

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada
2nd Annual Meeting
October 28, 2020

Deciding

Rob Reed, Convenor for the Annual Meeting, welcomed everyone to Round 2 of the Regional Gathering, and lit the Christ Candle as a symbol of our Christian community, and reminding us that, wherever we are, we are united in the body of Christ, and we remain in the presence of Christ.

Barb McNaughton, Convenor of the Planning Team, acknowledged that the meeting was held on the territories of treaty peoples and the homeland of the Metis people. The delegates were invited to name the treaty number of the place where they were located in the Chat.

Rob Reed led an opening prayer, and then opened the meeting with these words:

“In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority vested in me by this Regional Council, I declare the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Living Skies Regional Council open for worship, study, companionship and such business as shall properly come before it”.

Rob advised that the familiar parliamentary procedures would be followed to the best of our ability within the limitations of the Zoom Platform. He then outlined the procedures for voting.

The delegates were reminded to raise their hands and speak their questions and comments rather than typing them in the Chat, so that those joining by phone would be able to hear them.

A test vote was conducted, asking the participants to vote yes or no to the following statement:

“Leftover Hallowe’en candy must be eaten before Christmas.” The vote was an overwhelming yes, indicating that fresh candy is preferred for Christmas treats.

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, presented the Enabling Motions. A copy of the full text was posted as part of the meeting Docket on the Regional Council web site, in Section A, Page 16:

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Section-A-General-Meeting-Information-updated.pdf>. It was reported that no changes were made since posting in the Docket.

The motion to approve the Enabling Motions was moved by Shannon McCarthy, and seconded by Darrell Reine. The motion was carried.

A question was asked about the number of eligible voters at the meeting. It was determined that there were approximately 180 participants who were eligible to vote. The participants were advised that the outcome of a vote is determined by the count of the number of people who vote, as abstentions are not recorded in the count.

Tricia Gerhard, Executive Chairperson, was asked to give her report. Tricia referred the delegates to her written report in Section B the Docket. She then expressed her appreciation for the Staff and the Executive members, whose support has been incredible, and who have been working hard on behalf of this Regional Council.

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, was invited to give her report. Her written report was posted in Section B of the Docket. Shannon thanked the Executive for their hard work, allowing that there is still much more to do. The Executive has made the best decisions possible with the information available, and all Executive meetings were held monthly via Zoom. The Regional Council Staff were thanked, particularly for getting the web site launched just in time before the COVID pandemic hit the following week. Thank you, Bev Diebert, Julie Graham, and Jamie Mckay! Shannon reported that Julie's position has been renamed to Justice and Communications Minister. Appreciation was expressed to Tracy Murton for stepping in as Acting Executive Minister during Shannon's sabbatical leave; to Heather Dootoff for facilitating transfers of funds, financial questions and Audits for three Regional Councils; to Kent Mohn for keeping Youth and Young Adults connected; and to Madeleine McLuhan-Myers for her attentions to the Archives, even when she was unable to enter the building. Cherry Abad (Prairie to Pine RC) and Kathy Jackson (Northern Spirit RC) were thanked for working with the Tech Team for this meeting.

Rob Reed, Convenor, gave his report with Tricia Gerhard chairing. Rob referred the delegates to his written report in Section A of the Docket. He echoed all of the appreciation for the staff; commenting that the Regional Council is extremely blessed. Rob acknowledged the support of the people in the Gainsborough-Carievale Pastoral Charge for his ability to serve as Convenor; as well as all of the volunteers, Ministry Personnel and Laypersons, who continue to support one another and the Regional Council. Delegates were reminded of the need to remember to thank each other for the phenomenal work accomplished by this Regional Council.

Shannon McCarthy presented a special motion to extend the term of Rob Reed as Convenor until the next Regional Council Meeting.

The Motion was moved by Shannon McCarthy, and seconded by Darrell Reine.

Tricia Gerhard called for the vote, and the Motion was carried.

A question was asked about whether or not motions need to be presented in writing. It was explained that this was a special motion from the Executive because no one was nominated to serve as the Convenor, and that Rob had agreed to the extension.

The concern raised about the inability to conduct a secret ballot in the Zoom format was answered by notice of the plan to have additional software in place for the next Annual Meeting because using the poll function in Zoom excludes those joining by phone.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Rob Reed resumed chairing the meeting.

Prior to the business session, Delegates were reminded that discussion of the Remit and the two Proposals was held last week, during the session dedicated to listening and learning, and so, unless there were amendments proposed, there would be no discussion of the motions at this meeting.

Remit 1: Amendment to Basis of Union Article 10.0 on Ministry Personnel

Shannon McCarthy introduced the Remit, and reminded the Delegates that the Regional Council could only reply that they are either in favour or not in favour of the remit, and that no conditions or comments would be submitted with the reply. If 2/3 of all Regional Councils reply that they have voted in favour of the Remit, the General Council may declare that the Remit has been approved and come into effect in March 2021. If there is not a 2/3 majority in favour, the wording in the Basis of Union will not be changed.

The Question: Does the Regional Council agree that: (a) the Order of Ministry be open to persons of all gender identities; and (b) the Basis of Union be amended to reflect this change as follows: **10.0 The Order of Ministry shall be open to persons of all gender identities.**

Current Wording: 10.0 The Order of ministry shall be open to both men and women.

Rob Reed asked Delegates to vote either “Yes” or “No”. The response was “Yes”.

The Proposal, *Banning Conversion Therapy in Saskatchewan*, proposed by Grosvenor Park United Church, Saskatoon, was read by Shannon McCarthy.

The full text of the Proposal was posted in Section G of the Docket.

The motion was moved by Dawn Weber, and seconded by Nobuko Iwai.

Rob Reed called for the vote, and the motion was carried.

The Proposal, *Removing or Reducing the 20% Extra Regional Assessment Regional Council Assessment for 2021*, was presented by Tricia Gerhard, Regional Council Executive Chairperson.

The full text of the Proposal was posted in Section G of the Docket.

The motion to adopt the Proposal was moved by Tricia Gerhard, and seconded by Deborah Smith.

An amendment to change the extra regional assessment from 0 to 10% was moved by Doug Haroldson, and seconded by Cindy Bourgeois.

After discussion about concerns for the financial struggles of small Communities of Faith and Community Ministries and the availability of alternate funding sources for Community Ministries, the amendment was put to a vote.

Rob Reed called for the vote, and the amendment was defeated.

Rob Reed called for the vote on the motion to adopt the Proposal as presented. The motion was carried.

A Financial Report was presented by Donna Brown, Regional Council Treasurer. The 2019 Financial Statements were reviewed, and the Designated Funds were presented.

It was reported that there is still more work to be done on the terms of reference for designated funds.

A copy of the Financial Statements are posted on the Regional Council web site as part of the Docket:

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2019-Financial-Audit-LSRC.pdf>.

Donna thanked Heather Dootoff, Financial Administrator, for her efforts in bringing all of the information together, and sorting out the various revenue pieces received from the former Saskatchewan Conference and its Presbyteries.

In response to a question, it was noted that the “Bulldozer Fund” was misnamed, as the Property Commission intends it to be used for more than just demolishing surplus buildings.

Rob Reed thanked all of the Delegates, planners and leaders for their contributions and support, commenting that the meeting did not feel like they were sitting at tables in a cold curling rink.

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, and Jamie McKay, Recording Secretary, were thanked for their support.

Closing Worship and Communion:

The Closing Worship was led by Tricia Gerhard and Tracy Murton, Regional Pastoral Relations Minister.

The Delegates were invited into a time of worship, remembering, celebrating, honouring new

Covenants, and Communion: to praise, reflect, and honour being a faith community together.

After taking time to center into the moment, the Delegates were invited to listen or sing “Open our Hearts” led by a video shared by Jim and Jean Strathdee.

Tricia led the opening prayer, asking for hearts to be open to God's presence, connected through our faith in God, our church, and our mission and the ministry it offers. Delegates were reminded that God is in the everyday pieces of our lives now and when we leave this gathering.

As "Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness" was played by Lee Stubbe, photos of those who had passed away, the Retirees, and the newly Admitted and Ordained Ministers were shown, and their names were read by Tracy Murton.

The Delegates were invited to light a candle in memory of: Ray Griffin, Elaine LaMarche, Marguerite Dougherty; Irene Gibson, Larry Edwards, Gill Gilmer, Bob Armstrong, Ron Sutton, Dale Wiggins, Brian Ast, Sharon Jeeves, Dorothy Morrow, Jennifer Sigurdson, Alice McFarlane, John Yeo, Mildred Morrison, Rose Ward, Roger Argue, Eric Ingham, and Bill Adamson

The Retirees: Catherine Coates, Wendy Gibson, Elizabeth Goodson, Darilyn Grigg, Marg Janick-Grayston; Donna Rumpel, Salesi Takau and Ursula Wiig

The Admissionands: the Rev. Hyun Heo and the Rev. Hoeun Lee

The Ordinands: the Rev. Deb Anderson-Pratt and the Rev. Bruce Kakakaway

The Communities of Faith that had closed were remembered: Springside, Livelong, Rouleau, Lang/Milestone, Kelfield, Ruthida, Clavet, Birch Hills, Earl Grey, Edgeley, Lashburn, Loverna, Mortlach and Mossbank

The Scripture, Isaiah 43 1-18, 19, was read by Donna Rumpel.

Donna provided a reflection on the text, about call and fear. Donna reflected that God claims us all in personal and certain ownership, but our challenge is to look for signs as God makes all things new rather than letting our fear paralyse us. Delegates were encouraged to forget past disappointment, and to focus on the new thing as it springs forth. As we pass through the inevitable hardships in life, God is with us in all tough circumstances. We can use the hardships of the past as a springboard for joyful expectation. God's grace and power will continue to guide us now and into the future.

Rob Reed and members of the Community of Faith Support Committee led a Covenant of Mutual Commitment with Communities of Faith in all four directions and the centre of the region:

Balcarres: St. Andrew's	Canora: St. Andrew's	Esterhazy: St. Andrew's
Foam Lake-Leslie	Ituna: Lakeside	Kelliher: St. Paul's
Little Cutarm: St. Andrew's	Preeceville-Sturgis	Theodore: St. Paul's
Yorkton: St. Andrew's	Yorkton: Westview	Indian Head: St. Andrew's
Lumsden: St. Andrew's	New Venture	Radville
Regina: Heritage	Regina: Sunset	Strasbourg
Whitewood: St. Andrew's	Gull Lake: Knox	Kindersley: St. Paul's
Maple Creek	Hudson Bay Larger Parish	Shellbrook-Leask
Lanigan-Nokomis	Loreburn-Hawarden	Saskatoon: Grace-Westminster
Saskatoon: Grosvenor Park	Saskatoon: Knox	

Tricia Gerhard affirmed the Regional Council's intentions in the Covenant.

Rob Reed asked the questions of the Covenant, which were answered by individuals from the above-named Communities of Faith.

Tricia invited everyone to gather at the table.

Tricia and Tracy led the Great Thanksgiving and Hyun Heo led the Prayers of the People in Korean and English, concluding with the Lord's Prayer. After the Prayer of Confession, the Delegates were welcomed to the table. Tricia hosted the breaking of the bread, and Tracy hosted the pouring of the cup. After the Delegates had, in their own spaces, consumed the elements, Tracy led the Prayer after Communion.

Delegates were invited to sing “One More Step Along the World I Go”, led by the St. Paul’s United Church, Tisdale, Online Choir.

Tricia gave the final blessing, reminding everyone that we go into night knowing we are connected by love, compassion, and the God that surrounds us with mystery and miracle.

Rob Reed thanked the worship leaders, and declared the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Living Skies Regional Council to be adjourned.