

**Northern Spirit Executive Minutes
April 9, 2025 via Zoom**

EXECUTIVE PRESENT	Leigh Sinclair (Chair), Helen Reed (Past Chair), Donna Kline (Treasurer), Leslie Penny, Susan Silverthorne, Mervin Gallant, Paul Walfall, Marilyn Carroll, A quorum was present.
REGRETS	Lorraine Stewart
CORRESPONDING MEMBERS PRESENT	Jim Belliveau
STAFF PRESENT	Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister); Chloe Burns (Administrative Support); Chantal Winslow (Executive Assistant & Recording Secretary), Adam Hall (Pastoral Relations Minister);
CALL TO ORDER	Leigh called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.
APPROVAL OF AGENDA	We reviewed the agenda.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES 041-2024/2025	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the minutes of March 12, 2025 as distributed.
BUSINESS ARISING Clarification re: Hardisty-Hughenden Pastoral Charge Motion 042-2024/2025	It was agreed by consensus: That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the disbandment of Hardisty-Hughenden as a Pastoral Charge effective immediately, with each Community of Faith remaining open and functioning as individual Communities of Faith as Hardisty Pastoral Charge and Hughenden Pastoral Charge. To do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chloe will communicate this to Susan
CORRESPONDENCE Letter from Minister of Education	We received a response from the Minister of Education to our letter that was sent last month. Received for information.
NEW BUSINESS	
Centennial Celebration Swag Request	We received a request from a community of faith, asking if the region would be willing to place a bulk order for Centennial Swag so that we can save on shipping. It was decided that this would be a big undertaking. We are going to encourage communities of faith to speak with neighboring communities and order together.

To do:

* Chloe will put a note in the newsletter encouraging neighboring communities to order together

Lamont United

We received a request from Lamont United. They wanted somebody to attend and represent the region for their Centennial celebration.

Shannon is in Newfoundland and schedules are too crammed.

To do:

- Chloe to share link to the worship materials from GC in the Newsletter.
- Can Julie share the video that the regions are putting together?
- Leigh to make a written greeting to be read
- Susan will edit a video greeting – Shannon and Leigh will send videos. Adam might as well.

**General Council
Towards 2035
Discussion**

When GC45 meetings this summer, they have asked two reps from each regional council and the chair to stay two extra days to discuss the Towards 2035 Discussion.

To do:

- Leigh will reach out to commissioners, starting with those in rural spaces.

FINANCE

Donna presented us with the draft audited statement.

043-2024/2025

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the draft audited statement as presented.

To do:

- Chloe to post audited statements to the website separate from the Annual Meeting documents (2023 and 2024)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair

Leigh was able to attend the connect the dots event in Spruce Grove. Jordan Cantwell led them in a day discussing Evangelism.

Annual Meeting planning is going well. Leigh met with our theme speaker. We are going to really be encouraging small group discussions.

She received her itineraries for Newfoundland and Calgary.

Property

Jim reported. (attached)

**Incorporated
Ministries**

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the following:

044-2024/2025

a) Christian Youth Camps Incorporated o/a Camp Maskepetoon
...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada
approve the Christian Youth Camps Incorporated o/a Camp Maskepetoon 2024-
2025 Board of Directors

Kira Brunner
Mackenzie Couper
Wendy Dyjur
Ben Gregg
Leanna Heckel
Amanda Komarniski
Kevin McBean
Joe Marchand
Jetta Paradis
Kenneth Sage
Shirley Simpson

This is based on the draft minutes of Annual General Meeting of November 26, 2024, the 2024 board member approval form, contact list provided, and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

b) G U C Playschool Society
...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada
approve the G U C Playschool Society 2024-2025 Board of Directors

Amanda Burzynski
Darrel Howell
Catherine Kinsman
Karen Ollen
Doug Weir

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting minutes of January 14, 2025, the 2024 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.

**Camp Hardesty Non
Compliance**

Camp Hardesty is current in non compliance. They are not sending in the documents that are required.

We will reach out to them again, hopefully a new contact, and if that doesn't work, Shannon will draft a strongly worded letter.

To do:

- Helen is going to find a contact for them and pass it along to Shannon

**Nominations
045-2024/2025**

It was agreed by consensus:
That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the appointment of
AJ Janewski to the Affirm Committee effective immediately.

To do:

- **Chloe will send communication to AJ and the committee**

Listening

We had asked Lorraine and Donna to connect with 10 communities of faith and spend some time “listening”. This is still in process. They have made contact with 9 out of 10 of the communities of faith that were chosen.

Other

STAFF REPORTS

Executive Minister

There’s a lot of GC stuff happening – Shannon is on the business committee. We held a tri-region general council commissioner training. Working on putting together a video from the regional council explaining our proposal. In process of writing the reports from the three regional councils.

A lot of property conversations. Trying to figure out what they want to do with their properties.

Started conversations regarding a sabbatical.

Annual meeting, celebration of ministries, centennial celebrations. On the road lots in May.

Job description for half time staff person for youth from Pam Evans. Do we want to empower Shannon the go ahead to start that process? **Yes**

To do:

- **Make note that our new staff position could include some property pieces**

**Pastoral Relations
Minister**

Fort St. John had approved an appointment for an admissions minister. Been working on the immigration. The applicant has been denied twice by Immigration Canada. Required a Min income of \$15k more than what they could offer. Sadly, we had to end that appointment.

Garneau and McDougal have appointed an interim minister: Dirk Jessen. It is a 6 month appointment.

We have accepted a pastoral relationship change with Rev. Linda McLaren and Jasper United Church. The region is paying her salary up until the end of June. She will be in ministry until Easter Sunday but then on the books until July 1.

When our structure changed, Presbytery oversight visits changed to reading annual reports and communicating with those communities. However, we receive very few

annual reports. The committee is going to develop a visioning plan to start the in person visits again. This will mean a visit to every community once every 3 years.

046-2024/2025

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the disbandment of Pickardville United Church, effective December 31, 2024

Adam presented us the "Provisional Call Policy for Admission, Commissioning, Ordination or Recognition". Almost identical to the Prairie to Pine and Living Skies policies. Needs to still be updated with the 2025 references but everything else stay the same.

047-2024/2025

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive approve the amended "Provisional Call Policy for Admission, Commissioning, Ordination or Recognition" policy.

**Justice &
Communications**

Julie sent us a report (attached)

ONGOING BUSINESS

Moderator Events

On May 3 the Mod's Flourishing Workshop is taking place at Southminster-Steinhauer. You can register through general council website. Chloe has also put the link in the Newsletter.

On May 4 the moderator will be at Athabasca College. Worship service begins at 10 am. Following the Worship service, they will be going to Amber Valley.

**Annual Meeting
Planning**

Planning is going well. Very accessible space at Riverbend United Church.

We are going to be in home groups rather than table groups.

Friday night will be a public event where we will hear from trans folk and their allies.

Michael Blair is joining us and will be preaching on Sunday


NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be May 14, 2025

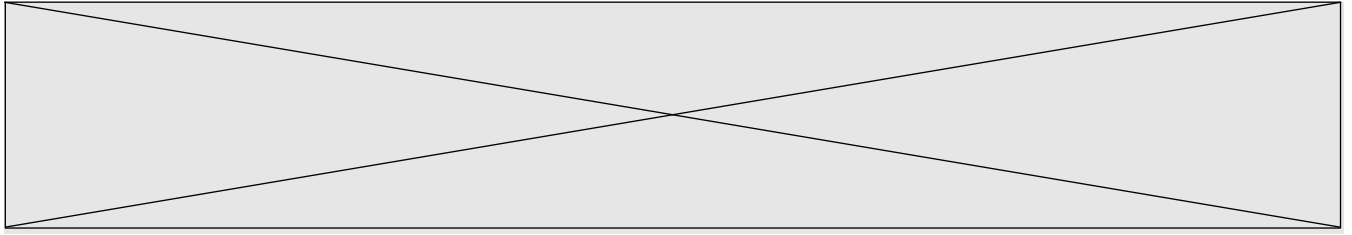
ADJOURNMENT



Leigh Sinclair – Chairperson



Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister



Properties Commission

Report to NSRC Exec April 09, 2025

The Properties Commission met on April 4. We welcomed Morgan Lawrence of Stony Plain to our Commission as a new member.

MOTIONS MADE

(previously via email)

That the Northern Spirit Regional Council Property Commission approve the request of Jasper United Church to offer the Municipality of Jasper the temporary use of Jasper United Church lands as the Municipality sees fit, until the spring of 2027, and return it to Jasper United Church in a usable state for development. Carried

On Jasper's request to engage in discussions for alternate land use for senior's housing: We had an intense discussion with members of the Jasper United Church regarding their prioritised desire to enter discussion with housing association and fast track development if possible for seniors housing. We indicate that we gave them sanction for this request to enact discussions, BUT under the following stipulations:

- That have at least 3 trustees with no conflict of interests (IE looking for future housing in any development)
- That they forward all correspondence between themselves, Parks Canada, The Town of Jasper and developers past and present.

MOTION

That the Northern Spirit Region Property Commission give permission to the Trustees of Jasper United Church to move forward with negotiations on use of a portion of their church land, held in trust, for the potential use of not-for-profit senior housing. Carried.

CEMETERY SURVEY

- We have sent a letter to the President of the Alberta Municipalities with the intent of gaining visibility of our survey, and we've received nil response.
- We were able to secure a current database on UCC cemeteries from the AB Government's Minister of Red Tape Reduction, and have been provided a form for future submission for their records.
- We are engaging with Uwin Church and the Elk Island PC to assist with their efforts, as required, to sort out the legacy and the way forward for their cemetery East of Lamont. No updates. It should be noted this is possibly a Pastoral Relations issue, and will advise on all future correspondence.

The Commission will meet again on April 10th to discuss a motion regarding the MacDougall sale disbursements, and details of rental agreement with new owners going forward.

Submitted April 9, 2025 by Jim Belliveau, Properties Commission rep

Report to Northern Spirit Executive April 2025 JG

There's lots going on. I'll use the newsletter text below to highlight first some shared national and regional work on the election, and then two major commitments the Affirming Committee is working with.

Other work has included:

A major learning gathering on Feb 27 on unmarked burials, which had 60 people attend, and follow up that continues;

An upcoming Western Intercultural Ministries event on Black history and presence in the United Church;

Working with Leigh and two members of Pilgrim UC on a short video for General Council explaining the "why" of the proposal brought to the Region asking for an apology for the United Church's and its predecessor denominations' roles in enslavement and its continuing impacts;

Continued 100th anniversary updates and beginning work on 1 minute Regional videos for the St John's national service;

Upcoming work on encouraging Northern Spirit participation in May 5, Red Dress Day, and June 21, National Indigenous Peoples' Day; as well as Pride Month.

Federal election campaign, now through April 27

This is an important moment for discerning our collective response to pressing social issues, including widespread polarization and disinformation. We as a church have positive ideas, principles, and concerns to share with all candidates. A [shared regional and national United Church resource](#) is now posted, so please have a look.

A poster for an "Affirming Donut Meeting". The top section has a purple background with the title "AFFIRMING DONUT MEETING!" in yellow. Below this is a row of four donuts: a plain one, one with white sprinkles, one with a smiley face, and one with pink sprinkles. The middle section has an orange background with the text: "All Affirming and curious ministries and all affirming people welcome. We're focusing on the rural and smaller town circle all around Edmonton this time. (Edmonton, your timbit time will come!)" Below this is another row of three donuts: one with orange sprinkles, one with blue and white sprinkles, and one with pink and white sprinkles. The bottom section has a purple background with the text: "SATURDAY 10 MAY 2025, 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM" and "SOUTHMINSTER-STEINHAUER UNITED CHURCH". At the very bottom, on an orange background, it says: "Hosted by the Northern Spirit Affirm Team. This is a time for connecting, mutual support, some planning, and lunch (likely with doughnuts. Details, registration, address: https://tinyurl.com/y8at4tt8)". There are two small logos on the right side of the bottom orange section: one is a circular logo with a cross and a heart, and the other is a rainbow-colored logo with the text "Affirm | Affirming | Affirming".

AFFIRMING DONUT MEETING!

All Affirming and curious ministries and all affirming people welcome. We're focusing on the rural and smaller town circle all around Edmonton this time. (Edmonton, your timbit time will come!)

SATURDAY 10 MAY 2025, 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM
SOUTHMINSTER-STEINHAUER UNITED CHURCH

Hosted by the Northern Spirit Affirm Team.
This is a time for connecting, mutual support,
some planning, and lunch (likely with
doughnuts. Details, registration, address:
<https://tinyurl.com/y8at4tt8>

Affirming Donut Meeting, May 10, in person at Southminster-Steinhauer United Church, with possible hybrid option

All Affirming and affirming-curious / supportive ministries and all affirming people welcome. Your ministry can send as many people as you like! We're focusing on the rural and smaller town circle all around Edmonton this time- imagine a big circle around 90 minutes drive wide all around Edmonton. Rural, small town, and bigger town, come join us. (Edmonton, your timbit time will come, we promise!) Come for support, visiting, planning Affirming work together, and lunch. Hosted by the Northern Spirit Affirm Committee. [All details and updates are on the Regional site.](#)

(Continued)



From the heart

Lived experiences of Alberta's legislation targeting transgender people

Join us for personal stories of the impacts of Bills 26, 27, and 29 on Albertan athletes, teachers, parents, children, and church members. Learn together how we can take action in support of gender-diverse people. Sponsored by Northern Spirit Regional Council of the United Church of Canada.

Friday May 30, 7:00PM @ Riverbend United Church, Edmonton

<https://tinyurl.com/uc5h8dwX>



From the Heart: understanding the impacts of AB's anti-transgender laws, 30 May, 7:00-9:00PM, Riverbend United Church and online

Join us for personal stories of the impacts of Bills 26, 28, and 29 on Albertan athletes, teachers, parents, children, and church members. Learn together how we can take action in support of gender-diverse people. Behind the headlines and debates, what is happening for transgender people in Alberta? This isn't only a legal and legislative matter; it has lived impacts on people's bodies, minds, hearts, and spirit. We thank our speakers, who are joining us to describe the impact on their lives. We invite you to come with an open mind and heart, and hear their stories, no matter your opinion on this legislation. [Please see all details here, and watch for further updates.](#)