

**Prairie to Pine Executive Minutes
January 7, 2021 via Zoom**

Present	Kwang Beom Cho (Co-Chair), Diane Dwarka (Co-Chair), Valerie Beckingham (Treasurer), Pat Bird, Sandra Rex, John Robertson, Erica Wiebe. A quorum was present.
Corresponding Members	Ken Delisle (Affirming Task Group), Betty Kelly (Regional Meeting Planning Committee and Nominating Committee), Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, Lynne Sanderson (Committee on Community of Faith Support), Donald Schau (Committee on Lay Ministry Support), Marissa Smirl (YAAY Committee).
Regrets	Grant Queskekapow.
Staff Present	Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister), Judy Hare (Pastoral Relations Minister), Twila MacNair (Youth and Young Adult Minister), Heather Dootoff (Financial Administrator), Jamie Mckay (Executive Assistant and Recording Secretary).
Call to Order	Diane Dwarka opened the meeting at 3:30 PM.
Treaty Land Acknowledgement	Diane Dwarka made the following Treaty Land Acknowledgement for Prairie to Pine Regional Council and invited us to share the territory we are in: <i>“As we gather to share the work that rightly comes before this court, let us acknowledge that we are meeting in Treaty No. 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dené peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We seek to live in respect on this land and live in peace and friendship with its people.”</i>
Opening Worship and Check-In	Pat Bird gave a short reflection and lead us in worship. We checked in by sharing how we are doing and what gives us hope.
Agenda	We reviewed the agenda.
028-2020/2021	It was agreed by consensus: That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approve the agenda as distributed.
Approval of Executive Minutes	We reviewed the minutes from December 3, 2020.
029-2020/2021	It was agreed by consensus: That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approve the minutes from December 3, 2020 as distributed.
Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Korean Ministries Network

BUSINESS ARISING

Annual Meeting 2021 The regional meeting planning committee needs people to fill seats and a meeting date to make plans for. We agree that we would prefer the meeting to take place on a weekend and there hasn't been any preference for spring or fall. A meeting taking place in the spring means planning needs to begin immediately.

To coordinate between the other two regional meetings, we agreed that the date of the 2021 regional meeting will be decided by the co-chairs and the Executive Minister.

We thought it would be a good idea to have separate planning for those who attended the meeting on the phone. We will find the number of phone participants and pass the information along to the planning committee.

We have learned there are several challenges to holding large virtual meetings:

- Technology – access, comfort of use, help with technical difficulties
- Connection – speaking at the right time, conversation
- Discussion – break-out rooms, time constraint, virtual discussion takes longer
- Screen fatigue – need frequent breaks

030 – 2020/2021

It was agreed by consensus:

That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive will leave the date(s) of the 2021 Regional Meeting to be decided by the Co-chairs, Diane Dwarka and Kwang Beom Cho, and the Executive Minister, Shannon McCarthy, with the date being decided before the next executive meeting.

TRC Representation – Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd

In order to have a deeper and thoughtful discussion, we decided to move this to the next meeting on February 4, 2021.

Anti-Racist Church

We would like to do some educational pieces in February as part of Black History Month. There is a document we can use that talks about the characteristics of white privilege, how we can recognize them, and how they affect the way we work. There are eight characteristics, and we could discuss one at each meeting. Someone commented that it would be great to explore with others what it means to be anti-racist or to decolonize since sometimes we don't even know what that means.

The United Church of Canada is working towards become an anti-racist church. We are not following a checklist in order to declare ourselves an anti-racist church. Indigenous groups, non-white groups, and the White Privilege Working Group are coming together to create a long-term anti-racism strategy and present for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

Finance

The balance sheet and income statement finance reports were provided for information.

We have come to the end of this year with more assets than we had at the end of

2019. Two foundations sent contributions from 2020 and 2021 which we received this year, resulting in double income in Unbudgeted Income Restricted Fund (Gifts). We also received \$32,000 from the sale of a group home in Neepawa.

**Strategic Budgeting
Committee Final
Report**

A report from the Strategic Budgeting Committee, *Support for Communities of Faith to Share the Good News Widely: Guide for use of funds transferred to Prairie to Pine Regional Council from Conference and Presbyteries (Appendix A)*, was presented by Valerie Beckingham.

The report is intended to provide guidance to Prairie to Pine Regional Council for use of funds transferred from Conference and Presbyteries. The report addresses only funds transferred from Conference and its Presbyteries to Prairie to Pine Regional Council on July 1, 2019.

The guidance contained in the report outlines the priorities of Prairie to Pine Regional Council, states a process for allocating these funds, and provides criteria for approving requests.

The summarized recommendations from the Strategic Budgeting Committee to the Executive are:

1. Designate \$100,000 to be set aside as a reserve.
2. \$100,000 used to cover budget deficits in the short term.
3. Invest \$400,000 to be used as annual income.

Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive will review the report every three years, making changes as necessary, to ensure the priorities, criteria, process and recommendations remain aligned with the work of the regional council.

After questions of clarification, the Executive asked that the report be amended to include the following:

- Investment income from the \$400,000 will come from interest, not capital.
- The report is to be held with the Prairie to Pine Regional Council Finance Team, to be brought forward every three years to review by the Executive.

031 – 2020/2021

It was agreed by consensus:

That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive receives and approves the report submitted by the Strategic Budgeting Committee, *Support for Communities of Faith to Share the Good News Widely: Guide for use of funds transferred to Prairie to Pine Regional Council from Conference and Presbyteries (Appendix A)*, as amended.

**Approval of New
Covenants**

Lynne Sanderson

Karen Medland is giving a worship at the Ash Wednesday. We are looking for pp who will want to take part as readers. Working on liturgy for Ash Wednesday.

032 – 2020/2021

It was agreed by consensus:

That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approves the recommendation of the Committee on Community of Faith Support that Prairie to receive, accept, and prepare to celebrate February 17, 2021 by Zoom the completed Covenants of

Mutual Commitment, Accountability and Support with the following Communities of Faith:

- **Windsor Park United Church**
- **North Kildonan United Church**
- **Charleswood United Church**

Prairie to Pine Structure Document

The Prairie to Pine Structure Document is not ready to be put on the table at this time. We will come back to this when it is complete, and we will make sure the committees will be able to see it before the final draft.

Letter of Support – Korean Ministers Network

We will send a letter of support. Ken DeLisle can work with Kwang Beom Cho and Julie Graham to draft a letter. Diane Dwarka and Shannon McCarthy can help with letter writing.

REPORTS

Executive Minister

Shannon is still in Ontario. She will have 14 days of quarantine when she returns to Manitoba. Some staff have returned from Christmas break and some are still away. She is working with Heather to start the new audits and finishing up the year end.

We are thinking about the office lease at St. Mary's Road and if we will renew. The lease for the building ends at the end of 2021.

Pastoral Relations

Congregations are dealing with issues in their pastoral relationships. A lot of phone call work needs to happen as well as trying to catch up on work that has accumulated.

Judy Hare is supposed to take sabbatical in 2021. When and if she goes on sabbatical will depend on the direction of work down the road.

Our tenants at St. Mary's Road are getting a new Executive Director. Shannon will have to speak with him about what is happening with the office space.

We are continuing to meet with clergy ministry personnel every second Tuesday afternoon. Judy will be touching base with community of faith lay leaders.

Justice and Communications

Julie Graham sent regrets.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will start to focus on recruitment for the regional meeting planning team. There are a few vacancies that have recently become available. They will also begin recruiting for the full slate of the annual meeting. A specific mailout is being sent in late January to the previous regional meeting registrants.

Next Meeting(s)

The Executive agreed to meet on the first Thursday of each month at 3:30 PM with the next meetings on:

- February 4, 2021
- March 4, 2021
- April 1, 2021

- May 6, 2021

Closing Kwang Beom Cho said a closing prayer. Diane Dwarka read a few words from Albert Einstein.

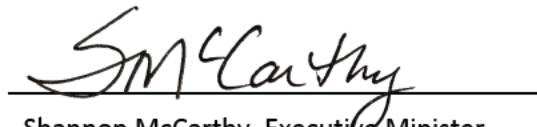
Adjournment Diane Dwarka adjourned the meeting at 3:25 PM.



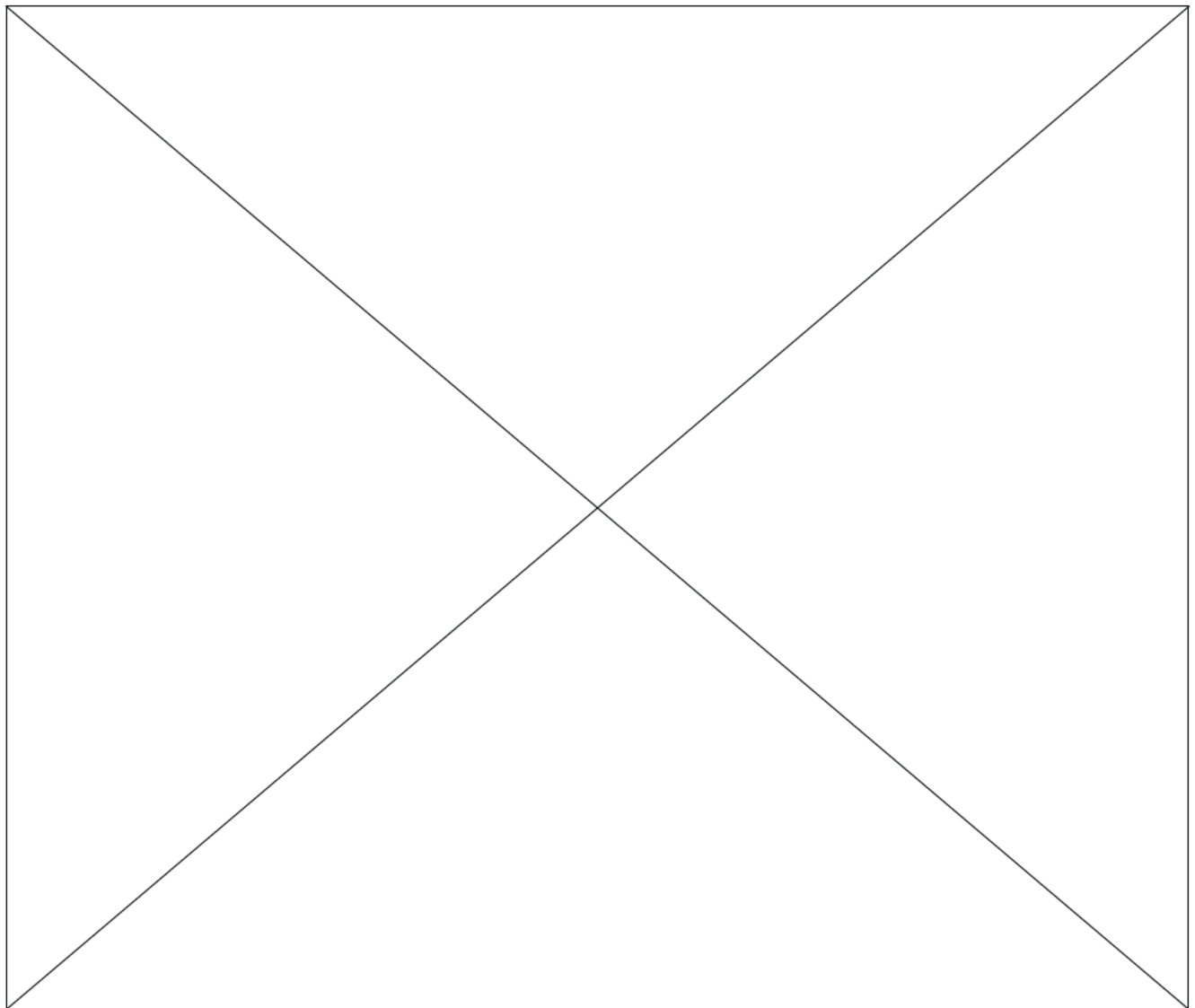
Kwang Beom Cho, Co-Chair



Diane Dwarka, Co-Chair



Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister



Support for Communities of Faith to Share the Good News Widely: Guide for use of funds transferred to Prairie to Pine Region from Conference and Presbyteries

Report of Strategic Budgeting Committee: Lori Stewart, Kwang Beom Cho, John Oussoren,
and Valerie Beckingham Approved January 7, 2020

Preamble

On January 1, 2019 the net financial resources of the former Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario and its six presbyteries were transferred to the Prairie to Pine Region. While some of the money was restricted or designated for stated purposes, approximately six hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$630,000) was unrestricted. While the minutes of final meetings record recommendations for the use of their money, Presbyteries and Conference agreed that Prairie to Pine Region has the right and the responsibility to determine the best use of these funds. Recognizing that these funds represent a one-time only opportunity, Prairie to Pine Executive appointed a committee to recommend a framework for decisions on uses of this money. This document is intended to provide guidance to Prairie to Pine Regional Council for spending the funds transferred from Conference and Presbyteries.

Materials consulted

We looked at the recommendations of the former Conference and Presbyteries, as recorded in the minutes of their final meetings, “Calls to the Church” from *Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle* presented to the 43rd General Council in July, 2018, “Calls to Change” from the Intercultural Group, and at the Listening Team Report from Prairie to Pine’s first Regional Gathering in May, 2019.

Scope

This document addresses only those funds transferred from Conference and its Presbyteries to Prairie to Pine Region on July 1, 2019. It does not address funds from yearly grants, from sale of church property, or from any other source.

Principles arising from our discussions

One overarching principle emerged to guide decisions about use of the transferred-in funds:

Support of communities of faith to share the good news widely

Specifically, projects and activities should support the following priorities:

1. Relationship building and work with children, youth and young adults (including camping support) in and for the present and future church/communities of faith.
2. Indigenous Communities and Consensus Building. Support Indigenous leadership by ensuring that enough time, as determined by the Indigenous faith communities, is afforded for community discussion before deciding on major issues, and by providing sufficient resources for the communication necessary for Indigenous communities of faith to arrive at consensus regionally and nationally. This priority was stated in various forms by Conference, Presbyteries, and the Listening Team.
3. Relationship building among Indigenous, settler and immigrant churches and communities. This is where our future lies. We should get to know others within our own denomination and reach out to those outside of it. Examples of this might include travel to and from remote communities to share work and worship, shared children's activities, and using human resources within our communities of faith to provide ESL classes for immigrants etc. This priority also reflects recommendations in the minutes of presbyteries and in the Listening Team report.
4. Work in areas the Regional Council wants to encourage, including regional priorities that will be identified from time to time. We are recognizing and appreciate the presbytery and conference suggestions made with their sent-in funds and from time to time the P2P regional council or the executive may or may not select some of these as priorities for project funding requests.

Process for allocating these funds

Requests for funds may be made by individuals or groups and need to be submitted in writing to the Regional Council Executive. The request should explain how the funds will be used to support the priorities identified above. It should include a budget and state the total amount requested.

Criteria for approving requests

Requests will be approved by the Regional Council Executive at a regularly scheduled meeting according to these criteria. If a proposal supports more than one of the criteria it will be a stronger proposal.

1. Will the project or activity contribute to our mandate to support communities of faith to spread the good news widely by furthering one or more of the four priorities stated above?

2. Will the project or activity either be completed at the end of the current funding request or have a plan to continue with other sources of funding? In particular, will any employees be hired on a term basis only for the extent of the funding?
3. Is this project or activity oriented to future growth?
4. Does this project or activity make better use of our limited funds than alternate projects of activities?

Investment of these funds

“Investment” can be financial, where the return on money is more money. “Investment” can also mean putting money to work directly in the work of the church, where the return on money is the furthering of the priorities listed above. It is this second meaning that describes the church’s ultimate goal for its financial resources. The first is a means to this end.

It is Council’s responsibility to decide when and how much of its money to give directly to those engaged in furthering its priorities and how much to invest to grow for its future work.

The funds are currently invested in short-term redeemable and non-redeemable GICs with yearly returns of less than 1% per year. To earn more, they need to be invested for a longer term and at greater risk. The Committee considered these options:

1. The United Church Foundation

The United Church Foundation was established to support the long-term work of the church. It strives to ensure that funds are invested in a way that is consistent with both the values and mission of the Church, and the fiduciary responsibilities of the trustees of the funds.

<https://www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca/investment-info/investment-information-overview/>

There are two ways to entrust our funds to The United Church Foundation:

- a. Transfer funds to the Foundation. Then the funds belong to the Foundation, and as assets of the Foundation, are invested in a balanced fund managed by Fiera Capital. Prairie to Pine can specify the recipients of grants from the funds but loses ownership of the capital. It is this arrangement that yields the high returns, 17% (less 1.5% fee) in 2019, 7.5% five-year average (less 1.5% fee).
- b. Invest funds through the Foundation. The funds are invested in a balanced fund managed by Canoe Financial’s Frontier Capital Funds or by Genus Capital Management, which offers The United Church Sustainable Development Portfolio for investments of \$250,000 or more. Prairie to Pine retains ownership of the money. Returns vary with type and length of investment.

2. CDI

We can make an agreement with CDI to use this as our fund.

Recommendations to Executive Council January 7, 2021

1. We designate \$100,000 of this money as a reserve. Many organizations, including other regions of The United Church of Canada have such a reserve to cover liabilities such as severance costs.
2. We recognize that although each year's operating costs should be covered by that year's income, and one-time funds should not normally be used to balance a deficit budget, we will need to use some of this money to cover our budget deficits in the short term until some financial obligations have been discharged and until we can plan to operate within the yearly grants. We designate \$100,000 of this money to be used for this purpose.
3. We invest \$400,000 so that there is a yearly income to fund the projects and activities that support our overarching principle. The nature of the investments will be determined by Prairie to Pine's Executive Minister and Financial Administrator and brought to the Executive for its approval.

Review process

At least every three years the Financial Administrator, the Executive Minister and the Treasurer of Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive will review this report, making changes as necessary, to ensure the priorities, criteria, process and recommendations remain aligned with the work of the Region.