SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

Name of Pastoral Charge: Meridian Pastoral Charge

Phone number of Pastoral Charge: (204) 736-2978

Communities of Faith (congregations) in the Pastoral Charge:

Avonlea United, Sanford United, & Starbuck United

E-mail for Pastoral Charge minister@meridian-pastoral-charge.ca

Pastoral charge Mailing Address: Box 35, Sanford, MB R0G 2J0

Physical address of the church building(s)

Starbuck United Church:
43 River Avenue
Starbuck, MB ROG 2P0

Sanford United Church:
4 Main Street
Mailing Address: Box 35, Sanford, MB R0G 2J0

Avonlea United Church:
McDonald Road
Domain, MB R0G 0M0

Name of Ministry Personnel Rev. James deBeer

Contact person: Rev. James DeBeer **Email:** reverendjdebeer@gmail.com

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Multi-point pastoral charge - see further comments on page 2 of the explanatory notes.
It is important that people at each congregation contribute to the comments on the following questions, and that the comments are shared with others in the pastoral charge. Try to write one report for the pastoral charge; within that report there may be comments common across the board or specific to a particular site.

Send hard copy of Self-Assessment Report to: Prairie to Pine Regional Council. Committee on Community of Faith Support. 60 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, MB R3G 1K7.

1. Vision & Mission

Mission Statement

Through its faith in God and Jesus Christ is committed to supporting its member churches:

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

Starbuck United:

Every year we try to live up to our Mission Statement. We have weekly services- two weeks of each month we are led by our minister, Rev. James de Beer, one week we share a joint service with Starbuck Trinity Luther Church and lastly, one weekly service is a lay-led service. We are not active during the summer months.

Our goal in regards to Outreach is to support local initiatives Starbuck Christmas Cheer board, attending a yearly meal at our local recreation centre and our local restaurant. We are a very small congregation, but we do still cater to some funerals, baptisms and weddings if requested. We offer a Shrove Tuesday supper and a Horticultural evening. Proceeds are designated to areas of need.

As Starbuck United Church burnt down in 2014 we use the insurance money to foster needs where we deem necessary- locally or within the province.

Our congregation is very small and there are no children. The congregation form most of executive and committees. Members are getting worn out and we don't feel new directions are feasible in regards to our mission statement.

Avonlea United:

We have regular worship with our minister and also have a virtual service on YouTube for Sunday's when the minister is not present in person and for those who prefer to worship from home.

We celebrate the Church year with symbols, candles and readings.

We are involved in our local communities and are members of 'Meridian Interchurch Council' with whom we participate in events and are aware of activities in neighbouring denominations.

We nurture people of all ages and have intergenerational activities when possible.

We have a good Mission Statement which allows us to work together in church or in community to achieve our goals and adapt when necessary.

Sanford United:

Sanford United Church worships regularly on Sunday from Sept to June. We are welcoming and inclusive for all who want to join us in worship. Live streaming our services so those unable to attend in person can still participate. We also host many community events and make our building available for other community organizations to offer programming. We have both project and outreach committees with strong connections to not only the community of Sanford but also support wider reach of organizations like Harvest Manitoba

2. Joys & Sorrows

Starbuck United:

One of greatest joys was our purchase of a columbarium which was established at our local cemetery and is open to those who are interested in purchasing space.

Another joy is our choir joining the choir of Trinity Lutheran Church. We put on a Canata every year as well sing at special times during the church year and also for funerals. There is a choir director from each church.

We have discussed the future and where will the money go after we disband. There is an interest to set up a Foundation so our money can continue to grow and support people who need assistance.

Our biggest sadness is the declining congregation and our loss of our church building. Our services are held at Starbuck Trinity Lutheran Church. Without their generous offer to use their building we would probably would not have continued as long as we have. We are concerned as to how long we can continue – its a yearly evaluation.

Avonlea United:

We are fortunate to be ministered to by an ordained minister.

Our joys include intergenerational activities such as pizza nights, Sunday School wind-up, pancake lunch.

We have interchurch events such as a baseball tournament and BBQ and an interchurch Advent service with all our neighbouring churches.

'Of all ages' gives us a sense of life and future to our church.

Our sorrows include the fall-out from COVID—young families and others have not returned. Hard feelings over COVID and immunization opinions created division and strained relations.

Sanford United:

Sanford United finds energy in the community events that we host. Meals , games nights, art programming for both adults and children, and so on. It gives us purpose and comfort to know the community supports us and wishes us present in Sanford.

Sanford United struggles with the fact that worship attendance is slowly declining despite the community always supporting us when we host non-worship events. Our small group of dedicated members are uncertain how much longer they can sustain our current programming level without new volunteers to help out.

3. Hopes & Fears

Starbuck United:

Our hopes are that we can continue and our fear is that we can't.

Avonlea United:

Our hope is to reconnect with and bring back members and other regular attendees who have become occasional and to connect with special service attendees. We hope to encourage new families to join us. We believe our financial base can continue to support our ministry.

Our fears are burn-out and frustration of those in leadership. We fear that YouTube watching at home will become more important that in-person worship.

Sanford United:

Sanford United is hopeful that we can find a few more volunteers to help us maintain and perhaps even grow our non-worship related programming. And rather than struggling to change worship in ways that may increase congregation size, we are content to keep our worship familiar to those who've been regular attenders for many years.

Sanford United is concerned that our active membership is so low that if it decreases even by one or two more that we won't be able to provide any more non-worship related programming. We are hopeful that new members will join our congregation and that we can find more volunteers.

4. Finances

Starbuck United:

Financially we are fine and we use our monies to help wherever needed.

Avonlea United:

There are more givers using direct deposit or semi-annual lump sum donations. We may need to rely on our savings.

We are aiming to increase communication with our membership and with the communities (for example the church newsletter and the LaSalle newsletter)

More specific appeals may be needed to fund specific projects. For example, there was a generous response to an appeal to help with our 2023 foundation repairs.

We may need to actively pursue the need to use our church building in other ways (ie rental income)

As the United Church denominational assessment increases, services, resources and support decrease. The result is stressful challenges for the hours and finances of volunteers who are committed to both church and community.

Sanford United:

Sanford United has been managing to just get by. There have been years when we've needed rely more heavily of support from outside our membership. However, the non-membership financial support has always been there when we've needed in the past and with the demographics of the community we are confident that in the next 3 years that will continue.

Sanford United has recently held very successful fundraisers in our community and plan to do more as required.

The denominational assessment is somewhere in the middle in terms of percentage of Sanford United's budget. Most of our non-mandatory expenses are lower than it. Which means if it increases, we're likely to need to cut more of our non-mandatory expenses which will hurt our ability to do our work in the local community.

5. Organization

Starbuck United:

The organizational structure is getting tiresome in our church and the Meridian Pastoral Charge (MPC). The congregation members are making their commitment to both. The same people volunteer and are getting weary.

As far as having jobs description of each council position we follow the outline in the United Church of Canada manual (2024). We have updated our Governance Document.

Avonlea United:

Our organization is good and effective. We have updated our Governance Document.

Sanford United:

MPC structure is per the United Church manual. It works reasonably well. If possible, it would be ideal if we could somehow reduce it's size to better reflect the reduced number of active members on our charge.

There are no up to date written job descriptions on MPC. It's been the same core group of members in leadership on this charge for many years.

6. Civic and Church Requirements

Starbuck United:

	Familiarity with this gov't or UC policy. **1, 2, 3 or 4**	How do you manage this matter? What additional support might you need?
Privacy policies	2	Most of the board members are familiar with the copyright and privacy policies.
Copyright policies - material copied in print, including pictures, e.g., in church bulletins	2	Most of the board members are familiar with the copyright and privacy policies.
Copyright policies – material copied in audio or video recordings, e.g., for use on T.V or YouTube	2	Most of the board members are familiar with the copyright and privacy policies.
Employment & labour standards	2	

CRA rules for employers	2	Revenue Agency rules for employers and organization a well known by the treasurer for MPC.
CRA rules for charitable organizations	2	Revenue Agency rules for employers and organization a well known by the treasurer for MPC.
United Church Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, & Violence Prevention and Response Policy	2	

7. Does the governing body have a:

		If not please explain why not
Chairperson elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?		yes
Secretary elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?		yes
Treasurer who is member of the governing body?		yes
Pastoral Charge Ministry & Personnel Committee?		yes
Lay person(s) elected as member(s) of the Regional Council?		yes
At least three people named as Trustees who can act if / when required?		yes

8. Other Administrative Responsibilities

		Notes or explanations of exceptional issues
Does the governing body meet at least 4 times per year?		yes
Is the annual charitable return filed regularly with CRA?		yes
Is the annual United Church statistical report normally filed by the deadline?		yes
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of Minutes of the governing body.		Yearly minutes and reports are put into report folders and stored safely in a filing cabinet. Yearly reports are distributed to

		churches within the MPC and an extra copy in the MPC secretaries' binder.
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of financial records for seven (7) years.		Digital copies are held by the secretary (who position does not change)
Are Burial, Baptism & Marriage Record books completed as required, including names, signatures, dates, license numbers, etc. Describe how and where they are stored.		Burial, Baptism and Marriage Record are in the church filing cabinet.
Is the Historic Roll of Members updated annually?		Historic Roll of Members updated by Trustees.

Avonlea United:

	Familiarity with this gov't or UC policy. **1, 2, 3 or 4**	How do you manage this matter? What additional support might you need?
Privacy policies	2	We refer to the online Manual as needed
Copyright policies - material copied in print, including pictures, e.g., in church bulletins	2/3	We rely on the knowledge of our minister or choose non-copyrighted material
Copyright policies – material copied in audio or video recordings, e.g., for use on T.V or YouTube	2/3	We rely on the knowledge of our minister or choose non-copyrighted material We use material from the Gathering Magazine
Employment & labour standards	2	We rely on the knowledge of our minister and Meridian M&P committee.
CRA rules for employers	2	Our treasurer is very knowledgable
CRA rules for charitable organizations	2	Our treasurer is very knowledgable

United Church Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, & Violence Prevention and Response Policy	2	We rely on the knowledge of our minister and others who have experience in the workplace.

7. Does the governing body have a:

	YES	If not please explain why not
Chairperson elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?		yes
Secretary elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?		yes
Treasurer who is member of the governing body?		yes
Pastoral Charge Ministry & Personnel Committee?		yes
Lay person(s) elected as member(s) of the Regional Council?		yes
At least three people named as Trustees who can act if / when required?		yes

8. Other Administrative Responsibilities

	YES	Notes or explanations of exceptional issues
Does the governing body meet at least 4 times per year?		yes
Is the annual charitable return filed regularly with CRA?		yes
Is the annual United Church statistical report normally filed by the deadline?		yes
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of Minutes of the governing body.		Fireproof box, safety deposit box, archives
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of financial records for seven (7) years.		Fireproof box, safety deposit box,
Are Burial, Baptism & Marriage Record books completed as required, including		Fireproof box,

names, signatures, dates, license numbers, etc. Describe how and where they are stored.		
Is the Historic Roll of Members updated annually?		Last done in 2023

Sanford United:

	Familiarity with this gov't or UC policy. **1, 2, 3 or 4**	How do you manage this matter? What additional support might you need?
Privacy policies	**2**	
Copyright policies - material copied in print, including pictures, e.g., in church bulletins	**3**	
Copyright policies – material copied in audio or video recordings, e.g., for use on T.V or YouTube	**3**	
Employment & labour standards	**2**	
CRA rules for employers	**2**	
CRA rules for charitable organizations	**2**	
United Church Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, & Violence Prevention and Response Policy	**3**	

7. Does the governing body have a:

	YES	If not please explain why not
Chairperson elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?	**Y**	
Secretary elected by the community of faith / pastoral charge?	**Y**	
Treasurer who is member of the governing body?	**Y**	
Pastoral Charge Ministry & Personnel Committee?	**Y**	
Lay person(s) elected as member(s) of the Regional Council?		
At least three people named as Trustees who can act if / when required?	**Y**	

8. Other Administrative Responsibilities

	YES	Notes or explanations of exceptional issues
Does the governing body meet at least 4 times per year?	**N**	**Sanford United has only one official board meeting per year and makes decisions between meetings by email.**
Is the annual charitable return filed regularly with CRA?	**Y**	
Is the annual United Church statistical report normally filed by the deadline?	**Y**	
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of Minutes of the governing body.	**N**	**Merdian Pastoral Charge has a Google workspace instance -- "Google for Nonprofits" where some of the minutes are stored digitally but not all of them are there.**
Describe how you safely store the print and/or digital copies of financial records for seven (7) years.		
Are Burial, Baptism & Marriage Record books completed as required, including names, signatures, dates, license numbers, etc. Describe how and where they are stored.	**Y**	**There is a notebook in the office of Sanford United we keep up to date with these records.**
Is the Historic Roll of Members updated annually?	**N**	**Roll of members is in the office at Sanford United and it is updated whenever membership changes but it is often more than a year between changes.**

Names of people involved in preparing this report**, the role they have** in the community of faith, and **contact information** (phone and / or email) for at least two of them.

Name	Role	Phone or email
Diane Trudeau	MPC Chairperson, MPC Regional Rep	d.trudeau8@gmail.com
Margaret Porter	Starbuck United Chairperson	maporter@mymts.net
Michele Ammeter	Starbuck United Co-Treasurer, M&P rep	m.ammeter@outlook.com
Jane Manness	Avonlea Chairperson	(204)736-4072
Cliff Harrison	Avonlea Treasurer	(204) 981-0718
Janice Harrison	Avonlea Worship Committee	(204) 736-2613
Jamie Scharf	Sanford United Board Chair	sanford@meridian-pastoral-charge.ca
Barb Kirk	Sanford Worship Committee	

Date the Report was reviewed & received by the local Governing Body March 12, 2024.
noted in the minutes of the Meridian Pastoral Charge AGM.

Comments of the Governing Body

These 'Self' Assessments are a lot of work. I hope our Pastoral Charge is not required or 'asked' to do this for a very long time.

Person responsible for mailing this Self-Assessment Report to the Regional Council

Diane Trudeau

Person responsible for emailing the report to the Regional Council to Cherry Abad (cabad@united-church.ca)

Diane Trudeau