



NORTHERN SPIRIT
REGIONAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



3 November 2023

Dear Board or Council secretaries, chairs, and members; ministry personnel, pastoral charge supervisors, and lay delegates to the Regional Council:

Greetings as we begin to anticipate the journey of Advent, and the movement into a new year of being the church together around the world. As we move towards the end of this church year, an important space for discernment and decision will remain in front of us, and we hope the following information and invitation will help you in that work.

In this letter, the Regional Council invites your careful consideration of a significant process underway across the United Church. Currently, a Category 3 Remit is before the church, focused on creating space for a National Autonomous Indigenous Organization within the United Church of Canada. **Every Regional Council and every Pastoral Charge governing body has the right and responsibility to vote between now and March 31, 2024.**

Northern Spirit Regional Council, at its May 2023 meeting in Camrose, voted overwhelmingly in favour of the Remit, but this has no impact on your pastoral charge vote. **Your own vote is still required.** Please bear in mind that if your governing body does not vote on this Remit, that will be considered a vote against. Therefore, we urge you to ensure that your Council or Board votes.

Resources for your discussion and decision process

The Regional Council has created a resource page to help your process of learning, listening, and deciding. [Click here to view it](#); it will be updated on a continuous basis. Between now and February, the Regional Council will also offer open online learning circles to all the people addressed in this letter, and we hope we will see you there. **The first such circle will be on Thursday November 23 at 6:30PM Mountain Standard.** [You can register here.](#)



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Courageous conversations

We bear in mind the words of numerous leaders and Elders in the Indigenous United Church, as expressed by Rev Cheryl Jourdain, past Speaker of the All Native Circle Conference: “Don’t pass this on the basis of guilt and fear; this Remit needs to build on courage and openness.” May all our discussions be done in the spirit of courageous conversations, and a commitment to new and renewed relationships. Together we can build on the Apologies, the Caretakers Calls to the Church, and many other right relations commitments the United Church has made.

We hope that your courageous conversations will help us all respond to this opportunity that is before us. If you have questions and concerns, please contact your Regional Council office, and staff will work out who best can respond.

With gratitude for the faithful leadership and care, and the time and skills you offer not only your community of faith, but the entire church.

Rev Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister