

**Meridian Pastoral Charge
“Congregational Package”
for the 2020 Annual Meeting
Feb. 9, 2021**

In this package:

1. Board of Trustees for Meridian Pastoral Charge
2. Meridian Pastoral Charge Governance Document
3. Meridian Pastoral Charge’s Covenant to the Prairie to Pine Region
4. Meridian Pastoral Charge Annual 2020 Report with proposed 2021 Budget and Agenda

Proposed Meridian Pastoral Charge Board of Trustees

The following individuals have agreed to let their names stand as trustees for the Meridian Pastoral Charge (MPC): Nancy Langlois - Sanford; Stuart Manness - Avonlea; Michele Ammeter - Starbuck; and by extension Reverend James deBeer - Minister of Meridian Pastoral Charge. Their appointments to the Meridian Pastoral Charge Board of Trustees shall be confirmed by vote during the virtual MPC Annual General Meeting to be held on 9 February 2021 at 7.00 PM.

Meridian Pastoral Charge Governance Documents

This document has been prepared to assist the Meridian Pastoral Charge (MPC) and the MPC governing body (Official Board) in understanding and performing their duties and responsibilities. MPC is a 3 point charge with functions divided between the pastoral charge and individual congregation levels. This governance document addresses only those functions that are currently managed at the pastoral charge level and not those at the individual congregation level.

A General

1. Definitions

- Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall refer to the Pastoral Charge Annual General Meeting of the MPC, generally held in February that has a quorum and has been duly called.
- Board Meeting shall refer to any meeting of the MPC governing body (Official Board) consisting of a quorum of the Board members
- Board member shall refer to a member of the MPC governing body (Official Board) which is the governing body of the pastoral charge.
- Community of Faith (COF): refers to the each of the congregations in the pastoral charge as recognized as a COF within the UCC through a covenantal relationship between the COF and the regional council (Manual B.1.1)
- Congregation: refers to the member, full members, adherents, and members of the order of ministry whose names have been added to the congregation's membership roll, who participate in a COF. (Manual B.3.1)
- General Meeting shall refer to any meeting of the pastoral charge members other than the AGM and that consists of a quorum and has been duly called.
- Region: refers to the Prairie to Pine Region of the United Church of Canada (UCC)

2. MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE

Meridian Pastoral Charge is a 3 point charge in the RM of Macdonald, Manitoba. The communities of faith in the charge are Avonlea (in Domain), Sanford and Starbuck United Church congregations.

At Avonlea United Church (AUC), as part of MPC, the governance board consists of an executive: chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, finance officer, worship representative, ministry and personnel representative, an Inter-church representative and a maintenance committee. The board generally has up to 10 members. Also the Minister of the Meridian Pastoral Charge (ex officio) will be in attendance at the AUC meetings. The AUC board meets three times a year and additional meetings when required. As well, the AUC holds an annual general meeting in January/February before the MPC February General Meeting

The Sanford United Church (SUC) governance board model consists of an executive: chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and representatives from the following committees-worship,

ministry and personnel, property and maintenance, and the project committee. SUC board meets two to three times a year and more frequently as required. An annual meeting is held in January of each year. Sanford United Church is part of the MPC.

The governance structure for Starbuck United Church resembles the Church Council model described in the handbook titled “Models of Board Governance”. The board consists of Chair, Secretary, Trustee, Treasurer, M&P, Pastoral Care, Worship and Projects. The council meets as required. Starbuck United Church is a part of the Meridian Pastoral Charge.

3. CONGREGATION

The governance of the congregations of MPC will be carried out in accordance with the intent of *The Manual of the United Church of Canada (2019 Edition)*, referred to as The Manual.

4. MPC OFFICIAL BOARD

The duties and tasks of the pastoral charge governing body will be performed by The Board Committees, namely Ministry and Personnel Committee, Worship Committee, Finance Committee, and the Financial Review Committee. The Board may create committees or other working groups as the need arises.

B Organization

MPC OFFICIAL BOARD

1. MEMBERSHIP:

The Board shall normally be composed of up to 15 members including:

- Chairperson (Chair)
- Vice Chairperson (Vice Chair)
- Secretary
- Treasurer (who also chairs the Finance Committee)
- Chairperson of each Congregational Board
- Chairperson of the following Committees:
 - Worship
 - Ministry and Personnel
- Prairie to Pine Region (#5) Representative
- Members at Large (1 from each congregation)
- Meridian Inter-church Representative
- Called or Appointed Minister or Pastoral Charge Supervisor (ex officio)

2. ELECTION

Positions of the MPC governing body are elected. These are elected at the AGM from representatives put forth by the Pastoral Charge Congregations.

The Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary of the MPC governing body shall normally be elected on a rotational basis from the Congregation. Each point in the charge shall normally be represented by one position at all times.

The Chair will be elected on a rotating basis from the three congregations, and shall normally serve as Vice Chair prior to serving as the Chair.

Vice Chair will be elected on a rotating basis from the three congregations. They shall normally become Chair immediately after their term as Vice Chair.

The Secretary will be elected on a rotating basis from the three congregations.

Year	Starbuck	Sanford	Avonlea
1	Chair	Vice Chair	Secretary
2	Secretary	Chair	Vice Chair
3	Vice Chair	Secretary	Chair

Treasurer will be elected at the AGM.

Ministry and Personnel and Worship Chairs shall normally be appointed on a rotating basis, by the committee, from the Committee members. These chairs shall not normally be from the same congregations.

Members-at-large and committee members will be elected by their congregation and serve for a one year term with no limit to the number of terms served with the exceptions listed above. Member-at-large elections shall normally be ratified at the annual meeting. Committee members shall normally be elected from the applicable committees of their home church to do work for the Board.

3. TERMS OF OFFICE

Chair serves a 1 year term. They may repeat as chair at the time when the congregation rotation that they represent returns.

Vice Chair term is 1 year. They may repeat as vice chair at the time when the congregation rotation that they represent returns.

Secretary serves a 1 year term. They may repeat as Secretary at the time when the congregation rotation that they represent returns.

Treasurer serves an initial 1 year term, and thereafter may be elected for an unlimited number of 2 year terms.

Ministry and Personnel and Worship Chairs serve for a two year term. They may repeat as chair at the time when the congregation rotation that they represent returns. Year 1 is a 1 year terms and 2 year terms thereafter.

MPC Prairie to Pines Region Representative serves an initial 1 year term, and thereafter may be elected for an unlimited number of 2 year terms.

Members at large, MPC Meridian Inter-Church representative, and Standing Committee members serve for a one year term with no limit to the number of terms served with the exceptions listed above.

Ad hoc committees serve from the time of appointment until the completion of the task for which the committee is appointed.

Terms run to the AGM, notwithstanding of when it is held.

4. MEETINGS

AGM shall normally be held as early as possible in the calendar year (Manual B.5). This meeting shall normally be held in person after the individual congregation annual meetings are held.

MPC Board meetings are open to all Committee members and all members and adherents of the Congregation. However, only Board members or their designated alternates are eligible to vote at the governing body board meeting. Designated alternatives shall normally be identified at the start of a meeting.

The Chairperson of MPC shall normally chair Board meetings.

The Chair and Secretary of each AGM and each general meeting of the charge shall normally be elected at the start of the meeting and be specific to that meeting.

The Board will meet as deemed necessary with one being the Annual General Meeting and at least three additional Board meetings at dates normally set at the AGM in consultation with the Board Members. These dates may be changed subject to notice.

The Board may be convened at any time by the chair of the Board, the settled Minister or the pastoral charge supervisor or when they receive a request as specified in the Manual (Manual B.7.7).

General meetings may be called at any time by the chair of the Board, the settled Minister or the pastoral charge supervisor or when they receive a request as specified in the Manual (Manual B.5.3).

A notice of meetings for the Board shall normally be published in the Church Bulletin used for Worship and put on the charge website prior to the meeting, except in the case of urgent need.

Notice of AGM or general meetings will be given in accordance with the Manual requirements where notification process will be dependent on the purpose of the meeting and shall normally be given verbally from the pulpit or in Church worship bulletin on two consecutive Sundays (Manual B.5.4).

Meetings may be held by means other than in person (such a conference call) provided all members can communicate with each other (Manual Appendix 3.4.1). Decisions may be made by email as specified in the Manual (Manual Appendix 3.4.2)

5. QUORUM:

The following shall constitute a quorum:

- AGM & General Meetings – numbers are dependent on the number of full members as specified in the manual (B.5.5) and including the Called or Appointed Minister, Pastoral Charge Supervisor, or other Regional Council designate and shall normally include at least 1 representative from each congregation;
- Board Meeting – Fifty percent of the people (not positions) on the current board including the Minister, pastoral charge supervisor, or other Regional Council designate. One of which must be the Chair or the Vice Chair and shall normally include at least 1 representative from each congregation.
- Each Board member will be considered as a single member of the Board even if they hold more than one position or role on the Board.

6. VOTE

Voting shall normally follow The Manual (Manual B.5.6, Manual Appendix 3.4).

Voting at Board meetings may be conducted by means other than in person (such as conference calls) provided all members can communicate with each other (Manual Appendix 3.4.1). Decisions may be made by email as specified in the Manual (Manual Appendix 3.4.2)

Each person shall normally have one vote, without regard to the number of positions such person holds.

7. INCOMPLETE TERM OR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Any Board member may resign from the Board by presenting a letter of resignation to Board Chair or Secretary.

The Board may request the resignation of a Board member who consistently fails to attend Board or Committee meetings, or fails to carry out assigned duties.

In the case of a resignation or removal of a Board member for any reason, the unexpired portion of the term may be served by a replacement appointed by The Board.

8. COMMITTEES

Under the Manual, the governing body is responsible for Spiritual Matters through the Worship Committee, Financial matters through Finance and, Pastoral Relations matters through Ministry & Personnel. Many of these are responsibilities of the COF. Normally the Chair of the COF committee sits on the committee of the MPC.

The MPC Board has 3 standing committees and 1 other committees to regularly organize and conduct the affairs and be responsible for all matters involving the joint interests of the

congregations which make up the Pastoral Charge, as set out in The Manual (B.7.8). Other committees may be appointed ad hoc.

STANDING COMMITTEES	COMMITTEE MEMBERS (UP TO)
Ministry and Personnel	(6) 2 from each congregation, minimum 1 from each.
Worship	(7) Minister, plus 2 from each congregation, minimum 1 from each.
Finance	(4) MPC Treasurer and Treasurer from each of the congregations

OTHER COMMITTEES

Financial Review	(2) (Sub Committee of Finance)
------------------	--------------------------------

Committee members will be put forth from each congregation. The responsibilities of each committee will be according to The Manual, UCC guidelines, and the MPC Governance Documents.

Committees will meet as often as required to effectively carry out their responsibilities and a representative of each Committee will report their programs and recommendations to the Board.

The Board may recommend alterations to its operating structures from time to time, as the work and focus of the Church may change and as experience may indicate. Recommendations will be considered by the Board, which will publish such recommendations for the congregations to study. Changes shall normally be approved by the congregation of the Pastoral Charge.

9. TRUSTEES

The Manual (Manual G.2.2) indicated that all congregational property is held by the congregation's trustees. This includes funds and investments, and any other kind of property. Also stated is that a pastoral charge with two or more congregations may, in addition to the board of trustees for each congregation, have a board of trustees for the pastoral charge (Manual G.3.2), particularly where there is property to the benefit of which the whole charge is entitled.

MPC Board of Trustees shall normally be comprised of 1 Trustee representing each COF and the automatic member (normally the settled minister). There is no membership requirement on the governance body but MPC Board of Trustees may report to the governance body as needed and shall normally report to the AGM..

The Board of Trustees shall normally operate as set out in the Manual and *Trustees Handbook with Concordance*.

C Duties and Responsibilities of the Board

ELECTED POSITIONS OF THE MPC BOARD

The Board will fulfill the responsibilities described in the Manual (2019) Section B.7.4 that are not being fulfilled by the governing bodies of the Communities of Faith

1. CHAIRPERSON

Duties include (as specified in the Manual (B.7.6.1.c) :

- a. Presiding and keeping order at the meetings of the governing body;
- b. Taking and announcing votes;
- c. Vote only in the event of a tie.

Additional duties:

- d. Oversee work of each committee, liaising with the committee chair;
- e. Plan agenda for each MPC Board meeting in consultation with the secretary and others as may be necessary;
- f. Plan agenda for the AGM in consultation with the secretary and others as may be necessary;
- g. Prepare a written report for the Annual General Meeting;
- h. Report at each Board meeting;
- i. Ensure a minute taker is present;
- j. Communicate with the media if the minister is unavailable;
- k. Oversee the process of succession of the Board and;
- l. Those described in Manual B.7.6.1, and other duties as assigned.

2. VICE CHAIRPERSON

Duties include:

- a. Vice Chair shall normally stand for election at the completion of the Chairs term;
- b. Vice Chair shall perform the duties and responsibilities of the Chair should the Chair be absent;
- c. Vice Chair shall collect and collate the reports for the MPC Annual Report including: MPC Chair, MPC Treasurer, M &P, Worship Committee, and Congregational reports. They shall normally be distributed (electronically) to Board Members before the Annual Meeting. Paper copies should be made available for the meeting. A copy of the MPC Annual Reports shall be sent to each congregation (electronically) within the MPC and;
- d. Vice Chair shall normally chair the Nomination Committee if one is required;
- e. Other duties as assigned

3. SECRETARY

Local COF are responsible for record keeping at the COF level (Manual B.7.4.9). Each COF in the MPC is responsible for maintenance of record keeping that is the responsibility of the COF including but not limited to: memberships, historic roll, record of children & adherents, baptisms, marriages, burials.

Duties include:

- a. To record accurately, prepare, distribute and keep minutes of the MPC Board Meetings;
- b. Shall normally forward the draft minutes of Board meetings to Board members before they are posted on the website;
- c. Shall normally ensure that all meeting minutes are posted on the MPC website as required;
- d. The minutes shall be marked as DRAFT until passed at the next MPC meeting;
- e. To prepare the agenda for the MPC Board Meetings in consultation with the Chair;
- f. To prepare the agenda for the MPC AGM in consultation with the Chair;
- g. Preserve documents and transmit the required records annually to the Prairie to Pine Regional Council office for review;
- h. Transmit required MPC records to the Archives as necessary;
- i. shall normally forward a copy (electronic or paper) of the MPC Annual Report to the Prairie to Pine Regional Council Office and;
- j. Those additional duties described in Manual B.7.6.2, and other duties as assigned.

4. TREASURER

Local COF are responsible for financial matters at the COF level (listed in the Manual B.7.4.2). Allotments are set annually in the Pastoral Charge budget process and the allotment is forwarded by the COF to the MPC Treasurer. M & S contributions are set annually by the COF and forwarded to the MPC Treasurer. Pastoral Charge expenses include; salaries, benefits and related employer expenses for pastoral charge employees including ministry personnel, and other expense in the pastoral charge budget.

Duties include:

- a. Prepare an Annual Budget for MPC, with the Finance Committee, to be presented and approved by the Board at the Board meeting prior to the AGM (typically November) and then at the Annual General Meeting;
- b. Attend to all MPC banking with the approval of the Board and attend to financial concerns not dealt with by other committees;
- c. To prepare a written financial statement (typically at each meeting) for the Board;
- d. To prepare a written financial statement for the MPC Annual report;
- e. Attends to the charge payroll;
- f. Receives the M&S contributions from the churches and remits them to the UCC;
- g. Receives and disperses funds for the MPC under the direction of the MPC governing body;
- h. Be responsible for keeping the records of all receipts and disbursements;
- i. Shall normally collect (from COF) and forward statistical information form to Prairie to Pine Region annually;
- j. Ensure the work of the Financial Review Committee, with an independent review, is completed by the Board meeting prior to the AGM;
- k. A bookkeeper may be hired to assist in the Treasurers duties with Board approval and;

1. Additional duties and responsibilities covered in the Manual (B.7.6.3 & G.4.3) and the *Financial Handbook for Congregations 2017*, and *Financial Resource Handbook: Abbreviated Edition 2019*.

ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

5. M & P COMMITTEE CHAIR

M & P Committee Chair is a member of the governing body.
Additional information is in section 8.a.

6. WORSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Worship Committee Chair is a member of the governing body.
Additional information is in section 8.b.

7. MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- a. Members-at-large have no specific duties, but may be assigned duties by the Board as needed.
- b. Members-at-large participate in Board meetings, vote, and may be members of Committees as a member of the Board.

6. PRAIRIE TO PINE REGIONAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE/S

Duties include:

- a. Up to three Representatives (1 from each congregation) from MPC are eligible to attend the meetings of the UCC Prairie to Pine Region Regional Council currently (B.2.1.6);
- b. They will represent the Prairie to Pine Regional Council to the Meridian Pastoral Charge and the Congregations;
- c. A designated Regional Rep shall normally prepare a written report for the MPC AGM;
- d. A designate Regional Rep shall normally attend MPC Board meetings and provide reports at any MPC Board meetings;
- e. Additional details in The Manual (B.2.1.6).

7. MERIDIAN INTER-CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

Duties include:

- a. The Minister and one congregant (from any congregation) act as the representatives on the Meridian Inter-Church Council whose representatives are from member churches in the RM of Macdonald;
- b. The congregant is a board member and referred to as the Meridian Inter-Church Representative;
- c. Meridian Inter-Church Representative shall normally prepare a written report for the MPC AGM;
- d. Meridian Inter-Church Representative shall normally attend MPC Board meetings and provide reports at any MPC Board meetings;
 - e. Inform the Congregations of Inter-Church events and represent United Church at Meridian Inter-Church Council meetings and events.

8. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES & OTHER COMMITTEES

MPC has several standing committees, which are ongoing. These include: the Ministry & Personnel, Worship, and Finance Committee

a. MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Ministry and Personnel (M & P) Committee is mandatory. The committee has three distinct roles: the consultative and supportive role, the healthy relationships role, and the supervisory role. (Manual B.7.8.5):

Committee and Chair duties include:

- i. The Chair shall normally prepare a written report for the MPC AGM;
- ii. The Chair (or designate) shall normally attend MPC Board meetings and provide reports at any MPC Board meetings;
- iii. Regular time should be available at M & P meetings for conversations with staff
- iv. Arrange for pulpit supply as required.
- v. Discuss service times and any changes and present recommendations to the Board.

Ministry & Personnel covered in the Manual, B.7.8.5 and in The UCC Handbook *Ministry and Personnel Committees: Policy, Procedures, Practises*, January 2019, and *Resources for Ministry & Personnel Committees* which are available to further outline the best practices of the M & P committee.

Excerpts below of these documents are not limited to, but include:

- i. The number of Committee meetings held per year is at the discretion of the Committee and Chair;
- ii. The M&P committee is responsible for being available for consultation and support for matters involving the pastoral charge staff;
- iii. They oversee the relationship of the pastoral charge staff to each other and to people in the congregation;
- iv. Regularly reviewing the working conditions (including Workplace Safety & Health), responsibilities, and compensation of all pastoral charge staff;
- v. Make any recommendations needed as a result of these reviews to the governing body;
- vi. Revise position descriptions of pastoral charge staff, in consultation with staff, as needed;
- vii. Conduct annual performance reviews of the pastoral charge staff;
- viii. Ensure pastoral charge staff make use of opportunities for continuing education;
- ix. The M&P committee maintains contact with the Prairie to Pine Pastoral Relations Committee as needed.

The work of the ministry and personnel committee is advisory and consultative in nature. Much of its work will be done quietly and confidentially. Confidentiality is vital to the work of the M&P Committee, keeping in mind that the committee is accountable to the

governing body and is also in relationship with ministry personnel, lay employees, and the community of faith.

b. WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The pastoral charge worship committee makes decisions and recommendations for worship matters affecting the pastoral charge.

Committee and Chair duties include:

- i. The Chair shall normally prepare a written report for the MPC AGM;
- ii. The Chair (or designate) shall normally attend MPC Board meetings and provide reports at any MPC Board meetings;
- iii. They shall normally meet a minimum of once a year with the Minister and Congregational Representatives to plan the worship year;
- iv. The number of additional committee meetings held per year is at the discretion of the Committee and Chair;
- v. They should study the nature and meaning of Christian Worship to consider new forms and language of worship and to consider varied cultures in the context of Christian worship.
- vi. They work in close consultation/coordination with the Minister, who is a member of the committee;
- vii. The planning of worship to includes;
 - the review of the previous year's activities,
 - plan and coordinate worship for the upcoming year,
 - review with the Minister the order of Sunday worship,
 - Set the number and dates for communion,
 - Review the Holy days, Seasons, Special days (Thanksgiving, Remembrance day, Hanging of the greens, White Gift, Christmas Eve, family days) and other special services as they arise,
 - To make resources available to help with worship, planning small group worship activities or intergenerational events,
- viii. The Committee should consider;
 - Inclusion of lay people in the leadership of worship to assisting with the sacraments and their administration,
 - considering the presence and involvement of children in worship,
 - Utilizing the arts in worship including multi-media drama etc.

c. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee and Chair duties include:

- i. The MPC Treasurer shall normally Chair the committee;
- ii. The committee shall normally set the (draft) annual budget of the MPC for the coming year;
- iii. The budget is presented and approved by the Board at the last meeting prior to the AGM (typically November);
- iv. The Board approved budget will be presented and approved at the MPC AGM;

- v. If a bookkeeper is hired, they may be invited to attend Finance Committee meetings at the discretion of the MPC Treasurer but, as bookkeeper, is not a member of the committee.

D. OTHER COMMITTEES

These committees may be made up entirely of non-board members and report only to required board meetings. They are set as required by the Board. They may include, but not limited to:

- i. Finance Reviews:

- Independent reviews of the financial records shall be done annually (Manual G.4.4.);
- Oversee the review of the MPC treasury books for accuracy and completeness;
- Report to the Annual General Meeting on the state of the treasury books.

- ii. Nomination Committee:

- Appointed by the Board to ensure the succession of the Board;
- Report to the Board chair before the AGM;
- Present a report with the names of the people named by the congregations to serve on the Official Board to the AGM.

C Other

1. WEBSITE

The MPC domain name (meridian-pastoral-charge.ca) belongs to the pastoral charge.

2. AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

- a. No amendment will be made to these governance documents except by the resolution of the Board passed by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Board present.
- b. The notice of motion, actual motion along with a named mover and seconder proposing an amendment shall be presented to the Chair or Secretary in writing, and the amendments will be sent to every member of the Board at least seven days in advance of the meeting at which the motion is to be made.
- c. Amendments to the governance documents will then be ratified by a majority vote of the congregations present at the next Annual General Meeting of the MPC, or at a General Meeting of the Congregations called for that purpose.
- d. Notwithstanding anything herein written, no amendment to the governance documents will take effect unless the amendment, and the manner of its making, will be in keeping with the intent of The Manual.
- e. The Board shall normally make provision for a review of the governance documents once every three years.
- f. Amendments take effect after a resolution at the AGM or general meeting of the MPC congregations.

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- a. Any member of the MPC Board with any direct or indirect (perceived or real) financial, professional or personal interest (gain) in any contract entered into by MPC:
 - i) Must not vote on the matter;
 - ii) Will be asked to leave that portion of a meeting where the matter is being approved.
- b. This does not apply to the reimbursement of a board member in respect to expenses incurred in carrying out the business of the MPC with the approval of the Board.

4. SIGNING AUTHORITY

Cheques shall normally be issued and signed by any two of the Signing Officers. Signing Officers shall normally be any two of the Chair, Vice Chair & Treasurer. Additional Signing Officers may be designated by the Board.

5. SIGNATURE AND CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

Contracts, documents, or other instruments in writing requiring a signature of MPC shall normally be signed by any two of the Chair, Vice chair or Treasurer, and all contracts, documents, and instruments in writing so signed shall be binding upon MPC without any further authorization or formality.

6. DISSOLUTION

- a. In the event of a dissolution or windup of the MPC and following the payment of all outstanding debts, liabilities, cost, charges and expenses properly incurred in the winding up, the MPC shall transfer all its property and assets to the local communities of faith according to the allotment set at the time of the final approved budget. Alternate recipient(s) of the assets, having similar objectives or purposes, may be decided by the members at the final General Meeting. This provision is alterable.
- b. In the event of a local community of faith wishing to leave the MPC, or otherwise exiting MPC, notification of intent must be given in writing to the Board no later than 6 months prior to the next AGM. This provision is alterable.
- c. If dissolution or a structural change is being contemplated, the Regional Council Committee on Community of Faith Support must be informed as soon as possible. Any dissolution, reorganization or other structural change in a pastoral charge requires the approval of the regional council and a change to the covenant between the pastoral charge or community of faith and the regional council (Manual G.1.3)

This Governance Document was adopted at the MPC Annual Meeting on February __, 2021

Chair

Vice Chair or Secretary

Resources

The United Church of Canada Manual, 2019 Edition:

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/the-manual_2019.pdf

The United Church of Canada Handbook on Models of Board Governance, 2013: https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook_models-board-governance.pdf

Governance Change document from Presbytery Oversight Committee

United Church Handbooks and Guidelines web page:

<https://www.united-church.ca/handbooks>

Financial Guidelines for Congregations, 2017:

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/financial_handbook_for_congregations_2017.pdf

Ministry & Personnel Committee Policy, Procedures and Practices:

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/ministry-personnel-committees_policy-procedures-practices.pdf

Resources for Ministry & Personnel Committees:

<https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources-for-mandp-committees.pdf>

Trustees Handbook with Concordance (Oct 2016):

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/handbook_trustees.pdf

“MPC Constitution”, September 9, 2008 amended version

“MPC Constitution Draft” presented to Board April 2020

Heather Lea and Lynn Sanderson, Prairie to Pines Committee on Community of Faith

A Covenant of Mutual commitment, Accountability and Support between Meridian Pastoral Charge and Prairie to Pine Regional Council

Meridian Pastoral Charge-Community of Faith Covenant

Preamble

Communities of faith and regional councils share ministry in mutual respect as part of The United Church of Canada. Together they celebrate God's presence, seek justice and love and serve others. A covenantal relationship, intentionally and willingly entered into by the parties, is an important symbol of this commitment.

A community of faith is recognized... within the United church by the regional council through a covenantal relations between the community of faith and the regional council.

The terms of the covenant include:

- a) the governance requirements for the community of faith in [The Manual];
- b) any applicable policies set by the General Council; and
- c) any other terms that the community of faith and the regional council may agree to include within denominational policies. (Manual 2019, B.1.3.1)

Changes to the Covenant

The terms of the covenant may be changed from time to time within denominational policies with the agreement of the community of faith and the regional council.

1. Community of Faith -MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE (MPC)

Meridian Pastoral Charge covenants to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the current Manual of The United Church of Canada, particularly section B and G.

1. A. The Manual: The chair of this governing body and ministry personnel will have access to and be familiar with the Manual, at least section B, and section G.

1 B. Governance

The MPC governance board model consists of an executive: chairperson, vice chair, secretary, finance committee and the following committees: worship, ministry and personnel, regional representative, and an Inter-church representative. Also the Minister of Pastoral Charge (ex officio), chairs and members at large from each local board. The Board of Trustees have been established.

The MPC meets quarterly according to B7.7.1 in the manual. Each church hosting a meeting and the annual meeting will convene after all three communities of faith have had their annual meetings. Currently, the board is actively working on updating the MPC's constitution.

1 C. Ministry Summary

Website <https://www.meridian-pastoral-charge.ca/>

The MPC is situated in the Rural Municipality of Macdonald in Manitoba. Our pastoral charge comprises of three community of faiths – Avonlea United Church (Domain), Sanford United Church and Starbuck United Church. The MPC office is situated in Sanford United Church. Each of the communities of faith has their own governance as in United Church manual 2019 section B. G. All three communities are small and intimate and are in close proximity to Winnipeg. Sanford and Domain are growing communities whereas Starbuck is somewhat stagnant. There is care and concern for everyone who lives in the three locales and surrounding areas. Volunteer spirit is alive and well and everyone takes pride in their respective towns. Christian education/Sunday school is available during the service and is actively promoted by the minister. Pastoral Care is shared with the minister and respective congregations.

Challenge

The MPC's challenge for the future is to be financially viable due to our aging demographic. Also, fewer people are attending church on a regular basis. A third challenge is that our existing congregations are getting older and some go south for the winter and some are moving away. There is no manse and the manse money is being utilized in MPC's financial business.

Purpose and Work

The MPC's Mission Statement is to worship and celebrate the church year while being a loving presence in our community during crisis and joy and to nurture the Christian faith to individuals of all ages.

Local and city outreach activities include clothing and food drives for One Just City, local Christmas hampers, volunteering at Siloam Mission and helping others in need.

The minister for MPC provides two services each Sunday. Services with the minister/pulpit supply are on a three year rotational basis where one church gets the minister every week and the other two churches get the minister/lay leadership two times per month. All churches follow the same "order of service" where the congregations participate. Starbuck United Church shares a joint service once a month with the local Trinity Lutheran Church.

Other faith communities within the Rural Municipality of Macdonald besides the United Church are Mennonite, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and independent churches. The communities of faith formed a Meridian Inter-church Council, that meets the second Tuesday morning of each month September to June, organizes an Advent Choral Service, supports graduates with a Service Award, and organizes a baseball and BBQ tournament in June. The mission is to be a visible sign of unity of the body of Christ to the church communities. The Inter-church group supports one another by sharing Christ's love as clergy and lay-people at all times and in all places.

Currently, the MPC Constitution is being updated using the Manual of the United Church of Canada as a guidance document. Policies and directives for Minister's fee, baptisms, weddings and funerals are being scrutinized and updated on a regular basis. Some differences exist with respect to the availability of music, lunches, and caretakers.

2. Regional Council

Prairie to Pine Regional Council covenants to fulfill the responsibilities of a regional council as outlined in The Manual of The United Church of Canada and its accompanying handbooks. See especially section C.2 Responsibilities

In addition, Prairie to Pine Regional Council will...

- enable access to specialized technical and professional services from the staff of the denominational council if such services are beyond the knowledge of the regional council staff;
- make information available about grants for communities of faith whose ministers will be on sabbatical leave;
- ensure that sources of funds are widely known throughout the regional council;
- serve as a liaison with mission partners in other denominations and faiths for mission projects on a regional, national, or international level;
- encourage the development and ongoing activities of local clusters of communities of faith and of networks that lift up different aspects of the life of the United Church.

Dispute resolution

If there is disagreement on any of the terms of this covenant, Meridian Pastoral Charge and Prairie to Pine Regional Council agree to:

1. as a first step, engage in whatever informal processes have been set up within the regional council (name the process clearly); if this process is unsuccessful in achieving resolution;
2. engage a conflict resolution facilitator to discuss the issues in dispute;
3. agree to binding arbitration if necessary to determine all outstanding issues; and
4. comply with any agreement reached or decision issued.

Dated at {insert place and date}

Dated at {insert place and date}

on behalf Meridian Pastoral Charge
Community of Faith

on behalf of Prairie to Pine
Regional Council

Submitted by
Diane Trudeau
for Meridian Pastoral Charge
d.trudeau8@gmail.com
HOME #- 204 735 2792

Meridian Pastoral Charge

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Sanford United
Church



Avonlea United
Church



Starbuck United
Church



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- P 3 Agenda
- P 4 Mission Statement
- P 5-9 Minutes form the 2019 Annual Meeting with Addendum
- P 10-11 Minister's Report
- P 12 Chair's Report
- P 13 Committee Reports Worship
- P 14 M&P
- P 15 Prairie to Pine
- P 16 Church Reports Avonlea United Church
- P 17-18 Sanford United Church
- P 18 Starbuck United Church
- P 19 Meridian Inter-Church Council
- P 20-21 Meridian Pastoral Charge Financial
- P 22-23 Meridian Pastoral Charge Budget for 2021

**Meridian Pastoral Charge
Annual General Meeting Agenda
9 February 2021**

Call Meeting to Order

Opening Prayer

Adoption of the Agenda

Election of Chairperson and Secretary for AGM

Corrections and Adoption of Minutes MPC AGM 24 February 2020

Annual Reports

Minister

Chair

Worship

Ministry and Personnel

Regional Council - Prairie to Pine

Church Reports

Avonlea

Sanford

Starbuck

Inter-Church

Treasurers

Correspondence

Old Business

MPC Governance Document Approval

Flyers Update

Tech Soup

New Business

Election of MPC Board Members – Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary

MPC Trustees

MPC Covenant Approval

MPC Budget for 2021

MPC Financial Audit

Confirmation of MPC Meeting Dates:

Tuesday 13 April 2021 – Starbuck – 7 PM

Tuesday 14 September 2021 – Avonlea – 7 PM

Tuesday 09 November 2021 – Sanford – 7 PM

Tuesday 08 February 2022 - Starbuck – 7 PM (AGM)

Call for Adjournment

**MISSION STATEMENT
FOR MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE**

To worship;

To celebrate the church year;

To be a loving presence in our community during crisis and joy;

To nurture the Christian Faith to individuals of all ages.

**2019 MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE ANNUAL MEETING
WITH ADDENDUM**

February 24, 2020
at Avonlea United Church

Attendance: Malcolm Kirkpatrick, Cliff Harrison, Stuart Manness, Jane Manness, Janice Harrison, Margaret Porter, Barb Kirk, Julie Ringash, Judy Cormier, Nancy Langlois, Jamie Scharf, Linda Manson, Diane Trudeau, James deBeer (by phone)

Regrets: Ron Manness

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm

Opening Prayer – James opened the meeting with a prayer

Agenda as prepared by Chair

Election of Chairperson/Recorder of Minutes

Secretary- Diane Trudeau volunteered

Chairman – Malcolm Kirkpatrick- nominated by Linda Manson/Margaret Porter Carried

Corrections and Adoption of Minutes from the Annual Meeting February 5, 2019

Motion: to adopt the minutes as circulated Jamie/ Cliff. Carried

Reports:

Minister's Report

James added via the phone that he hoped people would not hesitate to contact him by any means if there are any concerns. He likes to get feed back from the congregation whenever possible. James also mentioned that he has learned through this last year of his life's journey to NOT take anything for granted. Life can be very fragile.

Worship Report

A question to the worship committee is "Why does the order of worship not include any of the letters from Paul?" It was explained the lectionary readings follow a 3 year cycle and the reading would probably be in one of those years.

Ministry and Personnel

Question to this committee was, "Is there a list of pulpit supply?". Yes, it would be circulated. Also, is this committee addressing the rules and procedure for Jame's short term disability? Yes. It was also pointed out that the name "Tom Manness" should read "Tom Manson".

Regional Council Prairie to Pine

No additional info needed.

Church Reports

Avonlea United Church

There was a comment by Ron Manness via Cliff Harrison that the Meridian Pastoral Charge should have a way of supporting itself rather than relying on the Manse money. Fund raising ideas would be discussed in New Business.

Sanford United Church

Added to this report by Jamie was that Sanford United Church has run its second deficit year. Also added were the funerals of Irene Grills and Vern Parker.

Starbuck United Church

Margaret add John Marshall's funeral.

Meridian Inter-Church Council

Jane asked when the World Day of Prayer was to be held? James said March, 8th at Trinity Lutheran Church. 7 pm.

Motion: to adopt the reports as amended and presented. Michele/Jamie Carried

Financial Report

Cliff explained the 2019 Financial Report

Motion: to adopt the Financial Report as presented Cliff/Michele Carried

Correspondence

Peter Mitchell asked if Meridian Pastoral Charge would sponsor him as he wants to keep his United Church of Canada status as a minister.

Old Business

Constitution

Malcolm is working to update it and ensuring it measures up to United Church of Canada manual. He will present it at the April meeting.

Hub – we still need to get on it.

Contract vs Pulpit Supply

If a minister preaches 4 times or more they need to sign a contract in order to receive benefits. T4s must be provided if a minister earns over \$500 and that would be more than two Sundays.

Action: M&P study and present at the next meeting whether a "Contract Minister" or "Pulpit Supply" is best for us.

There needs to be a broader discussion on how we can reduce our Pulpit Supply expenditures. James is flexible to help us and provide resources as needed. He would even do a 3rd service on Sundays.

United Fresh Start

James contacted Rev. Elizabeth and explained about his condition and he would get back to her when he was feeling better.

New Business

Category Remit # 1

The proposal entitled “Amendment to the Basis of Union’s Article 10.0 on Ministry Personnel” was unfinished business from the 43rd General Council’s 2018 meeting in Oshawa and so now is being addressed. General Council has authorized this Category 1 Remit to Regional Councils to test the will of the church with respect to this change. At present 10.0 under Ministry and Personnel states, “The Order of Ministry shall be open to both men and women.” The amended 10.0 will state, “The Order of Ministry shall be inclusive of persons of all gender identities.”

Motion: to support the proposed amendment. Michele/Margaret Carried

Fishing Tips – How Curiosity Transformed a Community of Faith

by Rev. Dr. John Pentland

This book describes how to increase congregational numbers. Communities of Faith/churches have to look at how the young people of today communicate (using social media) and through those means advertise yourself. Through the board’s discussion it was mentioned to be cautious of confidentiality issues. Neighbour Talk was a suggestion - speak to one neighbour a month about which church you attend and why. It also suggested to change the word “Sermon” to “Reflection” as it seemed less preachy. This idea was well accepted. The author was also suggested to put news about your church in neighbourhood flyers.

Nomination and Election of New Board Members

Treasurer

It is very difficult to get a treasurer so it was suggested that Meridian Pastoral Charge hire a bookkeeper to make the position easier. The bookkeeper’s duties would be:

- have signing authority
- pay bills
- create monthly statements

The bookkeeper’s salary would be \$600 per year. They would NOT do the fiscal report. Cliff would work with them until April. **However we still need a Treasurer. Each congregation is to asked to see if they can get a volunteer by the April meeting.** After we get a Treasurer, Malcolm will send out a motion to accept them.

Motion: we hire Karen Elliot as bookkeeper for Meridian Pastoral Charge with a salary maximum of \$600 per year. Michele/Margaret Carried.

Motion: Cliff will be the reviewer of the books. Linda/Jamie Carried

Chairperson – Malcolm Kirkpatrick

Vice Chair – Diane Trudeau

Motion: to accept Diane as Vice Chair Michele/Margaret Carried.

Secretary – Jamie Scharf

Motion: to accept Jamie as Secretary Michele/Nancy Carried.

Attendance

Dates are set for meetings. If you are unable to attend please see if you can get someone to represent you.

Budget 2020

Discussion re:

Telephone – to save \$1100 per year, Jamie will change the church number to Jame’s phone. James was fine with this.

Treasurer – bookkeeper amount will change from \$500 to \$600 per year for making payments and monthly statements.

Allocations – Avonlea - \$2450, Starbuck \$1700 and Sanford \$2450 per month. Manse investment withdrawal - \$15 000. Use carryover - \$6000.

Motion: to accept the amendments to eliminate the phone expense of \$1100 and change the Treasurer amount of \$500 to \$600 to pay the bookkeeper with a total of \$97 586.00 Michele/Jamie Carried.

Motion: to accept the amended 2020 Budget using \$15 000 from the Manse account. Cliff/Jamie Carried

M&S Donations

Avonela \$3000

Sanford \$1000

Starbuck \$2000

2020 Board Members

Chairperson – Malcolm Kirkpatrick

Vice Chair – Diane Trudeau

Secretary – Jamie Scharf

Worship Chair – Colleen Norton

M&P Chair – Michele Ammeter until May and Julie Ringash continues

Regional Council Rep – Diane Trudeau

Members at Large

Avonlea – Jane Manness

Sanford – Nancy Langlois

Starbuck -

Church Chairpersons

Avonlea – Ron Manness

Sanford – Jamie Scharf

Starbuck – Margaret Porter

2020 Meeting Dates

Tuesday, April 14 2020 – Sanford 7PM

Tuesday, September 8, 2020 – Starbuck 7 PM

Monday, November 9, 2020 – Avonlea 7PM

Monday, February 8, 2021 7 PM -Annual Meeting at Sanford

Adjournment by Jamie Scharf at 9:23 PM

**Addendum to February 24 Meridian Pastoral Charge Draft Minutes
March 19, 2020**

This is to certify that during the 24 Feb 2020 Annual Meridian Pastoral Charge (MPC) Meeting meeting held at the Avonlea Church in Domain Manitoba that there were no volunteers for the position of MPC Treasurer. In lieu of and in addition to the Treasurer position being filled at a later date, there was a motion to accept Karen Elliot as bookkeeper (not Treasurer) which was passed by the Board.

On 12 Mar Cliff Harrison moved (via email) that Georges Cormier be nominated for Treasurer of the MPC for a two year term. Jamie Scarf seconded the nomination. There were twelve votes in favour of the nomination and zero votes against the nomination. The motion was unanimously approved by the MPC Board. Georges Cormier is MPC Treasurer for a two year term.

On 17 Mar Cliff Harrison moved (via email) that Georges Cormier (MPC Treasurer) and Karen Elliot (MPC bookkeeper) be given signing authority for the Meridian Pastoral Charge (Financial). The motion was seconded by Michele Ammeter. There were twelve votes in favour of the motion that Georges Cormier and Karen Elliot be granted signing authority for the Meridian Pastoral Charge and zero votes against the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the MPC Board.

MINISTER'S REPORTS -2020

Meridian Pastoral Charge AGM Minister's Report January 2021

As I look back on 2020 preparing this report for our Annual Meeting, I think of the pioneers who laid the foundations of our churches—many of whom are your ancestors. They didn't just build a church building from ground up, they built a church community, through hard work, sweat, tears, sacrifice but above all faith, hope and love. Many pioneers came here with little more than the clothes on their backs. They came to this land which, although beautiful and bountiful, is in many ways harsh and unforgiving. Yet, inspired by their faith and need of community, they began our churches 'from scratch' and lived out the Gospel, empowering the light and life of Christ to flourish. Celebrations, lamentations, caring for those in need; they showed us that we don't just go to church, but we are the church 24/7.

2020 has been a year for pioneering again, so to speak. Our need to follow Public Health restrictions, protect the vulnerable, support health care workers and essential workers meant we could not carry on as usual with our normal church routines, particularly gathering in person Sunday mornings. As difficult as that was, it was even more painful for those who had loved ones in care homes or other circumstances where visiting and care was hindered or made impossible. Hearing many of your own personal experiences of not being able to say goodbye to loved ones is heartbreaking and my heart and prayers go out to you. Please be assured that those who have passed on are with God and are now embraced by eternal light and life.

While I do not claim my experiences of 2020 to be on par with those of our pioneering ancestors, it felt a bit like being a pioneer constructing an infrastructure which would enable us to gather as church online, over the phone, emails, texts, YouTube and Zoom. Thank goodness much of this infrastructure was already laid out, waiting to be harnessed and thank you to those who lent their technical know-how to enable us to tap into these resources.

Moving to becoming a church that gathers mostly online was exciting in terms of the opportunities it opened, but was also very scary—for me personally at least—and there were times I confess I was tempted to despair. I thank you all and laud you for your patience, understanding and openness to these new virtual ways of being church. The Christmas Eve service in particular was very affirming and nourishing for my spirit because of your embrace to fully participate and share your videos, music, and photos. I know very well from my experiences this past year that recording yourself to go online is extremely daunting so thank you for sharing your beautiful selves with our communities of faith and beyond.

I encourage us all, as congregations and as individuals, to frequently reflect on our experiences of this pandemic and what lessons we have learned and can learn about ourselves and about being effective disciples of Christ. Our ongoing experience of being a church online I think invites us to consider how we want to continue harnessing these resources even as things (hopefully this year, 2021) return to 'normal.' It also must be noted that many in our faith communities do not have access to online resources and so we must work to ensure no one is left out or left behind.

2020 has been a year of struggles and tribulations, sadness and uncertainty—and not just because of the pandemic but also because of upheaval, illness and the death of loved ones. Thank you to everyone who reached out to one another, offered support and through determination and creativity, found ways to live out our mission:

To worship;

To celebrate the church year;

To be a loving presence in their communities, in times of crisis and joy;

To provide for the Christian nurture and nourishment of all ages.

I'm sure many of us are more than ready to turn the page on 2020, but, as I've said, I think it's important to remember and learn from this crisis and also to celebrate the positive. During any end-of-year time, there is a plethora of lists: top 10 google searches, top shows, top new phrases we've started using (I'm thinking 'zoom-bombing' or a whole new meaning to 'red-alert'). I recently read one in the Free Press on Top positive things that have happened in 2020 and I'd just like to highlight a few:

- 1) We adapted:** The pandemic asked us to roll with so much, but we were able to see that we can cope...we figured out new ways to being church...we've thought about what a 'new normal' might look like...we've seen how many of our social structures—specifically how we care for our very old and our very young—need to be overhauled. We kept going even when it felt like we couldn't.
- 2) We went outside:** maybe not all of us, but for me personally I spent much more time outside in 2020 than I have in years and it was good for my mental, spiritual and physical health. We even had some worship services and Sunday School outside which was fun. I still fondly remember those first few gatherings we had outdoors in late Spring and how excited we were to see each other in person.
- 3) We started hard work:** events around the world, particularly in the US, but also in Canada and Manitoba, have invited us to have difficult conversations about personal, institutional and cultural racism, white privilege and how we can bring about a more just and equitable society.
- 4) We showed up for ourselves:** a number of families in our communities spoke of how the pandemic, although hardly relaxing in multiple aspects, 'cleared the calendar' and meant more time to spend as a family, try new hobbies, read lots of books and watch lots of shows. "We started to have meaningful discussions about the cult of productivity and measuring one's self worth by how much one produces..."
- 5) We took care of each other:** we checked in on each other, we delivered groceries to each other, we shared our baking experiments, we shared our shaggy, scruffy faces on Zoom and Google-meet. "Every time we sacrificed precious time with family and friends in the name of greater-good public health, we took care of each other...Every time we put on a mask, washed our hands, kept our distance and stayed home, we took care of each other."

I know we are all looking forward to coming back to the Church building and seeing each other again, as soon as it is possible for all of us to do so. We miss each other's smiles – we miss each other's hugs – we miss each other's voices – we miss each other's encouragement and exhortation. The apostle Paul often wrote in his letters to different Churches how much he always looked forward to seeing his fellow believers to encourage them and strengthen their mutual faith:

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you... without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other..." (Romans 1:8-15)

My friends, may we always continue to grow deeper in our love for one another, whether we are present in the body or not. May we always look forward to our fellowship, because we are always united in one Spirit.

"I have much more to say to you, but I don't want to do it with paper and ink. For I hope to visit you soon and talk with you face to face. Then our joy will be complete." (2 John 1:12)

Rev. James deBeer

Meridian Pastoral Charge Chairperson Annual Report - 2020

Well it has been a long year highlighted by an unprecedented 21st century pandemic the likes of which have not been seen since the Spanish Flu of 1918. I think that I echo the thoughts of many of the congregants that hope - with all of the vaccines coming to the health system - we as a society can put the pandemic behind us sometime in 2021.

That being said, it is felt that the Meridian Pastoral Charge has managed to move the yardsticks ahead in several areas. A large thank you goes out to the committee that put together the governance documentation for the Meridian Pastoral Charge. This was no small undertaking. Also hand in hand with the governance document was the finalization of the covenants for not only the Meridian Pastoral Charge but also the covenants for the individual congregations. A big 'Thank you' to everyone involved in pulling these documents and declarations together.

With the pandemic running rampant in parts of Canada and throughout the world, it is remarkable that our congregants - and for that matter the congregants of other faiths throughout the world - have pulled together to weather the storm. This is a testament to our deep-rooted belief and hope for a brighter future. I am a strong believer that the congregations will be stronger than ever once we move into 2021 and beyond.

I have reserved my last statement for our Minister for the Meridian Pastoral Charge. Without his strong leadership in guiding us through these tough and what seemed liked unforgiving times, I think we as a Pastoral Charge could have been left 'wanting'. Without hesitation he has bore the brunt of the pandemic solitude by conveying to our households through in-person services, on-line services and outdoor activities to bring us the word of god every Sunday. Without his strong guidance and perseverance, I think that our faith would have been shaken to the core. Thank you Reverend James deBeer.

I sincerely hope that 2021 brings renewed hope for everyone.

Sincerely

MC Kirkpatrick
Chairperson Meridian Pastoral Charge

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MPC Worship Report

Meridian Annual Worship Committee meeting was held in Sanford September 1, 2020 at Sanford United Church. All members were present, with Michele Ammeter chairing.

After the annual meeting in February 2020, Colleen Norton was the chair of the Worship Committee. Sadly, she stepped down from the committee during the summer and passed away Dec 27th. Colleen was active on many committees over the years and we will miss her.

Generally most in person special dates in 2020 were cancelled. Services were held virtually during the COVID 19 pandemic. 2020 scheduled dates were:

- 1) Scripture readings for the 2020 church year were from Year A until Advent 2020.
- 2) Communion dates were to be: January 5 (Epiphany), March 1 (1st Sunday in Lent), April 12 (Easter), May 31 (Pentecost), October 4 (WWC), November 29 (Advent 1),
- 3) Inter-church Advent Service event was scheduled for November 29.
- 4) MPC Blue Christmas Service was be on Monday December 21.
- 5) Christmas Eve Services was a joint service on YouTube for all 3 congregations.

This year there were significant changes to the services as we all adapted to the pandemic. Things changed continually as the Public Health Orders during the pandemic changed. Rev James quickly adapted to the needs of Meridian Pastoral charge and had a service posted by March 17th on You Tube, just days after the pandemic was declared and the first case was announced in Manitoba. It was a praiseworthy job of ensuring that we had a service available online when we were unable to meet in person. A Children's Time post was also available shortly thereafter. This fall Rev James ensured there was both a virtual service and that we were able to get a printed version of the service to our congregation members unable to take part online.

We do not know when we will be able to meet in person again but have developed a set of guidelines for each congregation to use when this is possible. They were implemented in September, but there were very few services at that time and the guidelines may need to be reviewed prior to use again, and will be dependent on Public Health Orders in particular.

Respectfully Submitted by;
Michele Ammeter

Ministry and Personal Annual Report 2020

The Meridian Pastoral Charge Ministry and Personal committee have not had an in person meeting since November 5, 2019. Michele Ammeter was chairperson in 2018-2020, at my request she stayed on as chair until May 31, 2020 and I took over on June 1, 2020.

The Meridian Pastoral Charge (MPC) board decided that we would try using lay leaders only, in order to reduce the dependency on and expense of pulpit supply. A draft Meridian Worship Leadership schedule with no pulpit supply, lay leaders only was created. Worship services started on September 13, in all three charges and the lay leadership schedule was used, but only for several weeks before Manitoba went into pandemic lockdown and in person church services were cancelled. Service times for 2020-2021 were Sanford 9:30 am, Avonlea 11:00 am and Starbuck 11:30 am, except for the 2nd Sunday of the month when Starbuck had a joint service at 10:00 am with the Lutheran congregation.

Rev. James has done an excellent job of transitioning to online services. There has been meaningful online worship services and Sunday School from the beginning of the pandemic lock down in March right through to year end.

The MPC participated in the online Advent Interfaith service. There was a joint MPC/Lutheran Blue Christmas online service and a wonderful MPC Christmas Eve Service with participation from many members from all congregations. Thank you, Rev. James, for making these extra online services happen.

Rev. James had been using his personal laptop computer to put together the online services. The functionality required for putting together online services was more than his computer could handle. In December Rev. James asking the M & P committee to approach the MPC board about buying a more robust computer. A motion was made and passed to authorize Rev. James to purchase a new laptop computer for his use. This computer will belong to the MPC.

A huge thank you to Rev. James for providing meaningful worship in person and online through this most unusual year.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Ringash

Prairie to Pine Annual Report 2020

Communication with Prairie to Pine Council was through the weekly Prairie to Pine newsletters and electronic meetings using Zoom.

I attended a Special Regional meeting (via Zoom) in spring updating Communities of Faith (C.O.F) regarding some of the challenges for this year and how they may be handled. Also mentioned was the availability of monetary assistance from the government.

Meridian Pastoral Charge received a call from Shirley McClaren – Outreach- to see how we were doing. I reported:

- churches had some outside services in June
- we had 1 virtual meeting and 1 social distancing meeting at Sanford United Church
- we were working on our Governance
- all covenants had been submitted

In September, Prairie to Pine Regional Council acknowledged that our Covenants had been reviewed and changes must be made by mid September so the Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive could accept/pass them. The covenants would then be passed formally at the October 7th Regional Council Zoom meeting. At this meeting Prairie to Pine's covenant was presented to the C.O.F. and passed.

The Prairie to Pine Annual Regional Council meeting for 2020 which was suppose to held in Steinbach, Manitoba but because of Covid 19 it was held electronically via Zoom on September 30 and October 7. At this meeting our Covenants and others were accepted/passed. Changes to Remit 1 were passed to make it more inclusive of genders.

November 26th, 2020 the Sub-Executive of General Council Prairie to Pine noted to temporarily suspend the requirement in Section B.5.1 of the Manual for congregations or pastoral charges to hold an annual meeting and temporarily amend the responsibility of the congregations or pastoral charges to fulfill this responsibility where necessary and where permitted by the regional council; with each of the foregoing to be in effect until June 30, 2021.

The Prairie to Pine Regional Council has been keeping C.O.F aware of protocols and timelines for reopening via the weekly newsletters.

Submitted by
Diane Trudeau
Prairie to Pine Representative

CHURCH REPORTS

AVONLEA CHURCH CHAIR 2020

On behalf of the board I would like to extend greetings and best wishes in these challenging times and present my report for the year 2020. The past year was difficult for the church community due to Covid 19. Avonlea church had closed in person services March 7th to help prevent the spread of the disease. We had hopes at that time, the closure would last a month and then we'd be able to meet again after that. As we all know now it wasn't that simple. Reverend James organized on line virtual services for all three churches of the Meridian, as well as children's time on line. And, he had organized an outdoor gathering in June when restrictions were eased, which was a much needed relief to three months of isolation. We started in person services again August 9th practising social distancing, and other social protocols. In September the board had a meeting and decided to continue with in person services. We established protocols such as; people were to wear masks inside the church, to not exceed 25% of capacity, use hand sanitizer, social distance, post pone Sunday school, eliminate after service snacks and coffee, and greatly reduce singing. November the 8th the board decided to close the church indefinitely, due to the code red implemented by Manitoba Health.

The board had three regular meetings this year (two in person and one by conference call) and many discussions by email. Meetings were well attended. This year Judy Manness, Brad Aran, and Norman Manness are at the end of their terms and we thank them for their service. I am hopeful they will allow their names to stand for another term. Linda Manson had indicated this would be her last year as treasurer, but lately stated she would continue one more year due to the Covid 19 commotion. There's always room for more on the board so feel free to volunteer. We would encourage young people to become involved, even if you would like to attend a meeting or two just to see what it's all about. Just mention it to Ron or Cliff and we'll make it happen.

The United Church of Canada over the last three years has introduced new procedures, and a restructure of governance. We are no longer a member of the presbytery. Presbyteries have been replaced by regional councils and our regional council is called Prairie to Pines. The Prairie to Pines region runs approximately from Thunder Bay to Brandon. I had mentioned this in last year's report and I'm repeating it to remind you of that. Our (Avonlea) covenant or agreement with P to P has been presented to the region and has been approved. The Meridian pastoral charge had to review and rewrite its governance manual and that too has been forwarded to P to P and has been approved. It now needs to be ratified by the membership at our Meridian annual meeting. My thanks to those on the Meridian board involved in creating this document especially Michelle Ammeter, Jamie Scharf, and Malcolm Kirkpatrick. From our governance discussions we have discovered that we need to update our list of trustees for Avonlea. I have spoken to Shelley Robson, Stuart Manness, and Don Johnson about serving in that capacity. They have agreed to let their names stand. We will need to have a vote of support at our annual meeting to ratify this group.

Our annual meeting at Avonlea will be held virtually this year to avoid spread of Covid and to comply with government restrictions. We have it slated for January 19th 7:30 PM (Tuesday evening). Cliff will be sending out the meeting details.

I would like to thank Reverend James debeer for coming up with methods to continue fellowship at the churches under the challenging health restrictions. For example, he performed a baptism for Bennett Johnson and conducted the ceremony in the church with only the parents and Bennett in attendance. And as I said before he performed many church services including Christmas Eve on YouTube.

Thanks to everyone that has supported the church so faithfully. Without the volunteer and financial commitment we wouldn't last too long. On behalf of the board I would like to wish everyone

the very best in 2021. There will be some difficult days ahead, but if we hang in there, support each other, and be patient I'm sure we will be okay. *Ron Manness*

SANFORD UNITED CHURCH CHAIR for 2020

Chair – Jamie Scharf / Secretary - Tammy Klippenstein / Treasurer-Norm Dyck

Minister - Rev. James deBeer

Member at Large - Nancy Langlois

Sub Committees

Worship- Barb Kirk, Ken Boyd, Nancy Langlois, Tammy Klippenstein

Sunday School Teachers: Onnolee Scharf, Nancy Langlois

Property & Maintenance: Todd Ringash, Norm Dyck, Marc Nolette, Blair Johnson

Project Comm – Pat Schnell, Nancy D., Nancy L, Tammy K, Kelly Epler

Rentals -- Jamie Scharf

Cards – Nancy Langlois

M&P Representative - Julie Ringash

Outreach Committee- Barb Batulla, Barb Kirk, Onnolee Scharf and Julie Ringash

Board meetings were held on Jan. 19 (Annual Meeting), April 23, and July 23.

2020 has been the most unusual year for Sanford United that I can remember. In fact, I'd be surprised if anyone could say there was ever another year in history with such uncertainty and change. The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges and some opportunities like nothing ever before. And this came at a time when Sanford United and the Meridian Pastoral Charge was just learning how to operate in the new United Church governance structure. Safe to say, there has been very little "doing it the normal way".

In person worship stopped in March due to public health orders but thanks to our very capable and dedicated minister we quickly transitioned to online worship without missing a Sunday! Our services continued online all through the summer. Giving us our first opportunity, worship during the summer months! Thankfully, the COVID-19 situation had improved enough for us to resume in person worship on Sept. 13th. This was not normal worship but rather modified to meet public health orders. None the less, it was very satisfying to be together in person once again. Unfortunately, that didn't last long as public health order changed again at the end of October making it necessary to switch back to online worship only. This also meant we were not able to host the annual Remembrance Day service that is always so meaningful at Sanford United. As the year of online services progressed, the method has been refined and it's interesting to watch the progression as all services are still currently available on YouTube. The "climax" of the year's online service was the Christmas eve service where the participation from so many members from the entire pastoral charge was very rewarding to watch!

Some other highlights from 2020 are:

- The formation of an outreach committee who managed not only organize us better to do more of God's work in this world (locally and abroad) but also increase the awareness of our church in the community. In fact, we decided to post our own "Christmas in NOT cancelled" mailing to

the entire Sanford community in December just in time for the “Glow of Love” drive-by event which replaced an in-person Blue Christmas service.

- The installation of a new front door to our building.

Respectfully submitted, *Jamie Scharf*

STARBUCK UNITED CHURCH CHAIR for 2020

2020 has been a challenging year, not only for us but for people all across the world. Unprecedented has been an over used word perhaps but certainly sums it up. The tragic losses suffered are hard to grasp and it has been very difficult to deal with. People have lost family members, income and, in many cases, their way of life. We have all been tasked with staying apart and we have had to cope with the loss of in person fellowship and worship as well as the rest of our social lives. This has been hard on our small congregation. We have been unable to meet since March. However there has been some light in the darkness. We are particularly fortunate to have the services of Rev. James who has risen to the challenge in so many ways. The on line services (and particularly Christmas Eve) have been very special and have been much appreciated. Our thanks to him! Thanks also to Diane and Michelle for keeping bulletins and reflections circulated.

Our congregation has been hit hard by tragedy and we deeply mourn the loss of Sonya and now Colleen. Colleen was a very giving person who's service to the church was outstanding. We are forever grateful for her contribution as active council member and chorister. Both of these wonderful people went far too soon and will be greatly missed.

Now we must look forward with hope to the future. The arrival of vaccines gives optimism that things will be changing for the better in the foreseeable future and we are eager for the time when we may meet safely in person and return to more “normal” life. What a joy it will be when we are able to enjoy the simple things we formerly took for granted like coffee together before the services!

Our Annual meeting will not be taking place in the usual way but we hope anyone with concerns will contact council members with them and they will be addressed.

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope that as it progresses we will see each other back in church where we belong.

Margaret

Annual Report of the Meridian Inter-Church Council (MIC) for 2020

The churches that make currently make up this council are: Avonlea, Starbuck, & Sanford United, Oakbluff Bible, La Salle Community Fellowship, Springstein Mennonite, St Hyacinthe RC Parish, Trinity Lutheran (Starbuck) and St Paul's Lutheran (Brunkild), Mary, Mother of the Church (RC), Winnipeg. The annual fee was raised in 2020 to \$100 to cover the cost to support the Baccalaureate service awards. The United Church payment alternates between the three parishes: Avonlea for 2020; Starbuck in 2021 and Sanford in 2022. *MIC bank balance as of Dec 31, 2020 is \$1565.56.*

The current committee, with 1-3 representatives from each church group, meets the second Tuesday of each month at 10 am, approx. 9 times/year, on a rotational schedule – with meetings in churches or member homes, September to June. MIC Meeting minutes are shared with Jamie Scharf from Sanford United and Melody Mosset from Starbuck United. At each meeting we intimately share and support what is happening in each of our churches. As a committee we focus on Christian Unity regardless of differences that separate the churches.

Our Mission Statement: “Our mission as the Meridian Inter-church Council is to be the visible sign of unity of the body of Christ to our church communities of LaSalle, Sanford, Starbuck, Domain, Brunkild, Springstein, and Oak Bluff, through Scripture, prayer, worship, and service. We are a support to one another by sharing Christ's love as clergy and lay-people at all times and in all places. In Christ's name we share our peace and the comforting word of God's Grace with one another and our communities.” *We are looking at inviting other churches in the surrounding areas, including Winnipeg, to join the committee.*

One Baccalaureate Service award of \$500 was presented to Tamara Church of St Hyacinthe RC Parish.

The *Meridian Inter-church Family Baseball and BBQ* service was cancelled with hopes to organize in 2021.

The book we are currently reviewing is ‘Love Does’ by Bob Goff.

Shawnda Muir from Mary, Mother of the Church spoke to the group on marriage enrichment courses and divorce. Links available on the church website. Ernie Weins spoke to the group in November of another ministry of sharing the loving, non-violent, Jesus.

The Advent service, adapted from Rick Warren's “The Purpose of Christmas”, hosted by La Salle Fellowship, was virtual due to Covid. Aiden Penner was hired to put the service together and online on Sunday Dec 1 at 7pm. There was participation from all churches and 340 households have viewed the service. No collection was made but supporting youth in need was encouraged. Positive feedback has been received.

Rev James and myself are the United Church representation on the Meridian Inter-church Committee.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Manness on Jan 2, 2021, MIC Treasurer
Email: judy.manness@aiecommunications.com

MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

Meridian Financial Statement for the year ending December 31, 2020

RECEIPTS	AMOUNTS	NOTES
INTEREST	\$2096.66	As projected
AVONLEA	\$29250.00	As projected
STARBUCK	\$20400.00	As projected
SANFORD	\$29250.00	As projected
AVONLEA M&S/WD	\$3000.00	As projected
STARBUCK M&S/WD	\$2000.00	As projected
SANFORD M&S/WD	\$1495.00	Commitment was \$1000
CERB- GOVERNMENT FUNDS	\$6098.70	Covid-19 relief. About \$800 has to be repaid due to duplication.
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$93590.36	
DISBURSEMENTS		
PAYROLL AND BENEFITS JAMES	\$77279.90	
PAYROLL PULPIT SUPPLY	\$1006.80	Reduction \$6.337.20
ACCOUNTING AND LEGAL	\$160.50	Reduction in accounting fees as treasurer doing the work
UCC ASSESSMENT	\$4184.00	
WORLD DEVELOPMENT	\$3000.00	
MISSION AND SERVICE	\$3495.00	Sanford had an additional \$495.
WORSHIP LEADERSHIP	\$755.10	
PULPIT SUPPLY EXPENSES	\$417.34	
MILEAGE EXPENSE - JAMES	\$2335.96	Lower due to COVID-19
TRAVEL EXPENSES OTHER	\$0.00	Lower due to COVID-18
BULLETINS	\$330.00	Lower due to COVID-17
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$292.03	
WEBSITE DOMAIN	\$136.50	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$435.15	
REGIONAL ,MEETINGS	\$0.00	Lower due to COVID-17
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$94028.28	

RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	-\$437.92	
TRANSFER FROM MANSE-TD	\$15000.00	
CHEQUING ACCOUNT RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	\$14562.08	
	TERM DEPOSIT	CHEQUING ACCOUNT
JANUARY 1, 2020 BALANCE	\$110000.00	\$14401.33
DEPOSITS (total receipts \$93590.36 and Manse TD \$15000 transfer)		\$108590.36
DISBURSEMENTS	\$15000.00	\$94028.28
DECEMBER 31, 2020 BALANCE	\$95000.00	\$28963.41
LESS O/S DEPOSITS		\$3495.00
PLUS O/S CHEQUES		\$4229.66
RECONCILED BANK ACCOUNT	\$95000.00	\$29698.07
BALANCE PER BANK STATEMENT	\$95000.00	\$29698.07
DISCREPANCY	\$0.00	\$0.00

Please note that there were 3 different individuals working on the financials in 2020, so some of the disbursement categories could have been combined, such as payroll other and worship leadership.

Submitted by Georges Cormier, Treasurer January 15, 2021 (unaudited)

MERIDIAN PASTORAL CHARGE BUDGET FOR 2021

Meridian Projected Receipts and Disbursements for the year ending December 31, 2021

RECEIPTS	PROJECTED	NOTES
INTEREST	\$2000.00	Same as previous year
AVONLEA	\$29400.00	Same as previous year
STARBUCK	\$20400.00	Same as previous year
SANFORD	\$29400.00	Same as previous year
AVONLEA M&S/WD	\$3000.00	Same as previous year
STARBUCK M&S/WD	\$2000.00	Same as previous year
SANFORD M&S/WD	\$1000.00	Same as previous year
CERB- GOVERNMENT FUNDS	\$0.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$87200.00	
DISBURSEMENTS		
PAYROLL AND BENEFITS JAMES	\$79500.00	As per UCC
PAYROLL PULPIT SUPPLY	\$1000.00	1 pulpit supply for each church
ACCOUNTING AND LEGAL	\$0.00	
UCC ASSESSMENT	\$4522.00	
WORLD DEVELOPMENT	\$3000.00	Same as previous year
MISSION AND SERVICE	\$3000.00	Same as previous year
REPAYMENT OF CERB	\$870.00	
PULPIT SUPPLY EXPENSES	\$450.00	
MILEAGE EXPENSE - JAMES	\$6000.00	\$500/month at .41/km
TRAVEL EXPENSES OTHER	\$1200.00	
BULLETINS	\$700.00	
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$550.00	
WEBSITE DOMAIN	\$136.50	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$500.00	
REGIONAL ,MEETINGS	\$800.00	
Capital-Computer	\$3000.00	

TRANSFER FROM MANSE-TD	\$0.00	
CHEQUING ACCOUNT RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	-\$15028.50	Our checking account bank balance as at December 31,2020 was \$28,963. Therefor, there will not be a withdrawal this year from the Manse term deposit of \$95,000.