

Priorities, Objectives, and Actions For First Dawn Eastern Edge

On October 11-12, 2023, FDEE Regional Council Executive met at Regional Council office in St John's for a time of prayerful discernment and brain-storming to identify priorities and goals for the future and to set objectives for achieving these. We respectfully bring these to you, as representatives of Communities of Faith, for discussion at the upcoming Annual Regional Council Meeting June 7-9 in St John's.

This document is a work in progress and we are seeking your input. Please review, consider where there are gaps or redundancies, and come to the meetings prepared to offer suggestions and to discuss. Feel free to share this information with the Community of Faith that you represent and bring their input as well.

Thank you for your attention.
Paula Gale and Elizabeth Dawson
(on behalf of FDEE Regional Executive)

Priority 1: Sharing our Faith Story: Building Community

Objective: Engage communities of faith in telling the Good News with each other and with the community at large.

Actions

- Share success stories amongst communities of faith
- Foster and encourage connections and initiate intentional gatherings
- Help communities of faith discern their future; host intentional conversations to determine needs/wants
- Share stories, activities, buildings; tell the Good News
- Develop a process to stay in touch and reduce isolation
- Talk to communities of faith, denominations, municipalities to identify common issues and resources
- Read and respond to annual reports to offer encouragement and share stories
- Share faith stories with media
- Encourage and develop faith stories and promotional material
- Regain confidence in sharing who we are
- Engage in activities that build community trust
- Reach out into the community to meet people where they are; food banks, drop in centres, etc.

Priority 2: Inclusivity

Objective: To become an affirming region and inclusive church.

Actions

- Offer educational webinars about inclusivity and personal stories of inclusion
- Encourage storytelling and replace the fear of the future with hope and faith
- Affirm gifts of diverse communities
- Learn about the impacts of grief and trauma
- Learn from Indigenous leaders and residential school survivors
- Encourage communities of faith to avail of bereavement sessions
- Prepare the region for affirming vote in 2025; and live into that vision

Priority 3: Nurturing Communities of Faith

Objective: Building trust between the region and congregations by nurturing communities of faith.

Actions

- Improve communication between the region and communities of faith (two-way)
- Share community of faith resources
- Foster opportunities for connection
- Sponsor geographically clustered connection spaces/times/events
- Offer intentional fellowship gatherings (within the denomination and beyond)
- Make biannual calls to retirees; yearly team visits to Communities of Faith without full time clergy
- Plan clergy retreats and symposiums
- Develop Q&A for congregations; website space for Q&A
- Learn more about the Health, Joy & Excellence Institute
- Develop pastoral units

Priority 4: Managing Resources

Objective: To be good stewards of our resources

Actions

- Learn best practices within and outside the United Church
- Reassess resources (time, people, money) to align with mission and priorities
- Be good stewards of our resources
- Assess current capacity of people, finances to do the work of the church
- Engage Teams, Divisions, members in setting goals and directing resources to meet these goals
- Encourage people to dedicate their time and resources to the work of the church
- Support nominations work and member engagement