

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

Present	Pat Bird (Co-chair), Diane Dwarka (Co-chair), Erica Wiebe (Co-chair Elect), Valerie Beckingham (Treasurer), Marissa Smirl (YAAY), Barbara Brown, Joey Dearborn, James deBeer, Craig Miller, Grant Queskekapow. A quorum was present.
Corresponding Members	Ken DeLisle (Equity and Diversity Committee), Betty Kelly (Chair, Nominating Committee), Heather Lea (Committee on Community of Faith Support), Donald Schau (Committee on Lay Ministry Support).
Regrets	Julia Antonyshyn (YAAY), M Chorney.
Staff Present	Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister), Judy Hare (Pastoral Relations Minister), Julie Graham (Justice and Communications Minister), Heather Dootoff (Finance Administrator), Jamie Mckay (Executive Assistant & Recording Secretary).
Call to Order	Pat Bird opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.
Treaty Land Acknowledgement	Pat Bird read the following Treaty Land Acknowledgement for Prairie to Pine Regional Council, developed by the Equity & Diversity Committee: <i>“Creator. Eternal Spirit. God of all. We gather tonight on your land. We gather on land some called Turtle Island and others call Canada. We acknowledge that the lands of the Prairie to Pine people are covered by Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9. The Prairie to Pine office is located on Treaty 1 land. These are the traditional lands of many Indigenous peoples, including Anishinaabe, Ojibway, Cree, Oji- Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Swampy Cree, Muskegoik, Dene, and the Metis nation. We acknowledge that as settler people, we have not lived up to the promises of the Treaties with respect to the people or the land. We wish to do better, and particularly in the Prairie to Pine region, we aim to be part of the reconciliation efforts.”</i>
Opening Worship	Craig Miller led us in worship.
Check-In	We checked in by sharing how we honor our relationship with the holy land as we live and worship.
Agenda	We reviewed the agenda.
016 – 2021/2022	It was agreed by consensus: That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approve the agenda as distributed.
Approval of Minutes	We reviewed the minutes from September 9, 2021.

017 – 2021/2022

**It was agreed by consensus:
That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approves the minutes from
September 9, 2021, as amended.**

BUSINESS ARISING

Office closing

Prairie to Pine staff have begun searching for a smaller office space and have several office tours scheduled. We are making plans for packing, moving, and closing the building.

Land Acknowledgement Task Group

It was previously noted there were many versions of a Treaty Land Acknowledgement statement being used during meetings. We agreed that we would like to begin using a consistent acknowledge statement and a task group of Diane Dwarka, Pat Bird, M Chorney, and Stewart Hill was named to work separately from the Executive. The task group would have the ability to bring a proposal directly to the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Diane Dwarka agreed to contact task group members to begin work.

Religion in the News – Winnipeg Free Press

As part of our annual commitment to Religion in the News, we can name a member of the Regional Council to their advisory board.

We will revisit this work at a future meeting.

Correspondence

- Certificates from Manitoba Multifaith Council

REPORTS

Finance

Valerie Beckingham reported.

Valerie noted that the budget does not include money from prior years or money we are holding from presbytery and conference. If people have any ideas for how they would like to spend prior year money, please bring those forward.

The 2022 Draft Budget will be brought forward at the next meeting.

Closing the TD bank account

The TD bank account used by the former conference is still open and Shannon McCarthy is the only one of four signers remaining. For the purposes of closing the TD bank account, we agreed to name Shannon McCarthy to act as the sole signer.

018 – 2021/2022

**It was agreed by consensus:
That Prairie to Pine Regional Council of The United Church of Canada (formerly
called the United Church of Canada Conference of Manitoba and Northwest
Ontario) authorizes Shannon McCarthy to act as sole signer, for the purposes of
closing TD #0730-0303608.**

Co-chairs

Pat Bird reported.

Pat attended the Ordination and Celebration service for Elenor Thompson which was held in Oxford House, Manitoba on September 19th. The service was powerful and well-supported by the community.

Diane Dwarka, Shannon McCarthy, and Judy Hare traveled to Melita, Manitoba on September 12th for the Admission service for Christopher Davis. It was a wonderful service followed by good conversations with Christopher, his family, and those in attendance.

Diane Dwarka represented the Regional Council at a gathering called 'We Are All Treaty People' which was held at St. John's Park in Winnipeg, Manitoba on September 19th. Later that evening, Diane also attended the Ordination service for Susan McIlveen at Churchill Park United Church.

*Prairie to Pine
Structure document*

Work has begun on updating the structure document and will take longer than initially estimated. The next meeting will be on October 18, 2021.

We are hoping to have a document that will serve multiple purposes, with three sections being proposed:

- Formal structure – listing the responsibilities of the committee in a formal manual-type language.
- Narrative paragraph – explaining what the committee does in less formal language; a less intimidating description for anyone considering joining the committee.
- Staffing relationships – listing staff and commissions and committees they resource and provide admin support for.

Nominating

Betty Kelly brought forward two names for appointment to the University of Winnipeg Board.

019 – 2021-2022

**It was agreed by consensus:
That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approves the recommendation of the Nominating Committee that:**

- **GRANT CHRISTENSEN be appointed to the University of Winnipeg Board for a regular United Church three-year appointment, and**
- **EVAN PODAIMA be appointed to the University of Winnipeg Board for a one-year student appointment.**

**Executive Minister's
Report**

Shannon McCarthy reported.

Attending services

Shannon spent a lot of time on the road attending Ordination and Admission services almost every weekend in September, including going to a service in Living Skies Regional Council.

GC Finance principles

As we enter another General Council budget cycle, Executive Ministers have been

wanting finance principles and clarity on what the budget numbers for 2022 and beyond will be based on.

One discussion will be on how best to honour the 50/50 salary split for the Executive Minister and Executive Minister's Program Assistant. Prairie to Pine receives a grant for the salary split which has not been covering cost-of-living increases and step increases for newer employees.

*Changes to UCC
Benefits plan*

The General Council Executive made the decision to remove the Optional Benefits Plan, moving all members to the Core Benefits Plan, and making changes to the Core Benefits Plan to make it sustainable.

There was also a lot of conversation about how this decision was poorly communicated to the regional councils. Executive Ministers are working on finding ways to remind General Council to better communicate decisions to the regional councils, so people don't hear about these things second-hand on social media.

**Incorporated
Ministries**

020 – 2021/2022

It was agreed by consensus:

That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive take the following action:

a) United Church Halfway Homes of Winnipeg Inc.

....approve United Church Halfway Homes of Winnipeg Inc. 2021 Board of Directors:

- **Duncan Michie**
- **Rev. Dr. Paul Campbell**
- **Carlos Clark**
- **Kendra Kinley**
- **James Dixon**
- **Dr. Edward Johnson**
- **Anne Walker**
- **Crystal Adams**

This is based on the Annual General Meeting dated December 3, 2020, board member approval form dated January 6, 2021, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

b) Prairie View Lodge

....approve Prairie View Lodge 2021 Board of Directors:

- **Bev Leadbeater**
- **Susanne Fortin**

- Jack McKay
- Judy MacKinnon
- Crystal Adams
- Pat Cesmystruk
- Janice Olfert
- Alan Melvin
- Linda Cavers
- Yvette Glenn
- Alison Fijala
- Penny Follis

This is based on the Annual General Meeting dated June 15, 2021, board member approval form dated June 16, 2021, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

c) Prairie to Pine United Church Development Inc.

....approve Prairie to Pine United Church Development Inc. 2021 Board of Directors:

- Stewart Fletcher-Cook
- Dennis Butcher
- Gordon Goosen
- Lisa Lix
- Sheron Miller
- Teresa Moysey
- Dwight Rutherford
- Del Sexsmith
- Warren Thompson
- Kirk Windsor
- Betty Young

This is based on the Annual General Meeting dated June 15, 2021, board member approval form dated June 15, 2021, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

d) Wellman Lake United Church Camp

....approve Wellman Lake United Church Camp 2021 Board of Directors:

- Candace Wenzel
- Lanaya Harris
- Kendal Stechyshyn
- Joyce Bateman
- Max Polon

- **Blair Mullin**
- **Breana How**
- **Lucile Neufeld**

This is based on the Annual General Meeting dated April 26, 2021, board member approval form dated April 26, 2021, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

PASTORAL RELATIONS Judy Hare reported.

Pastoral Relations Minister

Since the last meeting of the Executive in September things have been active in the areas of work that I am engaged with within this United Church of Ours:

- A service celebrating the admission of the Rev. Christopher St. George Davis to the Order of Ministry of the United Church of Canada was held at Victoria United Church in Melita on September 12, 2021.
- A service celebrating the ordination of Elenor Thompson to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care hosted by the National Indigenous Council was held at Vernon Grieves Memorial United Church in Oxford House on September 19, 2021. Pat Bird attended on behalf of Prairie to Pine Regional Council.
- A service celebrating the ordination of Susan McIlveen to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care was held on September 19, 2021 at Churchill Park United Church, Winnipeg.
- Plans for a service hosted by the National Indigenous Council recognizing/commissioning Sam Ross as Designated Lay Minister at Johnston Garrioch Memorial United Church, Cross Lake have been postponed due to restrictions on northern travel because of new pandemic outbreaks in the region. Conversations are happening around a date for rescheduling, possibly November 07, 2021. Diane Dwarka will represent Prairie to Pine Regional Council at that service when it takes place.

Pastoral Relations Commission

The Pastoral Relations Commission and its Pastoral Relations Liaisons have been busy attempting to get Pastoral Relations Covenanting Services scheduled, with one almost every Sunday afternoon and evening until well into November 2021. They have a face-to-face meeting of the Commission and Liaisons scheduled for October 12th with some members opting to join by Zoom.

The Commission will begin to make plans for conversations throughout the regional council over the coming months on potential “collaborative ministry” arrangements*. Two Liaisons and I have engaged with the Indigenous Ministry staff around procedures we will follow in getting some pastoral relations matters completed before the beginning of 2022:

- Search for ministry personnel in three Indigenous communities,
- Revision to existing Calls/Appointments in several communities of faith with a redistribution of M & S grant money, and
- Renewal of annual appointments.

** Collaborative ministry arrangements are arrangements whereby different communities of faith come together to have their ministry needs met together. This may be as formal as becoming a multi-point pastoral charge sharing governance structure and ministry personnel through amalgamation or re-alignment or it may mean arranging to share ministry personnel and trained lay leaders through mechanisms currently called Service Agreements or Memorandums of Agreement/Understanding while remaining autonomous related to governance structures.*

Priority for Land Acknowledgement

The Commission is still awaiting the results of the work of the task group of the Prairie to Pine Executive related to the "land acknowledgement" to be included on our Certificate of Covenant and needs this to be completed as a priority.

Committee on Ministry Personnel Support

The Committee on Ministry Personnel Support is convening a Zoom meeting of their MP2MP Connectors (Ministry Personnel to Ministry Personnel Connectors) in late October.

October is Clergy Appreciation month so suggestions will appear in the Weekly News for how Communities of Faith might express appreciation and encouragement to their ministry personnel and lay leaders. We currently have one hundred and one ministry personnel in active pastoral relationships, including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous settings as well as another dozen or so ministry personnel in other appointments (i.e. theological schools, community ministries, chaplaincies in hospitals and correctional facilities, GC/regional Council staff).

As Pastoral Relations Minister, Judy Hare continues to facilitate a Zoom connection every second Tuesday afternoon with ministry personnel who wish to gather for conversation. Discussions of late have focused on re-engaging activities and the impact that Public Health Orders have had on that. The Board of Vocations considered the matter of vaccinations for active clergy when it met on September 28 & 29, 2021 and hope to share their thoughts with Ministry Personnel through communication on October 12, 2021.

Changes to UCC Benefits Plan

When the General Council Executive met on September 25, 2021, it considered recommendations related to changes in the United Church Benefits Plan effective January 1, 2022. Some general commentary currently appears on the United Church Benefits website with details promised no later than November 1, 2021 to all who will be impacted: clergy, lay employees, retirees, and communities of faith.

Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support

The Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support did not meet in September.

Committee on Community of Faith Support

The Committee on Community of Faith Support continues its work with communities of faith on Covenants of Mutual Commitment, Accountability and Support and on matters related to re-alignment and disbanding. Heather Lea brings motions to bring to this executive meeting on these matters.

All the Committees/Commission are working on updated their mandate statements for the structure document as per the request received. Clarification on when those are due would be helpful.

*Gloria Cook
resignation*

I was saddened to receive the notice from Gloria Cook that she has given her resignation as Community Capacity Development Coordinator with Indigenous Ministries effective October 15, 2021. I have enjoyed opportunities to connect with and learn from Gloria as she has worked with the communities of faith and ministry personnel within Keewatin Circle. I was heartened to hear that although she is leaving her employment within the United Church of Canada, she will continue to share with us the journey of healing and reconciliation. I will forward to working with whomever steps into that role next.

*Possible financial
assistance for
community of faith*

A meeting was held on the evening of October 5th involving the council of a Winnipeg Community of Faith with representatives from the Committee on Community of Faith Support, Pastoral Relations Commission, the Property Commission regarding the future of the pastoral relationship, the sale of the property, and the possible disbanding of the congregation. Given the financial picture and the time required to take potential action in these three areas, it is possible that the Regional Council may need to provide financial assistance to the community of faith which it would recover from the assets of the community of faith when they are liquidized, or the building is sold.

Some direction on the process and required information to come to the Executive or whomever would grant permission for this to happen would be helpful. It may happen before the end of 2021 or in early 2022.

*Proposal – Covenants
of Mutual
Commitment,
Accountability and
Support*

Heather Lea brought forward one proposal for action.

There are a dozen communities of faith whose covenants of mutual commitment, accountability and support with the Regional Council have not been completed. One of these is in the process of preparing to disband, and there may be up to four others which may move in that direction or seek some form of realignment.

021-2021/2022

It was agreed by consensus:

That Prairie to Pine Regional Council Executive approves the recommendation of the Committee on Community of Faith Support to receive, accept, and prepare to celebrate, at a date yet to be decided, the completed Covenants of Mutual commitment, Accountability and Support with the following Communities of Faith:

- **Holland**
- **Boissevain**
- **Newdale**
- **Cardale and the Newdale-Cardale Pastoral Charge;**
- **Tilston (Deloraine-Melita-Tilston Pastoral Charge).**

Annual Meeting

We decided to wait to discuss plans for the 2022 regional council meeting until after

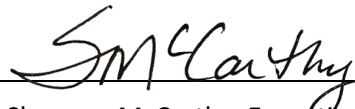
- Planning** the chairpersons meeting being held later in October.
- Justice and Communications** Julie Graham brought forward a draft document which is meant to begin the conversation around Right Relations and living into the many teachings and responsibilities we have been given as the United Church.
- Beginning discussion on Right Relations Governance* Julie mentioned the people who have already begun these conversations in different ways and acknowledged this work has already been going on for many years. Survivors and Elders have been speaking about these matters and
- The discovery of unmarked graves at a residential school Kamloops in May 2021 brought what survivors and Elders have been speaking about for decades onto a national spotlight. Elders, survivors, and intergenerational survivors have long lived within this knowledge and reality without being heard or acknowledged.
- Widespread acknowledgement has brought fresh pain to the surface. We heard from a member of the Executive, Grant Queskepow, a Cree Elder of Norway House, as he shared the powerful moment he learned of the unmarked graves.
- We talked about how vital it is to present correct information and wondered how we could get information out in a way that is accurate, truthful, and that supports each other.
- We thanked Julie Graham for drafting this document and beginning this conversation. We acknowledged this work will be slow and will take time. We decided to re-visit this work at a later meeting.
- Grants Committee** The Grants Committee has one more request to receive and is not ready to make a recommendation at this time.
- Next Meeting(s)** The Executive agreed to meet on the first Thursday of each month at 4:00 PM with the next meeting dates:
- November 4, 2021
- Closing Prayer** Craig Miller said a prayer to close the meeting.
- Adjournment** Diane Dwarka adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM.



Patricia Bird, Co-Chair



Diane Dwarka, Co-Chair



Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister