

Antler River Watershed Regional Council Fall Meeting

Friday October 3 – Saturday October 4, 2025

Meeting Workbook

“Seasons”



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Workbook Introduction

Theme: “Seasons”

Purpose: Holding and Encouraging Communities of Faith

Priorities:

Assessment	Mission & Support
Communities of Faith Support/Pastoral Relations	Children and Youth
Communications and Resources Support	Chaplaincy
Connecting/Meeting	Social Justice

Format and Process: Decision Making

The format for General Council proposals is being used for the regional meeting. The General Council approach involves three distinct stages in the decision-making process:

1. Listening/learning;
2. Discussion;
3. Decision.

In our regional council meeting we do not have the space or time to mirror these stages in the same way the General Council practices them.

In our proceedings, the steps will be:

1. The Presenter will outline:
 - a. What is the issue? And,
 - b. The suggested way in which the regional council might respond to the issue.
2. The President will inquire if there are questions for clarification. Please note this is for clarification only.
3. The President will then ask if there are changes or additions being suggested for the proposal.
4. Once there is significant agreement, the President will invite the Presenter to move the motion at which point the regional council enters the formal debate process.

ARWRC Fall Meeting Support Team

Agenda & Business Committee—Kerry Stover - Friday / Jane Van Patter - Saturday (Chair), Richard Auckland (President), Mark Laird (Executive Minister), Max Watkinson, (Secretary)

Chaplain—Cheryl Bolton

Equity Support—Charmain Bailey and George Bozanich

Community Building—Pam Wilcox

Parliamentarian—Brad Morrison

Tech Team—John Neff, Michele Petick

Worship Team—Greg Simpson and Marque Smith

BRAVE: Commitment to Community Safety



BRAVE: Commitment to Community Safety

We strive, in this time of co-learning, to be brave by

B – being accountable for the impact of both our words and our silence

R – reflecting on and naming our own biases

A – actively listening

V – vocalizing questions that arise from our learning

E – encountering new ideas with curiosity and wonder

Antler River Watershed Regional Council Affirming Ministry Vision Statement

SAFETY. SANCTUARY. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Striving to be faithful followers of Jesus in our time and place, Antler River Watershed Regional Council will continue to remove barriers to participation in the life and work of the regional council and society, committing ourselves to be open to the Spirit. Resisting all forms of oppression, we welcome and celebrate people of any sexual orientation and gender identity, and all others who are marginalized. The Regional Council, Staff, Executive, Commissions, networks, and members commit to working toward fulfilling the vision statement by:

A. Continuing to remove barriers to participation in the life and work of Antler River Watershed Regional Council.

B. Continuing to remove barriers to participation in society.

C. Committing to be open to the Spirit.

D. Resisting oppression.

E. Welcoming and celebrating people of any sexual orientation and gender identity.

Participation in a Virtual Meeting

If joining by Zoom, please review the following. How Zoom presents depends upon the device being used. Every participant is expected to know:

- 1) How to **mute** and **unmute** themselves;
- 2) How to turn their **video on** and **off**;
- 3) How to **rename themselves**;
- 4) How to **raise their hand**.

If you are not familiar with these options, there are zoom information tips at: [Zoom Resources](#)

Please ensure you have updated to the latest version of Zoom. Otherwise, some meeting options might not work for you.

Waiting Room

When you first log into the meeting, you will be placed in a waiting room. As soon as the meeting is ready to start, you will be automatically admitted.

Participants

When you are admitted to the meeting, please go immediately to the **Participants list**. You will see your name listed BUT sometimes you are identified by the type of device you are using. The President will be recognizing people on the basis of the name that is shown. So, please change your name to read **First Name/Surname** by hovering over the mic and camera icons, click on **More**, then **Rename**.

*For example, Executive Minister, Mark's iPhone might read: Mark's iPhone. Mark would need to go to the **Participant list** and **change his name** to: Mark Laird (he/him). All participants are encouraged to **add their pronouns** after their name.*

Those who are at the meeting as a guest (not a voting participant) please add an x in front of your name. THIS IS IMPORTANT IF YOU ARE A NON-VOTING GUEST.

For example, if Mark was a guest, he would write his name as:

x-Mark Laird. This helps us with vote counting.

Mute

All participants will be automatically muted when they enter the meeting. Please ensure your microphone remains off. This reduces background noise and feedback and improves the quality of sound for everyone.

You will need to click on the **Mute** button to turn on your microphone if you are recognized by the President to speak in debate and when you move into breakout rooms.

Video

Please have your video on as you join the meeting! It is lovely to see everyone as the meeting begins. Once the meeting begins, please turn off your video. That way, you have some privacy if you move around and are not in danger of sharing unintentionally. This also helps with the stability of the Zoom call especially in places with unstable internet.

Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down

There may be times when the President wishes to informally poll the regional council concerning a proposed change. The President may ask for a thumbs up or thumbs down. These two icons are found under reactions.

Being recognized to speak

To be recognized to speak in the discussion time, first **please raise your hand** by clicking on the button labeled **Raise Hand**. Your digital hand will then be raised. The Zoom host will draw the President's attention to your hand. The hand will be lowered by the meeting hosts after you have spoken.

Remember when the President calls you by name to:

1. **Unmute** your microphone
2. Turn on **video**
3. **State your name**; and
4. Your **community of faith** – be sure to add the location as we have a few Trinity United Churches, Emmanuel United Churches, St. John's United Churches ...

Voting

This will be explained in the meeting. If you are a guest, please remember you do not vote.

Chat Box

Please reserve the chat box for the following:

1. Questions of **clarification**;
2. **Procedural concerns** and questions;
3. **Matters of privilege** (for example someone uses a term that is insulting to another who then wishes to bring that to the President's attention re the conduct of the council).

Many of us have experience of meetings where the chat box served as the discussion space, which in fact turns it into commentary. Discussion happens among participants when the President recognizes the speaker. The Chat Box is a side conversation that is distracting and disruptive.

If you see a friend among the participants with whom you wish to chat, please feel free to **send a private message** to them. Go to Participants, enter their name or scroll to their name & click on it and then you can send them a private note!

Breakout Rooms

Participants will be invited to move into a breakout room at various times during the meeting.

To join the breakout room, participants must accept the **join invitation**. Once you enter the breakout room, unmute your microphone and turn on your video.

Equity Support Team Member Position Description

The members of the Equity Support Team are two or more individuals who might volunteer to be active participants at a United Church meeting or event. The Equity Support Team members are part of the leadership of a meeting or an event, and have responsibilities before, during, and after a gathering.

Equity realizes that in order to ensure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all peoples, we need to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some people and groups. Equity moves closer to justice, and it is part of the work of the church.

While working toward equity is a collective responsibility of everyone, the members of the Equity Support Team have a particular role in helping to name equity issues at gatherings.

Responsibilities

Before the meeting

- Attend planning team meetings, when possible, to help offer advice about equity- related issues and to help shape the planning process for the event or meeting.
- Receive background education and training on equity and receive an orientation to the Equity Support Team role.
- Offer advice about Web content, meetings, workshops, or events so that they follow established protocols for equity, accessibility, and communication-related issues; and that PowerPoint slides comply with an established font size protocol (as suggested by the 43rd General Council), and communicate a set of best practices for online and in- person meetings.
- Along with the planning team, clarify that the role of the Equity Support Team is different from the role of theological reflectors, chaplains, Elders, and other leadership roles that are present at a meeting or event.
- Share a contact phone number or equity e-mail with participants so they can be in touch with the Equity Support Members during the gathering.
- Be introduced to participants of the meeting in advance (by short video and/or by e-mail with a bio) so participants at the meeting might get to know the team members before the gathering takes place.

During the meeting

- At the beginning of the meeting, offer a covenant, equity agreements, intercultural lens questions, or other related protocols that can help work toward equity at the gathering.
- Be available (by phone or e-mail) to participants at the meeting who would like to share about any equity-related issues over the course of the meeting (including affirmation of processes, or hearing particular challenges that people are experiencing).
- Help work toward the full participation of peoples of all identities.
- Be attentive to microaggressions, unhelpful power dynamics, harm, intercultural

conflicts, oppressive practices, and/or other inequities.

- If hurt or harm has been done in the course of a meeting, in most cases do not offer a direct intervention or interjection in the moment, but rather be in touch with the moderator or chair of the meeting and ask them to address the issue at another point during the gathering.
- Partway through the gathering and/or at the end of the gathering, offer advice and feedback on how the meeting has been functioning in terms of equity. It is helpful to offer some affirmation about what has been going well, and suggestions for a subsequent gathering.
- When reporting back to the meeting, point out any issues in a general way, and not specifically target individual people.

After the meeting

- Meet with staff and/or the planning team to offer feedback about equity for a subsequent meeting. These could name what has worked well and what should continue, as well as suggestions for improvement at a subsequent meeting.
- If possible, offer a written report of their insights and recommendations for a future meeting.

Background

The United Church of Canada, through its General Council, has made several commitments around equity in recent years. These commitments include 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](#) 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 toward 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](#).

All of these commitments are part of ongoing and sustained efforts for the United Church to continue to work toward equity, creating better places of belonging for people of all identities, to challenging power and privilege, and to live into God's call to be the church.

Section One:

Meeting Agenda

Friday, October 3rd	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
	Welcome, Land Acknowledgement Opening Motions Introduction of Meeting Leadership and Staff Opening Worship Pastoral Relations Commission Presentation Community Building Closing Prayer
Saturday, October 4th	9:00 a.m. – 3 p.m.
	Welcome back Opening Worship GC45 Presentation Financial Report Proposed Budget for 2026 Discipleship & Justice Commission Presentation GC 45 Presentation cont'd Break Congregational Support Commission Presentation GC 45 Presentation cont'd Mission and Service Presentation Towards 2035 Lunch Towards 2035 cont'd Community Building Proposal #3: Camping Ministry Seasons of Growth Presentation – Greg Smith-Young GC45 Presentation cont'd Moderator's Message In Memorial, CoF Life Cycle Changes Closing motions

President's Executive Report

Antler River Watershed Regional Council

I began my time as President back at the conclusion of the Spring Meeting. Since then, I have been extremely busy in my role. I had the opportunity to attend the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada Celebration in St John's, NL. Being a part of this momentous occasion was indeed a privilege. General Council 45 (GC45) took place online in April and June; in person in August in Calgary, Alberta; and again, online in September. Fourteen adults represented ARW while Elijah, Alex, Sheina, Heather, Scott, Tejiri and Tobi attended GC45 as Youth Delegates. During GC45, we examined 71 different proposals put forth by individuals or groups that in most cases were vetted by the local Regional Councils. Please refer to the separate report that provides some insight from many of our attendees. And now as we prepare for our Fall Gathering, we continue in information gathering and decision-making modes.

The Executive has scheduled monthly meetings or on an as-needed basis. The work of the three Commissions: Human Resources, Congregational Support and Discipleship & Justice, gets done through the efforts of many volunteers, and dedicated staff. One way that decision making has been streamlined is by giving authority to those commissions without them having to be ratified at the Executive level. Having some staff split amongst the three regions allows them to focus on a specific aspect of their work, and to do that with each region. Otherwise, one staff member might be responsible for various aspects of the work of various commissions within ARW and may be stretched thin.

Financially, over the course of the last year, funds that have been distributed by the Executive of ARW include the following:

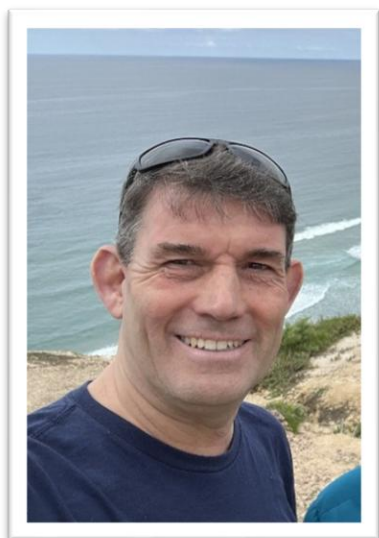
- one Bridge Loan of \$30,000
- \$2,100 from the Collaborative Ministry Fund, supporting an educational event being held between multiple Pastoral Charges
- \$550 from the Rural Ministry and Leadership Fund supporting the work of LLWL's
- From our Executive Events Budget, among other things, we have supported the Native People's Retreat and the development of the "Here from the Beginning" Art Installation which will be in our RC in early 2026.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers who do the work of the church. Without you, we wouldn't be a church. As always, hopefully, you too have found a calling within your own church and perhaps ARW to serve. We also benefit from the expertise of the many staff members who serve our region and help guide us on our way. Thank YOU.

Richard Auckland

President, Antler River Watershed Regional Council
of the United Church of Canada

President Richard Auckland's Welcome



On behalf of the volunteers and staff that serve the Antler River Watershed Region, I welcome you to our Fall Gathering. “Seasons” is the focus of our time together and gives us an opportunity to reflect on where we are. For me, I’m in the “autumn” of my teaching career, still actively involved with tutoring students and part-time teaching at Western University. The seeds I sowed throughout my career, are bearing fruit in allowing me to educate the new teachers of tomorrow. As far as my work with ARW, I am in my “spring.” While new in my role as President, I have served as chair of the Discipleship & Justice Commission. I learn from each new experience and try to incorporate those learnings into my next challenge. Which season fits for your circumstances? Are you game to begin anew, in “spring” and volunteer for one of our Commissions or at your own church?

We all lead busy lives with demands of family, work, leisure, and I would encourage you to breathe deeply, acknowledging all that you have accomplished, and looking forward to all that you can accomplish when you heed God’s call.

Whether it is assisting with a charity, volunteering at church, or doing something as simple as doing God’s work in the community (e.g., having a cheery disposition with the grocery store clerk, paying for someone’s order in the drive through, shovelling a sidewalk, donating your time, talent or treasure), these acts go a long way in being God’s love in action.

While we all have a favourite season, I try to look at the positives in each. Spring flowers, summer vacations, fall colours and the beauty of fresh fallen snow. Are there parts that are less enjoyable? Certainly. But I try to put a positive spin on all circumstances and embrace all life has to offer. We all have challenges in our lives, but I am constantly reminded that someone else probably has it worse off than me.

Regardless of the season, we all have a role to play in God’s world. Heed the call and get involved.

Richard Auckland

President, Antler River Watershed Region
of the United Church of Canada

In Memoriam:



Rev. Douglas Hall

Kevin Coad

Matthew Etches

Ted Alexander – GC 39 Commissioner

Rev. Victor Brown

Lise Landsborough – General Council Commissioner

Rev. Dr. Joseph Driskill

Community of Faith Life Cycle Changes:



ARWRC Community of Faith life Cycle Changes Report **(Changes since May 31, 2025)**

Corunna UC & Port Lambton UC enter a new Collaborative Agreement from November 1, 2025, to October 31, 2028.

Richwood United Church & St. Paul's United Church, Paris enter a new Collaborative Agreement from October 1, 2025, to October 1, 2026.

Hickson, UC (ARWRC) and Grace United Church, Tavistock (WOWRC), amalgamated, September 14, 2025.

***Ausable Pastoral Charge and Forest United Church** enter a new Collaborative Agreement, May 7, 2025.

**may have been reported at Spring meeting, final approval & conditions met, reported in minutes of June 18, CSC Meeting.*

Section Two:

Congregational Support Commission Report

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.

Discipleship and Justice Commission

As the Discipleship and Justice Commission of the ARW Regional Council, we are tasked with supporting regional ministries as they carry out the priorities of our regional body. These tend to revolve around the following conjunctures: Youth and Young Adult programming, living out our Affirm Mandate, Practices of Reconciliation-Right Relation with First Nations. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from and grow with each other in our efforts to bear witness on behalf of our regional council, and we hope to build out our participating membership going forward.

At present, much of our work emerges from regular meetings, during which time we get to discover a bit about the goings on of different ministries that are nurtured in part through our Mission Support Grants. Our responsibility, as a commission, is to ensure the region's resources are stewarded faithfully with an eye to community transformation. To that end, we inquire about the use of Mission Support funds and listen as each recipient provides us with both information and stories evidencing the work of Spirit in their respective sites. We are all aware that funding for the different ministries is not at the level it once was, so we do everything in our power to be both prayerful and judicious in the awarding of grants.

Sincerely:

Joshua Lawrence (co-chair)

Lilian Patey (co-chair)

Thank you to our Commission Members and Support Staff:

Co-Chair	Joshua Lawrence	email
Co-Chair	Lilian Patey	email
Staff Resource	Kathy Douglas	email
Staff Resource	Thérèse Samuel	email
Staff Resource	John Egger	email
Member	Linda Badke	
Member	Tabitha Carey	
Member	Bob Harris	
Member	James Haupt	
Member	Doug Peck	
Member	Jim Hatt	
Member	Wanda Winfield	

Pastoral Relations Commission

Pastoral Relations Commission Report for the Fall Meeting of the Antler River Watershed Regional Council, October 3 & 4, 2025

When clicking on the webpages for ARW, and I get to the Pastoral Relations Commission webpage, the basic principles of your Pastoral Relations Commission are front and centre under the heading MANDATE:

The Pastoral Relations Commission carries responsibility for:

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

The Pastoral Relations Commission may create different resource pools.

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

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

See [The Manual, 2025](#) Section C.2 references for responsibilities delegated to the Pastoral Relations Commission (PRC).

It is through this MANDATE that the commission does it's work on your behalf through many dedicated volunteers and with the support of Micol Cottrell, Pastoral Relations Minister, and Michele Petick, Administrative Assistant, Social Media and Website Management.

Monthly, the commission engages in discussion regarding policy and how to interpret the manual and the various handbooks that are resource materials. Helpful tools are available on-line with resources that Micol and his colleagues have made available on the Antler River Watershed Regional Council webpages under the toolkits link, <https://arwrcucc.ca/toolkits/> We encourage communities of faith to delve into the toolkit(s) that pertain to a search for a new minister. Also, listed under the pastoral relations toolkits is information for Ministry and Personnel Committees on how to support clergy and lay employees of your community of faith. Even if your community of faith is not in a search for a new minister, please be aware of the information that is provided.

The commission is grateful for Micol's guidance, support and tenacity as the commission works and supports many communities of faith in our region. We truly appreciate the calmness Michele provides as we venture through technology challenges from time to time.

On your behalf, the commission has experienced many moments of joy this past year as new covenants are made by communities of faith and their respective called clergy and the region. The commission's regional liaisons assist and often lead the covenanting service as they represent the region on your behalf. Don't forget to familiarize yourself with the ARW Facebook page so you can see when a covenanting service is occurring in your area and then plan to attend to support the new covenant. We are in this together.

Monthly the commission meets and through careful consideration of the various needs before us; we discuss and approve position descriptions, approve calls for ministers from the various communities of faith, review pastoral relations information that comes to the commission, we assign liaisons to search committees, attend special meetings of communities of faith and work and license LLWLs in the region. There are many decisions to be made as a commission, and we do it with prayer, great joy and God's peace.

One of the items we need you to consider is becoming a liaison for the region. Both order of ministry or lay persons are welcomed to become a liaison. If you are interested in becoming a liaison, please reach out to Micol Cottrell or myself for further information.

The Pastoral Relations Commission is greatly thankful for the work that the Licensed Lay Worship Leader Resource Team does in preparing lay persons who are called to serve as pulpit supply. The Team members are Norm Mc Pherson, Ian Phillips, Lillian Rowe, Mary Anne Silverthorn (Chair) Pam Wilcox, Tracy Wygiera. If you recall from the regional spring meeting we licensed three new LLWL's – Colin Barker, Karen Hodgins and Bill Butt. Congratulations again to those three for their study and call into the LLWL ministry of service. If you are interested or know of anyone that has an interest in becoming a licensed lay worship leader, have them contact us. Sunday pulpit supply is often filled with these trained LLWLs and that provides relief and help for those communities of faith with a vacancy or when a clergy person is away from their respective community of faith on a Sunday.

The Fresh Start Program has been up and running and we thank Micol for coordinating the efforts that support new ministers in their calls and the respective communities of faith. The program is well worth the collaboration and consideration of both clergy and the community of faith. Micol is the person to reach out to learn more about this program or look up the information at <https://arwrcucc.ca/toolkits/>

Antler River Watershed Pastoral Council's Pastoral Relations Commission meets every month on the 2nd Tuesday. Our minutes are published on the Antler River Watershed Regional Council website for your reading pleasure: <https://arwrcucc.ca/human-resources-commission-minutes/>

We give thanks to God for the blessings and support that the commission receives each day from you the regional members who keep us in your prayers.

Thanks to the commission members for their service in His name:

Carol Ferguson (OM), Louise Hall (L), Melodee Lovering (OM), Norm MacPherson (L), Martin Mwale (OM), Larry Schneider (OM), Mary Anne Silverthorn (L), Tracy Wygiera (L)

Peace be with you,

Rev. Kerry Stover (he, him)

Chair, Pastoral Relations Commission

United Church Apology to the 2 Spirit and LGBTQIA Communities

An Update from

Thérèse Samuel, Minister, Right Relations and Social Justice

John Egger, Minister, Social Justice

The southwestern Ontario tri-regional councils, Antler River Watershed (ARW), Horseshoe Falls (HF) and Western Ontario Waterways (WOW), are Affirming Ministries with a shared commitment and action plan. The apology offered by the United Church of Canada to 2 Spirit and LGBTQIA communities on August 8, 2025, was an apology by the church and to the church. There are implications to our regional councils as Affirming Ministries. An apology might start with words, but without meaningful action it becomes empty words.

Many may wish to have the action complete immediately, but this is a marathon, not a sprint. Action will be an ongoing process, and with our faithful engagement and the Spirit's help we can live into the apology over the coming months and years.

As a first step, we encourage individuals and congregations in each of ARW, HF and WOW Regional Councils to be aware of the apology and begin to ask the questions:

- How does this apology impact me?
- How does this apology impact others in my congregation and wider community?
- How does this apology impact the Regional Council?
- What is God calling us to do, be or change to live into this apology?

For more information, and links to the apology and background go to:

Apology Link: <https://united-church.ca/news/apology-offered-today-united-church-2s-and-lgbtqia-communities>

Watch for more follow-up activities in the spring. If you have any suggestions, comments or questions for follow-up, please reach out to the Social Justice Ministers:

John Egger, Minister, SJ jegger@united-church.ca

Thérèse Samuel, Minister, RRSJ tsamuel@united-church.ca

Section Three: Meeting Materials

Proposal #1 – Opening & Procedural Motion

Proposal #1 – Opening & Procedural Motion

Title: Opening and Procedural Motion

Origin: Executive Minister

What is the issue?

The regional council must establish the procedures by which it will conduct business.

Why is this issue important?

This clarifies and confirms the way in which decision-making will happen.

How might the regional council respond to the issue?

The regional council might adopt the following as a consent docket:

1. Adopt the agenda as circulated and authorize the Agenda and Business Committee to make any changes as necessary;
2. Approve the minutes of the meeting of 2025-05-30/31;
3. Receive the minutes of the following meetings of the
 - i. Executive
25-04-09
25-05-14
25-05-28
25-06-11
25-07-24
 - ii. Congregational Support Commission
25-04-30
25-05-07
25-06-04
25-06-18
25-08-06
 - iii. Pastoral Relations Commission
25-05-13
25-06-10
 - iv. Discipleship & Justice Commission
25-05-13
25-06-10

Note: Minutes are posted on the website www.arwrcucc.ca "About" page

4. Appoint Brad Morrisson as Parliamentarian;
5. Appoint Kerry Stover as Chair, Agenda and Business Committee;
6. Name Charmaine Bailey and George Bozanich to serve as Equity Support Team Members;

7. Name Cheryl Bolton as Chaplain;
8. Name President Richard Auckland, Chair Agenda and Business Committee Kerry Stover, Executive Minister Mark Laird, and Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary Max Watkinson, as the Agenda and Business Committee;
9. Set the bounds of the meeting as the zoom call, and the Stoneridge Inn, 6675 Burtwistle Ln, London, ON N6L 1H5
10. Make the designated representative from any United Church ministry, other than a congregation, which has been invited to become a community of faith by entering into a covenant with the regional council, a member of the regional council for this meeting (Section C.1.2 c);
11. Make all guests corresponding members;
12. Set the deadline for new business to be submitted to the Agenda and Business Committee as 9:00 a.m., Saturday, October 4th, 2025.
13. Adopt the following method for dealing with proposals for action by the regional council

Step One:

The Presenter will outline:

- A. What is the issue? and
- B. The suggested way in which the regional council might respond to the issue.

Step Two:

The President will inquire if there are questions for clarification. Please note this is for clarification only.

Step Three:

The President will then ask if there are changes or additions being suggested for the proposal. Using warm and cool signals, the regional council will seek to come closer to agreement on how to respond to the issue.

Step Four:

Once there is significant agreement, the President will invite the Presenter to move the motion at which point the regional council enters the formal debate process.

Proposal #2 – Finance Budget & Auditor’s Report

Proposal #2 Budget 2026

Title: Reviewing 2025 Year-to-Date and Adopting 2026 Operating Budget

Origin: Treasurer and EM

What is the issue?

Transparency and accountability are key elements of financial management in any charity. It is important that the regional council is guided by these principles and models these practices for the communities of faith within its bounds. The regional council needs to understand both the strengths and challenges of its financial situation to be able to function effectively in the present and to ensure it is well positioned for the future.

Establishing a budget for 2026 is one step in this process and will guide the Executive in its management of regional council resources.

Why is this issue important?

The regional council is becoming familiar with its financial situation and its financial reporting.

Income

The regional council receives two grants to fund its operation:

Assessment Grant: For Governance and Shared Services

Mission and Service Grant: For Mission and Ministry

The regional council also receives funds from:

1. Investment income
2. 50% grant from Archives Reserve to cover its costs
3. Regional council share (25%) of proceeds of disbanding congregations.

Expenses

Expenses are reported according to the ministry they support to help illustrate how the regional council is using its assets to meet its priorities. The budget categories and the staff positions assigned to each are listed below. AA refers to Administrative Assistant.

Ministry	Purpose	ARW’s Share of the following Positions
Regional Operations	Operation of the regional council	Executive Minister Executive Assistant .65 AA, Finance, Office Site Operations
Communities of Faith	Partnering with congregations	Minister, Congregational Support .05 AA, Finance and Office Site Operations
Pastoral Relations	Supporting the formation and nurture of healthy pastoral relationships	Minister, Pastoral Relations .25 Minister, Pastoral Support .15 Communication and AA
Communication	Newsletters, Websites	.85 AA, Communication and AA
Connecting	Providing opportunities to come together including regional council meetings	.75 Minister, Pastoral Support
Faith Formation	Nurturing discipleship	Minister, Faith Formation

Social Justice	Seeking to be faithful in the world	Minister, Social Justice .5 Minister, Social Justice and Right Relations .3 AA, Finance
Right Relations	Deepening understand and relationship with Indigenous Ministries	.5 Minister, Social Justice and Right Relations
Office Operations	Office supplies and equipment	
Building Expenses	Cost to maintain building	
Emerging Ministries	Unbudgeted expenses responding to an emerging situation or to the regional council's exercise of discipline.	

The regional council has established an investment policy and created an investment portfolio that it anticipates will help address the gap between increasing expenses and diminishing grants.

What might the regional council do?

The regional council might:

1. Receive the internal 2025 operating statement to date for information;
2. [Approve the 2024 Auditors' Report](#)
3. Appoint KPMG LLP as auditors for the 2025 Financial Year.
4. Adopt the proposed 2026 budget authorizing the Executive to adapt as necessary.

ARWRC Operating Budget 2026

	2024 Budget	2024 Actuals	2025 Budget	YTD 06/30/2025	2026 Budget
Income					
Assessment	325,000	334,375	325,000	162,500	325,000
Mission and Service	180,000	180,000	180,000	145,021	180,000
Salary Support	68,340	67,000	70,049	33,500	70,049
Other Grants (Archives)	20,000	24,254	20,000	10,000	20,000
Other Revnue		28,646		2,590	
Investment Income	65,000	28,720	55,000	23,397	55,000
<i>Transfers from Property Fund</i>	19,076	18,476	19,998	9,999	19,942
<i>Transfers from General Fund</i>	88,330	29,980	88,678	20,732	78,678
<i>Transfers from Operating Fund</i>					
Transfers	107,406	48,456	108,676	30,731	98,620
Total	765,746	711,451	758,725	407,739	748,669
Expenses					
<u>Regional Operations</u>					
Staff	102,782	102,705	99,054	50,414	94,420
Travel	6,500	4,377	5,000	70	5,000
Staff Support	2,000	1,233	2,000	483	2,000
Exec Meetings	5,000	1,470	5,000		2,000
Exec Events	5,000	1,375	4,000	720	7,000
Archives	40,000	44,507	40,000	10,000	40,000
Corporations	8,000	8,100	8,000	4,050	8,000
Legal	10,000		10,000		10,000
Learning Fund	30,000		20,000		20,000
Professional Fees	25,000	27,690	20,000	6,840	20,000
Section J				51	
Total	234,282	191,457	213,054	72,628	208,420
<u>Communities of Faith</u>					
Staff	55,585	64,579	58,422	32,451	60,618
Travel	3,000	87	2,000	1,199	2,000
CSC Meetings	3,000	759	2,000	998	2,000
CSC Events	10,000		5,000	3,146	5,000
Total	71,585	65,425	67,422	37,794	69,618
<u>Pastoral Relations</u>					
Staff	49,097	44,643	51,243	18,206	50,835
Travel	3,000	32	2,000		2,000
HRC Meetings	3,000	1,662	2,000	1,555	2,000

HRC Events	10,000	2,273	10,000	1,690	10,000
Emergency Fund	1,000	267	1,000		1,000
Total	66,097	48,877	66,243	21,451	65,835
<u>Connecting</u>					
Staff	40,108	39,975	42,122	11,456	25,197
Travel	2,000		1,000		2,000
RC Meetings	34,500	57,057	34,500	14,595	34,500
Total	76,608	97,032	77,622	26,051	61,697
<u>Communication</u>					
Staff	35,338	35,375	36,851	14,213	24,934
Travel	1,500		1,000		1,000
Total	36,838	35,375	37,851	14,213	25,934
<u>Social Justice and Outreach</u>					
Staff	32,508	34,070	33,791	14,400	43,266
Travel	3,500	115	2,000	100	2,000
D & J Commission meetings (50%)	1,500	95	1,000		1,000
D & J Commission Events (50%)	5,000	3,216	4,000	1,381	4,000
Total	42,508	37,496	40,791	15,881	50,266
<u>Faith Formation</u>					
Staff	42,053	42,009	43,104	22,085	34,217
Travel	2,500		1,500	71	1,500
D & J Commission meetings (50%)	1,500		1,000		1,000
D&J Commission Events (50%)	5,000	225	4,000		4,000
Total	51,053	42,234	49,604	22,156	40,717
<u>Right Relations</u>					
Staff	18,076	18,476	18,998	9870	19,942
Travel	1,000		1,000	100	1,000
Other	500		500		500
Total	19,576	18,476	20,498	9,970	21,442
<u>Emerging Ministries</u>		1,483			
<u>Office and Admin costs</u>					
GCO Acctg & IT	40,000	36,995	40,000	18,579	40,000
Office Operations	15,675	7,392	16,380	2,411	17,250

Total	55,675	44,387	56,380	20,990	57,250
<u>Building Expenses</u>	12,500	10,128	13,062	7,696	13,650
Total					
<u>Mission Support Grants</u>	150,000	150,000	150,000	104,100	150,000
Total	816,722	742,370	792,527	352,930	764,829
Difference	-50,976	-30,919	-33,802	54,809	-16,160

Proposal #3 – Camping Ministry Fund

ARW Regional Council / September 2025

Proposal #3

Title: Camping Ministry Support Fund

Origin: United Church Incorporated Camp Ministries of AWR with dedicated efforts from Lambton Centre and Kenesserie Camp.

What is the issue?

Camps need financial support to keep registration cost for campers/families affordable, attempt to pay staff a living wage and meet the other operational expenses. As costs rise, camps can not increase fees exponentially as many campers would not be able to come. This will be a considerable loss to many.

Camps need financial support from their regional councils to cover general operations. Financial support builds a connection and offers intentional supportive relationship between the regional camps and the regional council.

Even though congregational ministries are in decline, many camps are seeing growth--making them the primary UCC experience for many families & communities

When property sells in ARW, the region receives a percentage of those sales. Our camps would like to be able to access a portion of those resources each year for general operations.

Why is this issue important?

Camping ministry (part of First Third Ministry of the United Church of Canada) continues to be the front line for Christian Education and Leadership Development with children, youth and young adults. We need our camps to offer faith filled communities of faith to build life long learners, activists and disciples.

ARW Regional council names “Camps and Youth” along with, “Social Justice and Outreach-living out our Affirm mandate” & “Living into Right Relations” as priorities for the ministry and calling of our church. Camps meet all of these priorities.

Camps exist to bring safe, fun and meaningful life experiences to children, youth and their families. Our camps offer programming and build relationships toward meeting the Calls to the Church ([The Calls to the Church | The United Church of Canada](#)) and building their

Affirming capacity for campers and staff. And in fact, too much of the energy of camp leadership is spent on finding financial resources to operate the camp, sometimes at the expense of focusing on these justice issues.

Camps are good at finding grants/subsidies sources but many of these sources are 'project specific' and not for ongoing programming and property expenses such as food, maintenance, insurance, taxes. Donations are not a guaranteed source of funding which creates a constant need for steady income for general operations. Although, it is imperative that camps create new programming and staff positions to address diverse needs and to generate enticing activities some expenses never change and are constantly increasing in cost. General operation costs must be met and finding grants to cover these costs is exhausting work and not always successful.

Communities of Faith (churches) are declining in their ability to donate to camps but their heart and passions have always been to support camping ministry. Many congregations have closed and when they do, their property sells, with a percentage of that resource going to ARW Regional Council. Some of this money could be 'given' to the camps in the region to help with general operating expenses, without the cumbersome need to write a grant application. In the past presbyteries gave a grant every year to their local camps simply as a regular practice and those funds have been greatly missed. Camping is a valid opportunity to be a legacy for any of our Communities of Faith.

What might the regional council do?

This proposal asks that an automatic 5% of sale price from regional property sold be put into a Camping Ministry Support Fund and each year those dollars be distributed evenly between the 5 camps of ARW Regional Council. Changing the policy to the following:

that in accordance with Manual Section C.2.6(a), Antler River Watershed Regional Council adopts the policy that funds received from the property of a disbanding congregation be disbursed in the following manner:

- Reimbursement of holding/maintenance/disposal costs
- Covering unpaid past assessments and current year assessment
- Repaying any congregational indebtedness
- 33% for the congregation to direct to United Church of Canada ministries such as neighbouring congregations, United Church outreach ministries, United Church camps, United Church extension councils, The United Church of Canada Foundation or any of the following:
- 15% designated for Indigenous ministries
- 12.5% designated for Mission and Service (current year)
- 12.5% designated for Mission and Service Endowment Fund
- 2% designated for Archives

- 20% designated for regional council
- 5% Camping Ministry Fund
 - “A congregation may give an amount equal to the percentage of its previous year’s revenue that was donated to a non-United Church registered charity to that charity.”

(To be clear, should this essential new source of funding become a reality, we wish to clearly state that this fund would not replace/diminish other funds that are already being allocated to camps. This fund, no matter the amount would be in addition to those and would represent a commitment to Camping Ministry in ARW Regional Council.)

Proposal #4 – Closing Motions

Proposal #4 – Closing Motions

Title: Closing Motion

Origin: Executive Minister

What is the issue?

The work of the regional council continues between regional council meetings.

Why is this issue important?

The regional council must be clear how the work will continue.

What might the regional council do?

The regional council might

1. Entrust any unfinished business from its October 3rd/4th, 2025 meeting to the Executive;
2. Authorize the Executive to fill any vacancies on the understanding that appointments will be confirmed at the next spring regional council meeting;
3. Direct the Executive to plan to convene a meeting of the regional council in the spring of 2026;
4. Entrust the Executive and Commissions with the responsibilities and authority of Antler River Watershed Regional Council in accordance with The Manual of The United Church of Canada and the Governance Handbook of the Antler River Watershed Regional Council.
5. Close the October 3rd /4th, 2025 meeting of the Antler River Watershed Regional Council.

Notes: