

## Re unplanned cancellation of church services

### RUPC

#### Why might it happen?

In case of inclement weather or infrastructure problems (loss of hydro, furnace issues, frozen pipes, etc).

We need to take into account driving conditions for members (many seniors). Icy roads, freezing rain, blowing with drifting snow with reduced visibility etc. can make travel hazardous. Radar and other weather forecasts should be consulted when making decisions.

#### What's the process?

Recognition of a problem may come from various individuals within a congregation. Session members should be consulted to see what conditions are like in different areas (**country locations** vs. in town).

While each church may have a slightly different process for who should be involved in determining when to cancel a service, the Clerk of Session must be involved in the decision and be responsible for co-ordinating contact of the ministry personnel and the congregation. Any such decision should be the result of discussion by a small number of congregation members (Session and possibly Stewards) as well as the Minister or pulpit supply leading the service that Sunday.

If the cancellation is due to weather, paired churches should communicate and once a decision is made to cancel, it might be that both services would be canceled. This information should be shared with the other congregations for consideration.

#### *Considerations:*

- Decision should be made as soon as possible to provide sufficient time to contact ministry personnel and members of the congregation. Minimum 3 hours before first service?
- If e-mail lists are available they can be used to inform of the cancellation (would we request replies from folks to ensure they've read their e-mails?)
- For some people a phone call would be preferable and calling lists would be advisable to accomplish this most effectively.
- If pulpit supply was to be used that Sunday, that individual should be reimbursed for at least half of the normal amount paid to allow for the time they've invested in preparing the service.
- A notice should be placed on the Pastoral Charge website (ruralunited@gmail.com)
- The local radio stations could also be contacted