



Northern Spirit Regional Council
3rd Annual Meeting
Session 2 - Deciding
May 6, 2021 at 7:00pm

Gord Waldie, Chairperson for of the Regional Council Executive and Convenor of the Annual Meeting, welcomed the Lay Representatives of Communities of Faith, Ministry Personnel, Guests, and Staff to the second Session of the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Northern Spirit Regional Council. He called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm, with about 150 people present. He acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on land known as Treaties 6, 8 and 11.

Cathy Kinsman, a member of the Affirming Task Group, lead the opening prayer.

Gord Waldie introduced and thanked the staff of Northern Spirit Regional Council: **Earl Reaburn**, Pastoral Relations Minister; **Kathy Jackson**, Regional Council Administrative Support; **Leanne Templeton**, Archivist; **Shannon McCarthy**, Executive Minister; **Jamie McKay**, Regional Executive Assistant; **Julie Graham**, Regional Minister: Justice and Communication; **Heather Dootoff**, Financial Administrator; **Karen Medland**, Office of Vocation Minister; and **Vicki Nelson**, Stewardship Animator for Western Canada.

The Executive Minister, Shannon McCarthy, reviewed the process for consideration and voting on proposals. The listening and discussing had happened during the first Session on Tuesday evening, but there would be a short time allotted at this Session to review each proposal before voting. Shannon advised folks that the Business Committee had received their questions for clarification and suggestions for each proposal, and had made some changes. This session, delegates were asked to vote on the proposals without further wordsmithing, and were reminded that decisions about proposals to General Council would be about whether or not they would be forwarded to the 44th General Council. Instructions regarding voting in the Zoom platform were reviewed.

The General Council Guest, Kate Rodd, Executive Minister for Communications, was introduced and welcomed. Kate introduced video greetings from United Church Moderator, the Right Reverend Dr. Richard Bott. The Moderator thanked each disciple for their work in such interesting times. He acknowledged that he was grateful to be part of the United Church, and that God is with us. He talked about the discerning and planning process will take happen over the next year. The 44th General Council will only be online, with Commissioners using their computers, iPads, tablets, etc. The opening session will happen in February, 2022, and the major part of the meeting and the closing in August, 2022. It is hoped that more than just Commissioners would attend, allowing conversations that occur at the General Council to carry over into local Communities of Faith. Richard Bott assured the faithful that we are in his thought and prayers. Gord asked Kate to extend our thanks to the Moderator, and Kate, on behalf of the General Council staff, offered her appreciation for the work of the Regional Council.

Britt Aerhart, Past Convenor of the Annual Meeting, took over the chair to allow Gord to give his report. He acknowledged his [written report](#) that was posted as part of the Annual Meeting Workbook, and admitted, verbally, that he had taken on the role of Annual Meeting Convenor, because no one else did. He confessed that many of the tasks of the Convenor weren't fulfilled because of his dual role, and

assured those in attendance that this is being discussed at the Executive. Gord shared that, as Chairperson for the Executive, he writes a newsletter after each Executive meeting, for distribution with the Regional Council E-Newsletter. He encouraged everyone to read these.

Gord announced that Donna Kline, a Lay Representative from Trinity United Church, Edmonton, had been appointed as the new Regional Council Treasurer. Gord expressed appreciation to Shauna Scott, who had been the Regional Council Treasurer for the first two years of its existence, and who had served for 12 years as Treasurer for the former Alberta and Northwest Conference. Ken Hutchinson thanked the Executive and the staff for their work in holding things together through this transition.

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, presented her report. She began by commenting on how hard it is to believe that the pandemic has been around for so long, through two Easter seasons, and how it has changed who we are and the patterns of how staff and Ministry Personnel carry out their work. She remarked that, while it will be amazing to see people in person again, on the upside, her future travel costs will likely continue to be reduced. During this time, Shannon has been asked to preach in different places, and has seen others preach that she would or could never have done before. She thanked the volunteers who have participated in these new and strange times and ways to meet using new technology, and expressed her hope to connect and build community in this way. Shannon thanked the Executive, and all who are working in the new way on top of regular work things. Gord and the staff were thanked for all they do for the Regional Council. She also acknowledged the new United Church General Secretary, Michael Blair, and encouraged those interested to view the introductory videos available on the [United Church](#) web site. In response to a question, Shannon told those gathered about her involvement with the General Council Anti-Racism working group that is working on a strategic and action plan for the United Church.

Gord then called upon new Treasurer, Donna Kline, to bring the Financial Report. Donna started by thanking Shauna Scott for helping in the transition, Heather Dootoff for her work keeping the financials up-to-date, and Kathy Jackson for all her assistance. Donna informed those gathered that the Northern Spirit Regional Council Financial Statements were audited by BDO. She reported that the Regional Council came out of 2020 with a surplus, due to reduced costs related to the pandemic. She then reviewed the [2020 Financial Statements](#) that had been posted as part of the Workbook for the Annual Meeting, advising that the Financial Statements were approved at the most recent Executive meeting.

Kate Rodd introduced Vicki Nelson, the new Stewardship Animator for the five western Regional Councils. Vicki reported that part of her work is to help Communities of Faith and other ministries to integrate stewardship into their work. She announced that she will be running a program, "Called to Be", in Northern Spirit, beginning later in May, and invited those who were interested to please be in contact with her. She also advised that she has resources to share with anyone interested, and thanked the delegates for their work on behalf of Mission and Service. Vicki concluded her presentation with a Mission and Service video, which included short vignettes of Mission and Service grant recipients; and reflections from Moderator, Richard Bott; from Sarah Charters, Interim Executive Minister, Philanthropy, and President of The United Church of Canada Foundation; and from Michael Blair, General Secretary. In their own ways, each thanked the donors to Mission and Service, and encouraged everyone to support this ministry that can change peoples' lives.

Gord Waldie turned the meeting over to Katharine Moore, Business Convenor. Katharine began by thanking all those who submitted feedback from Tuesday night's proposal discussions, and advised that Proposals 3 & 4 requested actions of Northern Spirit Regional Council, and that Proposals 1, 2 & 5 were

directed to the 44th General Council for action. Katharine reminded the delegates that the objective for tonight's discussions was to honour the intent of each proposal. The full texts of the approved proposals are posted on the [Annual Meeting](#) page of the Regional Council web site. Consideration was given to each proposal individually, with a short time for discussion. The following decisions were made by the Regional Council.

Proposal 3, *Response from the Northern Spirit Regional Council to the Incidences of Racial Violence and Hatred in Alberta*, and Proposal 4, *Expressing Deep Concerns with the Proposed Alberta K-6 Curriculum*, were both approved.

Proposal 1, *Community of Faith Meeting Quorum*; Proposal 2, *Commemorate Emancipation Sunday*; and Proposal 5, *Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council to End a Pastoral Relationship*, were discussed. All three were agreed to, and therefore passed on to the 44th General Council for action.

The results of the election of Commissioners to the 44th General Council 44 were announced. Elected as General Council Commissioners (*indicates Lay Members): Mary Annan, M.P.T. Basele, Daniel Chon*, Peter Chynoweth, Lloyd Henderson*, Amy Kaler*, Helen Reed, Scott Reynolds, Leigh Sinclair, Gord Waldie, Sarah Waldie*, and Bruce West*. Alternates: Linda Marcotte and Deborah Hoekstra.

Gord thanked Katharine for her leadership through the business session, and turned the meeting over to Deborah Hoekstra, liturgist for the Closing Worship and Communion Service.

Deborah Hoekstra opened with a call to worship, and Daniel Chon led the opening prayer. The Retirees, the Reverend David Lloyd-Pearce, the Reverend Nancy Monteith, the Reverend Stephen Sparks and the Reverend Larry Wright, were thanked for their service to the Church. Daniel Chon read the scripture, from Matthew 22:34-39. Matthew Heesing, who would be ordained in June, was introduced, as was the Reverend John C. Rhoad Jr., who was admitted from the Presbyterian Church in the USA. Matthew read a quote and led a prayer from Desmond Tutu, but John was unable to connect with the meeting for his reflection. Deborah read the names of those who had died since the 2nd Annual Meeting: Mr. Douglas Lee, Mrs. Copie MacMillan, Mrs. Heather Kariel, Mr. Kenneth Chan, Mrs. Joyce Kimmerly, and the Rev. Edward (Ted) Blezard. A moment of silence was observed in memory of them.

Deborah introduced the Communion Service. The Communion liturgy was led by Cynthia Creed, the Rev. Stephen Sparks, the Rev. Larry Wright and Sharon Adams. Participants were invited to share in the communion elements by Larry, and Stephen offered the prayer after Communion.

Britt Aerhart, former Annual Meeting Convenor, and Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, lead a covenanting with the newly-elected Commissioners to the 44th General Council. Shannon read the names of those elected, and Britt posed the question, "Do you accept this ministry to which you have been elected and in the presence of the Church, commit yourself to this trust and responsibility?" The Commissioners responded, "I do, with God as my guide." With that, they were installed as the Commissioners from Northern Spirit Regional Council to the 44th General Council, and Shannon led a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing to and for the Commissioners. Daniel Chon and Deborah Hoekstra read a closing blessing.

Gord made three short announcements, advising that Matthew's Ordination Service would be held on June 27, at First United Church, Fort Saskatchewan, COVID restrictions permitting; that the Admission Service would take place on the Grimshaw-Peace River Pastoral Charge on a date yet to be determined;

and that a video-recorded Regional Council-wide Pentecost Service, being prepared by Grace United Church in Edmonton, would be available for Sunday, May 23. Delegates were reminded to watch the Regional Council E-Newsletter for details.

Gord Waldie, Convenor, closed the meeting with prayer, and declared the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Northern Spirit Regional Council to be adjourned, at 9:09 pm.