

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME REPORT

To

First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council, Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council,

Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Councils 2024

There will, however, be no one in need among you. (Deuteronomy 15: 4 NRSV)

But there will be no poor among you. (Deuteronomy 15:4 RSV)

...great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned land or houses, sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold...and it was distributed to each as any had need. (Acts 4: 33b, 34, 35 NRSV)

The ideal, “there was not a needy person among them”, has its source in the Hebrew Scriptures. The early church embodied it, extended it to all Christian faith communities, and to the central Church in Jerusalem. It was, in truth, a summary of the commandment given by Jesus, drawing upon his Jewish heritage, to love God with all our heart, soul and mind; and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Mark 12: 31, Matthew 22: 37 – 39).

We believe this ideal carries for us today a ‘call for action’ for a **Guaranteed Livable Income** (GLI), a payment to individuals or families by government that covers the cost of basic necessities (food, shelter, clothing, transportation and community participation) and is not conditional on meeting employment criteria in order to qualify for the benefit. It ensures everyone an income adequate for basic needs, allowing all people to live with dignity, because of work status.

For people of faith, concern for those who live in poverty is not an ‘act of charity’; it is “faith in action”. Since the 1970’s The United Church of Canada has affirmed that a guaranteed livable income is the most effective and efficient way to lift a greater number of people out of poverty. Over the years we have joined with people and organizations from all political parties, other faith communities and all walks of life (for example, economists; business leaders; professionals in medical and social arenas) calling on our governments and political leaders to take action for a guaranteed livable income.

Presently, in The United Church of Canada we structure most of our efforts through national and regional networks. We have a United Church of Canada national GLI network, comprised of interested people throughout Canada. It meets monthly (via Zoom) to consult, provide resources and initiate advocacy work for GLI. Our network is supported by General Council staff and co-chaired by the Rev. Barry Morris (Vancouver, BC) and Ann McRae (Hamilton, ON). A recent video (2023) by Moderator Carmen Lansdowne highlights how important this work is, given the poverty and context of our times. (See: [The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne calls](#)

[for a Guaranteed Livable Income for All – youtube.com](#)) The national network is complemented by [Regional GLI networks](#), from coast to coast, providing important information, motivating and coordinating action.

In the [Atlantic Region](#), six of us (Rose-Hannah Gaskin; Karen and Hal Llewellyn, Rob Fennell, Bob Lockhart, Marion Parady) form The United Church of Canada **Atlantic Region** GLI Network. Together, with others from the Atlantic Region, we meet regularly for the sharing of ideas, mutual support and action. For example, in 2022 we sponsored a well-attended book study on “Bootstraps Need Boots; One Tory’s Lonely Fight To End Poverty in Canada” by Hugh Segal. Presently, we are working with a ‘group of 12’ congregations in the Atlantic Region who are “learning and acting” about a guaranteed livable income. Other congregations are encouraged to join. Click on [AtlanticRegionCongregationalResource 2024](#) for the Tool Kit and, if interested, contact your regional representative, email below.

In our [First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council](#), we have a network of 8 interested persons with Marion Parady as coordinator: Liz Dawson (North West River); Hope Rowsell (South Brook); Shane Foote (Burin); Holly Smith (Hant’s Harbour); Frank Fry (St. John’s); Sarah Mills (Stella’s Circle); Rob McLennan (Stella’s Circle). In addition, we have a number of others who, by request, receive pertinent information via email. On April 15, 2023, St. James United Church, co-sponsored by Gower Street United Church, held a Multi-faith Vigil (Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs) to shine light on the need for a guaranteed livable income with representatives from our municipal, provincial and federal levels of government present. At the time of preparation for this report, two congregations have joined the ‘group of 12’, St. James and Gower Street United Churches, St. John’s

In our [Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council](#), we were successful last year in getting the municipality of Pictou to support GLI, and a letter to follow up on that support was sent just recently to make sure action promise was taken. At the time of preparation for this report, four churches in our region have agreed to be part of a congregational cluster in support of GLI: Pictou United Church; Sharon St. John United Church, Stellarton; Greenhill-Alma Pastoral Charge; St. Matthews United Church, Halifax. Two other churches have requested events (worship followed by panel discussion). As Coordinators for our region we continue to participate in Zoom meetings with Basic Income NS, and encourage Senators in our Region to support Bill C-223 and Bill C-233.

In our [Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council](#), we have a network of 6 interested persons with Rose-Hannah Gaskin as coordinator: Steve Berube; Audrey Lounder; Anne Pirie; Bruce Moore, Suzanne Hickey; Elisabeth Stevenson. In addition, we have a number of others who, by request, receive pertinent information via email. At the time of preparation for this report, three congregations have joined the ‘group of 12’: Wilmot United, Fredericton, NB; Park Royal United Church, Charlottetown, PEI; Bedeque North Pastoral Charge, PEI.

Take Action. Here is what you can do.

. **Municipality Action**. Because Municipalities carry so much of the weight in dealing with local and regional poverty, it is important to obtain the support of municipal councils. Across Canada this support is growing. In the Atlantic Region the following Municipalities have passed Resolutions endorsing a Basic Income:

New Brunswick: Moncton (passed, September 2022); Fredericton (passed, October 2022); Saint John (passed, January 2023); Edmunston (passed, February 2023); Miramichi (passed May 2023)

Nova Scotia: Halifax (passed, June 2022); Pictou County (passed, February 2023); County of Annapolis (passed, March 2023); Wolfville (passed, March 2023); Antigonish Town Council (passed, May 2023); Town Council of Yarmouth (passed, July 2023); Cumberland County (passed, July 2023); Cape Breton Regional Municipality (passed, October 2023); Kentville (passed, November 2023); Colchester County (passed, February 2023).

Prince Edward Island: Charlottetown (passed, May 2023); Summerside (passed, July 2023); Town of Kensington (passed, August 2023); Municipality of Three Rivers (August 2023).

Newfoundland and Labrador: City of St. John's (October 2022); Municipalities of Newfoundland and Labrador (October 2023).

Click here for a copy of the Basic Income Resolution passed by other Municipalities.

<https://www.big-ns.org/atlantic-canada-basic-income-now> Contact your city/town/community Councillor or Mayor to request them to do the same.

. **Contact your Member of Parliament** and urge them to support **Bill C-223** to establish the first (if passed) national framework for an unconditional Guaranteed Livable Basic Income for all persons over 17 across Canada. An identical **Bill S-233** is in the Senate as well. To show support for these two Bills, go to: [Bills S-233 and C-223 for unconditional Basic Income in Canada \(ubiworks.ca\)](#). Write to your provincial Senators urging them to support **Bill S-233**. Write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland, and ask them to seize this moment to roll out a guaranteed livable program in collaboration with the provinces, territories and indigenous leadership.

. **Consider establishing a "Learn and Act" group within your congregation.** Your regional coordinator/contact person below can provide you with further assistance in addition to the Tool Kit.

Resources for above and other action can be found on our United Church website: [Create a Guaranteed Livable Income Program | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](#). **You could also email:** justice@united-church.ca .

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