

2023 Northern Spirit Annual Meeting Workbook Documents



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(May 25, 2023)

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A1. Memorials

We celebrate these lives and their ministries:

*Members of the Northern Spirit Regional Council who have passed away,
and whose names have been made known to the Regional Council Office
in the time since the last Regional Council Annual Meeting.*

The Rev. Ray Leppard	deceased February 19 th , 2023
The Rev. James Reeb	deceased December 22 nd , 2022
The Rev. Edward Scarlett	deceased January 6 th , 2023



In Memoriam: The Rev. Ray Leppard

1930 – 2023



Ray passed away peacefully on February 19, 2023, at 93 years old. Ray's impact on so many people will forever be remembered.

Ray Emerson Leppard was a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend.

Ray is lovingly remembered by his family: John (Mary Frances), Cathy, Stephen (Elizabeth), Sue (Rod); grandchildren, Rebecca (Scott), Malcolm (Ashley), Tyler, Rachel, Matthew, Hayley, Daniel; great-grandchildren, Eric and James. Ray was predeceased by his parents, Roy and Sarah; and his loving wife of 46 years, Enid.

Ray grew up in Edmonton and attended schools in the area and then the University of Alberta where he received two science degrees and worked at Imperial Oil for a short time. Ray realized that he had a greater calling and returned to school and after ordination he became a minister for the United Church of Canada for the next 40 years. Ray's passion and commitment to the church and the congregation was his life. Ray also had many other interests, Edmonton Eskimos/Elks, Oilers, playing in the Edmonton School Boys Alumni Band, summer holidays in Penticton, and anything that put him in the presence of his family. Family was everything to Ray. Family first, last, and always.

"He's not really dead. As long as we remember him."

– Dr. McCoy – Star Trek II The Wrath of Khan (1982)

In Memoriam: The Rev. James Reeb

1943 – 2022



The family of Rev. Jim Reeb of Wetaskiwin, Alberta, is deeply saddened to announce his passing on Dec. 22, 2022 at Wetaskiwin Hospital and Care Centre at the age of 79. Born Dec. 12, 1943 to Lloyd and Florence Reeb (nee Fairbairn) of Maidstone, Ontario, Jim grew up alongside Pike Creek with a great appreciation for his family, the outdoors and the value of hard work.

Nicknamed “The Blonde Brain” in the 1961 Essex High School Yearbook, Jim worked as a milkman and at Ford Motor Co. to pay his way through University of Windsor.

He graduated in 1965, the same year he married the love of his life, Donna (nee Stratford), who stole his heart the summer after high school when they attended Gesstwood United Church Camp. Together, Jim and Donna lovingly raised four children: Scott (Leanne), Troy (Maureen), Kendra and Kristen; in a life journey that took them across the country, making many friends and memories along the way.

Always active in the church, Jim was working for the federal government when he was called to serve God, graduating from Queen’s Theological College, Kingston, in 1979 and being ordained into the United Church of Canada. Supported by Donna and her musical gifts in the choir, Jim’s ministry spanned many years in Underwood (Bruce County) and Leamington, Ontario, as well as Westlock and Wetaskiwin, Alberta, where he retired in 2005.

A passionate advocate for the less fortunate, for mental health-care, and for our veterans, Jim served in many community roles, including as Padre of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 86 Wetaskiwin. He loved Canadian history, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the works of Stephen Leacock and W.O. Mitchell, and researching the family tree. More than anything else, he loved Donna, and they could be seen most days, winter or summer, walking hand-in-hand at By-the-Lake Park.

Rev. Reeb is survived by his wife and children, brothers Robert (Connie) and William (Victoria), brother-in-law William (Erna), grandchildren James, Rene,

Ben, Marcus, Audrey, Samuel, Chloe, Ethan and Emma, plus many cousins, nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff at Centennial Centre for Mental Health, Ponoka, for their care and support.

In Memoriam: The Rev. Edward Scarlett

1930 – 2023



Reverend Edward Joseph "Ed" Scarlett passed away on January 6, 2023, supported by his loving family and the spirits of others who loved him.

Ed is survived by his partner, Margaret Brown; his children, John, Marla (Patrick), Helen (Richard), Michael (Constance); and his adored grandchildren, Julien, Kassia, and Zoe. He is remembered fondly by his siblings, Patricia (Bill), Bob (Kathy), Linda, and other extended family.

He was predeceased by his sister, Marjorie (2009).

A2. Celebrants

We celebrate:

ADMITTED to the ORDER OF MINISTRY
from Another Denomination:

The Reverend Doctor Dorcas Kanana Muketha

RETIRING FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY:

The Reverend Catherine MacLean
The Reverend Nancy Steeves

RETIRING REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

The Reverend Earl Reaburn, Pastoral Relations Minister

Rev. Dr. Dorcas Kanana Muketha

*ADMITTED to the ORDER OF MINISTRY
from Another Denomination*



Rev. Dr. Dorcas Kanana Muketha is an ordained minister with the Methodist Church in Kenya. Currently serving Beaverlodge-Wembley- Hythe Pastoral Charge and a member of nominations committee within Northern Spirit Regional Council. Dorcas pursued undergraduate studies in Kenya Methodist University and her post graduate studies in Norway. While pursuing her post graduate education, she pioneered a new Congregation within the United Methodist Church of Norway and in her country Kenya. Dorcas also taught religious studies and theology in various universities in Kenya. She is gifted in offering pastoral care services, leading bible study, and singing. Her hobbies are hiking, reading, travelling, and mentorship. She is inspired by the words long coined by John Wesley: "The World is our Parish!" She is called to care and serve all both locally and globally.



The Rev. Dr. Catherine Faith MacLean

Retiring from Active Ministry, 2023

Please quote me: Ministry is the best gig in the known universe.

The congregation of St. Andrew's Truro, Nova Scotia, called me into the parlour. They asked me to consider an internship. I had, they said, a call to ministry and gifts for working in the church that were enhanced by my academic interests. They knew me, and I respected and trusted them, so I did. I loved it.

Church and ministry were not foreign to me: my father, George, was a minister as was my Uncle Cliff and my mother, Helen, had been a missionary in Japan. I knew the church and I loved the church. CGIT, leadership training camps, fun with a gaggle of girls and a youth group, openness to possibilities of concepts of God, divine realities in creation: even in the 70s, these were real. I had done my first degree at Dalhousie in languages and literature, my second degree at Harvard in Divinity, and I had completed the course work toward a PhD in comparative religion at U of T. I was ready to go to Japan for research, when I listened to my congregation and took an internship in Toronto. I loved it.

Settlement took me to Northern New Brunswick: Mi'kmaq, Acadian, English - and sugar maples. Earl Reaburn and I became friends, and on Saturday nights there were church suppers: his four churches, my three, and then the Anglican, the Presbyterian, the Romans, the Reserve: time to get acquainted Later, all totaled, the congregations and Presbytery threw us seven wedding showers. 57 cups and saucers. I loved that place.

I loved that place and the people, and I say that about each of the places I have served: Restigouche, Yellowknife, Canmore, St. Paul's Edmonton.

Our children, Andrew and Hannah, were born in Yellowknife. In the north we made lifelong friends, and we came to appreciate the dark. Winters in Yellowknife are long and gathering with friends in those long evenings I thought about the false dualities we have, including light and dark. Friendship blooms at dinner parties after sundown. I began to write about the profundity of trust in the night-time stories of scripture.

A call took us to Canmore where fine artists and musicians produced inspiration in the roughness of the Rockies. I learned about the sharp edge of ownership between nature and politics. I began to teach about the integration of place and soul.

St. Paul's Edmonton called and in the company of people whose faithful lives are shaped by science and academics I was encouraged to enrol in a doctorate. My pastoral and preaching ministry deepened. I discovered the vocation of a Doctor of the Church. With a PhD one teaches to benefit the world through the Academy; with a D.Min one teaches to benefit the world through the Church. I love the confluence of the academy and the church, where educated clergy are not erudite but integral. I studied for a D.Min in Preaching at McCormick and began to write academically, again, with a pastoral focus.

The *what* we believe has always fascinated me. In theology I am less concerned with right or wrong than with possibilities. There is always more to learn. There are imagination, creativity, and expression in the human soul and in faithful spiritual communities. Those possibilities blossom in pastoral, political, and planetary concerns. Together with John H. Young I wrote *Preaching the Big Questions: Doctrine Isn't Dusty*. Over the years I have published 40+ articles, forewords, hymns, and chapters.

I had a hand in writing *A Song of Faith*, and in preparing *Then Let Us Sing!* our upcoming hymnal. As much as I like writing, I like talking more and have led worship and preached in 70+ places, by call and for special occasions – and was the Guinness Book Official Witness for the Biggest Dodgeball Game in the World. I have enjoyed long pastorates and in them have seen the economic Trinity at play.

As to the *what* we believe, it's the responsibility and pleasure of bringing a Word of hope. The *what* is being called into community as a reminder of sacred joy, which is sometimes exuberant - and sometimes solemn. The *what* are the biggest questions of our day. It's a great time to be in leadership in the church; the world needs our thoughtful reflection and the company of the church.

In my sabbaticals I continued to work as a pastoral theologian; I am a two-time Louisville Grantee. I did research to bolster my congregational work, and to offer keynote addresses across the denomination and to teach at AST and VST. I enjoyed membership in the Academy of Homiletics and service as President of the Canadian Theological Society.

Among my cherished opportunities are my University of Alberta Peter Lougheed Leadership College Lecture "Normal Life: Thoughts on Diversity"; the 9 sermons in 10 days on Joshua and Judges as Berwick Camp Evangelist; the AST Aitken Workshop "Preaching the Good News in Troubled Times"; a World Council of Churches Rapporteur's report on challenging empire. These opportunities are cherished because they gave me occasion to speak from my soul about the critical significance of congregations and the godsend of pastoral attention.

Ministerial identity has been a major theme in my wider church work. Vocation, ministry, ecclesiology: these are central to the practice of the pastoral theologian. It's been a joy to gather colleagues at events such as the Theological Students Conference at the WCC in 1983, reVITALize, and reCall. Before and through covid John Young and I led webinars on the

theological doctrines that underpin our courage as ministers - and the crises, such as murder and pandemic, that call us to a practice of theological potency.

The joy of preaching is lively when it is based in the privilege of pastoral care. The pastorate was the fit for me because it's about the awe-inspiring ministry of listening to people in every time of their lives, no reason needed, simply as Gospel.

I conclude these remarks with gratitude to colleagues, congregations, friends, family, to the Spirit:

Grateful for God's loving action,
we cannot keep from singing.
Creating and seeking relationship,
in awe and trust,
we witness to Holy Mystery who is Wholly Love.

A Song of Faith

Thank you for reading this narrative.

Many blessings,
Catherine



Retirement Biography – Earl J. Reaburn

*Northern Spirit Pastoral Relations Minister,
retiring 2023*

May 2023

It is all a big mistake. I was supposed to be teaching French and Spanish all these years! I left the farm for Montreal to study at McGill University, but things didn't turn out the way I thought they would. After a few long weeks of being homesick and completely over my head in French classes filled with francophones, I returned to work with my father in his feed mill - dusty, hot, heavy work that quickly convinces one of the merits of higher education. But, during that time, a strange stirring occurred in the depth of my being. I showed up in my minister's study late one afternoon, and lifting his gaze from the books before him, he said, "I hope I am going to hear, what I think I am going to hear." And within a remarkably short time, I was an Intended Candidate for Ministry from Huron-Perth Presbytery in London Conference.

I had a rather innocuous and unremarkable time at Victoria College, and Emmanuel College. My preaching professor told me I deliver a sermon like a stand-up comedian. But that's where I met Stuart Jackson, Sandra Beardsall, John Pentland and other remarkable people with whom I would share this vocation. I was provided with a pickup truck for transportation on my first internship in Shell Lake, SK, and a room above the bar in the hotel. The bouncer had the room next door. They moved me out after my room was broken into the second time. It's where I began to appreciate that this ministry gig could be more adventuresome than I had imagined! When they were placing me for my second internship, I reminded them of the adventures on my first and offered that I was interested in exploring ministry in Quebec. The Eastern Townships are lovely in summer and the people in Waterloo, QC formed me enough to begin practicing pastoral ministry upon my Ordination in 1985.

I had a large map of Canada on my wall the night of the Transfer meetings, young and unattached as I was. On the day of the Settlement meeting it was a map of the Maritimes, which included the underbelly of the Gaspé Peninsula, and that is where I was placed to serve the Escuminac Pastoral Charge. I stayed with those wonderfully interesting people for 5 years. Thanks goodness for the support of my neighbouring ministry colleagues, Bev Brazier and Catherine MacLean. At first when people would ask if Catherine and I were going out we would truthfully answer that no we were just good friends. By the time we were going out, they had stopped asking. Sharing daily conversation with a theological pastor of renown is an intriguing delight! The Gaspé Coast is a beautiful country, covered with maples that turn the low mountains brilliant red and orange in the autumn. Ministry was challenging. The depth of poverty for some families was heartbreaking, as was the loneliness of elderly folk whose children had left for Alberta. But the most difficult part of ministry at that time were the discussions about whether one's sexual orientation was a consideration in one's eligibility for

ministry in the United Church. Hostility and suspicion burst into the life of even the smallest congregations. For those of us who had little experience in navigating the heated discussions before and the reactions following, 1988 had a profound effect on our relationships with our congregations and colleagues, and our future practice of ministry. I believe the United church has never acknowledged or recovered from the trauma of those years - a lingering ghost.

But Earl! You hate the cold! That was the reaction I got when I announced to my congregations that I and my now wife, Catherine, had accepted a call to Yellowknife. It is astonishingly cold, but the crisp, long nights bring the mystical Aurora. People draw together to share stories, make music, celebrate holy days and milestones, and for us life long friendships took root. Under the magical canopy on a night when it was *below* 40 below, our son Andrew was born, and on an equally cold and brilliant night two years and 4 days later, Hannah was born. PK² x 2!

A great lesson the north taught me is that everyone's survival depends on genuine caring for another's welfare, even the stranger. In that harsh environment, overlooking a person's need could prove fatal.

Our congregation in Yellowknife has 3 retired members. It was a collection of Presbyterians, Mennonites, Catholics, United and Orthodox. They were creative, artistic, adventuresome, teachers, civil servants. Among us were Marie Wilson and Nora Sanders, and René Fumuleau was a wise neighbour. Our predecessor was the much beloved Peter Short. Snowsuits waiting to be filled with small children lined the foyer after worship. The sense of community was vibrant and strong, the ministry rich and full. And then it was shaken by an underground blast at the wrong time of day. Nine miners who had crossed the picket line to work at the Giant Mine, rode down a shaft and tripped an intentionally set explosive which killed them all. And Yellowknife changed. Suspicion invaded everywhere. Our hurting congregation offered what grace and compassion it could muster to meet such a deep and painful time.

We saw them through the most intense part, and then under the guise of depleting finances, a new call came.

Everyone talks about the cold and dark of the north, but few mention the relentless sunlight and the mosquitoes! We packed our two young children into their carseats, handing each a fly swatter, and headed for the mountains, via Fort Simpson, Fort Nelson and the National Parks, arriving in a place we had not heard of until a few months before, a small town called Canmore.

We soon realized that we had landed in a hot-bed of Alberta politics. Eight years before this quiet coal-mining town had hosted the Nordic events for the 1988 Olympics, and had caught the eye of developers. The small frame company houses were now being quickly replaced with luxurious timbered residences and condominiums spread up the sides of the valley. Mining families felt the closeknit fabric of the community coming apart as long time neighbours moved away to more affordable towns. The School Board had been discussing year round schooling to accommodate the enrollment numbers, but 3 years later that discussion was irrelevant because young families moved away. This beautiful place to visit was a challenging place to live.

The historic 90 seat building was a meeting place where oldtimers and newcomers gathered with a shared commitment to be a significant presence in the community. This is where I learned that knowing when to give permission and get out of the way of people's gifts and graces is a helpful skill for ministry leadership. Creativity flowed from these artistic spirits: music, craftsmanship, dance, art, liturgy, and leadership. Roger MahPoy talked with us about wanting to change the racial label used to identify a prominent peak above the town and have it named for the railroad worker from China who had famously climbed it: Ha Ling Peak. He succeeded.

This is where we were on September 11, 2001. We had planned the first service in a new program called Evensong, to provide mid-week worship for those who worked in hotels and restaurants on Sunday mornings. But with the news of 9/11 the Main Street doors were opened and anyone who needed a sacred space to hold their confusion, shock and grief, could sense God's steadfast presence amidst the chaos.

Catherine accepted a Call to St. Paul's United Church in Edmonton. Our children were leaving very close friends in Canmore, so I was willing to be a stay-at-home Dad while they moved into a new home and city and school. One morning in November, the phone rang and I was asked if I could provide some support to the congregation at St. Andrew's in Spruce Grove. I found myself engaged in their journey to sort through the ethics of being loving Christian community with authenticity. Their music ministry and care for one another was inspiring.

On September 1, 2004, I began the position of Personnel Administration Coordinator for Alberta and Northwest Conference. When we left the Maritimes, we moved north and so I have always seen the Conference from that perspective. I know Yellowknife and Whitehorse better than I know Medicine Hat and Fort McLeod. That may have influenced the way I saw my role as well. For me, the people of the Pastoral Charges are the primary governance level of the church. The Regional Council and the General Council support the congregations from below, providing the platform on which our people become visionary, active players in unveiling God's hope and intention. Vision must come from the hearts of our people.

When I began there were 10 staff working for the Conference. In 2012, four positions were ended, including Pat Bourque, Paul DuVal and Joel DenHaan working in Presbyteries and congregations with whom I collaborated daily in my work. When our Executive Secretary, Lynn Maki, retired the Conference became a pilot project site, Bill Doyle and Shannon McCarthy were asked to provide Executive Secretary support part time and non-resident. The structural change in 2019 eliminated 2 more resident positions, and divided the Conference in two, meaning we had no default committee system to build upon as other Regional Councils did. And before we became familiar with how this might work, the Covid pandemic descended upon us. Kathy Jackson went above and beyond her role as Administrative Assistant, taking on responsibility for program work with grace and efficiency. No replacement was in place on the day she retired. It was a lonely office. Leanne Templeton was at one end of the city and I was at the other. Then, we were introduced to Chloe Burns, a most capable, curious and positive individual who has joined the Regional staff. Adapting to change for ten years takes its toll, and yet it has been an amazing honour to have served the people who are the United Church in the Conference and in

this Region. The trust I have been given, the faithful diligence for our ministry and mission which you have shown is truly grace revealed.

I am convinced that we have much to learn from the vibrant leadership and resourceful methods of the global Christian community, and I worked diligently to welcome highly capable ministry personnel from around the world to join us in our ministry and mission in this Region. And we are enriched by their gifts and graces.

I came into the role with a strong commitment to support congregations, lay leaders and ministry personnel in being faithful, mature, healthy, and safe communities where people could worship authentically, explore matters of the spirit freely, discover gifts and graces in themselves and others, receive forgiveness and acceptance, find healing and dignity, and offer compassion and hope to one another, their community and the world beyond. I continue to believe that if church staff can provide a platform upon which people in congregations can practice and keep practicing their faith, this happens and we see God's dream in our very midst. Our hope is in genuine caring for the welfare of each other. Jesus called it love.

I will not be able to preach at the Regional Worship service as I had hoped, but really, you, the people of Northern Spirit are my sermon. Go forward knowing that your presence is valued in unspoken ways, that God Spirit delights in you and as you touch lives Christ's compassionate love reaches to meet the world's pain. You are the good news I have to proclaim, and you are my hope for the times ahead.

Submitted with deep respect and great appreciation,
Rev. Earl J. Reaburn

We also celebrate and acknowledge those in our Region who retired in the years since we last gathered in person, listed here:

John Burrill (2022)

Denise Davis-Taylor (2022)

Kurt Katzmar (2022)

Henriette Kelker (2022)

Ian Kellogg (2022)

Peter Kugba-Nyande (2022)

Heather Koots (2022)

Wendy Molnar (2022)

Anne Telford (2022)

Kathy Jackson (2022)

David Lloyd-Pearce (2021)

Nancy Monteith (2021)

Stephen Sparks (2021)

Larry Wright (2021)

Mary Annan (2020)

David Wasyk (2020)

Edith Harnden (2020)

We also welcome these newest Northern Spirit Staff:

Chantal Winslow

Executive Assistant to Executive Minister, Shannon McCarthy

for: *Northern Spirit, Prairie to Pine, Living Skies*

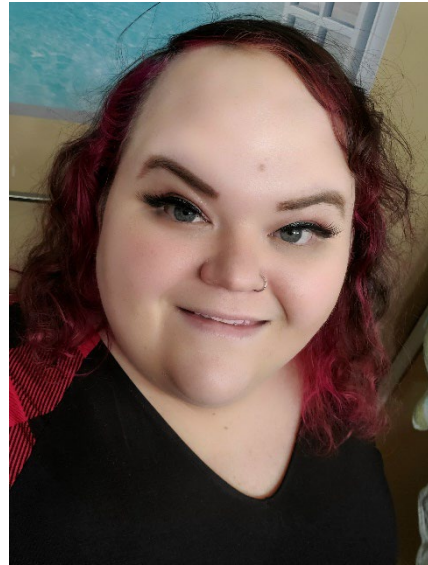
I joined Shannon McCarthy's team in November 2022, however, I have worked within the United Church for the last 7 years.

I grew up in London, ON and originally went to school to be a legal assistant. I worked in personal injury law for 5 years. After I moved to Alberta, I found myself seeking something completely different to put my time and energy into. That is when I stumbled upon St. David's United Church.

I fell in love at my interview and the congregation, staff and community became family to me. Working at St. David's allowed me to grow and learn so much. The United Church has been so welcoming and I am thrilled to continue my journey with Shannon, doing work for three regions.

I work remotely from Crossfield, AB where I live with my husband of 6 years and our fur babies: The Pasta Cats (Spaghetti, Fettucine and Penne) and our one-year-old puppy, Meatball.

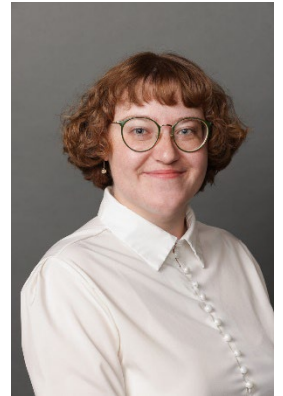
In my spare time I love to spend time with my family and friends. My passions are event planning, organization and facilitating connections within my community. I have founded and run a group in my small town based on forming friendships and connections. I also love to be creative. I am usually dabbling in a few different arts and crafts. Currently I have really been enjoying acrylic painting and ceramics. As well as reigniting my love for reading.



Chloe Burns

Office Administrator, *Northern Spirit*

Chloe joined the Northern Spirit staff in October, 2022, and started working full-time for the Region in January 2023. She lives and works in Treaty 6 territory, Edmonton, Alberta, and holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Alberta, where she majored in both English and Women's & Gender Studies. She has experience working in administration, events, education, and the arts. She has been singing, celebrating, and gathering with the United Church for her whole life. Chloe works with many of the communications and contact tools that help hold our Regional Council together, including the weekly newsletter, contact lists, website content, and responding to questions and requests.



DRAFT April 28 2023
Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report
Nominations Committee Report 2023
2022-2023 Members and Vacancies

Preface

On January 1, 2019, the Northern Spirit Regional Council of The United Church of Canada came into being. It is made up of Lay Representatives from Communities of Faith, Ministry Personnel (active and retired), and others, within a geography encompassing 1,567,442 km² and four Treaty territories: 6, 8, 10, 11.

There is room for you ...

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the United Church. We rely on the wisdom and talents that committed individuals bring to all areas of the life and work of Northern Spirit Regional Council. Whether it is a spiritual calling, or the willingness to offer gifts and abilities named by others, there are a variety of opportunities to “get involved”. Please consider where you might be called, and talk to others about where they might find a place in the Northern Spirit Regional Council.

The Nominations Committee attempts to follow the diversity parameters established by The United Church of Canada. Diversity, in terms of racial and ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, geographical location, vocation or economic status, makes us strong, by bringing a variety of important perspectives to work of the Regional Council.

A list of the Roles on the Executive, Commissions, Committees and Task Groups that currently carry out the mission and ministry of the Regional Council can be viewed or downloaded [here](#).

The Nominations Committee works throughout the year to find people from all over the Northern Spirit region to fill vacancies on the Executive, Commissions, Committees and Task Groups, with the use of a rolling nominations process, that seeks out and invites nominations for vacancies as they arise, rather than waiting to fill them via nominations from the floor of an Annual Meeting. Nominations are presented to the Regional Council Executive for approval, and a yearly report is presented to each Annual Meeting.

It is important to note that the Nominations Committee attempts to follow the diversity parameters established by The United Church of Canada, as well as the Calls to the Church by the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle. Therefore, to the best of our ability, we try to represent a diversity of identities, lenses and geography among nominees to Regional Council roles.

The following is a list of the people who have been involved in the work of the Regional Council for the 2021-2022 pastoral year. Where noted, there are vacancies (highlighted in **red**). If you, or someone you know, is interested in getting involved as the Regional Council continues to develop its mission and ministry, please complete the online [Expression of Interest and Nominations Form](#).

There are a variety of opportunities available.

DRAFT April 28 2023
Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report

2022-23 Members and Vacancies

Where do you feel called?

1. Annual Meeting Convenor

The Convenor of the Annual Meeting will preside at the next full meeting of the Regional Council.

Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Convenor, 2022 Annual Meeting	Helen Reed	2022	1 year, renewable	DM Camrose AB

2. Regional Council Executive

The usual term length for Executive members is two years, with an option for renewal.

The Chair-Elect will become Chairperson when the current Chairperson's term is completed.

Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Chairperson	Helen Reed	2022	2 years	DM Camrose AB
Chairperson-Elect			2 years	
Treasurer	Donna Kline	2021	2 years	Lay, Edmonton AB
Executive Minister	Shannon McCarthy	2019	Continuous	OM, Winnipeg MB
Member-at-Large	Mary Annan	2020	2 + 2 year	Retired OM, Edmonton AB
Member-at-Large	Peter Chynoweth	2020	2 + 2 years	Retired OM, Cochrane AB
Member-at-Large	Margaret-Anne Hall	2020	2 + 2 years	Lay, Fort Nelson BC
Member-at-Large	Leslie Penny	2021	2 years	Lay, Barrhead AB
Member-at-Large (3)	Vacant		2 years	Lay, OM, DM or DLM
Annual Meeting Convenor (2023)	Helen Reed	2021	1 year, renewable	DM Camrose AB Corresponding Member
Pastoral Relations Minister	Earl Reaburn	2019	Continuous	Lay, Edmonton AB Corresponding Member
Communications & Justice Minister	Julie Graham	2020	Continuous	Lay, Saskatoon SK Corresponding Member
Financial Administrator	Heather Dootoff	2019	Continuous	Lay, Regina SK Corresponding Member
Recorder/Executive Assistant	Chantal Winslow			
Community Capacity Development Coordinator	Charlene Burns			

DRAFT April 28 2023
Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report
2022-23 Members and Vacancies

Task Groups

Task Groups are established, by the Regional Council, or its Executive, to carry out particular work deemed necessary for the life and work of the Regional Council.

Affirming Task Group				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Chairperson	Linda McLaren	2020	Continuous	OM, Edmonton AB
Member	Cathy Kinsman	2020	Continuous	OM, Lloydminster AB
Member	Wilson MacLennan	2020	Continuous	Lay, Edmonton AB
Member	Louise Rogers	2020	Continuous	Lay, Sherwood Park AB
Member	Monica Rosborough	2020	Continuous	OM, Athabasca AB
Anti-Racism Task Group				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Wilson MacLennan	2022	Continuous	Lay, Edmonton AB
Member	Douglas Walfall, Paul	2022	Continuous	OM, Ft. Saskatchewan AB
Members (3)	Vacant			

2. Northern Spirit Regional Council Commissions

The work of the Commissions is reported to the Northern Spirit Regional Council through its Executive.

Pastoral Relations Commission				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Blaine Gregg	2019	3 years	OM, Edmonton/Leduc AB
Member	Linda McLaren	2021	3 years	OM, Jasper AB
Member	Rob McPhee	2023	3 years	Lay, Edmonton AB
Member	Susan Silverthorne	2021	3 years	Lay, Wetaskiwin AB
Member	Stephen Sparks	2020	3 years	OM, Bonnyville AB
Member	Vacant		3 years	Layperson

DRAFT April 28 2023
Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report
2021-2022 Members and Vacancies

Committees of the Pastoral Relations Commission

Communities of Faith Support Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Wendy Galloway	2019	1 year, renewable	OM, Redwater AB
Member	Steven Johann	2019	1 year, renewable	OM, Edmonton AB
Member	Chang Lee	2019	1 year, renewable	OM, Onoway AB
Member	Alistair MacKay	2023	1 year, renewable	Lay, Fort McMurray, AB
Member	Helen Reed	2021	1 year, renewable	DM, Camrose AB
Lay Leadership Support Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Gaie Goin	2021	1 year, renewable	Lay, Wetaskiwin AB
Member	Linda Roberts	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, Spirit River AB
Member	Lesley Verdin	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, Edmonton AB
Member	Trudy Tanner	2021	1 year, renewable	Lay, Hinton AB
Ministry Personnel Support Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Deborah Brill	2020	1 year, renewable	OM, Lamont AB
Member	Anna Constantin	2022	1 year, renewable	OM, Edmonton AB
Member	Dirk Jessen	2019	1 year, renewable	OM, Edmonton AB
Member (3)	Vacant		1 year, renewable	Lay, OM, DM or DLM
Property Commission				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Chairperson	Martha Dawson	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, Grande Prairie AB
Secretary	Erin White	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, Mewassin AB
Member	Jim Belliveau	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, Cold Lake AB
Member	Bob Miller	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, Edmonton AB
Member	Gregory Parker	2019	1 year, renewable	OM, Provost AB
Member	Susan Waldie	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, St. Albert AB

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Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report
2022-2023 Members and Vacancies

3. Northern Spirit Regional Council Committees

Annual Meeting Planning Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Chairperson	Deborah Hoekstra	2020, 2021, 2022	1 year, renewable	OM, Edmonton AB
Chairperson-Elect	Vacant		1 year, renewable	Lay, OM, DM or DLM
Annual Meeting Convenor (2022)	Helen Reed	2022	1 year, renewable	DM Camrose AB
Executive Chairperson	Helen Reed	2022	2 years	DM, Camrose AB
Member	Steven Johann	2022	1 year, renewable	DM,
Member	Dorcas Muketha	2022	1 year, renewable	Admission
Member	Dianne Nikiforuk	2022	1 year, renewable	Lay
Member	Devyn Waldie	2022	1 year, renewable	lay
Staff Support				
Executive Minister	Shannon McCarthy			
Treasurer	Heather Dootoff			
NSRC Admin	Chloe Burns			
Exec. Admin	Chantal Winslow			
Justice & Communication	Julie Graham			
Mission Support Grants Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Mary Annan	2020	1 year, renewable	Retired OM, Edmonton AB
Member	Peter Chynoweth	2020	1 year, renewable	Retired OM, Cochrane AB
Member	Leslie Penny	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, Barrhead AB
Member	Susan Waldie	2019	1 year, renewable	Lay, St. Albert AB
Nominations Committee				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Brenda Simon	2020	1 year, renewable	OM, Fairview AB
Member	Dorcas Muketha	2022	1 year, renewable	OM, Beaverlodge AB
Member	Wilson MacLennan	2022	1 year, renewable	Lay Edmonton

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Northern Spirit Regional Council
Nominations Committee Report

Youth Council				
Position	Name	Elected	Term	Comments
Member	Scott Reynolds	2020	1 year, renewable	OM, Irma/Viking AB
Member	Deidre Fuder	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, Wainwright AB
Member	Lorraine Nyarota	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, Leduc AB
Member	Miriam Waldie	2020	1 year, renewable	Lay, Grande Prairie AB

4. General Council Commissioners

General Council Commissioners serve for a term of three years.

Commissioners to the 44th General Council (2022) were elected at the 3rd Annual Regional Council Meeting in May 2021.

Lay Commissioners	Order of Ministry Commissioners
Daniel Chon (Lay, Edmonton AB) Lloyd Henderson (Lay, Yellowknife NT) Amy Kaler (Lay, Edmonton AB) Sarah Waldie (Lay, Grande Prairie AB) Bruce West (Lay, Sherwood Park AB)	Mary Annan (OM-Retired, Edmonton AB) M.P.T. Basele (OM, Wainwright AB) Peter Chynoweth (OM-Retired, Cochrane AB) Helen Reed (DM, Camrose AB) Scott Reynolds (OM, Irma/Viking AB) Leigh Sinclair (OM, Leduc AB) Gord Waldie (OM, Grande Prairie AB)

Notes:

OM=Ordained Minister, DM=Diaconal Minister, DLM=Designated Lay Minister, Lay=Lay Representative

28-April-2023

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL GATHERING SCHEDULE – DRAFT – MAY 2023

Thursday, May 4 th		Friday, May 5 th		Saturday, May 6 th		Sunday, May 7 th	
9:30	Set up Registration	8:45	Gathering Music	8:45	Gathering Music	9:00	Celebration of Ministry preparation
		9:00	Opening Worship (Red Dress Day)	9:00	Opening Worship	10:00	Celebration of Ministry Service
		9:15	Theme: Bold Discipleship	9:15	Workshops		
11:00	Orientation of registers	10:15	- Break	10:15	- Break		
	Orientation of Table Group Facilitators	10:45	LISTEN/DISCUSS: Indigenous Church Remit	10:45	Workshops		
	Worship Leaders Meeting	11:45	Admission Introduction: <i>Dorcas Muketha</i> Announcements				
11:30	Registration Opens	12:00	Grace & Lunch Choir Rehearsal	12:00	Grace & Lunch Choir Rehearsal	12:00	Grace and Lunch Reception
1:30	Welcome/Courtesies Introduction of Guests & Hosts; Orientation to Space Treaty Acknowledgement Greetings from Moderator (video)	1:30	Q & A Reports: Nominations who/what/how General Council Report	2:00	DECIDE: Indigenous Remit & AFFIRM Proposal		
		2:00	Theme: Daring Justice	2:30	Workshops		
2:30	Opening Worship (45min)	3:00	- Break	3:30	- Break		
3:15	- Break	3:30	LISTEN/DISCUSS: Affirm Proposal	4:00	Closing Words Table Groups Closing Time		
3:30	Introduction of the Theme	4:30	Reports: Pastoral Relations Office of Vocation Philanthropy				
4:00	Overview of Agenda and Business Process: Listen, Discuss, Decide						
4:45	Q & A Reports: Executive Minister NS Council Executive Finance	5:00	Announcements & Singing	5:00	- Break		
5:30	Blessing & Supper	5:30	Blessing & Supper	6:00	Banquet		
7:00	Theme: Deep Spirituality Connecting/Lamenting	7:00	Clustering & Networking Groups	7:30	Celebration of Ministries <i>Honouring of Retirees</i>		
8:00	Vespers			9:00	Reset for Sunday		

4th ANNUAL MEETING OF NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL ENABLING MOTIONS

1. **Roll of the Regional Council:** that the Roll of the Regional Council for the purposes of the Third (3rd) Annual Regional Council meeting be:
 - i. the members of the Order of Ministry within the bounds served by the regional council; and
 - ii. other ministry personnel in a covenantal relationship with a community of faith within the bounds of the regional council
 - iii. lay members of the regional council are members of the United Church who are not ministry personnel and who are elected by communities of faith. (The Manual 2023, C.1.1 & C.1.2)
 - iv. members-at-large, lay members within the Regional Council who have been appointed as members necessary for the work of the Regional Council by the Regional Council Executive and who have not been elected by their community of faith.
 2. **Corresponding Members:** that all invited guests, registered guests, and staff be corresponding members of this Regional Council meeting, with voice but not vote.
 3. **The Bounds of the Council:** that the Bounds of the Regional Council Annual Meeting be Camrose United Church, the virtual meeting room and the telephone connections to that meeting space.
 4. **Minimum Number of Members at Meetings:** that the Regional Council may meet only if a minimum number of members are present. If there are 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present; and there must be at least one ministry personnel and one lay member who is not ministry personnel present. Corresponding members are not counted for this purpose. (The Manual 2023, C.4.3)
 5. **Limits to Debate:** that without the permission of the Council, no member shall speak more than once on any proposal or amendment; and that speeches be limited to two minutes per person on each proposal, except at the discretion of the Convenor.
 6. **Business Committee:** that the Business Committee for this Regional Council Annual Meeting be the members of the Regional Council Meeting Planning Committee, including Steven Johann who is designated as the Business Convenor, and plus Blaine Gregg who is designated as the Parliamentarian.
 7. **Rules of Debate and Order:** that the rules of debate and order for parliamentary debate be those spelled out in the Appendix of The Manual 2023, Pages 191-194; and that, for any point not covered in such Appendix, the parliamentary rules accepted in Canada (Bourinot) shall be followed.
 8. **Unfinished Business:** that all unfinished business be referred to the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive.
 9. **Minutes:** that the Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Northern Spirit Regional Council be approved as distributed in the online workbook.
 10. **Reports:** that the verbal and written reports be accepted as presented.
-

**Minutes of Northern Spirit Regional Council
Via Zoom
May 4 & May 6, 2021**

Session 1: Listen & Discuss

OPENING	Gord Waldie, Chairperson for the Regional Council Executive and Convenor of the 3rd Annual Meeting of Northern Spirit Regional Council, called the meeting of about 150 participants to order at 7:00 pm, for the purposes of worship, study, and business.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TREATY TERRITORY	Gord Waldie acknowledged that this gathering was taking place on land known as Treaty 6, 8 and 11 and that “some come from families that have been here for a short time and others from families that have been here for centuries”.
WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS	In his opening remarks, Gord spoke of the fifteen months of the pandemic and of the new restrictions announced just today. He gave thanks for God and for that presence being with us through it.
INTRODUCTION TO VOTING PROCESS	Gord then invited Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, to present the enabling motions. Shannon began with a practice vote. In response to the question, “Do we want to let Mari (Shannon’s puppy) out of the crate?”, delegates were asked to raise their electronic hands to vote. Participants voted and Mari was let out of the crate for a quick visit.
PROCEDURAL/ ENABLING MOTIONS 001-2021	<p>Moved: Shannon McCarthy Seconded: Katharine Moore CARRIED</p> <p>That Northern Spirit Regional Council accept the following Enabling Motions #1-10 for this Regional Council meeting:</p> <p>1. Roll of the Regional Council: that the Roll of the Regional Council for the purposes of the Third (3rd) Annual Regional Council meeting be:</p> <p>i. the members of the Order of Ministry within the bounds served by the regional council; and</p> <p>ii. other ministry personnel in a covenantal relationship with a community of faith within the bounds of the regional council</p> <p>iii. lay members of the regional council are members of the United Church who are not ministry personnel and who are elected by communities of faith. (The Manual 2021, C.1.1 & C.1.2)</p> <p>iv. members-at-large, lay members within the Regional Council who have been appointed as members necessary for the work of the Regional Council by the</p>

Regional Council Executive and who have not been elected by their community of faith.

2. Corresponding Members: that all invited guests, registered guests, and staff be corresponding members of this Regional Council meeting, with voice but not vote.

3. The Bounds of the Council: that the Bounds of the Regional Council Annual Meeting be the virtual meeting room and the telephone connections to that meeting space.

4. Minimum Number of Members at Meetings: that the Regional Council may meet only if a minimum number of members are present. If there are 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present; and there must be at least one ministry personnel and one lay member who is not ministry personnel present. Corresponding members are not counted for this purpose. (The Manual 2021, C.4.3)

5. Limits to Debate: that without the permission of the Council, no member shall speak more than once on any proposal or amendment; and that speeches be limited to two minutes per person on each proposal, except at the discretion of the Convenor.

6. Business Committee: that the Business Committee for this Regional Council Annual Meeting be the members of the Regional Council Meeting Planning Committee, plus Katharine Moore who is designated as the Business Convenor, and Blaine Gregg who is designated as the Parliamentarian.

7. Rules of Debate and Order: that the rules of debate and order for parliamentary debate be those spelled out in the Appendix of The Manual 2021, Pages 190-194; and that, for any point not covered in such Appendix, the parliamentary rules accepted in Canada (Bourinot) shall be followed.

8. Proposals to the General Council: that, if the Regional Council does not agree with a proposal where the General Council is the court of action, it will not be sent on to General Council unless a separate motion to send it on is made and passed.

9. General Council Commissioners: that the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive will have the authority to elect additional Commissioners to the 44th General Council (2022), if necessary, in order to fulfill the slate of eleven (11) Regional Council-elected Commissioners, as set by the General Council.

10. Unfinished Business: that all unfinished business be referred to the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive.

11. Minutes: that the Minutes of the Inaugural and the 2nd Annual Meetings of the Northern Spirit Regional Council be approved as distributed in the online workbook.

12. Reports: that the verbal and written reports be accepted as presented.

ANNUAL MEETING PLANING COMMITTEE	Gord introduced Katharine Moore, Business Convenor, and Deborah Hoekstra, Chairperson for the Annual Meeting Planning Committee. Deborah acknowledged the members of her committee: Gord Waldie, Sharon Adams, Shylo Rosborough, Linda McLaren, Monica Rosborough, Stuart Jackson, Julie Graham and Kathy Jackson.
OPENING WORSHIP	Gord then invited the Affirming Task Group to lead the Opening Worship. The scripture passage from Acts 8:26-40; the story of the Ethiopian Eunuch was used.
BUSINESS	Gord Waldie thanked Linda and the Affirming Task Group, and the business portion began, a time for listening and discussing proposals before the vote to be held the following Thursday night, May 6.
Election of Commissioners	Delegates were advised that Thursday night would also include the election of 11 Commissioners to the 44th General Council, in addition to Gord Waldie, who was elected by virtue of his office as Annual Meeting Convenor. At least, one third of the 12 delegates (4 people) must be Ministry Personnel and at least one third must be lay people. Up to 11 people could be selected from the ballot distributed through JotForm.
PROPOSALS	Gord invited Katharine Moore to call for introductions to each of the five proposals. The texts of the Proposals can be viewed in Annual Meeting Materials section of the Workbook posted on the Annual Meeting page of the Regional Council web site (https://northernspiritrc.ca/news/regional-council-meeting/)
Community of Faith Meeting Quorum	The first proposal, Community of Faith Meeting Quorum, was introduced by Blaine Gregg. It proposed that the 44th General Council consider that an addition be made to section B.5.5 of The Manual to add attendance of the Community of Faith Ministry Personnel or Pastoral Charge Supervisor to the list of persons required for quorum at a meeting of the Community of Faith.
Commemorate Emancipation Sunday	The second proposal, Commemorate Emancipation Sunday, was introduced by Paul Walfall. It proposed that the 44th General Council designate the first Sunday in August each year to be observed as Emancipation Sunday in The United Church of Canada, and that Communities of Faith and Regional Councils be encouraged to share worship resources and liturgies developed for this event.
Response from the Northern Spirit Regional Council to the Incidences of Racial Violence and Hatred in Alberta	The third proposal, Response from the Northern Spirit Regional Council to the Incidences of Racial Violence and Hatred in Alberta, was also introduced by Paul Walfall. It proposed that the Executive write a letter decrying the recent cases of racism and hatred in the province, that it create an Anti-Racism Task Group to encourage and educate the Regional Council and Communities of Faith to seek ways to live out the church's commitment to becoming intercultural and anti-racist, to work with the General Council Anti-Racism Common Table, seek to network with other organizations working on anti racism within the boundaries of the Regional Council

and beyond and encourage communities of faith to do the same, and to report to the next meeting of the Regional Council on its work.

Expressing Deep Concerns with the Social Studies Proposed Alberta K-6 Curriculum

The fourth proposal, Expressing Deep Concerns with the Proposed Alberta K-6 Curriculum, was introduced by Erin Hickman. It proposed that the Regional Council send a public letter to the government of Alberta expressing grave concerns with the curriculum as proposed and deep disappointment with the failure to live up to the Joint Commitment to Action, that it encourage Communities of Faith and the people of the Regional Council to send their own letters of concern to the government of Alberta and local school boards, and that it make appropriate supporting resources for education and discernment available.

Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council to End a Pastoral Relationships

The fifth and final proposal, Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council to End a Pastoral Relationship, was introduced by Helen Reed. It proposed that the 44th General Council reconsider the Pastoral Relations policy of The United Church of Canada to include criteria and authority, allowing the Regional Council to end a pastoral relationship without undue delay when it is deemed to be dysfunctional by the Regional Council.

“Table” Group Discussion

After the proposals were introduced, the delegates were placed into small groups to discuss the proposals. Groups were asked to email their questions for clarification or suggestions for change, to the Regional Council Office, for submission to the Business Committee for review and edit of the proposals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLOSING

As the Session neared its end, Deborah Hoekstra reminded folks to bring their Communion elements for worship on Thursday evening. Gord reviewed the voting process to elect Commissioners to the 44th General Council. Cathy Kinsmen, a member of the Affirming Task Group, closed the meeting with prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

Gord Waldie, Convenor, adjourned the Session at 9:34 pm.

Session 2: Decide

WELCOME

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.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

He acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on land known as Treaties 6, 8 and 11.

OPENING WORSHIP

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

**INTRODUCTION OF
STAFF**

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.

**REVIEW OF BUSINESS
PRACTICES**

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.

**WELCOME FROM THE
MODERATOR**

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 place 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.

REPORTS

Britt Aerhart, Past Convenor of the Annual Meeting, took over the chair to allow Gord to give his report.

**Convenor of the
annual meeting**

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.

Executive Minister

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.

Treasurer

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.

Stewardship

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.

PROPOSAL DECISIONS

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. Consideration was given to each proposal individually, with a short time for discussion. The following decisions were made by the Regional Council.

Response from the Northern Spirit Regional Council to the Incidences of Racial Violence and Hatred in Alberta

002/2021

**Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Paul Douglas
That Northern Spirit Regional Council**

- 1. instruct its Executive to write a letter to communities of faith decrying the recent cases of racism and hatred within the bounds of Northern Spirit Regional Council; and**
- 2. Create an Anti-Racism Task Group to:**
 - a) Encourage and educate the Regional Council and Communities of Faith to seek ways to live out the church's commitment to becoming intercultural and anti-racist;**
 - b) To work with the General Council Anti-Racism Common Table;**
 - c) Seek to Network with other organizations working on anti racism within the boundaries of the Regional Council and beyond, and encourage communities of faith to do the same;**
 - d) Report to the next meeting of Northern Spirit Regional Council on its work.**

CARRIED

Expressing Deep Concerns with the Social Studies Proposed Alberta K-6 Curriculum

003-2021

**Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Eric Hickman
That Northern Spirit Regional Council**

- 1. Through its Executive send a public letter to the government of Alberta, with a copy to Yellowknife United Church, expressing its grave concerns with the curriculum as proposed, and deep disappointment with the failure to live up to the Joint Commitment to Action; and**
- 2. That the Regional Council encourage communities of faith and the people of the Regional Council to send their own letters of concern.**

CARRIED

**Proposal 1:
Community of Faith
Meeting Quorum**

004-2021

**Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Deborah Hoekstra
That Northern Spirit Regional Council agrees with Proposal 1: "Community of Faith Meeting Quorum" and will therefore pass it on to General Council 44 for action.**

CARRIED

Proposal 2:
Commemorate
Emancipation Sunday
005-2021

Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Deborah Hoekstra
That Northern Spirit Regional Council agrees with Proposal 2: “Commemorate Emancipation Sunday” and will therefore pass it on to General Council 44 for action.
CARRIED

Proposal 3:
Criteria and Authority
for a Regional Council
to End a Pastoral
Relationships
006-2021

Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Deborah Hoekstra
That Northern Spirit Regional Council agrees with Proposal 5: “Criteria and Authority for a Regional Council to end a Pastoral Relationship” and will therefore pass it on to General Council 44 for action.
CARRIED

All three were agreed to, and therefore passed on to the 44th General Council for action.

ELECTION OF
COMMISSIONERS
007-2021

Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Shannon McCarthy
That Northern Spirit Regional Council approve the following as the Commissioners for General Council 44:
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*.
And the following as Alternates for General Council 44: Linda Marcotte and Deborah Hoekstra.
(*indicates Lay Members)
CARRIED

ELECTRONIC BALLOTS
008-2021

Moved by Katharine Moore and seconded by Shannon McCarthy
That the electronic ballots be destroyed.
CARRIED

CLOSING WORSHIP

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 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 Sprit 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.

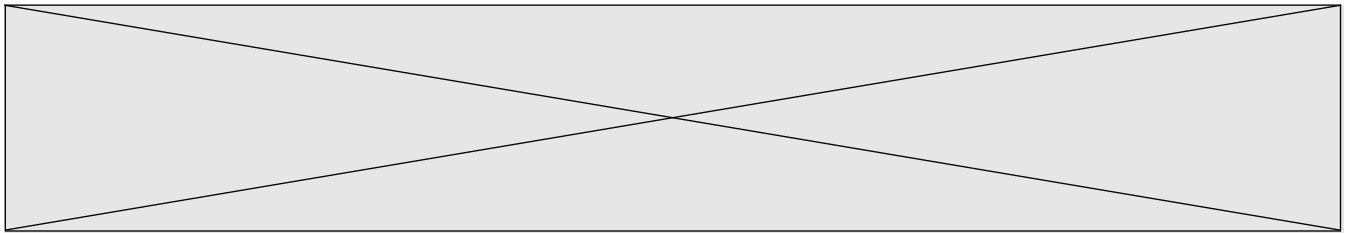
ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

ADJOURNEMENT

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.

SIGNATURES



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

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Winnipeg MB R3B 3K6 Canada

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive of Northern Spirit Regional Council

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Spirit Regional Council (the "Council"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2022 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council as at December 31, 2022 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Matters

We have not audited, reviewed or otherwise attempted to verify the accuracy or completeness of the schedule on page 17 of the Council's financial statements.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Council or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Council's financial reporting process.



Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Council to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

BDO Canada LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Winnipeg, Manitoba
May 2, 2023

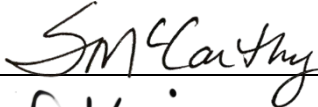

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31

	2022				2021	
	Externally Restricted Funds				Total	Total
	Operating Fund	Ann Mazur Fund	Other Externally Restricted	Internally Restricted		
Assets						
Current Assets						
Cash	\$ 223,014	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 223,014	\$ 174,332
Short-term investments (Note 3)	1,049,637	-	-	-	1,049,637	937,050
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	997	-	-	-	997	1,856
Accrued interest	9,452	-	-	-	9,452	3,565
Interfund accounts	(921,888)	172,078	226,671	523,139	-	-
	361,212	172,078	226,671	523,139	1,283,100	1,116,803
Long-term investments (Note 3)	-	-	137,848	-	137,848	135,338
Loans receivable (Note 5)	77,292	16,000	-	-	93,292	49,576
	\$ 438,504	\$ 188,078	\$ 364,519	\$ 523,139	\$ 1,514,240	\$ 1,301,717
Liabilities and Net Assets						
Current Liabilities						
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 11,269	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,269	\$ 9,715
Due to related parties (Note 6)	3,721	-	-	-	3,721	1,495
	14,990	-	-	-	14,990	11,210
Net assets	423,514	188,078	364,519	523,139	1,499,250	1,290,507
	\$ 438,504	\$ 188,078	\$ 364,519	\$ 523,139	\$ 1,514,240	\$ 1,301,717

Approved by the Regional Council Executive:

 Executive Minister
 Treasurer

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31

					2022	2021
	Budget	Operating Fund	Externally Restricted	Internally Restricted	Total	Total
Revenue						
United Church of Canada grants	\$ 631,000	\$ 655,775	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 655,775	\$ 641,375
Donations	-	414,548	38,449	35,253	488,250	170,031
Investment Income	-	10,068	9,710	-	19,778	13,205
Other Income	4,000	1,196	-	-	1,196	-
Receipts - internally restricted	-	-	-	-	-	2,515
	635,000	1,081,587	48,159	35,253	1,164,999	827,126
Expenditures						
Grants and payments to programs	170,000	459,662	50,312	10,882	520,856	172,758
Annual meeting	10,000	958	-	-	958	1,424
General fund	42,805	24,473	-	-	24,473	20,798
Office and administration	53,648	48,101	-	-	48,101	58,978
Staffing costs	371,895	358,222	-	-	358,222	347,961
	648,348	891,416	50,312	10,882	952,610	601,919
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures before other item	(13,348)	190,171	(2,153)	24,371	212,389	225,207
Other Item						
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	-	-	(3,646)	-	(3,646)	15,993
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	\$ (13,348)	\$ 190,171	\$ (5,799)	\$ 24,371	\$ 208,743	\$ 241,200

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended December 31

	2022				2021
	Operating Fund	Externally Restricted	Internally Restricted	Total	Total
Net Assets , beginning of year	\$ 258,343	\$ 558,396	\$ 473,768	\$ 1,290,507	\$ 1,049,307
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	190,171	(5,799)	24,371	208,743	241,200
Internal transfers (Note 8)	(25,000)	-	25,000	-	-
Net Assets , end of year	\$ 423,514	\$ 552,597	\$ 523,139	\$ 1,499,250	\$ 1,290,507

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended December 31	2022	2021
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 208,743	\$ 241,200
Adjustments for		
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	4,001	(15,993)
	<u>212,744</u>	<u>225,207</u>
Adjustments for non-cash items		
Accounts receivable	859	2,774
Accrued interest	(5,887)	5,343
Loan receivable	(43,716)	12,466
Due from related parties	-	(2,072)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,554	278
Due to related parties	2,226	(4,192)
	<u>167,780</u>	<u>239,804</u>
Cash Flows from Investing and Financing Activities		
Purchase of investments	(119,098)	(221,395)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	48,682	18,409
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	174,332	155,923
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	\$ 223,014	\$ 174,332

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

1. Nature of the Operations

The Northern Spirit Regional Council (the "Council") is composed of Communities of Faith of The United Church of Canada within Northern Alberta, and parts of Northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. The Regional Council of The United Church of Canada is a decision making body responsible to serve and support Communities of Faith within its bounds and provide necessary oversight. The Council is a registered charity under the Income Tax Act. It is exempt from income taxes under section 149(1) of the Income Tax Act.

The purpose of the Council is:

- Provide support advice and services to Communities of Faith in the areas of human resources, property, archives, leadership training.
- Provide oversight of Communities of Faith and supporting them in their life and work and ensure compliance with the policies and polity of the United Church.
- To ordain and commission members of the order of ministry, recognize Designated Lay Minister, and celebrate admission and re-admissions into the order of ministry.
- To speak both pastorally and prophetically while providing education and advocacy on issues that affect the health of our communities.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Fund Accounting

The Council follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions. Interest revenue is recognized as income when the Council becomes entitled to such earning.

Externally Restricted Funds

Ann Mazur Memorial Fund

In 1982, the Conference received a bequest from the Estate of Ann Mazur with the stipulation that the funds were to be used to provide capital assistance for new church development. Accordingly, the bequest was used to establish the Ann Mazur Memorial Fund. Loans are made from the fund for specific capital projects and are repayable over a period of up to 10 years from the date of the loan, with interest rates up to 5%. This fund was transferred from the Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Externally Restricted Designated Funds (continued)

The Council has received certain contributions which are to be used for specific purposes as instructed by the donors. Interfund accounts are due on demand and non-interest bearing.

Archive Trust Fund

In 2001, the Archive Trust Fund was set up to receive grant funding from the Canadian Council of Archives to assist in the reduction of the current backlog of United Church archives and continue the conversation of the previous descriptive system to the national archival standard. From 2005 to 2014, it received two percent of net proceeds, to the maximum of \$5,000, of the sale of a property after a congregation has ceased to exist, for the preservation and maintenance of archival records. Since 2015, the portion has increased to 5% with no maximum. It has also received donations from individuals. This fund was transferred from the Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada.

Emergency Relief Trust Fund

This fund was established to receive donations for the assistance of those affected by recent emergencies in the Province of Alberta. During 2018, funds were disbursed on the authority of one of the Conference Co-Executive Secretaries to provide recovery assistance and post-disaster counselling and pastoral support for the people of Fort McMurray affected by the wildfire there in 2016. This fund has been made available to help Communities of Faith affected by the pandemic. This fund was transferred from the Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada.

Reclaiming the Mission Fund

This fund was made available to each Conference by the General Council Executive for the purposes of raising awareness and promotion of the Mission and Service Fund, encouraging wider use of stewardship materials and the development thereof, and education/awareness building for ministry personnel in areas of Stewardship and Mission and Service. The overarching intent is to realize an increase in revenue generation for the Mission and Service Fund to build a more secure base for the ministry and mission of the United Church of Canada. This fund was transferred from the Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada.

Special Conflict Resolution Trust Fund

This fund was established in December 2018 by an allocation from the Conference Net Assets to cover expenditures relating to a specific conflict involving ministry personnel at a pastoral charge. As the pastoral charge is located in the Northern Spirit Region at January 1, 2019, the balance of this fund was transferred to the Northern Spirit Regional Council. Once the issue has been resolved, the Northern Spirit Regional Council will transfer 50% of any funds remaining to the Chinook Wind Regional Council. This fund was transferred from the Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church of Canada.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Externally Restricted Designated Funds (continued)

Student Bursary Fund

In 2021 the Alberta and Northwest Conference Student Bursary Fund Society was voluntarily dissolved and transferred their assets to the Northern Spirit Regional Council. The Northern Spirit Regional Council will use these funds to continue to support candidates for ministry in Northern Spirit Regional Council and Chinook Winds Regional Council. A student can be in the ordained, diaconal or lay ministry educational streams as well as candidates for admission from other denominations.

Regional Archive Fund

The Regional Archive Fund was established as the Council requires Communities of Faith which are disbanding to make a contribution to the cost of operating the archives. Once the Archive Trust is spent, Northern Spirit will continue to fund the share of archive costs from the Regional Archive Fund.

Internally Restricted Funds

Conflict Resolution Trust Fund

The Conflict Resolution Trust Fund was established to cover costs associated with conflicts involving Communities of Faith and Ministry personnel.

Pastoral Relations Emergency Fund

The Pastoral Relations Emergency Fund was established to assist Communities of Faith and ministry personnel with costs incurred during personnel emergencies.

Legacy Fund

This fund was created from money transferred from the former Conference and Presbyteries. Money from this fund will be available for grants in the area of mission and ministry work, criteria and procedures to be established by the Legacy Support Committee.

Contingency Reserve Fund

The fund is to help the Council strive to maintain sufficient operating reserves to provide for significant unanticipated costs, including, but not limited to, natural disasters or other catastrophic events, lawsuits or other legal or regulatory proceedings, and major changes to the governance and/or funding policies of The United Church of Canada.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Internally Restricted Funds (continued)

Annual Meeting Fund

The fund is to help the Council budget for the in-person annual meetings to be held every three years.

Revenue Recognition

The Council follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions.

Grants and Assessments - These revenues are recognized as revenue in the period for which the assessment is made based on the approved budget of the Council.

Interest - Interest revenue is recognized as income when the Council becomes entitled to such earnings.

Contributions - Contributions restricted for particular purposes are recognized as revenue in the related fund when received.

Donations - Donation revenue is recorded when received. Donation revenue received for specific purposes is restricted and will be used at the discretion of the Council. The Council's practice is to allocate these funds as per the donor's request.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in operations. All other financial instruments are reported at cost or amortized cost less impairment, if applicable. Financial assets are tested for impairment when changes in circumstances indicate the asset could be impaired. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale or issue of financial instruments are expensed for those items remeasured at fair value at each statement of financial position date and charged to the financial instrument for those measured at amortized cost.

Post Retirement Benefit Plan

The employees of the Council participate in a defined benefit pension plan administered nationally by The United Church of Canada. Defined contribution plan accounting is applied to this multi-employer contributory defined benefit plan.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Contributed Services

The Council benefits greatly from the work of volunteers who contribute countless hours of service to enable the Council to fulfill its mandate. Because it is not possible to determine the fair value of these services, they are not recognized in these financial statements.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

3. Investments

	2022	2021
Conexus CU GIC - 0.90%, maturing March 11, 2023	\$ 200,000	\$ 126,938
Conexus CU GIC - 1.10%, maturing March 11, 2023	185,000	152,325
Conexus CU GIC - 0.90%, maturing March 11, 2023	168,796	125,000
Conexus CU GIC - 3.48%, maturing September 26, 2023	150,000	6,323
Conexus CU GIC - 1.10%, maturing March 11, 2023	135,000	\$ 304,650
Conexus CU GIC - 3.48%, maturing September 26, 2023	110,841	100,775
Conexus CU GIC - 3.00%, maturing June 27, 2023	100,000	110,605
ATB Financial GIC - 0.60%, maturing January 27, 2022	-	5,434
ATB Financial GIC - 0.25%, maturing February 10, 2022	-	5,000
Portfolio investments	137,848	135,338
	1,187,485	1,072,388
Less due within one year	(1,049,637)	(937,050)
	\$ 137,848	\$ 135,338

4. Accounts Receivable

	2022	2021
GST receivable	\$ 648	\$ 583
Other receivables	349	1,273
	\$ 997	\$ 1,856

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

5. Loans Receivable

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
St. Stephen's College, Edmonton - 10 year loan due March 31, 2026. Interest free for three years to March 14, 2021, then interest at 5%. Repayable in semi-annual principle only payments of \$3,000 to March 14, 2021, then semi-annual blended payments of \$3,424 to maturity.	\$ 27,292	\$ 32,576
Edmonton Korean United Church, Edmonton - Loan is due upon sale of property and is non-interest bearing.	50,000	-
Kirk United Church Centre - 10 year loan due June 1, 2030. Interest free to June 1, 2023, then interest at 3%. Repayable in semi-annual principle only payments of \$1,000 to June 1, 2023, the semi-annual blended payments of \$1,116 to maturity. The loan was issued on June 1, 2020.	16,000	17,000
	<u>\$ 93,292</u>	<u>\$ 49,576</u>

6. Related Parties

The following table summarizes the Council's related party transactions for the year:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Grants from the United Church of Canada	\$ 655,775	\$ 641,375

These transactions are in the normal course of operations and are measured at the exchange value, which is the amount agreed upon by the two parties.

The amounts due (to) from related parties at year end are as follows:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Due to Living Skies Regional Council	\$ (397)	\$ (1,593)
Due (to) from Prairie to Pine Regional Council	(5,501)	98
Due to United Church of Canada	2,177	-
	<u>\$ (3,721)</u>	<u>\$ (1,495)</u>

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

6. Related Parties (continued)

These transactions are measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount agreed upon by the two parties. These amounts are non-interest bearing and have no specific terms of repayment.

Living Skies Regional Council and Prairie to Pine Regional Council are also United Church Regional Councils with similar purposes, goals and policies. These regions share employees and accounting with the Northern Spirit Regional Council.

United Church of Canada is the governing body for all Regional Council's in Canada and they provide grants and assistance to each region.

7. Pension Plan

Retirement benefits for employees of the Council are provided through the pension plan of The United Church of Canada (the "Plan"). The Plan is a multi-employer pension plan which provides pensions for members of the Ministry Personnel and lay employees of the Offices of the General Council, Regional Council, or Community of Faith of The United Church of Canada. The Plan is a contributory defined benefit pension plan which is financed by contributions from participating employers and employees, and by the investment earnings of the Plan. The Plan is registered under the Pension Benefits Act, (Ontario), Registration #0355230.

At the date of the last actuarial valuations and publicly available financial information, there were no unfunded liabilities related to either past service or to amendments to the Plan.

During the year, the Council made employer contributions to the plan of approximately \$24,322 (\$24,067 in 2021).

8. Internal Transfers

During 2022, the Executive authorized the transfer of funds in the amount of \$25,000 from the Operating Fund to Internally Restricted Funds (\$7,400 in 2021).

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2022

9. Financial Risk Instruments

The Council is exposed to different types of risk in the normal course of operations. The Council's objective in risk management is to optimize the risk return trade-off, within set limits, by applying integrated risk management and control strategies, policies and procedures throughout the Council's activities.

(a) Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument fails to discharge an obligation and causes financial loss to another party. Financial instruments that potentially subject the Council to significant concentrations of credit risk consist primarily of cash and bank, investments and accounts receivable. The Council is not exposed to significant credit risk as the accounts receivable have typically been paid when due, and investments are diversified.

(b) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk of loss that may arise from changes in market factors such as interest rates and equity prices. The Council holds a portfolio of equity and interest bearing investments and is exposed to market risk through this portfolio of investments.

(c) Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The Council is not exposed to significant interest rate risk as its cash and cash equivalents are held in short-term investments or variable rate products. The risk has not changed in the year.

(d) Foreign Currency Risk

The Council is not exposed to significant foreign currency risk as it does not have any financial instruments denominated in foreign currency and the number of transactions in foreign currency are minimal. The risk has not changed in the year.

Northern Sprit Regional Council
Schedule of Funds
For the year ended December 31, 2022
(unaudited)

	Opening Balance	Receipts	Expense	Internal Transfers	Closing Balance
Externally Restricted					
Ann Mazur Fund	\$ 185,842	\$ 2,236	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 188,078
Archive Trust Fund	139,233	2,754	(34,311)	-	107,676
Reclaiming the Mission Fund	24,160	-	-	-	24,160
Emergency Relief Trust Fund	13,912	-	-	-	13,912
Regional Archive Fund	-	34,312	-	-	34,312
Special Conflict Resolution Trust Fund	7,606	-	-	-	7,606
Student Bursary Fund	187,644	5,210	(16,000)	-	176,854
	558,396	44,512	(50,311)	-	552,597
Internally Restricted					
Legacy Fund	296,444	35,253	-	-	331,697
Contingency Reserve Fund (Finance Policy 3.1.1)	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Conflict Resolution Trust Fund	17,323	-	(3,382)	-	13,941
Annual Meeting Fund	-	-	-	17,500	17,500
Pastoral Relations Emergency Fund	10,000	-	(7,500)	7,500	10,000
	473,768	35,253	(10,882)	25,000	523,139
Total Funds	\$ 1,032,164	\$ 79,765	\$ (61,193)	\$ 25,000	\$ 1,075,736

Remit 1: Study Guide for Category 3 Remit Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization

As authorized by the 44th General Council, in 2022

Between March 15, 2023 and March 31, 2024, every regional council and each pastoral charge's governing body will be asked to approve an amendment to the Basis of Union of *The Manual* establishing an autonomous Indigenous Church structure. An amendment to the Basis of Union requires a category 3 remit.

There is one question to be voted on, as follows.

Does the regional council/pastoral charge agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect:

- a. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council*; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
- b. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union**; and
- c. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

* The "Denominational Council" and the "General Council" are often used interchangeably.

** The detailed proposed changes to the Basis of Union are listed in a chart on page 5 of this document, under the section heading "Frequently Asked Questions".

What is this remit about?

1. At General Council 44, the National Indigenous Circle asked for the removal of any structural barriers that would prevent the development and sustaining of an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada. When any requested change in church structure will alter the Basis of Union of *The Manual*, then a category 3 remit is required. This document is the study guide for this remit.
2. In 2019, General Council 43 approved the creation of a National Indigenous Organization, as a body equivalent to, and having the same power and responsibilities as, a regional council. This is currently reflected in *The Manual* in Section C-NIO.
3. This remit proposes that the already-existing National Indigenous Organization would become autonomous, within The United Church of Canada.
4. The creation of an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada would be consistent with the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle's *Calls to the Church* and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Approval of this remit will enable the Indigenous Church to define its own structure and processes within The United Church of Canada. It acknowledges Indigenous peoples' rights to their own spiritual identities and to self-determination. This has the potential to create a new kind of relationship: in the words of the National Indigenous Council, moving "from 'missions to Indians' ... towards being 'partners in God's call to all the earth.'"

Background

The Idea of a Self-Determining Indigenous Church

5. The idea of a self-determining Indigenous Church has a very long history in The United Church of Canada, dating back to at least the 1960s. From that time until now, Indigenous peoples have been organizing to bring their vision of church to life, whether that was achieving the Apology in 1986 for the church's role in colonization; building Indigenous systems of governance and theological education; or asserting its long-standing call to the church to acknowledge and atone for its actions at residential institutions.
6. The United Church pledged to uphold (among others) the rights to spiritual identity and self-determination in 2016 when it adopted the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation as a response to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The church stated at that time that it was "not sure [of]

what lies ahead,” but that it was committed to “a new identity, a new relationship, and a new way of being” with the Indigenous Church.

Apologies to Indigenous Peoples

7. With the establishment of residential institutions, health care facilities, and missions in the 19th and 20th centuries, and as named in the 1986 Apology, the United Church and its predecessors “confused Western ways and culture with the depth and breadth and length and height of the gospel of Christ, [and] imposed [Western] civilization as a condition of accepting the gospel”.
8. As named in the United Church’s 1998 Apology, as the church continues its long and painful healing journey from its complicity in colonization, we are committed “to work toward ensuring that we will never again use our power as a church to hurt others with attitudes of racial and spiritual superiority”. This is an essential component of our intention to become not just a reconciling but also an actively anti-racist church.
9. The United Church’s 1986 Apology, given only after Indigenous peoples called for it, was one way of atoning for the church’s forced assimilation practices and the intentional destruction of Indigenous spiritualities, cultures, and languages. Another way forward came in 2015 with the statement acknowledging the value of Indigenous spiritualities, avowing that “holding both your spirituality and ours is possible through listening and learning with open hearts”. The United Church has also committed to becoming an anti-racist denomination.

The Restructuring of the United Church in 2019

10. In 2019, the Comprehensive Review process was implemented throughout The United Church of Canada. This Comprehensive Review process resulted in substantive changes to the structure of the United Church, including the creation of a three-court model from a four-court model. As a result, the Aboriginal Ministries Council (AMC) began to explore how the Indigenous Church could structure itself within (or alongside) the three-court model of the church created by the Comprehensive Review.
11. The Aboriginal Ministries Council appointed and enabled the Caretakers of Our Indigenous Church to help define this direction, and they did so through a document entitled *Calls to the Church*. This document envisioned a self-determining Indigenous Church founded on Indigenous knowledge and teachings, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and “the desire to live into right relations with a repentant church and pursue the original Indigenous desire for friendship, peace and the strength that comes from respect”.

The Calls to the Church

12. The *Calls to the Church* were accepted at the National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering of the United Church in 2019, and by General Council 43 in its annual meeting that same year. Since then, a new Indigenous governance structure (the National Indigenous Council); the National Indigenous Elders Council; and the Indigenous Office of Vocation have been created alongside the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit at the General Council Office to shape and guide the work of self-determination.
13. In July 2022, the National Indigenous Council brought forward General Council 44 Proposal NIC-01, naming its vision of the two parts of the church (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) working side-by-side, and recommending the identification and removal of “all the structural barriers to developing and sustaining an autonomous Indigenous Church within The United Church of Canada”.

Decolonizing our Approach to Structural Changes

14. In our current process, and depending on the type of change that is needed to be made, the Indigenous Church would require a new remit for continued changes to its developing structure. This means that the Indigenous Church would be constantly seeking approval from the rest of the church to make those structural changes. This kind of dynamic—where the Indigenous Church would always be asking for consent from the non-Indigenous church—reflects continued colonial thinking and practices. As named in the United Church’s 1998 Apology, as the church continues its long and painful healing journey from its complicity in colonization, we are committed “to work toward ensuring that we will never again use our power as a church to hurt others with attitudes of racial and spiritual superiority”. This is an essential component of our intention to become not just a reconciling but also an actively anti-racist church.
15. The General Secretary’s proposal to General Council 44, GS-10, is an attempt to begin a process of decolonizing our approach to structural change. It is asking for the church to give pre-emptive remit approval for whatever the Indigenous Church determines in the future as the place it will have in the United Church, guided by the *Calls to the Church*—and without the need for further remit approvals.

Frequently Asked Questions

What particular sections of The Manual are proposed to change?

The sections that are proposed to change are all in the Polity section of the Basis of Union. The proposed changes are under the headings of “The Church” (Section 4.2) and “The Denominational Council” (Section 7.4.1).

Current	Proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 4.2: The United Church of Canada is organized as a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council, as follows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 4.2 of the Basis of Union will be amended and state: The United Church of Canada is organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization.Section 4.3 will be added to the Basis of Union and state: In its own time and through its own processes, the autonomous National Indigenous Organization will determine its structure and processes.Section 4.4 will be added to the Basis of Union and state: Once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union.Section 4.5 will be added to the Basis of Union and state: The final wording describing the structure and processes of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization will be recorded here.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 7.4.1: changing the Basis of Union—the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the Regional Councils and also, if the Denominational Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges; ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union will be amended and state: changing of the Basis of Union—with the exception of section 4.4 (under section II “The Church”), the Basis of Union may only be changed through the remit process, which requires the approval of a majority of the Regional Councils and also, if the Denominational Council considers it advisable because the change is substantive or denomination-shaping, pastoral charges; ...
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What might an autonomous Indigenous Church within The United Church of Canada mean?

The Indigenous Church is asking to develop and sustain an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada.

The Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle’s *Calls to the Church* notes that:

“The Indigenous ministries of The United Church of Canada have been about the work of ministry since the beginning in 1925 with roots in the 19th Century work of Methodist and Presbyterian ministries. 2018 marks the 193rd Anniversary of the Grand River Methodist Mission.

“Indigenous people have met regularly over many decades and held deep and ongoing conversations about matters relating to our Indigenous work and our relationship with the United Church. We have been evolving, struggling, adapting and growing since that time and even losing ground too. We do not want to lose the gains we have achieved through the years in any future developments.”

“The UN Declaration [on the Rights of Indigenous People] is about establishing and maintaining respectful relationship, Indigenous self-government, and Indigenous land rights in their traditional territories. This means the Indigenous faith community must exercise a truly Indigenous self-determination and possess a sustainable land-based support.”

The full statement is available on united-church.ca; search “Calls to the Church.”

Can we vote “yes” to some parts of the question in the remit and “no” to other parts?

No. It is not possible to vote for parts (a), (b), and (c) of the remit question separately. The remit is one overall question, broken up in three parts.

Who can I ask questions about this remit?

Please send any questions to remits@united-church.ca, or contact your Regional Council Executive Minister (contact information is available on united-church.ca; search for “Regional Council”).

What is a category 3 remit?

A category 3 remit is required for substantive, denomination-shaping changes to the Basis of Union (*The Manual*, s. F2). A category 3 remit also requires that information and study materials be prepared and sent out with the remit. The proposed change must be sent to the governing body of every pastoral charge and regional council for a vote.

The timeline for information sharing, study, and voting is 12 months.

The General Secretary and the Executive of the General Council are responsible for ensuring the final wording of any change to the Basis of Union is consistent with the by-laws of *The Manual*.

Note: If a regional council or a pastoral charge does not register a vote, that it is considered a vote AGAINST the proposal.

Where can I access additional background information?

The proposals directly related to this remit that were brought to General Council 44 can be accessed through the United Church Commons (commons.united-church.ca), in the folder called “Nurture the Common Good”. Those two proposals are called:

- GS 10 Living into Reconciliation
- NIC 01 National Indigenous Circle – Restructuring of Indigenous Church

The following may also be helpful to reference.

Available in the “Indigenous Ministries” section on united-church.ca:

- The Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle’s *Calls to the Church* (on united-church.ca, Indigenous Ministries/Calls to the Church)

Available in the “Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice” section on united-church.ca:

- The United Church's *Commitment to UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (on united-church.ca: Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice/UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)
- The United Church's *Statement on UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the Framework for Reconciliation* (on united-church.ca: Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice/UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)
- *Affirming Other Spiritual Paths*, the United Church's statement acknowledging the value of Indigenous spiritualities (on united-church.ca: Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice/The Apologies)
- The United Church of Canada's Apologies to Indigenous Peoples (on united-church.ca: Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice/The Apologies)

Available on united-church.ca:

- Contact information for Regional Council Executive Ministers (search for "Regional Council")
- *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada (under "Handbooks and Guidelines")

B6.

Proposal to the 2023 Northern Spirit Regional Council Annual Meeting Becoming an Affirming Regional Council

We believe the Holy Spirit has journeyed with us over the past three years as we (the Task Group) discerned how to respond to the call from Motion NSRC 012-19. We further believe that God is calling us to respond to this justice issue in becoming an Affirming Regional Council.

We trust our slumbering souls have been awakened to the amount of exclusion that is practiced in the church not just to our 2SLGBTQIA+ friends but also to different skin colours, differently abled, economically challenged, marital status and beyond.

Are we ready to say "Be excluded no more!" That we commit to stretching our hands to those who have been stereotyped, stigmatized, labelled, and assigned to the margins of church and society.

We have fulfilled the requirements of Affirm United and declared ready for the vote if you the Court are ready. The Vision Statement and Action Plan are attached as Appendix A & B.

Moved by: Wilson MacLennan

Seconded by: Rev. Linda McLaren

In full participation in the life and work of Northern Spirit Region of The United Church of Canada, that the court approve that the Northern Spirit Regional Council embrace the Affirming Vision Statement.

Moved by: Rev. Cathy Kinsman

Seconded by: Rev. Monica Rosborough

That the Northern Regional Council be an Affirming Ministry in The United Church of Canada and the Northern Regional Council become a member of Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble.

Appendix A

Northern Spirit Region of the United Church of Canada Affirming Vision Statement

We, Northern Spirit Regional Council, believe that we are called to follow Jesus' wisdom in the way of radical inclusive love. We believe that all people are unconditionally loved by the Creator whose divine image we reflect.

The Northern Spirit Regional Council will live out its ministry by intentionally creating safe spaces of welcome and participation of the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and additional sexual orientations and gender identities, communities and their families.

We affirm that all people will be fully included in all aspects of Northern Spirit Regional Council's life, leadership, and ministry, without limitation. Northern Spirit Region welcomes the full participation of all persons in the life and work of the region: persons of all ages, genders, races, appearance, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, family configuration, social status and economic circumstance. We commit ourselves to living into the complexities that becoming an Affirming Ministry will require.

Together we will use tangible resources to embody a ministry that is public, intentional and explicit of our call to live out these values, and that we commit to continually learning and evolving.

Appendix B

Northern Spirit Region Affirming Task Group Action Plan

Following the regional approval of Northern Spirit Region to be Affirming Region, the region will establish an Affirming Committee within the regional council structure.

The Affirming Committee membership will be comprised of members representing the varied geographic areas of the region and the varied lived experience of the residents of the region.

The Affirming Committee will:

- Provide educational opportunities to the Regional Council and the Communities of Faith within the region.
- Support Communities of Faith as they discern their own desires to become Affirming Ministries and Communities of Faith, and support existing Affirming Ministries in their ongoing program.
- Use the AffirmUnited/S'affirmer Ensemble logo on the Northern Spirit website, publications, presentations, and display the AffirmUnited/S'affirmer Ensemble logo on the Northern Spirit Region Office.
- Establish an Equity Monitor Policy that will ensure that all people have access to events and meeting procedures.
- Be available to provide education and guidance to other denominations who request assistance in developing their own affirming programs or request assistance with issues regarding inclusiveness.
- Provide annual support for AffirmUnited/S'affirmer Ensemble in the form of annual membership and offering support to send a representative to the Annual Meeting and Conference when it is held in our area.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the anniversary of Northern Spirit Regional Council becoming an Affirming Ministry at Annual General Meetings.
- Be a witness to the greater community of inclusiveness within the United Church of Canada through opportunities such as Pride events and other opportunities that may present themselves in the future.
- And be mindful of events and developments within the church and the greater community that arise in the future where the Northern Spirit Affirming Committee,

Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble, or The United Church of Canada can play a part for the betterment of society.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Consensus Decisions 2022/2023

MOTION #		MEETING	
01	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the agenda, as distributed.
02	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the minutes of March 9, 2022 and May 11, 2022, as distributed.
03	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the minutes of April 13, 2022, as corrected.
04	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive (upon consultation with Larry) appoint Larry Wright to the Edmonton & Area District Council of Churches for the 2022/2023.
05	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive agrees to raise the gas mileage rate for the regional council to \$0.30 per kilometre.
06	2022/2023	June 8, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the recommendation of the Communities of Faith Support Committee to amalgamate Tofield United Church and Holden United Church, effective July 1, 2022. They will continue as Tofield United Church, therefore they would be the Tofield Pastoral Charge.
07	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the June 8, 2022 minutes as distributed
08	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	It was agreed by consensus:

MOTION #		MEETING	
			That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive disband Pierceland United Church effective 19 September 2022.
09	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council disband Busby United Church effective 19 September 2022.
10	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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.
11	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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”.
12	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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.
13	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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.
14	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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

MOTION #		MEETING	
			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.
15	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	<p>It was agreed by consensus: That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive take the following action(s): a) <u>Christian Youth Camps Incorporated o/a Camp Maskepetoon</u> ...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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>b) <u>Kirk United Church Centre</u> ...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</p>

MOTION #		MEETING	
			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.
16	2022/2023	September 19, 2022	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.
17	2022/2023	November 9, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the September 19, 2022 minutes as distributed.
18	2022/2023	November 9, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the 2023 Budget as proposed.
19	2022/2023	November 9, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That the emergency grant to Korean United Church of \$15 000 be taken from Mission Support grants. And that should any further funds be requested it would be considered a loan until the manse property is sold.
20	2022/2023	November 9, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That the Northern Spirit Regional Council (2) Executive take the following action(s): a) <u>Jellinek Society</u> ...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Jellinek Society 2022-2023 Board of Directors Greg Babiuk Jennifer Bowser Mike Brennan Chantel Chinni

MOTION #		MEETING																	
			<div>Ralph Friederichsen Tom Hunter Ross Izzard Hugh MacGregor Rick Schmidt Val Stewart</div> <div>This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of June 21, 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.</div>																
21	2022/2023	November 9, 2022	<div>It was approved by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the following Mission Support grants upon recommendation from the Mission Support Grant committee:</div> <table><tr><td>Bissell Centre, Edmonton</td><td>\$40,000</td></tr><tr><td>Camp Maskepetoon</td><td>\$11,600</td></tr><tr><td>Camp Whitney</td><td>\$25,000</td></tr><tr><td>Edmonton Interfaith Centre</td><td>\$2,500</td></tr><tr><td>Hillcrest United Church, Fort Nelson</td><td>\$25,000</td></tr><tr><td>Inner City Pastoral Ministry, Edmonton</td><td>\$20,000</td></tr><tr><td>Kirk United Church Centre, Edmonton</td><td><u>\$10,000</u></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>\$134,100</td></tr></table>	Bissell Centre, Edmonton	\$40,000	Camp Maskepetoon	\$11,600	Camp Whitney	\$25,000	Edmonton Interfaith Centre	\$2,500	Hillcrest United Church, Fort Nelson	\$25,000	Inner City Pastoral Ministry, Edmonton	\$20,000	Kirk United Church Centre, Edmonton	<u>\$10,000</u>	Total	\$134,100
Bissell Centre, Edmonton	\$40,000																		
Camp Maskepetoon	\$11,600																		
Camp Whitney	\$25,000																		
Edmonton Interfaith Centre	\$2,500																		
Hillcrest United Church, Fort Nelson	\$25,000																		
Inner City Pastoral Ministry, Edmonton	\$20,000																		
Kirk United Church Centre, Edmonton	<u>\$10,000</u>																		
Total	\$134,100																		
22	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	<div>It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the November 9, 2022 minutes as corrected.</div>																
23	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	<div>It was agreed by consensus: That we set \$17,500 aside from 2022 finances for the 2023 Regional Council Gathering.</div>																

MOTION #		MEETING	
24	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	<p>It was agreed by consensus: That the Northern Spirit Regional Council (2) Executive take the following action(s): a) <u>Bissell Centre</u> ... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Bissell Centre 2020-2021 Board of Directors</p> <p>Ami Amato Beverley Browne Lauren Chalaturnyk Melanie Fix Jason Gorman Hooman Hosseinkhannazer Nat Kav Lee-Ann Leitch Debra Lister Jill Matthew Leanne Monsma Joshua Moser Leigh Mulholland Gina Wheatcroft</p> <p>This is based on the Annual General Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2020, the 2020 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.</p> <p>... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Bissell Centre 2021-2022 Board of Directors</p> <p>Ami Amato Lauren Chalaturnyk Melanie Fix</p>

MOTION #	MEETING	
		<p>Jason Gorman Nat Kav Emily Kneteman Lee-Ann Leitch Debra Lister Jill Matthew Joshua Moser Leigh Mulholland Brad Shopland Ryan Turpin Gina Wheatcroft</p> <p>This is based on the Annual General Meeting Minutes of July 5, 2021, the 2021 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.</p> <p>... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Bissell Centre 2022-2023 Board of Directors</p> <p>Ami Amato Lauren Chalaturnyk Melanie Fix Emily Kneteman Lee-Ann Leitch Avery Letendre Debra Lister Joshua Moser Brad Shopland Ryan Turpin</p> <p>This is based on the Annual General Meeting Minutes of July 27, 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.</p>

MOTION #	MEETING	
		<p>b) <u>Camp Whitney, St. Paul Presbytery</u> ... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Camp Whitney, St. Paul Presbytery 2020-2021 Board of Directors James Belliveau Sandra Bishop Shirley Kvill Dianne Mabbott Patricia Miller Alan Mytz Rheta Prill Megan Tetlock Douglas Webb</p> <p>This is based on the AGM Meeting Minutes of November 26, 2020, the 2020 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.</p> <p>... pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Camp Whitney, St. Paul Presbytery 2021-2022 Board of Directors James Belliveau Sandra Bishop Shirley Kvill Dianne Mabbott Patricia Miller Sydney Milton Alan Mytz Rheta Prill Janelle Schmeltzer Megan Tetlock Douglas Webb</p>

MOTION #		MEETING	
			<p>This is based on the AGM Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2021, the 2021 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.</p> <p>c) <u>G U C Playschool Society</u> ...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the G U C Playschool Society 2021-2022 Board of Directors Darrel Howell Catherine Kinsman Karen Ollen Lindsay Sedgwick Doug Weir</p> <p>This is based on the Annual Meeting minutes of June 24, 2021, draft Annual Meeting #2 minutes of November 8, 2022, the 2021 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.</p> <p>...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the G U C Playschool Society 2022-2023 Board of Directors Darrel Howell Catherine Kinsman Karen Ollen Lindsay Sedgwick Doug Weir</p> <p>This is based on the draft Annual Meeting minutes of October 20, 2022, draft Annual Meeting #2 minutes of November 8, 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.</p>
25	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	It was agreed by consensus:

MOTION #		MEETING	
			That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive close Ashmont United Church effective immediately.
26	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council receive the report of the investigator for WDHVRP 2022-01.
27	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive based on the recommendations of the Investigator's report take over the governance of Edson United Church effective immediately.
28	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive acting as the governing body of Edson United Church agree that the last day of work for Kimberly Roy be December 15, 2022 and inform the Ministry Personnel committee of Edson United Church of this decision.
29	2022/2023	December 14, 2022	It was agreed by consensus: That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive create a commission to act as the governing body of Edson United Church effective December 19, 2022. And that, the chair of the Edson United Church commission be Rev. Bill Doyle with two other members to be appointed by the Executive Minister and Chair of the Executive.
30	2022/2023	January 11, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the December 14, 2022 minutes.

MOTION #		MEETING	
31	2022/2023	January 11, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That we approve the numbers as were presented to us.
32	2022/2023	February 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the minutes of January 11 as distributed.
33	2022/2023	February 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus (reluctantly): That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the retirement of Earl Reaburn.
34	2022/2023	February 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive will support the funding of Together We Worship until the end of June.
35	2022/2023	February 1, 2023	It was agreed by email consensus on January 11, 2023 that: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive appoint the Trustees of Barrhead United Church to act on behalf of the Regional Council in the matter of the sale of Swan Hills United Church.
36	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the minutes of February 1, 2023 as distributed.
37	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was approved with dissension: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the Application for Moving Financial Assistance in the amount of \$6000 to Spirit West.
38	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus:

MOTION #		MEETING	
			That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the “Grizzly Trail Pastoral Charge” be renamed to “Barrhead Pastoral Charge” effective March 1, 2023.
39	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve an organizational structure change to Barrhead Pastoral Charge effective March 1, 2023.
40	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve an annual donation of \$300 to the United Church Rural Ministry Network.
41	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve Wilson McClennan be named to the Nominations Committee.
42	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve Rob McFee be named to the Pastoral Relations Committee.
43	2022/2023	March 1, 2023	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve our new logo design.

*

The Northern Spirit Regional Council is a collection of Communities of Faith serving in northeastern British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and Alberta north of Highway 13.

It is my privilege to be the Chair of the Regional Executive. This position and its lens is remarkable as it has allowed me to meet – mostly virtually – many people in our Region. I have been invited into stories of lament, of frustration, of learning, of joy. Thank you for all of that.

Our Executive meets on a regular basis to answer questions, make decisions and guide us as best they can to becoming a Region that embraces and cares for all of its members. Sometimes their decisions are hard to make and I see them taking time to have discussion and to discern what is the right decision to make.

I am grateful for the Staff that serve our Region. They have a tremendous workload trying to keep us all in order. They offer us valuable information, challenge us and support us. They are our frontline workers who know the Region, warts and all, as no-one else does.

It seems to me that the COVID pandemic (which is not over yet) thrust us into an unknown journey. We were just beginning to figure out how to function in our newly created structure when everything came to a halt. We weren't able to meet, to have discussions, to iron out the wrinkles. We felt isolated from our neighbours. We struggled to be in our own homes and communities never mind explore a new identity as Region.

Now as we emerge from that most trying time, we find ourselves in partnership with communities that are thriving, striving, and just barely hanging on. Some of our Communities of Faith are embracing change that they see as necessary to continue their ministry in their local communities. Some of our Communities of Faith are longing for what they were before this mess began. Some of our Communities of Faith have found that they don't know what to do next because their future is now blurred and expected.

But we are a strong and faithful people and I believe that we will move through this and find our new selves if we do it together.

We have known our neighbours before. We can get to know them again. There is no reason why Faith Communities can't get together for conversation, to

share ideas, to simply connect again. You do not need Regional Staff to tell you how to call your neighbour, I'm sure you can remember how.

We have shared resources before. Volunteers offered their gifts and skills to the work of the previous Conference and Presbytery structure. We need to now share those skills in the Region – the need is still there. We still need people to supervise Communities of Faith who find themselves without Ministry Personnel. We still need people with skills in facilitation and finances to offer support and guidance in conversations. We still need people who love processes and procedures to guide us through property sales, and amalgamations, and to help us figure out what the next best step is for our Community of Faith. You don't have to be a Regional Representative to do this piece because anyone can volunteer to be a resource to help us build again.

I think that I need to ask for a bit of patience as we grow into this new thing that we are together. There are a number of Communities in defensive or crisis mode. We haven't had many of these experiences in the same way before. Some of the processes aren't clear. We're learning them together. We don't have enough people to immediately respond so there are times when we are triaging. That hasn't been something we've needed to do before either – and it's a skill that we hope we will be able to let go of. There have also been some issues that have occurred that we are not, legally, allowed to fix for you. We can guide you up to a point, but then we, as a Regional Council or Staff, must step back and you must take responsibility for your work. This has been hard learning for Staff and Communities of Faith. We need to be patient with each other on these huge learning curves and to share our experience and offer suggestions for those who will travel the same road we just did.

Doing our part. As we create our Region into the best we can make it, we each need to take on the responsibility that we have to create a network that supports each other. That includes doing our due diligence: filing the Annual Reports, CRA reports, Financial reports; being honest when we know that we are in trouble; offering constructive feedback; being willing to learn together and accept mistakes without blaming; offering to fill gaps where we can.

We need to remember that God has promised to be with us in all of the moments of life, the challenges and the triumphs. God invites us to work together to keep the church alive in the community.

Jesus called disciples to ground themselves in the love of God, to be ready to embrace and encourage change, to dive into change even when it wasn't comfortable.

Our Theme for this 2023 Annual Meeting is
Living our Faith: Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice.
What are we offering our Region to make this come true?

Thank you for allowing me to be on this journey with you.

Blessings,

Helen



C3. Northern Spirit Regional Council Property Commission

Report to the Council May 2023

The work of the Property Commission is varied and interesting. Each property problem is different and challenging with a variety of emotions attached. There is grieving over the loss of a community of faith and its building. There is relief when a struggling community makes the Decision to close. There is excitement over the prospect of a new mission and sharing of the church home.

McDougall in Edmonton has applied for community funding to develop its dream of becoming a community hub. The church is now being shared in part with the Muslim Society of Edmonton. The Korean Church in Edmonton is exploring ways of developing its excess property with the help of Kinderworks (United Property Resource Corporation). The Holden Community of Faith has amalgamated with Tofield and donated its church property to the Village of Holden to become part of the Village museum. Jasper United Church is working with an affordable housing society in Jasper hoping to transfer its empty lot for a housing project.

Moore Memorial in Redwater has been sold to a private individual and the Community of Faith is working on closing. All of the legalities around the sale of the Drayton Valley United Church building have been completed. The proceeds and other assets of the former congregation have been distributed according to Regional Council policy with a portion going to the newly established "Living Spirit" United Church in Drayton Valley.

The Drayton Valley Commission established by Yellowhead Presbytery acted as trustees for the Drayton Valley Church property and worked long and hard taking care of the property, handling the sale, and making the recommendations for the dispersal of assets. I would like to thank the members of the DV Commission; Phil Dunn, Rev. Dirk Jessen, Lorraine Stewart, and Jackie St. Goddard and also local church member Erin Hickson for their tireless and faithful work.

Questions about purchasing, selling, or renovating church property may be answered on the Regional Council website - see "About Us" and scroll down to "Property Commission". A comprehensive resource "Property Matters – a guide for communities of faith growing, dispersing, or recreating" is available there. At the present time a task group is working on streamlined, infographic charts on closing, amalgamating, or disposing of excess property. We hope this will be a helpful way to get started. Please check the website when you are contemplating a sale of property. You could also speak to any member of the Property Commission.

The PC members are; Bob Miller (recording secretary), Jim Belliveau, Rev. Greg Parker, Susan Waldie, Erin White (corresponding secretary), and Steve Lyster. Steve was appointed to the Commission on January 11, 2023 and quickly began contributing in helpful ways. We are grateful for the guidance of Executive Minister, Shannon McCarthy and Financial Administrator Heather Dootoff. This enterprising group has developed a good working relationship. I thank them all for their contributions to the work of the Commission.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha Dawson for the Property Commission.

C4. Report of the Affirming Ministry Task Group to the Northern Spirit Regional Council Meeting May 4-7, 2023 - Camrose, Alberta

At the November 2019 meeting, the Executive of the Northern Spirit Regional Council approved the formation of an Affirming Task Group answerable to the Executive of Northern Spirit Regional Council.

The objectives of the task group are: 1. To conduct an educational/discernment affirming process engaging the Northern Spirit Regional Council and, 2. To bring a recommendation/process to the Northern Spirit Regional Council regarding becoming an Affirming Regional Council.

The meetings began in January 2020 with the following persons committed to the work of the Task Group:

Rev. Linda McLaren, Minister Jasper United Church, Jasper, Alberta. Chair.

Rev. Cathy Kinsman, Minister at Grace United Church in Lloydminster, Alberta.

Rev. Monica Rosborough, Minister at Athabasca United Church in Athabasca, Alberta.

Louise Rogers, Lay member of Sherwood Park United Church, Sherwood Park, Alberta.

Wilson MacLennan, Lay member of Robertson Wesley United Church, Edmonton, Alberta.

Shylo Rosborough, Affirming Ministries Coordinator Edmonton- Staff Resource

Julie Graham, Justice and Communications Minister, Northern Spirit Regional Council, Prairie to Pine Regional Council, and Living Skies Regional Council, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Staff Resource - (joined April 2020)

Education Sessions were provided to the Regional Council and beyond electronically in October 2020, May and October 2021, March 2022.

Report on progress of the work was presented to the Regional Council Executive June 2022 and Regional Council Meeting October 2022.

We trust that becoming an affirming Regional Council will be widely displayed publicly, intentionally, and explicitly that the governance of the Region is welcoming and supportive to all people.

Being an affirming region does not affect or cause the Communities of Faith to become affirming. Affirming is a choice that each Community of Faith makes for itself.

In compliance with the requirements of Affirm United, the Affirming Task Group wrote a draft Vision Statement which welcomes the full participation of all persons in the life and work of the Regional Ministry. A somewhat limited consultation was conducted with our Indigenous

Ministry and Intercultural Ministry friends seeking their full input and improvement of the product.

An Action Plan to keep affirming , ministry alive going forward, has been completed. Both the Vision Statement and Action Plan are attached to the Proposal from the Task Group, which recommends considering the question about becoming An Affirming Regional Council.

Part of the Action Plan requires we have an ongoing Committee that will ensure the work of this Ministry is alive and well into the future. We must not assume that individuals from the Task Group will automatically become members of the ongoing working Committee.

It has been a pleasure for the Task Group to carry out this important work on behalf of the Regional Council

Respectfully and Prayerfully submitted,

Affirming Task Group

C5. BEING GOOD RELATIONS NETWORK LEADERSHIP GROUP

For CHINOOK WINDS & NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONS

Annual report May 2023

The Being Good Relations Network of Chinook Winds and Northern Spirit Regional Councils connects those who are committed to living out the United Church apologies, and implementing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Calls to the Church of the Indigenous Church, and the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It involves building relationships with Indigenous communities of faith, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit organizations in our communities and provinces/territory.

The BGRN Leadership Group strives to support ‘witnesses’ and communities of faith in unlearning and learning, conversation, advocacy, taking action and spiritual practice on the journey of truth and reconciliation. We continue to discuss how the BGRN is developed and structured, the role and membership of the Leadership Group, and accountability.

Jody Wilson-Raybould says *True Reconciliation* involves three core practices: Learn, Understand, Act.

We pay particular attention to TRC Call to Action #59, which states: *‘We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church’s role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary’.*

We took inspiration from a meditation by Richard Rohr on the prophetic path. Prophets call us to revere the land, live with respect in creation, to honor covenants, agreements, and peace treaties. Being a witness can feel like being a prophetic voice in the wilderness. Prophets are a challenge to business as usual. The prophetic path like our work in reconciliation is often 2 steps forward and one step backward. “That falling, that failing, that suffering – use whatever word – becomes the energy for the next two steps forward.” This journey of reconciliation is a messy and complicated process.

Leadership Group Zoom meetings

While the church recovers from the pandemic, the Leadership Group continued its activities via Zoom. At the August and October meeting, we reflected on our way forward, noting that we had benefitted much from using Zoom, yet yearn for some face-to-face gathering. We have yet to meet or plan events for the Network to be held in person, largely due to lack of people energy to plan. While there are 25 people on the invitation list, an average of 11 people have attended 5 zoom meetings held since last March 31 - Aug. 30, Oct.24, Dec.5, in 2022 and in 2023, Jan.16, March 26.

Rev. Cecile Fausak has continued to facilitate the Group’s meetings, and Sharon Woodhouse has been a faithful notetaker. We are grateful for the attendance of Indigenous staff Rev. Tony Snow, and Charlene Burns whenever they are able, and to Julie Graham for Zoom hosting.

The ‘check-in’ is always extensive and conversations have touched on the Pope’s apology, unmarked burials, James Smith Cree Nation massacre, Bashaw Town Council lawsuit claiming discrimination, National Ribbon Skirt Day, Walking in Two Worlds with Rev. Michele Rowe, protocols, Land Acknowledgements, and the Indigenous Church.

Clusters

Rev. Tony Snow has hosted a monthly Tuesday Indigenous Ministries Circle online hour as an opportunity for those in Chinook Winds region to learn about resources and upcoming events, and connect with each other.

Efforts to gather in 'clusters' are tentative – those in the Edmonton and Lethbridge areas have the most momentum. On Nov.21, a group of mostly Northern witnesses gathered, and gave rise to the desire to host a book study, and a time to share ideas for lifting up Indigenous History Month and Day of Prayer June 21. However, Julie Graham was on sabbatical from Feb.1-April 30 and no volunteer was stepping forward.

Student Placement

One of the Leadership group members with Indigenous heritage based in Grande Prairie, Grace Hussey BSW, was seeking a student ministry placement to meet requirements of studies at the Atlantic School of Theology. A proposal was developed and approved for Grace's placement for 10 hours/week from Jan – May 2023 to be funded partially through the NS Cluster budget, the LIRR Fund, and a Federal Vocational Rehabilitation fund supplement. During the placement, Grace would prepare for and facilitate a Lenten book study and a webinar, and compile the results of a congregational survey.

Survey of Communities of Faith & Witnesses

During February, in several weekly Regional e-newsletters to all ministry personnel and regional reps, and a BGRN e-newsletter to all witnesses, there was a invitation to complete a survey to tell us how your community of faith was participating in the journey of reconciliation, and how the BGRN might support you. We were disappointed in the return of only a dozen surveys. Nevertheless, some important connections have been made, concerns identified, and actions to be celebrated.

"Indigenous Writes" Lenten Book Study

The Leadership group chose Chelsea Vowel's book "Indigenous Writes" for a 5-part online study during March 2023. 44 people registered, and 25 participated in one or more sessions. There were many important insights gained and myths busted as the focus was on learning the history that has led to the realities of today, on and off reserve.

Vowel says "This country is woefully ignorant on a grand scale, and we will never succeed in rebuilding relationships until we address that ignorance. I can't stress enough: without education, there can be no justice, and until there is justice, there will be no peace." (p.230)

We hope to offer another book study, perhaps more focused on reconciliation and treaties.

Webinar April 22 Preparing for June Indigenous History Month and Day of Prayer

Plans were made for participants in the webinar to support each other in enhancing their community's response to the TRC Calls to Action and learning and celebrating during Indigenous History Month. They heard what some communities have done, what has worked, what obstacles have been experienced, and what resources have been helpful.

Journey Towards Indigenous Allyship Tool Kit

The toolkit was created by Chinook Winds Region Members working with Indigenous Minister Rev. Tony Snow, and released in Sept. 2022 before National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The hope is

that through using the resources, individuals and communities of faith will choose to move through acknowledgement, awareness, and internalization to advocacy in the ministry of reconcile-action.

KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE)

There was some return to conducting Blanket Exercises in person. Rev. Tony Snow led at least 7 Blanket Exercises using his unique script in the Chinook Winds region over Lent. There were 3 done in Drayton Valley led by Wilson Bearhead and his daughter Seneca, with funding assistance from the national UC Justice and Reconciliation Fund. However, after 25 years of offering this very popular teaching tool, the KBE program has stopped bookings, is reviewing its administrative and delivery framework, and a new Indigenous-led organization is being established. See update here:

<https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>

KAIROS Prairies North and the Decolonization Committee

An event focusing on decolonization was held in August at Muskeg Lake Cree FN, and the annual Prairies North Regional gathering was held in Calgary in November.

Acts of Reparation

The Central Alberta Spiritual Circle led by Russel Burns and others have begun to gather at the former Beverly United Church in Edmonton which was transferred to Interconnect Housing Foundation based in Red Deer. This is instead of rebuilding Samson UC at Maskwacis.

We are awaiting the report of the Beaver Hills Biosphere Treaty Land Sharing Network Pilot Program.

<https://www.beaverhills.ca/stories/post/treaty-land-sharing-network-pilot-program> In this program (modelled after TLSN efforts in Saskatchewan) private landholders provide access for Indigenous peoples to practice their culture and connect with the land in a safe environment.

Bunk #7 play

This play, [decades in the making](#), toured northeastern BC in the fall, and BGRN friends in the Peace River and Fort Nelson areas helped spread the word. It focuses on resistance and resilience at the United Church-run Edmonton Indian Residential School. [Here's an APTN story on the play and tour](#). And [here's the website](#). We wonder if there would be any interest in staging another tour in Alberta.

Resources, E-newsletters, Webpage, Facebook groups

We continue to make posts to the private and public Facebook pages of upcoming events, pertinent news and campaigns, and resources. You can contact igraham@united-church.ca to receive the BGRN periodic e-newsletters. There is a BGRN webpage at <https://northernspiritrc.ca/programs/being-good-relations-network/>. You can also subscribe to the monthly Living into Right Relations newsletter from the desk of General Council Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice. <https://united-church.ca/e-newsletters>. Soon a calendar of important days in Indigenous culture will be posted.

There really has been a lot happening, and there is so much more to learn and tackle. If you have any questions, suggestions, comments, or want to get more involved, please contact us:

On behalf of those on the journey of reconciliation,

Rev.Cecile Fausak

Grace Hussey

Rev. Tony Snow

Sharon Woodhouse

cecilefausak@telus.net

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swoodhouse@telus.net

Lacombe

Grande Prairie

Calgary

Calgary

C6. Western Intercultural Ministry Network of the United Church of Canada

Report for the Annual Meetings of the Western Regions – 2022-2023

(Prairie to Pine, Living Skies, Northern Spirit, Chinook Winds, Pacific Mountain Regional Councils, and the Indigenous Church)

The Western Intercultural Network is a relatively 'young' network of communities in the United Church of Canada committed to a fully inclusive and intercultural church, covering the five Western Regional Councils.

The network holds gatherings, educational events and online conversations that focus on intercultural discussions and dialogue. Network members are engaging in and promoting action in their regions towards living out the UCC's vision of being an intercultural church ([Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](https://www.united-church.ca)). An executive composed of representatives from the five Western Regional Councils of the United Church offers us leadership.

Our vision of becoming an intercultural United Church encompasses:

- Racialized people and communities, which includes ethnic churches within the United Church, racialized lay leaders, and ministry personnel, and more.
- Indigenous people and communities, within the United Church and beyond, of all traditions.
- People with disabilities.
- LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people and communities.
- The privileged, yet broken, who are seeking wholeness and justice.

We are each worthy individuals and numerous cultural groups, and richer for our diversity. And we are at the same time engaged in a common pursuit of caring for each other and the planet. We honour our identities, and the spaces where they intersect. Our ministry includes courageous (and awkward!) conversations about our diversity, and about the social privilege and history that hinder right relationships. We believe the Good News of Jesus Christ calls us into such conversations, right relationship, and mutual transformation.

2022-2023 Activities

During the 2022-2023 period the WIMN Executive the Network has continued to offer its Coffee Chai time series. These series offer opportunities for learning, discussion and reflection on themes related to interculturality. The sessions held between April 2022 – March 2023:

June 23, 2023 – Topic: "Residential Schools: Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Strategies to support communities" – This session led by Rev. John Snow, Jr. and Rev. Tony Snow offered an introduction to trauma awareness and how to support communities as they seek to understand, and process news that continues to emerge about unmarked graves being located at sites of former Indian Residential institutions.

November 29, 2022 – Topic: "Jesus and the Marginalized" - This session led by Rev Dr. OhWang Kwon, MDiv., PhD., focussed discussions on the book *Jesus and the Marginalized: Jesus Christ for Koreans in The United Church of Canada*, co-authored by Rev. Dr. Ohwang Kwon, and Dr. Don Schweitzer, which explores the meaning of Jesus for Koreans in the United Church of Canada, and in the Canadian context.

The Executive continues to engage in discussions at its meetings about how we might move forward by building on areas of strength and develop stronger support and ministry for areas which we have not been able to truly focus our attention. The Executive has also engaged in discussions with staff from the National Office about how best to support and invite clergy and lay persons in under-represented groups to step forward as nominees for positions on the many denominational groups seeking these unique voices at the table.

Annual Meeting

WIMN hosted its Annual meeting on November 29, 2022, in conjunction with one of its Chai/Coffee Sessions.

At that meeting the members of the Executive that had guided the Network's activities for 2022 largely chose to remain involved and to offer their gifts and stewardship for the work of the network for another year.

The Executive for 2022-23 comprises:

Co-Chairs: Kathy Yamashita (Chinook Winds) and Deborah Richards (Pacific Mountain)

Secretary: Rev. Chelsea Masterman (Northern Spirit)

Pacific Mountain: Alwin Maben (past chair)

Chinook Winds: Rev. Dr. OhWang Kwon

Northern Spirit: Vacancy for one more representative

Living Skies: Mathias Ross, Salesi Takau

Prairie to Pine: Damber Khadka, Bill Millar

Staff support: Julie Graham (Living Skies, Prairie to Pine and Northern Spirit Regions), Chris Mah Poy (Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Region)

In the past year, Rev. Kurt Katzmar (Northern Spirit) retired from active ministry and we were sorry to see him step down from his role as Co-Chair. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

Our Elder Kay Quon continues to join the Executive for meetings when possible and we enjoy having her join us as she is able.

The Executive meets monthly for about 90 minutes. This provides an opportunity for us to connect about activities in our region, as well as engage in planning discussions. All of our meetings were online this year.

Looking forward

The Executive will continue to build on its ongoing discussions on how the Network will engage in supporting and living out the call within our regions to be an Intercultural Church.

Upcoming Events

Our Coffee/Chai time series will continue in 2023 and we are hoping that we might be able to hold an in-person event in fall 2023.

Contact Us

If you would like to be contacted about WIMN events you can [sign up for occasional updates here](#); you can unsubscribe at any time, and we don't share your information with anyone else.

Respectfully Submitted by

Kathy Yamashita and Deborah Richards

Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Executive of the Western Intercultural Ministries Network

March 22, 2023

C7: Northern Spirit Annual General Meeting, May 4-7, 2023
Leanne Templeton, Archivist

One area of focus this past year has been identifying the records of Indigenous Peoples and Communities, opening these up through descriptive work and processing to make them findable and easy to use by researchers. In response to the TRC Calls to Action, and with a sense of urgency to see tangible change occur, United Church archivists across Canada have been collaborating to identify and make available to Indigenous Communities records packages (hard drives). This work is being advanced by Bringing the Children Home, and occurs in consultation with Indigenous Ministries and Justice (IMJ).

Prior to the pandemic, our volunteer contingent was in the process of increasing from two to four. However, after three years of being locked out of the building, on February 8th, 2023, the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA) allowed two United Church volunteers to re-enter: Gayle Simonson and Phyllis Verhaar. It is a sign of trust, and confidence in the professionalism of our program, that Gayle and Phyllis are only the 3rd and 4th out of more than fifty pre-pandemic volunteers to be allowed to resume activities.

Our partnership with the PAA continues to be strong. The PAA provides equipment and workspace for the archivist, secure and monitored records storage, reference services, conservation services and numerous supplies at no charge. This is in sharp contrast to the expenses for rent, supplies and storage incurred by other regions. We are blessed to have such a positive and well-working relationship in Alberta.

On April 1st, 2023, the archivist began lending support to Living Skies Regional Archives, seven hours a week. This work is being conducted remotely, from Edmonton.

For growth and professional development, the archivist served on the Archives Society of Alberta Education Committee, contributed to a Project Risk Assessment as a member of the Advisory Group for *Digitizing United Church Archives of Chinese and Japanese Canadian Communities in B.C.*, met with Pacific Mountain and Prairie to Pine archivists at the Association of Canadian Archivists Conference “*UnSettled: Redefining Archival Power*”, and obtained a Digital Archives Specialist Certificate from the Society of American Archivists.

If you have questions about how to transfer records to the archives, would like to receive a retention schedule or *What Do The Archives Want Guide*, please email the archivist at LTempleton@united-church.ca

C8. Office of Vocation Report
Northern Spirit, Living Skies and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils
Rev Laura Fohse, Vocational Minister

I stepped into the role of Vocational Minister in August of 2023. There has been a very steep learning curve and I am grateful for the patience extended as I learn the ropes.

I am also grateful for the many opportunities I have had to become acquainted with ministry personnel across my three regions. It is a privilege to be invited into discerning conversations with respect to sabbaticals, retirement and vocational clarity. I have been able to join the zoom ministry gatherings in Northern Spirit and Living Skies (Prairie to Pine still to come). I have also enjoyed seeing many of you at the professional boundaries' refresher workshops – both in-person and online. I was able to facilitate in-person workshops in Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg. Last fall I participated in a clergy retreat offered by Living Skies Pastoral Relations Minister, Tracy Murton and this April I was invited, by the Prairie to Pine Committee for Ministry Personnel Support, to offer a similar retreat in that region. It is my hope to also offer a retreat, in conjunction with an in-person professional boundaries refresher in Northern Spirit Regional Council next fall.

Prairie Candidacy Board

The Prairie Candidacy Board has been hard at work supporting 29 candidates on their journey through the Candidacy Pathway. We have an amazing and diverse board consisting of: Chair, Rob Smith; Aurora Espenant, Brenda Curtis, Chewe Mulenga, Doreen Hewitson, Mary Annan, Mkwadi Basele, Salesi Takau, Shirley Goodrich, SunDo Hyun, Taeil Yang, and Wayne Youngward.

Of the 29 candidates, 9 are from Prairie to Pine, 12 from Living Skies, 7 from Northern Spirit and 1 from another region. We have 4 in the Designated Lay Ministry stream, 8 in the Diaconal stream, and 17 in the Ordained stream. We have 12 candidates in Supervised Ministry Education (SME). 8 candidates are completing the pathway in 2023 - 2 will be commissioned, 2 recognized and 4 ordained.

Oversight and Discipline of Ministry Personnel

Over the past year, there has been a focus on deliberately consulting with regional councils through an increased number of case conferences, during the informal phases of oversight and discipline proceedings.

As the response committee continues its work there is recognition of the need for more trained investigators, reviewers and consultants, as some people have stepped away from the work, for a variety of reasons.

The Office of Vocation takes seriously its responsibilities with respect to ensuring standards for accreditation are being met. These include annual declaration of criminal charges and mandatory training. The Standards committee reviewed the Ethical Standards for Ministry

Personnel and the Board of Vocation approved changes to better include guidelines for social media and digital technology.

Admissions Committee

(Admission work is now staffed by Sarah Bruer in the Office of Vocation, this is her summary)

If you go to the United Church of Canada website and search for admissions, you'll find that the admission process is currently not accepting new applications. This pause does not mean that our work with admission ministers is paused. It is merely allowing us to focus our energy on supporting the 194 ministers who are already at various stages within the admission process. In 2022, the Admission Board conducted 36 interviews; and another 12 have already been conducted in 2023. Meanwhile, the Matching Commission is piloting a new program that we hope will make it easier for Admission Ministers to find the appointments they need to complete the admission process, with five ministers looking forward to joining us this year. Having come through such interviews and appointments, this spring we are collectively celebrating with 11 ministers who have completed the admission process and will be admitted to the Order of Ministry in The United Church of Canada.

Again, thank you for your patience and support as I adjust to this ministry. I welcome every and all opportunities to connect with ministry personnel in Prairie to Pine, Living Skies and Northern Spirit Regional Councils. My contact information can be found on each of the regions' website. If you see me at the regional council gathering, please flag me down and introduce yourself.



This QR code will take you to a digital filing cabinet of [stewardship resources](#)



I am delighted once again to bring news from the stewardship support team, Mission & Service, and the United Church Foundation to the good people of Northern Spirit.

Over the past year I have had the honour of meeting with many of you, whether as participants in a *Called to be the Church: The Journey* program, or through a phone conversation or webinar. If we haven't yet met, my role is to provide resources and support to individuals, communities of faith, and other ministries in the areas of generosity, congregational giving, Mission & Service, and the work of the United Church Foundation. If you have ideas, questions or inspiration to share, please get in contact [with me](#).

One way I would love to connect in 2023 and beyond is through the learning programs, *Called to be the Church: The Journey*. We currently have 4 course offerings that provide training and support for different parts of the stewardship journey. Whether you want to learn some stewardship-first principles, get resources to run a congregational Giving Program, or are hoping to set up a Legacy Giving Program in your community of faith, we have training options for you!! One participant provided this program feedback, *"I appreciate the leadership, the enthusiasm, the knowledge and the support of the leaders of this course. It was a lot of information, and was presented in a way that was not overwhelming. The recommendations are practical and doable."* You can learn [more here](#).

Speaking of gratitude for shared abundance, Mission & Service is our Church's most powerful vehicle for helping to transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and build a better world. Together we do more. Thanks to generous people like you 2022 saw \$24.5 million raised, including Mission & Service givings totalling \$21.1 million, bequests and other planned gifts totaling \$1.8 million, and over \$1.5 million for the people of Ukraine.

Locally, Mission & Service funds supported a number of amazing ministries in Northern Spirit. Camping ministries like Camp Whitney and Maskepetoon, anti-poverty work happening at the Bissel Centre, and Interfaith Centre for Education and Action are some of the transformative programs supported with your Mission & Service donations. Thank you!

Setting giving goals and sharing inspiring stories about Mission & Service are effective ways to hold up and celebrate this amazing work, and to encourage deeper generosity in your community of faith. New Stories of our Mission are [posted monthly](#). For those who utilize videos in worship, there are also [videos that tell personal stories of the life changing work of Mission & Service](#). If you want to bring more conversations about stewardship, gratitude, generosity and Mission & Service into your community of faith, consider signing up for the monthly newsletter [God's Mission, Our Gifts](#).

C9. Community of Faith Stewardship Support

Finally, I want to draw your attention to the important work being done by the United Church Foundation. In 2022 the Foundation established [four priority areas](#): Anti-Racism, Reconciliation with Indigenous People, Climate Justice, and Communities of Faith. If your community faith has program ideas or is engaged in work that falls into one of these areas, there may be grants available. Additionally, the United Church Foundation is there to help you invest in the ministries you care about.

Thank you, Northern Spirit Region friends. I am so grateful for your spirit, creativity, generosity, and thoughtfulness. I look forward to learning together in 2023.

In gratitude,

Vicki Nelson, Community of Faith Stewardship Support Staff for Northern Spirit Region

VNelson@united-church.ca * 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2045

C10. PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMISSION REPORT

April 2023

The Northern Spirit Region's Pastoral Relations Commission (PRC) is made up of six members: three ministry personnel and three lay people. The Commission has not had full membership for quite a while: working with four or five members in recent years. The PRC members take turns as chairperson on a rotating monthly basis. The Commission is supported by the region's Pastoral Relations Minister (Earl Reaburn) and the region's Administrative Support Person (Chloe Burns). Chloe began supporting the PRC in November 2022, following the retirement of Kathy Jackson. Earl will end his work with the committee in June 2023 when he retires. The PRC is looking forward to working with the region's next Pastoral Relations Minister.

Section C.2.8 of the United Church's Manual states:

The regional council is responsible for co-operating with communities of faith in

- a) recruiting, choosing, calling, appointing, and covenanting with ministry personnel and communities of faith;
- b) ending calls, appointments, and covenants with ministry personnel and other staff; and
- c) appointing a regional council liaison officer to assist a community of faith in pastoral relations matters at designated times.

There are a lot of details and tasks behind these three responsibilities. Sometimes it is simple as ensuring that the virtual paperwork is completed correctly. In all it does the PRC seeks to be mindful that it is to support and enliven the mission and ministry of the church.

In addition to appointing liaisons for places looking at changes in pastoral relations, supervisors are appointed to support communities of faith without a minister. Many people within the region take on supervisor and liaison roles and are an essential part of supporting the communities of faith, but the need often outstretches the capacity. The PRC is trying to be creative ensuring that Communities of Faith are supported as they update their Profiles and as they search for new ministry personnel to fill vacancies.

The PRC has three sub-committees that focus on *Communities of Faith Support*, *Ministry Personnel Support*, and *Lay Leadership Support*. These groups have a valuable ministry and often work closely with people and churches as they navigate through the challenges and joys of being church.

It is a reality in the modern church that some communities of faith are faced with a need to make significant changes. The PRC and its sub-committees work with them as they willingly (or reluctantly) evolve into something new, partner with others, or wind down their life as a church through celebration and creating a legacy. This is becoming an increasing amount of the Commission's work.

The PRC may operate behind the scenes, but its efforts can be seen when new pastoral relationships begin, when endings are celebrated, and when possibilities are explored.

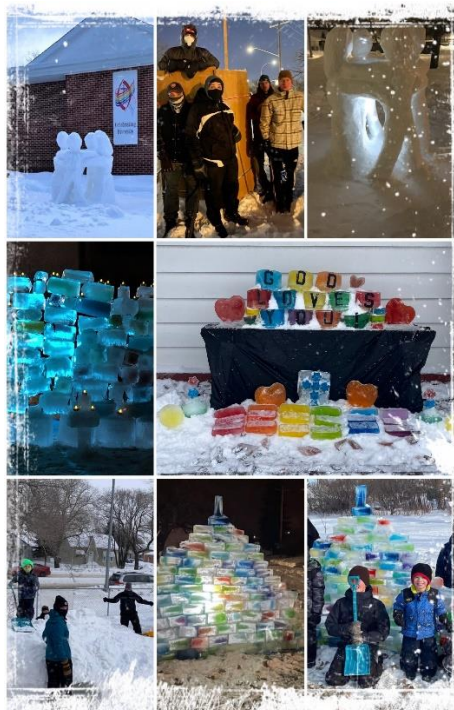
Submitted by
Blaine Gregg
Acting-PRC Chair

Justice and Communications Minister: Report to Northern Spirit Regional Council meeting 2023, covering work in 2022

As I write this, we're all preparing for the Regional meeting in Camrose. This will be my first chance to see you face to face since I began this job in January 2020. I look forward to many good conversations. I hope this report gives you a sense of my work and ministry with you, and I welcome conversations by any medium at any time!

I want to note that in 2022 I had to bid a retirement farewell to Kathy Jackson, with whom I worked closely from day one of my new three-Region job. I miss her, and am delighted to now work with Chloe Burns. I'm grateful for Kathy and Chloe's wisdom, creativity and amazing organizing skills. We take a team approach to communications across the three Regional Councils, and this makes the work less daunting and much more fun. All of the details you see below are the result of much collaboration, across staff teams, across church and ecumenical and Indigenous partnerships, and above all, between so many groups and people in Northern Spirit.

Communications and Community



Community-building: Snow and Ice Art. ([Click here for the web page](#)).

In January 2022 we launched a three-Region Love Your Neighbour, intergenerational ice art and snow sculpture initiative. About 25 communities of faith participated and the creativity was impressive! In 2023 we didn't have capacity to run this again, as I was on sabbatical, and even thinking about being creative in the new reality of living permanently with COVID seemed a bit much. However, we will think about this for 2024, because it was a great way to connect congregations with the wider community in a way that involved lots of food colouring and hot chocolate.

Networks and Clusters: The 2023 updated list of NSRC Networks and Clusters [is posted here](#). Understandably, many Clusters seem to be inactive, while Networks have in some cases found it easier to move online. Whenever we can, we post news from Networks and Clusters, and would love to add your work to this. [Click here for the homepage](#).

Directory for the Regional Council: This big project launched in January 2023, after a lot of shared work and planning across the three Regions to identify what information was needed, why, and how it could align with both privacy and connection needs. Kathy Jackson did all the heavy lifting of sifting through often competing data, I helped with editing, and Chloe brought it all to launch as soon as she started.

We hope this resource will help you, the people and delegates of the Regional Council, as well as members of Nominations, better see the network of relationships and personal commitments that sustain our ministry.

Nominations: The Executive voted to strike a committee for this crucial work that was being carried largely by Marilyn Carroll and staff support Kathy Jackson. On Kathy's invitation I joined to offer some communications support to this work. I am very grateful for Brenda Simon stepping into this role, and, more recently for Wilson MacLennan joining the committee.

Newsletters: [Click here for the newsletter archives](#). The weekly news continues to be a lot of vital weekly work, especially for fearless editor Kathy, and now Chloe. Chloe works with the mountain of content that comes in, maintains the website archive and contact list, and works with new subscribers. I am so grateful for their work. We made permanent a 2021 experiment that split the newsletter into alternating News and Events, in an effort to narrow down the focus and both the amount and scope of the content. Thank you to all who have written in with constructive feedback.

Events: Beginning about four month into COVID, we have all set sail on a sea of online events that occasionally builds to a tidal wave. This is both amazing and occasionally overwhelming for everyone. I have prioritised working with the newsletters team (Bev, Cherry, and Kathy and Chloe) to promote events and workshops that: have Indigenous leadership/ are focused on right relations; are Affirming; or intercultural; or anti-racism focused; focus on anti-poverty or climate justice; or reflect Regional initiatives and concerns. Generally we priority-promote first Regional, and then General Council, ecumenical, and national/ regional KAIROS events. Please remember that community of faith events have a [dedicated calendar](#) and [event posting form](#). [Regional events are here](#).

Website troubleshooting and development are always ongoing. As of February 2022 some persistently annoying technical issues were mostly resolved (of course writing this down ensures they'll start happening again). Keeping the site up to date is a priority for Chloe and me, and we hope it remains a useful home base for news, key documents, events, and more at www.northernspiritrc.ca For over two years we have maintained a special COVID newsfeed, and in 2022 that page was archived. We hope this is a sign of hope.

Over on **Facebook**, our group has reached almost 300 members and remains very active. Thank you to all who contribute to this community!

Justice work

2SLGBTQIA+ Affirming work and Regional Task Group: It is a privilege to accompany the skilled and diverse membership of this group. Task group members are: Linda McLaren (chair), Cathy Kinsman, Wilson MacLennan, Louise Rogers, Monica Rosborough. [Click here for the Affirming section on our website](#). They carry the responsibility of guiding the Regional Council through it Affirming process.

My work includes promoting Affirming resources and events to the Region; responding to Affirming ministries or ministries in the process or interested, and I was honoured to work with Living Spirit UC as they discern; connecting with Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble and with Alberta's Affirming Connections. In February 2023 we all collaborated with the national United Church and the Canadian Anti-Hate Network on a learning session about the frequently vicious anti-drag harassment targeting all ages drag story times and other events across the country. 230 registrants speaks to the importance of the topic, and the kind of strain drag artists and gender diverse people are living through as a result of

this harassment.

Previously I worked alongside Shylo Rosborough, who was employed by the former Edmonton Presbytery to carry Affirming engagement and education. We miss his work, his having moved on to further education, and the contract money having run out.

Intercultural ([Click here for the web page](#)). The Western Intercultural Network continues its work, which includes Chelsea Masterman, Kurt Katzmar, and Kay Quon (elder) as Northern Spirit members on the executive. More people are always welcome! The Network did not hold a fall 2022 event, instead taking another break from big online events, and advocating that people attend the Fifth Intercultural Adventure in Edmonton in October.

It will continue with at least quarterly open, 90 minute intercultural “coffee/ chai” learning and conversation events focused on specific practices of intercultural and anti racist ministry. These have included a discussion of [Jesus and the marginalized](#), with a focus on Korean Canadians; and intercultural “beneath the iceberg waterline” understandings of clergy collars.

I maintain the Network list and send out occasional newsletters, and feel privileged to be part of this vibrant and diverse group of leaders. I also presented on this network at a national staff gathering.

Right Relations/TRC

I have the great privilege of supporting the Being Good Relations Network ([click here for info and news](#)), which spans Northern Spirit and Chinook Winds. They have a large and active leadership group, which in late 2022 began talking through a detailed survey of local membership that would help guide future work. The survey was launched in early 2023, along with a book series focused on the myth-busting book “Indigenous Writes”, by AB Métis author âpihtawikosisân/ Chelsea Vowel. Huge thanks to Grace Hussey, ministry student at Atlantic School of Theology, and placement supervisor Cecile Fausak, for carrying this crucial work forward. It was a huge effort.

In March 2022, the Regional Council was invited to a round dance and ceremony at Saddle Lake Cree Nation celebrating the giving of Ashmont United Church’s building to the Acimowin Opaspiw healing society. [Please read the full story here](#). At a time when the United Church is releasing many of our buildings, and the land on which they’re built, we are reminded of our obligations under the Apology, the TRC Calls to Action, and many more such voices that call us out of colonization and into the right and just relationships God envisions for all of God’s creation and peoples. If your community of faith is considering a different future for your building, the Property Commission and the Being Good Relations can help you talk through giving land back to First Peoples.



In July 2022 Rev Helen Reed represented the Regional Council at the mass given on the occasion of the Pope's long-awaited visit to Alberta and other treaty and Indigenous territories to apologise for residential schools. The Pope also visited Maskwacis, and a number of people from our Region and from the Indigenous church attended. *(Left: Helen with Lutheran Bishop Rev Larry Kochendorfer.)*

I prioritise promoting events and resources related to significant days in the Indigenous and right relations calendar, especially June 21, September 30, and October 4, and any events offered by Indigenous leadership in the United Church. There have been many of these, meaning that we all have the space needed to come out, to learn, and to be challenged and transformed.

I continue to be in regular contact with staff of Indigenous Ministries and Justice at General Council and with colleague Charlene Burns, and am grateful for these relationships. In September 2022 I was very honoured to be invited to attend a circle focused on the emerging Central Alberta Spiritual Circle, based in part out of Beverly United Church in Edmonton.

KAIROS Prairies North Decolonization Committee: Along with our (so far) sole AB rep, Presbyterian lay leader Javed Sommers, I participate in this ecumenical group which offers education and reflection gatherings focused on practical steps towards decolonization in which everyone can be involved, with a focus on Indigenous leadership. Our May 2022 workshop series focused on land acknowledgement best practices for faith and spiritual communities and had good AB participation. Plans for spring and fall 2023 include a multi year focus on understanding the relationship between resource extraction, treaty rights, and Canadian law that continues to be grounded in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. I'm not doing this description justice; there are some very interesting learning spaces planned.

Anti-racism: This is a denomination-wide commitment with a public action plan in which we can all join.

In June 2022 I supported Rev Paul Douglas Walfall (Northern Spirit), elder Russel Burns, and Rev Jordan Cantwell to offer a [three-Region June evening series on anti racism planning](#) in local ministries, based on the book *Wait-Is This Racist?*, a church-focused resource on the impact of racism in church life, and strategies for challenging this. We had good Northern Spirit participation, with over 50 people turning out for most evenings.

This series allowed us to work around the absence of an anti racism working group in Northern Spirit; during repeated invitations to get this annual meeting-approved going, we had too few people offer to participate.

I continue to be part of discussion with national staff about coordinating anti-racism networking with Regional Councils, and accessing lists of people who have done Sessions 3 and 4 of the national training and could be leaders for us. In 2022 I ended my role in the facilitation team for the national training because of time constraints, but am part of conversations about a possible rural-focused version of the training.

Refugee sponsorship: COVID and ever-tighter government rules about finances and more have made this challenging area of work more so. I am beyond grateful for the advocates and communities of faith who continue to ensure that we live into our Christian and Canadian responsibility to support those seeking refuge from fear, want, and violence. In March 2022 we held a three-Region refugee supporters and sponsors check in concerning the national refugee sponsorship program, with national staff Khwaka Kukubo. This included a focus on COVID impacts; Afghanistan; and LGBTQ refugees. However, I am aware that we do not have a committee, network, or other means of communicating with and between sponsoring communities of faith, and that this needs to be addressed.

Other justice networking: People in the Region have been involved in shared national-local work on: Guaranteed Livable Income; Palestine; Faithful Footprints and For the Love of Creation, both climate change related.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Graham,

Regional Minister: Justice and Communications, Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils of the United Church of Canada.



D1. Annual Report to Northern Spirit Region of the United Church of Canada from Kirk United Church Centre 2022

Kirk United Church Centre, also known as Kirk Centre, is an Incorporated Ministry of the United Church of Canada, located in the neighbourhood of Dovercourt in Northwest Edmonton, Alberta.

In 2019 when Kirk United Church was in the process of disbanding, the congregation turned the building over to the United Church of Canada and it subsequently has evolved into the community hub known as Kirk Centre.

Kirk Centre was incorporated under the Province of Alberta Societies Act in December of 2019. Kirk Centre reports to the Northern Spirit Regional Council in accordance with the Incorporated Ministries policy.

Vision: Kirk Centre is a vibrant, welcoming hub, and integral partner in building community in northwest Edmonton.

Mission: Kirk Centre provides an open, safe, diverse and inclusive facility, working collaboratively with other non-profit organizations to help meet the identified cultural, educational, spiritual and physical needs of the residents of Dovercourt and its neighbouring communities.

Kirk Centre is governed by a Board of Directors currently consisting of five United Church members and two community members:

Jacqueline Hunt – Chair (UCC Staff and Member)
Wilson MacLennan – Secretary (UCC Member)
Susan Waldie – Treasurer (UCC Member)
Darlene Bakker – Director (UCC Member)
Deanna Boyde – Director (Community Member)
Gail Greenwood – Director (Community Member)
Larry Wright – Director (UCC Member)

Kirk Centre has two employees, Sally-Anne Woolnough – Executive Director and Shelly Arsenault – Facility Caretaker.

Kirk Centre was incorporated in December 2019 and was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic just 3 months later. The last set of widespread restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic were lifted in Alberta in June 2022 and Kirk Centre was able to resume its planned activities at that time. However, from the Kirk Centre incorporation in December 2019 to December 2022 Kirk Centre was unable to run at full capacity for 28/37 months or over 75% of its life cycle. As a result, Kirk struggled with revenue rates as low as 5% compared to previous months/years. These statistics lead Kirk Centre to deplete an investment which had been planned as an emergency fund.

In the summer of 2022, shortly after COVID restrictions were fully lifted, Kirk Centre faced the challenges of making ends meet while we resumed marketing efforts to ensure full capacity and usage. It became apparent that until we were at 100% rentals, we could not ensure the long-term viability of the Centre. With the support of The Northern Spirit Regional Council and a generous loan from The General Council of The United Church of Canada in October 2022, Kirk Centre was able to handle the short-term financial crisis and focus on the long-term success of Kirk Centre.

As of the end of December 2022 Kirk Centre was home to seven faith assemblies, eight community businesses (including Mr. Rooter, Highlander Counselling, Talk Box Therapy, Dancing Willow Yoga and

The Nechi Institute), three levels of Girl Guides, four levels of Scout groups, and many community groups including a T.O.P.S. group, Gamblers Anonymous, Sex and Lovers Anonymous, a Zoomba group, an Adult Dance club and a horse trail riding association. In addition, Kirk Centre is the home base for two Northern Spirit Region staff.

In a typical week approximately five hundred and fifty people used the facility at that time. By the end of 2022 Kirk Centre was in discussion with additional Tenant Partners including Sage Counselling, Serenity Respite, Connection Market & Events and the School of Hope. All of these discussions lead to agreements with these organizations to become Tenant Partners at Kirk Centre in early 2023.

Kirk Centre was pleased to receive a federal grant from Canada Summer Jobs which enabled us to hire three students between May and September 2022. These students were key in developing community plans and partnerships, which would not have been accomplished otherwise. In addition, the students allowed Kirk Centre staff to catch up on other duties and tasks.

In 2022 Kirk Centre saw the launch of another Little Free Project. With the Little Free Library (LFL) in full swing, Kirk Centre opened the Little Free Pantry (LFP) in July 2022. The LFP receives shelf stable and weather appropriate donated food and hygiene items and puts them in a pantry outdoors, available to by anyone, no questions asked. Unlike other free food providers, Kirk Centre does not require intake information, or require someone to officially ask for help. People are free to access the pantry as they determine. Kirk Centre has three more Little Free Projects already open or planned for 2023.

Kirk Centre was also able to launch the volunteer Program in 2022. There are some community projects that would be very difficult for the staff to manage on their own without some volunteer help, so their assistance is invaluable. In addition to the Board of Directors, Kirk Centre welcomed six regular volunteers in 2022, with more expected in 2023. With a variety of volunteer opportunities to suit all time constraints and interests, Kirk Centre is a great opportunity to get on the ground level of a grassroots project and make a positive impact in the community.

Kirk Centre held a fundraiser in August 2022 in partnership with community cats YEG. Kirk Centre collected bottles, sold 15 auction items, had a bake sale, door prizes and provided kids activities and building tours. This fundraiser was in support of Kirk centre and Community Cats YEG, but the most important aspect was the opportunity to bring people in to the building to see what Kirk Centre is about and what is being offered to the community.

A partnership has also been developed with Serenity Funerals Service, a community owned, not-for-profit full-service funeral home, to supply space where indigenous families can honor their loved ones with a traditional 24 to 72 hour wake. Many buildings cannot accommodate the overnight stays and it has been Kirk Centre's honour to fill that need.

Kirk Centre believes the Community Hub model is an asset to The Northern Spirit Region and to The United Church of Canada and plans to continue to strengthen our relationship with and our place within The United Church of Canada and The Northern Spirit Region

With hard work, tenacity and broad support Kirk Centre continues to move forward on its strategic plan, increasing community partnerships and engagement and seeing a busy and vibrant community hub come to life. We are excited to continue to share our successes with you.



Jacqueline Hunt

Chair - Kirk Centre Board of Directors



ANNUAL REPORT TO UCC REGIONAL COUNCILS
April 2023

Greetings and grace to you as you convene for your Regional Council meeting. May that time nourish and sustain you, as you build up the church and enjoy the goodness of *being* the church.

I am pleased to report that AST has experienced several interesting events and changes in the last year. Here are a few of them.

In the summer of 2022, and for the first time since 2019, we were able to have our summer MDiv students take their courses in person and occupy rooms at the campus residence. I had several opportunities to meet with students both as a group and individually. They were pleased to meet faculty and fellow students in person and to share worship, meals, and recreation with their colleagues.

As the Fall 2022 term began, our courses were offered remotely or in hybrid (both virtually and in-person) form. As none of our own students applied for residence, all our rooms were rented to international students from other institutions in the Halifax area. However, we maintain a policy of preferential availability for AST students. In the meantime, we are remaining true to the fundamental values and mission of AST by reaching out to those who would have to pay much more for accommodations or would be unable to study in Halifax because of a lack of rental spaces.

In other good news, the Province of Nova Scotia has provided AST with a grant of \$3M to renovate and upgrade our residence facilities, work that is long overdue. The funds will allow us to repair brickwork, install new plumbing, make wi-fi system updates, and upgrade shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.

At the May 2023 Convocation, the first cohort of students in the Diploma in Missional Leadership (DML), all of whom are affiliated with the United Church, will graduate from this new program. The next cohort of the DML will begin in early 2024. This learning opportunity will be available to persons from all denominational backgrounds as we build a new complement of ecumenical partners in mission. AST is currently in the last stages of the formal application processes to launch a Bachelor of Theology degree program. The key purpose of the Bachelor of Theology degree is to increase accessibility to higher education in theological subjects. Those who desire postsecondary education specifically in the theological disciplines

but lack an undergraduate degree will benefit from this new degree. A direct-entry undergraduate degree option will assist them in their vocational and educational goals.

A key element of the Strategic Plan adopted by the AST Board in February 2022 is collaboration with Saint Mary's University (Halifax) as part of the now twenty-year old Memorandum of Understanding between our two independent institutions. In the past year, we have integrated our student information infrastructure into the Banner system at SMU. That project, funded by the Nova Scotia government through the NS Council of University Presidents, is almost complete. The initiative has provided significant benefits to our students, faculty, and staff. It has allowed AST to move from paper-based to IT-based processes for handling many things, from course registration to student records and course changes.

We will see some significant leadership changes at AST over the next several months. The Presidential Search Committee (even as this is being written) is nearing the end of its work to find a candidate to propose to the Board as AST's new President. As well, a second search committee is in the process of seeking a new Academic Dean to succeed Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell who has served in that role since 2017. His outstanding contributions to the university have earned him a well-deserved sabbatical which will begin this summer. Finally, Rev. Dr. Linda Yates succeeds Dr. Peter Secord as Chair of AST's Board of Governors.

We would like to express deep gratitude to our partners in The United Church of Canada—the General Council, the Regional Councils, the Board of Governors of Pine Hill Divinity Hall, and the local churches, leaders, and ministers—who support AST's work in a variety of ways. Financial support from the General Council and Pine Hill Divinity Hall are critical to our capacity to function as a university focused on theological education for ordered ministry candidates and lay leaders. The local churches support AST through discernment processes for potential ministry candidates, by encouraging lay people to continue their lifelong faith learning, by calling and supervising our graduates who serve your congregations, and by your vital and deeply valued financial support. If your Community of Faith has not yet made a gift to AST this year, I ask you to consider doing so in the next month or two.

AST continues to seek to be responsive to the emerging needs of the church and society as we serve together in God's world. In this, we are grateful to be your partners.

In Christ,
Dr. Tim O'Neill
Interim President, Atlantic School of Theology

D3. CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES – 2022

A Year of Anticipation and Adjustment

Students in Northern Spirit:

Jennifer Carter-Morgan

2022 for The Centre for Christian Studies was a year full of preparation, anticipation, and adjustment. It began with the departure of David Lappano (former program staff) and Michelle Owens (former principal). It set the stage for two search teams to look for new staff. Meanwhile, Ken Delisle served as the interim principal for most of the year until the arrival of the new principal. Through several months of internal preparation, discussion, and searching, CCS now has new Program Staff Alcris Limongi and Alan Lai; the new principal. They both started in the month of October.

Alcris Limongi came to CCS from Parkdale United Church in Ottawa, where she served as the Minister of Pastoral Care. Alan came from Vancouver, where he was the minister serving South Arm United Church in Richmond. Alcris originally came from Venezuela, and Alan, Hong Kong. Together, they bring intercultural perspectives and years of leading anti-racism and intercultural learning to the CCS community. Covenanting service for Alcris and Alan were conducted on November 23rd, at Westworth United Church in Winnipeg.

With the assemble of the new team complete, the staff spent the last few months of the year building new relationships and sharing ideas and practices. The spirit of exploration and relationship building was high. With Alan's photographic and video production skills, CCS has begun to post more updates and videos on the school's Facebook page and YouTube channel.

While the searches were going on most of the year, CCS's programs and operation continued smoothly with dedicated staff and volunteers. CCS continues to offer courses online and in-person, which included: Power and Privilege, Ages and Stages, Ministry as Community-building, Health, Pain, & Trauma. CCS Fridays is a series of free, one-hour online workshops and discussions offered mostly once a month to connect friends and the wider community. On April 3rd, during the Annual Service of Celebration, Aileen Urquhart was awarded the Companion of the Centre Award.

Financially, CCS continues to rely on the commitment of the denomination and generous donors who believe in the mission of the school. Lori Stewart, our Development Coordinator, has done a fantastic job connecting with donors and applying for grants and funding. While denomination funding is decreasing, and Endowment portfolio is not as promising as before,

we are committed to working towards financial sustainability. We are thankful that many of our donors remain committed to diaconal education and bless us with extraordinary generosity in 2022. CCS is anticipating major Endowment fundraising campaign in the coming years.

There is no doubt the pandemic has challenged the school on many fronts, including programming, student enrolment, marketing, and so on. It disrupted more than just in-person gathering, but also concepts of theological education, teaching, learning, and service in the world. However, the process of rebuilding has begun.

We are blessed with collaborative, generous partners, including:

- Anglican and United Churches
- Diakonia of the United Church of Canada
- Anglican Deacons
- Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean
- Diaconal Mentors, Field Placements, Learning Facilitators, Local Committee members, Council and Committee volunteers
- St Andrew's College
- St Stephen's College
- Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre
- Strategic Charm (social media managers)

Our Yearbook, Financial Statements, and Annual Report may be found at:

<http://ccsonline.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2022-Year-Book.pdf>

Respectfully submitted,

Alan

Rev. Dr. Alan Lai
Principal

To our beloved friends in Christ: greetings from St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon!

As we journey into 2023, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support and encouragement of our Regional Councils. The past few years have been challenging, and we are mindful of the pain and loss that we and the world have experienced. We are also excited by the new opportunities that lie ahead, and we are humbled by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst at St. Andrew's College.

One of the most significant reminders we rediscovered, during the pandemic, is the importance of community. We are now sharing our building with the other two schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union, (Lutheran Theological Seminary and the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad) and we have entered into a Covenant of Commitment, which marks a profound level of cooperation between us. This renewed relationship enables us to support one another, so that each partner's unique denominational gifts contribute to our collective ability to do more than we could on our own. We hope that our ecumenical boldness will inspire faith communities in every denomination to explore creative and courageous ecumenical partnerships as well.

We are thrilled to announce that we are finalizing the development of our renewed **Master of Divinity** and **Master of Theological Studies** degree programmes. Both programmes will be available in an intensive format, and St. Andrew's students can complete the entire learning journey from their own contexts without having to relocate. Our programmes are deeply ecumenical, shared across all three schools, and involve the collaboration of faculty from different denominational traditions and theological disciplines. We look forward to welcoming our first cohort of students for these innovative programmes, beginning in the fall of this year.

We are also pleased to report that we have recommitted to offering our **Doctor of Ministry** program, and we have already received applications for the fall cohort. Additionally, we continue to enjoy hosting the **Designated Lay Ministry** programme at the College, while we await further word from General Council about its future.

There's so much happening at our College right now, but we wouldn't want to miss talking about the **Lifelong Learning Pathway** we've been developing. It has been researched and developed over the past two years, and we're currently testing it with a pilot project of eager learners. This new programme opens the great privilege of theological and spiritual reflection to a wider community of learners beyond our traditional degree programmes. Whether you're exploring Christian discipleship through leadership in your faith community or in the wider society, or seeking paths of wisdom in other spiritual traditions, our certificate programmes (*Leadership in the Faith Community*, *Leadership in the World*, and *Spiritual Exploration*) create new possibilities of study.

Our new Lifelong Learning Pathway prioritises your own learning goals and pairs you with your own educational guide. We'll help you identify educational resources and opportunities, develop a personalised learning plan, and build a portfolio of reflective work. You will progress at your own pace toward the competencies described in your chosen certificate. This unique new programme is perfect for seasoned pastors seeking continuing education, lay leaders who want to engage in theological work to enhance their ministries and vocations, and the spiritually curious wisdom-seekers who will benefit from a flexible and supportive framework of reflection. Regardless of your previous formal education, St.

Andrew's Lifelong Learning Pathway opens up a treasure-trove of theological and spiritual exploration to anyone who desires it!

As you can see, we're at a very exciting place in our history. The challenges of the past few years have unleashed our imaginations and propelled us into God's future. We believe that there are opportunities waiting for us that are greater than we could ask or imagine, and we invite you to continue to support us, pray for us, and indeed join us as we take theological education that embodies compassion, hope, and justice into a new century of faithful discipleship.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions at all, at principal.sac@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca. If you would like to know more about our academic or lifelong learning pathways, feel free to contact Shawn, the College Recruitment Officer, at shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca. And we would be more than happy to receive your financial support! Contact our College Secretary at collegesecretary.sac@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca for a list of development opportunities and ways to give.

As we walk together in ministry, may the Spirit continue to bless and guide you!

On behalf of the St. Andrew's Community,
Yours in Christ,

Rev. Shawn Sanford Beck
Recruitment Officer

&

Dea. Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis
Principal



D5. Report 2022

For Northern Spirit Regional Council

The United Church Rural Ministry Network (UCRMN) is a national network, that connects electronically to share stories and news of rural communities across Canada (and around the world), by networking with leaders of rural communities of faith – lay and clergy.

Our ways of connecting with people are mainly by monthly e-Newsletters and Quarterly Zoom workshops.

The e-Newsletters are always available (UCRMN.ca) for sharing worship ideas and hopeful stories from rural congregations. The e-Newsletters publicize events happening throughout the Church which are of interest to rural folks, advertising from Regions and committees like Affirming Connections, Curiosity Cohort, etc. There is excellent tech advice and challenges from Martin Dawson in PEI and from Peter Chynoweth in Cochrane, AB.

Our Zoom workshops throughout the year 2022 were held on February 24 (Rural Church check-in), April 28 (talking about GS128 and GCE06 – better rural support and DLM, conversation being held at GC44), October 13 (Michele Rowe sharing on Trauma-Informed Ministry, 'Ministry in the Midst') and then January 19, 2023 (Peter Bartlett, an Eastern Ontario Regional staff shared information on the United Church Strategic Plan, which inspired lots of conversation, both pro and con). At the end of April there was a very engaged and engaging workshop on Collaborative Ministries. (The recording of the gathering is on the website). These workshops are advertised in the e-Newsletters and registration is done through Eventbrite – they have a \$5 or \$10 cost to assist with our budget.

UCRMN received a one-time start up grant of \$5,000 from United Church Foundation in 2020. UCRMN is a charitable organization that receipts donations from Regional Councils, Congregations or interested people. At UCRMN.ca, there is a link for online donations, or to email an e-Transfer, or how to mail a donation by cheque. As well, UCRMN has been contacting Regional Councils requesting that funding for UCRMN be in their annual budgets, as 70% of United Church congregations across the country are in rural or small towns, therefore a relevant cost to each Regional Council. We want to thank Northern Spirit Regional Council very much for making a donation for support of UCRMN this year.

UCRMN has been in discussions with Edge about running rural ministry Conferences in strategic areas across Canada. We are finding that some Regions are hosting their own Rural Ministry Conference, such as "Rural Routes Through the Holy" in the Maritimes Region (information can be found in the UCRMN e-Newsletter).

UCRMN folks ran the Canadian portion of the International Rural Churches Association (IRCA) 24-hour Global Prayer event that took place March 7 & 8, 2022. Catherine Smith, a UCRMN member from the Atlantic Region, was the host of 'Canada East', and Tim Wray, a Lutheran pastor and member of CIRCLE M at the Saskatoon Theological Union, hosted 'Canada West'. You can check them out on the IRCA website (IRCA.online).

UCRMN members are taking part in the “Rural Townhall” by Edge Network for Ministry Development, to hear peoples’ thoughts about what is going on in rural churches, and how rural ministries can be supported.

UCRMN always is looking for members to serve on the Board, as e-Newsletter Editor, Workshop Coordinator, or on the Finance Committee. Peter Chynoweth of Cochrane, AB, has been our Web Minder since October 2022.

There are many UCRMN members in Northern Spirit Region. We encourage others to join so that you receive the e-Newsletter automatically. We are eager that United Church Rural Ministry represents lay-led congregations, as well as congregations with Ministry Personnel. You can subscribe on the webpage, www.urcmn.ca.

Respectfully Submitted
Catherine Christie
President, UCRMN (Abbey, SK)



Centennial 2025

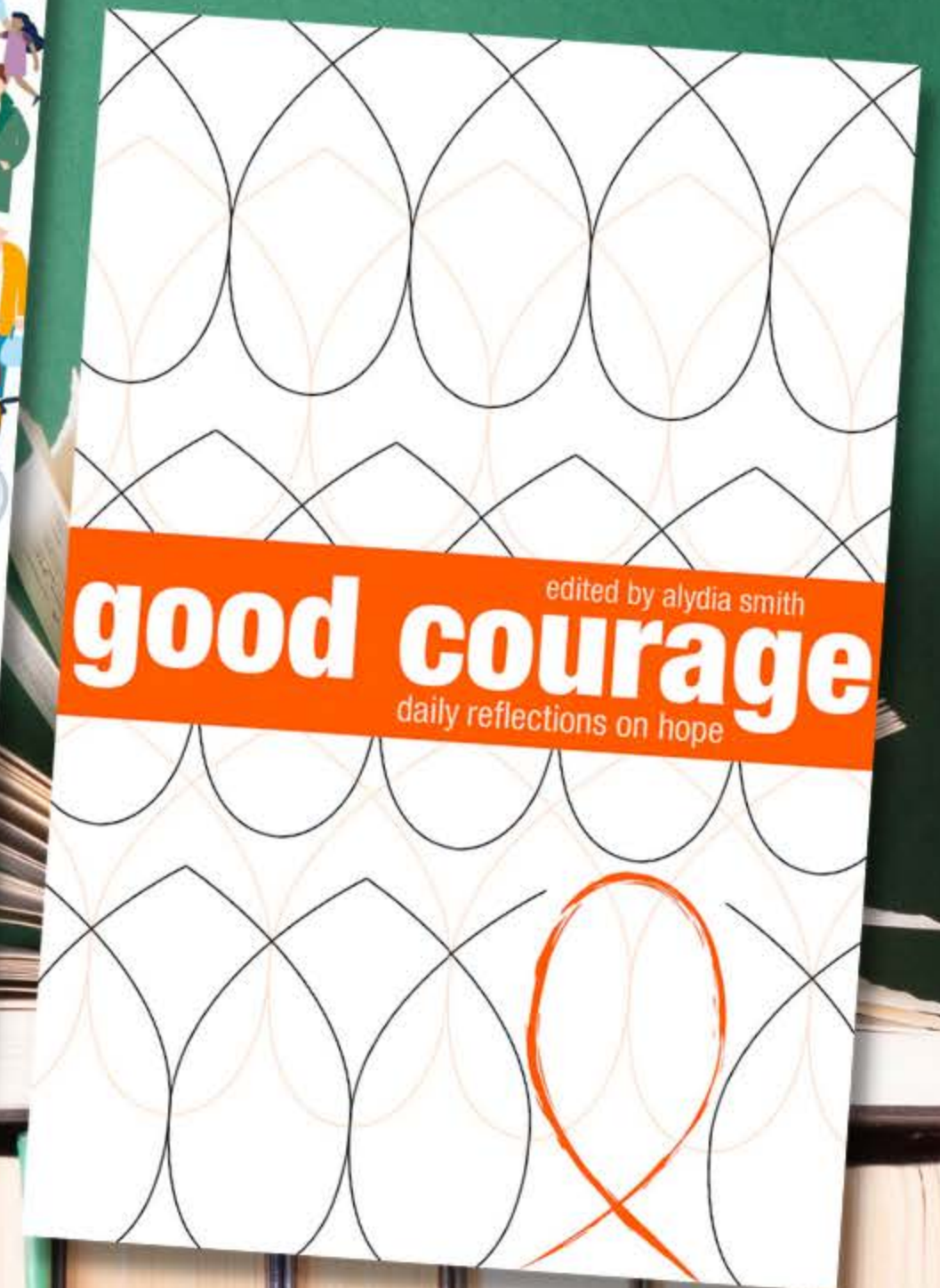
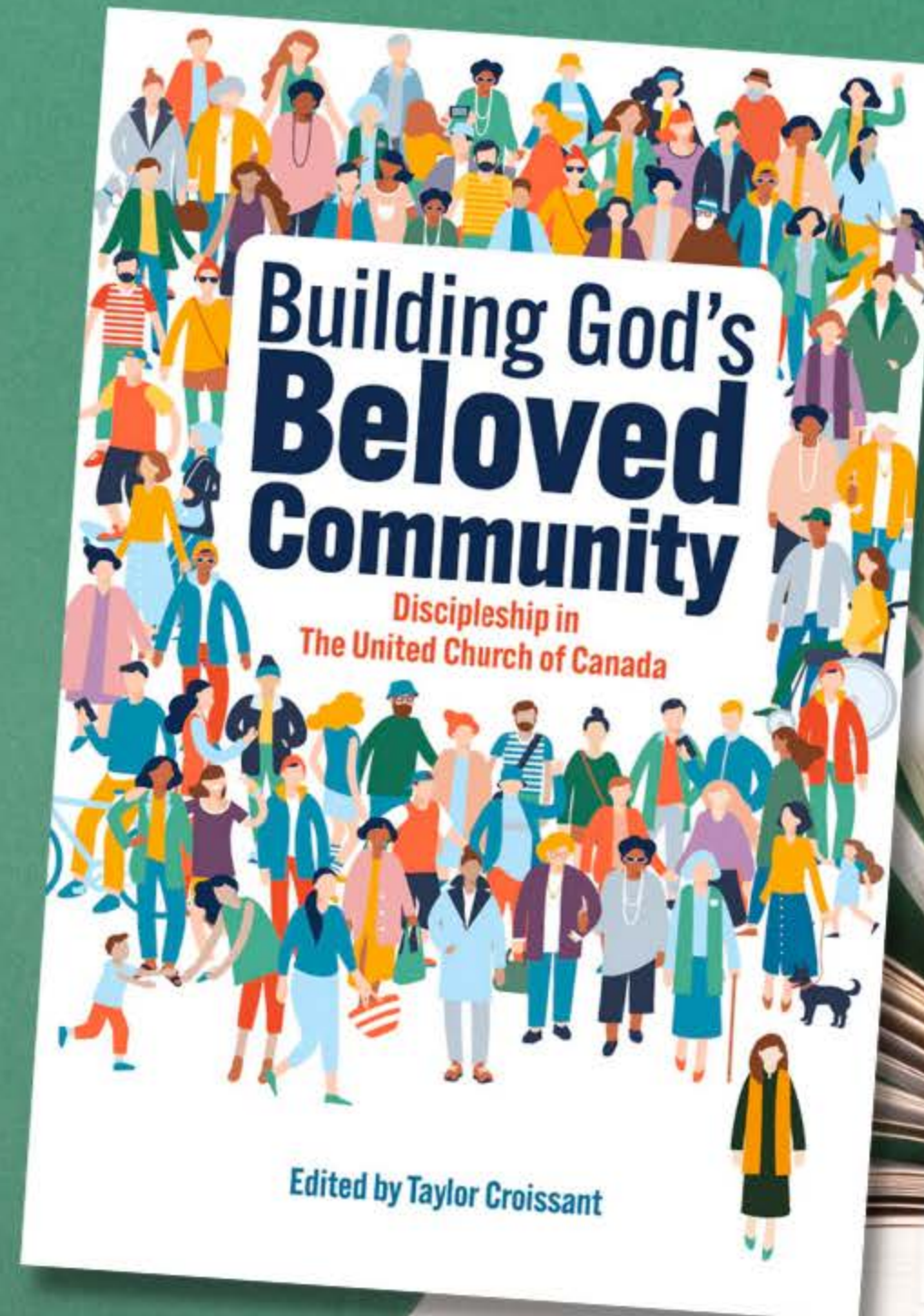
Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice

The Centennial Celebrations Committee would like to hear from you.

On June 10, look for guiding principles and a form on united-church.ca inviting your thoughts—and plans—for Centennial 2025. Please share your ideas!

Ideas so far...a Canada Post Commemorative stamp, a National Worship Service(s), Centennial Editions of Moderator's Book Club, Special Print and Digital Releases...much more

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2023 Northern Spirit Regional Council Annual Meeting

May 4 – 7, 2023

Camrose United Church, Camrose, Alberta

2023 Annual Meeting Planning Committee:

Chairperson: Deborah Hoekstra

Annual Meeting Convenor: Helen Reed

Member: Steven Johann

Member: Dorcas Muketha

Member: Dianne Nikiforuk

Member: Jennifer Villebrun

Member: Devyn Waldie

Administrative Support: Chloe Burns

Theme Speaker, Jennifer Henry, who spoke to our 2023 theme of *Living Our Faith: Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice*.

Jennifer Henry (she/her) is a feminist leader, theologian and activist. She currently serves as Executive Minister, Organizational Development and Strategy, at The United Church of Canada, working with teams dedicated to communications, planning and growth. She worked for almost three decades in national and global ecumenical social justice, including as Executive Director of KAIROS between 2012 and 2020. Jennifer has a Master of Social Work and a Master of Theological Studies from the University of Toronto and has just completed a Diploma in United Church Studies at the Vancouver School of Theology. In 2019, Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon granted her a Doctor of Christian Letters (honoris causa). Growing up on the prairies, she currently resides in Toronto with her partner Susie and two daughters, as a guest on territory governed by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant.

Attendees Total: **165**

Online Attendees (via Zoom): **11**

United Church & Northern Spirit Staff: **9**

Lay Representatives: **71**

Ordered Ministry: **50**

Youth: **8**

Children: **3**

Guests: **13**

Northern Spirit Communities of Faith Represented: **69**