

**Northern Spirit Executive Minutes
September 19, 2022**

Present	Peter Chynoweth, Wilson MacLennan (Affirming Task Group); Mary Annan, Donna Kline, Leslie Penny, Alistair MacKay, Helen Reed (chair) A quorum was present.
Corresponding Members	Wilson MacLennan, Affirming Task Group
Regrets	Margaret-Anne Hall, Gord Waldie
Staff Present	Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister) Heather Dootoff (Finance Administrator), Julie Graham (Justice and Communications Minister), Kathy Jackson (Office Administrator).
Call to Order	Helen Reed opened the meeting at 9:45 am.
Opening Worship and Check-in	We checked in about the summer and began the meeting with prayer.
Agenda Review	We reviewed the agenda.
007-2022/2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the June 8, 2022 minutes as distributed
CHURCH CLOSURES	
Pierceland United Church 008-2022/2023	All assets from Pierceland United Church have been disbursed. It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive disband Pierceland United Church effective 19 September 2022.
Busby United Church 009-2022/2023	All assets from Busby United Church have now been disbursed. It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council disband Busby United Church effective 19 September 2022.
Ashmont United Church	Ashmont United Church: the church has been transferred to Acimowin Opaspiw Society formally as of September 12 pending the \$1 transfer from the society. Background is posted on the Northern Spirit website.
NAME CHANGES	
Namao/Morinville 010-2022/2023	It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the change of name from “Namao (Morinville) Pastoral Charge” to “Namao Pastoral Charge” as requested.

**Cold Lake/Pierceland
011-2022/2023**

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the change of name from “Cold Lake-Pierceland Pastoral Charge” to “Cold Lake Pastoral Charge”.

**Kirk Centre Bridge
loan**

Kirk Centre needs Regional Council approval to receive a bridge loan from General Council to help recover from Covid losses. Wilson MacLennan spoke to the request as he is on the Kirk Centre Board.

Various rental groups use the building and renovations have happened over the past few years. Maintenance has eaten away at reserves. However, rental income is going up and Wilson feels cautiously optimistic.

Shannon stressed that the Region would really rather not be in a position of having to property manage. Wilson suggested it would be helpful to have a Regional representative on the KUCC board, noting that since the end of presbytery, that connection with the wider church has diminished. Alistair noted the importance of the connection, and that a corresponding member of the Executive on the board might be a helpful connection. Shannon noted that Kindred Works, the new UCC property development corporation, is an important resource, and she will connect the KUCC board.

Wilson extended thanks to Kathy Jackson on behalf of the KUCC Board for her presence and her ministry of welcome over the years.

012-2022/2023

It was agreed by consensus:

That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the request of Kirk Centre for a bridge loan of \$60,00 from General Council, with the recommendation that a representative of the Regional Council be appointed to the KUCC board; and that the Kirk Centre report its finances and related plans to the Region through the representative.

Affirming Task Group

Wilson MacLennan is a member of the Affirming Task Group and reviewed some of the work done on engaging the Regional Council in the 2SLGBTQIA+ journey. ([Their page is here.](#)) He reminded us of the conditions in the 1980s, specifically the lack of equality and workplace and family protections not only for diverse sexual orientations, but for gender. The movement for employment safety and equity spread to the UCC in the 1980s and caught up a widening number of ministers, including straight allies. He named former Moderator Anne Squire’s enormous support for the community, working with the Affirm United movement and their approach, “all is all”. This later led to a more expansive and intersectional understanding of inclusion: economics, abilities, race, age, and more.

Wilson spoke to the need for the United Church to understand that it’s insufficient to say (as so many do) “but we’re all welcoming”. It must be practiced publicly, in part because of the number of unwelcoming Christian traditions who tend to define the

conversation. He asked for the Executive's reflections on when the question might be put to the Regional Council membership. Peter named the need to be open to being challenged, and to expect it, no matter how Affirming-ready the Region feels itself to be.

Alistair spoke to the need to constantly renew- turnover means that we need to think ten years down the road, and ask how we keep living it out. Shannon spoke to being aware of impacts: for example, Prairie to Pine chose to say no to a conservative Christian venue for annual meeting, because of safe space commitments. It remains a question for many what it means to be a non-Affirming community of faith in the context of an Affirming Regional Council. Affirming processes for communities of faith are much harder to engage in the growing context of no ministry personnel.

Affirming ministries currently in Alberta: <https://affirmunited.ause.ca/alberta/>

013-2022/2023

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive ask the Affirming task group to prepare a report to go to the October Regional Council gathering reviewing work to date.

At the Regional Council Gathering, members will be asked if they have sufficient information to move forward to a Vision Statement draft to be presented and voted on at the June 2023 annual meeting. (Approval of the Vision Statement and Action Plan must be part of the vote to become Affirming).

**Property and New
Church Development
Council**

We have received a proposal to work with this group which has experience in assessing property, and reimagining property with congregations. There isn't an ask for money, simply a request for conversation. Need to clarify the relationships between this incorporated ministry and the Regional Councils. A task group of three is working on a survey and common matrices related to congregational reviews of viability, preparatory to talking about viability with congregations. Clear lines of accountability and communication, including communication and data updates, all need to be addressed. The Property Commission does not want to be involved in viability conversations; it wants to talk with CoFs after they are ready to make decisions about property.

Underlying ethos: We take care of each other as congregations, as communities;

Who holds the bigger questions, such as "will the UCC have a presence in X, Y, Z areas in the future"? And bigger questions about what presence looks like, including online and support for this; the reassessment of habits and schedules people of all ages groups started during COVID and that have resulted, in many cases, in people not showing up in the same way or at all for church anything.

Memory and nostalgia are not the same thing. In many ways, we are stuck in nostalgia at the moment, especially for presbyteries, and held there somewhat by COVID, and by its proximity to the restructuring itself. How do we move from memory into the

future? How do we recognize the need to live into the new structure, naming what we want to do, not simply what we have to do.

Across all Regional Councils: Longing for connection and trouble initiating that connection. Pace of closure has increased and the entire process is exhausting, and feeds the narrative of decline.

**Edmonton and
District Council of
Churches**

The Council would like a second UCC representative (Larry Wright is appointed from NSRC for 2022-2023). In the past, this was an Edmonton Presbytery appointment. This raises the question of appointment and authority in the new structure, and is emerging as an issue in all three Regions, in urban areas especially.

014-2022/2023

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council continue to pay for and appoint one representative to the Edmonton and District Council of Churches; and that the Edmonton churches be encouraged to form a Cluster or Clusters (geographically based support and networking), and seek representation for this Cluster at the Edmonton and District Council of Churches.

**Incorporated
Ministries
015-2022/2023**

It was agreed by consensus:

That the Northern Spirit Regional Council (2) Executive take the following action(s):

a) Christian Youth Camps Incorporated o/a Camp Maskepetoon

...based on the guidance received from General Council Staff, pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada receive Bylaws dated December 16, 2021 of the incorporated ministry known as Christian Youth Camps Incorporated.

This is based on the draft Members Meeting minutes of December 16, 2021, and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

These Bylaws are being received as there was no changes made to the United Church Clauses. References to The Manual, Section 429, in article 10.02. should be changed to the Incorporated Ministries Policy in the next update.

b) Kirk United Church Centre

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Kirk United Church Centre 2022-2023 Board of Directors

**Darlene Bakker
Deanna Boyde**

**Gail Greenwood
Jacqueline Hunt
Wilson MacLennan
Susan Waldie
Larry Wright**

This is based on the draft AGM minutes of June 16, 2022, the 2022 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

Executive Minister's report

Shannon McCarthy reported:

The NS administrator position was posted twice; after moving it to a hybrid option (in office two days a week) one application was received, the person was offered the job, then turned it down. We will look at other options to fill the position until we can hire someone on a permanent basis.

The posting for the Executive Minister's Executive Assistant has not yet been posted, and is close to being ready. The job is such that the person can be based anywhere since it is a fully online position.

Dropbox: is basically a nightmare for many people. Shannon and Julie will look into other options. Options with Google Suite have run into technical problems. They'll continue to work on it.

Finance Report

Heather Dootoff reported.

Heather reviewed the latest actuals. The Region is currently running an \$80,000 operating surplus. In person annual meetings in 2023 and 2025 and staffing are two areas that need planned extra resources.

Regional Council gathering 2022, Oct 14-15

The planning committee continues to meet, and shared the small group discussion questions; some of these pick up on the conversation about viability, change, and mutual support. The intent is for each small group to report the highlights of each conversation, to feed into continuing work. The process will also cover a reintroduction to what the Region does.

Regional Council Meeting 2023

Shannon flagged that hotels and arenas may now be about of financial reach for big meetings going forward, and that a church could be considered as a venue (Spirit of Hope in Edmonton, Kirk United Church Centre, Camrose, St Albert.)

016-2022/2023

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive set the dates for the Northern Spirit Regional Council gathering for 2023 as: Thursday May 4- Sunday May 7.

UofA Chaplaincy

Helen shared the letter from the Lutheran chaplain, confirming it's a request for funding that would allow the current ELCIC chaplain to cover United Church connections and needs. The chaplaincy had returned a portion of its 2022 Mission

Support grant due to the UCC chaplain's retirement.

Background: at the 2019 annual meeting, there was a push to prioritize this ministry, and to make it a chaplaincy for the whole Region. Confusion about who was to take the lead; a committee was never struck. Additional factor was tension between the Edmonton-focused staffing of the past and the wider Regional nature of work going forward. Intercultural; Affirming; Indigenous elder; U of A chaplaincy were all Edmonton-focused and -grounded ministries. New church development funded this, but that came to an end. An Edmonton Cluster, or some geographic-specific structure, has never emerged. While creating this isn't the Region's responsibility, and can't be, can the Region encourage and hold space for Edmonton ministries to create strategies together?

Discussion about the U of A chaplaincy: Concern that other education institutions would not be covered; that youth and young adult work could be done with the membership of the Regional Council rather than the more specific and limited community of the U of A. But, are there possibilities for partnerships and innovation that allow for a more truly Regional approach to chaplaincy, or allow a more truly Edmonton-centred approach supported by Edmonton ministries. What would initial steps look like?

Next steps:

Shannon will correspond with chaplain Richard Reimer regarding funds sought, accountability including Board representation.

Next Meeting


We discussed that it would be good to have a face to face meeting once a year with all the other meetings held on Zoom.

Next meeting: Wednesday October 12, 9:30AM on Zoom.

Final final transfer of Ashmont United Church



Helen Reed, Chairperson



Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister

2022 Northern Spirit Regional Council	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual *not final	2022 Budget	31-Aug-22 except highlighted figures	Projected	
Governance Revenue							
Governance and Shared Services (from :	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 189,583	\$ 325,000	To July 31
Shared Staff Grant Governance	\$ 67,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 76,375	\$ 67,000	\$ 47,483	\$ 81,400	additional salary grant
Annual Meeting Meal Fee	\$ 27,538	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
Misc	\$ 4,836	\$ 16,126	\$ 642	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,259	\$ 4,259	
	\$ 424,374	\$ 408,126	\$ 402,017	\$ 396,000	\$ 241,325	\$ 410,659	
Governance: Office and Staffing Expenses							
Office Expenses:							
Office Rent (Kirk Centre)	\$ 37,800	\$ 38,272	\$ 38,748	\$ 38,748	\$ 25,830	\$ 38,745	
Office Costs (supplies, phone, wifi, et	\$ 13,427	\$ 13,489	\$ 12,278	\$ 13,500	\$ 10,802	\$ 13,500	Bissel and Ashmont insurance
Shared Service GC	\$ 11,045	\$ 11,619	\$ 9,719	\$ 11,500	\$ 6,279	\$ 10,764.00	To July 31
Website	\$ 4,441	\$ 1,056	\$ 1,005	\$ 1,005	\$ 946	\$ 1,005	
Audit/Prof Services	\$ -	\$ 5,433	\$ 6,169	\$ 6,200	\$ 6,511	\$ 6,511	
Discretionary fund	\$ 2,232	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	
Shared Staff Costs							
Shared EM, Asst and Finance staff	\$ 84,499	\$ 85,972	\$ 88,761	\$ 92,000	\$ 62,442	\$ 103,472	GC decision/severance
Shared Staff Office Costs (office spac	\$ 10,418	\$ 10,232	\$ 11,483	\$ 3,500	\$ 518	\$ 1,000	
Shared Staff Travel Costs	\$ 6,213	\$ 1,118	\$ 1,209	\$ 7,000	\$ 1,059	\$ 7,000	
Staffing							
Regional Staff - Governance	\$ 137,315	\$ 140,040	\$ 144,144	\$ 147,143	\$ 87,702	\$ 150,346	GC decision
All Staff Con-Ed	\$ 2,467	\$ 1,706	\$ 313	\$ 3,500	\$ -	\$ 3,500	
All Staff Training Event	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500	travel costs high
Staff Travel/meals	\$ 4,597	\$ 367	\$ 378	\$ 4,000	\$ 197	\$ 2,000	
Governance: Committee and Structure							
Annual meeting	\$ 59,874	\$ 619	\$ 1,424	\$ 10,000	\$ 741	\$ 10,741	10K to fund
Governance Committee costs	\$ 12,478	\$ 6,867	\$ 1,829	\$ 12,000	\$ 609	\$ 12,000	
TOTAL GOVERNANCE	\$ 386,806	\$ 316,790	\$ 317,460	\$ 357,096	\$ 203,636	\$ 369,084	
Remainder of Governance Total	\$ 37,568	\$ 91,336	\$ 84,557	\$ 38,904	\$ 37,689	\$ 41,575	
Mission & Ministry (Mission & Service F	\$ 289,000	\$ 289,000	\$ 240,000	\$ 239,000	\$ 166,846	\$ 239,000	
Other M & M Income	\$ 12,030	\$ 3,503	\$ 387		\$ 345,859	\$ 345,859	DV and Barrhead
	\$ 301,030	\$ 292,503	\$ 240,387	\$ 239,000	\$ 512,705	\$ 584,859	
Mission and Ministry Costs for Region 2							
Staffing							
Salaries and benefits	\$ 71,755	\$ 109,219	\$ 113,157	\$ 116,252	\$ 69,471	\$ 119,093	GC Decision
Mission & Ministry							
Mission Support grants	\$ 150,300	\$ 139,000	\$ 138,750	\$ 150,000	\$ 132,349	\$ 150,000	To July 31
Clusters & Events, other grants*	\$ 24,122	\$ 30,260	\$ 7,266	\$ 20,000	\$ 282,381	\$ 287,381	*Disperse DV and Barrhead
Mission & Ministry Committee Costs	\$ 166	\$ 205	\$ 203	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,386	\$ 5,000	
	\$ 246,343	\$ 278,684	\$ 259,376	\$ 291,252	\$ 485,587	\$ 561,474	
Remainder of Mission & Ministry Total	\$ 54,687	\$ 13,819	\$ (18,989)	\$ (52,252)	\$ 27,118	\$ 23,385	
* 2020 Includes \$20000 grant for Kirk UC Centre							
Restricted/Designated Funds							
Revenue			\$ 200,715		\$ 39,424	\$ 39,424	
Expenses			\$ 25,086		\$ 23,500	\$ 23,500	
			\$ 175,629		\$ 15,924	\$ 15,924	
Combined Surplus (Deficit)			\$ 241,197	\$ (13,348)	\$ 80,731	\$ 80,884	

Shared GC
inc min 4083
it 2196
6279

Cont ed
Shannon \$ 500.00
Earl \$ 1,500.00
Leanne \$ 750.00
Julie \$ 500.00
\$ 3,250.00

Office - updated Aug 31 2022
general office
eqpt
phone 1571
supplies
recycling
insurance 8666
copier 390
bank fees 48
postage 66
membersh 60
10801

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Requests
Regional Council	3121			3000
Property	500	377		500
AMPC	610	303		500
Affirm ?				
Mission Support Grants Committee				
Nominations Committee				
Ministry Personnel Support Committee	5077	1240	580	1000
Pastoral Relations Commission	3132			5000
Pastoral Relations Liaison Training	2890			
Lay Leadership Support Committee	610		260	500
Community of Faith Support Committee		69		1500
Total Allocated to Committees	15940	1989	840	12000

Actual Committee/Event total Gov and M & M	22162	5913	1489	
Budget Gov and M & M Cttees			17000	17000

\$5000 was a grant

Pandemic declared in March 2020

includes cluster events

2022 estimates