

## **STEPS IN CLOSING A COMMUNITY OF FAITH OR PASTORAL CHARGE**

Once a Community of Faith or Pastoral Charge approaches the difficult decision to cease operating as either of the above and before a motion to this effect has been passed at a duly constituted meeting of the community or pastoral charge, the trustees and governing body of the community should consult the FSLDW Property Handbook to familiarize themselves with the steps and conditions which apply to a closure so that the community can arrive at a decision being fully informed of the process.

The Property Handbook is available on the regional website (UCC East) under Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters - Policies.

The Pastoral Relations and Property Committees should both be informed of the intention to close before the congregational vote to ensure that this course of action is the only suitable plan, to receive any guidance required and receive their support for the closure.

The following steps must be taken before the community or pastoral charge can cease to legally exist following a positive vote

### **INITIAL STEPS:**

1. Notify the Regional Council by providing a copy of the minutes of and motions of the applicable meeting. This communication should be directed to the Executive Minister.
2. A date will be established with Regional Council by which the entity ceases to operate and will no longer be required to submit an annual remittance to the United Church of Canada. This date may coincide with the date of the closing service for the community. This service should be coordinated with your Regional Pastoral Relations Committee to allow for regional participation in that service.
3. The Property Committee should be notified of the intention to cease operation as they will need to be involved in the disposition of property and remaining funds. Please be prepared to provide a list of all property held by the community including, but not limited to, church building, church hall, manse and any properties and monies owned or managed by the community including cemeteries. All property and equity have been held in trust for the United Church of Canada by the local trustees as per the United Church Manual.
4. The Property Committee and Pastoral Relations Committee will maintain regular communication on the status of the property disposition process in each community to properly coordinate the required steps.

### **TRUSTEES:**

5. Each community must have a minimum of three functioning trustees, a majority of whom must be members of the United Church.

6. If trustees are unable or unwilling to serve, the congregation may appoint new trustees. If the congregation fails to appoint said trustees, the Regional Council may appoint the necessary number of trustees.
7. All trustees must remain in place until all property and financial assets of the community are properly disbursed or transferred including cemeteries.
8. Failing the ability to find or appoint trustees Regional Council can declare the property surplus, assume trusteeship of all assets, and manage the legal closure process of the community or pastoral charge.

OTHER STEPS:

9. All church records must be properly transferred to the new custodian.
10. All financial matters must be concluded (CRA records, payroll, annual charity return, charitable number, disposition of remaining assets)
11. All memberships must be transferred or distributed directly to the member before legal closure can be declared.
12. All these steps must be completed before the Regional Pastoral Relations Committee can pass a motion to declare the community or pastoral charge legally closed.

Adopted by FSLDW Pastoral Relations June 2024