

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
FIRST DAWN EASTERN EDGE REGIONAL COUNCIL
REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE
June 24, 2026 at 9:30am via video conference

RC1

ATTENDANCE

Attendance

Brenda Andrews, Jocelyn Cook, Elizabeth Dawson, Oliver Dingwell, Faith March-MacCuish, James Ravenscroft, Susan Sheppard, Liberty Matabire, Debra Sparkes-Mercer, Elsie Squires, Dorcus Yohan.

REGRETS

Regrets

Doreen Cave, Emma O'Rourke, Rebecca Pike-Winter.

WELCOME

Welcome

The newly installed President, Susan Sheppard, welcomed members to the meeting. A special welcome was extended to newly appointed members to the regional council; Debra Sparkes-Mercer, United Church Women representative; Jocelyn Cook, Human Resources chair and Oliver Dingwell, President-Elect.

OPENING DEVOTIONS

Opening
Devotions

Susan Sheppard led the opening devotions based on the feast day of St. John the Baptist. The President offered a responsive reading from John Birch, based on scripture readings from Luke 1:76-79, and opened the meeting with prayer.

QUORUM AND CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL

Quorum

The President, Susan Sheppard, 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.

Constitution of
the Court

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 MEMBER

Corresponding
Member

MOTION: (Jocelyn Cook/Elsie Squires)

That Brenda Andrews be a corresponding member to the June 24, 2026 meeting of the Executive.

CARRIED

AGENDA

Agenda

MOTION: (Elizabeth Dawson/Jocelyn Cook)

That the agenda be adopted, with the addition of one additional item under correspondence.

CARRIED

CHECK-IN

Check-In

New and returning members of the Executive took time to introduce themselves and to check-in with each other.

MINUTES

Minutes

MOTION: (James Ravenscroft/Elsie Squires)

That the minutes of the March 24, 2026 meetings of the Executive be adopted.

CARRIED**Business
Arising****BUSINESS ARISING****Toward 2035****Toward 2035**

The Executive Minister updated the Executive on this work. The Executive Minister is working with the Regional Minister to gather Pastoral Units and bring this presentation to these gatherings.

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

The Executive Minister reported that the Executive Minister, Regional Minister, and regionally appointed governance mentor have visited the pastoral charge to work on determining their new governance structure. Stephen Matthews is the mentor working with the pastoral charge and provides updates to the Executive Minister. This work is going well. In addition, the Office of Vocation has been in contact regarding next steps.

**Land
Development –
St. James UC****Land Development – St. James United Church**

The Executive Minister reported that a meeting of the small group of representatives from St. James and the regional representatives has taken place. The Executive Minister feels that it was a very positive meeting and the group will now work towards a meeting with Kindred Works.

**Cochrane Street
UC – CCOPC****Cochrane Street United Church-CCOPC**

Under reports.

**Garnish-
Frenchman's
Cove
Commission****Garnish-Frenchman's Cove Commission**

The Executive Minister presented the June report from the Commission. It was noted that all financial documents for the pastoral charge have been collected, and the region can now proceed with the financial audit. The Commission are now working with the congregations regarding establishing a governance structure.

Chaplaincy**Chaplaincy**

A final Chaplaincy report has been received, offering thanks to Doreen Barbour for completing the final financial pieces.

Cemetery Policy**Cemetery Policy**

Work on this policy is still ongoing. This will be brought to the Executive once the final items are in place.

**Blanket
Insurance****Blanket Insurance**

Under reports.

**Regional
Council
Structure****Regional Council Structure Evaluation**

The Executive Minister noted that a consultant has been contracted for 4 (four) sessions with the Executive. It is planned to begin these sessions in the fall.

**Pathways
Proposal****Pathways Proposal**

The Executive Minister noted that an additional meeting has taken place to continue with this proposal; planning for students from the theological college to have placements in local pastoral charges in this region. The group are currently working on matching, placement and travel processes.

Correspondence**CORRESPONDENCE****JAG Hotel**

1. JAG Hotel – Letter received from John Steele offering to re-open discussions for the purchase of George Street United Church property. This matter will be discussed under reports.

(James Ravenscroft left the meeting)

St. James UC

2. St. James United Church - Letter received to request an exemption in congregational membership requirements for participation in church governance.

MOTION: (Debra Sparkes-Mercer/Elsie Squires)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council approves the request from St. James United Church to allow an exemption in congregational membership requirements for participation of Skyler Simpson (member at large) and Leah Kirk (secretary) in church governance.

CARRIED

(James Ravenscroft rejoined the meeting)

3. Thank you – cards of thanks were received from Rebecca Bartlett, for the scholarship received and Pansy Harris, for the gift from the region.
4. Cochrane Street United Church – Letter received to note that final distribution of items has taken place, and to request to have the de-consecration service before September 30, 2026.

Thank youCochrane Street UC**MOTION:** (Oliver Dingwell/James Ravenscroft)

That the closing service for Cochrane Street United Church be held on September 27, 2026 at 2:00pm.

CARRIED**BREAK**Break**REPORTS**Reports**PRESIDENT**President

The President, Susan Sheppard, noted her excitement for the work ahead, and reported that she thoroughly enjoyed the Celebration of Ministries service and extended congratulations to Katie Vardy, newly ordained minister. The President has sent a letter of invitation to the region, and looks forward to connecting with communities of faith around the province.

EXECUTIVE MINISTERExecutive Minister

The Executive Minister reported that the three annual meetings are now completed for the eastern regions. The Executive Minister offered updates on the work before the Executive, including expressing concern for teams that have vacancies and for the continued piloting of pastoral units.

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH SUPPORT AND PLANNING – Appendix ACommunities of Faith Support and Planning

Liberty Matabire, chair, presented the report of the Division, included in the appendix. The chair highlighted the recently approved MAPs. The next meeting of the Division is planned for September.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES – Appendix BFinance and Administrative Resources

Brenda Andrews, Secretary of the Division, presented the report, included in the appendix.

George Street United Church PropertyGeorge Street Property

The secretary reported that there are increasing concerns with George Street United Church property; with property clean-ups and alarms requiring extra cost and visits to the property. The Division are proceeding with property valuation in preparation for discussions regarding the future of the property.

CCOPCCCOPC

CCOPC has heard from First Light that they are no longer in the financial position to move forward with the purchase of the Cochrane Street property. More recently, it was reported that there is an urgent situation regarding the condition of the roof. CCOPC is currently working with the City, as they are the title holders of the property.

Blackhead – Old Methodist CemeteryBlackhead

The cemetery, heavily damaged in last summer's wildfires, is in need of considerable restoration and clean-up.

MOTION: (Jocelyn Cook/James Ravenscroft)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council approves up to \$10,000 (ten thousand), if necessary, in support of the restoration of the Old Methodist Cemetery in Blackhead, to be disbursed on an as needed basis, pending receipts.

CARRIED

The secretary of the Division offered further updates on the regional insurance policy, the Property Reserve Fund and Loon Bay and West Haven Camps.

MOTION: (Oliver Dingwell/James Ravenscroft)

That the order of the day be extended to 12:15pm.

Human
Resources**HUMAN RESOURCES** – Appendix C

Jocelyn Cook, chair, presented the report of the Division, included in the appendix. The chair noted that she is currently still serving as Licensing Convenor. There will need to be a new Convenor named for this work.

Nominations**NOMINATIONS****MOTION:** (James Ravenscroft/Debra Sparkes Mercer)

That the following names be added to the following positions: Stephen Jewczyk, Property Convenor; Lena Blake and Marion Penney, members at large, Division of Finance and Administrative Resources; Karen Bursey, Convenor of Faith Formation and Christian Education; Kathy Brett and Georgina Parsons, members, the Justice, Mission and Outreach Team; Stephen Matthews, Secretary, Future Directions; Jason Boyd, member of Future Directions; Stephen Matthews, Secretary of Licensing and Jeanette Kerrivan, member of Licensing; and that the Stewardship and Communications Teams be dissolved; with these responsibilities to be included in staff positions.

CARRIEDGeneral Council
Representative**GENERAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE**

Dorcus Yohan, representative, offered an update on the work of Toward 2035.

Tri-Regional
Staff Support**TRI-REGIONAL STAFF SUPPORT**

Faith March-MacCuish, Executive Minister, offered that the committee will meet this week to continue work on the revisions to the MOU.

United Church
Women**UNITED CHURCH WOMEN**

No report.

Affirm**AFFIRM** – Appendix D

James Ravenscroft, chair, requested that, as an Affirming region, there be a regional presence in this year's Pride Parade. It was suggested that the committee prepare as list of the various community parades and encourage participation where possible.

MOTION: (Oliver Dingwell/Elizabeth Dawson)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Executive encourages and supports participation in various pride events throughout the region.

CARRIED**MOTION:** (Elsie Squires/Jocelyn Cook)

That the reports of the region be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

MEETING DATES 2026-27

Meeting Dates

The Executive discussed meeting dates for the 2026-27 year. The following Executive meeting dates were agreed upon:

September 28-29, 2026 – in person at Regional Council Office; beginning at 9:00am on September 28.

November 25, 2026 at 6:00pm – via Zoom

February 17, 2027 at 6:00pm – via Zoom

April 7, 2027 at 6:00pm – via Zoom

June 9, 2027 at 6:00pm – via Zoom

It was noted that additional meetings will be called by via Zoom video conferencing, if needed, for business arising.

Oliver Dingwell and Debra Sparkes Mercer offered to work with the Executive Minister for the planning of the September in person meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment

Having no further business, the President declared that the meeting adjourn.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Executive is scheduled on September 28-29, 2026 at the Regional Council Office in St. John's.

BENEDICTION

Benediction

The President, Susan Sheppard, closed the meeting with benediction and prayer.

Rev. Susan Sheppard
President

Rev. Faith March-MacCuish
Executive Minister

Appendix A

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH SUPPORT AND PLANNING

Community of Faith Support and Planning

Community of Faith Support and Planning met on June 9, 2026 the following is the report from that meeting.

Introduction of the Division – each person introduced themselves to the committee

Team Reports:

Mission Consultation and Accountability Team – Larry reported that many of the church that are doing their MAPs are really doing a great.

We have had 4 MAPs that have been approved since January 1, 2026

Wesleyville/Valleyfield approved 20260127

Springdale approved 20260324 by online vote

Newtown/Lumsden approved 20260324 by online vote

Wesley, St. John's approved 20260421

There is one still pending, Central Labrador PC we are seeking more information that was missing from the document.

Future Directions Team – Amanda Barnes

Future Directions has not had a meeting for a long time due to having no chair. We are grateful to have a chair now and will hopefully have a report for the next division meeting.

Mandate for the Division: Heather went over the mandate for this division. The mandate for the division is contained in the Governance handbook which is linked below.

<https://ucceast.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/First-Dawn-Eastern-Edge-Governance-Handbook-September-24-2024.pdf>

We have plans to meeting again in September at the call of the chair.

Appendix B**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES****FIRST DAWN EASTERN EDGE REGION
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES REPORT
June 24, 2026****George Street Property**

- **Jimmy Pratt**

In a letter dated March 30, 2026, Krista Koerner advised that Jimmy Pratt Inc. would be vacating the George Street property effective April 30th. That has since happened. Another clean-up of the property was necessary as there was a considerable mess left behind. That has been confirmed by ECC Solutions and Maintenance

- **Expression of Interest in the Building**

The Executive Minister received a letter dated April 6, 2026, from John Steele, CEO, and Steele Hotels, enquiring about the Region's plans for the George Street property and expressing interest in exploratory discussions. She responded on May 19th stating that it had been brought to the Division of Finance and Administrative Resources and would go to the Regional Executive Committee on June 24th for recommendation on the best way forward.

This matter was discussed at a meeting of the Division held on May 26th. It was felt that, before the Region can be in a position to determine the future of this building, it is important to know the fair market value of the property. Therefore, the following motion was carried:

Motion: (Todd Rose/Brenda Andrews)

That the Division of Finance and Administrative Resources recommend to the First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Executive that consideration be given to determining fair market value for the George Street United Church building in preparation for discussions related to options for the future of the property.

Carried

- The Executive Minister has gone to one company, Boyd Fleming, appraisal and he has declared a conflict of interest, therefore we are working to find another company that is able to complete this work for us.

CCOPC - Ownership Proposal from First Light/Roofing Concerns

- An e-mail was received on May 25, 2026, from Beverley Lane regarding the roof at 81 Cochrane Street requiring an immediate decision.
- On May 20, 2026, Stacey Howse, President and CEO, First Light, advised CCOPC of an urgent situation regarding the current condition of the roof and associated fire and life safety system impacts. There are active building system failures, escalating compliance and operational risks, and implications for continued occupancy.
- First Light state they are not able to assume the scale of structural, financial and regulatory responsibility required for the building in its current condition. She is requesting that this be reviewed as a priority and that they receive confirmation of the intended pathway forward as soon as possible.
- CCOPC has responded noting that they and First Light were aware of the roof problem and that they were surprised to hear that they are raising concerns and involved the City of St. John's. As this is something that both parties were working on and they did not understand that the concerns related to the roof was of such concern for First Light, the leak in the roof has caused some problems with one section of the alarm in the fire suppression systems at the property, however, not the section to the alarm where residents live. CCOPC requested a copy of a KD Pratt report (referenced in the First Light email) and posed questions to gather additional necessary information and to gain clarity on the cost of the work involved.
- CCOPC state that there is no immediate requirement to remove the tenants from the building. CCOPC will have a roof assessment completed as soon as possible to determine the scope of the necessary work and associated costs.
- We will need to hear back from CCOPC as they are the title holders of the building.

Appendix B - continued**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES** - continued**2026 Regional Insurance Policy**

- **Steers – Account Reconciliations 2024-25 and 2025-26**

In an email dated April 14, 2026, Alison Piercey provided documentation received from Steers for noting outstanding balance totals of \$10,939.45 for 2024-25 and \$55,705.45 for 2025-26. Regional Council Office is following up with the pastoral charges to send them a copy of the invoices for immediate attention.

- **Creston-Red Harbour PC – Insurance Policy**

The Executive Minister requested and has received a copy of the insurance policies acquired by Creston-Red Harbour PC. She is following up with Steers to determine items that are not covered.

- **King's Point PC – Insurance Policy**

The Executive Minister requested copies of the insurance policies acquired by King's Point PC. She will follow up with Steers to determine items that are not covered.

- **UCC Protect**

- Alison has been doing some follow-up with UCC Protect to see what more can be done to get a quote.

Property Reserve Fund

Approved by the executive and is now being added to the list of funds held by the region and there will be an announcement circulated in the weekly announcements about the updated use of the fund.

Blackhead – Old Methodist Cemetery

- In an email dated April 29, 2026, Robert Hudson provided information relating to the Old Methodist Cemetery, the site of the first Methodist Church in Newfoundland and Labrador, designated as a historic site, which was impacted during the 2025 wildfires in Conception Bay North.
- The Cemetery requires considerable clean-up/restoration.
- Mr. Hudson poses questions relating to the authority of the Cemetery Committee to make decisions and actions and whether there are funds available through the Church that might help in these efforts. He is also hoping for a visit to the area by members of the Executive.
- This matter was discussed at a meeting of the Division held on May 26th. The following motion was carried:

Motion: (Liz Dawson/Todd Rose)

That the Division of Finance and Administrative Resources recommend to the Executive that they consider assisting with funding for restoration of the Old Methodist Cemetery, Blackhead, as a result of the impact of the 2025 wildfires in Conception Bay North.

Carried

- A letter dated June 14, 2026, was sent to request additional necessary information – Who are the representatives on the Cemetery Committee? To whom are they accountable? What work needs to be done? Can we get a quote for the cost of the necessary work?

Loon Bay Camp

- We still don't have a Board in place, nominations committee has now named this as a priority.
- We have received a report from the Health Department and are ready to assess the possibilities for the future of the camp.
- We are still unable to access the bank funds, however we now have letters signed by the last three signing officers naming they are no longer on the board and will need to be removed. The office is working to get the Regions signing officers added to the account.
- We need to pay the bills; Regional Council is paying the bills, and they will recoup the funds from the account when we are able to get access.,

Appendix B - continued

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES - continued

West Haven Camp

- The Executive Minister has received notice that the West Haven Camp will not be operating this year because of a lack of volunteers able to make it work. Rev. Catherine met with them and tried to encourage them to have a different model of staffing for the summer and they felt they were not able to make it work even though they received six grants from the government for staffing. There will need to be more work done with the camps to help them with a future direction.

Appendix C

HUMAN RESOURCES

Division of Human Resources First Dawn Eastern Edge Region Report to Executive June 24, 2026

A meeting of the Division of Human Resources, First Dawn Eastern Edge Region, was held on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. via Video Conference (Zoom).

WELCOME – Heather welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 1:11p.m.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

We respectfully acknowledge the territory on which we gather as the ancestral land of the Beothuk, and the Island of Newfoundland as the ancestral homeland of the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk, and the Inuit and Innu populations as the original inhabitants of Labrador.

OPENING DEVOTION by Heather from Song of Faith

REPORTS

Reports from Licensing, Chaplaincy and Pastoral Relations received by Secretary prior to meeting are included at end of these Minutes. Report discussion highlights or additions as follows:

LICENSING TEAM

In addition to her submitted report, Jocelyn advised that the team met that morning (May 26) and discussed options of other supports the team could offer. The team is also looking for a Chair, as she will be stepping into a new role that requires her to resign as Licensing Team Chair.

PASTORAL RELATIONS TEAM

In addition to his submitted report, Jason stated that Victor Hamlyn, Fogo, has resigned for health reasons, and Corey Paul is moving to PEI. This team is also in need of a Chair, as Jason must step down due to his new position on the Atlantic Candidacy Board. Jason said that his Pastoral Relations Team was an amazing bunch of people, a pleasure to work with, and he is grateful for the opportunity to have worked with the group. Acting Chair Heather stated that both Jocelyn and Jason would be missed in their respective teams.

CHAPLAINCY

Heather advised that the final report for Chaplaincy had been submitted & it is no longer a standing committee. She acknowledged Doreen Barbour for her tireless work to get the team financials clued up and the CRA paperwork completed, and she thanked both Doreen and the team for their work.

RETIREE SUPPORT TEAM

Heather said the team in place is very committed, but there is simply too much work to be done without more team members behind them to help. The hope is that others with the drive and passion for this important work will come forward.

ADOPTION OF REPORTS

Motion: (Jocelyn Cook / Bev Wells)

That the Reports of: Licensing Team, Pastoral Relations Team, Chaplaincy Team, and Retiree Support Team be accepted as presented. **Motion Carried.**

NEXT MEETING – At the Call of the Chair, once the Executive schedule is determined.

The Executive develops their schedule in June, with time given for committees to submit their reports, and some flexibility given during the summer months. Heather advised that while there is a need to keep on top of pastoral relations over the summer, the next meeting could probably be sometime in September.

Appendix C – continued**HUMAN RESOURCES** - continued**FDEE Licensing Team
Report for May 26, 2026**

The Licensing Team has had only one meeting since the last HR meeting, and that was for an interview for a candidate for licensure for LLWL. This candidate had completed all of the studies required for this position and the interview was a joy in which to participate. Stephen Matthews and I felt very good to recommend Brad Cole to be licensed as a Licensed Lay worship leader. In June, we will meet to interview and renew licenses for those already licensed as LLWLs. The licenses for Sacraments Elders will also be renewed at that time. The Licensing Team feels good about those who are licensed to carry out worship and Sacraments with our United Church congregations who are without official ministry in our Region.

Respectfully submitted,
Jocelyn Cook (Chair)

**Report for Human Resources
Pastoral Relations
For Meeting 26 May 2026**

2026 Meetings: 17 March; 21 April; email vote 18 March

Note a Pastoral Relations Meeting was also held on 19 May. However, minutes from the meeting are not yet prepared, and I have stepped down from Pastoral Relations as required to join the Atlantic Candidacy Board.

Appointments and Calls:

18 March 2026 Email Motion Moved by Derek White and seconded by Bob Bennett that FDEE Pastoral Relations approves the appointment of Victor Hamlyn, DLM Retired to the Fogo Island Pastoral Charge, part-time (20 hr/wk), for the period of 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026. Motion Carried.

21 April 2026 Moved by Bob Bennett and seconded by Oliver Dingwell that FDEE Pastoral Relations approves the call of Emma O'Rourke to Springdale (part time 25 hours per week), commencing 1 August 2026. Motion carried.

21 April 2026 Moved by Bob Bennett and seconded by Ethel Paul that FDEERC Pastoral Relations approves the appointment of Jocelyn Cooke to the Pasadena/ Howley Pastoral Charge (**30 hours per week**) pending completion of documentation on Church Hub. Motion carried.

Changes in Pastoral Relations:

21 April 2026 Moved by Bob Bennett and seconded by Derek White that FDEE Pastoral Relations approves the request for change in pastoral relations for Corey Paul (La Scie Pastoral Charge) and that prorated moving charges would apply. Motion carried.

Miscellany:

17 March 2026 No specific motion language, but approval of lay reader training by Revs. Stephen and Beverley Matthews was given.

21 April 2026 Moved by Oliver Dingwell and seconded by Ethel Paul that we ask Rev. James Ravencroft (Chair of Affirming Committee) to attend our next meeting. Motion carried.

21 April 2026 Moved by Bob Bennett and seconded by Derek White that FDEE Pastoral Relations approve the request by Victor Hamlyn to be granted permission to obtain Sacraments and Elders credentials for the duration of his appointment (April 1- June 30, 2026), pending completion of the Sacraments and Elders Course. Motion carried.

Appendix C – continued**HUMAN RESOURCES** - continued**Final Chaplaincy Report
May 22, 2026**

In my last report, I shared with you that Doreen Barbour was wrapping up the books and making sure they were closed properly. That piece has now been completed. All piece for Revenue Canada is complete, the bank account is closed and the 7 years of financials are at the office for shredding each year as appropriate. It is with great thanks to Doreen's diligence and wisdom in completing this task.

Blessings
Heather

Appendix D

AFFIRM

Report of Affirm Committee to FDEE Regional Council

Committee: The Affirm Advisory Committee is currently comprised of four main members, Cynthia Burt, James Martin-Carter, Alice Moore and James Ravenscroft with Rev. Faith giving support to the committee's work. We are seeking new members.

Recent Work: The main work of the committee this year was holding our public celebration. On May 3, FDEE Regional Council held a public worship service to celebrate our new status. To reflect the breadth of who we are as a region, this was a hybrid celebration with physical locations across the province linked via Zoom with others joining digitally. The locations were Carol United Church in Labrador City, Memorial United Church in Grand Falls-Windsor, and St. James United Church in St. John's, with a worship watch party held in Pasadena. Memorial United was the main location with youth from Youth at Region helping to lead the service and receiving the official certificate from Affirm United. Rev. Grant Stuckless gave the sermon.

Looking Ahead: The focus moving forward is on living out being an Affirming Region. Our prime focus will be on education, encouraging people to learn more about being inclusive by viewing the recordings of webinars produced by Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Affirm Committee, and also making our own. We also continue to field requests for more information about Affirm and just to offer support regarding issues of inclusivity.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. James Ravenscroft
Convenor, FDEE Affirm Committee