

EOORC Fall Meeting: “Courageous Community”

Summary for Communities of Faith

The Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council is made up of 125 pastoral charges. The regional council has three general meetings each year. There is an online educational event in the winter, a two-day AGM in the spring, and a one-day meeting in the autumn. Our 2024 Fall Meeting was held at Trinity United Church in Renfrew, Ontario. Many people also joined us through Zoom. About 150 people attended the meeting, either in person or online.

The theme of the Fall Meeting was “***Courageous Community.***” Rev. Mary Royal-Duczek, our new Community of Faith and Network Support Minister, guided us as we began to explore this theme. Starting from the story of Jesus’ resurrection, Mary talked about beloved community...places where we feel Christ’s love in the love of those around us. Mary invited us to share different ways that our communities of faith are “beloved community.” She asked: “*What is your community of faith really good at?*” and “*What is God up to in your community of faith?*” Mary encouraged us to look out for new life and to be willing to be surprised, just like the women at the Empty Tomb on Easter Sunday. You can watch Mary’s presentation [here](#).

Next, we learned about ***Neighbourhood Profiles.*** Have you ever wondered about the neighbourhood surrounding your community of faith? The United Church of Canada has a profile for each neighbourhood across Canada. These profiles can give you important information about your neighbours. This data can inform our ministries. For example, a congregation where 40% of the local residents are seniors and 30% live alone might want to start a seniors’ coffee hour. Sharon Buttrey from the General Council Office shared an interesting presentation with us, teaching us about these Neighbourhood Profiles. You can watch Sharon’s presentation [here](#). *Many communities of faith in EOORC already have a copy of their Neighbourhood Profile. If your community of faith does not yet have a copy and you would like one, please contact Growth Animator Rev. Tori Mullin at tmullin@united-church.ca.*

Especially for those who attend in person, regional meetings are a wonderful opportunity to make connections with other United Churches. We enjoyed a lunch break (thank

you to the Trinity-St. Andrews UCW for the meal!) with plenty of time to talk. This was a good opportunity to meet our neighbours, share stories, and make new friends.

Rev. Teresa Burnett-Cole shared updates from the **General Council Executive**. EOORC Member Sue Smarkala told us about Multifaith Housing Ottawa's new campaign "**United We Dream.**" EOORC has agreed to a fundraising target of \$150 000 to help support the building of 30 units of affordable housing at Lebreton Flats for Indigenous individuals and families. Many congregations are holding fundraising events or a special Sunday service. You can find more information, as well as resources for worship services at <https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/united-we-dream.html>.

We elected **Commissioners to the 45th General Council**, which will begin in summer 2025. We also **debated proposals** which were submitted for our consideration. A proposal about information accessibility and the General Council Executive was approved and forwarded to the General Council. A second proposal, entitled "The Gospel," had a lively and amicable debate. EOORC members agreed that it is important to share the message of Christ's love, but there were differing opinions about whether this proposal was the best way to achieve that. Ultimately, the proposal was sent forward with non-concurrence.

Our day began and ended with worship. We prayed and sang together. Thanks be to God for this day of community, worship and learning!

You can find all our meeting documents and information [here](#).

Report By: Natalie Matkovsky

nmatkovsky@united-church.ca