

Creating a Living Faith Story and a Living Faith Profile

Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council
The United Church of Canada
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Purpose of this PowerPoint presentation:

- ▶ To provide an overview of:
 - ▶ - a Living Faith Story and a Living Faith profile
 - ▶ What are they?
 - ▶ What are they for?
 - ▶ When do we need to create them?
 - ▶ When do we use them?
 - ▶ When do we need to revise/update them?

What is a “Living Faith Story”?

- ▶ A Living Faith Story is a detailed description of a Community of Faith or Pastoral Charge that is to be posted on ChurchHub.
- ▶ The governing body is responsible for preparing the Profile, including the “Living Faith Story”.
- ▶ The purpose of the Living Faith Story is to:
 - ▶ • articulate the community of faith’s witness to the gospel
 - ▶ • articulate the ministry needs of the community of faith
 - ▶ • summarize the community of faith’s resources and community context

What is a “Living Faith Profile”?

- ▶ A Living Faith Profile is a more comprehensive document than a Living Faith Story. It includes information that is vital to applicants seeing a full picture of a ministerial vacancy.
- ▶ When in the search for a new minister, the Living Faith Story is included in the Living Faith Profile.
- ▶ Together these provide an applicant a clear view of not only the essence of the Community of Faith, but also the specifics related to the vacancy.

Create a Living Faith Story now... ... here's why:

The Manual I.1.4

“The Community of Faith is responsible for preparing and regularly updating a Community of Faith Profile and filing it with the Regional Council.”

The Manual I.3.1.6 c)

“The Community of Faith must prepare and file an updated Community of Faith profile with the Regional Council before initiating a change of pastoral relations by ending the pastoral relationship.”

[The Manual, 2021 \(united-church.ca\)](http://united-church.ca)

What is a “Living Faith Story”?

- ▶ The living faith story articulates the Community of Faith’s ministry focus.
- ▶ It is your opportunity to share why you exist as a Community of Faith.
- ▶ It is an opportunity to share where God is leading your Community of Faith.
- ▶ Creating a “Living Faith Story” is an invitation to articulate, assess, and perhaps even reframe who you are as a Christian congregation.
- ▶ All Communities of Faith are expected to develop a Living Faith Story, to review it regularly, and to share it with the Regional Council so that appropriate support can be offered.
- ▶ **!! This is a faith-focussed document and not meant to be a detailed summary of how many golf courses, schools, parks, etc. are close to the church or what great restaurants and entertainment venues are close by.**

Create a Living Faith Story now...

... here's why:

- ▶ The Living Faith Story is used in a few different ways:
 - ▶ 1. It is a required element of a community of faith profile as part of the pastoral relations process.
 - ▶ 2. It is part of the covenantal relationship with the regional council and part of the self-assessment process with the Regional Council.
 - ▶ 3. It is posted on your ChurchHub page as a description of your Community of Faith.
 - ▶ 4. It can guide your Community of Faith in shaping ministry priorities and sharing a vision of your community and its mission.
 - ▶ 5. For communities in search of a new ministry personnel, this is part of your invitation to ministry personnel to consider whether they are being called to serve your ministry context.

Create a “Living Faith Story” need not be a long and onerous task!

- ▶ The community of faith can use one of the following as a beginning point in creating their “Living Faith Story”:
 - A recent Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) report may supply much of the information needed for the creation of a “Living Faith Profile”..
 - A recent ministry profile, list of mission and ministry priorities, Living Faith Story, Living Faith Profile, ministry articulation profile, or essence statement from an *Effective Leadership and Healthy Pastoral Relationships* project in your former Conference may need only slight modification.
 - If your community of faith has recently participated in a visioning exercise with EDGE, you could use your ministry goals, vision statement, and current realities articulated in that work.
 - A narrative budget and other applicable material (that names your ministry both within and beyond the community of faith) could be suitable.
 - Use an existing vision or long-range planning document.
 - Finally, of course, you can develop a unique, original living faith story, which articulates the ministry of your community of faith.

When A Pastoral Charge Is Vacant And Searching For A New Minister...

- ▶ The “Living Faith Story” is the starting point for the creation of a “Community of Faith Living Faith Profile” which is created and uploaded onto ChurchHub at the beginning of a search process.
- ▶ Both the “Living Faith Story” and the “Community of Faith Profile” can be viewed by prospective applicants for a ministerial vacancy to that they can get an full overview of the pastoral charge.
- ▶ The EOORC Pastoral Relations Commission) will name a Pastoral Relations Liaison to work with all Communities of Faith who are in the process of seeking a new minister.

We now have a Living Faith Story.

When else can it be of use?

- ▶ When a Community of Faith is experiencing a change in pastoral relations, its Living Faith Story will need to be reviewed and updated before posting on ChurchHub.
- ▶ The “Living Faith Story” is a companion document to the “Community of Faith Profile” on ChurchHub
- ▶ “Pastoral Relations: Guidelines for a Community of Faith Profile”

[Pastoral Relations: Guidelines for a Community of Faith Profile \(united-church.ca\)](http://united-church.ca)

What is included in a Community of Faith Profile when a vacancy is declared?

- living faith story
- position description(s)
- financial statement
- demographics
- real property descriptions
- manse report, if applicable
- financial viability review
- learning site requirements, if applicable

Where to start...

Creating a Living Faith Story

+ The Living Faith Story can be developed at any time by the local governing body, by a small group selected by the governing body, or by the congregation and then refined by a smaller team.

Creating a Living Faith Profile (for the purpose of conducting a search)

+ A Living Faith Profile, which will include the Living Faith Story, is normally created by a small group chosen by the congregation or the governing body. The Regional Council will appoint a Pastoral Relations Liaison who will work with the team.

Congregational Approval

+ Once the Living Faith Story or a Living Faith Profile is completed, it must be presented to the congregation for their final approval.

A helpful UCC resource...

[Pastoral Relations: Guidelines for a Community of Faith Profile \(united-church.ca\)](https://www.united-church.ca)

- ▶ Helpful resources found in this handbook:
 - ▶ Preparing You Community of Faith Profile
 - ▶ Living Faith Story; Financial Statement; Demographics; Manse Report; Real Property
 - ▶ Workshop for Developing a Living Faith Story
 - ▶ Sample “Living Faith Story” Template
 - ▶ Administration; Community Outreach & Social Justice; Denomination & Communities; Faith Formation & Christian Education; Leadership; pastoral Care; Self-Care; Worship;
 - ▶ Financial Viability Review
 - ▶ Manse Information Summary Sheet
 - ▶ Real Property Worksheet
 - ▶ Position Description Template