

**A COVID CHRONOLOGY
of Actions and Decisions
(in which the Rev. Debbie McMillan directly participated)
at the Cayuga Pastoral Charge
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
to Friday, April 3, 2020**

Submitted as part of the Minister's Report
Wednesday, April 22, 2020

All confidential information has been removed.
DAILY PASTORAL INTERACTIONS ARE NOT TRACKED HERE

1a) Wednesday, March 11, 2020

The Official Board meets for the first time since the congregational meeting on March 8. (minutes below were sent March 29th)

**Cayuga Pastoral Charge
Board Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2020**

- 1) **Call to Order** – Rev. Debbie McMillan called meeting to order at 7:08pm. **Explained if no chairperson, the chair position falls to the minister.** Rev. Debbie McMillan will step out of chair position while giving minister's report. Carolyn Hamilton has agreed to step in as chair while Rev. Debbie McMillan gives minister's report.
- 2) **Opening Devotions** – Carolyn Hamilton shared from Our Daily Bread, "We are Dust."
- 3) **Minutes** – Donald Mitchell motion to accept the minutes of the February 12, 2020 as presented, second by Betty Balanger. All in favour. Passed
- 4) **Business Arising from the Minutes:**
 - Strategic direction – no new report, update was given at the AGM on March 8, 2020
 - Constitution – deferred to minister's report
 - Chair of Board Applications – no applications so far

5) Correspondence:

- New program available to help rural congregations staff positions that are difficult to staff. Document will be printed and emailed to the Board. Can discuss at next meeting or as needs arise.

6) Minister's Report – Carolyn Hamilton stepped in as Chair at 7:17pm, Carolyn accepted.**Minister's Report****Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

1) A draft of the Constitution from 2013 was found by Aase Buckle and presented to me on February 23 following the service. It was not in an electronic format. We need to thank Christine Kish for converting the document into an electronic format. On the surface, it looks as if this will make our work easier; however, it may not.

Whereas presbytery has no record of the document

Whereas presbytery no longer exists

Whereas The Manual has been changed significantly since 2013

Whereas all churches must reorganize themselves to be in compliance by 2021

This document will be used to aid us in our discussions but cannot supplant the work which we need to accomplish by creating a new constitution.

2) I will be sending the 2013 document Rev. Warner Bloomfield for his information as we continue to work on our constitution. I will also be sending for your reading and awareness for the next meeting.

3) I am waiting to hear if my vacations and study leaves have been approved.

4) I was present at the Pancake Supper, February 25 at St. John the Divine and will co-preside on Maundy Thursday with The Rev. Holly Klemmensen. I have a copy of the services scheduled for the Anglican Church and will post.

5) We have received one new member formally: Melanie Ruigrok joined the congregation on March 8. Thank you to all the board for accommodating that.

6) I will be kicking off a coffee cup fund-raising campaign to co-inside with roll up the rim.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Debbie McMillan

Carolyn relinquished the chair at 7:20pm.

7) Congregational Designated Minister:

- Preached 3 of the last 4 Sundays as per schedule. Schedules are completed for Greetings, Openers, Readers. They will be posted tonight at the Church.

8) Team Reports:

- **M&P** – none
- **Finance** – had at AGM
- **Property** – no report
- **Worship** – have not had meeting. Meeting on March 24, 2020. Mt. Olivet wanted to change back to the old benediction, Carolyn looked back in the minutes and it was approved that the Music Director could go ahead with what they would like. Hazel has been informed. Dorothy VanOsch will supply music here at Cayuga United while Mt. Olivet does their anniversary Sunday.
- **Community Outreach:**
 - Pam Jarrett will be running the Pancake Breakfast. Have not heard from anyone else for volunteers.
 - **Bev Richert stepped forward at the stating that she made phone calls to get someone to help with the auction, she has not received the support she needs and will not be running the auction. Therefore, there will be no Auction in 2020 as it stands.**
- **Congregational Care** – Some visits have been done. Has been told not to go to Anson Place in Hagersville due to the ongoing health virus.
- **Christian Education** – VBS for this year has been scheduled for the week of August 10-14, 2020. “Little Hands, Big Hearts.” The children will learn about their God given gifts and talents. An exotic animal show is being planned for Friday of that week. Melanie Ruigrok will be organizing the week with songs, videos, games, and crafts.
- **Communication & Technology** – Our Google listing for the Cayuga United Church has been associated with a calendar from another church in the United States. Contacted our website designer, it has nothing to do with the website. Suggestion to take ownership of Google listing, will look further into this.
- **Other Team Reports:**
 - *Blended Team* – on hiatus

9) New Business Goals for 2020:

- Donate 1500lbs of food to the Cayuga Food Bank
- Increase givings

- Compliance for March 2021 – need to have congregation ready

- 10) **Suggestion Box:** nothing
- 11) **Next Regular Meeting:** Wednesday April 8, 2020 at 7:00pm
- 12) **Devotions Volunteer:** Betty Balanger
- 13) **Minutes Volunteer:** Christine Kish
- 14) **Closing Prayer** – Glenn Rowell, 7:39pm

Betty Balanger:
 motion for the meeting to be adjourned,
 Donalda Mitchell: second.
 Passed.

2a) Thursday, March 12, 2020

Rev. Debbie lets finance chair and treasurer that she is going to call a congregational meeting for April 5, Palm Sunday to discuss finances.

Thu, Mar 12, 10:19 AM

Heads Up: I'm calling a Congregational meeting

The Rev. D. McMillan

Hi Jim and Liz/Treasurer,

At the board meeting last night we received Correspondence from Bev Rickert. She explained that she would not be able to provide leadership for the beef auction. This means there will be no beef auction and no turkey supper this year.

As per The Manual I am acting chair of the Board by virtue of office since no chair at the meeting and Bruce is finished his term. In my capacity as Board Chair, I am going to put a date to the meeting Bruce proposed: Palm Sunday: April 5th at 12:30.

Finances and fundraising were already on the agenda for that day. I just wanted to make sure you knew what was coming since we are all in this together.

Thank you for your ministry and dedication.

Peace and blessings,
 Debbie

2b) Thursday, March 12, 2020

Rev. Debbie emails Board and Worship Chair to co-set up a date to have conversations about defining terms (short term vs. long term)

Meeting to Define Terms

The Rev. D. McMillan

Thu, Mar 12, 11:45 AM

Greetings, Everyone!

It's a gray day: but it still belongs to the Lord, so let us rejoice and be glad in it!

I'm writing in my capacity as Chair-of-Board-as-Per-The-Manual. (A reminder: since no chair was named or nominated at that meeting, that role falls to me.)

In that capacity, I am suggesting we all find a time to meet to define the terms attached to "coverage" as per direction from region.

By defining short term and long term, we can decide whether worship or m and p is responsible for finding coverage for specific reasons.

I recognize that time is precious and of the essence as worship committee meets on the 24th.

I have availability after church on Sunday the 15th, and all day on the 19th and up to noon on the 20th. Please let me know what works for you.

Peace and blessings,
(The Rev.) Debbie McMillan

2c) Thu, Mar 12, 4:44 PM

Rev. Debbie notifies M and P Chair, worship chair, bulletin editor/musician and Congregationally Designated Minister about the Emergency Plan put into place by the United Church of Canada.

The Rev. D. McMillan

Friends in Christ,
I am very sorry to send so many emails today.

The United Church of Canada has an emergency measures protocol concerning COVID 19. You can find it by clicking on “Emergency Plan” in the online statement below. I am required to make sure you know about it.

<https://www.united-church.ca/news/covid-19-united-church-statement>

Patti, if you are well enough, would you be willing to print off a copy of the Emergency Plan that can be posted at the church while you’re printing off the bulletin? If you’re not, I can do it on Sunday.

Stay well.

Peace and blessings, Debbie

2b Patti responds asking if I want anything in the bulletin about this information? I say “yes” and suggest the following.

“The United Church of Canada will comply with any and all recommendations made by the World Health Organization as well as the Federal, Provincial Governments and Municipal Governments with regards to COVID 19. This means the Cayuga Pastoral Charge will also be in compliance. Should we be asked to suspend services because of the virus, you will receive and notice through the info line or a phone call if you are not online.”

3) Fri, Mar 13, 5:31 PM

**—EMAIL from Moderator Forwarded to
The Cayuga Pastoral Charge through our
Info Line**

Cayuga Pastoral Charge

Grace and peace to you, in the love of the Creator, the peace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

I am writing to you on the evening following the announcement by the World Health Organization that the novel coronavirus COVID-19 has reached a pandemic state. Here in Canada, while the number of presumptive and confirmed cases remains low, Canadians are being asked to prepare for an increase in the number of people affected by the virus.

There are many more people who are far better equipped than I am to talk about how the virus can affect our health. I have been deeply thankful for the calm and clear explanations and directives by Canada's public health services, local, provincial, and federal. I hope that individuals will turn to these medical leaders, who are well prepared to lead us through this time.

The General Council Office is sharing resources with communities of faith and regions to help them in their planning about how to respond to this health situation. (You will be able to find links to them, as they are posted, on the [Emergency Planning](#) page.) As measures are put in place to help people remain as healthy as possible, it is my hope that our communities of faith will continue to help people to love God with all they are, to love their neighbour, and to love themselves by helping each other, and the wider community, to the best of our abilities.

I recognize that there is a great deal that is being learned about COVID-19. I have also noticed, both on social media and on traditional media, a great deal of misinformation

and “hyping” of fears. While that is understandable in the face of the unknown, it isn’t particularly helpful. A level of caution is important. It can help us to be careful and caring about our actions. When fear overwhelms us, we can act in ways that do harm not only to ourselves but also to those around us.

Scripture talks a lot about fear—often in the form of “Don’t be afraid!” I know that can be hard to do, but I think there is an important call to us as people of God and followers of Jesus. In those moments when fear gets huge, we have the opportunity to love even more and, in that love, to help one another.

As we build in “social distance,” where people aren’t able to spend time in each other’s presence in the ways we’re used to, it becomes even more important to reach out in creative ways—by telephone and video-chat, for example. For those who are staying home from church because of health concerns, or as we face the possibility that communities of faith may need to suspend regular gathering for worship at some point, there is the possibility of joining a worshipping community through livestream on the computer, or downloading audio or text versions (if that’s possible in your area) until we are able to return to our more traditional practices. And if you are offering services online, let people in the wider community know via social media. At times like this, people turn to the church for comfort, and we can still offer strong and reassuring pastoral care online and through telephone and text.

God is with us in this, and we are with each other—even when we aren’t able to be together. We are not alone.

Christ’s peace is with you.

The Right Rev. Richard Bott
Moderator, The United Church of Canada

4) Mar 14, 2020, 4:42 PM

Rev. Debbie (as ordained clergy and as board chair) informs the congregation of conversations she has had with the chair of M and P and the Congregationally Designated Minister earlier that afternoon. (She has added the highlighting).

Friends in Christ,

The words below are from the “Emergency Plan: The United Church of Canada, March 2020.”

*In times of crisis, the faith community is often the first place people turn to for support, particularly if the emergency has widespread health implications. Yet the very nature of being a community adds an increased level of risk if the emergency involves the spread of a respiratory (droplet) infection. **How would we continue to offer ministries on Sunday mornings and throughout the week without putting our ministry personnel, lay people, and participants at risk?***

The church’s mission will guide us to do what is right:

- *to love one another as Christ loved us*
- *to provide hope and compassion*
- *to take action and respond to community need*

The United Church of Canada has empowered individual communities of faith to decide how to demonstrate Christ’s love, offer hope and compassion as well be responsive to the ever changing realities of living in a COVID 19 world. Things began to escalate rapidly on Friday, March 13th and have continued to change over the past 12 hours.

The Cayuga Pastoral Charge needed to answer that bold-faced question. **Rose Anne Maracle, as chair of the Ministry and Personnel committee, Glenn Rowell our CDM and Carolyn Hamilton from Mount Olivet and I have been in conversation about how our faith community can do that effectively and responsibly.**

I need to say that our conversation was based on the best information and the most helpful criteria available at the time. That information included:

an assessment tool from Health Canada; <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assessment.html>

the decision to suspend all local gatherings (services, programming and meals) made by the Anglican Diocese of Niagara; <https://niagaraanglican.ca/news/ontario-bishops-decide-to-suspend-worship-services>

the decision of Cayuga Christian Fellowship to suspend its VBS but hold worship with precautions in place; <http://www.cayugachristian.com/>

the decision for Gateway to suspend all face to face gatherings (including services meetings and gatherings) <https://www.gw.church/covid-19>

the decisions made by Haldimand Norfolk County; <https://www.simcoereformer.ca/news/local-news/norfolk-closes-facilities-cancels-programs-as-part-of-covid-19-containment-strategy>

the decision made by the Ontario Government to close schools <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-to-close-all-publicly-funded-schools-for-2-weeks-after-march-break-due-to-covid-19-1.4850653>

the decision to practice social distancing as stated by the Federal Government <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>

and the need for a “deep clean” of every surface in the church as per the Federal Government <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>

Based on all of that information and taking into consideration our context, we decided to make the following decision:

On Sunday, March 15, I will be available *at regular service times* to counsel people, to pray for or with people, and to talk; however, there will be no worship service of any kind: no music, no sermon, no corporate prayer, no food prep, no coffee hour. This will help us maintain social distancing space of one metre all the way around each person. Those who come are invited to use hand sanitizer which will be left at the doors. I will wear gloves and a mask for your comfort and protection. Gloves will be available for those who choose to come. There will be an offering basket for use. For the Cayuga folk: you are asked to come into Wesley Hall and meet with me there as its surfaces can be cleaned more quickly and easily by me before hand. For the Mount Olivet folk, I will be in the sanctuary in gloves and mask. An offering plate will be there for your use.

Mount Olivet has also said that they would like to decide on outright cancellation within the next 24 hours. That decision will be communicated through its phone tree and by way of email.

This has not been an easy decision to make. And this decision may change. **In the meantime, I need to thank Rose Anne, Glenn and Carolyn for giving up their time to help discern this matter.** If you have any questions/comments/concerns please bring them to our attention. Things may need to change again in the hours, days and weeks ahead.

Please stay healthy, stay home if you feel unwell, and pray for all who are suffering from this virus or the fears of it.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Debbie McMillan

5) Sat, Mar 14, 9:21 PM

Cayuga Pastoral Charge

Hello Again Friends in Christ,

Whereas Mount Olivet is a separate faith community with its own identity (though it shares an administrative and executive connection with Cayuga) and the power to close remains in the hands of the faith community,

Mount Olivet is announcing that it will be completely closed for services and programming:

Sunday, March 15,

Sunday, March 22

and Sunday, March 29.

We apologize for this inconvenience. Worshippers are encouraged to continue reading the Gospel of Mark beginning at Chapter 12.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Debbie McMillan

6) Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 4:32 PM

Rose Anne makes reference to one of the conversations she had with me during Rev. Debbie's prayer and presence morning earlier that day.

Rose Anne Maracle

Sun, Mar 15, 4:33
PM

to me

Forgot to include you in on this message

Yours truly
Rose Anne

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rose Anne Maracle** < >
Date: Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 4:32 PM
Subject: Church cleaning
To: >
Cc: James Smith >, Liz Roberts <

Hi Dave

I trust you are well and that "prison sentence" will be over soon.
At least you are confined with the love of your life and that as I understand you have property to survey each day. Talk about being Lord of the Manor!

Rev Deb and I were doing some planning for the future church meetings. As you know church services and church activities have been temporarily stop due to COVID-19 concerns.

We hope to resume April 12 on Easter Sunday. There will be no Pancake Breakfast and a decision about Sunrise service hasn't been announced. Rev Deb will be sending out a more detailed email later after she talks to Glenn about the sunrise service.

The reason I am contacting you is that as per United Church of Canada guidelines the church building needs to undergo a deep cleaning. This includes steam cleaning of curtains, couches, carpets and all soft surfaces. As well all other surfaces need cleaning..ie pews, tables, counter spaces etc

This is more of a job than our cleaning lady can accomplish.
We wonder if you could investigate companies that can do this work.

Jim Smith and Liz Roberts will need to know that this cost will be coming forward

This all needs to be accomplished no later than April 7th so that folks such as computer program planners, music teams and communion set up folks can get into the church for their usual work on or after that date.

Thanks Dave.

my phone number is 1-905XXXXXXXXX should you want to rtalk directly. I don't have your tel number.

Yours truly
Rose Anne

6) Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 5:24 PM

Rev. Debbie informs the congregation that the church will be closed until April 12 (Easter Sunday) based on the best information she, Rose Anne, Glenn and Carolyn had at the time.

Cayuga Pastoral Charge

Sun, Mar 15, 5:24
PM

Friends in Christ,

These words may be familiar to you:

1 John 4:18 (NRSV)

There is no fear in love, but **perfect love casts out fear**; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.

Fear is an automatic response to what creatures perceive as a threat to survival. Fear can produce a physiological reaction that can cause a creature to fight, to fly or to freeze. All three of these instincts are defensive reactions designed to ensure survival. A lion will fight another lion for a zebra carcass. A bird will take flight when a cat draws near. A rabbit will stand still to blend in with its surroundings.

We humans are creatures. We still have fear as an instinct; however, we have the ability to control it. This can be done in many ways. One way is to meditate on scripture. In this case, I am suggesting this phrase from 1 John. To meditate is to sit quietly, think deeply and carefully- about these words. I have done that on more than one occasion as part of my treatment for anxiety. Each time I do, I feel stillness, calmness, peace and warmth. In those moments, I feel the presence of God draw closer to me. We know that Jesus longs for us to feel confident in Him and through Him. Loving Him fully leaves little room for fear to enter our hearts and minds. That said: it's okay to be afraid right now. God understands that and wants to help us through it.

Another way to control fear is to understand what frightens us. If we are able to understand what scares us, we are can **respond TO the fear rather than react FROM fear**. A response is a well-considered course of action based on sound and credible information. A reaction is an explosive outburst of emotion that is usually

triggered by something which inspires fear.

Rose Anne Maracle as M and P chair, Glenn Rowell as CDM, Carolyn Hamilton as Mount Olivet Representative and I have been in conversation today in an attempt to respond to COVID 19 in the days ahead.

We acknowledge that the Chief Medical Officer Theresa Tam said, “Canadians need to take “strong action” to prevent the further spread of the novel coronavirus.” <https://globalnews.ca/news/6680382/coronavirus-canadians-313-chief-health-officer/>

We acknowledge that there is a very thin line between response and reaction; however, it is better to err on the side of caution than to be careless.

We acknowledge that we cannot offer a perfect response to this crisis in the context of our community. People will be unhappy and disappointed: ourselves included.

We acknowledge that we made decisions based on the best information we had at this moment in time; our response may change based on new information.

With those acknowledgements in mind, we are announcing “strong action” in relation to Cayuga United Church.

Cayuga United Church is now fully closed as a worship, meeting, pastoral care and programming space. This closure will remain in effect until Easter Sunday, April 12 when we offer three services:

- the Sunrise service at the River (without Pancake Breakfast this year due to COVID and logistical issues)***
- the 9:00am Contemporary Service***
- the 11:00am Traditional Service***

This lengthy closure will ensure that recommended social distancing occurs.

This lengthy closure will ensure that self-isolation occurs.

This closure will also allow the building to receive a deep, thorough and professional cleaning of every personally accessible surface in our building.

This closure means that our community groups (Guides and The Rug Hooking Group) will not be able to meet in the building.

Band and Choir practices ***might*** be possible between the 7th and the 10th of April depending upon the scheduling of the cleaning. We will let you know closer to that time.

You are encouraged to check your email every Friday for a scheduled update of where our Pastoral Charge stands during at the time.

While the building may be closed, the ministry will continue. Both Glenn and I remain accessible through phone/email/text and in person as necessary.

If you have any questions please contact me, Rose Anne or Glenn directly. I thank them, once again for their gifts of wisdom, insight and discernment.

May God bless us all as we try to care for one another without fear during this challenging time.

Yours in Christ,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

7) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 11:05am

*Rev. Debbie –following the direction of the Moderator **and** conversing with colleague (The Rev. Kate Jones in New Brunswick) takes advantage of a “free license” made available to all clergy until April 15th 2020. She does this because she decided to lead some kind of worship out of her basement. She spoke with Glenn Rowell the previous afternoon, informing him of the license.*

ONE LICENSE <info@onelicense.net>

Mon, Mar 16,
11:05 AM

to me



ONE LICENSE
Inspiring congregational

Hello Debbie McMillan

Click this link to verify your email address on ONE LICENSE

[ACTIVATE MY ACCOUNT](#)

If you did not make this request, just delete this email.

If we can assist in any other way, please contact us at info@onelicense.net

If you're having trouble clicking the "Activate My Account" button, copy and paste the URL below into your web browser:

<https://www.onelicense.net/account/activation/bce7f8c528b51385a86812dc5865d1521>

www.onelicense.net

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8) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 12:15pm

Rev. Debbie lays out a vision for an online service.

The Rev. D. McMillan <revdebcayuga2016@gmail.com>
Friends in Christ,

This morning, I was told that Ordained Clergy in Canada have been given one month free of One License. This can enable clergy to podcast/broadcast and include music.

I have subscribed.

I have been in touch with Patti. She and Brian will be able to offer one song a week which they will record and send to me. Since they live in the same house, rehearsal is easy.

The first satellite worship service will take place on Sunday, March 22. Time and platform TBA. The theme for ~~the each~~ Sunday is FEAR NOT.

There will scripture, prayers, a reflection and music.

I acknowledge that this does not meet the needs of those who are technologically impaired and/or deprived.

More information will follow in our weekly communication: the first of which will happen on Friday.

Thank you for your dedication and support.

Peace and blessings, Debbie

8) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 12:39pm

Rev. Debbie asks the Finance Chair and the Treasurer if they would like to make a statement to the congregation about making donations and offerings. The statement will appear in the bulletin and/or in weekly communication with the congregation.

Donations during COVID

The Rev. D. McMillan

Mon, Mar 16,
12:39 PM

Hi Jim and Liz,

Patti, Christine and I will be sending out an info-bulletin on Friday. I'll be announcing details of our weekly satellite worship service in it.

Is there a statement that either of you -in your capacities as finance chair and treasurer-would like to make about donations? What would you say to people who want to make a donation: to whom do they write a cheque? To whom do they mail it? Etc?

Is there any information you would like to share with our community about our financial state?

If so, would you like it read during our online worship or shared through the info-bulletin?

Thank you for consideration.

Stay well.
Peace and blessings,
Rev. Debbie

9) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 2:30pm

Rev. Debbie speaks with local United Church clergy about what they will be doing in their respective congregations during the crisis. The correspondence is confidential and ongoing. The final email in the thread is exchanged on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 2pm.

10) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 3:46pm

Nora Sanders, general secretary of the United Church of Canada addresses ministry personnel, informing them that the Council Offices will be closed until further notice. The office continues to encourage churches to begin online worship services (where possible). The office also encourages clergy to seek ways to delay funerals.

March 16, 2020

To Ministry Personnel and Church Leaders

Peace and grace to you in this unique and challenging time in the history of our world.

Your leadership during this time is very important to your congregations and the communities you serve. In many respects, you will be an essential service to your communities. We know it isn't easy, and are grateful for all that you have been doing and will be doing as this advances.

Yesterday some churches met for worship, and others closed, moving where possible to offering electronic broadcasts. We anticipate that by next Sunday few congregations will gather, although there may be parts of the country that are exceptions. With schools in several provinces and public gatherings cancelled, most people are moving towards limiting social interactions outside their households to all but essential ones, it is prudent to suspend in-person worship or other gatherings in your churches. Even funerals might best be delayed until a later date to minimize the opportunity for transmission of the virus.

This is a good time to try out other ways of connecting using the amazing electronic tools we have these days. Some of you have the capacity to conduct worship electronically, and this experience has been very powerful. Not all congregations have this capacity, but the beauty of electronic tools is that they can be shared broadly, so please share your links and we will do our best to offer these links through our website too. It might be a good time to introduce some new practices to your congregation to ensure continued connection with one another: perhaps prayer chains or pastoral care call-in lists. Share news of what you are doing on [The United Church of Canada's Facebook page](#). The Moderator, and many of you, are preparing online worship and worship resources that [you will find here](#).

Some questions have been raised about continued [pastoral relationships and employment](#) as congregations suspend worship. Please remember that ministry personnel, in particular, will be on the front lines in our congregations and communities with pastoral care, supporting new ways to reach out to and care for each other and to “meet” for worship and reflection. This will be no “time off” for you. Where there are needs to provide pastoral care to very sick or dying members or neighbours in your communities, you will need to protect yourself and others by taking appropriate precautions. This will involve some difficult judgements, but these are unusual times, and you have all of your members, and your family, to think of. Some guidance for congregations in regards to employment have been posted on the United Church [COVID-19 page](#).

We have made the difficult decision to send the General Council staff home to work from there until March 30. They will continue to be available by e-mail and at their usual phone extensions during regular hours throughout the weeks ahead.

Through all this, grace to you. We remember that God is with us; we are not alone. And we say, thanks be to God.

Nora Sanders
General Secretary, The United Church of Canada

CC: Pastoral Charges, Church Treasurers, Church Board Secretaries

11) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 6:03pm

Finance cancels its schedule meeting for March 24th.

By 6:24, the Finance Chair and Treasurer have drafted statements which will be included in the weekly communication with the congregation.

12) Monday, Mar 16, 2020 at 11:58pm

Rev. Debbie receives [the statement from the Provincial Government ordering all places of worship closed](#). She forward the information to key leaders.

Mon, Mar 16, 11:58 PM

Hello Friends in Christ,

Tonight the Provincial Government issued this statement.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2020/03/enhanced-measures-to-protect-ontarians-from-covid-19.html>

In it, you will see that the province is asking churches to close. The province is also asking people who are over 70 to remain indoors.

I offer this in case anyone asks you what the latest information is concerning our closure.

Peace and blessings,
Debbie

13) Monday, Mar 17, 2020 at 2:09

After speaking with Rev. Debbie, the Chair of Worship Monica Grabham gets a congregational list from Communications chair, Christine Rowell. She is inviting them to online worship and doing an informal check in with people who haven't been to church in years.

Tue, Mar 17,
2:09 PM

to Christine, me, Glenn

Hi Christine,

Could you please supply me with the congregational list? We plan to call individuals who are unable to access the online service via telephone.

Thanks, Monica

14) Monday, Mar 17, 2020 at 8:29pm

Rev. Debbie had an online meeting with Nova Scotia minister, The Rev. Nick Phillips at 7:30pm (Ontario Time). The meeting addressed questions about media platforms and online broadcasting. Attention was given to what would be the easiest option for Rev. Debbie to use. (Rev. Nick knows Rev. Debbie personally and knows and her computer. He also knows and her lack of skill with tech.)

Answering Tech Questions

Tue, Mar 17, 8:29 PM

The Rev. D. McMillan

to Monica, Rose, Glenn, Carolyn

Hello, Friends in Christ.

I consulted with The Rev. Nick Philips (my clergy friend in Nova Scotia). He is our webmaster/host. He is a former programmer and IT specialist at Nortel. He is also a musician and radio personality. I have his permission to condense his answers to your questions. Your questions appear in **blue**. His answers will appear in **red**.

It seems that it also used for tracking the reporting of using of songs/ music (much like our CCLI licence obligations). I'm not sure if this will be a duplication.

Our church license does not cover archiving (recording) or live-streaming (broadcasting). The license I have does.

I assume that we are going to use their Podcast/ streaming option. The service can then be uploaded to our website (is it active) or facebook. There is a limit on how many downloads based on the licence depending on the size of the congregation. I'm not sure how that's working for the free licence.

Facebook Live is fun and gimmicky. It can create a live, interactive feel which is a "pro". The "con" is that it is utterly unforgiving. If you make a mistake, you're in trouble. If there is a tech problem, you're in trouble. And do you want to show all your tech glitches to show on your first broadcast? Another "con" is that FB live is restricted to FB users. It can't be removed from the FB platform successfully.

Youtube is a good option because you can pre-record, edit and upload. You then can create a link that can be emailed even to people that don't have FB. Not only that, but you can load it back to FB, set up a "Watch Party" and "guests" can participate through comments and "likes" etc.

I still love the idea of playing the service using a computer and cell phone to those with no computers. Lynn is working on getting a list put together and I expect that we will be able to establish our virtual visitor committee soon. I had envisioned it go something like this:

1. Virtual visitor (VV) (with the computer) calls the house bond, non computer congregant (let's call her Betty).
2. VV identifies themselves and places their phone close to their computer so that "Betty" can hear the service in its entirety.
3. VV chats to Betty, discusses sermon (if they are comfortable) and does a general check in with Betty.
4. VV closes the time with a prayer of their own.
5. Betty now has had an opportunity to worship along with VV.

Questions:

Is there a limit no how many times VV is able to download the podcast and play the service to the shutins? If I download it, can I just repeatedly play it so I can call more than one person?

There is no limit with One License. And if you broadcast from youtube, the sound quality will likely be even better. There is also another source that someone on your team might want to investigate. It's called <https://churchonlineplatform.com/> The catch is they don't use Youtube for streaming. Perhaps if COVID is going to be a longterm thing, you might want to see what they offer. One really cool thing about it is it is totally free.

Monica, how full is your plate? Is churchonlineplatform something you could into?

--

Peace and Blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

Cayuga Pastoral Charge|| 25 Munsee St. S.|| Cayuga, ON || N0A 1E0||

"In my experience, there's no such thing as luck." *Obi-Wan Kenobi - Episode IV - A New Hope*

15) Monday, Mar 18, 2020 8:30pm

*Rev. Debbie receives and reads formal communication from the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council. The communication is comprehensive. It contains information about accessing restricted funds, migrating worship to online formats, where to get reliable information and conducting meetings using technology--Zoom is recommended. **This information is given to Patti to add to the bulletin. Rev. Debbie forwards this information to key leaders on Tuesday, March 19, 2020.***

Dear Horseshoe Falls Regional Council,

Your creativity and compassion during this period of disruption are inspiring.

Thank you for the steps each community of faith along with their ministry personnel and governing body are taking to promote best public health practices while remaining available to offer the encouragement of faith and the assurance of God's presence. We are privileged to be your colleagues.

Your inbox may be experiencing information overload. We have tried to make this letter as comprehensive as possible to reduce the frequency of our correspondence. Thank you for your patience with its length.

Please click on any of these links to take you to the section below:

[Reaching Communities of Faith](#) [Check Websites](#) [Regional Council Office Closed](#)

[Community of Faith Support](#) [Holding Meetings](#) [Staff Support](#)

[Event Cancellation](#) [Connecting](#) [Facebook](#)

Reaching Communities of Faith and Their Leaders

We have expanded the recipient list for this email drawing on the information recorded in the pastoral charge's ChurchHub account. This is a critical time to ensure that the contact information in the ChurchHub account is accurate. Please update the information for your pastoral charge.

Please also share this newsletter widely and encourage others to join the mailing list through the Subscribe button at the end.

Keep Checking the Website

Updates from the regional council will be posted to the [Emergency Plan: COVID-19](#) page of the [Horseshoe Falls Regional Council](#) website.

Please check it regularly.

Regional Council Office Closed

On Monday, the General Council Office announced that it was closing the office with staff working from home until at least Monday, March 30th.

Regional councils were encouraged to do the same. As of Tuesday, March 17th, the regional council office is closed.

Regional council staff frequently work from home and have access to secure

email remotely. They also receive phone calls through their laptops. Staff remain available to you during regular office hours. Staff contact information can be found on the [Staff Directory](#) page.

Community of Faith Support

Staying Connected

Communities of faith are being innovative in the ways they connect. Some are holding meetings and worship by Zoom; others are streaming worship over their website or through Facebook Live. A resource for [streaming worship](#) has been prepared as well as a growing [interactive worship map](#) to help you find a congregation streaming worship near you.

Additionally, communities are ensuring continuing contact with members, some of whom may be at risk, either through phone calls, notes or social media.

Managing Finances

To provide as much stability as possible during this period, please encourage those who remain able to contribute to donate by:

1. Forwarding their offering by cheque to the church office;
2. Enrolling in [PAR](#) (pre-authorized remittance for automatic payment);

Activate your community of faith's [Canada Helps](#) page to provide for on-line donations. Go to the website and type in your community of faith's name in the search bar. Every community of faith is already listed, with several donation options.

Value of Other Property

Covenant Commission Chair, Adrienne Robertson, wishes to advise communities of faith that the Covenant Commission has taken the following action:

The Covenant Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council authorizes communities of faith with funds restricted by either the previous Presbytery or the regional council, to access these restricted funds if needed, up to the amount of their February ADP payment, for the purpose of meeting ADP payroll in March and April of 2020. The governing body's decision to access these funds to be communicated to the Covenant Commission via the respective staff. (Minister, Congregational Support and Mission, [Lynne Allin](#))

A scan of Column 50 of the Year Book indicates that almost all pastoral charges show an amount under Value of Other Property, Endowments, Investments, Etc. This property may not be in the form of cash, but the governing body could authorize borrowing against this resource if necessary.

Any pastoral charge without reserves struggling to make payroll is encouraged to contact the Minister, Congregational Support and Mission, [Lynne Allin](#).

Mission and Service

Please support the Mission and Service Fund. The fund enabled us to respond to the pandemic when it first erupted in China. It also enables the church to provide outreach ministries for vulnerable people. It supports hospital chaplaincies. It helps provide ministry in Indigenous communities. It is important that resources be available to these ministries. These ministries need continued support just as congregations do.

Holding Meetings

Some decisions will need to be made about conducting business of the congregation and communities of faith are asking how best to accomplish this.

Governing Body Meetings

Because we are a conciliar church, key decisions rest with the governing body (Council) of the community of faith. Please consider holding your

meetings electronically to avoid putting Council members in the position of choosing between their own well-being or that of a vulnerable loved one and their responsibilities to the church. Consider experimenting with on-line technology to hold a meeting in real time without personal contact.

Congregational Decisions

- ***Notice of the Meeting***

Some congregations are asking how to hold meetings concerning the pastoral relationship. Congregations holding virtual worship can deliver the notice electronically in the service. Congregations that are not gathering electronically for worship have an alternate option during this time of disruption. Based on [The Manual](#) Section G.3.6.2, congregations are being authorized to give notice by telephone, email or post at least seven days before the meeting to the members known contact information. The minutes for the meeting should indicate how notice was delivered and that this was in light of the current situation. This alternative way of giving notice is only available while communities are not meeting for worship.

- ***The Meeting***

Any meeting for such an important matter must happen in real time; that is, people must be able to hear one another and to speak. Technology can make this possible. On-line video conferencing, e.g. Zoom or Skype, are some options; conference calling is another. The Governing Body/Council will need to decide in advance how it voting will be handled. There are some polling/voting options with [Zoom](#). If such a meeting is happening, please consider speaking with regional council staff in advance.

Support for Ministry Personnel and Other Staff

The linked General Council page provides advice on the continuing

employment of ministry personnel and other staff. Ministry personnel will continue to have demands on their time whether it is learning new technologies to facilitate online opportunities, providing people with pastoral care and spiritual support, responding to those who are ill or who are grieving. Ministry Personnel will be continuing to provide leadership to your community.

Please see this [General Council page](#) for guidance on employment in congregations.

Ministry personnel are also reminded of the resources available to them at this time. Minister, Pastoral Support, [Kevin Steeper](#), is available as the minister for the ministers. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with him.

Ministry personnel also have access to [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#), EFAP, and may wish to reach out for additional support.

If ministry personnel or other staff members (working in excess of 14 hours) become ill, please remember to access the Restorative Care Benefit. Minister, Pastoral Relations, [Diane Blanchard](#), can assist with this.

All Regional Council Events Cancelled Until After Easter

All in-person regional council events are postponed until after Easter. We will definitely reschedule the celebration of the ministries of Joan Tuchlinsky and Kim Uyede-Kai. As is no surprise to any of us who have had the privilege of working with them, they are very flexible on this and we will find another date once the current situation eases.

Connecting

We have planned an on-line (Zoom) TOWN HALL gathering for the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council on Thursday, March 26th at 1:00 p.m.

This is the link to [join the on-line meeting](#) on March 26.

We have the capacity to host up to **two members of each pastoral charge**. Please determine which two people will be present from your pastoral charge. At that time, we'll provide a brief update on the actions the regional council is taking and also have an opportunity for people to share what is working for them and their communities as they manage the disruption. This is also your opportunity to ask some questions.

[Facebook](#)

We have been planning a Facebook group for Horseshoe Falls Regional Council and now seems like the right moment to launch it. Check it out [Horseshoe Falls Regional Council](#).

This group is a place for members of the regional council to share ideas, to offer encouragement, to update one another with congregation events! Share your Good News! Let everyone know what your congregation is doing. Invite neighbours to plays, fundraisers, BBQs, bazaars and special worship services. Let everyone know what's working.

We are all in a time of stress as we navigate new waters. Everyone is doing their best. The more we can demonstrate patience and understanding the less anxiety we will add.

Please share this newsletter widely and encourage others to join the mailing list through the [Subscribe!](#) button below. We count ourselves privileged to be in ministry with you. God be with you as you continue to serve faithfully.

Shalom,

[Kate Young](#)

President

[Horseshoe Falls Regional Council](#)

16) Tuesday, Mar 19, 2020 5:25pm

Rev. Debbie receives the music file from Patti.

17) Tuesday, Mar 19, 2020 6:45

Rev. Debbie completes her sign up with Zoom so she can begin chairing meetings.

Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>

Thu, Mar 19, 6:45 PM

to me

[Header Logo Sign In]

Hello, revdebcauga2016@gmail.com,

Welcome to Zoom!

To activate your account please click the button below to verify your email address:

Activate Account

18) Tuesday, Mar 19, 2020 8:25pm

Rev. Debbie forwards the *comprehensive email from Regional Council to key leaders*. She sends it as a link. *She gives the key leaders a "heads up" that key committees will be expected to meet on line ASAP.*

The Rev. D. McMillan

Mar 19, 2020, 8:25 PM

t

Friends in Christ,

I hope you are staying well during these challenging times.

I am sending this email as a heads-up. Tomorrow (or Saturday if there are any technical issues) the congregation will receive an info-bulletin that will have this

link attached. <https://mailchi.mp/e7e4f0688537/covid-19-update-march-18-2020?e=63fe49b09b>

I encourage you to read it ahead of time very carefully for two reasons:

1) It explains that we now have the power to conduct virtual meetings in order to maintain social distance while conducting church business.

2) There are some notices about accessing financial assistance that our pastoral charge may need to consider carefully.

If you are a team lead/committee chair that needs to have face to face meetings in order to conduct business, I encourage you to speak with your committee members and explore how you can carry this out.

Please keep in mind that screen to screen meetings are the preferred option--to keep the feel of a face to face meeting in tact; however, conference calling platforms for telephone use are available. That said: conference calling can be a challenge for those who have hearing issues.

I acknowledge you may have people in your committee/on your team who can't access technology. If that number is in the majority, please let me know--especially if your committee is essential to the function of the church so we can brainstorm ways in which to carry on our work.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider its contents.

Please feel free to ask me any questions either using group reply or single replay as you choose.

Thank you for your commitment to Christ as demonstrated in your work His Church.

--

Peace and Blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

Cayuga Pastoral Charge|| 25 Munsee St. S.|| Cayuga, ON || NOA 1E0||

"In my experience, there's no such thing as luck." Obi-Wan Kenobi - Episode IV - A New Hope

19) Friday, Mar 20, 2020, 12:28pm

Rev. Debbie receives first draft of bulletin.

20) Friday, Mar 20, 2020 7:15

Rev. Debbie receives the email from the National Offices concerning retaining staff. She forwards this email to the M and P chair as an F.Y.I.

March 20, 2020

Grace and peace to you as we live in to the reality of being the Church Scattered.

These are times when the anxiety levels of people are high, and the essential services provided by ministry personnel are in great demand. Ministry personnel have been offering pastoral care through various media, paying careful attention to those who need critical care. While they have been taking precautionary measures as they offer support to the very sick and those who are dying, let us make every effort to offer them support. Thank you!

To this end, congregations are encouraged to make every possible effort to retain the minister in their paid accountable position. Please recognize that to lay off a minister means a void is created: no pastoral care through telephone calls or FaceTime chats, no meetings via Zoom, no visits to critically ill or dying congregants, no funerals. In a time of so many moving pieces, we *want* the certainty and calm assurance of our ministry personnel in the local setting. We draw attention to *The Manual*, section G.4.2.4, in which ministry personnel remuneration has the first draw on financial resources.

With in-person worship being suspended and rental incomes stopped, the reality is that some communities of faith may be faced with financial concerns sooner rather than later. Before making any decisions about staffing, **contact your regional council to explore options.**

Please also note that the General Council Office will soon make an announcement about a revision of the due dates for the denominational assessment. This would change the timeline for another call on the finances of the community of faith. Consideration is also being given to providing an emergency loan fund. Details and criteria are being developed. We have also confirmed that most congregations will qualify for the government employer assistance announced recently. No details are yet available.

Before any decision is made with respect to the continued employment of your staff, here are some checkpoints:

- Consult your regional council office. They will work with you to identify financial resources on the pastoral charge that can be redirected to meet the responsibilities and to identify any measures available to temporarily cut expenses and free up resources to meet these needs.
- Take advantage of the Government of Canada's newly announced three-month wage subsidy of 10 percent (up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer) through reductions in income tax withholdings.
- Consider [alternative methods of continuing local givings](#)
- Use job-protected statutory leaves in areas that are under states of emergency. These leaves include
 - people required to self-quarantine
 - caregivers of people who are ill
 - parents who must stay home with their children
- If it becomes necessary, staff may be placed on a "job protected leave" for up to three months. Consideration is being given to how and what benefits might be continued. Further details on this next week.

Circumstances are changing hour by hour. If the decision is made that staff members must be laid off, then strict labour standards have to be followed. Take no action without making that call to your regional council office, and check this website for updates and further advice as they are available.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide you as you reveal Christ in new ways, sharing the good news that we are not alone!

The Reverend Alan Hall, Executive Officer Ministry and Employment
General Council Office

CC: Pastoral Charges, Ministry Personnel, Treasurers, Board Secretaries

21) Saturday, March 21, 2020

Rev. Debbie contacts Communications Chair Christine Kish asking her to let the congregation know that worship will be taking place online tomorrow. Her plan is to go live at 10:30am. Rev. Debbie decides to call it Church Together because it will bring all of

the worshipping congregations together...along with communities outside of the Pastoral Charge.

Online Worship Sunday, March 22, 2020

The Rev. D. McMillan

Sat, Mar 21,
10:57 AM

Friends in Christ,

I am excited to tell you that an online worship experience will be offered at 10:30am on Sunday, March 22 on my Youtube Channel.

Sharing in this worship will allow us to gather together as a community even though we will all be in different places.

You can find my channel by clicking here or cutting and pasting the link below: <https://youtu.be/tEzjVG3IBNA>

You can participate in the worship experience by downloading the PDF attached to this email. That attachment also has some very important announcements that we all need to consider over the coming days, weeks and months.

There are so many things this service won't be.

It won't be in either of the churches.

It won't have live music.

It won't have all of us gathering for coffee hour and snacks afterwards.

It won't be at the preferred time.

It won't go smoothly.

But what it will have is the pure hope that if we can make this work in any way, shape or form, it will give us the chance to worship together as a community. And as different as we all are, we are the body of Christ. And when we are together in Christ, amazing things happen.

So, please, tune in on Sunday. Join your community of faith from the comfort of your home.

ALSO: Please click on this link to read a very important message from the Regional Council.

<https://mailchi.mp/e7e4f0688537/covid-19-update-march-18-2020?e=63fe49b09b>

See you Sunday.

22) Sunday, March 22, 2020 12:38pm

Rev. Debbie has a pile of technical issues which prevent her from going live with her service at 10:30am. She has to settle for recording her service and uploading it to YouTube. The process takes her longer than expected. The music file Patti sent couldn't be added to the video recording. Rev. Debbie had to hold the phone near the computer speakers. It was too quiet. This is the first online service.

<https://youtu.be/o5hGpMRnA1A>

23) Sunday, March 22, 2020

Rev. Debbie receives six emails expressing support and appreciation for offering the online service.

23)Monday, March 23, 2020. 7:41pm

Rev. Debbie receives notification from the Region about a Town Hall meeting taking place on March 26th.

23) Monday, March 23, 2020, 8:38am

Rev. Debbie receives notification that the Cayuga Food Bank will be closed until April. Only emergency food orders will be taken.

24) Tuesday, March 24, 2020, 12:53pm

Rev. Debbie shares information to Key Pastoral Charge Leaders (M and P, Board, Worship Chair, Mount Olivet Rep and Staff) from the Region about keeping buildings completely closed for the foreseeable future.

The Rev. D. McMillan

Tue, Mar 24, 12:53 PM

Hello, Fellow Labourers in the Vineyard,

Thank you for dedicating precious time in your lives to the ministry of God through Christ during this unprecedented time in history.

I write with two purposes:

- 1) To show the M and P chair and all personnel very clear communication coming to us from the Regional Council **concerning workspace/meeting/rehearsal** space
- 2) To assess our level of compliance.

Here is the communication from our Regional "Chief of Staff". It appeared through the FB page and has not yet been converted into an email:

[Cheryl-Ann Sampa](#)

"What does "essential services" legislation mean for the church?

The matter is still developing but, since churches were not deemed an essential service, the advice is that buildings must now be closed-including to small groups leading worship on Sunday. *The custodian can enter to check the building but no other staff should be present. People can lead worship from their homes.*

It's clear not all Canadians are following public health dictates. While a small group meeting at the church might be observing social distancing and practicing good hand hygiene, they would be violating the measures put in place. Let's follow the new restrictions as a way to model making hard choices for ourselves for the sake of those at risk and our health care workers and resources. It's time to be compliant not defiant!"

Cheryl-Ann's communication has me wondering: does our pastoral charge have a "designated custodian" in each church? With all of the job sharing in our pastoral charge, I am not sure who does what. Is there a way to make sure we have only one person going in to do that check in each building? Can we ensure that person is properly protected (gloves/mask/coveralls) when going inside. Can we make sure that we are receiving a report from that person through either Property or M and P and, if necessary, can that report be shared with the pastoral charge in a weekly report.

I'd appreciate hearing your thoughts.

25) Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 11:30am

Rev. Debbie receives word that [a congregant] has passed away. At that point, the United Church of Canada has no clear policy concerning funerals: only suggestions. She begins reaching out to the family to set up a graveside service.

On Mar 25, 2020, at 11:54 AM, The Rev. D. McMillan wrote:

Good Morning Lynne and Marilyn.

I am writing to let you know that [a congregant] passed away yesterday. I do not know the circumstance of [their] passing.

I am also letting you know that there are **VERY** strict protocols in place for funerals to ensure the safety of all during this time; the family, the funeral staff and presiders. For that reason, the service will be a brief, graveside service at which all social distancing measures will be practiced. The funeral director and I

are committed to offering pastoral and professional support while maintaining the highest standards of hygienic practice.

I share this with you because people who hear about [the congregant's] passing may think that the funeral work we are doing is the normal thing. It isn't.

--

Peace and Blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

26) Thursday, March 26, 2020, 1-2:30

During the scheduled Regional Town Hall Meeting, Rev. Debbie and the rest of the participants hear that the Funeral Policy for all United Church presiders has changed. Effective immediately, clergy and laity who preside over funerals are being directed to refuse funerals. The statement will be created within a week to two weeks. Rev. Debbie informs M and P chair as well as [The Funeral Director] and the family of The Congregant

For now, all that can be provided as proof is the words of Cheryl-Ann Sampa: Cheryl said this during the question time at our regional ministry personnel meeting. Three times, to every possible question. -- not outside, not at graveside. No exceptions. We are called to be models, she said, and hard though it is, it's what we have to do.

27) Friday, March 27, 2020. 11:07am

Rev. Debbie sends a letter to the Moderator and the General Secretary urging the denomination to communicate with funeral homes about withdrawal of service so that families can be advised immediately, clearly and professionally.

Fri, Mar 27, 11:07 AM

Dear Richard and Nora,

Thank you for giving leadership during these challenging and unprecedented times. Your presence in your positions provides me with direction: like lighthouses in rough waters. Again, I say thank you.

I am writing to ask if any formal communication has been sent to funeral homes concerning the regional directions clergy were given to withhold even interments from families in light of the COVID crisis.

I ask because I had to inform our local funeral director and a family about our region's decision to refrain from providing interments. Both were shocked. In that moment, having a very clear policy or decision from a larger body within the

denomination to share with both parties would have been helpful for them and for me.

Perhaps GCO has already reached out to these folk. The Funeral Service Association of Canada **1-613-505-0277** or info@fsac.ca
If so, I am sorry for raising this matter.

I am willing to redirect this line of inquiry to my region if that makes more sense. They too serve as a lighthouse in this dark time.

Thank you for your time. My prayers for you both continue.

Peace and blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

27) Friday, March 27, 2020. 11:13am

Rev. Debbie hears back from the General Secretary. They correspond. The General Council Office agrees to reach out to funeral homes in Ontario (and in other parts of the country where needed).

Sanders, Nora

Fri, Mar 27,
11:13 AM

to me, Moderator

Debbie, what a good idea. I hadn't thought of it, but this is helpful. I don't think it will be in the form of direction to the funeral homes, but I will share with them what we have shared with our congregations.

And thank you for all that you are doing in your own congregation to help people stay connected and supported.

Peace and grace.

FW: United Church of Canada direction about delaying funerals

Sanders, Nora

Fri, Mar 27,
11:21 AM

to me

Hi Deb, I have sent this note in response to your suggestion. I will also share it with regional council executive ministers. Thank you.

From: Sanders, Nora
Sent: March 27, 2020 11:20 AM
To: info@fsac.ca
Subject: United Church of Canada direction about delaying funerals

Peace and grace to all in this most extraordinary time.

For your information, I am sharing the link to the direction given by the Moderator of the United Church of Canada concerning funerals during this COVID – 19 time. Perhaps you could share it with your members across Canada, for their information. Thank you.

<https://www.united-church.ca/news/moderator-asks-funerals-be-delayed>

Nora Sanders
General Secretary
United Church of Canada
nsanders@united-church.ca
416 231-5931 ext 2013

The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.

Our vital, innovative, and healing ministries are supported by generous Mission & Service donations.

Fri, Mar 27, 12:43 PM

Thank you very much, Nora. I appreciate it and the work that all of you are all doing on every level safe.

Peace and blessings, Debbie

Sanders, Nora

Fri, Mar 27,
1:21 PM

to me

Thanks Deb, and our communications person was also going to reach out to the communications person at the funeral association. So good to have good ideas offered. Thanks.

From: The Rev. D. McMillan <>
Sent: March 27, 2020 12:44 PM
To: Sanders, Nora <>
Subject: Re: FW: United Church of Canada direction about delaying funerals

Thank you very much, Nora. I appreciate it and the work that all of you are all doing on every level to keep us all safe.
Peace and blessings, Debbie

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 11:21 AM Sanders, Nora <nsanders@united-church.ca> wrote:

Hi Deb, I have sent this note in response to your suggestion. I will also share it with regional council executive ministers. Thank you.

From: Sanders, Nora
Sent: March 27, 2020 11:20 AM
To: info@fsac.ca
Subject: United Church of Canada direction about delaying funerals

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<https://www.united-church.ca/news/moderator-asks-funerals-be-delayed>

Nora Sanders
General Secretary
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--

(The Rev.) Debbie McMillan
Minister, The Cayuga Pastoral Charge



The Rev. D. McMillan <revdebpcayuga2016@gmail.com> Fri Mar 27,
1:46 PM

to Nora

That is wonderful to hear. I am glad that there are helpful conversations happening. We are all in this together.

--

Peace and Blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

Cayuga Pastoral Charge|| 25 Munsee St. S.|| Cayuga, ON || NOA 1E0||

"In my experience, there's no such thing as luck." Obi-Wan Kenobi - Episode IV - A New Hope

28) Sat, Mar 28, 2020 at 11:34 AM

*The weekly communication for the pastoral charge contains information about **Monica phoning people to let them know about worship, creating large print orders of service, offering prayer/receiving prayer.** It also informs the congregation that a Zoom Tech Test will be taking place. **Rev. Debbie sent a Zoom link to key leaders to offer them the chance to learn how to use technology so meetings can continue. There is some pressure/expectation from the region and from the national offices that meetings happen so operations can be discussed.***

From: **Cayuga Pastoral Charge** <cayugapcinfo@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Mar 28, 2020 at 11:34 AM

Subject: Fwd: Please Send this instead

To:

Saturday, March 28, 2020

Friends in Christ,

The Apostle Paul's epistles were longer than my emails---and far more exciting. As you prepare to endure my weekly rambling, I invite you to keep these words from Paul in mind:

³ *And not only that, but we^[a] also **boast in our sufferings**, knowing that **suffering produces endurance**, ⁴ *and endurance produces character, and **character produces hope**, ⁵ **and hope does not disappoint us**, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. (Romans 5:3-5 New Revised Standard Version)**

I invite you to grab a cup of coffee, settle in and endure.

Two weeks ago, the United Church of Canada assured all of its members and adherents that carrying out our shared mission would enable us to get through these difficult times. That mission is:

- *to love one another as Christ loved us*
- *to provide hope and compassion*
- *to take action and respond to community need*

It's inspiring to see that mission being lived out and carried out in the Cayuga Pastoral Charge. **Monica Grabham** has taken it upon herself to go through the Cayuga portion of "**the church list**" and **reach out to each person on it**. Her work has been appreciated by people who have received her calls. *If you or someone you know could use a phone call, please let us know.* This is a great way for our community to work together to remain connected.

Worshipping together is another way in which we can be **connected**. **Online worship** will take place tomorrow. **Christine will send you the link tomorrow at 10:30am**. Whether the service will be on at that time or not depends upon the demand of the streaming. I apologize in advance for all technical issues. You will notice that a copy of the bulletin for our online worship service is attached to this email. **There is a large print edition and a regular print edition. Using the bulletin allows you to participate in the service.** *Whether you choose to print it off is up to you. Please remember, if you use it, you may not be able to access it through the same device that is carrying the service while the service is on. Please try to figure that out before the service begins.*

Another way our community can remain connected during this challenging time is through **prayer**. We will **continue the practice of praying for people and situations** during our **online services**. We can also continue praying for you **in small groups** that are praying together **on the phone or through Facebook**. So:

if **you** would like **prayer**;
 if there has been an **incident in the community that requires prayer**;
 or if you have **permission from a friend or loved one to pray for them**,
please call me/text me at 705-XXXXXXX or email me at and let me know whether
 public or private prayer would be better.

Yet another way to remain **connected** is by **following the United Church of Canada Webpage**. This week we are all being challenged personally and professionally to live into the statement by the moderator concerning funerals. <https://www.united-church.ca/news/moderator-asks-funerals-be-delayed> It is becoming policy across the country and became policy on Thursday, March 26th in Horseshoe Falls Region---the region in which our Pastoral Charge resides. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me directly and I'll do my best to answer. This is heartbreaking and difficult news with which I struggle.

The final way in which we can **remain connected is through the business of doing church**. Church business practices around the world are changing---rapidly. The Cayuga Pastoral Charge is three Sundays into the COVID crisis; there is no end date in sight; therefore, it is critical for the Cayuga Pastoral Charge to take advantage of new rules from our denomination which will allow committees to meet online. **Today, Saturday March 28th**, key leaders within the Cayuga Pastoral Charge will be conducting a technology test. This test will give key leaders the opportunity to learn a new skill in a friendly, supportive environment and bring all of us together face to face. It will also give us the opportunity to assess our business in a way that is responsive to the crisis. To be clear, this is NOT a board meeting. This is not a committee meeting. This is a test and an update session only. Rest assured, you will receive reports about committee meetings and board meetings when they happen.

I **thank you** for your courage and your patience.

I **thank you** for your faith in God and your devotion to His ministry.

I **thank you** for hanging in with the pastoral charge.

I **thank you** for telling people about who we are and what we do during this time.

God has given us the ability to endure this crisis by showing us His face in Jesus Christ.

May we seek it, find it and live in hope always.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Debbie McMillan

29) March 29, 12:36pm

a) Church Together is loaded up after technical issues. The music volume of the music has been increased. It still sounds distorted. (Rev. Debbie is disappointed again because she can't add the clip to her computer.)

b) *Rev. Debbie and Christine Kish work together to make sure the website is updated with the message which appears below.*

Update

The Rev. D. McMillan < >

Sun, Mar 29, 2:39 PM

to Nick

As of March 29, both of our church buildings are completely closed until further notice. We have made this decision to ensure the safety of all people in our community and to remain in compliance with all government orders. Rev. Debbie is offering a weekly online worship experience during the COVID crisis. If you would like to receive the worship link, please contact our communications director at XXXXXXXXXX

30) Monday, March 30, 11:55am

a) *Rev. Debbie receives news that one resident at Anson Place has passed away from COVID-19. She sends a letter through the info.line.*

The Rev. D. McMillan

Mon, Mar 30, 11:55 AM

to Christine

Monday, March 30, 2020.

Friends in Christ,

Centuries ago, the writer of Ecclesiastes shared these words:

For in much wisdom is much vexation, and those who increase knowledge increase sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1:18)

In other words: the more we know, the more we suffer with sadness and grief.

We know that as of today Haldimand-Norfolk County has 8 active cases of COVID-19.

We don't know how this number will change in the coming days and weeks: it is likely to increase.

We know that Anson Place has lost one resident to COVID-19.

<https://www.simcoereformer.ca/news/local-news/positive-covid-19-cases-rise-to-8-in-h-n>

<https://www.thespec.com/news-story/9918611-first-coronavirus-related-death-in-haldimand-norfolk-confirmed/>

Since one resident has passed away, we know that there is a family in our community that is grieving. Since one resident has passed away, we know that residents in Anson Place are scared; we know that staff is anxious.

As followers of Christ, we also know that pain and suffering has ended for the person who has succumbed to this wretched virus: that they are in the care of God and in eternal rest. Therein lies the comfort for the person. Discomfort and sadness remain for those who are left behind. Let us hold them in our hearts and prayers.

As Christians, we must remember that we have an obligation to the communities in which we live: we are required to be salt and light. Even though we may feel like we need it ourselves, we must shine for others and we can. Through Christ all things are possible.

While we may not be able to leave our homes to offer hands on help and presence, we can and should pray. Psalm 32 verse 6 says:

*“Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you [God];
at a time of distress...”*

Luke 18:1-8 also reminds us to pray through a parable Jesus offers. “Then Jesus[®] told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.” I encourage you to read the rest of the parable because it reminds us that God does hear and answer prayer.

Prayer is what we can offer as Christians. Phone calls are what we can offer as responsible citizens of the community, the country and the world. God can and will work through all of our intentions.

Thank you for being faithful to the call of our church, our province and our country during these unprecedented times. May God through Jesus Christ add strength to your strength, patience to your patience and hope to your hope.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Debbie McMillan

31) Monday, March 30, 12:21pm

b) Rev. Debbie notifies M and P as well as Finance of new/official information concerning finance and employment.

The Rev. D. McMillan <

Mon, Mar 30,
12:21 PM

to Elizabeth, Rose, James

Good morning everyone,

I am passing along some financial information that I am required to make sure gets into your hands. I must apologize if this complicates work you have done or are in the process of doing.

First, I am required to let you know that the 75% wage subsidy announcement made by the PM this morning (Monday, March 30) applies to non-profits and charitable organizations. (More about that will be forthcoming).

Second, I am required to pass along this form for tracking monies taken from reserves to cover staffing.

Third, I am required to encourage you to participate in this webinar. The topic appears below. The link This webinar is designed to give up to date information about key issues connected to finance. I am required to say that there is an expectation that treasurers, finance and M and P chairs will attend or send representation.

Congregational Finances During the Pandemic

Wednesday April 1, 2020 7:00 pm ET / 4:00 pm PT
Wednesday April 8, 2020 7:00 pm ET / 4:00 pm PT

[Please click on the times above to see start times in each of Canada's time zones](#)

Course Description

Join us on April 1 for up-to-the-minute information on wise ways to manage the financial impact the pandemic is having on our congregations. No fooling!

- what the 75% Federal funding announcement means to your congregation and how it will work
- avoiding or minimizing layoffs and what to do
- United Church of Canada bridge funding program - just approved

- best practices in sustaining revenue and preserving cash

united-in-learning.com/index.php/webinars/316-congregational-finances-during-the-pandemic?fbclid=IwAR36F3kEKZEIQpFbKF6B04ukLnbBn1_F_CCEcSJU0L2W7-f0mXNLapp4IU

Thank you for your dedicated service to our community of faith during this challenging time.

--

Peace and Blessings,
The Rev. Debbie McMillan

32) Tuesday March 31, 6:10pm

a) Rev. Debbie has been in touch with Sean Cook. He introduces her to OBS: a streaming software that should facilitate the addition of music video clips to the service. Rev. Debbie also learned that there was a virus which entered the Pogson's computer system after they tried to upgrade their software to make their video. This could be one of the reasons why she couldn't get the video to work. In any case, she must upgrade her computer system.

Tech Upgrade

The Rev. D. McMillan <revdebcaayuga2016@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 31,
6:10 PM

to Glenn, Monica, Rose

Partners in ministry,

I am doing software upgrades to my system to improve the quality of what I can broadcast from my basement on Sundays. These changes will accommodate the system Sean has suggested we use.

Unfortunately installing this upgrade will affect my phone and my laptop which MAY put me out of communication range entirely. It is not a straightforward process and it is time consuming.

I am doing my best to expedite this process without having ready tech support due to the crisis. It is what it is.

Thank you for your patience and your understanding. I am sorry for the inconvenience this may cause.

Peace and blessings,
Rev. Debbie

33) Tuesday, March 31, 7:00pm

Rev. Debbie attends the Zoom worship committee meeting. She receives support and feedback. She also shares feedback she has received through email and text. She explains that she is planning on offering a Good Friday Service as well as the Easter Service.

34) Thursday, April 2, 9:06am

Knowing that there was a Finance Webinar, Rev. Debbie asks if Rose Anne and Jim can debrief with her.

The Rev. D. McMillan <revdebcauga2016@gmail.com>

Apr 2, 2020,
9:06 AM

to Jim, Rose

Good morning, Rose Anne and Jim.

I was wondering if a debrief of the financial webinar you both watched last night would be helpful.

If so, when today would work?

Also, is there anyone else who should be on this call? I can send them Zoom invitations.

Thank you for your ministry and dedication.

Peace and blessings, Debbie

--

(The Rev.) Debbie McMillan
Minister, The Cayuga Pastoral Charge

35) Thursday, April 2, 1pm

Rev. Debbie attends finance debrief. Aase Buckle as a trustee and Monica Grabham as a former CRA employee are also invited to attend. During the meeting, having a Donate Now button added to the website is discussed. The Donate Now button is added by Canada Helps. This will facilitate the connection of online donations.

36) Thursday, April 2, 3:06pm

Rev. Debbie receives "minutes" from the worship committee meeting outlining the musicians schedule.

Monica Grabham

Thu, Apr 2, 3:06 PM

to Rose, Glenn, me, Patti, Hazel, Carolyn, Sandie, Sean, The

Worship Team - Please consider this email our "minutes".

Rose Anne,

This is to confirm several conversations regarding the music coverage for the Cayuga Pastoral Charge.

As you know, the last half of March was covered as follows:

March 15 - no music either site

March 22 - Brian and Patti

March 29 - Brian and Patti (and John sang :))

April is planned as follows but is subject to change depending on technical challenges.

April 5 - Sean

April 9 - Good Friday - Sean

April 12 - Sunrise service - Glenn providing a reflection (no music planned)

April 12 - Easter Sunday - Hazel and probably Sean

April 19 - Brian and Patti

April 26 - Sean

The rotation is Brian, Sean and then Hazel for one week each. It is anticipated that the last Sunday of "regular" services will be June 28th.

In Christ, Monica
Chair of Worship

37) Friday, April 3, 3:48pm

Rev. Debbie registers the Cayuga Pastoral Charge for Donate Now through CANADA Helps.

The Rev. D. McMillan

Fri, Apr 3, 3:48
PM

to Gerald, Jim, Monica, Pam, Rose

Hello, again.

Ok, so I have done the registration piece for Canada Helps.
The next piece is to fill out this form.
Once this is filled out, Nick can load the page.

Jim or Dave, can you raise this with your finance team and see if someone is willing to own this work. If not, I'm willing to oversee it until someone else comes forward.

Thank you for your work and dedication to Christ's ministry.

Peace and blessings, Debbie