

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
FIRST DAWN EASTERN EDGE REGIONAL COUNCIL
REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE
December 10, 2025 at 12:00pm via video conference

Attendance

ATTENDANCE

Brenda Andrews, Doreen Cave, Jocelyn Cook, Oliver Dingwell, Faith March-MacCuish, Liberty Matabire, Emma O'Rourke, James Ravenscroft, Susan Sheppard, Elsie Squires.

Regrets

REGRETS

Juanita Andrews, Elizabeth Dawson, Rebecca Pike-Winter, Dorcus Yohan.

Welcome

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Opening Prayer

The President, Elsie Squires, welcomed members to the meeting. The President opened the meeting with prayer.

Quorum

QUORUM AND CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL

Constitution of the Council

The President, Elsie Squires, noted that a quorum was present and constituted the council in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, for all the business that shall properly come before it.

Acknowledging the Land

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

The President began the meeting by acknowledging the land on which we gather, work and worship. The island of Newfoundland is the ancestral homeland of the Mi'Kmaq and Beothuk. We also recognize the Inuit and the Innu as the original people of Labrador. We strive for respectful partnerships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation.

Corresponding Members

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

MOTION: (Emma O'Rourke/Susan Sheppard)

That Brenda Andrews be a corresponding member to the December 10, 2025 meeting of the Executive.

CARRIED

Agenda

AGENDA

MOTION: (Jocelyn Cook/Liberty Matabire)

That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

Minutes

MINUTES

MOTION: (James Ravenscroft/Oliver Dingwell)

That the minutes of the November 17-18, 2025 meeting of the Regional Council Executive be adopted.

CARRIED

(Doreen Cave joined the meeting)

Business Arising

BUSINESS ARISING

Toward 2035

Toward 2035

The Executive Minister provided an update on this initiative, and the upcoming work to communicate this initiative to the congregations in the region through proposed workshop sessions. The Executive Minister has been working closely with the three Regional Ministers to develop a proposed way to move forward with this communication plan, in order to have brave and bold conversation with communities of faith in the region.

The Session 1 documents, being developed as a resource for congregational use, are expected to be posted by General Council in the New Year. The Executive Minister presented a proposed draft of this information to the Executive members gathered. It is suggested that the presentation of the Toward 2035 information would take place over several sessions. The Executive members offered feedback on the roll-out and offered endorsement for the staff to prepare a workplan for these conversations.

Corner Brook United Church Review – File #2025-1118-01

Corner Brook
UC Review

The Executive Minister provided an update on this work. The decisions from the last meeting have been communicated to the pastoral charge. The Regional Minister and Executive Minister are planning to have a meeting with the co-chairs of the pastoral charge to discuss the process and provide some background information. It was hoped that a reviewer would be named today, however the reviewer approached from the Atlantic region is currently unavailable. The Executive Minister has reached out to General Council for further recommendations. An email vote naming the reviewer will be needed at a later date.

File #2025-
1118-01

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence

The Executive Minister shared some Christmas greetings that have been received at the regional council office. It was noted that there were no other pieces of correspondence to be recorded.

REPORTS

Reports

PRESIDENT

President

The President offered her report. The President noted that it has been a short time since the last meeting, but she has received two invitations to attend de-consecration services in the new year.

EXECUTIVE MINISTER

Executive
Minister

The Executive Minister noted that there are still pieces of work in progress from the last meeting of the Executive, including the insurance policy and the review. In addition to the work on structure evaluations and Toward 2035, the Executive Minister noted that two new staff have begun work in the Sackville Office.

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH SUPPORT AND PLANNING

Communities of
Faith Support
and Planning

Liberty Matabire, chair noted that there is no report to bring to this meeting.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

Finance and
Administrative
Resources

Brenda Andrews, secretary of the Division, presented the report.

CCOPC – Cochrane Street United Church

CCOPC

Brenda Andrews reported that the CCOPC board has met to make motions in relation to the transfer of the building and the dissolution of the incorporated ministry. In addition, the Division met on December 5, 2025 to consider the information and motions presented, and discern the best way forward for this faith community.

Cochrane Street
UC

The Division has made several motions in favour of several recommendations to the Executive that are in keeping with the requests of the board and congregation, and offer a commitment to reparations; as the truth and reconciliation work calls us to be the church. First Light has a detailed plan to continue the legacy of the community and outreach begun at this historic site over one hundred years ago. The CCOPC board endorses this plan and First Light as new stewards of the property, as we continue to live into the commitment the church has made towards right relations. After this discussion, the following motions were made:

MOTION: (Susan Sheppard/Jocelyn Cook)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council transfer the Cochrane Street United Church building and Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre to First Light and work with legal counsel to bring the transfer to completion.

CARRIED**MOTION:** (James Ravenscroft/Doreen Cave)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council agrees to forgive the remaining balance of outstanding loans/registered mortgage to First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council.

CARRIED**MOTION:** (Emma O'Rourke/Jocelyn Cook)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council recommends to General Council that The United Church of Canada consider forgiveness of the outstanding registered mortgage in the amount of \$500,000 (five hundred thousand).

CARRIED**MOTION:** (Oliver Dingwell/Liberty Matabire)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council approves the winding down of the Incorporated Ministry known as Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre (CCOPC).

CARRIED

The Executive Minister shared a video, highlighting the history and importance of Cochrane Street United Church and its legacy of faith, prepared as a tribute to the space that will now move into a new future; remaining a beacon in the community. First Light sees this a shared legacy of generosity and care, that they will honour and carry the light forward.

Bridges to Hope**Bridges to Hope**

Bridges to Hope has updated its by-laws. The by-laws have been approved by the board, and by the Division of Finance and Administrative Resources.

MOTION: (Jocelyn Cook/Emma O'Rourke)

That the revised by-laws for Bridges to Hope, Inc. be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

(Liberty Matabire left the meeting)

Insurance**Insurance**

Brenda Andrews reported that two renewal options were presented to the region at a December 4, 2025 meeting with our broker, Steers Insurance. During the presentation, it was noted that there is still a total of over \$14,000 (fourteen thousand) owing for the 2024 insurance year. The Division are still awaiting a quote from UCC Protect for coverage. In light of this delay, the Division recommends that the region remain with the current insurer for the 2026 year.

The recommended policy will result in a 1.2% (one point two) increase in overall premiums for 2026. It was noted that an alternate insurer was approached and provided a rate for similar coverage which would result in a minimum 21% (twenty-one) increase to current rates.

MOTION: (Jocelyn Cook/Oliver Dingwell)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council remain with Steers Insurance, as our broker. That we continue with Ecclesiastical Insurance as our insurer, and that we accept Option1, with occurrence-based abuse coverage for 2026.

CARRIED

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources

In the absence of a chair, no report was available.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations

Emma O'Rourke, chair, presented the report of the committee. The chair noted that several conversations are ongoing to fill vacancies, with some individuals to be named at the next meeting. The Executive members offered some suggestions for the committee, who are also looking for new members.

REGIONAL COUNCIL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Regional Council Services and Support

In the absence of the chair, no report was available.

GENERAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

General Council Representative

In the absence of the representative, no report was available.

STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Staff Support

Doreen Cave, reporting member of the committee, reported that the committee has not met since the last meeting of the Executive.

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

United Church Women

In the absence of the representative, no report was available.

AFFIRM

Affirm

James Ravenscroft, chair, reported that the committee has not met since the last meeting of the Executive.

MOTION: (Doreen Cave/Emma O'Rourke)

That the reports of the region be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Executive is scheduled on March 24, 2026 at 9:30am.

BENEDICTION

Benediction

Having no further business, the President declared the meeting adjourned, and closed the meeting with an Advent blessing.

Rev. Elsie Squires
President

Rev. Faith March-MacCuish
Executive Minister