Report to the Fall Meeting of the Western Ontario Regional Council

From the Congregational Support Commission – October 2026

Within the key focus of the Region, “Connection, Supporting, Transforming,” the Congregational Support Commission is here to support Communities of Faith where ever they find themselves, throughout their life cycle changes. From the inception of a new beginning, detailed in the Community of Faith Profile, through times of transition such as the loss of paid Ministry Personnel, or the consideration of amalgamation or collaborative agreement, to the hard time of closure and disbandment, we walk alongside you, supporting you in your decisions, answering your questions and consulting with you when new possibilities or challenges arise.

We receive and review the yearly Annual Reports from Communities of Faith throughout the Region and have a working group within the Commission that looks at each Annual Report that we receive. They review each report and respond back, through letter, to the Community of Faith. To date we have received and reviewed 44 out of a possible 141, 2025 Annual Reports, in 2026. There may be some reports submitted as a Pastoral Charge, that are not included in this number. Along with Annual Reports, there are other documents that help us to assist you in your work.

As of this writing we have received:

4 out of 141 new or updated Community of Faith Profiles and 3 out of 124 self-assessments from Pastoral Charges in 2026.

We thank those who have responded and hope that overall number of reports submitted will increase in the future. These are vehicles that help the Congregational Support Commission to walk along side of you, through the ups and downs of your faith journey.

We also provide Pastoral Charge Supervisors to assist Communities of Faith who are without Ministry Personnel. These leaders take on the important work, within the Region, to insure a connection between the Community of Faith and the wider church and provide support and assistance in articulating United Church polity. There are 40 out of 124, or 32% (current or upcoming) of the Communities of Faith in our Region that have the support of Pastoral Charge Supervisors. The Congregational Support Commission has a working group that reviews reports made by Pastoral Charge Supervisors, at various time intervals and when their assignment with a Community of Faith is completed.

The Congregational Support Commission does more than receive and review reports however. We have hosted workshops on the topics of Amalgamation/ Collaboration of Communities of Faith. We also hosted a day with Betty Pries, centered on how

Communities of Faith can thrive in today's age of anxiety. These gatherings were open to anyone interested with our Region and those around us.

In short, responsibilities of the Commission include:

- The articulation of ministry (Community of Faith Profile)
- The use of financial and property resources.
- Advice around governance.
- The overall health and well-being of communities of faith, such as changes in the life cycle.
- Dealing with real property etc.
- Advice for grants and loans.
- Amalgamations, Disbandings and Collaborations.

However, the work of the Congregational Support Commission continues to expand, as we listen to and respond to the needs and dreams of Communities of Faith within the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council. This year, we have also taken time away to better understand our Commision's role and responsibility in the United Church's Initiative, "Toward 2035."

Our mandate is to walk along side you in these exciting and challenging times in the church today. We are deeply grateful to Congregational Support Minister, John Neff, usually your first contact with our Commission. Thank you John for your leadership, advice and counsel. We would be unable to do our work without your steadfast and expert support. Also, a big thank you to Executive Assistant Max Watkinson for supporting our work and keeping us on track.

Respectfully submitted,

Roz Vincent-Haven, Chair

On behalf of the Congregational Support Commission:

Gord Dunbar, Nancy Flagel, Bruce Gregersen, Robert Hyatt, Marg Krauter, Peter Kupfer, Sharon Norton, Margaret Ruggles, Terry Smith, Collin Snyder.