



PRAIRIE TO PINE

REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada



Prairie to Pine regional meeting 2024 update, and invitations to help our Region renew connections and support

18 March 2024

Dear members of Prairie to Pine Regional Council,

In this letter you will find an update on our 2024 Regional meeting, important reminders about planned opportunities for connecting, and a request that you help our Regional Council create more such opportunities.

Are we having a 2024 Regional meeting or not?

Yes: but it won't be in person. It will take place online October 10 and 17. More details are below.

Since the 2023 Regional meeting the Regional Executive has engaged in thoughtful discussion around Proposal #2, which asks the Regional Council to hold in-person regional meetings two years out of every three. [Click here to read the proposal](#). Gathering together, whether in person or online, is an important aspect of what it means to "do" and "be" church. This proposal highlighted this important element of who we are as people in the Prairie to Pine Region.

Unfortunately, meeting yearly in person as we did in the pre-COVID era is no longer feasible, due to greatly increased costs, financial constraints, and limits on staff time, especially for staff who serve three Regional Councils. This means that the Executive reached a consensus to take no action on Proposal #2.

This decision was taken with strong recognition that the concerns raised in the proposal were very important, and that this was a much-needed conversation. The movers, Rev Frances Flook and Brenda Shodin, are thanked for their proposal, and we ask you to read the rest of this letter carefully, as we continue the conversation about how to renew connection and collaboration across the Regional Council and between its many ministries.

Planning an open strategy conversation about connecting with each other

We recognize that all voices are important in the process of discerning how and when we gather, not only as a constituted Regional meeting, but in other ways and places. Therefore, in

the coming months an **online town hall event** will be scheduled, inviting opinions and suggestions on how we connect and re-connect. Keeping in mind that annual in-person business meetings are impossible financially, other options are necessary to maintain a strong connection to our faith siblings. As a church strongly rooted in volunteerism and grassroots initiatives, we seek your voice as we work together to address this need.

Be on the lookout in the weekly newsletter for more information in the following weeks. Your presence and your ideas are very much needed at this meeting.

[Regional meeting 2024 online this October](#)

Prairie to Pine will hold its regional meeting, on Zoom, **the evenings of October 10 and October 17**. Important business will include the election of Commissioners to General Council 45, to be held in Calgary August 7-13 2025. Your Nominating Committee will soon be sending out material to start the process of inviting discernment on these and other important roles. Please note that terms for the many generous people who serve Regional Council governance will be set to 1 July 2024, rather than the customary rise of annual meeting. As always, the meeting will include not only business but worship, discernment, and community too.

[Other opportunities to connect: present and future](#)

All are invited to share in the evening festivities celebrating the 2024 Retirees with the venue at Crestview United Church, accommodating one hundred people at the in-person gathering on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Celebration of Ministry Service has been confirmed for June 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at Dauphin: First United Church

All Regional events, and as many local ones as people post, are always in our calendar. [Click here to view Regional events](#), and [click here to view local events](#). You can use a List or Month format. Your events, clusters, gatherings, and more, are a welcome addition, [using this web form](#). As you'll see, there are always a lot of gatherings happening, from celebrating new covenants, young adult and youth events, Affirming check ins, and Cluster gatherings. All of these are important points of connection.

There is [Regional funding](#) to help you get these going, and the terms of that funding have deliberately been left very open, as we all get a better sense of needs and possibilities. Please keep this option in mind. You can [access all Clusters and Network information here](#). We thank those who are currently engaging in this type of gathering, and creating opportunities for the members of Prairie to Pine.

If you have questions, concerns, or thoughts about any of this information, please get in touch with the Executive through the Regional Council office (this helps us keep personal emails private when this letter is posted online). prairietopine@united-church.ca, Local (204) 233 – 8911, Toll Free 1-866- 860 – 9662

With gratitude for all of the many ways in which you help our church be the body of Christ,

Erica Wittevrongel, Chair, Prairie to Pine Regional Council, on behalf of the Executive.