

Proposal Concerning Faithful Ministry Personnel

Preamble:

Huron Shores United Church is responding to the closed settlement of 2018 between Reverend Gretta Vosper and Toronto Conference and its impact on the United Church of Canada.

We are concerned that this action has cast a shadow, and raised questions for our wider church, especially relating to the faith of actively serving Ministry Personnel.

Our Council heard the concerns of some members of our congregation and our community. These were referred to a working group to create this proposal, supported by our congregation, community and Council.

This proposal includes our requested course of action by the United Church of Canada in a deliberate and transparent manner.

What is this issue?

- a. A lack of transparency in the settlement process raises questions which extend beyond one individual.
- b. The settlement may have resolved one situation, but leaves the wider question unaddressed: Uncertainty now as to whether Ministry Personnel in the United Church of Canada have a living faith in God.

2. Why is this issue important?

- a. The settlement has raised the question that *some* ministry personnel have left their faith, but are not being open about it, leading to a lack of confidence in public proclamation and testimony.
- b. The wide publicity around the settlement has been framed as an unstated position of the United Church of Canada, which appears to permit "atheist clergy."
- c. Partner churches within the World Council of Churches, and other ecumenical bodies need assurance that the United Church of Canada has faith in God, honours scripture, and properly administers the sacraments.

3. How might Council respond to this issue?

- a. HSUC Council accept the following proposal and transmit it to WOW Regional Council with concurrence:

HSUC Council proposes that General Council clarify expectations regarding the faith of Ministry Personnel, and develop procedures to provide a mechanism to review the faith of Ministry Personnel.

- b. Inform the HSUC congregation of this action, in a deliberate and transparent manner.

4. For the Body transmitting the proposal.

- a. We request that Regional Council transmit this proposal to General Council Executive with concurrence.
- b. We request that Regional Council share this proposal with other Regional Councils

Note: Our minister, The Rev. Dr. Kate Crawford, assisted us in preparing this material; however, she did not initiate, direct or influence our conversations. She resourced us by explaining and clarifying process.