

## **MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE – 2022 - 2023**

Chairperson	Darrell Reine
Treasurer	VACANT
Member	Ron Brandow
Member	Linda Gunningham
Member	Kathleen James-Cavan
Member	Deborah Springer
Member	Piotr Strzelecki
Member	Dave Whalley
Member	VACANT
Convenor of RM	VACANT
Executive Minister	Shannon McCarthy
Program Assistant	Chantal Winslow

## **LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE REPORT**

This past year has felt like I had big shoes to fill, those of Tricia Gerhard. Tricia led the executive over three years of the Covid pandemic and chaired the regional gathering online with such smoothness and precision. I have lots to give thanks for in her leadership.

I also give thanks for the leadership of both the staff and executive as they have stepped up to the plate constantly doing their best in the trying circumstances that the church and world are going through. So, thank you to Piotr, Deb, Kathleen, Linda, Ron, Dave, Tracy, Bev, Shannon, Heather, Julie, Chantal, Lindsay, and Madeline. Your work and call to be the church is very life-giving and appreciated.

Almost out of the pandemic, I have felt our region has not been able to get the anchor down to hold the ship steady. We are struggling with a variety of things: not being able to fill committees, the executive and other functioning pieces of the governance structure; the number of people it is taking to be pastoral charge supervisors and liaisons to communities of faith who are without a minister and those volunteers not being able to be found; the financial strain on congregations especially with the number of people who have not come back to church; the number of ministry personnel retiring or moving out of the region, and a lot of things, mostly not good, happening in our world.

How do we be the church? How do we fulfill our roles as staff, lay, ministers and partners in the region? Sounds gloomy, feel scary and challenging, and it seems like a struggle. The pandemic stalled our anchoring ourselves in this new structure and we are trying to find a rock to hook the anchor to.

So, to ministers and lay representatives, I encourage you to look at the good people in your communities and discern with them in how they could be part of the region and its work. For when our neighbour struggles with something, we need others to be there just as we want someone to be there when we struggle.

My hope is that we find a renewed energy through the Holy Spirit that will engage and challenge us to be the Church God calls us to be. The Church that lifts up those who struggle, to work for justice and peace, to share the inclusive love of God and to be God's beloved.

Over the past year, these are some of the highlights and decisions of the executive:

- Provided \$5000 to the KICI ANISHINABEK Kananakachiwewat Elders society co-operative for a culture camp.
- Approve expenses of up to \$1200 for our participation in the 2022 Okanese feast
- Provide up to \$750 for the Kairos Prairies North for a planned event.
- Provide up to \$4000 to help fund the Theological Banquet event in the fall
- Provide \$650 to support travel for seven members of the Western Intercultural Network to attend an event in the Edmonton Korean United Church
- Approved the ordination of Aurora Espenant and Kent Mohn and to recognize James Wolff as a Designated Lay Minister.
- Approved the list of directors for Camp Tapawingo Tamarack Presbytery
- Approved that Anne Mathewson be named a licensed Lay Worship Leader
- Approve that \$125,000 in grants for 2023
- Approve the payment of the outstanding assessment for Land Milestone church of the Soo Line pastoral charge of \$7640
- Agreed that the LSRC participate in the Faith Leaders Advisory Council of Sask.
- Approved that \$500 towards room upgrades at Queen's House in Saskatoon.
- Agreed to give \$500 towards UC Rural Ministry Network for their continued work.
- Agreed that the executive set the mileage rate at .40 per km.
- Agreed in solidarity with St. Andrew's College to refuse the offer to sell surface rights on the two quarters of Moats land.
- Approve the Lumsden Beach camp board of directors
- Agreed to send a letter to the Premiere in support of the Onion Lake Nation requesting the halt to the sell off of Crown lands.
- Approved the renewal of license for eight LLWLs
- Approved the governance structure of First United Church in Swift Current.
- Approved several policies for the Annual Gathering
- Approved the renewal of license for Colleen Groenen
- Ordered a review of a community of faith
- Approved a new logo for the region
- Approved the budget for 2023
- Approve the exemption to St. Paul's United Church to allow Megan Bonsan as a member of the board.
- Approved the name change from Nokomis Lanigan Charge to Lanigan Pastoral charge.
- Approved the ordination of Sarah Giles and MinHyuk Hwang on May 28, 2023
- Approved the shared ministry agreement with Camp Christopher
- Agreed to give \$1000 to the Four Collee Conference in Saskatoon

As we move into the next year of working together as a region and communities of faith, may the blessing of the creator be with each of you and your communities.

Darrell Reine

Convenor of the Regional Council Executive and the Annual Gathering

## **LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE MINISTER'S REPORT**

I want to welcome everyone, and especially those who have never been to an in-person Living Skies meeting before – for the new ministers we have welcomed since our last gathering, the new representations from communities of faith.

It is good to be together in person!

We have done amazingly well online as communities of faith and as a regional council. There is something nice about gathering in a space together that feels like community – a community that can talk about our joys, our sorrows, can work through difficult things with care, respect, love and humility. It is important that we are together in a good way. I want to acknowledge the trauma that the Covid 19 pandemic has caused in our lives and in our church communities, I don't think we even now understand the impact it has had in our world. I especially want to acknowledge our Ministry Personnel who have gone above and beyond, working incredibly hard to keep their Communities of Faith connected.

Despite all that hard work and the dedication of volunteers, the realities of our world and our church – declining rural population, aging memberships, new rules/old rules, lack of finances, can make us feel like we are doing something wrong. WE ARE NOT! We are all doing the best that we can and it is amazing how we pulled through a worldwide pandemic with new technology and new rules for gathering. Even though we haven't done anything wrong we do need to find ways to do things in a new way. I encourage you to look at the General Council website and to read about our Call and Vision if you haven't already done so. We are called embrace Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice, Deep Spirituality in all the ways that we are church in our communities.

We have incredible stories to tell about being bold disciples, to stepping forward and offering daring justice, and doing all of it out of our deep spirituality. Tell those stories boldly!

As a Regional Council we rely on volunteers to do the work we are required to do – this is your Regional Council, the work of the Church is ours together. We cannot do it without volunteers. I want to thank all of the committee, commission, task group members that have contributed to the work of the Regional Council over the last year. I especially want to thank the Regional Council Executive and our Convenor Darrell Reine.

A huge thank you to our incredibly dedicated staff who work for the Regional Council who bring and do their best every day: Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister; Bev Diebert, Office Administrator; Heather Dootoff, Finance Administrator; Julie Graham, Justice & Communications Minister; Lindsay Mohn, Young Adults and Youth Minister; and Chantal Winslow, Executive Assistant.

Thank you for all of the work you do and have done!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Madeleine McLuhan-Myers who served as our Archivist until the Provincial Archives terminated our sharing agreement at the end of March. We now have a sharing agreement with archivists from Northern Spirit and Prairie to Pine to cover the duties of an archivist until we figure out what the future of the archives will be. Leanne Templeton and Erin Acland are monitoring the [livingskiesarchives@united-church.ca](mailto:livingskiesarchives@united-church.ca) email or if you call the Regional Council office Bev will direct your message to one of them.

As we move forward from this space at the end of our time together I invite you to embrace Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice, Deep Spirituality and find new ways to live it out in your communities.

**Minutes of Living Skies Regional Council Meeting  
VIA ZOOM  
June 4-5, 2021**

**SESSION 1: Friday June 4, 7:00 pm**

<b>OPENING</b>	Tricia Gerhard, Chairperson for the Regional Council Executive, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, saying that she was glad they had chosen to spend this time together to do the work of the church. She explained that Rob Reed, Convenor for the Annual Meeting, was not able to be present due to pastoral concerns, and she asked that he and his Community of Faith be held in prayer.
<b>INTRODUCTIONS</b>	Tricia introduced Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister; Jamie McKay, Regional Executive Assistant and Annual Meeting Recording Secretary; Kent Mohn, Youth and Young Adult Minister; Bev Diebert, Administrative Support; Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister; Madeleine McLuhan-Myers, Archivist; Heather Dootoff, Finance Administrator; Julie Graham, Minister: Justice and Communications; Darrell Reine, Rob Reed, Hoeun Lee, and Bonnie Morton, Regional Gathering Planning Committee Members; Alan Hall, Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment and General Council Guest; Karen Medland, Office of Vocation Minister; Charlene Burns, Community Capacity Development Coordinator (Western Canada), Indigenous Ministries Circle; and Vicki Nelson, Stewardship Animator (Western Canada).
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TREATY TERRITORY</b>	Tricia stated the Land Acknowledgement with these words, "We come together this evening from many places across Living Skies Regional Council, places that are on the traditional territories and treaty lands of strong and diverse First Nations and the homeland of the Metis peoples. As we gather, let us respect and honor these traditional lands. Let us pray that as we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, we will be motivated to faithfully move forward in partnerships with our Indigenous siblings and the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration. We are all Treaty People."
<b>OPENING WORSHIP</b>	The Rev. Hoeun Lee introduced the Opening Worship. The recorded service can be viewed at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhxXEgnUrIE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhxXEgnUrIE</a> .
<b>PROCEDURAL/ ENABLING MOTIONS 001-2021</b>	That Living Skies Regional Council accept the following Enabling Motions #1-12 for this Regional Council meeting:  <b>1. Roll of Regional Council:</b> 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 2021, C.1.1 & C.1.2)

iv. members-at-large, lay members within the Regional Council who have been appointed members as 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 visitors, 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 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 is 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. Agenda Committee:** that the Agenda Committee for this Regional Gathering be the members of the Regional Council Meeting Planning Committee.

**7. Rules of Debate and Order:** that the rules of debate and order for Parliamentary debate be those spelled out in 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 Living Skies 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 sixteen (16) Regional Council-elected Commissioners, as set by the General Council.

**10. Unfinished Business:** that unfinished business be referred to the Living Skies Regional Council Executive.

**11. Minutes:** that the Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting and the 2nd Regional Gathering of the Living Skies Regional Council be approved as distributed in the online docket.

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

Moved: Shannon McCarthy

Seconded: Darrell Reine

CARRIED

**LISTEN:  
PROPOSAL  
PRESENTATIONS**

There were two Proposals to be considered at this Annual Meeting. The full text of the proposals as presented can be viewed at: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SecG21.pdf>

**PROPOSAL 1**

**Proposal 1: Living Skies Regional Council Policy on Justice**

Originator: the Rev. SunDo Hyun

The Proposal, presented by SunDo Hyun, called for the Regional Council to:

- establish a Justice Committee to promote justice and equity for all people in all aspects of life and work of the Region Council, with terms of reference to be created by the Executive; and
- that the committee develop and adopt policies on justice based on anti-racist and anti-oppressive principles and the voices from Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Colour, LGBTQTT2S+ peoples, and people with poverty, disability, mental illness, and more; and drawing on past Saskatchewan Conference and present national church justice, equity, and intercultural policies as relevant.

**PROPOSAL 2**

**Proposal 2: Reinstatement of Funding for Spiritual Care throughout the Saskatchewan Health Authority**

Originators: Daryl Woods, Chair of North Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy; and Randy Graham, Chair of South Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy.

The Proposal, introduced by Daryl Woods, called for the Regional Council to:

- issue a formal request to the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the provincial Minister of Health, and the Premier of Saskatchewan for the re-instatement of adequate funding and support for Spiritual Care programs in the provincial healthcare budget; and
- encourage Communities of Faith and members/adherents throughout the Living Skies Region to contact their Members of Legislative Assembly with a request to re-instate adequate funding and support for Spiritual Care programs in the provincial healthcare budget.

**DISCUSS**

Proposal 1: Responses to Questions for Clarification

- The Justice Committee would be focused on all areas of justice, but grounded in principles of racial justice; it could work with clusters and networks, and would be accountable to the Regional Council.
- The intention is that it be relevant to the Living Skies Regional Council (LSRC), but committee members do not need to be members of the Regional Council. Only members of Commissions must be LSRC members.
- If the Nominations Committee will need to recruit membership, then information about the number and make-up of Justice Committee members, and a clear mandate will help.
- All committees are corresponding members of the Executive, and can attend and communicate with the Executive regularly.
- It is intended to be a committee, or a better structure would be acceptable to the originators.
- The budget would be part of the Committees Budget.

- The Justice Committee would be accountable to the Regional Council in its reporting, and to the Executive between RC meetings for day-to-day operations
- The Executive would have to determine how Right Relations work would fit into the Justice Committee mandate. There are networks already doing right relations work.

Proposal 2: Responses to Questions for Clarification.

- The proposed funding would likely be for hospitals in Regina and Saskatoon, where the chaplaincies are centred, but the Proposal references the provincial budget, and so other hospitals should be included.

At the end of the session, the presenters and the delegates were thanked for their work and their input to the discussion.

**BENEDICTION**

Tricia Gerhard gave a Benediction and thanked those gathered for sharing their weekend with the church, and the session concluded at 9:14 p.m.

**SESSION 2: Saturday June 5, 9:30 am**

**OPENING**

Tricia Gerhard, Chairperson for the Regional Council Executive, welcomed the participants.

**MORNING  
WORSHIP**

The morning Worship was led by Lorna King and Emily Carr, the South and North Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplains, respectively.

**REPORTS**

**Regional Gathering  
Planning  
Committee  
Convenor**

Darrell Reine. Regional Gathering Planning Committee Convenor, chaired the meeting while Tricia Gerhard, Regional Council Executive Chairperson, gave her report.

Tricia referred the delegates to her written report in the docket for the meeting: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SecB21.pdf>

Recent Executive action included a letter that was sent to the Saskatchewan Provincial Government asking for a ban against conversion therapy in Saskatchewan, with no response as yet. Communities of Faith are encouraged to join the discussions, noting that conversions are still happening in Regina and Saskatoon. An invitation will be coming to Communities of Faith encouraging them to send letters to the provincial government as well.

As follow-up to the last Annual Meeting, the Regional Council is discontinuing assessments for additional Community Ministry funding. A universal Community Ministries Fund has been created to distribute funding equitably to the Community Ministries. The fund will be administered by the Grants Committee. Information about donating to the fund is posted on the Regional Council website, and will be distributed in the *Rambler* newsletter.

More information will be circulated about the work of the Community Ministries, and the delegates were encouraged to share it widely.

**Discussion:** the impact on Community of Faith assessments is still being worked out with Erik Mathiesen; Indigenous Ministries funding is self-governed by the General Council Indigenous Ministries and Justice unit, and comes from Mission and Service; It is frustrating to see this separation between community and Indigenous ministries; Communities of Faith are asked to contribute a portion of proceeds all property sales to the Indigenous Ministries and Justice funding system; Indigenous Ministries and Justice is looking at setting up an Indigenous Regional Council.

Tricia Gerhard resumed chairing the meeting, and thanked Darrell Reine for chairing during her report.

## **Executive Minister**

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, began her report by saying how good it was to see everyone, and that she was looking forward to travelling to Saskatchewan again soon.

Shannon thanked Tricia and the Executive for their work over the past year. In spite of meeting via Zoom, which is exhausting, thoughtful and careful consideration was given to all of their work.

The volunteers and ministry personnel, particularly the Nominations Committee, were thanked for carrying out their extremely difficult work during this transition. Former Conference and Presbytery volunteers were encouraged to come back for justice, affirming, and all kinds of Regional Council work that needs their gifts and skills.

Shannon expressed appreciation for the work of the staff: for doing an incredible job at this time, and reaching out to help people in new and different ways: Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister; Bev Diebert, Administrative Support; Madeleine McLuhan-Myers, Archivist; Kent Mohn, Youth and Young Adult Minister; Heather Dootoff, Financial Administrator; Julie Graham, Regional Minister: Justice and Communication; Vicki Nelson, Stewardship Animator for Western Canada and Jamie McKay, Regional Executive Assistant.

The delegates were referred to Shannon's written report in the docket:

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SecB21.pdf>

Shannon also referred the delegates to the United Church Website, to view how the General Council has responded to the finding of 215 unmarked graves in Kamloops, BC, including responses and prayers from Moderator, Richard Bott, and Murray Pruden, Executive Minister for Indigenous Ministries and Justice: <https://united-church.ca/news/kamloops-residential-school-time-mourning-and-support>.

Tricia thanked Shannon for her report and for all of her work over the past year.

**Discussion:** the rural church is struggling, not caused, but exacerbated by COVID; the General Council is aware of this. Congregations are closing; a large number of churches are without the services of ministry personnel; urbanization is also a factor; Communities of Faith are being supported, especially the Lay Leaders; St. Andrew's College is separately incorporated, and the Regional Council doesn't have authority over their decisions; the Association of Theological Schools approves programming for graduates that are to be ordained.



## General Council

Alan Hall, General Council Executive Minister for Ministry and Employment, began his report by thanking the Regional Council for the invitation and opportunity to be part of this meeting, and for the references to the recent discovery of the 215 unmarked graves of children at the Kamloops Residential School. This shocking and incomprehensible news provides a reminder that we have much to explore and reflect on in our history, and that we have much to do for reconciliation.

Appreciation was expressed for Murray Pruden, new Executive Minister for Indigenous Ministries and Justice, and change that will effect steps towards right relations.

Alan asked for prayers for the new General Secretary, Michael Blair, as he responds to so many issues facing the church at this time.

The 44<sup>th</sup> General Council (2022) will be a virtual meeting, in three sessions: listening in February, discussion in the spring, and decision-making in the summer session.

The development of a strategic plan for The United Church of Canada is moving forward with input from town halls and consultations. The results will be reported to the General Council Executive in the fall, and then to the 44<sup>th</sup> General Council in 2022. The plan will address the question: What does the church need to do today to be relevant, and meaningful, effective and faithful 10 years from now? Comments can be sent to [planning@united-church.ca](mailto:planning@united-church.ca).

A report to the GC Executive is being drafted with recommendations about rural churches, and practices to support those without ministry leadership.

The Office of Vocation is only in its second year, and continues to learn and revise its processes and make improvements to ChurchHub.

Alan encouraged the delegates to support Japhet Ndhlovu, the new Executive Minister for Church in Mission, and expressed appreciation for the academic leadership of John Young, soon to be retiring from the position of Executive Minister for Theological Leadership.

Appreciation was also expressed for the staff, and those in Pastoral Charge leadership, both vocational and lay, for learning new skills and ways to connect during the COVID pandemic. Alan acknowledged that technology is not always available in rural areas, and told the story of one Community of Faith that is distributing weekly rural mail box sermons.

Alan asked that any updates in the work around reviewing the Designated Lay Ministry, Licensed Lay Worship Leaders and Sacramental Elders practices be communicated to him.

At its conclusion, Alan Hall was thanked for his report.

## Stewardship

Vicki Nelson, Stewardship Animator for Western Canada, was introduced.

Vicki invited the delegates to consider these questions. What is your Community of Faith's mission? What inspires you to stay involved with your Community of Faith? What inspires new folks when they find you? If money was not object and you had unlimited time to devote to it, what do you dream for your Community of Faith?

Vicki introduced *Called to be the Church: the Journey*, a program for Communities of Faith to intentionally focus on and plan for stewardship. The program is being planned for August, and delegates were invited to contact Vicki directly: [ynelson@united-church.ca](mailto:ynelson@united-church.ca).

Further questions were considered. When do you ask members of your Community of Faith to give? When was the last time generosity was spoken about as a spiritual practice? How are folks, curious about your Community of Faith, invited in, welcomed and engaged? How do you practice gratitude in our own life? How is generosity within your Community of Faith lifted up and celebrated? How do you feel when you are appropriately seen, acknowledged and thanked? In what ways do you pay that forward?

Vicki reminded the delegates to use *Generosity Matters* and *Minutes for Mission* stories and resources, and that, "living a life full of gratitude takes practice and daily effort, but it is so worth it!"

The Mission and Service video, *Thank you for your Generosity!* was shown. It can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXI6tqlw52w>.

## Lydia Gruchy Anniversary

Sandra Beardsall, Professor of Church History and Ecumenics at St. Andrew's College, shared some of her research on Lydia Gruchy, whose 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination would be celebrated in November, 2021. Lydia Gruchy was the first woman ordained in The United Church of Canada, and in the whole of Canada.

Sandra reflected on Lydia's life, and what it means for the church today.

Further details about Lydia Gruchy's life can be found in her biography, *With Love, Lydia: The Story of Canada's First Woman Ordained Minister*, by Patricia Wotton.

Sandra concluded by leading the delegates in reciting a paraphrase of Psalm 122:

I was glad when they said to me: let us go to the house of God.

And now our feet are standing within your gates, the gates of a city bound firmly together.

The people go up, to give thanks to God: there stand the pillars of justice and peace.

For the sake of my siblings, of my friends, I say: "Peace be with you, city of God!

And I will seek your good, O city. I will seek your Good". Amen.

Tricia Gerhard thanked Sandra Beardsall for her presentation, and congratulated her on her upcoming retirement later in 2021.

## Finance

Heather Dootoff, Financial Administrator, began by bringing greetings from Donna Brown, Regional Council Treasurer, who was unable to be present. Heather reported that 2019, as a year of transition, and 2020, with the impact of COVID-19, were not normal spending years, and that 2021 is raising questions about what might be the new normal.

Delegates were referred to the [2020 Financial Statements](#), posted on the Regional Council web site, which show that the operating revenue was over-budget, while expenses were less than budgeted, leaving a net surplus.

Heather reported that virtual meetings were being held between *Edge* and Mission Support-receiving Ministries to find ways to strengthen their funding capacity in the face of diminishing Mission and Service funds.

Delegates were invited to visit <https://livingskiesrc.ca/resources/funding/> to find out about available funding and resources.

Heather concluded her report with a reminder that Community of Faith statistics need to be submitted through ChurchHub.

## Nominations

Susan Reed, Nominations Committee Convenor, referred the delegates to the [full report](#) in the meeting docket.

Susan offered a word of thanks to those who said “yes” to taking on new roles; to those who considered the possibility even if the answer was “no”; and to all those who have given of their time, energy, gifts and wisdom to the Regional Council.

She advised that the primary role of the Nominations Committee is to fill vacancies, and that currently there were fourteen vacancies; plus members needed for any new committees; plus Pastoral Relations Liaisons. Information about all of these opportunities is posted on the Regional Council web site:

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/governance-admin/nominations/>.

There are two processes for nominations: to ask people directly, and to seek submissions through the [Expression of Interest](#) form. At present, only self-nomination is available, so delegates were encouraged to talk to others about the opportunities, referring them to the Expression of Interest form or to contact the Nominations Committee for more information: [lsrconominations@gmail.com](mailto:lsrconominations@gmail.com). Susan concluded her report by advising that there were three vacancies on the Nominations Committee, and invited the delegates to consider joining this fun group, which would be more effective with six members rather than the current three.

## Commissioners to the 44<sup>th</sup> General Council

Susan Reed outlined the process of the Nominations Committee, including considerations of General Council and Regional Council Executive mandated parameters, balances for diversity, living into being intercultural, and including all kinds of people.

It was reported that the Nominations Committee was responsible to produce a slate of nominees for 17 General Council Commissioners and 5-6 Alternate Commissioners, to include:

- 1 Commissioner who is ex-officio, the Chairperson of the Regional Council;
- 1 Youth Commissioner to be chosen by the Youth and Young Adult Community (YAYAC); and
- 15 Commissioners selected from the applications submitted to the Nominations Committee; and

Biographies of the nominees for GC Commissioners were not available publicly, but the delegates were assured that the Nominations Committee was very careful in its work to produce the following slate:

- Tricia Gerhard (Ex-Officio), Ordained Minister, Regina
- Youth Commissioner, yet to be named
- Bob Hayes, Layperson, Prince Albert
- Vicki Nelson, Layperson, Regina
- Bill Pollock, Layperson, Saskatoon
- Jeri-Lee Jones, Designated Lay Ministry Student Estevan
- Michelle Rowe, Ordained Minister, Maple Creek

- Beth Johnston, Ordained Minister, Nipawin
- Owen Wright, Layperson, Saskatoon
- Allan Gairns, Diaconal Minister, Rosetown
- SunDo Hyun, Ordained Minister, Meadow Lake
- Frances Kitson, Candidate, Lanigan
- Emily Carr, Ordained Minister in Adm. Process, Saskatoon
- Trina Hodgson, Layperson, Regina;
- Yvonne Terry, Designated Lay Minister Retired, Regina; and
- Jen Dresser, Diaconal Minister, Yorkton.

The Delegates were advised that information would be circulated about the nominations process to find one additional Commissioner, and 5-6 Alternate Commissioners, using the Expressions of Interest form (link above).

It was moved by Susan Reed and seconded by Jeanette Warrian that the above slate of Commissioners be approved by the Living Skies Regional Council. The motion was carried.

The Nominations Committee was thanked for its very important work.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Darrell Reine provided information about UCRD's Great Clearance Sale and upcoming opportunities on Zoom.

Delegates were reminded that Westminster United Church, Humboldt, had shared a Sunday service for June 6 (or another time):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZkqnjFYbpQ>.

Fundraising for Mission and Service: donations for M & S were invited by e-transfer to [livingskies@united-church.ca](mailto:livingskies@united-church.ca). The goals are \$3,000 to allow Sandra Beardsall to retire, and \$5,000 so that Daryl Woods might retire in 2022.

It was reported that Westminster United Church, Regina, had donated to the Healing Fund in memory of the children who had died in residential schools. Charlene Burns, Community Capacity Development Coordinator for Western Canada, Indigenous Ministries and Justice, gave her regrets for the remainder of the meeting.

## **LUNCH BREAK**

Tricia Gerhard dismissed the delegates for a lunch break at 11:47 a.m.

## **SESSION 3: Saturday June 5, 1:30 pm**

### **OPENING**

Tricia Gerhard, Chairperson for the Regional Council Executive, welcomed the delegates back for the final session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Living Skies Regional Council.

The full revised text of both Proposals can be viewed [here](#).

### **DECIDE:**

The two proposals introduced on Friday evening were discussed in preparation for decisions.

Darrell Reine, Chairperson for the Regional Gathering Planning Committee, introduced the Proposals and reported on the feedback received overnight and any revisions that were made.

### **PROPOSAL 1: 002-2021**

**That Living Skies Regional Council establish a Justice & Equity Committee to promote justice and equity for all people in all aspects of life and work of the Region Council, with the size of the committee and**

terms of reference to be created by the Executive. Terms of reference will include but not be limited to:

- That the Justice & Equity committee be able to ask for the creation task groups as needed to focus on particular justice issues (eg. Anti-racism)
- That there be a focus on education and resources for communities of faith
- That the committee encourage the formation of relevant networks and clusters

That the committee develop and recommend policies to the Regional Council Executive on justice based on anti-racist and anti-oppressive principles and the voices from Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ peoples, and people with the lived experience of poverty, disability, mental illness, and more; and drawing on past Saskatchewan Conference and present national church justice, equity, and intercultural policies as relevant.

The proposal received general agreement, with the particular focus on racial justice/anti-racism. The need for a committee was outlined: a place where clusters and networks can connect, and a body to foster the development of clusters and networks around specific focus areas in order to propose justice and equity policies for the Regional Council.

Moved: Darrell Reine

Seconded: Hoeun Lee.

CARRIED

**PROPOSAL 2:  
003-2021**

**That Living Skies Regional Council issue a formal request to the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the provincial Minister of Health, and Premier of Saskatchewan for the re-instatement of funding and support for Spiritual Care programs in the provincial healthcare budget; and, That Living Skies Regional Council encourage Communities of Faith and members/adherents throughout Living Skies Regional Council to contact their Members of Legislative Assembly with a request to re-instate funding and support for Spiritual Care programs in the provincial healthcare budget.**

The Proposal received general agreement. Suggestions included the need for funding for all people of Saskatchewan and not just in Saskatoon and Regina. This proposal speaks to provincial funding for all people of all faiths. The Executive will work with the originators to prepare a brief that goes to the government. Adjusting the Proposal to make it an ecumenical/interfaith request would change the intent of the originators, however, the Executive can explore that further in consultation with the Chaplaincy Boards. All of the feedback will be provided to the Executive as they create the brief and prepare the package to help Communities of Faith respond to the Proposal.

**Discussion:** the brief will also be presented to the opposition; health determinants outline social determinants, including spiritual care, so this may be future work for a Justice Committee if the province doesn't have funding,

and it is larger than a chaplaincy issue; contact with other denominations and ecumenical partners doing the same work is under purview of Executive follow-through; a sample letter will be part of the information for Communities of Faith; Chaplaincies are working with *Edge* to help chaplaincies create sustainable funding, and they can apply for Mission Support funding; it needs to be clear that this is about broad spiritual care; support is also needed for chaplains and leaders from all faith communities; denominational chaplains vs. spiritual care for all with a spirit was explained.

Moved: Hoeun Lee.

Seconded: Darrell Reine

CARRIED

## GREETINGS

A video greeting from St. Andrew's College was presented:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9ce4ttPrFw>

A video greeting from United Church Moderator, Richard Bott, was shared:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vMq2f4kO-o>

## ANTI-RACISM LEARNING TIME

Darrell Reine began this time for learning by saying, "I am a racist", and reminding the delegates that there is lots of work ahead for us to do.

An example that makes this clear is the continued struggle of the Board of Vocation to find diversity for the Board and its Committees.

A video presentation from Michael Blair was shown, with his reflection on the importance of racial justice work for the Christian community. The Table has become a central symbol of the Christian tradition. Some only allow those who fit certain criteria to join. In the United Church, we affirm that the table is open to all, invited by the Lord who invites all people, as a symbol of community and hospitality. The open table is an opportunity to explore our understanding of justice and inclusion. Attending to who is at the table, who is missing, who cannot participate, and how we justify the make-up of the table, invites us to ask questions about our blinders. This is where the conversation about race becomes significant. We need to question where we are blinded and what assumptions we are making. This is critical to our fundamental understanding of an open table and our identity of being a just and inclusive church.

Time was given for personal reflection on these questions:

- Who is present at the Table of Racial Justice?
- Who is missing?
- Why are some present, and some missing?

In plenary, the delegates considered these questions:

- How would you engage these questions in you Community of Faith or ministry setting?
- What resources have been helpful to you? This discussion is just the tip, need to encourage one another to work towards right relationship with one another.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Tricia Gerhard led a prayer for re-centring. Deb Anderson-Pratt offered a Woman's Warrior Song that was written to give strength to face difficult times. Thank you Deb!

## **HONOURING NEW MINISTERS AND THOSE RETIRING FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY**

A video, with submitted material, was presented to honour the Retirees and New Ministers: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHX0S-fah\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHX0S-fah_g)

- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Jonathan Worrall, Ordinand | Emily Carr, Admittand  |
| • Brian Maitland, Retiree    | Ron McConnell, Retiree |
| • Mathias Ross, Retiree      | Yvonne Terry, Retiree  |
| • Mark Wartman, Retiree      |                        |

Tricia Gerhard invited delegates to celebrate all that we have been blessed with, and to hold each of them in their hearts, and honour them in worship. Darrell Reine offered final reminders of the announcements.

After a deep breath, the delegates prepared themselves for the closing worship.

## **CLOSING WORSHIP**

The Closing Worship was led by Jen Dresser and Shelly Manley-Tannis, with readings from Isaiah, Chapter 5.

Time was spent in acknowledgement of the loss of Communities of Faith that had closed since the last Regional Council meeting. These losses were acknowledged and their connections were remembered, as they were held in prayer.

Communities of Faith remembered:

- Brithdir Congregation of the Humboldt Pastoral Charge
- Borden Pastoral Charge
- Fillmore: Grace United Church Congregation of the Prairie Points Pastoral Charge
- Gravelbourg: St. Stephen's Congregation of the Gravelbourg Pastoral Charge
- Manor: Knox United Pastoral Charge (SM)
- Nokomis Congregation of the Lanigan, Nokomis Pastoral Charge
- Redvers: Knox United/Lutheran Pastoral Charge (SM)

The lives of the people who had died since the last Regional Council meeting were honoured and remembered, and celebrated for their faithful service and witness:

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Ronald Murray Evans;          | Eric Pullam;               |
| • Allan Shaw;                   | Alma Pockrandt;            |
| • Marylynn Florence Dumont;     | Betty Powell;              |
| • Earl Grigg;                   | Patricia Joan Farquharson; |
| • Ivan Glen Fulford;            | John (Jack) Millar; and    |
| • Charles (Chuck) Robert Alton. |                            |

Time was given to experience the medicine of the earth, through a video of sounds and photography shared by people throughout Living Skies Regional Council.

Members of the Regional Council Executive and the Committee on Community of Faith Support led time of covenanting with these Communities of Faith:

- Bridging Waters Pastoral Charge;
- Four Town Pastoral Charge;
- KeLRose Pastoral Charge;



- Norquay Pastoral Charge;
- Rocanville United Pastoral Charge;
- Star City Pastoral Charge;
- Crossroads United Pastoral Charge;
- Lafleche-Limerick Pastoral Charge;
- Moose Jaw: St. Andrew's United Church;
- Ogema, Bengough, Pangman Pastoral Charge;
- Regina: Eastside United Church;
- Regina: Wesley United Church;
- Southey Pastoral Charge;
- Swift Current: First United Church;
- Wolseley: St. James Pastoral Charge;
- Biggar Pastoral Charge;
- Coteau Hills Pastoral Charge;
- Meadow Lake: Grace Pastoral Charge;
- Outlook: St. Andrew's Pastoral Charge;
- Rosetown Pastoral Charge;
- Big River Pastoral Charge;
- Prince Albert: Calvary United Church;
- Northern Lakes Pastoral Charge;
- Kinistino: St. Andrew's Pastoral Charge;
- Davidson-Girvin Pastoral Charge;
- Delisle-Vanscoy United Church;
- Dundurn-Hanley Pastoral Charge;
- Humboldt Pastoral Charge;
- Quill Plains Pastoral Charge;
- Saskatoon: Mayfair United Church;
- Saskatoon: St. David's Trinity United Church;
- Saskatoon: St. Paul's United Church; and
- Saskatoon: St. Martin's United Church.

## COURTESIES

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, offered words of thanks to Tricia Gerhard for stepping in to chair this meeting in the absence of Convenor, Rob Reed

Shannon also expressed appreciation to the many people who made this meeting possible, including: Rob Reed, Darrell, Reine, Hoeun Lee, Bonnie Morton, and Shannon McCarthy, Planning Committee; Hoeun Lee, video creation; Don Kindopp, screen sharing; Emily Carr, Jen Dresser, Lorna King, Shelly Manley-Tannis, Worship leaders; Alan Hall, General Council Representative; Bev Diebert, Heather Dootoff, Julie Graham, Kathy Jackson, Shannon McCarthy, Jamie McKay, Kent Mohn, Tracy Murton, tech and communications team (Gremlins); and the group from Westminster United Church, partnered with St. Andrew's Anglican Church, both in Humboldt, and Quill Plains United Church Pastoral Charge in Watson and Quill Lake, for the June 6 Sunday Service: God's Family of Faith - A recipe for Unity, including, Matteo Carboni, Phyllis Arnst, Andrew Cebryk, Maureen Whalley, Carol Gossner, Deborah Bryson, Elan Buan, Ruth Mostowy, Roxanne Bagnall, Elsa Hancock, Chris Hancock, Yoonjin Park Bott, Tyler Skogen, Doug Berger,



Allison Sarauer, April Pauli, Cindy Goodman, Brenda Curtis and Sarah Miller (Video Editor).

Thanks were expressed to all delegates and visitors for coming to yet another Zoom meeting, and for faithful and enduring ministry over the past year, and possible thanks to all who contributed the “terrible” prior to the beginning of the sessions.

A fervent “Here’s to cookies next year in person!” concluded the expressions of appreciation.

#### **ADJOURNAMENT**

Tricia expressed gratitude to all 170 people who participated in the meeting, and provided the words of sending forth and blessing.

Tricia Gerhard, at 4:05 p.m., declared the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of Living Skies Regional Council to be adjourned until the next gathering of Living Skies Regional Council.

#### **SIGNATURES**