

On January 1, 2019...

... structural changes approved by the 43rd General Council will be taking place across The United Church of Canada. These changes realign The United Church of Canada into local, regional, and national levels, called Communities of Faith, Regional Councils, and the General Council.¹

If you are located...

- north of Highway 13 in Alberta,
- south of the Arctic Circle,
- west of Nunavut & Saskatchewan,
- east of the Yukon border & the Northern Rockies in British Columbia,

...then you are now in the Northern Spirit Region of The United Church of Canada.

It goes without saying that the Region has a lot of geography, encompassing:

- 1,567,442 km² (at least),
- 4 Climate Regions: Tundra, McKenzie, Boreal Forest, Prairies,
- 2 Continental Watersheds: Arctic Ocean and Hudson's Bay,
- 4 Numbered Treaties: 6, 8, 11, 10,
- 3 Provinces, 1 Territory

Sharing life on this land we are at least...

- 135 preaching points,
- 95 Communities of Faith,
- 6 church camps,
- 1 United Church affiliated hospital,
- 85 Ministry Personnel

...plus incorporated and other associate ministries, who are collectively called to be a blessing, commissioned to be the church, and challenged to live the gospel within the Region.

¹ For more information and for updates and news: <https://www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/remit-implementation>

A Prayer for the New Year

Guiding Spirit,
as people of the way,
we are called to be a
blessing,
commissioned to
be the church,
and challenged to
live the gospel.

Today we boldly
leave the paths
that have brought
us this far, to discover new ways of doing
the work of Jesus.

We give thanks for the way behind us and
the faithful who have led us this far in
Congregations, Presbyteries, Conferences
and General Council.

We give thanks for your way around us and
the many faithful companions in ministry
who start this New Year together in the
Northern Spirit Region.

We give thanks for the way before us and the
faithful who are willing to clear
challenging paths and seek new
possibilities for Communities of Faith,
Regions and General Council.

May we commit ourselves to following your
lead so that our work will support future
generations, who, with your help, will do
infinitely more than we could imagine.

Amen.

Source: *Sankofa: Looking Back, Moving Forward, A service for church courts that are closing in this time of transition*, www.united-church.ca.



Welcome To The Northern Spirit Region

The United Church of Canada



Questions & Answers

How does this change affect my church?

In one sense, the life of your Community of Faith will continue as it normally does when the New Year begins, unless something is happening that requires you to immediately connect with the Regional or General Council. On the other hand, you will need to begin participating in the new structure by electing a representative from your Community of Faith to attend the inaugural meeting of the Northern Spirit Regional Council.

What is the Regional Council?

The Regional Council is the United Church decision-making body within the Northern Spirit Region. It makes decisions that affect the common life of the United Church across the whole region.

Who makes up the Regional Council?

Elected representatives from Communities of Faith, plus Ministry Personnel in the Region, basically make up the Regional Council.

When does the Regional Council meet?

The Regional Council meets at least annually. The annual meeting may be a meeting of the entire Regional Council or of the Executive of the Regional Council, as determined by the Regional Council.

Does every Community of Faith have to participate in the Regional Council?

Yes, every Community of Faith will in fact be in covenant with the Northern Spirit Regional Council.

What does being in covenant mean?

Being in covenant is about intentional participation with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the Community of Faith *and* the whole church.

When does the Northern Spirit Regional Council plan to meet for the first time?

The first meeting of the Regional Council will be May 23-26, 2019 in Valleyview, Alberta.

Who is making decisions until then?

A Transition Commission appointed by General Council has been meeting regularly since August, 2018. This Transition Commission becomes the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive as of January 1, 2019. It is charged with ensuring that basic operational requirements are in place at the start of the New Year: staffing, a 2019 budget, decision-making structures, a Regional Meeting Planning Committee, nominations for elections held at the inaugural meeting.

Since you brought up the budget, what about those assessments anyway?

There is a new annual assessment process for congregations as of January 1, 2019, administered by General Council. Funds from these assessments will be directed to Regions to form the basic annual budget for Regional Council work.

Can the Regional Council make additional assessments of its own?

Yes, but the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive is not planning any extra assessments of congregations in 2019.

Regional Staffing

EXECUTIVE OFFICE STAFF

(Shared With Two Other Regions)

Shannon McCarthy,
Executive Minister

Jamie McKay,
Program Assistant

Heather Dootoff,
Financial Administration

REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

(Located In Edmonton)

Earl Reaburn,
Pastoral Relations Minister

Kathy Jackson,
Administrative Support

Contact Us

Northern Spirit Regional Council
13535 122 Avenue Northwest,
Edmonton, AB T5L 2V7

Telephone: 780-435-3995
Fax: 780-438-3317
Toll free: 1-866-860-9662
northernspirit@united-church.ca

A Northern Spirit website is under development. The Alberta & Northwest Conference website will be maintained until the new website launches.