

Executive Minister's Report 2019/2020

Well this has been an interesting year in the lives of our Regional Council! This was our first full year in operation with the structures that we created through the transition, and just when we thought things were running smoothly and we were getting in a groove...COVID 19 happened. So here we are in the fall of 2020 having online meetings that were originally supposed to happen in May and June, and life has changed dramatically in the last 6 months.

I was blessed to be able to take a Sabbatical in December, January and February to read, study and get in some needed Sabbath. That seems like a very long time ago now! I do want to thank all the staff who covered for me, especially the three Pastoral Relations Ministers: Judy Hare, Tracy Murton, and Earl Reaburn. They took on the difficult job of doing their own work as well as taking on some of mine and I truly appreciate it.

The Regional Council Executive has continued the work of establishing procedures and connections for the Regional Council, trying to vision and set the goals for the ongoing work of the Regional Council. They have tried to do this while also learning what it means to be intercultural and make decisions in a new way. We are also committed to working with all the councils of our denomination to work towards becoming an Anti-racist church. Thank you to the Executive for their commitment and faithfulness!

Much of the work of the Regional Council is still about establishing relationships with Communities of Faith, Incorporated Ministries, and Camps, as well as trying to enable the formation of clusters and networks. There are many demands for time, attention and financial assistance and, unfortunately, your Executive has had to make hard decisions about where to allocate staff time, financial resources and people resources. We are also committed to working with all the councils of our church to work towards becoming an Anti-racist church.

The transition from Conferences and Presbyteries to Regional Councils is still new, luckily one of the blessings of that transition is that we were in a better position when we were forced to work from home due to COVID 19, because all the staff are now using the same laptops and software programs we were able to adjust quickly. During this time I think our staff did an amazing job maintaining connection, providing support, calmly offering as much information as possible and thanks to our new websites we were able to communicate quickly! Special thanks to everyone who got the websites up and running just in time, especially Jamie Mckay, Julie Graham, Cherry Abad, Bev Diebert, and Kathy Jackson. It was also a benefit that many of our committees and commissions were already familiar with zoom and we were able to make decisions quickly to support Ministry Personnel and Communities of Faith in this difficult time.

I am always amazed at the ability of our church to come together during difficult times, I am confident that regardless of the challenges that the year ahead will bring the people of our Regional Council will meet them head on with prayerfulness, determination and faithfulness.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon McCarthy,
Executive Minister

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils.