

Minutes of the Fifth General Meeting

Chinook Winds Regional Council

Theme – At the Crossroads

The United Church of Canada

May 4-7, 2023



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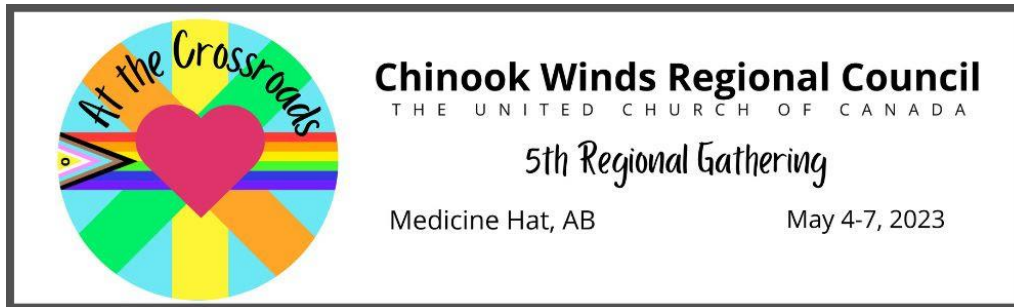
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The United Church of Canada

May 4-7, 2023



First Day: 3:00 p.m. Thursday, May 4, 2023

1. **Welcome:** Joanne Anquist, Presiding Officer of the Chinook Winds Regional Council, welcomed delegates to the meeting. She thanked the rEvolve music group comprised of Christopher Geffen, Josh, and Gord. She introduced Treena Duncan who is our Executive Minister.
2. **Authority:** Joanne Anquist opened the meeting with the following words: “Pursuant to the authority granted to the Executive at the previous General Meeting of Chinook Winds Region of the United Church of Canada, I declare that the 5th General Meeting is now open to conduct business properly before it to the glory of God.” A quorum was present with 150 delegates in attendance.
3. **Land Acknowledgement:** Joanne said *“that it is with a sense of gratitude, responsibility, and solidarity that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples.*
We are gathered today in Medicine Hat, called Saamis in the Siksika language, a gathering place of First Nations since time immemorial. This is treaty territory, and we are treaty people. Our ancestral church is a signatory to Treaty 7, and we recognize the relationships and responsibilities that come through treaty making.
The Chinook Winds Region is located on Treaty 4, Treaty 6 and Treaty 7 territories, and Metis Nation of Alberta Region 3, home of the Stoney Nakoda First Nation, including

the Bearspaw, Chiniki and Goodstoney-Wesley First Nations, the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), including the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations, and the Tsuu' tina First Nation.

We acknowledge the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit whose footsteps and guardianship have marked these lands for generations and affirm our commitment to the principles and actions of Reconciliation.”

Treva Eagle, from the Samson Cree Nation of Treaty 6 welcomed the delegates and held a smudging ceremony for all to ground us to her ancestral lands. She is the child of residential school survivors who experienced the trauma of separation, loss, and abuse.

4. **Worship:** Opening worship was led by Rev. Trevor Potter with the help of the youth delegates. Scripture was from Jeremiah 6:16a speaking about crossroads. Rev. Cameron Trimble gave the reflection on the new world one can see from up in the air in a plane. She talked about the decline and changes in our Christian denominations. She reminded us that through this time that we are not alone, God is with us.
5. **Business:** Rev. Taylor Croissant introduced himself as the chair of the Business Committee. He thanked Barb Lough, OhWang Kwon, Kathy Yamashita, and Treena Duncan who formed the Business Committee. He reviewed some housekeeping issues and introduced some guests in the court. He reminded us about Holy Manners and then reviewed the three-phase decision making process.
He presented Order Paper 1

Order paper 1: Constituting the Court and Organizing Business

Moved by Taylor Croissant, seconded by OhWang Kwon

1. That the 5th Annual General Meeting of the Chinook Winds Regional Council be held on May 4-7, 2023.
2. The roll of the 5th Annual General Meeting of Chinook Winds Regional Council shall consist of those members of Chinook Winds Regional Council who register prior to 5:00 p.m., Thursday May 5, 2023. Those arriving after that time shall not be included on the roll.
3. The bar of the council be established as Wesley Hall of Fifth Avenue-Memorial United Church, Medicine Hat, and the Zoom™ digital meeting room assigned and shared with registered delegates.
4. That Joanne Anquist, Presiding Officer, be affirmed as the meeting chair, Kathy Yamashita as recording secretary, and that the Business Committee consist of

the following: Taylor Croissant (chair), OhWang Kwon, Barb Lough, Kathy Yamashita, and Treena Duncan (executive minister, ex officio)

- 5.** That voting be conducted via Simply Voting, and the Business Committee be empowered to tabulate and report results of votes.
- 6.** That attending candidates for ministry not in an appointment be granted full voting rights. Regional Council staff, General Council guests, and invited presenters, be appointed as corresponding members of the court.
- 7.** Subject to such changes as the Business Committee might make and announce, the agenda as printed shall be the working basis for the order of business.
- 8.** The rules of order to facilitate the formulation of motions and discussion of matters raised in business shall follow The Manual, 2023: Appendix – 3. Meeting Procedures, or for matters not covered, Bourinot’s Rules of Order.
- 9.** At the discretion of the Presiding Officer, speakers can be limited to two minutes each.
- 10.** Proposals directed to the Annual General Meeting must be received by the Business Committee prior to 5:00p.m. Thursday, May 4, 2023. The Business Committee may recommend editing or clarification before the proposal comes to the floor. Proposals dealing with matters not noted on the agenda shall be dealt with in an order as determined by the Business Committee. Proposals that are alike may be grouped together at the discretion of the Business Committee.
- 11.** All unfinished business shall be referred to the Regional Council Executive.
- 12.** The Regional Council Executive Minutes are received for information and included as part of the Record of Proceedings. (The Manual, C.3.1.4)
- 13.** The reports distributed in the agenda booklet, the interim financial reports, and the report of the Nomination Committee be received for information.
- 14.** The minutes of the 4th Annual General Meeting of The Chinook Winds Regional Council held May 5-8, 2022, be received for adoption.
- 15.** Requests to withdraw from the meeting shall be submitted to, considered, and granted by the Business Committee. Members leaving before 5:00pm on Saturday, May 7 without the consent of the Business Committee shall not be

entitled to have travel expenses paid.

16. The plenary portions of the agenda will be recorded within the Zoom™ platform and made available on the Chinook Winds Regional Council website.

17. Following the adjournment of this meeting, Chinook Winds Regional Council confers the powers of the court, both regular and emergent, to the Executive Committee until the next Annual General Meeting of the Regional Council.

MOTION CARRIED

6. **Explanation of Logo: Rev. MiYeon Kim** explained the inclusive nature of the colors of the logo that was created for this Regional Gathering which represents the diverse crossroads which we face together at this moment. The orange line represents the road toward reconciliation between the Indigenous and Settler church, and our commitment to becoming an Intercultural denomination. The yellow line represents the Intergenerational crossroad. The green line represents the environmental crossroad in the mist of the climate crisis. Finally, the rainbow line with chevron represents the crossroad of living into being a Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Affirming Regional Council.

Our diversity brings vigor and health to the church, and we find our unity in Jesus Christ. In our time together, we will encourage one another in the bond of love that is the Holy Spirit.

7. **Introduction of Rev. Cameron Trimble:** Treena Duncan introduced our theme speaker, Cameron Trimble who talked about some of the topics that she will address this weekend.

On March 11, 2011, a magnitude-9 earthquake happened on the east coast of Japan which disrupted GPS efficacy. Cameron said that the church is presently living during a similar catastrophic change. She showed a graph of declining worship attendance among American congregations between 2000-2020. This was before the pandemic and since then the attendance has continued to decrease. In addition, the age of clergy is increasing.

Cameron said that there has never been a better time for innovation in church life. The impulse is to hold on stronger to how things have always been. Traumatic fatigue creates breaks in the ability to respond to the trauma. We need to name this in order to heal and make responsible decisions.

Second Day: May 5, 2023, acknowledging Red Dress Day for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

8. **Welcome and Indigenous Land Acknowledgement:** Joanne Anquist welcomed the delegates and made housekeeping announcements. She read a history of McDougall United Church written by Barry Clayton. It included the work of Robert Rundle who ministered to the Indigenous people. Then Tony Snow gave a history of the experience of the Indigenous people and their development of churches in Alberta.
9. **Worship:** Rev. Kim Holmes-Younger and Trevor Potter led us in morning worship speaking to Corinthians 12:12-26.
10. **General Council Guest:** Treena Duncan introduced Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu our visitor from General Council who leads the Church in Mission unit. He spoke about the helping influence of the United Church in the world.
11. **Policy Governance:** Treena Duncan explained the Policy Governance model of administration. She said that it is the work of the Executive to set policy and then the Chinook Region Staff does the work within a given framework. The Executive has been working with Dan Hotchkiss, a Governance Consultant. He has emphasized the need for continual education into the future.

She said that Tammy Allen, the Chair of Nominations is hoping to hear from those who are interested in serving on the Regional Council Executive Committee.
12. **Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Council- Listening Phase.** Taylor Croissant and Treena Duncan adjudicated this portion as delegates asked questions about the proposal.
13. **Proposal #1: Supporting Leadership of Adolescents and Youth (SLAY) – – Listening Phase.** Chris Mah Poy and members of the youth presented this proposal and answered questions.
14. **The Art of Being Lost:** Rev. Cameron Trimble said that we have become aware of the ability of humans to damage their only home. The degree of optimism or pessimism about any issue will affect our appreciation and understanding of that issue.

Cameron said that the way we think about the future informs our present actions. She asked us to describe the world in 2070 and describe a snapshot of this world. There was table discussion and plenary sharing. Then we were asked what we envision that the

church will look like in the world of the future. She asked us what our desirable future for Spirituality would be in 2070.

One of the delegates said that Deep Seated Faith is what will carry her through to the future. Another said not to worry about the future, but to love and live the faith now.

15. **Memorial:** We heard the names of those people of our Region who have passed away in the past year and remembered them with gratitude. A video was presented.

Rev. George Grant Scott	1932-2022
Rev. Don Lewis	1927-2022
Rev. Dr. Austin Fennell	1933-2022
Rev. Joyce Sasse	1940-2023
Rev. Wayne Lewry	1948-2023
Rev. Brian Pilmore Jackson	1930-2023

16. **Commemoration of Red Dress Day:** Tony Snow said that the red jingle dress on the stage was sewn by his sister, Teresa Snow. The red dress tradition began in Winnipeg as a statement about the callous disregard by those in authority, of missing and murdered indigenous women. He introduced his aunt, Glenda and sister, Trudy who led us in indigenous prayer. They are both licensed worship leaders. They said that we must never forget, we must say their name and we must seek justice. There are 93 Indigenous women in Alberta who are missing or murdered. Today there is a gathering at the Medicine Hat College for Red Dress Day.

17. **Introduction of the Chinook Winds Staff:** Our Executive Minister, Treena Duncan expressed her gratitude to be a part of our Region. She was especially thankful for her recent sabbatical and for the hard work of the staff in her absence.

- Karen Medland: Pastoral Relations and Community Support
- Shelley Den Haan: Communications and Pastoral Support.
- Mauricio Araujo: Assistant to the Executive Minister.
- Chris Mah Poy: First Third Ministry animator.
- Michelle Slater: Director of Leadership and education
- Jeffrey Simmins: Hospital Chaplaincy Coordinator
- Tony Snow: Indigenous Ministry
- Jes Beckerley: Half time assistant to the Pastoral Relations Minister and Leadership
- Joel Den Haan: Property and Community of Faith strategist.
- Tim Nethercott: Campus Ministry YYC
- Mary Nichol: Camping Ministry (Pacific Mountain Region)

- Pam Evans: First Third Ministry Lead (Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Region)
- John den Hoed: Finance Officer
- Karen Norrie: Chinook Winds Region Bookkeeper

18. **Proposal 2: Get Rid of Greenhouse Gasses (GROGG):** listening phase

The proposal was read by a representative of youth delegates and questions from the court were answered.

19. **Proposals 1 and 2 discussion:** The table groups reviewed and discussed the two proposals which were brought forward by the youth delegates. Each table appointed someone to record the table group conversations. These comments were received by the Business Committee.

20. **Working Group for Property:** Sue Brodrick is the Chair of this Group. She introduced Barrie Clayton who spoke to us about property matters in the Region. Mary Axworthy and Mel Spence are the other members of this Group and Joel Den Haan is their staff support.

Barrie talked about some of the changes in church buildings in response to declining membership. He asked us to consider the question: “what is the role of the United Church in today’s society and what initiatives can the Community of Faith undertake to serve that role?” He said that it is estimated that every week, one community of faith of the United Church of Canada closes its doors.

21. **United Church Bookstore:** We viewed a video about www.UCRDstore.ca and new books.

22. **Revitalization Discussion:** The court was divided into groups to consider the issue of church revitalization from urban and rural perspectives and then clergy and lay. We met in rural/urban groups and then in lay/ministry groups. The following comments were made when the groups returned to plenary.

What might be some effective strategies to revitalize our communities of was the best response that you heard in your group?

- Partnerships over rentals and collaborations over amalgamations.
- Experiment with new things.
- We need to find ourselves a quitting helper. Who will guide us to quit and pass the reins over to someone else.
- Bring children with young families to a nature kindergarten
- If you believe in a project, make sure you provide supplies to make a successful effort.

- Let things die if the passion was not there.
- Resurrection

What do you believe could be done at the Regional Council level to nurture these revitalization strategies?

- Engage more youth participation in Sunday Schools and so forth. Generate more programs that the youth can access.
- Trying to find a way to identify what is the connection between the community and the congregations. Build partnerships which would empower us to work together. Ministry Personnel need to be trained to be community minded.
- Technology and cluster groups. Youth organizations could be connected particularly in rural groups.
- Lay people and volunteers could receive support and training of lay leaders in worship in the church to assist the minister.
- Support from the Region to celebrate for the good things that we are doing, not just that things will be hard.

23. **Request for Nominations:** Treena said that her office is planning for next year's Chinook Winds Annual General Meeting. It will be in Calgary at MacDougall United Church. She hopes for nominations of people who are willing to serve on Chinook Winds Regional committees which include:

- Agenda and Planning
- Theme and Worship Committee
- Executive Committee: specifically, two ordered and one lay and one Indigenous
- Pastoral Relations: Watch for separate call for nominations
- Pastoral Relations Committees: Lay ministry working group and Ministry Support
- Property Committee: meets monthly.
- Affirming Ministry

Treena also reminded us that 45th General Council will be held in August 2025 in Calgary. We will require many local volunteers from Chinook Winds Region for this to be successful.

Third Day: May 6, 2023, Saturday

24. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement:** Joanne Anquist welcomed us and asked Tony Snow to bring a story of the Indigenous people in Alberta about the Medicine Stone

which fell from the sky. Joanne then told the story of her great-grandfather's immigration to Alberta as an indentured child and the history of her family's settlement on the land appropriated from the Indigenous people.

25. **Message from Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator of the United Church of Canada**
We watched a video message from the Moderator. She talked about Bold Discipleship, Deep Spirituality and Daring Justice as our North Star.
26. **Worship:** Rev. MiYeon Kim and Rev. Kim Holmes-Younger led us in worship assisted by the youth delegates and rEvolue on Acts 2. MyeongNam Park from Korea told his story of coming to our region as a student minister. He was attracted to the United Church of Canada theology which is strong on justice issues. The Korean delegates joined MiYeon in singing *Cast Your Nets*, a hymn which she had written. Rev. OhWang Kwon gave the benediction.
27. **Executive Report:** Joanne Anquist turned the chair over to Vicki McPhee who was the previous presiding officer, for this report.

Joanne then talked about the work of the Executive Committee which has been creating policies, procedures and bylaws. The Region is trying to be more proactive in supporting the Communities of Faith with a Consultancy Model so that ministry can adjust to our future. We are trying to look at the future for our Region and its people and to Deepen its Spirituality. She talked about a non-partisan response to the upcoming provincial election and the executive have written a "Politics of Jesus" series. She also talked about the attachment that we have to our church buildings.

She talked about having Safe Churches. She advised that every church should get a Narcan Kit and learn how to use it. The church should have good lighting.
28. **Leadershift:** Michelle Slater talked about Leadershift to support those who are leading and tending communities of faith. During the Covid lockdown, they provided information about holding worship electronically online. In two weeks, there will be an online workshop on how to thrive with part time ministry personnel. In October 27&28 there will be a workshop on dealing with conflict in our communities of faith to be held at Woodcliff United Church in Calgary. In September there will be a four-day workshop at High River United Church on Rural church. During lent in 2024 there will be a pilgrimage to Guatemala led by our Executive Minister.
29. **First Third Ministry:** Pamela Evans said that her portfolio has been listening to the comments from churches across Canada. Families with children are not returning to

church. Thus, we must reach out to the children in the communities to share the story of Jesus. We should create spaces for the children then and First Third Ministry is ready to consult in the process. Camping Ministry meets monthly on ZOOM with Mary Nichol. Promotional videos for each Camp have been produced by the Region. She talked about program offerings, and she invited delegates to be placed on the mailing list.

30. **Stewardship Support for Communities of Faith:** Vicki Nelson is our Region's Stewardship Animator. She lives in Regina. She can answer questions about stewardship, the United Church Foundation and Mission and Service. Contact vnelson@united-church.ca She said that there were 24.5 million dollars in donations to Mission and Service Fund in 2022.
31. **Remembering the Children:** Joanne Anquist introduced this initiative centred on the Red Deer Industrial School. We heard from Rev. Ross Smilie and Dr. Lyle Keewatin Richards who told this story of tragedy in a powerful slide show. The Remembering the Children Society is a model for community- based restorative justice.
32. **Reconciliation in Chinook Winds:** Tony Snow educated us about how reconciliation has come about in our denomination and in the Government of Canada. Grants have allowed a support movement through local churches to provide food and clothing to Indigenous people. He said that we need to continue to hear the Indigenous stories to bring us to a model of reparation.
33. **Global Partnership in Korea:** We heard from John Egger who has finished his work in Korea where he was the last United Church staff member assigned there, the last of 150 mission co-workers in Korea. Our denomination was important in bringing about democracy in South Korea by sending a staff member to be there with the PROK, to help them know that they were not alone in their struggle.
34. **Office of Vocation:** Brenda Fawkes says there are 13 full time staff at the Office of Vocation. Effectiveness, oversight, discipline and candidacy admissions are done by 160 elected volunteers. She said that her office intersects with the work of each of the Chinook Winds Region staff. There is work on standards for continuing education, collaborative ministries and mentorship program for the first five years of ministry where isolation in ministry is a struggle. She said that there are 12 people on the candidacy pathway in the Chinook Winds Region. There are 94 ministers who have been approved for membership in the United Church from another denomination, but they cannot find an appointment. Many of these people are from another country where English is not first language.

She introduced **Jerial Joseph (JJ) Soriano** who will be ordained tomorrow at the Celebration of Ministry Service. He addressed the court with a Tagalog greeting and talked about the auspiciousness of being ordained at a Conference where “At the Crossroads” is the theme. He is standing at his crossroads now and is feeling gratitude. At each of the crossroads in his past, he has had people who have encouraged and supported him.

35. **Retiree:** Rev. Ruth McArthur addressed the court in a video telling about her ministry. She favored us with an acapella performance of “What a Wonderful World”.
36. **Theme Speaker: Navigating Change.** Cameron Trimble said that it is difficult to navigate change but if we don’t make plans, someone else will make plans for us. Anxiety is a motivator which can effect change when the pain of NOT changing is greater than the pain of changing. The change has to be believable, inspiring and challenging. Transformation moves at the speed of trust which becomes earned over time. Absence of trust creates fracturing which can create new models. Following Covid, there is a problem with trust.

She said that there is an inability to grieve for the loss of normal before COVID. Only 50% of the people are returning to church.

- Lee Spice said that it is hurtful to discover that people are not returning because they do not need us.
- Joel Den Haan said that there is a great resistance to change, and many have a path dependency. Faith communities often have this lens of path dependency.
- There were many more questions and comments.

Her final statement was “You can always have your way if you have enough ways”.

37. **General Council 44 Report:** Vicki McPhee was a commissioner for the 44th General Council in 2022. She said that the proceedings are published on the United Church website. She uplifted Allan Buckingham who organized the business of the meeting through the year. Many of the proposals were left for the Executive of General Council. She said that at next year’s Chinook Winds Regional AGM we will need to elect the commissioners for the 45th General Council. She also lifted up the importance of volunteers at General Council.

She has recently returned from the West Bank as an Ecumenical Accompanier, and she is willing to bring a presentation about her experience.

38. **Nominations Report:** Tammy Allen thanked Chris Whittaker and Sue Brodrick for being on the nominations committee with her. She also expressed her gratitude for those who

let their names stand for committee appointments. She named the following persons for appointment to the Region Executive with new members names in Bold print:

Kim Holmes Younger – Calgary

David Holmes - Lacombe

Trudy Wesley – Morley

Joanne Anquist – Calgary - Presider

Allan Buckingham – Banff

Shauna Getz – Calgary

Elaine Taylor-Kerr – Calgary

Kathy Yamashita – Lethbridge

Taylor Croissant – Lethbridge

OhWang Kwon – Stettler

Anne Yates-Laberge – Calgary

Treena Duncan (Executive Minister)

There was a vote taken and the Presiding Officer reported that the slate has passed.

Tammy Allen thanked the members who are standing down from Executive Committee: Trevor Potter, Kevin Dorma and Marlene Lightning.

39. **Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization**

There were many comments from the court about the following Remit which begins with a preamble.

The 44th General Council met virtually between February 2022 and August 2022.

At that meeting, the General Council approved an amendment to the Basis of Union in *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada to establish an autonomous National Indigenous Organization. It also authorized a Category 3 Remit to test the will of the church with respect to this change.

The General Council's decision was in response to proposal [NIC-01: Restructuring of the Indigenous Church](#) from the National Indigenous Council, which named its vision of the two parts of the church (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) working side-by-side, and recommending the identification and removal of "all the structural barriers to developing and sustaining an autonomous Indigenous Church within The United Church of Canada". The way to remove these "structural barriers" is named in a proposal from the General Secretary, [GS-10: Living into Reconciliation](#), which asks the church to give pre-emptive remit approval for whatever the Indigenous Church determines in the future as the place it will have in the United Church, guided by the *Calls to the Church*—and without the need for further remit approvals.

This is a Category 3 Remit, and so requires a vote by every regional council and each pastoral charge's governing body. If a regional council or a pastoral charge does not register a vote, that is considered a vote against the proposal.

There is one question to be voted on, as follows.

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

- 1. 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**
- 2. 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**
- 3. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.**

There was a vote on Remit 1 and the Presiding Officer reported that the vote passed.

- Taylor Croissant reminded us that the Communities of Faith must vote on Remit 1 by March 21, 2024.

40. Proposal #1: SUPPORTING Leadership of Adolescents and Youth (SLAY)

There was debate on this motion.

Motion #1: Supporting Leadership of Adolescents and Youth (SLAY)

M/S Tamika Vogstad/ Rhondda Gower

Be it resolved that the Chinook Winds Regional Council of The United Church of Canada requires that at least 5% of the voting representatives at all general meetings be between 14 and 30 years of age in order to pass motions for decision.

CARRIED

41. **Motion # 2: Get rid of Greenhouse Gasses (GROGG).** There was debate on this motion.

Motion #2: Get Rid of Greenhouse Gasses (GROGG)

M/S Lindsay Veenstra/ Kamal Kennedy

Be it resolved that the Chinook Winds Regional Council performs an energy audit of emissions produced in the course of its work (including Regional Gatherings, staff travel, events), including buildings, transportation, and waste.

That the Chinook Winds Regional Council strongly encourages Communities of Faith to provide an energy audit to be included with their 2024 self-assessment/annual report provided to the Region.

That the Chinook Winds Regional Council reports on its carbon emissions and on all audits reported from Communities of Faith at the 2024 Regional Gathering.

CARRIED

42. **Courtesies:** Joanne Anquist expressed her gratitude to all of those made this Regional Gathering possible.
43. **Closing Worship:** Kim Holmes Younger led us in a closing worship, a time of renewal.

Sunday May 7, 2023: Celebration of Ministry Service

44. There was a joyous Celebration of Ministry Service held in the sanctuary of Fifth Avenue Memorial United Church in Medicine Hat, at the end of which, Joanne Anquist declared the adjournment of the Fifth Annual General Meeting of Chinook Winds Regional Council

SIGNATURE PAGE

CHINOOK WINDS REGIONAL COUNCIL



Rev. Joanne Anquist, Presiding Officer

Treena Duncan, Executive Minister