

Congregational Support Commission Report

Antler River Watershed Regional Council – Fall Meeting Workbook

Submitted by: Greg Simpson, Chair

Mandate and Responsibilities

The Congregational Support Commission (CSC) holds primary responsibility for the relationship between communities of faith and the regional council; especially on matters requiring shared decision-making. This includes ministry and mission articulation, property and financial stewardship, local governance, and the overall well-being of congregations.

The CSC supports congregations throughout the various stages of their life cycle: from evolving ministry to transitions and collaborations, and closure.

Our work is grounded in the commitments outlined in *The Manual (2025)*, *Section C.2* and guided by the governance structures of Antler River Watershed Regional Council.

Commission Membership

- **Staff Support:**

Karlene Kimber, ARW Congregational Support Minister

Krista Ford, Secretary

- **Commission Members:**

- Herb deJong
- Judith Fayter
- Adam Kilner
- Greg Simpson (Chair)
- Jim Stirling
- Carey Wagner
- Dave Whiting
- Joan Golden

Staffing Update

We are thrilled to welcome Karlene Kimber as our Congregational Support Minister (serving 3 days per week). She has stepped into this role with grace and determination, navigating a steep learning curve with impressive skill. We are deeply encouraged by the wisdom, insight, and fresh ideas she brings to this essential ministry of accompaniment.

Stories of Connection and Evolution

We continue to celebrate the creative and courageous work being done in the South Kent area, where neighbouring congregations are actively building relationships and walking together through closures, nesting arrangements, and amalgamations. These churches are adjusting to change and discerning new ways of being the Body of Christ together.

In London, Calvary, Riverside, Wesley-Knox, and White Oaks United Churches have developed a symbiotic model of shared ministry: three ministers serving four churches, sharing worship services, leadership needs, and some collaboration around shared physical space. This model reflects a spirit of mutual trust, sustainability, and innovation.

Across the region, congregations are evolving in response to the Spirit's call. We witness again and again that transformation is possible, and that God is at work in unexpected, beautiful ways.

Ongoing Priorities

Our primary priority remains supporting congregations in transition through leadership changes, governance discernment, amalgamation, or closure. We do this best when we know what's happening on the ground. We invite every community of faith to share their successes, challenges, and dreams with us.

Reach us anytime at ARWCSM@united-church.ca. We are here to listen, to walk alongside, and to resource.

Pastoral Charge Supervisors – Always Needed

As more communities of faith journey through transitions, we are in urgent need of trained Pastoral Charge Supervisors: clergy or lay people who can offer guidance, accompaniment, and serve as liaison with the Commission.

Training is provided. If you feel called to this work, please visit the Regional Council website under “Make a Difference” → “I Want to Volunteer”, or contact any Commission member directly.

Looking Ahead

As a Commission, we are committed to:

- Encouraging **collaborative models of ministry**;
- Supporting **faithful stewardship** of property and resources;
- Resourcing **healthy governance** and sustainable leadership;
- Holding space for **honest discernment and hopeful transformation**.

The Gospel calls us to walk with one another; not only when the path is clear, but especially when the road is uncertain. We are honoured to do this work in service of Christ's church.

Let's keep the conversation going. Let us know how you're doing, and how we can support your ministry.