

**Northern Spirit Executive Minutes
March 10, 2021 via Zoom**

Present	Gord Waldie (Chair), Shauna Scott (Treasurer), Mary Annan, Marilyn Carroll, Peter Chynoweth, Margaret-Anne Hall, Alistair MacKay. A quorum was present.
Corresponding Members	There were no corresponding members in attendance.
Regrets	There were no regrets.
Staff Present	Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister), Earl Reaburn (Pastoral Relations Minister), Julie Graham (Justice and Communications Minister), Heather Dootoff (Finance Administrator), Kathy Jackson (Office Administrator & Administrative Support), Jamie Mckay (Executive Assistant & Recording Secretary).
Call to Order	Gord Waldie opened the meeting at 9:30 AM.
Opening Worship and Check-in	Gord Waldie read scripture and said a prayer. We checked in by sharing reflections of the past year.
Agenda Review	We reviewed the agenda and agreed it would be our agenda for this meeting.
039-2020/2021	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accept the agenda as distributed.
Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter to Denis Davis Taylor re: Faith Lift
Approval of Minutes	We reviewed the minutes from February 10, 2021.
040 – 2020/2021	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accept the minutes from February 10, 2021, as distributed.
FINANCE	There were no new financial statements to review. The financial audit is currently underway. Heather Dootoff will report on the audit when she receives it from the auditors.
041 – 2020/2021	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive removes the following as signers on the Alberta Treasury Branch bursary fund account: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carolynne Bouey Shank• Doug Settle• Pamela Milton

042 – 2020/2021

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive adds the name of NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL to the Alberta Treasury Branch bursary bank account.

PASTORAL RELATIONS

Eart Reaburn reported.

Pastoral Relations Commission

The Pastoral Relations Commission is writing final edits on the Financial Assistance for Moving Policy and will be submitting for approval to the executive.

Pastoral Relations minutes

We had a discussion about if the Pastoral Relations Commission will create a summary of their motions and/or decisions and submit them to the executive for approval. The motions and/or decisions made by the Pastoral Relations Commission need to become public after approval from the executive.

Often there is a delay between their meetings, submitting their decisions to the executive, and the finalization and posting of the executive minutes.

No decision was made on if the Pastoral Relations Commission will send a summary of their motion and/or decision to the executive for approval. They will discuss further and bring back to a future meeting.

Ordination for Matthew Heesing

We are delighted to learn that Matthew Heesing from Fort Saskatchewan First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan, has been approved for ordination. Matt would like the ordination to happen in Northern Spirit Regional Council and be held at First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan where his family attends worship.

Shannon McCarthy needs to be present for the service. Gord Waldie, Earl Reaburn, and Shannon will work out the details the service, including a date.

Intended motion

Once we have a date, we need to make a motion on behalf of the regional council with our intention of holding an ordination service for Matthew Heesing, along with the date and time.

We plan to make this motion at the meeting on April 14, 2021.

Community of Faith Support Committee

A number of congregations have begun conversations about making a decision to close or disband. A few congregations are experiencing some degree of conflict within themselves.

Living Spirit United Church continues to do very well.

The Community of Faith Support Committee and the Pastoral Relations Committee are still asking the same question, which is:

- Where are we going in terms of the regional council over the next 10 or 15 years?
- What do we need to do to get there is a creative and positive way?

Although there is news of a number of congregations beginning conversations about closing or disbanding, it's still important to be focused on the future with creativity and positivity.

Board development workshop

One member of the Community of Faith Support Committee is working on creating a board development workshop. The goal of the workshop would be to provide guidance to setting boundaries within communities of faith regarding who has the authority to make decisions. The workshop would be offered in several locations.

Annual reports

Kathy Jackson has received back four or five annual reports and is holding them until a decision is made on who will be reading them.

Reading team

The Community of Faith Support Committee is recruiting a team of readers to go over the annual reports. We hope that this will be a good way to involve leadership from former presbyteries who may now be feeling disconnected from the regional council.

They will be asked to read the annual reports and make some notes, particularly around support that could be provided by the regional council to that community of faith.

New Ministries Development Fund

Earl Reaburn and a member of the Community of Faith Support Committee had a meeting with Erik Lo Forte, Grants Officer at the United Church of Canada Foundation, to get input on what would go into the terms of reference. They discussed acknowledging where the fund came from, the purpose of the fund, eligibility, and criterion.

An application will be developed as well as a plan for distribution and evaluation.

Ministry Personnel Support Committee

Living Skies Regional Council has invited Northern Spirit ministry personnel to take part in a two-day online retreat. Living Skies is providing worship materials and the retreat is taking place next week.

The Ministry Personnel Support Committee contacted many retired ministry personnel and conversations with them helped clarify to us that keeping in touch with our retired ministry personnel is very important.

A clergy wellness survey will be distributed this week asking questions such as:

- How have you been doing during the pandemic?
- During the pandemic, have you thought of leaving ministry?

Living Skies and Prairie to Pine will be distributing the same survey and we will compare results to learn and share with each other what is working. We will also use the survey to provide feedback to our ministry personnel.

Lay Leadership Support Committee

The Lay Leadership Support Committee is continuing their work on the Licensed Lay Leader Policy. They have asked licensed lay worship leaders for feedback.

The committee provided a gift card from UCRD – United Church Bookstore to thirteen licensed lay leaders, as a gift of appreciation.

REPORTS

Executive Minister's Report

Shannon McCarthy reported.

The Manual 2021 is available online to download and print. Annual meetings are coming up and Shannon is working out dates and times with the other two regional councils.

The work around the anti-racism piece is continuing. Shannon had been attending meetings with the national group called The Anti-Racism Common Table. Shannon was asked to be part of the interviews for the executive minister for Church and Mission.

Shannon has had meetings with other executive ministers to talk about budgeting principles and assessments. They have been discussing ways to bring some regional councils up to paying 100% of their assessments and what is the best and fairest way to do that.

Communications & Justice

We reviewed a proposal submitted by Jeffrey Dale of Shining Waters Regional Council about co-sponsoring a three-part conversation around the need for the Decriminalization of Illicit Substance for Personal Use across the country. Part of this conversation includes how The United Church of Canada is involved in harm reduction. The proposal does not include a request for money, and it is not suggesting the regional council take a position on the issue. The regional council would join a space to hear stories and have a conversation about the issue.

The Executive is in favour of this proposal. Julie Graham will send a response.

Incorporated Ministries

There was nothing new to review from incorporated ministries.

ORDER OF THE DAY

We agreed to extend the order of the day. We also agreed to schedule future meetings for an additional half an hour, ending at 12:00 PM instead of 11:30 AM.

2021 NSRC Regional Meeting

We discussed the plans for the 2021 Regional Meeting.

Aside from our usual annual meeting business, so far, we have two decision items to make at the regional meeting:

- Electing General Council 44 Commissioners
- Proposal: Attendance of Pastoral Charge Supervisors or clergy at congregational meetings

We would like to hold an election which changes the amount of time needed for the meeting. The first evening will be the information, learning and discussion portion of the meeting. The slate of General Council 44 Commissioners will be presented, and voting will take place by email in the time between the second evening. The results of the voting will be approved at the second meeting.

043 – 2020/2021

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive agrees to hold the Northern Spirit Regional Council 2021 Regional Meeting on the evenings of Tuesday, May 4th and Thursday, May 6th with the meeting each evening to be held from 7:00-9:00 PM (MT).

St. Andrew's College

Gord Waldie will draft a letter of support to St. Andrew's College.

Transition to Full Assessments

We had a short discussion about the transition to full assessments. At the time of this meeting, communities of faith in Northern Spirit are currently at 93.5% of the full assessment.

Nominations

There was nothing new to review from Nominations.

Next Meeting

The Executive agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 – 11:30 AM via Zoom with the next regular meeting date:

- April 14, 2021

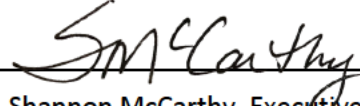
Closing Prayer

Gord Waldie said a closing prayer.

Adjournment

Gord Waldie adjourned the meeting at 12:20 PM.


Gord Waldie, Chairperson


Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister

