



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC45 Antler River Watershed Accountability Report for Summer 2025

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Origin: Antler River Watershed Regional Council

Welcome to Antler River Watershed Region, where our purpose is “Holding and Encouraging Communities of Faith.” We live out this commitment through the work of our Affirming Regional Council. Antler River Watershed Region encompasses the counties of Elgin, Essex, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, and Oxford.

The Executive meets online approximately ten times per year. While the regional council gathers twice a year for business and learning opportunities. In the fall we meet online and in the spring we gather in person and online. This hybrid option allows members to be more flexible with their time and finances while still staying informed. Of course, Celebrations of Ministry services are held in person in conjunction with both of the Regional meeting with live-stream options for those unable to attend the celebrations.

This year marked a significant leadership transition. We bid farewell to long-time Executive Minister Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa as she moved on to serve the wider church at the General Council Office. We were pleased to welcome Mark Laird as our new Executive Minister.

We also celebrated the retirement of Executive Assistant Susan Duliban and welcomed Max Watkinson into the role. Several additional staff changes occurred, and we acknowledge and appreciate the unique gifts and perspectives each staff member brings to our region.

We collaborate closely with Western Ontario Waterways and Horseshoe Falls Regional Councils through initiatives such as Tri-Regional meetings and coordinated staffing. It has been a pleasure working with these other regions to share ideas and experience other

perspectives.

To enhance leadership, we have established a Volunteer Recruitment Committee focused on identifying and recruiting commissioners. We also reviewed the Regional Council evaluation to better understand the evolving needs of our communities of faith.

In partnership with Kindred Works, we are establishing a Business Trust model designed to support communities of faith in reimagining the future use of their properties.

The Discipleship and Justice Commission continues to champion social justice and spiritual growth. Highlights of this work includes supporting social justice workshops, such as the Ontario Quebec Native People's Retreat.

We provide ongoing support to regional camping ministries and while we were saddened by the closing of Camp Tanner in Oxford County, we are encouraged by the growth and creative outreach of remaining camps. We applaud the innovative camp programming and collaboration with other denominations that we have seen throughout these vital ministries

This commission also administers Mission Support Grants to camps, community ministries, chaplaincies, and other incorporated ministries.

The Discipleship and Justice Commissioners also took on the task of contacting all Communities of Faith to ensure they were able to vote on the Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

Our Congregational Support Commission is committed to supporting congregations undergoing change. Our assistance includes helping with community of faith profiles and living faith stories, updating information on ChurchHub, annual self-assessments, congregational health, visioning, governance, shared ministry agreements, redevelopment, amalgamations and closures, grants, sale, leasing or renovation of property, making support, guidance through formal processes, and managing real estate transitions, including the sale of church properties.

Our Human Resources commission continues to support the covenantal relationships between ministry personnel and congregations. This commission faithfully and prayerfully assists communities of faith with the search, selection, call and appointments of ministry personnel.

Our UCW gathers several times each year to celebrate their shared ministry. The Antler River Watershed UCW supported the National UCW's 60th Anniversary Project by contributing to the Regina Native Outreach Ministries' Baby & Mother Welcome Bags initiative among other faith filled projects.

We are excited about our Centennial Project, which celebrates the history of our regional communities of faith. This initiative involves collecting and compiling stories from our past, helping us reflect on our legacy while preparing to embrace the future.

Thank you to all of our amazing staff, commissioners and all those who are lovingly "Holding and Encouraging Communities of Faith" throughout Antler River Watershed Region and the United Church of Canada.

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