

Convenor's Report

Northern Spirit Regional Council

2019-2020

Greetings and blessing to everyone as we come together for a very short meeting of the 2020 Northern Spirit Regional Council. I look forward to seeing you online on October 14 and 21. My term as Convenor, 2020 Northern Spirit Regional Council Meeting, will end with the conclusion of the meeting on October 21.

The main role of the Annual Meeting Convenor, Northern Spirit Regional Council, is to be part of the Annual Meeting Planning Team (the Convenor does not necessarily have to chair this team but may do so), to represent the Regional Council at ecumenical and interfaith functions throughout the year of their term, and to be a corresponding member of the Regional Executive.

Here are some of the activities in which I represented our Regional Council Annual Meeting in fulfilling these responsibilities:

1. Annual Meeting Planning Team

- a. I participated in over a dozen 2020 Regional Gathering Planning Team meetings and two site visits to the Augustana Campus, University of Alberta, Camrose, the site selected for our 2020 Gathering. In light of the COVID 19 Pandemic, that in-person meeting was cancelled, upon recommendation by the Planning Team and decision by the Regional Council Executive. Thank you to the people of Camrose United Church and to the individuals who served on the 2020 Regional Planning Team:

Deborah Hoekstra, Chairperson	Susan Waldie
Britt Aerhart	Sharon Adams
John Helps	Shelley Sabo
Neil Lundy	Kathy Jackson, Recording Secretary

- b. This same Planning Team went on to arrange for brief online fall meetings of the 2020 Regional Council to deal with a Remit from General Council, to introduce the Regional Council to the Affirming Process which the 2019 Regional Council meeting approved, and to receive annual accountability reporting.

2. Ecumenical & Interfaith Events

- a. In Spring 2019, I attended the St. Stephen's College Graduation luncheon.
- b. In the fall of 2019, I spoke at an Edmonton ecumenical event marking the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification". Each denominational signatory had a representative speaker, and the United Church represented the Methodists in particular.
- c. Also in the fall of 2019, I brought greetings from the Regional Council to an annual ecumenical learning event held each year in Sherwood Park.
- d. I became a member of the planning committee for the Forum on Dialogues, a national ecumenical event planned in conjunction with the Canadian Council of Churches, to be held in the fall of 2021 in Edmonton.

- e. I attended an lunch/afternoon event with Ecumenical Officers from other denominations to discuss the Canadian Council of Church's "Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry" (DUIM) program.
3. Regional Council Executive
- a. I submitted regular written reports about the progress of the Regional Council 2020 Gathering Planning Team.
 - b. I attended the Regional Council Executive meetings at least quarterly, or more often if necessary.
 - c. I spoke regularly with Ruth Lumax, the Chairperson of the Regional Council Executive, to try to ensure regular communication.
4. Other
- a. I wrote three pastoral letters to Regional Council members in response to political/social and pandemic crises. I set up two opportunities for prayer gatherings online.
 - b. I was part of planning for a youth gathering in conjunction with Ruth Lumax, Denise Davis Taylor, Scott Reynolds and the Go Project, held at River Lodge Retreat Centre, February 7-9, 2020.
 - c. I signed Regional Council length of service certificates for ministry personnel.

I provide you, the Regional Council, with this level of detailed reporting because our governing structures and roles are still relatively new. I hope it will be helpful for the Regional Council, the Executive and the next Convenor to have a good record of how this role has been unfolding over 2019-2020. Thank you for the opportunity to be in this role and part of the first steps in the formation of our Regional Council.

Britt Aerhart
Convenor, 2020 Gathering
Northern Spirit Regional Council