

Rockingham United Church
Congregational Handbook 2011

Rockingham United Church
12 Flamingo Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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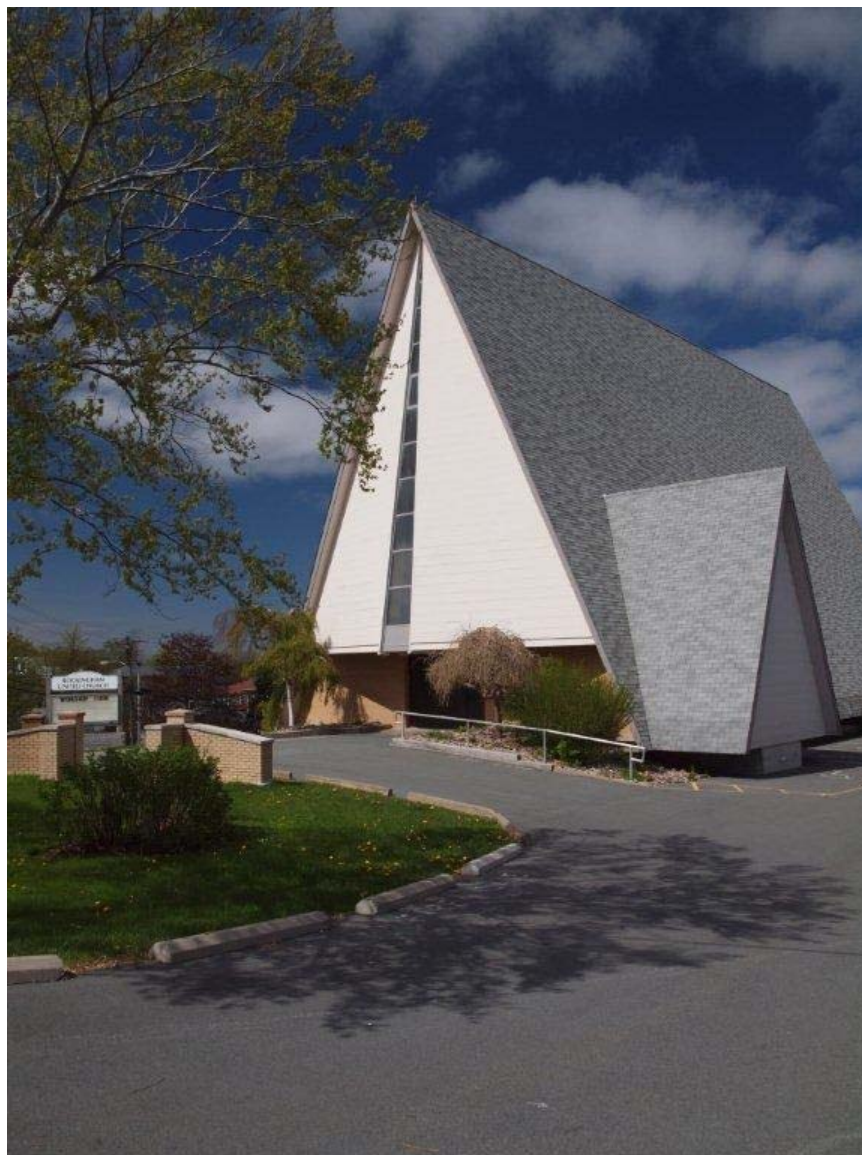


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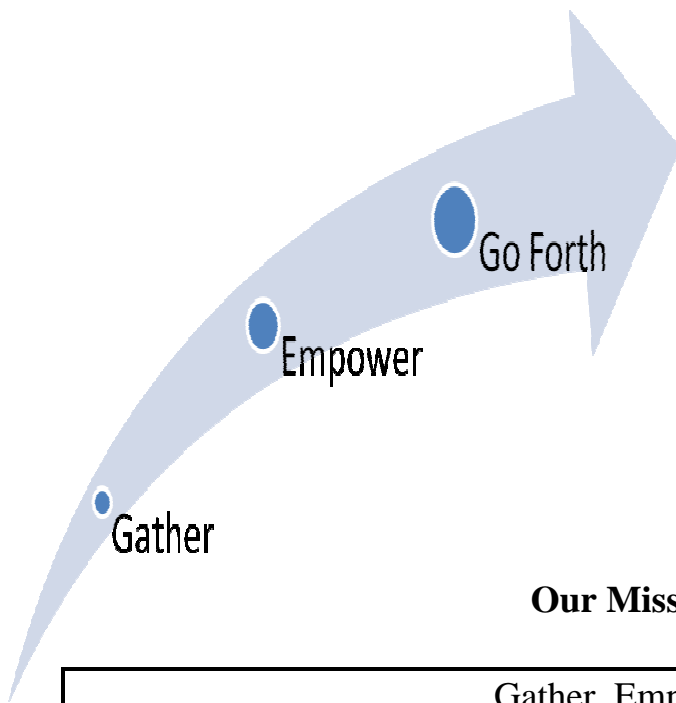
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Rockingham United Church Congregational Handbook

This handbook is designed to be a resource for those who wish to familiarize themselves with the life and ministry of the Rockingham Congregation. As a congregation of the United Church of Canada, our worship and our governance reflect our roots in this uniquely Canadian institution. As you move through the following pages, we hope you will see in these pages something of our story and our congregational life. Whether through the ministry of our various committees, groups and choirs, we invite you to find the place where you can live out the ministry that is yours. For more information on the life of Rockingham United Church, please contact our church office (902-443-2947) to speak to either our minister or church administrator

Rev. D. Aitken



Our Mission Statement

Gather, Empower, Go Forth

Rockingham United Church exists to gather people of faith and through God, empower them to go forth making our community and the world a better place in which to live. We see ourselves as a thriving, multigenerational community of disciples, centering on the word of God, reaching out and positively impacting all of God's creation.

United Church of Canada

United Church Crest



The crest is the official signature of The United Church of Canada, placed on legal documents, ordination and commissioning certificates, and licences to perform the sacraments. Designed by the Rev. Dr. Victor T. Mooney (a treasurer of the United Church), it was officially adopted in 1944 by the 11th General Council.

For our church members, this insignia is a spiritual and historic reminder. Its oval shape is derived from the outline of a **fish**, a symbol of identity by early Christians. The initials of the words "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour" spell the Greek word for fish.

The crest is designed in the form of a St. Andrew's Cross with an insignia in each of the four corners. The "X" at the centre, the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, is a traditional symbol for Christ. In the four corners of the crest are symbols, three of which are particularly associated with the three communions-Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian-that united to form The United Church of Canada in 1925.

- The **open Bible** represents the Congregational Churches with their emphasis upon God's truth that makes people free. From this communion we have a heritage of liberty in prophesying, love of spiritual freedom, awareness of the creative power of the Holy Spirit, and clear witness for civic justice.
- The **dove** is emblematic of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:10) whose transforming power has been a distinctive mark of Methodism. Here our heritage is one of evangelical zeal, concern for human redemption, warmth of Christian fellowship, the testimony of spiritual experience, and the ministry of sacred song.
- The **burning bush** is the symbol of Presbyterianism. It refers to the bush that burned and was not consumed (Exodus 3:2), and symbolizes the indestructibility of the church. From Presbyterianism we have received a heritage of high regard for the dignity in worship, the education of all people, the authority of scripture, and the church as the Body of Christ.
- The symbols **alpha** and **omega** in the lower quarter are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. They symbolize the eternal living God, in the fullness of creation (Revelation 1:8).

The Latin words *ut omnes unum sint* that surround the symbols on the crest mean **That all may be one** and are taken from John 17:21. They are a reminder that we are both a "united" and "uniting" church.

In 1980, a French translation of The United Church of Canada-L'Église Unie du Canada-was authorized by General Council to be added to the crest.

Commonly Used Terms

Congregation – a group of members and adherents who gather for the purpose of common worship. Today there are over 3 million members and adherents across Canada included in approximately 512,000 households.

Pastoral Charge – A Pastoral charge may include one or more congregations under the spiritual leadership of a minister.

Presbytery – A presbytery is an administrative grouping of pastoral charges in a local area. Delegates from each pastoral charge meet regularly to oversee the work of the charges. We are members of the *Halifax Presbytery* which includes charges from Sheet Harbour to St. Margaret's Bay.

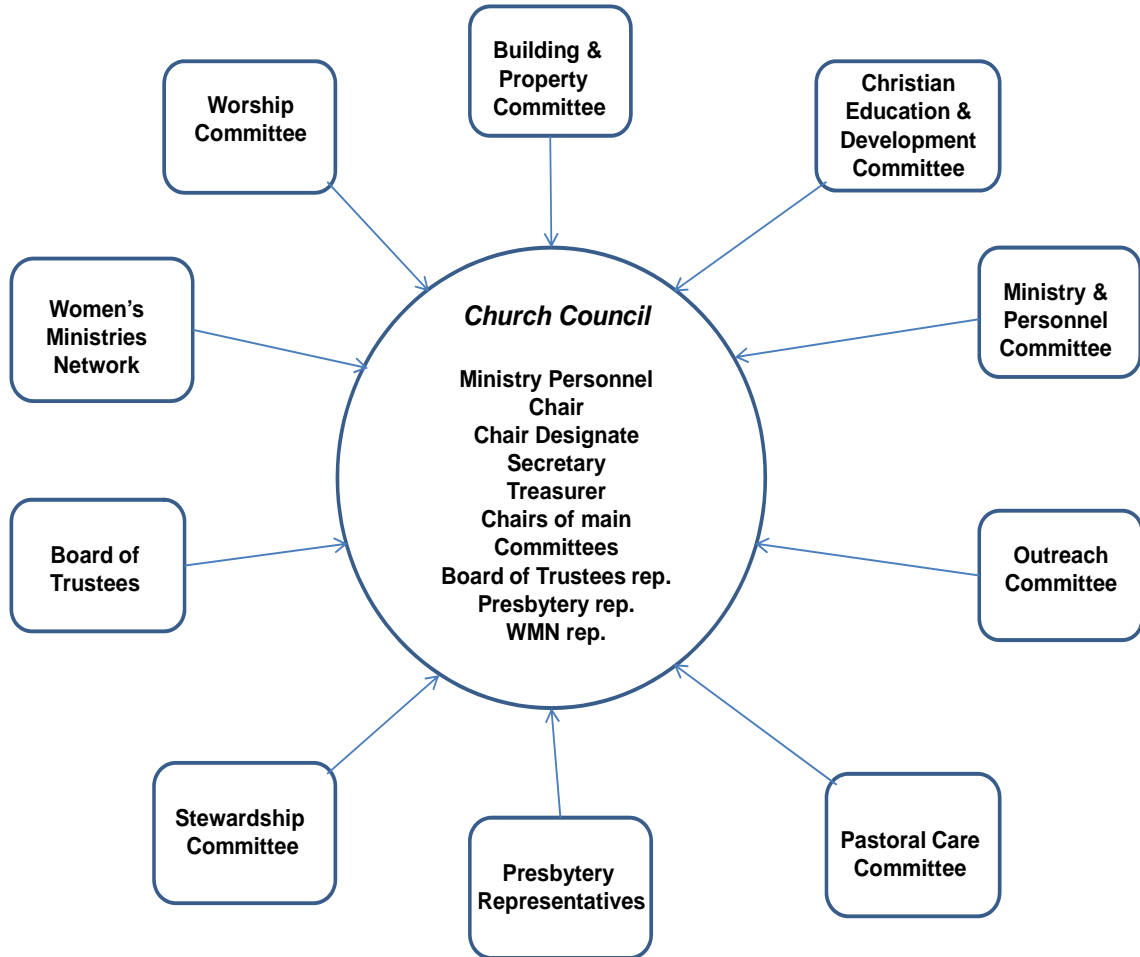
Conference – this is an administrative grouping of presbyteries in a regional area. Lay and ministerial delegates meet annually to discuss issues pertaining to the area. A full time staff in conference offices works with presbyteries and pastoral charges. We are members of the *Maritime Conference* which includes Presbyteries in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Bermuda.

General Council – This is the highest legislative court in the church. The Ordained, commissioned and lay commissioners are elected by the Conferences to attend General Council. The Council meets every three years to set and review Church policy. Between meetings an Executive and Sub-Executive govern, with policy being implemented through four permanent committees.

Satellite Committee – A committee that functions under the umbrella of one of the main committees and whose terms of reference are the same as the committee under which it serves. Chairs of these committees are selected by the committee from the members of the committee.

Ad Hoc Committee – A committee appointed for a specific task by Council and is disbanded upon completion of that task.

Rockingham United Church Council



1. INTRODUCTION

Our church is a complex structure when it comes to conducting daily operations for our congregation. The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand the organizational structure of the congregation, as well as where and how to access information which may be of importance to you. For more detailed information about any of these committees you may contact the committee chair, the list of which is published yearly on our church website <http://www.rockinghamunited.org/home.htm> or by phoning the church office (443-2947). For a current list of Council members in this document, please see **Appendix A**

A Brief History of Rockingham United Church

The origin of Rockingham United Church can be traced back to 1855 when a small group of six Protestant families in the Rockingham area began Christian worship in a barn. They were able to meet moderate success in maintaining a regular schedule of worship over the next thirty years. The building of the railroad from Halifax saw an increase in families living along Bedford Basin. By 1866 there was an increased congregation of about 40 members of various Protestant denominations meeting to conduct worship which led to the construction of a permanent hall for that purpose.

In 1898 the Presbyterians living in the Rockingham area felt they should have a church building of their own and so a church was built along the Bedford Highway. This building would serve the community for the next sixty four years. With the formation of the United Church of Canada on June 10, 1925, the pastoral charge indicated support, and so in 1925, the Rockingham Presbyterian Church became the Rockingham United Church.

The Rockingham area experienced tremendous growth in the early 1950's and the old church was becoming too small. It was decided to construct a new church building on Flamingo Drive. A building lot was bought at 12 Flamingo Dr. and a groundbreaking ceremony was held at the future church site on Sunday, April 29, 1962 with Rev. Elton Smith turning the first sod.

On February 10, 1963, the formal Dedication Ceremony was held for our church. The sanctuary seats approximately 350 people for church services as well as a choir of up to 30 members. The building includes a downstairs hall, 2 meeting rooms, a full kitchen, a main office, additional office space and an elevator to enable access to all of these facilities. Today Rockingham United Church has a membership of approximately 1100 people in 330 families. At present Rockingham United Church has a staff, which includes a full time minister, a part time office administrator, a part time organist and choir director, and a part time custodian.

The memorial stained glass window in our sanctuary has been designed around the existing cross, making use of the symbolic shape and colour. The Cross appears to rise from the red flames of Pentecost. The yellow area behind the cross symbolizes the Glory of the Cross and Christ's sacrifice. The blues glow darker toward the top of the window. The yellow passes through the dark area as a symbol of Jesus, the Light of the World, calling the Church to be agents of hope amidst despair.

More recently the congregation of Rockingham United Church has seen the installation of a pipe organ, the dedication of a new United Church Hymn Book 'Voices United' and the beginning of the John Turner Memorial Garden. The building has been enhanced with the installation of sound and video system, an elevator and other wheelchair accessible projects. The hall has had a labyrinth painted on the floor, the parking lot has been paved and the front entrance and John Turner Memorial Garden refurbished. Many fundraisers and congregational events continue to enhance the fellowship of the congregation.

2. Policies and Procedures

The following is a summary of the various policies and procedures in place at Rockingham United Church. These are not meant to be the definitive explanation of each policy but rather a summary to familiarize the reader with them. For further information please consult the *Policies and Procedures binder* located in the church office and the *Governance Policy* found on the web site.

A. Governance

The Council Model

Rockingham United Church has chosen to follow the Church Council Model that emphasizes the responsibility of all the members of the congregation to be engaged in ministry. The Ministry Personnel appointed or called to the Pastoral Charge offers spiritual leadership within the Council. It is the function of the council to plan and be the visioning group for the congregation, as well as carrying out the day to day activities which make Rockingham United Church a community of faith. Each group or committee is empowered to act within the guidelines laid out in **The Manual**. The Council is responsible for overseeing each of the groups or committees and thus the congregation assumes ownership of the governance process.

The **Church Council** model emphasizes the responsibility of all members of the congregation to be engaged in ministry. All councilors are elders of the congregation acting as a roundtable. Leadership of the council is focused on the ministry of the church and within parameters of responsibility assigned to committees. The strength of this model is that it gives more autonomy to committees, with the council concentrating on planning, and priorities, rather than managing.

Role of the Council

Although the congregational meeting is the final decision-making body for a pastoral charge, authority is delegated to the Council to develop policy, maintain accountability, and make decisions. Our Council meets each month with the exception of the months of July and August. It is the responsibility of the Council is to keep the congregation members focused on their mission statement. All policy development and accountability is based on the mission approved by the congregation.

Committees of Rockingham United Church

The following is a list of the various committees that function within our church community. Much of their work is done behind the scenes, yet without these groups we would be hard pressed to maintain those things we hold important. This list is intended to give a brief overview of what each group does and is not intended to be definitive. For more detailed information about any of these committees you may contact the committee chair, the list of which is published yearly on our church website <http://www.rockinghamunited.org/home.htm>, the information board in the Narthex (lobby) or by phoning the church office (443-2947).

- i) Building and Property Committee**
 - Plans for upgrades and ensures church property is safe and provides a healthy environment
 - Coordinates the work of the caretaker in conjunction with the Ministry & Personnel Committee
 - Oversees maintenance and purchase of church office and caretaker equipment
 - Determines financial charges for groups using church facilities except the sanctuary
 - Supervises maintenance and security of church building, equipment and grounds

- ii) Christian Education and Development Committee**
 - Studies the needs and develops programs to assist in congregational Christian growth
 - Supervises and administers running of Christian development programs for youth
 - Supports development of the church library
 - Assesses Sunday School curriculum and provides a program for the children

- iii) Ministry and Personnel Committee**
 - This committee is a requirement in every Pastoral Charge (Section 244, The Manual) of The United Church of Canada and is intended to be “a confidential consultative body that supports the pastoral relationship”.
 - Provides a consultative and supportive agency for ministry personnel and staff within the pastoral charge as well as for members and adherents within the congregation
 - Oversees the relationship between ministry personnel and staff and the congregation
 - Reviews and revises position descriptions for staff and ministry personnel and recommends any necessary changes to the appropriate bodies
 - Reviews and evaluates annually the effectiveness of staff and ministry personnel
 - Reviews and makes recommendations for remuneration and working conditions
 - Provides a liaison between congregation and staff members
 - Develops appropriate processes for receiving congregational input with respect to the responsibilities of ministry personnel and staff

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- Consults with ministry personnel and staff re continuing education plans and ensures the availability of resources
- iv) Outreach Committee**
- Keeps congregation informed of work being done in Rockingham United Church & United Church of Canada
 - Assists the Stewardship Committee in promoting local support of the Mission & Service funds
 - Coordinates with outreach groups in other church and community organizations
 - Offers the congregation educational opportunities in the area of social service and social justice
- v) Pastoral Care Committee**
- Works in cooperation with ministry personnel and supports the pastoral care needs of the congregation
 - Provides hospital & home visits as well as cards to those who are ill or shut in
 - Provides support for those who have lost a loved one
 - Provides transportation to worship and other church functions for those who need assistance when drivers are available
 - Provides home communion for those unable to attend church
- vi) Stewardship Committee**
- Cultivates knowledge about the mission of the church
 - Plans campaigns related to the church budget
 - Coordinates an annual commitment plan, explaining to the congregation why these funds are needed
 - Annually reviews the total financial needs of the pastoral charge
 - Coordinates individuals to count, record and deposit weekly offerings and special event deposits
- a) Finance Satellite Committee
- Develops annual budget and disburses funds according to congregation budget
 - Communicates with Board of Trustees regarding investment procedures
 - Administers various church funds and investments
- b) Wills & Bequest Satellite Committee
- Reviews conditions applied to a bequest or gift and assure it is used as intended or recommend how it can be used when not specified
- vii) Women's Ministries Network (Women of the United Church)**
- Includes all women's groups in the United Church whose purpose is defined in the Manual "to determine their own purpose which may include personal support,

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friendship, spiritual nurture and growth, mission education, service, exploring faith in Jesus, outreach, fundraising, fun, prayer, healing or education for life”

- The purpose is fulfilled through the various UCW units and Women’s Spirituality group.

viii) Worship Committee

- Periodically reviews order of worship to ensure it is meeting congregational needs
- Provides guidance and assistance in the conduct of worship services to those groups within the congregation
- Identifies and supports candidates recommended for the Order of Ministry
- Works with Christian Development to foster Christian education within the congregation
- Maintains a calendar of events
- Prepares special Sunday services
- Ensures worship services are taped and supports the audiovisual component during worship
- Provides guidance on choice of bulletin covers, communion ware, banners and decorations in the sanctuary
- Purchases and cares for Bibles, hymn books, service books etc.
- Recruits lay readers, welcomers, etc.
- Invites and assists members of the congregation to take part in worship services
- Assists with administering the sacraments
- Assists ministry personnel in administering matters pertaining to weddings, baptisms, funerals and other services or requests for the use of the sanctuary

a) Membership Relations Satellite Committee

- Supports publishing of newsletter Rockingham Reflections
- Provides contact with new members to the church
- Maintains organization of Narthex (lobby)
- Provides Sunday after worship coffee and tea
- Organizes receptions for special occasions
- Coordinates the church website and church publication Rockingham Reflections

ix) Presbytery Representatives

- Presbytery business is reported to the Council of the Pastoral Charge by the Presbytery representatives who are selected from lay members of the congregation. The number will vary according to the size of the congregation.
- Representatives attend Full Court Meetings of Halifax Presbytery and report to presbytery about their home congregation as well as vote on behalf of the Pastoral Charge.
- Representatives are required to be members of a Committee of Presbytery. They are delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Maritime Conference and are expected to contribute to the life of the presbytery.

x) **Board of Trustees**

- Holds title to all church property
- Approves all major renovations that could impact property values
- Ensures church is adequately insured
- Ensures church is adequately maintained
- Holds and administers all property, real, personal held in trust or acquired for the congregation

B Election of Church Council

The Church Council is made up of:

- Ministry Personnel, settled or appointed to the Pastoral Charge.
- Chairs of main committees, selected by members of each committee
- Chair of Board of Trustees, selected by members of the Board of Trustees,
- Chair of Council
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Chair Designate
- UCW representative selected to sit on the Council
- Presbytery representative that will alternate annually between the three named at Congregational Meetings

Members of the Church Council are elected by the congregation from among members of Rockingham United Church. Names are submitted to an “ad hoc” **Nominating Committee**, which is directly responsible to Council. Council then vets the names of potential candidates prior to being submitted to the congregation for election at the congregational meeting. There are specific terms and conditions of office for each position on council outlined in the church governance policy. The members of committees are elected from among the members and adherents of the congregation according to the needs of the various committees and skills offered.

C Staffing

Ministry Personnel are called or appointed to Rockingham United Church as part of a covenant relationship with Halifax Presbytery of the United Church of Canada. Ministry Personnel needs are discerned through a Joint needs Assessment Process, followed by a Joint Search Process. Both these processes include members of the congregation and representatives of Halifax Presbytery. Ministry Personnel are accountable to the Congregation and to Halifax Presbytery.

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Staff, which presently includes a part-time office administrator, a part-time music director and a part-time custodian, is hired through a search process established by the Council. Church Council acts on behalf of the congregation as the hiring body.

The Ministry and Personnel Committee oversee the relationship of the congregation to both Ministry Personnel and Staff.

- **Privacy**

All members and adherents can expect private information to be used by the church only for the purpose for which it was collected. The general privacy guidelines of the United Church of Canada are to be followed. It is recognized that the name, address and phone number is information that is widely available to members of the congregation and not strictly controlled. All other information will be limited to those who require it for the operation of the church. Information posted or available on any public domain such as web or bulletin boards shall be restricted to the person's name unless prior permission has been obtained.

D Policy Procedures

Rockingham United Church has an established policy procedure which ensures that all policies are both current and if necessary, subject to review should the need arise. All church policies are reviewed and approved by the Church Council. Any questions or suggestions on policy may be submitted in writing to the appropriate committee that will discuss it and bring it to Council, where it will be evaluated for possible future action.

E Expressing Concerns

Forums are available for members and adherents within the congregation to address their issues, questions, concerns or ideas. Council meetings are open to the Congregation as are the majority of Committees and dialogue is encouraged. The exceptions are the Pastoral Care Committee and the Ministry and Personnel Committee where confidentiality must be observed. At the present time a Community Covenant is being developed for the life and work of the congregation.

The Manual of The United Church outlines the principles and processes to be observed when individuals and groups do find themselves in conflict with one another. Early resolution is encouraged, with people engaged in direct and respectful communication, one with another. Anonymous letters will not be considered by any of the church committees or courts.

F Congregational Community Covenant

On April 8-9, 2011, members of Rockingham United Church met to work on shaping a behavioural covenant for this congregation. They focused on establishing norms in five

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particular areas of congregational life: decision-making, information sharing, conflict, complaints, and leadership. Council met, discussed and approved the “Rockingham United Church Community Covenant” on May 17, 2011 and a town hall meeting was held on May 30th to give those who were not at the workshop an opportunity to ask questions before the congregational meeting. The congregation took ownership of the community covenant on June 5, 2011 at the congregational meeting.

At Rockingham United Church, with God’s guidance, we are a joyful and enthusiastic community of faith that strives to be welcoming and friendly, respectful and inclusive, creating a safe place for all to share their gifts. As such,

1. We promise to care for and pray for one another as we make this journey together, seeking guidance from the Spirit to govern our thoughts, words and deeds.
2. We will strengthen one another with a gentle kindness and we will forgive ourselves and each other, recognizing our human frailties.
3. We will respect the diversity of each other’s gifts, opinions, needs, feelings and fears.
4. We will listen with open, non-judgmental minds to each other’s words, ideas and stories, building relationships of trust.
5. We will strive to express ourselves as clearly as possible, asking for clarification of anything we do not understand as we discuss, debate and sometimes agree to disagree.
6. We seek to be proactive when assessing our community needs. We commit to information sharing and inclusive decision making processes and promise to support the decisions made.
7. We will support our minister, staff and church leaders, setting realistic expectations for their time and their roles.
8. We acknowledge that we have a shared responsibility and accountability for ourselves and each other in living this Community Covenant.

3. Ways and Means – Finance/Stewardship

A Funds

Rockingham United Church has a number of specific funds established for various purposes. Each fund has specific guidelines to monitor growth and spending. An audit is conducted each fiscal year with the results available.

Major expenditures require a minimum of three quotations before being brought to the Council. Routine committee expenses are made from each committee’s yearly budget.

- i) ***Building Fund*** - This fund represents contributions specifically designated for this purpose. It is used to cover the costs of maintenance and repair of the Church when such costs exceed \$1000. The management of this fund is under the guidance of the Council.

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- ii) **Capital Fund** - This fund includes the estimated original cost of the Church, not including furnishings and additions since the original construction.
- iii) **Manse Fund** - This fund includes some of the proceeds from the sale of the manse in 1987. The interest earned is transferred to the general operations of the church to help offset the minister's housing allowance. Management of this fund is under the guidance of the Trustees.
- iv) **Memorial Fund** - This fund includes monies received as gifts or bequests from an estate or in memory of deceased relatives and friends. In certain cases the donors have placed restrictions on the purposes for which the money can be used. These funds which are administered by the Board of Trustees are separated from the main fund and are used specifically for the purposes indicated. An annual report is produced for inclusion in the annual report of Rockingham United Church.
- v) **Mission & Service Fund** - This fund is used to separate funds collected on behalf of Mission and Service. All donations are turned over to the Mission & Service fund of the United Church of Canada. This money is spent a variety of ways such as supporting congregations, programs, new church development, outreach programs, international relief and development programs and to administer the work of the church.
- vi) **Operating Fund** - This fund is the sum of our surpluses and deficits since we began operation as a congregation.
- vii) **Organ fund** - This fund was established for the purpose of raising funds to cover the cost of installing the pipe organ (1995). The remaining balance is used for the maintenance and enhancements of the church organ. The management of this fund is under the guidance of the Council.
- viii) **Special Projects** - This fund is designed to handle funds raised from special appeals to handle smaller special projects. Any excess raised is transferred to the operating fund when the special project is complete. This fund is under the guidance of the Council.
- ix) **Endowment fund** - The Board Of Trustees at Rockingham United Church has established an Endowment Fund in order to provide an additional source of income, with all interest and/or dividend income from the Fund to be transferred annually to the RUC Operating Fund. This will be a perpetual fund, consisting of investments which will grow over time to provide a steady annual source of income for RUC, to help pay for expenses and programs. Unlike the RUC Memorial Fund and others, the Endowment Fund will not be restricted for specific purposes, and the principal amount of the fund will not be encroached upon. This fund is under the guidance of the Trustees and Finance Sub Committee.

B Expenditures

All expenditures at Rockingham United Church are documented and each year a financial statement is produced to be included in the Annual Report. As well an audit is carried out for each fiscal year.

Routine committee expenses are made from a committee budget. Requests for this amount are made to the Council in the spring for the following year. Some groups conduct fund raising projects to finance their activities. These projects are coordinated through a fund raising coordinator. Groups are required to obtain a minimum of three quotations for projects requiring expenditures over their budget amount. All major projects are brought to the Council for approval before proceeding. Any payment to an individual requires a receipt and an invoice form signed by the chairperson of the committee to which the payment is to be charged.

4. Facilities

A Emergencies (See Appendix B for diagrams of plan)

Upon hearing the Fire/Evacuation alarm:

- All occupants will evacuate the building through the nearest exit;
- Elevators shall not be used;
- All drivers of vehicles at the main entrance will clear the area so that fire trucks can approach the building;
- Fire Wardens shall ensure that all personnel in their area of responsibility have safely vacated the building; and report it to the Building Fire Warden at the main entrance
- No one shall return to the building until prior permission from the Fire Chief is given.
- Notify Fire Dept by phone, 911
- Assembly Areas: South End of Parking Lot
- Evacuation Routes:
 - Basement, Kitchen, Stage, Choir Room and washrooms exit primary through Office Exit and secondary through Sunrise Room Exit
 - Sunrise Room, Rainbow Room, Organ Pump Room, Child Nursery and Furnace Room exit primary through Office Exit and secondary through Sunrise Room Exit
 - Main Floor – Choir Loft, Altar and front half of Congregation exit primary through Main Doors and secondary through south exit by steps
 - Main Floor – Narthex, Gallery over Narthex, rear half of Congregation exit primary through main doors and secondary through south exit by steps
 - All others shall exit through nearest exit.

B Premises Use

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- i) **Sanctuary Use** - The use of the sanctuary is normally restricted to church groups and specific church functions. Approval may be obtained through contacting the Worship Committee and then the church office. Certain rules and guidelines will apply.
- ii) **Facilities Use** -The use of the facilities is normally restricted to church groups and non-profit community groups. Application may be made through the church office administrator and for non-RUC groups approval must be obtained from the Administration Committee. A fee schedule is in place for non-church groups as well as key deposit. Church functions will take priority over rental arrangements. All new group requests/applications are subject to review and approval by the RUC Building and Property Committee.
- iii) **Kitchen Use** - The UCW of Rockingham United Church maintains the kitchen and purchases the supplies. The kitchen may be booked at no charge by any Rockingham United Church (or RUC sponsored) organization through the church office. For non-RUC groups or organizations there will be a small fee charged for the purpose of offsetting costs to maintain the kitchen.

* Please contact the church office for a suggested fee schedule.

C General Rules for the Use of Rockingham United Church Premises

- Please be advised that use of these premises will be required for Church related functions at various times throughout the year and will necessitate changes to your scheduled event. When this happens we will make every effort to provide advance notice and to re-schedule your event.
 - Persons who have signed for keys for off-hours access to the premises are not to loan their keys to other persons without the express consent of church officials.
1. Please ensure all lights you have used are turned off before leaving the premises and washrooms are checked and in order.
 2. Please keep the doors closed to prevent heat loss during the winter months. The doors must be locked or monitored during meetings to ensure that unauthorized persons do not have access to the building.
 3. Although the fixtures and furniture are aging please use them carefully and they will remain serviceable for many more years.
 4. Groups using the hall should note that the offices and other meeting rooms may be occupied during the same period of time. Please keep the noise levels to a minimum so that the other meetings are not disturbed.
 5. Fire regulations prevent parking in the driveway of the church. (This is a Fire Lane!)
 6. The exterior surface of the lower roof of the building is strictly off limits, except in an emergency.

7. Please hang coats on the racks provided and ensure personal effects are not placed where they may present a hazard or block access to office, doorways or stairways.
8. Storage areas are to be allocated by the building custodian. The two large storage areas under the stage are for equipment storage for groups meeting weekly. Please do not store other equipment on the premises i.e. camping gear or items not used on site.
9. Please lock the building upon the completion of meetings. The last person or group leaving the premises must ensure they are secured even if other persons may still be in the building.
10. Your use of these premises applies to areas designated on your Premises Use Application only.
11. Absolutely no access to the upper levels of the church premises. Everyone should enter and exit by side door only, unless elevator access has been previously arranged for those individuals with mobility limitations.
12. No alcohol or smoking permitted anywhere on the premises.
13. Tables and chairs are to be lifted and not dragged when placing in the main hall to preserve the painted floor and labyrinth. Do not use tape on the floor as it removes the paint when it is removed.
14. All non RUC groups are required to carry liability insurance
*Due to the church's financial situation and the limitations of our insurance policy we request strict adherence to these regulations.

D Cancellation

In the event of cancellation of the regular Sunday Service, the decision will be made by 7:00 am by the Minister and Chair of Council. This announcement will be placed on the church web site and the telephone messaging system. If possible it will also be placed on community radio stations. For scheduled meetings, please contact either the chair or leader of the specific group or the church web site or voice messaging system.

5. Spiritual Life

A Baptism

People interested in baptism are asked to attend a short preparation session with the minister prior to baptism. Prior to the baptismal service, the parents and children and/or person being baptized will be introduced to a member of the Worship Committee who will participate in the Baptismal service. For those who are new to our church or are returning after a lengthy period away, you must attend at least two services before the baptism. The minister must be informed of the Sunday you plan to attend so you may be introduced to the congregation. During your meeting with the minister, they will go over the questions that will be asked of you during the service. The sacrament of Baptism is celebrated at least five times annually at Rockingham

United as part of the regular Sunday morning worship service. For further information, please contact the church office.

B. Membership

To be a Member of Rockingham United Church, you must be either:

- (a) Confirmed here after having been Baptized here or elsewhere,
- (b) having been Confirmed elsewhere, have your Membership Transferred from a previous United Church or other Christian denomination (for the latter you would take the Confirmation course),
- (c) if there is a problem Transferring your Membership as in “b” you can make a Profession of Faith (non-United Church Members will take a Confirmation course).

If you are not a Member of Rockingham United, you are an “Adherent”: a person who is attached to a Congregation and who contributes regularly to its life and work while not being a member thereof” (The Manual). To become a Member and have your name added to our Roll of Membership, please speak to the Minister to discuss what is involved as Membership Classes are required for any seeking Confirmation and those coming from other denominations.

C Communion

The Sacrament of Holy Communion uses a small piece of bread and juice to represent Jesus’ last meal with his followers and of God’s enduring love. The United Church invites all who seek to love Jesus to share in this sacrament. The sacrament is presided over by the Minister with the help of congregational servers. We alternate the form of Communion by having the congregation receive it in the pews or by coming forward to receive the elements from the Minister and servers.

As part of the inclusive practice of Rockingham United Church, children with parental approval are invited to take part in the communion service. Those not wishing to have their children receive the elements may have their children blessed by the minister when the service involves congregants coming forward.

D Weddings

The Worship Committee of Rockingham United Church affirms that the wedding ceremony is an act of worship. It establishes and celebrates a sacred commitment in the lives of two people. It is required that you participate in a Pre-Marriage Education Course or with the minister if you cannot take a course. Normally the minister of this church conducts the weddings held here. If he/she is not available, we will arrange for another minister to conduct the service. It is our preference that the rehearsals be held the evening prior to the wedding. If necessary other

arrangements may be made. The organist or music director should be contacted through the church office to assist you when a wedding date has been confirmed. For further information on this service, please contact the church office.

E Funerals

Rockingham United Church will respond to requests to participate in funeral or memorial services for Members, adherents or their families, and members of the community. People requesting such services will be encouraged to have them celebrated in the church sanctuary. Services may be conducted at a funeral chapel upon request. If the organist from Rockingham United Church is not available one may be arranged from through the office. People wishing to make a donation are invited to make their gifts to one or more of Rockingham United Church Memorial Funds, i.e. Building Fund, Organ Fund, Hymn Books etc. Receptions following the service can be held in the hall upon request. For families who are not Members or adherents at Rockingham United Church, a donation for receptions would be appreciated.

F Eldership

Officers of the Church Council, elected by the Pastoral Charge and those persons elected by the Committees to be members of the Church Council (chairs of committees) are Elders as outlined in the Manual 2007 sec. 219 and as such shall be members of the United Church of Canada. (sec. 134).

6. Groups

i) Choir

- a. Men's Choir** - There are approximately 17 members in the Men's Choir. The group is formed from men who like to sing but not necessarily read music. The group usually performs once at month in the Sunday service, and has joined other men's groups throughout metro for special concerts. They join with the Senior Choir to perform Easter and Christmas concerts. Practice is Sunday morning from 8:45 to 9:45 am.
- b. Senior Choir** - The Senior Choir is under the directorship of our church Choir Director and Organist. There are approximately 25 members in our senior choir. This group practices on Thursday evenings from 7-8:30 pm with a 30 minute rehearsal on Sunday morning prior to the service. The music performed by this group ranges from early Baroque to contemporary. The choir not only

Rockingham United Church Congregational Handbook

contributes to our worship service on Sundays but also performs in special events both locally and outside Halifax

- c. Youth Choir** - Our youth choir is under the direction of our church Choir Director and Organist. Practice is Thursday evenings from 6-6:45 and the choir generally sings during the worship service once a month. The choir also joins with the Senior and Men's choir for special services and concerts throughout the year. New members are welcome to attend. For further information, please contact the Choir Director or Church Office.
- ii) Friendly Social** - This group meets on the last Wednesday of each month in RUC. This is a time of music, singing, storytelling as well as guest speakers from both the church and community. Potluck luncheons and refreshments are very popular at these meetings. Everyone who is free is welcome to attend.
- iii) Men's Group** - The primary function of the Men's Group is to provide opportunities for those men in the congregation who wish to get together and participate on a social basis in activities that they enjoy. The group is very informal, meeting only twice a year aside from the planned monthly activities. The group holds fundraisers such as a yard sale, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper or other events, with proceeds going toward church projects. Information about these events may be found in the church bulletin
- iv) Prayer Circle** - The function of this group is to pray for those in need of support in our church community. When the need arises, contact will be made to members of the circle via phone message. Membership in this group is open to any person in the congregation. For further information please contact the church office.
- v) Women's Ministry Network**

 - a. Rockingham United Church Women** - This group is comprised of women who are active in all aspects of Church life. The UCW groups meet monthly for fellowship, worship and service. Currently there are three groups, two of which meet in the evening and one in the afternoon. Their major project is the Candy Cane Carnival and Dinner, which is held in November. Money raised from all UCW events goes toward church projects and local charities.
 - b. Women's Spirituality Group** - The Women's Spirituality Group was formed to provide a time for women of the congregation to meet together to nurture and enhance their spiritual life. The once monthly meetings are held on Sunday evenings and include music, guest speakers and films as well as a short worship period. Weekend retreats are also held.
- vi) Youth Groups**

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- a. Sunday School** - As part of the Christian Development Committee's responsibility, a Sunday School and Nursery Program operate at RUC. The Christmas Pageant and Easter Drama are two of the more commonly held events. For further information please contact the church office.
- b. 3rd Rockingham Group** - Scouting and Guides have been an active part of Rockingham United Church since 1963. Through site affiliation with the 1st Clayton Park this group includes Beavers, Wolf Cubs, Scouts and Ventures, Sparks, Brownies and Guides.
- c. Youth Group** - The Youth Group was formed to meet the needs of young people in the congregation who are in grades 7 – 9. The group participates in various youth centered events around the province such as the Intermediate and Youth Forum.

7 Resources

Appendix A

Rockingham United Church Council 2011-2012

Chair	Bruce Russell
Council Secretary	Gaye Wishart
Treasurer	Alan Schnare
Presbytery Rep	vacant
Board of Trustees Rep	Sam MacKay
Ministry Personnel	Rev. Debbie Aitken
Chair Designate	David Williamson

Committees

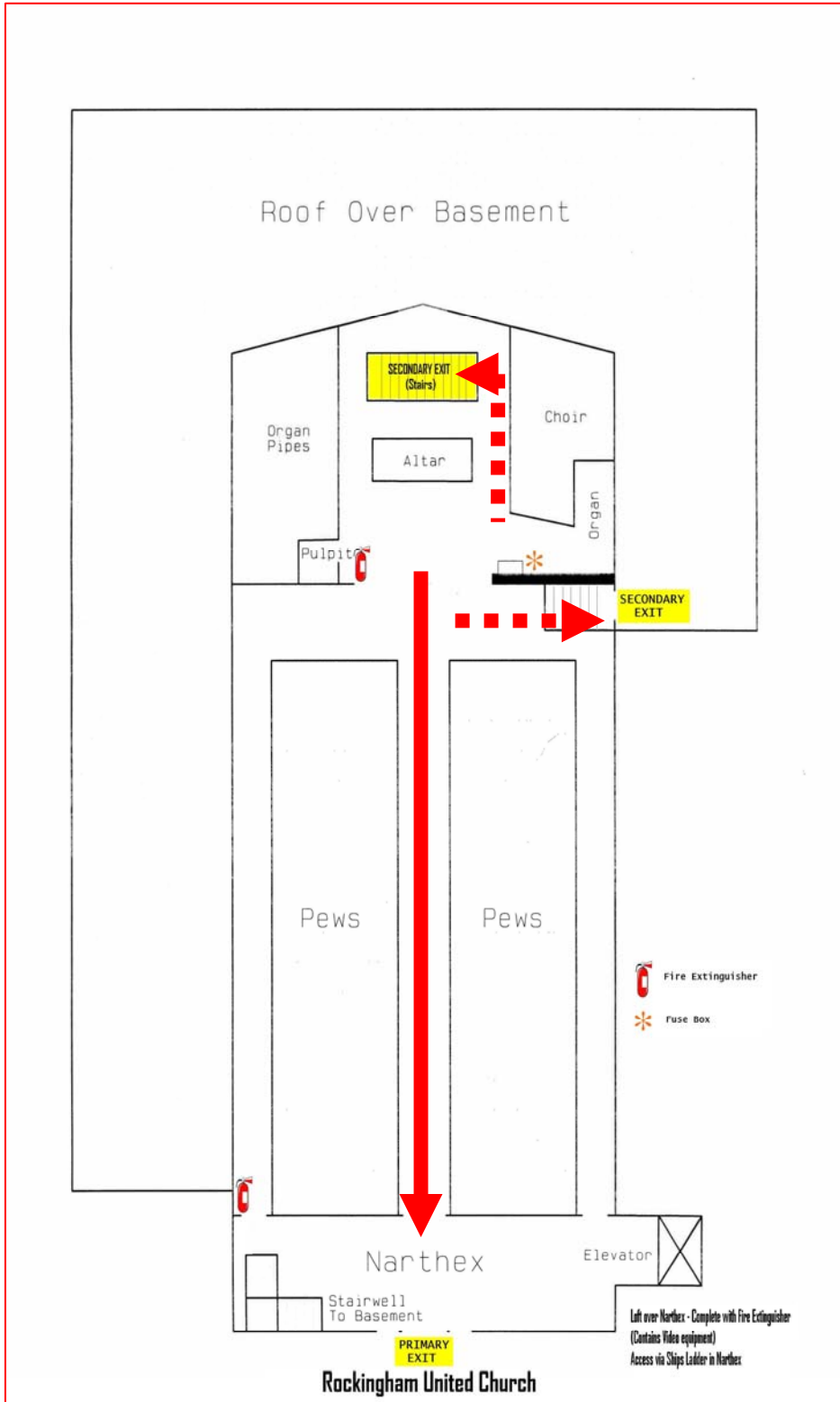
Building & Property	Bob Rose
Christian Education & Development	vacant
Ministry & Personnel	John McLearn
Pastoral Care	vacant
Outreach	Brenda Munro
Women's Ministry Network	Helen Sweett
Worship	Anne Forbes

For further information on any of this document please the church office:

Telephone: 902-443-2947
Fax: 902-457-7510
Postal address: 12 Flamingo Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3M 1S5
Website: <http://www.rockinghamunited.org/home.htm>
Email: Judi Goodwin-Kedy church.office@rockinghamunited.org

Appendix B

**Rockingham United Church Emergency Plan
Sanctuary**



FIRE/EVACUATION

REMAIN CALM

NOTIFY OTHERS ON THIS LEVEL

EXIT USING PRIMARY ROUTE

IF BLOCKED USE SECONDARY ROUTES

ASSEMBLE AWAY FROM BUILDING

DO NOT USE ELEVATOR

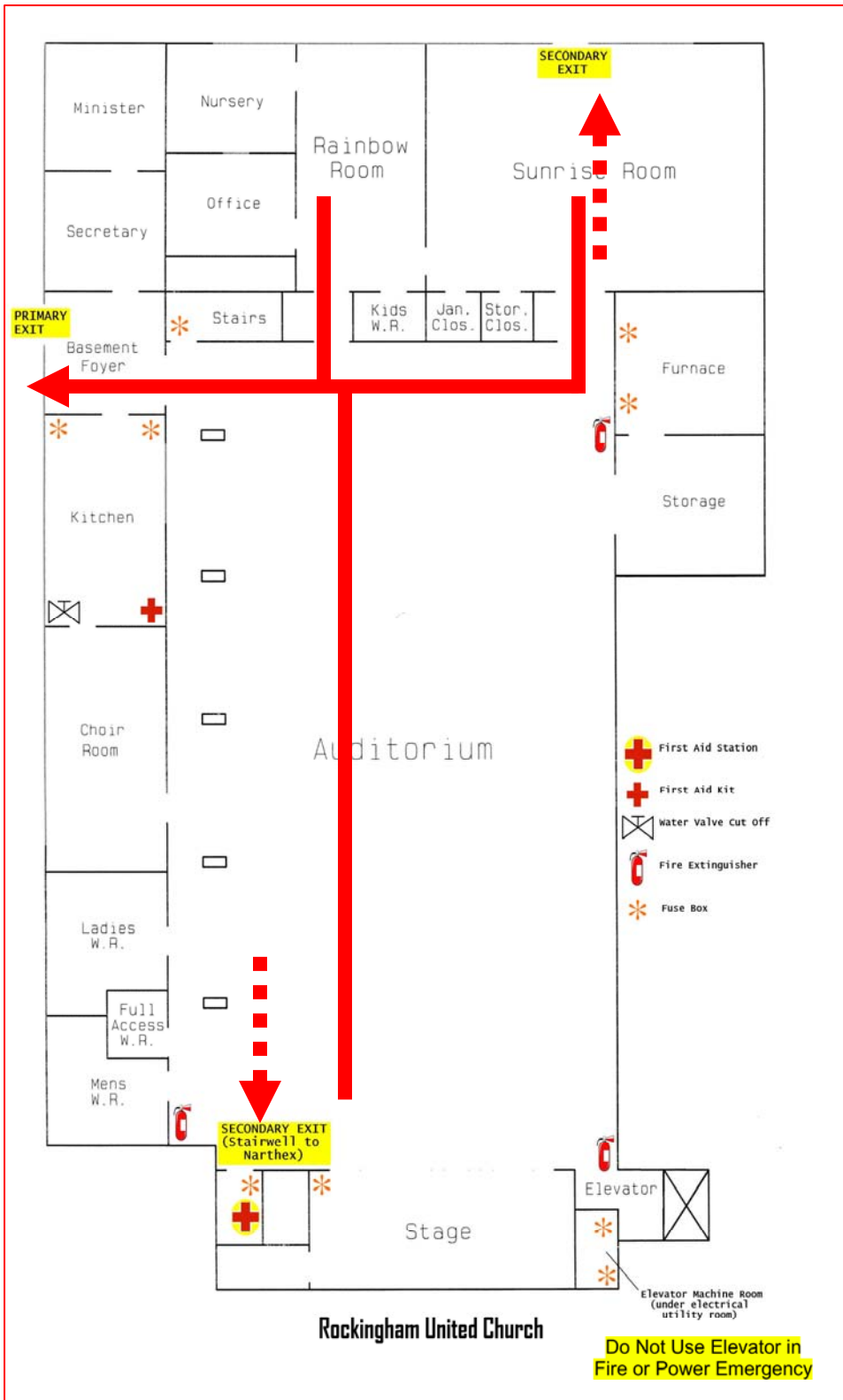
FIRE WARDEN IN-CHARGE PERSON

FOLLOW FIRE ORDERS

ENSURE OTHERS IN BUILDING ARE NOTIFIED

ENSURE 911 IS CALLED

Rockingham United Church Emergency Plan Basement



FIRE/EVACUATION

REMAIN CALM

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FIRE WARDEN IN-CHARGE PERSON

FOLLOW FIRE ORDERS

ENSURE OTHERS IN BUILDING ARE NOTIFIED

ENSURE 911 IS CALLED

Appendix C

Bibliography & Resources

- Rockingham United Church web site
<http://www.rockinghamunited.org/home.htm>
- Rockingham United Church Governance Policy 2010
<http://www.rockinghamunited.org/downloads/RUCGovernance.pdf>
- Rockingham United Church Procedures Manual
- The United Church Manual 2010
http://www.united-church.ca/files/manual/2010_manual.pdf
- The Congregation Organization Handbook 2006
<http://www.unitedchurch.ca/mtf/pdf/congregationorg.pdf>
- The Ministry & Personnel (M&P) Committee Guidelines 2010
<http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/mandpguidelines.pdf>
- Models of Board Governance 2010
<http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/models-of-board-governance.pdf>
- The Financial Handbook for Congregations 2010
<http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/financial.pdf>
- The Board of Trustees Handbook 2004
<http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/trustees2004.pdf>
- The United Church of Canada Privacy Policy
http://www.united-church.ca/files/local/privacy/privacy_abridged_rev.pdf