

Living Skies Regional Council (LSRC) Gathering
May 25 — May 28, 2024
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan
“Discerning a Good Path Together”

The 2023 LSRC Gathering was held in Prince Albert from May 25 to May 28. Calvary United Church was our host.

The gathering was filled with uplifting music and very meaningful worship opportunities. The most moving worship was the Memorial Worship service where we acknowledged the passing of individuals within LSRC and those who retired from ministry.

DAY 1

The first day presented two Listen and Discuss sessions:

1. Intro to Remit re Autonomous Indigenous Organization within The United Church;
2. A proposal to becoming an Affirming Regional Council

DAY 2

The second day provided the United Church delegates an opportunity to participate in a “The Heart of the Youth” Pow Wow. This was my first ever Pow Wow and I thoroughly enjoyed the colourful regalia and dances performed. The Pow Wow began with “The Grand Entry” of flag bearers and invited dancers accompanied with drum circles. A delicious lunch of beef stew, bannock and sweets were available. Over 3,500 area school children were in attendance.

In the afternoon we had the privilege of having Cadmus Delorme, former chief of Cowessess First Nation as our guest speaker. A highly educated and articulate young man, he led us through the history of Indigenous peoples and their relationship to the “Western” peoples. Chief Cadmus invited us all to put down our shields so we can learn. So many of our conflicts are rooted in not understanding what is underneath the emotions and positions we each hold. We need to center our relationship and try to understand one another and listen deeply to each other in order to work through these conflicts. Our biggest barrier to overcome is ignorance. An inspiring leader, Chief Cadmus, left us with hope, love and joy and the reminder that hard work and having hard, honest conversations will lead to reconciliation.

DAY 3

The third day dealt with the reports of Executive Minister; Chair of LSRC; General Council; Finance; Pastoral relations Justice & Communication.

It also dealt with the following remit:

Category 3 Remit

Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization

As authorized by the 44th General Council, in 2022: Between March 15, 2023 and March 31, 2024, every regional council and each pastoral charge’s governing body

will be asked to approve an amendment to the Basis of Union of The Manual establishing an autonomous Indigenous Church structure. An amendment to the Basis of Union requires a category 3 remit.

THE QUESTION:

Does the regional council/pastoral charge agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect:

- a. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
- b. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union; and
- c. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

This remit was passed by the LSRC Gathering. This remit will need to be dealt with by the leadership of each Community of Faith within LSRC. The deadline for this is March 31, 2024. More information can be found at this [link](https://generalcouncil44.ca/council/remits/remits-1-establishing-autonomous-national-indigenous-organization): <https://generalcouncil44.ca/council/remits/remits-1-establishing-autonomous-national-indigenous-organization>.

Another proposal was dealt with:

Becoming an Affirming Regional Council

PROPOSAL 1

The Living Skies Regional Council (LSRC) Affirming Task Group moves that the Living Skies Regional Council applies to become an Affirming Region; endorses the Regional Affirming Statement; directs the Executive Council of Living Skies Regional Council and the Executive Minister to complete the process of accreditation with Affirm United / S'Affirmer Ensemble (AUSE); and plans a public, intentional, and explicit (PIE) celebration for the 2024 Annual Gathering of LSRC.

PROPOSAL 2

The Living Skies Regional Council Affirming Task Group moves that the Living Skies Regional Council disbands the Task Group and creates an ongoing Affirming Committee to carry out the continuing journey of living into being an Affirming Region.

Both proposals were passed unanimously.

LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL

AFFIRMING STATEMENT

May, 2023

Living Skies Regional Council recognizes the diversity of God's creation and encourages the full and equitable participation of all people in our ministries.

We value the complete spectrum of human diversity which includes (but is not limited to) sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds, mental and physical ability, spiritual beliefs, and all definitions of family.

We make a public, intentional, and explicit commitment to sharing our faith, gifts, and resources to live out God's call for love, compassion, and justice.

As an Affirming Ministry, we will support ongoing, engaging, educational processes for Communities of Faith and other ministries to understand what it means to become affirming, as well as offering encouragement and inspiration to existing Affirming Ministries.

We honour those who walked this path before us and celebrate the opportunity to journey further.

A banquet honoring the retirees and Ordinands was held Saturday evening.

DAY 4

The last day of the LSRC Gathering was the Service of Praise held at Calvary United Church. Two ordinands, Sarah Giles and Minhyuk Hwang were ordained. The Service of Praise was boisterous, uplifting and well attended.

The Docket of the 2023 LSRC Gathering can be found on the LSRC website at <https://livingskiesrc.ca/governance-admin/regional-gathering/>.

The chairperson of the Executive Council of LSRC is Darrell Reine.

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