

REPORTS –PROGRAM STAFF***Welcome to our New Tri-Regional Staff Chantal Winslow***

Chantal Winslow
Executive Assistant to
Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy
Northern Spirit, Prairie to Pine and
Living Skies Regional Councils

I joined Shannon McCarthy's team in November 2022, however, I have worked within the United Church for the last 7 years.

I grew up in London, ON and originally went to school to be a legal assistant. I worked in personal injury law for 5 years. After I moved to Alberta, I found myself seeking something completely different to put my time and energy into. That is when I stumbled upon St. David's United Church.

I fell in love at my interview and the congregation, staff and community became family to me. Working at St. David's allowed me to grow and learn so much. The United Church has been so welcoming and I am thrilled to continue my journey with Shannon, doing work for three regions.

I work remotely from Crossfield, AB where I live with my husband of 6 years and our fur babies: The Pasta Cats (Spaghetti, Fettucine and Penne) and our one-year-old puppy, Meatball.

In my spare time, I love to spend time with my family and friends. My passions are event planning, organization and facilitating connections within my community. I have founded and run a group in my small town based on forming friendships and connections. I also love to be creative. I am usually dabbling in a few different arts and crafts. Currently, I have really been enjoying acrylic painting and ceramics. As well as reigniting my love for reading.



Erin Acland
Keeper of the Archives



Every year is a busy year in the Archives. Every year reference requests arrive in a near-constant stream, as do boxes of records that I have to contemplate where exactly to put, but 2022 did stand out in a number of ways.

Reconciliation and a commitment to doing concrete work in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action has been a significant part of my vocation since I became Keeper of the Archives in 2014. This year, however, more time than ever was devoted to partnerships and building relationships with Indigenous Communities and Knowledge Keepers and their allies, and doing archival work that meaningfully contributed to living in right relations.

The second stand out of 2022, is the return to in-person researchers and group visits to the Archives, which was wonderful to see after a long dry spell due to Covid. While Covid protocols and access restrictions to the University of Winnipeg (where the Archives are held) were in place until September, it did not deter many researchers who were eager to access the records in-person and conduct long-delayed research.

One of the silver linings of the pandemic was leaning into technology, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, that allowed me to better communicate with my colleagues despite geographic distances. I've always worked away from the other regional staff, but I now feel more connected to the other staff as well as my United Church archival colleagues from across the country. Chatting over MS Teams is a regular part of my work day now, and collaborating with colleagues is significantly easier than in the past.

Reference and Archival Accessions

In 2022, I received 385 archival requests. 314 requests were for reference assistance, and 71 requests were for records management help or discussions about donations and transfers of records to the Archives. In addition, this year 47 in-person researchers visited the Archives, I presented to 8 groups/classes, and 2 media outlets filmed stories in the Archives.

For the last few years, because of Covid, transfers and gifts of archival records were discouraged. However, this year, a substantial number of records were transferred to the Archives. A University of Manitoba Archival Studies MA intern has been hired for 11 weeks, during the summer of 2023, to accession all of the archival records that have arrived over the last few years, and to help us gain better physical and intellectual control over the records.

Grants

The Archives received \$8,000 from the Department of Canadian Heritage: Reopening Fund for Heritage Organizations under the Museums Assistance Program.

\$3,791.68 was received from the Make Room for Women Fund for me to attend the Diakonia of the United Church of Canada's (DUCC) National Gathering in Tatamagouche, NS to discuss archives and the ongoing development of the DUCC Archives located at the Prairie to Pine Regional Archives.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation and decolonization is not a task list or a box to tick, but an ongoing commitment to do all of my work through a new lens. This work is very much ongoing. Every year I field well over one hundred reference requests from Indigenous folks who are often looking for assistance in proving their genealogy

as part of obtaining Metis or Indian status; in searching for the records of their loved ones who attended Residential or Day Schools; or who want access to Home Mission records about their communities.

In addition to these types of reference requests, this year I also hosted two tours of the archival space and records for 20 Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders; presented and led a discussion for a U of W class on Residential Schools; hosted a Global News documentary film crew at the Archives (<https://globalnews.ca/news/9216470/residential-school-ungraved-graves-canada/>); and partnered with the Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis History Project (<https://indigenoustbhistory.ca/>) to help families find the burial locations of their loved ones.

One ongoing project that is being headed by the General Council Archives is the repatriation of “Knowledge Bundles” back to communities. Indigenous communities are very welcome to reach out to the GC Archives and work with them to receive digital copies of every Residential School record the United Church has that is connected to their community. So far 18 communities have received these bundles, which they have control over.

GC Archives and regional archives are also at the very beginning of the work on digitizing all of our records of Colonizing Institutions, such as Home Missions. As part of Bringing the Children Home (<https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice/bringing-children-home>), for a few months in the fall and winter, I hosted and helped researchers at the Archives to identify which records should be digitized as part of the initial phase of this project.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Acland, Keeper of the Archives
Prairie to Pine Regional Council



Julie Graham
Regional Minister:
Justice and Communications

Communications

Regional Council Directory

Thanks to Cherry, in collaboration with Judy and myself, we launched the brand-new directory in January 2023. YES! The process took a long while, requiring discussions about privacy, security, safe access, and resolving data discrepancies from multiple sources. The directory is available as a password-protected PDF on the website, and the password will be sent directly to our contacts in the most secure way possible. We know many have waited a long time for this, and hope it will be a good resource for

relationships and re-connecting. Constructive feedback is welcome, especially if you have thoughts on other contacts or information that could be appropriately included.

Structures document for the Region

I've been working with Teresa Melnychuk, Pat Bird, and Diane Dwarka on thinking through writing, editing, and purpose. Teresa in particular has carried a lot of the writing and wrangling. It's been an interesting process as we work out how to identify a variety of needs and audiences, and create an accessible and clear document that outlines how the Region work, who makes it work, and how, and how people can get involved. The "bird's eye view" summary of the Regional Council was finished in January 2023; part 3, the "job descriptions" for members of committees, commissions, and task groups, is a lot of detailed work that we hope will serve as both a handy reference and an open invitation.

Newsletter development

The newsletter remains one of our most important communication tools, and Cherry wrangles an enormous amount of detail every week. Based on 2021 survey feedback, we now alternate Events and News each week. Fine-tuning continues, Specifically, in consultation with colleagues in other Regions, Cherry and I confirmed that local events and local matters like job postings will not be included in the newsletter. Events have their own CoF calendar already; most locally-focused opportunities are not relevant to the entirety of the Region's membership; and concerns about the length and too wide a range of content in the newsletter are very real, and increasing. A related initiative for the second half of 2023 will be the creation of a Facebook group that would allow people to share these announcements.

Events

We continue to navigate a lot of online events, and at times the flow is hard to manage. In early 2023 I had initial training on and experience with the new national platform, Church X, which could open up some good options for ongoing Regional courses. I have prioritised working with the newsletters team (Bev, Cherry, Kathy, and Chloe) to promote events and workshops that: have Indigenous leadership/ are focused on right relations; are Affirming; or intercultural; or anti-racism focused; focus on anti-poverty or climate justice; or reflect Regional initiatives and concerns such as government policies that worsen poverty. Generally, we priority-promote first Regional, and then General Council, ecumenical, and national/ regional KAIROS events. Please remember that the community of faith events has a [dedicated calendar](#) and [event posting form](#). [Regional events are here](#).

Website: Troubleshooting and development are always ongoing. Keeping the site up to date is a priority for Cherry and me, and we hope it remains a useful home base for news, key documents, events, and more at www.prairietopinerc.ca **YAAY events online:** When our new website was created, part of the goal was to allow sharing of events and news across many groups, with shared posting responsibility. Many thanks to Elizabeth Kenyon and Twila MacNair for all the amazing YAAY events they've shared on the website. I'm so grateful for their posting team. [Have a look at the newsfeed here](#).

Winnipeg Free Press faith project: Thank you to Teresa Moysey for representing the Regional Council at the Faith Council, and bringing her perspective to possible stories- not only for the United Church but for people of many faith traditions.

Communicators' group

This a hopefully soon-to-be tri-Region informal group of people with strong experience in communications, including theology, technology, and connecting. We had a very good and lively first couple of conversations in November and January.

Justice**Right relations** ([Click here for the web page](#)).

June 19, Indigenous Day of Prayer, and Indigenous Peoples Day June 21, Orange Shirt Day, and May 5 and October 4 for honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people: these are all priorities every year. People are offered resources and encouragement to participate and highlight, through the newsletter and website.

Letter to Winnipeg Police Chief and city and provincial authorities: Thank you to Erica, Pat, and Shannon for the letter the Region sent regarding the urgent need to commit to searching the Prairie Green landfill for the bodies of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran, along with Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe, whose whereabouts are unknown. [The letter is here](#). [A call to action is here](#).

On December 21, I received a call from Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham, who wanted to update the United Church on his efforts and commitments, and the joint provincial and city committee that was working closely with elected Indigenous leadership. I took the chance to ask him how grassroots community members living most closely with continued violence were being included and heard. I think it's important that communities of faith continue to make their voices heard here because clearly, some in power are feeling some pressure. I hope we can show up whenever we can to remind elected leaders of commitments we all share under the TRC and MMIWG2S Inquiry and its calls for action.

Norway House Listening Circle

Over a year ago, the Region received an invitation and gentle challenge from Rev Grant Queskekapow regarding our intentions about and attention to survivors' experiences, and the TRC Calls to Action commitments. Diane Dwarka, Pat Bird, and Irene Greenwood took the lead on working with me to set up a group that was representative of the geography and diversity of the Region, with the proviso that these could not be people who are brand new to truth and reconciliation work, including listening circles. Progress has been slow and careful in both PtoP and at Norway House, where a community search for unmarked burials is now getting underway at the sites of the United and Catholic residential schools. This is a difficult journey, as is the proposed learning circle, for survivors and the whole community. We have about a dozen people from Prairie to Pine in the circle. The group met with Grant, and Elder Ida Mackay, on October 27, and will continue the conversation in 2023.

Work on unmarked burials at Brandon Residential School

Prairie to Pine Archivist Erin Acland worked with Global News on a documentary on unmarked burials at [Brandon Residential School](#), run by the Methodist and then United Church from 1895-1969. [Please see the story and the video here](#). Many thanks to Erin for her work with the Global team, including a lot of

archival research. Archivists across Canada continue to carry much work associated with the search for burials, as well as equally important struggles to access records of family members forced to attend the schools. This work continues quietly in the background over the very long term.

Thank you as well to people in Brandon, including members of Knox United Church, who continue to [hold this crucial work on behalf of the wider United Church](#). The search, as with all such searches, is very painful for the people of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, made worse by their [inability to access private land long thought to house burials](#). I'm working on editing a public version of an update from the group.

Climate justice

Across Canada, confronting the magnitude of the climate crisis has become harder and harder in our communities and with government, even as the impacts of climate change become more and more obvious. What risks does God call us to in this moment? [How do we join voices with multifaith partners?](#)

I've been connecting with Karen Tjaden and others about how the Region can hold space for climate justice, in addition to the Faithful Footprints grants we've been promoting for three years now, which have participation from several Prairie to Pine CoFs at the moment.

Vigils November 11-13: In November 2022 we encouraged communities of faith to host or participate in a vigil. The ecumenical group For the Love of Creation invited groups across Canada to [host candlelight vigils in their own communities](#) on the weekend of November 11-13, 2022. This was a time to reflect and share our love for our planet, our concern for our fellow human beings at risk from climate change, and our hopes for truly transformative action to happen through the governments gathering for the United Nations "Conference of the Parties" (COP). A number of congregations held vigils or participated.

A 2023 Lenten action on climate justice and Royal Bank's role in financing oil and gas took place, with leadership from Lynda Trono, Karen Tjaden, and Caryn Douglas. A related proposal will come before the 2023 regional meeting.

Anti-racism

Western Intercultural Ministries Network

Damber Khadka and Bill Millar are our reps to this network, which held its AGM on November 29. I assist with their newsletter and continue to hope that we can work out how to better connect the Regional Council to their work. Networking models remain a challenge in the context of Regional participation.

Wait Is This Racist? book and practice workshop, Tri-Region June 2022 series: 29 registrants, with representation from Prairie to Pine from Dryden and Portage.

Equity and Diversity have had five people step up to help the committee and Region develop a plan for learning and acting in a contextual way on racism. This too could also help the Region find its way towards living into a denomination-wide commitment in a way that lines up with our contexts.

2SLGBTQIA+ Affirming work

First, congratulations and gratitude to the new Affirming ministries in Prairie to Pine in 2022 and the first half of 2023! They are Bird's Hill United Church in Winnipeg, John Black Memorial United Church in Winnipeg, and Westminster United Church in The Pas.

Thank you to Twila Macnair for a [June 2022 feature on Winnipeg churches celebrating Pride](#). June is Pride Month, and every year we prioritise sharing resources and encouraging communities of faith to be public, intentional, and explicit in their commitment to a full and loving community.

Action against racism, hate, and extremism

Anti-trans and anti-drag targeted harassment affiliated with "Freedom Convoy" supporters and their social media groups continue across the country. Some of these have targeted schools and libraries, and some have been vicious and very persistent, including targeting Pembina Parish in Morden. February 15 United in Learning, Affirm United, and Affirming Connections co-hosted an education, awareness, and engagement workshop about the anti-drag / pro Convoy movement and how United Church communities can respond. I had the privilege of moderating the panel, and we were grateful for the 230 registrants. We were reminded that in the face of harassment, hate, and deeply demeaning slurs directed

"Freedom Convoy" in Winnipeg Feb 2023: Concerns were received from Bill Millar re the safety of BIPOC people in the area of the Legislature, including at Broadway Disciples if this gathering went ahead (it did, but outside the city, following community activism against its plans). Prairie to Pine joined a coalition against racism and extremism, and a press conference was held at Broadway Disciples in Winnipeg. This included signing a community organisation statement against hate and extremism: [click here to read this statement](#) (scroll down).

Click [here for a thorough media report](#), and [click here for the coalition website](#).

A reminder that the national [church released a 2022 statement of concern about the Freedom Convoy and racism](#), as did [Indigenous Minister Tony Snow in Chinook Winds](#).

It is a privilege to support the people and communities of the Regional Council in this way. I welcome talking, planning, and conspiring toward God's love and justice with you at any time!

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Graham, Regional Minister: Justice and Communications for
Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils.*

jgraham@united-church.ca

Judy Hare
Pastoral Relations Minister



As I write this report, the World Health Organization is announcing that COVID-19 no longer qualifies as a global emergency (its highest level of alert). This declaration marks a symbolic end to the devastating coronavirus pandemic acknowledging both the devastation to the economies worldwide and the loss of seven million people worldwide. At the same time, the WHO predicts the impact the virus will continue to have on so much in our world today.

The Communities of Faith in Prairie to Pine Regional Council, their volunteer leadership and Ministry Personnel, and the Committees and Commissions of the Regional Council are just beginning to bounce back from the pandemic years and assess what the “new reality” post-pandemic looks like.

As the report from the Committee on Community of Faith Support indicates some Communities of Faith have made the decision to explore the option of selling properties and/or disbanding. For other Communities of Faith, formal amalgamations with others within reasonable distance offer an opportunity to create more vital Communities of Faith with hope for longevity.

General Council 44 which was held virtually in the spring/summer of 2022 made some decisions that Prairie to Pine Regional Council hopes will open up some options for the future of the church in our part of Canada. A decision to amend the section of The Manual related to “congregational designated ministers” to allow for Regional Councils to determine the oversight and support needed for ministries where “Congregational Designated Ministers” exist rather than confining them to locations that have Called or Appointment Ministry Personnel on-site, allows for flexibility in some locations. The Pastoral Relations Commission is hoping to have a proposal to bring to the Executive in the coming months to test something in this regard.

Conversations with staff colleagues across this United Church of Ours reveal that the needs of the church in various contexts differ somewhat and our polity and priorities developed nationally need to allow for such variance.

A proposal before GC44 passed allowing for, even encouraging, exploration or experimentation with new models of ministry such as collaborative or cooperative Ministry and new ways of doing things. Prairie to Pine Regional Council was already and will continue to embrace these opportunities and perhaps expand on them. It is the hope that these new incarnations of existing Communities of Faith may result in more vital and engaged ministries. We might look ahead to finding some efficiencies in the way we do some things like pastoral charge supervision.

While we celebrate people whose training and orientation for ordered ministry are now complete especially those staying among us to engage in ministry, there are more position postings on CHURCH HUB than ministers looking for positions. A primary source of ministry personnel for the United Church of Canada at this stage in our history is Ministry Personnel from other denominations, many international, seeking to enter the Order of Ministry of the United Church of Canada through the admissions program. Our messaging of becoming a more diverse and intercultural church has attracted a substantial number of applicants whose credentials have been cleared and who are seeking an initial appointment as part of the process. Sadly, not many of these applicants are successful at being short-listed, interviewed, and/or appointed. An attempt by the Admissions Board to assist with this through an Admission Matching Pilot Project this spring is awaiting pastoral charges willing to participate. Timelines may need to be reworked. If you are interested in knowing more about this project, please ask me!

Paving new paths or developing new ways of being and doing often means things need to be tailored to context. That work often requires time and patience and may require focused assistance from staff and trained volunteers. To that end, we are actively seeking people to be trained and mentored to function as Regional Council Liaisons (Pastoral Relations) joining the twelve Liaisons that we have functioning at the present time. Larger numbers could allow some Liaisons to specialize in a particular aspect of the work such as processes related to collaborative ministries. Some of the Support Committees as well could benefit from additional people to accomplish the work they do on behalf of the Regional Council.

We are also excited at the restructuring at General Council this past year that has transitioned what was known as EDGE into the Organizational Development and Strategy Unit with its new Director of Growth and Ministry Development and plans to hire a “growth animator” for each of the tri-region areas. Perhaps for us, this may not have the primary focus on growing “new “communities of faith but on assisting with the realignment, redevelopment, and revitalization of existing communities of faith.

Some of the administrative matters undertaken this past year by the General Council have had an impact on the Communities of Faith within Prairie to Pine. The review of the Cost of Living Group assignment by an external company that is a regional compensation specialist, Mercer, resulted in a total of 121 Pastoral Charges of our 141 Pastoral Charges included in the listing experiencing an increase in Cost of Living Group assignment (86 %) 39 from COL 1 to 2; 30 from COL 2 to 3 and 52 from COL 3 to 4. 20 Pastoral Charges, mostly in Northern Ontario, will remain in the current Cost of Living Group (14%) and one Pastoral Charge will experience a decrease in Cost of Living Group assignment.

In the past six months, the committees and commissions that I work as with as staff resource and many communities of faith have begun to meet in person again at least occasionally. Such gatherings bring energy and a sense of caring, unity, and purpose that ZOOM meetings rarely do! But we have discovered that there are some things that we can do more frequently and economically if we do them collectively online using ZOOM (trainings for profile teams and search committees; sacraments elders and Ministry and Personnel Committees) so we may continue doing so for the immediate future. It WILL be good to see many of you in person at the Regional Council meeting in June since our next in-person Regional Council meeting will not be held until 2026.

It is both a challenging and exciting time to be part of the mission and ministry of the United Church of Canada. Much is happening and I hope that you are keeping aware of it by reading the Prairie to Pine

Weekly News, and the postings and the minutes of the Executive and Commissions available on the Regional Council website. There is MUCH to be hopeful about in the shifting sands. I am so very grateful for the many people who voluntarily share their skills and time in various committees, commissions, boards, and councils locally, regionally, and nationally. I am grateful for colleagues who bring different skills and perspectives to the work that we share.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Minister,
Prairie to Pine Regional Council*

A few statistics from the 2022-2023 Pastoral Year (more or less accurate):

3 New Collaborative Ministry arrangements were approved and/or filled in this past year involving 6 Communities of Faith (MacGregor/Trinity, Portage; Altona/Roland; United in Spirit (Steinbach/Niverville)

2 Former Collaborative Ministry arrangements have ended/shifted to other things (one Community of Faith in the process of disbanding; one collaborative arrangement moving toward amalgamation)

10-12 Communities of Faith that are now exploring or actively engaged in collaborative ministry conversations

Approximately 50 Pastoral Charges have been involved in a pastoral relations process within the past year (profile and/or search and/or change in ministry time); some completed; some are still in process.

73 Pastoral Charges/ 83 Communities of Faith received Pastoral Charge Supervision with 14 lay people and 39 ministry personnel assuming the role of Pastoral Charge Supervisor (6 of those Pastoral Charges have Candidates; 1 Minister in the Admission Process)

45 Ministry Personnel in full-time ministry employment during this pastoral year among those 3 from other denominations serving Ecumenical Shared Ministries; 6 in Collaborative arrangements making FTE; 1 in the Admission process; 1 Candidate; 2 Retired Supply)

36 Ministry Personnel in part-time employment including 4 Candidates; 19 Retired Supply; 18 were in halftime employment; 8 were more than halftime and 7 were less than halftime; 4 were in collaborative arrangements/more than one pastoral charge; 6 in Calls and the balance in appointments)

9 BIPOC Ministry Personnel serving in non-Indigenous Ministry settings



Shannon McCarthy
Executive Minister

I want to welcome everyone, and especially those who have never been to an in-person Prairie to Pine 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 to 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 that we are required to do – this is your Regional Council, and the work of the Church is ours together. We cannot do it without volunteers. I want to thank all of the committee, commission, and 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 the Co-Convenors Pat Bird and Erica Wittevrongel.

I also want to thank our incredibly dedicated staff who work for the Regional Council who bring and do their best every day: Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Minister; Cherry Abad, Office Administrator; Erin Acland, Keeper of the Archives; Heather Dootoff, Finance Administrator; Julie Graham, Justice & Communications Minister; Twila MacNair, Young Adults, and Youth Minister; and Chantal Winslow, Executive Assistant.

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

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.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils.

Twila MacNair
Coordinator, Young Adult
and Youth Ministries



Once again in 2022, I have had the pleasure of working with the Young Adult and Youth (YAAY) Committee, whose mandate it is to organize events for the young people in the Prairie to Pine Region.

Although Zeebu retreat happened online, we were excited to be able to offer other events in person again in 2022. It was wonderful to see new and returning youth connecting again face to face, making friends across communities; playing, worshipping, singing, and discovering their faith together. It was good to see young people learning and practicing leadership skills as they stepped in as Home Group Leaders, or moved onto Retreat Planning Teams, or tried out a coordinator role. It was great to see young people mentoring one another in leadership. It is hopeful to see national, regional, and local church committees and boards finding ways to welcome young people into leadership in this church. Let's be open to their visions of how to be the church going forward!

While advertising YAAAY events over the past year, I heard from several ministers and congregational youth allies that they needed more time to rediscover (post-pandemic shut-down) who and where the youth were in their communities of faith (CoFs) and re-engage the children locally before they would have some youth to send to regional events. If this is your struggle, please know that you're not alone, but even if you have a single youth, let's work together to try to connect them with the other lively and enthusiastic young people in the Prairie to Pine Region, so they will know they are not alone. Also if your CoF wants to offer some youth programming (such as confirmation, youth group, a retreat, an event...), but you feel either you don't have the numbers of youth on your own to make it worth the effort, or you feel that what you're doing could be of benefit to other youth, please reach out to me, and together we can try to promote it to youth beyond your CoF. There is no need to duplicate our efforts, if instead, we can share our resources. Why do something alone, if we can be even better together?!

I very much appreciate the work of the YAAAY Committee, and am happy to be able to support them in the fine work that they do for our region! For information on what they were up to in 2022, see the YAAAY report that has been submitted by the YAAAY Convenors, Julia Antonyshyn, and Lilja Best.

Respectfully submitted

Twila MacNair

Coordinator, Young Adult and Youth Ministries

Prairie to Pine Regional Council

