

# A Proposal: Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project

Central United | Sackville United | Vision's United  
Trial Period: Eighteen months

## Collaborative Ministry Working Group

<b>Central United</b>	<b>Sackville United</b>	<b>Vision's United</b>
Dianna Doucet (506) 850-4938 dianna@dolphinvillage.com	Chrystal Schipper-Everill (902) 664-8578 chrystalse@gmail.com	Fay Cameron (506) 866-7524 fay0684@gmail.com
David Lewis (506) 863-5740 shiptoshore@nb.aibn.com	Luc Poirier (506) 540-1072 poirier.luc@gmail.com	Peter Lightfoot (506) 233-0657 lightfoo2@gmail.com
<b>Resourced By:</b> Sharon Ballantyne Lloyd Bruce Kendall Harrison Shawn Redden		

You are invited to prayerfully consider this proposal, and the motions on the final page that will be before each of the three Communities of Faith on Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup>.

You may direct questions by phone or email to members of the Collaborative Ministry Working Group by noon on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

Members of the Collaborative Ministry Working Group will gather on April 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to consider all of the questions received and develop responses to each as they are able.

Members of the Collaborative Ministry Working Group will by April 19<sup>th</sup>, respond individually to each who have asked a question, and share all questions and responses with each of the governing bodies of the three Communities of Faith, for them to distribute to members of their Community of Faith.

# Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Agreement

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## Introduction

This proposal is offered out of a deep commitment to the Communities of Faith that we are presently serving and the larger ministry that the three Communities of Faith share. We offer this proposal to begin a conversation toward the possibility of implementing a Collaborative Ministry for a trial period of 18 months. The overall goal is to share resources and strengthen and enhance all three communities of faith while allowing for autonomy and independence of each Community of Faith.

While several factors have led to this proposed collaboration, we are aware that some conversations have been filled with a sense of renewal, excitement, and anticipation and that there is a desire among the three Communities of Faith to work together to be who we are called to be as the church.

Each Community of Faith is unique with its own ideas, needs, and people. However, we believe that the three communities of faith share enough in common to enter into a Collaboration Agreement.

It is NOT the intention of this proposal that the three communities of faith will become a multi-point charge nor amalgamate, but remain three separate communities of faith, while sharing two full-time ministers, as well as programming and resources.

We imagine that during the trial period, each Community of Faith will review and revise their Community of Faith Profile. Position descriptions for the members of the Ministry Team are attached and will be reviewed every six months over the duration of the pilot project.

It is with a sense of hope that we present this proposal to representatives from each of the three Communities of Faith hoping that they share our vision in growing in faith by expanding our capacity together to be a vibrant expression of God's love within the communities.

## Establishment of a Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Commission (CMPPC)

This proposal seeks the appointment of a Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Commission (CMPPC) made up of two persons appointed from each of the governing bodies of each of

the Communities of Faith. It is recommended we have one representative from each of the Ministry and Personnel Committees and one representative from each of the Governing Bodies. Members should have a high level of understanding of what is in the best interest of their Community of Faith.

With the adoption of this Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Agreement by the three communities of faith, the CMPPC is formed. The CMPPC will function collaboratively, as a Commission for the sake of efficiency. The CMPPC will assume responsibility for specific tasks as identified within the agreement and make decisions on behalf of the three Communities of Faith on all matters falling within the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Agreement, working with the Ministry Team to support the Collaborative.

Again, the goal is to enable each Community of Faith to continue their individual identities and better serve the whole of the faith community through working and sharing together as a Collaborative: the whole being greater than the sum of its individual parts.

## Ministry Personnel

This proposal for a Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project assumes the equivalent of two full-time ministry personnel working collaboratively, as a team, to ensure that effective ministry is provided efficiently to three communities of faith.

This proposal further assumes that the equivalent of two full time positions would make up the “ministry team” and would remain in effect for the duration of the pilot period. All costs for Ministry Personnel (salaries, benefits, continuing education, travel, telephone etc.) would be split equally between the three communities of faith.

In the future, should the Collaborative move beyond the pilot project period, or new personnel are called or appointed, one of the three Communities of Faith could assume responsibility for all payroll administration and further reduce the shared costs.

Salary and benefits will be adjusted toward parity, and travel between the communities of faith would be compensated at the national rate.

## Sunday Gatherings: Liturgy and Preaching

Sunday Gatherings will utilize lay leadership and leverage technology to provide for an experience that is broadcast to all three sites. On each Sunday (except those Sundays on which one of the ministers is on vacation or study leave) each member of the ministry team will be present (in-person) in two of the sites offering Liturgy or Preaching leadership. There may be participants present at the third site so that each location takes part.

On the Sundays on which one of the ministry team is on vacation or study leave, the other team member(s) will offer leadership in both Liturgy and Preaching. This eliminates the need for Pulpit Supply to cover vacations and study leave.

On the Sunday of the Annual Celebration of Ministry Service (which requires the attendance of Ministry Personnel) the schedule shall be maintained and the cost for supply shall be absorbed into the collaborative budget.

Each Sunday there will be a lay host who will serve at each site to welcome the community and coordinate community announcements. At each site there will be a lay person who will take responsibility for technology: broadcasting the liturgy or reflection and receiving the broadcast.

At the appointed time the site providing liturgy would begin the broadcast utilizing Vimeo or Zoom or other technology as required. This will allow any of the three sites to receive the liturgy and offer the preaching according to the schedule as agreed upon.

The worship schedule will seek to provide for an equal number of instances in which each member of the ministry team is present in-person in a leadership role in each Community of Faith. This schedule will free other member(s) of the ministry team from having to prepare a reflection every Sunday thereby freeing up time and energy for other areas of ministry. (Such as Faith Formation, leadership development, supporting transitional needs). This will also free up volunteers, as there will be no need for 3 PowerPoint presentations or 3 readers etc.

In this model, musical leadership for the Sunday Gathering would be provided by the Community of Faith that is offering the Liturgy. To this end, there is a possibility for collaboration in respect to musical leadership. Music Leaders may be able to travel some Sundays, especially if one of the communities of faith is without music leadership. Or they can use time freed up from leadership on a particular Sunday when their Community of Faith is not offering liturgy/music to develop other musical opportunities within the Community of Faith or the collaborative ministry.

The CMPPC, after consulting with the three communities of faith will establish an agreed upon time for the Sunday Gathering. The ministry team in collaboration with the appropriate lay representatives from each Community of Faith will craft an order of service that will be utilized in each of the three Communities of Faith.

The CMPPC, after consulting with the three communities of faith and the ministry team, will prepare a worship schedule. This schedule ensures each Community of Faith leads the liturgy, offers the sermon, or receives the broadcast once a month.

The third Sunday of the month could be a “Creative Community Engagement” enabling each Community of Faith to host their own gathering, unique to their context, and explore

topics important to them in more depth or in a different style. The Community of Faith will have the option to work with a member of the ministry team if they so choose. These gatherings would be open to all three communities of faith for anyone who might find the specific topic of interest.

## Pastoral Care

The ministry team will be equally responsible for the provision of pastoral care among the three communities of faith and will develop a monthly on-call schedule for responding to pastoral emergencies and funerals. This schedule will not preclude one minister or the other from responding to situations in which there is a pre-existing pastoral relationship.

The ministry team will be equally responsible for supporting each of the communities of faith in developing lay pastoral care teams.

## Administration/Governance

Sackville United and Visions United have similar governance models (alternatives to former Council or Official Board models). The ministry team will both support and participate in Grounding Meetings of the Governing Body of each of the Communities of Faith. Central's governance model holds monthly Council meetings.

Each Community of Faith will develop with the Ministry Team a schedule for 'Minister's Office Hours' to ensure access to the minister at each location for congregants.

Each Community of Faith will maintain its own Office Administration Staff and Treasurer.

## Faith Formation/Exploration

The ministry team will facilitate and support Faith Formation in the three Communities of Faith. Where possible, Faith Formation opportunities will utilize technology to allow for participation from remote locations, for both individuals and groups of persons. We imagine the Ministers working with each Community of Faith to offer at least one Faith Formation Opportunity over the course of a year.

Each Community of Faith will where feasible and possible, maintain existing faith formation opportunities and open them to include persons from the other two Communities of Faith.

With each minister preaching fewer Sundays, this proposal assumes there will be more time from the ministry team to support and deepen faith formation opportunities. For example, the model of Café Worship and Supper Church developed by Visions, which includes elements of Faith Formation, can be used by the other two Communities of Faith

in their settings with the minister working with a lay team to adapt the content. The ministers can lead joint Faith Renewal or Confirmation sessions.

All three of the communities of faith have integrated special speakers into worship with faith formation opportunities in the past. Often these have been outreach or faith-in-action themed. These can be opened to the other Communities of Faith or planned as collaborative opportunities.

## Outreach

The ministry team will facilitate and support Outreach into the local community as discerned and articulated by each of the three communities of faith. Where possible and feasible, outreach efforts will be coordinated: Pride Week, Back to School, Food Bank, Elimination of Poverty, Climate Justice, etc.

Each Community of Faith will where feasible and possible, maintain existing outreach projects and open them to include persons from the other two Communities of Faith.

# Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project

## Team Ministry Position Description

Central | Sackville | Vision's United Churches

Trial Period: Eighteen months

## Ministry

Ministry is a vocation – a response to a call. Ministry is a response in service and as such, the tasks of ministry personnel are not always clearly defined but can be broken out into five general areas: Sunday Gathering, Faith Exploration/Development, Pastoral Care, Administration, and Service within the Larger Church, Community and World.

To the right of each area of ministry is affixed a percentage of energy/time that the team as a whole would devote to that area. This Position Description would be reviewed every six months by the Ministry Team and CMPPC.

Should the Ministry Team be compromised of 1 full-time and 2 part-time personnel these percentages would be adjusted to reflect the unique focus that each part of the team would bring to the whole.

## Team Ministry

This position description assumes a model of ministry that is fully team in nature: two or more persons, equally capable, with diverse gifts and skills working for the greater good of the Collaborative, in ways that respect and support the other. Such teaming takes intentionality and a deep commitment to the values of mutuality and shared accountability.

Such a model of Team Ministry is offered, not solely for the benefit of one community of faith or the other, but for the greater good of the Collaborative, with the result always being greater than the sum of its parts – this is the Spirit at work.

## Sunday Gathering 30%

Members of the Ministry Team will each be responsible for planning, coordinating, facilitating, and offering leadership at one of three Sunday Gatherings within the Collaborative each Sunday, except for those times when they are away on vacation or study leave. Members of the Ministry Team will utilize technology in creative ways to expand reach and engage persons as fully as possible.

Each member of the Ministry Team will participate in the preparation for and presiding at the sacraments of baptism and communion, and marriage and funeral rituals according to an agreed upon on-call schedule.

Members of the Ministry Team will offer leadership at local nursing and senior care homes as agreed upon in consultation with the Collaborative Ministry Team.

In collaboration with the Music Directors and the Worship Committees of each of the Communities of Faith, the Ministry Team will develop quarterly schedules for Sunday Gatherings with final approval for the schedule resting with the CMPPC.

Members of the Ministry Team will plan, coordinate, facilitate and offer leadership at weekly liturgies, reflections, and special seasonal gatherings: Advent, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter as negotiated with the CMPPC.

The Ministry Team will plan, facilitate, and participate in the leadership of Sunday Gatherings in ways that invite and support the involvement and participation of a wide cross-section of persons from each of the communities of faith.

## Faith Exploration/Development 20%

The Ministry Team, leveraging technology where possible, will provide and support regular opportunities for faith exploration/development among the Collaborative, including but not limited to weekly lectionary study gatherings, seasonal or topical study groups, and intergenerational learning events.

The Ministry Team will support and promote the provision of faith exploration/development opportunities for children and youth based on the needs and availability of resources within each Community of Faith.

## Pastoral Care 35%

The Ministry Team will provide spiritual guidance and emotional support for individuals and groups within the Collaborative. Each member of the Ministry Team will make themselves available for office and home visits and make visits to shut-in and institutionalized residents as requested by families or others in the congregation.

The Ministry Team will carry out regular hospital visits at the Moncton City, George Dumont, Albert House (Hospice SENB), and Sackville Memorial Hospitals as required.

The Ministry Team will work with and support the development of Pastoral Care Teams in each of the Communities of Faith within the Collaborative, as a means to expand the ministry of pastoral connection and visitation.



Members of the Ministry Team will establish an on-call schedule for responding to pastoral emergencies and will provide pastoral counselling within the scope of their practice and make referrals as necessary.

## Administration/Governance 5%

The members of the Ministry Team will attend to the necessary governance and administrative tasks of the Communities of Faith within the Collaborative, as mandated by the Manual, participating in meetings of committees of which they are an ex-officio member and are required or invited.

Where possible, technology will be utilized to minimize travel, achieve administrative efficiencies, and make connections between the members of the Collaborative.

## Service within Larger Church & World 10%

Members of the Ministry Team will be a visible presence in the community, participating in various community projects and events. Members of the Ministry Team will participate in Regional and National Committees of the United Church of Canada as requested.

## Motions for Congregational Meetings on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2024

Whereas the Collaborative Ministry Working Group, made up of representatives from Central, Sackville, and Vision's United Churches have worked closely with incumbent Ministry Personnel and Regional Staff in the development of this Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project; and

Whereas the Pastoral Relations Committee of Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council is aware of and supportive of this Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project;

**Therefore, be it resolved:**

that the congregation of \_\_\_\_\_ agree to enter into the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Agreement with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_; and appoint \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as its representatives to the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Commission<sup>1</sup>.

that the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Commission be tasked with working with the Regional Council Pastoral Relations Committee and Regional Staff to secure the appointment of suitable second full-time (or equivalent) ministry personnel to complete staffing of the Pilot Project.

that the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project begin upon the appointment of the second full-time (or equivalent) ministry personnel.

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<sup>1</sup> It would be appropriate for each governing body to arrive at the congregational meeting with potential candidates for these two representatives. If necessary, the congregation may split the motion in two, nominate persons to the role of representatives to the Collaborative Ministry Pilot Project Commission, and then have an election before passing the second part of the motion.