



BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

March 26, 2018

Update from the President of BC Conference
Following the Announcement of Region Executive Ministers

Dear friends in Congregations and Communities of Faith across BC, stretching into the mountains to Banff, and reaching north to Whitehorse,

No doubt you have seen the public announcement by the General Secretary, late last week, of the new provisional Region Executive Ministers (REMs). In that letter from the General Council Office, six people are identified as the new REMs, with the Rev. Doug Goodwin named as REM for Regions 1 and 3 (until June 30, 2019).

Having seen the principles that were guiding the work of the Task Force created late last month, you may be a bit confused on two points: the fact that Regions 1 and 3 are sharing a REM, and the shortness of Doug's term.

Let me address the second point first: both the Conference Executive, and the Task Force, were clear on our preference to keep Doug in the role for as long as he would agree to serve. The date of June 30, 2019 represents Doug's own declaration to seek a change. It became clear to him in the process that while he did not want a permanent job working for two Regions, he could, with integrity and energy, serve in an "interim" role for both Regions until that date.

So while "best" might have been to have Doug stay for the recommended 5 year commitment the General Secretary was seeking, and "better" would have been to retain him for a longer transition time, we find ourselves grateful for "good," in which we maintain a healthy relationship during a time of change with a long-serving and visionary leader who has done exceptional work in our midst. We then have the process of an open search for Doug's successor to look forward to.

Regarding the cooperation between Regions 1 and 3 in sharing our REM: in the current negotiation with the General Secretary, there was no "opting out" of the cooperative model in order to maintain a single accountability with our own REM in Region 1. It is still a strong commitment of the Conference Executive, as we move forward, that the accountability of our REM be as clear as possible. We will carry this conversation forward with the General Secretary into the open search for Doug's successor.

You likely have many other questions, particularly about finances. So let me alert you to the hope that a financial and staffing plan will come before the Conference Executive by electronic meeting means, in advance of the General Meeting, with the hope that the plan can be shared publicly in Penticton when we are meeting face-to-face.

I have personally invited our new friends from Whitehorse and Banff to the General Meeting, and I hope they will be in attendance.

Here's something fun: we will undertake a process (to be unveiled shortly after Easter) for discerning a name for the new Region. (Hopefully I won't steal anyone's thunder by telling you that an amalgamation I was once involved in had a name suggestion of "Pidgeon United Church" after the first Moderator of the UCC... which got the vote of exactly one 11 year old in the congregation.) Be creative! Think about our life together into the future!

Dear friends, we are all carrying the life of our body as faithfully as we can, during times of transition, when anticipated losses cloud our vision and worrisome changes make our feet unsteady. So let's not forget to reach out and support one another, and put our trust in the one whose footsteps we follow. Thank you for your faithfulness to Christ and to his body, to one another, as we continue in ministry together.

May the peace of Christ be with us all,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cari Copeman-Haynes".

(Rev.) Cari Copeman-Haynes
President, BC Conference

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