Procedure

Applications to be submitted to the WOWRC Executive. The application form will be designed for events to which communities of faith with a rural postal code can apply.

C.1.3 Leaders of Associate Member Ministries

The regional council includes people in formal ministry leadership in those communities of faith of other denominations

- a) that have been granted associate membership in the United Church based on policies set by the Executive of the General Council; and
- b) that are located within the bounds of the regional council.

A community of faith of another denomination may be granted associate membership in the United Church based on policies set by the Executive of the General Council.



C.1.4 Corresponding Members

The regional council may include corresponding members as determined by the regional council.

C.1.5 Regional Council Roll

The Board of Vocation is responsible for

- a) assigning each ministry personnel to a regional council for membership purposes;
- b) informing each regional council of the ministry personnel who are members of that regional council; and
- c) informing each regional council of any changes in its ministry personnel membership.

The regional council is responsible for keeping a roll of all its members and corresponding members.

KEY
 Regional Council: RC
 Executive: EX
 Covenant
 Commission: CC
 Human Resources
 Commission: HR
 Mission & Discipleship
 Commission: M&D

C.2 Responsibilities

C.2.1 Covenanting

The regional council is responsible for

- CC a) recognizing a new community of faith by entering into a covenantal relationship with it;
- RC & EX b) living in a covenantal relationship with each community of faith, with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- CC c) approving changes to the covenantal relationship with the community of faith from time to time, including structural changes, amalgamations, realignments, and disbanding of communities of faith; and

The regional council's responsibilities in the life cycle of a community of faith that is a congregation or pastoral charge are set out in more detail in Congregational Life G.1.



- HR d) living in a covenantal relationship with ministry personnel.

Bylaws C. Regional Council

C.2.2 Services for Communities of Faith

The regional council is responsible for

- HR a) providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in human resource matters;
- CC b) providing support, advice, and services to communities of faith in dealing with congregational property;
- c) managing regional archives;
- d) providing ongoing leadership training for ministry personnel and lay people; and
- EX e) providing funding partnerships with United Church educational and leadership training centres and camps as determined by the regional council.

C.2.3 Service, Support, and Oversight of Communities of Faith

The regional council is responsible for

- CC a) reviewing the self-assessments of communities of faith in light of the covenant between the community of faith and the regional council;
- C b) supporting emerging new ministries;
- ALL c) supporting communities of faith in their life and work;
- C d) promoting articulation of mission and ministry;
- C e) ensuring compliance with the policies and polity of the United Church and reviewing any relevant records;

The “polity” of the United Church means the form of organization and government of the United Church as it is set out in these bylaws.



- EX f) hearing appeals from communities of faith and their governing bodies; and
- EX on recommendation of C g) assuming control of a community of faith in extraordinary circumstances where the community of faith is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational policies.

C.2.4 Purpose

The regional council is responsible for encouraging and engaging in

- M&D a) joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- M&D b) local, regional, national, and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical, and interfaith) for ministry, mission, and justice work;
- M&D c) ministry with children, youth, and young adults;
- M&D d) honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry; and

Honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry is described in [Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church](#), a resource available from the [General Council Office](#).



- e) living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

Bylaws C. Regional Council

C.2.5 Policy and Finance

The regional council is responsible for

- EX a) administering policy set by the General Council, and setting appropriate regional policy;
- EX b) participating in determining priorities for mission and ministry work through the Mission & Service fund; and
- RC c) setting and managing its annual budget, including revenue from the denominational assessment, and setting any additional regional assessment for any additional services the regional council wishes to undertake.

C.2.6 Property

The regional council is responsible for

- C a) co-operating with the community of faith in buying, selling, leasing, and renovating community of faith property, and distributing any proceeds within denominational policies and guidelines, including
 - C i) making decisions on requests from communities of faith to buy, sell, mortgage, exchange, renovate, lease, or otherwise deal with community of faith property;

The regional council makes decisions relating to the property of amalgamating congregations. See Congregational Life G.1.4.5.



- C ii) making decisions on the meaning of the terms “other major assets” and “major renovations” for that regional council;

The terms “other major assets” and “major renovations” are explained in Congregational Life G.2.1.2 and G.2.1.3.



- EX iii) communicating the meanings of those terms to each community of faith within the bounds served by the regional council; and

There are three exceptions to the regional council's responsibility for making decisions about the property of communities of faith that are congregations. They are set out in Congregational Life G.2.2.2, G.2.2.3, and G.2.2.4.



- C b) making decisions on the property of communities of faith remaining after the communities of faith cease to exist; and
- C c) buying, selling, leasing, and renovating regional property, and distributing any proceeds within denominational guidelines.

C.2.7 Preparation for Ministry

The regional council is responsible for

- RC a) celebrating the approval of applicants for candidacy;
- RC b) ordaining and commissioning members of the order of ministry;
- RC c) recognizing designated lay ministers;
- RCorHR d) licensing licensed lay worship leaders; and
- RC e) celebrating admissions and readmissions.

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C.2.8 Pastoral Relations

The regional council is responsible for co-operating with communities of faith in

- HR a) recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith;
- HR b) ending calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel and other staff; and
- HR c) appointing a regional council liaison officer to assist a community of faith in pastoral relations matters at designated times.

For more information on the regional council liaison officer, see Pastoral Relations I.1.5.



C.2.9 Licence to Administer the Sacraments

The regional council is responsible for granting a licence to administer the sacraments to diaconal ministers, designated lay ministers, people who retired while serving as designated lay ministers, and sacrament elders, as set out in Pastoral Relations I.2.4.

C.2.10 Celebrating Retirements

The regional council is responsible for celebrating the retirements of ministry personnel.

C.2.11 Ministry Personnel

The regional council is responsible for

- HR a) encouraging and supporting ministry personnel toward health, joy, and excellence in ministry practice; and
- HR b) assisting with informal conflict resolution processes.

C.2.12 Participation in Denominational Life

The regional council is responsible for

- RC a) electing members to serve on General Council based on the following:
 - i) **Number:** it elects five members plus an additional number allocated to it based on the proportion of communities of faith within the bounds of that regional council to the total number of communities of faith in the United Church;
 - ii) **Lay/ministry personnel balance:** a minimum of 1/3 of the members elected must be ministry personnel on the roll of the regional council and a minimum of 1/3 of the members elected must be lay members of communities of faith within the bounds of the regional council who are not ministry personnel;
 - iii) **Diversity:** attention is given to diversity of gender and age, racial and cultural identities, and sexual expressions, as provided in policies set by the General Council;
 - iv) **Timing:** the election takes place, where possible, at least one year before the next regular in-person meeting of the General Council;

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- v) **Eligibility of ministry personnel:** the ministry personnel who are elected must be members of the regional council that elected them both at the time of the election and at the time that the General Council holds its next regular in-person meeting;
- vi) **Eligibility of lay members:** the lay members who are elected must be members of a community of faith within the bounds of the regional council both at the time of the election and at the time that the General Council holds its next regular in-person meeting;
- vii) **Method of election:** the regional council is responsible for deciding how to elect its representatives to the General Council; and
- viii) **Alternates:** it must also elect a number of alternate representatives;

*The General Council holds an in-person meeting every third year.
See General Council D.3.1.*



- RC b) naming a leading Elder or presiding officer of the regional council to serve as a member of the General Council;

The regional council has the flexibility to determine its own officers, except that there must be a leading Elder or presiding officer to fill this role.



- RC c) receiving, dealing with, and forwarding proposals from members of the community of faith to the General Council; and
- RC & EX d) promoting and fostering direct dialogue between communities of faith and the General Council.

C.2.13 Incorporated Ministries

- EX The regional council is responsible for
- a) deciding whether to approve applications to incorporate ministries that will carry on activities in the region;
 - b) serving, supporting, and providing oversight of the incorporated ministries that carry on activities in the region; and
 - c) serving, supporting, and providing oversight, if assigned by the General Council, of incorporated ministries that carry on activities in more than one region.

C.2.14 Limitations

All responsibility of the regional council is subject to

- a) policies set by the General Council on membership, governance, pastoral relations, candidacy, ministry personnel, property, and any other area within the authority of the General Council; and
- b) the authority of the General Council to assume control of the regional council in extraordinary circumstances where the regional council is unable to or refuses to meet its responsibilities or acts outside of denominational or regional council policies.