

February 20, 2026

A Joint Message from Alberta's Regional Councils
Remembering Who We Are Called To Be

Dear friends in Christ,

I write to you as the Presiding Officer of Chinook Winds Regional Council, and as an Albertan. An Albertan whose pioneer family origin in this land predates the creation of the province itself. An Albertan who has been blessed by the resource wealth of this land, who was able to pay their way through their post-secondary education employed in the oil and gas industry. An Albertan who is married to an immigrant, to a person who *chose* to make Alberta her home.

I write to you, the members of The United Church of Canada within Alberta, to express my concern with Premier Danielle Smith's televised remarks on February 19, 2026. Concern that is shared by my leadership colleagues in Northern Spirit Regional Council who have asked me to write this letter on the behalf of our two Regional Councils that represent the Province of Alberta.

To serve the need of our denomination in this province, my spouse ministers to two congregations in rural Alberta, where our Regions are desperately seeking more people to serve. Every year she leads her community in the singing of "O Canada" in the Legion's annual observance of Remembrance Day. She is a tax payer. She builds up the community where she serves.

Once again, the Premier has directed blame for inadequacies within her government onto another vulnerable group. First Transgender Albertans, then educators, now immigrants. The goals of the October 2026 referendum which the Premier proposes are, quite frankly, invalid. Immigration and the appointment of the judges are entirely the mandate of the federal government as articulated in the Canadian constitution. The Premier is clearly seeking to make immigrants a scapegoat for the declining price of oil and the effects this has on the government's finances.

The Bible instructs us as Christians very clearly on how we are commanded to treat immigrants in our land. The Books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy directly prohibit the mistreatment or exploitation of immigrants. In Matthew's gospel Jesus reminds us that our spiritual ancestor, Abraham, was a wandering refugee, and that how we treat the least amongst us is how we treat Christ himself.

Our Regional Councils have been tremendously blessed by the leadership of immigrants within our church. Our congregations and the communities they live in have been tremendously enriched by the immigrants who have chosen to join our church.

February 20, 2026

Let us strengthen our hearts from the prejudices of our day, and not fall prey to those who would seek to divide us. I share gratitude for the contribution of every immigrant to this province, just as my ancestors came to what was the Northwest Territory more than 125 years ago, as well as profound thanks to the Indigenous peoples of these lands who welcomed immigrants here through Treaties 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10.

May Christ's peace be with all who now feel uneasy by the Premier's words regarding their place within Albertan society. Let us all trust in God's promise of the coming Kingdom of peace and righteousness.

The Rev. Taylor Croissant
Presiding Officer,
Chinook Winds Regional Council

The Rev. Leigh Sinclair,
President,
Northern Spirit Regional Council

Treena Duncan,
Executive Minister
Chinook Winds Regional Council

The Rev. Adam Hall
Acting Executive Minister
Northern Spirit Regional Council