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April 11, 2018

Cathy Kay & Diane Avery, Co-Chairs
Woodlawn United Church
54 Woodlawn Rd
Dartmouth, NS B2Q 2S1

Dear Ms. Kay and Ms. Avery,

Re: Changes to the United Church of Canada's Governance Structure

Thanks for your March 27, 2018 letter to the Moderator and General Secretary where you raised questions about who is “in the know” about the processes and decisions that are being made regarding implementation of the remits. Your letter arrived on April 5; both the Moderator and General Secretary have seen your letter, and I was asked to respond on their behalf.

In your letter you raised concerns about not having enough information. I can appreciate the frustration when people want clear answers; I think we've all shared those frustrations from time to time during this process and wish we could be more definitive more quickly.

As you can imagine, in a change this massive, many things overlap and interplay with each other. You mentioned three items that are great examples of how complicated this change will be – boundaries, staffing and offices. We needed to know the results of the Boundaries Commission's work before we could consider staffing. The staffing conversations have an impact on the number and placement of offices, or whether there will be physical offices. Moreover, all of this must be done within a financial envelope that reduces costs so we can live within our means as a church. There have been lots of moving pieces.

You also mentioned communication to enable more people to be knowledgeable about what is happening. The remit implementation team values the importance of communication during a time of transition, and have utilized numerous ways of getting information out to the church at large. They are:

- The United Church's website has information on a regular basis; see www.united-church.ca; and search for “remit implementation”;
- E-ssentials is sent to every pastoral charge giving highlights of the most recent activities; Woodlawn is included in the recipient list so you might check with the church secretary;

- A remit implementation newsletter is sent out every couple of weeks; you can sign up for these regular updates on our webpage; <http://www.united-church.ca/newsletters>
- A postcard was included in the January Infopac letting people know how to get information;
- The webinar you mentioned about the work of the Boundaries Commission will be followed by additional webinars in the spring and fall on other topics; more information about these will come out in e-essentials and the remit newsletter;
- We've been running half-page ads in *The Observer* every month since January 2018 and will continue to do so until December 2018;
- People can gather news from The United Church of Canada Facebook page and Twitter.

In addition to these methods of communicating, we have tried other ways:

- Maritime Conference Executive Secretary David Hewitt made presentations to each of the presbyteries within the Conference; he invited questions from them which were forwarded to the implementation task group;
- We established remits@united-church.ca so people can submit their own questions; this e-mail address is included on all of the communications we have sent out.

So as you can see, we're trying to communicate, and we recognize that there may still be areas that can be improved. We have a commitment to providing as much information as possible in as timely a manner as possible. If you have further questions, don't hesitate to send them to remits@united-church.ca or by regular mail. Emails are read by me on a regular basis.

Finally, although presbyteries and pastoral charges have voted in favour of the remits, all of this work is dependent on whether General Council decides to enact the remits in July, 2018. The 43rd General Council will receive reports on what has been done and what is still to be done before implementation on January 1, 2019, and will make its decision on whether to enact the remits, if it is satisfied that the church is willing and ready to make the changes outlined in the remits.

With best wishes,



David W. Allen (Rev.)
Remit Implementation Project Leader