

St. Andrew's College Report to Northern Spirit Regional Council 2022 Annual Meeting

Dear friends of the Northern Spirit Regional Council,
Greetings in name of the Holy One,



Chapel Rainbow Tapestry

It has been quite year for all of us. I have had the honour to connect with alum, friends and students from across the country. In these conversations, both in-person and remote, there have been many paradoxes present. Hope has been visible even in the reality of the pandemic. Joy has been evident even in the challenges of the fentanyl crisis. There has been resilience even in the context of forces and voices that have served to challenge the common good and our social democracy.

It is in these places that St. Andrew's continues to journey with leaders who are called to bear Light and Good News. This is a faithful pursuit. It is an honour to bring this annual greeting to you as you gather to do the righteous work of our United Church.

When we spoke last year, the College had begun to address an existential financial crisis that led to both an acceleration of our 2020 Strategic Plan¹ and to some extremely difficult restructuring decisions. Since then, much has unfolded. As in all paradox, there is indeed celebration in the midst of change, which is sometimes well received and at other times disruptive. I hope the following, therefore, imparts some of the significant work and changes for St. Andrew's.

In the last year, the College has engaged with our Saskatoon Theological Union (STU) partners to deepen our relationship in significant and substantive ways. This has included conversations that have ranged from our academic commitments to the realities of administration and governance alignment among St. Andrew's, the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary.

As I write to you, the Union has held a Covenanting Ceremony² and has just completed an academic retreat. Arising from these important milestones, we are now completing proposals for new integrated academic MDiv & MTS degrees. These new programmes place the context of the student at the centre of an ecumenical experience, which deeply enhances previous collaborations. In turn, we are finalising a framework for a shared STU Faculty, which will nurture a culture of scholarship and interdisciplinary educational opportunity for students. As these degrees receive approval from the appropriate bodies, beginning in May, the STU Faculty will finalise courses and syllabi for this intensive-based endeavour. Recruitment will begin in May for a soft launch in the winter of 2023. We look forward to being up to full steam beginning in fall 2023!

As St. Andrew's innovates with our STU partners in the Academic Pathway, I am just as excited to share the further work of the Academic Redesign Team (ART). ART has also been passionately, creatively and substantively developing a new Lifelong Learning Pathway. The Team includes United Church partners, alum, and an Educational Consultant from the University of Saskatchewan. ART has been developing learning opportunities for lay and ordered ministry. They are creating a learning ecosystem that ranges

¹ <https://standrews.ca/our-community/about/strategic-plan/>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXz1Wrrioq4>

from condensed workshops to new certificates. At the centre of this new Pathway will be the learner and their context. I am confident that this new Pathway will allow the College to not only recruit and educate our traditional United Church family but will also include people from ecumenical and secular sectors who are hoping to connect their spiritual journey with their work and vocation.

At the moment, the timeline for the deployment of the Lifelong Learning Pathway is similar to the Academic. The first certificate – *Leadership in the Faith Community* – will be launched in the same timeline as the new Academic Pathway. It is further anticipated that the other two certificates (*Leadership in the World* and *Spiritual Exploration*) will be launched in 2024.

The three certificates being developed are listed below and are accompanied by initial draft descriptions. All three of these Certificates build in core competencies which will allow students to progress, if they so desire, into the graduate level degree programs of St. Andrew's College, such as the Master of Divinity or Master of Theological Studies.

- The *Leadership in the Faith Community* (LFC) Certificate is a non-credit, competency-based program of active learning and reflection, designed for all members of a faith community (lay or ordered) who are involved in Christian ministry. The LFC Certificate program supports lifelong learners to grow and deepen their skills in contextual theological reflection and the practice(s) of ministry, while assessing and documenting this growth through a personalized study plan, learning portfolio, and intentional mentorship.
- The *Leadership in the World* (LW) Certificate is a non-credit, competency-based program of active learning and reflection, designed for professionals, community leaders, social entrepreneurs, and social justice activists/advocates working for a better world. The LW Certificate program supports lifelong learners to explore their sense of vocation or “calling” and deepen their leadership skills, while assessing and documenting their development through a personalized study plan, learning portfolio, and intentional mentorship.
- The *Spiritual Exploration* (SE) Certificate is a non-credit, competency-based program of active learning and reflection, designed for all who identify as “spiritual but not religious” or spiritually curious/adventurous. The SE Certificate program supports lifelong learners to delve into a wide range of worldview conversations and spiritual practices, while assessing and documenting their exploration and growth through a personalized study plan, learning portfolio, and intentional mentorship.

There is indeed much to celebrate at St. Andrew's! The College is relying heavily on our Strategic Plan. Though the timelines have been accelerated by the pressures of the past year, we are intentionally pursuing a course upon which Spirit has invited us. To that end, we are happy to provide the Regional Council (and its Communities of Faith) opportunities to support the vital work which we do. Here are several concrete development programs we would like you to consider and share widely:

- The 2021 #NoGalaGala
Last year's event featured our previous Registrar, Greg Torwalt. Greg is a successful recording artist and founding member of the band Too Soon Monsoon. This concert is still available online for exclusive viewing by ticketholders, and contains music, conversation, and guest appearances that include student reflections and an introductory meditation with our Pastor in Residence, Janet Clarke.³

³ <https://standrews.ca/donate/donate-now/> and choose NoGalaGala

Stay tuned for news about the 2022 #NoGalaGala, which will feature the art and music of one of the College's most recent Honorary Doctorate recipients, Brenda Baker. Recording for the September 9th premiere will begin this summer

- Companions of the College

This initiative builds upon the College's ongoing commitment to develop deeper relationships with supporters and friends. College Companions are those who have committed to support the college, on an annual basis, at one of two initial tiers:

1. Cypress: \$500/annum with a yearly commitment to increase the gift by 10% annually; and,
2. Tamarack: \$1 000/annum with a yearly commitment to increase the gift by 5% annually.

This initiative invites new donors to give at these levels; existing supporters, at either of these two-tier levels, are invited to commit to the annual increase. Each tier will have access to ongoing new digital content, which the College has and will continue to create:

1. Cypress: This donor level will have access to the College Sunday Digital Worship Library. This resource allows individuals and faith communities to download and/or stream full worship services developed by members of St. Andrew's. Currently there are 6 worship services, which range from thematic to stand-alone. The college will be adding at least 2–3-year new worship experiences per year; and,
2. Tamarack: At this donor tier, supporters will receive access to the College Sunday Digital Worship Library and exclusive access to all previous and future #NoGalaGala events. Currently the college has hosted two online premieres and intends to have 1-2-year.

If you or your faith community want to know more about this exciting initiative and the digital resources which accompany the tiers, please contact Melanie Schwanbeck, College Secretary, melanie.schwanbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca.

- College Sunday Digital Library

St. Andrew's College has a long tradition of visiting communities of faith, large and small, to bring greetings, share the Gospel, and strengthen our bonds with the wider church. The covid era has invited us to consider innovative ways to continue that tradition, and so we are pleased to offer our new College Sunday digital resources. These include a growing digital library of full worship services, including sermons, hymns, liturgical notes, and conversation-starter questions. Current themes include leadership, stewardship, compassion, vocation, humility, and much more. For more information, contact Melanie Schwanbeck at the College office melanie.schwanbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca.

- Classroom Enhancement Initiative

As the college prepares for renewal over the coming years, we are also continuing to update our classrooms to offer hybrid learning. This will allow students to learn together whether onsite or remotely. Please consider giving to the College's *Second Century Fund*.

In Christ,

Dea. Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis