



Minutes of the Seventh General Meeting
Chinook Winds Regional Council
Theme – “Flourishing: Where Living Water Flows”
Meeting in Lacombe

May 8-11, 2025



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Theme – Flourishing: Where Living Waters Flow
The United Church of Canada

May 8-11, 2025



First Day: 3:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, 2025

1. **Welcome:** Joanne Anquist, Presiding Officer of the Chinook Winds Regional Council, welcomed delegates to the meeting. She introduced Treena Duncan, the Executive Minister for our Region.

2. **Land Acknowledgement:** Rev. Tony Snow and Marlene Lightning welcomed us to the Treaty Six Land, giving information about the history of indigenous people in the Lacombe area. Marlene comes from the Samson First Nation with a population of ten thousand people. She is a survivor of residential school as were three generations before her. She is blessed with many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Intergenerational trauma is affecting their communities in the form of addictions and mental illness. She hopes for a normal life for her people who have a hard time in the city because of racism and the culture differences. The United Church had a presence in the community of Maskwacis until the building burned down. Marlene is holding church in her house right now.

Tony said that this is important to hear because this is our host community, and these issues affect the indigenous people here.

3. **Worship:** Opening worship based on Ezekiel 47:1-12 was led by Karen Holmes, Marco Ste. Marie and the worship team. Shelley Den Haan related the history of some of the Union churches in Alberta. Our table groups talked about when we felt in our hearts that we were United Church people.

We remembered these ministers who were lost this past year:

- Rev. Brenda Fawkes, 1971-2024
- Rev David Denholm, 1949-2025
- Rev. Arij Langstraat, 1936-2025
- Rev. Catherine Brommel, 1948-2025
- Rev. Dr. Fran Hare, 1943-2025

4. **Authority:** Joanne Anquist opened the meeting with the following words: "Pursuant to the authority granted to the Executive at the Sixth General Meeting of Chinook Winds Region of the United Church of Canada, I declare that the 7th General Meeting is now open to conduct business properly before it to the glory of God." A quorum was present with 5% who were youth delegates. The total registration was 192 voting members with 11 voting youth (30 or under).

She introduced the Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne; Karen Medland; Cameron Fraser, and the Music team: Mark Green, Barb Myers, Cheryl Dennett; and deployed GC staff: Scott Reynolds, Vicki Nelson, Cari Copeman-Haynes, Charlene and Russell Burns.

5. **Business:** David Pollard introduced himself as the chair of the Business Committee. He reviewed some housekeeping issues and welcomed all those in the hall and those joining us online. He thanked those facilitating the online presentation and the technical team. He reminded us about Holy Manners and then reviewed the three-phase decision making process. He told us that there are no proposals to this meeting.

He presented Order Paper 1:

Order paper 1: Constituting the Court and Organizing Business

Moved by David Pollard and seconded by OhWang Kwon

Be it resolved:

1. That the 7th Annual General Meeting of the Chinook Winds Regional Council be held on May 8-11, 2025.
2. That the roll of the 7th 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 8, 2025. Those arriving after that time shall not be included on the roll.

- 3.** That the bar of the Council be established as the Memorial Centre in Lacombe, Alberta 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: David Pollard (chair), OhWang Kwon, Kathy Yamashita, Treena Duncan (executive minister, ex officio) and Mauricio Araujo as staff support.
- 5.** That voting be conducted via Simply Voting or show of hands 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.** That 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.** That the rules of order to facilitate the formulation of motions and discussion of matters raised in business shall follow The Manual, 2024: Appendix – 3, Meeting Procedures, or for matters not covered, Bourinot's Rules of Order.
- 9.** That at the discretion of the Presiding Officer, speakers can be limited to two minutes each.
- 10.** That proposals directed to the Annual General Meeting must be received by the Business Committee prior to 5:00p.m., April 15, 2025. 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.** That all unfinished business shall be referred to the Regional Council Executive.
- 12.** That 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.** That the reports distributed in the agenda booklet, the interim financial reports, and the report of the Nominations Committee be received for information.

14. That the minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting of The Chinook Winds Regional Council held May 2-5, 2024 be received for adoption.

15. That 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 10, 2025, without the consent of the Business Committee shall not be entitled to have travel expenses paid.

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

MOTION CARRIED

6. **Theme: “Hope is Productive”** Treena Duncan introduced our Moderator, Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne to the court. Carmen said that Rev. Cameron Fraser who is the General Council Director of Growth and Ministry Development, will co-facilitate this Flourishing workshop. Rev. Scott Reynolds introduced himself as a Growth Animator for Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regions.

- Cameron said that hope is productive when it creates a sense of purpose. Hope inspires creativity and strengthens social fabric and belonging. It catalyzes daring connections.
- Table groups were asked to discuss “what do you appreciate most when you think about your 8-year-old self, yourself now and your future self.”
- Rather than think about what we don’t want, we should focus on what we hope will happen.
- Scott talked about faithfulness in the midst of fear filled times. Most of us want to be faithful to our families and friends.
- Carmen talked about how brain science informs our flourishing. When we feel threatened, we can be cut off from our ability to find solutions.
- We were asked to think about where we are in our lives, above or below the line of curiosity, innovation and hopeful change.

7. Joanne Anquist recessed the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Second Day: May 9,2025

8. **Welcome:** Joanne Anquist reconvened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

9. **Campus Ministry:** We viewed a video about Campus Ministry work at Red Deer Polytechnic, University of Calgary and Mount Royal University. We were invited to financially support its mission.
10. **Worship:** Eva Biderman led us in worship with Annette Forer who is the chair of the board at Airdrie. Candles were lit to center us in worship. Tony Snow responded to the Territorial Land Acknowledgement. Ezekiel 47: 1-2 introduced us to Living Water. Eva talked about how church is not the building, but the people within. Every good-bye to a building can be an opportunity to change. Annette talked about the openness to change of Airdrie United Church.
11. **Theme: “Chaotic World”** Carmen Lansdowne talked about our response to the state of the world where unimaginable and unthinkable events happen often. We are struggling with reality e.g. Trump, freedom convoy, forest fires, rise of fascism, severe weather events, searching landfills, unmarked burial sites at former residential institutions. There is grief baked into the word, “unimaginable”. How do we respond to threat?
- During the rise of Covid-19 outbreak, the church leaders in Pacific Mountain Region were asked to avoid gathering in church buildings. Faith leaders had to learn the technology of online worship offerings. If we don't spend time thinking about the future, then we can be blind-sided by reality.
- Cameron Fraser asked us to ponder when the future will begin. The court did an exercise on the future of shoes.
12. **Business:** David Pollard said that he is perplexed because no proposals were presented to the Court. If business is the work about the body of the church, to which we are called, then on the other side there is the work of the soul, of inspiration and investigation.
- Perhaps there are no proposals because everything is fine. He asked the table groups to discuss and agree on one severe threat to the church. Many threats were identified, and everything is not fine. As people feel overwhelmed, they may not have the energy or experience to turn worries into proposals for action.
- First Third Ministry delegates modelled a sample proposal process. We practised the Listening Phase, Discussion Phase and Decision Phase.
- He reminded the delegates of their duties. They should report to their Community of Faith, the decisions of the Annual Meeting. They could also consider nominations to a standing committee. They should act as a liaison between their community of faith to the staff and executive of the Chinook Winds Region.

MOTION: Order paper # 2
M/S David Pollard/ OhWang Kwon

Be it resolved that the powers of the Annual General Meeting of the Chinook Winds Regional Council be transferred to the executive committee following the rise of this meeting until the convening of the next Annual General Meeting.

CARRIED

13. **Candidate for Moderator:** Rev. John Pentland was interviewed by Joanne Anquist so that the delegates could know him better. John initiated an M&S fundraising campaign for our Regional Meeting and we were invited to contribute during the meeting.
14. **Western Intercultural Ministry Network:** Kathy Yamashita said that this network is committed to a fully inclusive and intercultural church and is formed from representatives in the five western regions of the United Church of Canada. We are part of the United Church Ethnocultural Networks which also includes the Korean, Chinese, Black Clergy and Filipino networks. If a church is to become intercultural, it should be curious about the experiences of racialized people near them. To that end, this network has organized two online “Coffee/Chai” workshops per year with intercultural topics that are offered to the entire church.
15. **Being Good Relations Network:** Cecile Fausak said that reconciliation is primarily the responsibility of the settlers. The indigenous people have said that there should be “nothing about us without us”. This is based on hearing and learning from the truth of the history of Indigenous people in Canada. The goal is education, dialogue and building community with the First Nations, Metis, Inuit and non-Indigenous peoples.
16. **General Council 45:** Taylor Croissant said that General Council 44 has been meeting annually online. In August 7-11, 2025, GC 45 will meet in person in Calgary. The theme is “Dreams and Visions”. He was appreciative of the volunteers from our Region who have stepped up to support the meeting.
17. **Mission and Service/ Stewardship:** Vicki Nelson spoke about stewardship and how uncomfortable people get when they talk about money in the church. She introduced four Stewardship resource kits which can be downloaded from united-church.ca/stewardship. There are also worship resources, Stewardship Best Practices workshop on CHURCHx.ca.
18. **Office of Vocation:** Cari Copeman-Haynes, as Office of Vocation Minister interviewed the celebrands: Keith Murray, Robin Hope Galey, Letitia Berger and Lisa Penzo.

19. **First Third Ministry:** Pam Evans is the Team Lead for ministry to those 33 years of age and under. GC 45 Youth Forum will have 85 youth and 23 children and young teens and 10 of the leaders are under 30 years of age. More than 50% are racialized or indigenous in this group. She introduced the staff from Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regions who work in First Third Ministry.
- Baz Skinner is working with the youth and teens who needed a free place to exist. YOUNited Youth is the only affirming youth group in Lethbridge and they have a Pickleball Ministry at Southminster United Church.
 - Lisa Penzo supports Camping Ministry and Camp Caravan.
 - Aleesha Neal from Sunnybrook United Church in Red Deer works in Campus Ministry at Red Deer Polytechnic.
 - Jess Andrews works in Campus Ministry across Mount Royal University and University of Calgary and is excited to tell us that there will be a new part time person to join her in this work.
 - Michelle Slater is pleased to work in Leadership Development and support of ministry personnel and staff in First Third Ministry.
 - Chris Mah Poy is the First Third Ministry Animator for Chinook Winds Regional Council. He works with Youth Council made up of eight members from our two Regions. They have brought issues from the youth perspective to the governance of our Regions
20. Joanne Anquist announced that we raised \$830 in cash and \$120 in pledges for a total of \$950 for **Mission and Service**, an initiative introduced by John Pentland earlier today.
21. **Theme: “Turn the world upside down”** Carmen led us in an exercise to turn the church upside down. Table groups were invited to discuss the church building, membership and finances. We were asked to think creatively about these issues.
22. **Worship:** Robin King led us in worship based on Ezekiel 47: 3-6a. A bolt of blue cloth was unrolled and moved through the Court as we sang “River” (MV 3). He talked about his ministry with the Bashaw United Church and how it built community connections.
23. **Affirming Ministry:** Pam Rockerbie introduced a documentary called “Mama Bears”. There was a panel discussion after the movie about LGBTQ2IA+ support. We heard that there were many parallels between the documentary events in Texas and circumstances in our province. We heard about the positive and negative ways in which the church can affect their lives.
24. The meeting recessed at 8:30 p.m.

Third Day: May 10, 2025, Saturday, 9:10 a.m.

25. **Opening worship** was led by Nancy Chegus and the worship team focussing on Ezekiel 47: 6b-9 They acknowledged the indigenous lands where we are meeting. Tony Snow responded to the land acknowledgement from an indigenous perspective. Vicki McPhee gave the message about living waters. In table groups we talked about what we bring to the church.
26. Joanne Anquist reconvened the meeting with housekeeping announcements. She said that there were three retirees this year, Glenda Wert, David Robertson and Susan Lukey. We blessed Glenda who was in the court today as she continues her journey.
27. **Executive Report:** The chair was given to Vicki McPhee so that Joanne could present the Executive Report
- Treena Duncan presented a Governance Overview. Chinook Winds Region was a brand-new region when it was formed seven years ago so did not bring old habits to governance.
 - She talked about what is Policy Governance, where the Board governs, and the staff manages. The executive minister operates within Board-set boundaries. The Board approves policies which guide the work of the staff. Goals and executive limitations are created. The staff are in charge of how the goals are achieved. We are responsible to the members of the Chinook Winds Region.
 - Joanne talked about the Executive terms of office which are for 3 years. The Presiding Officer is elected annually by the executive committee. Taylor Croissant is the vice-Presiding Officer. Trudy Wesley serves as the Indigenous member of Executive.
 - The members of the Chinook Winds Executive Committee are: Joanne Anquist, Nancy Nourse, Elaine Taylor-Kerr, Taylor Croissant, OhWang Kwon, Allan Buckingham, David Holmes, Luke Haisa, David Pollard, Barry Clayton and Kathy Yamashita. Treena Duncan is the Executive Minister and Mauricio Araujo is the Administrative Assistant.
 - She said that the Executive is concerned about the Southeastern area of the Region where there is only one ordered ministry person in the entire area. Executive committee has decided that some places need a United Church presence even if the congregation cannot sustain it. For example, there is a regional development of a ministry at Olds College. Our goal is to assist communities of faith to be healthy. She suggested that if your church

is struggling, that you could join a local cluster of churches to help each other.

- Joanne acknowledged that many are tired in the Region, but she is inspired by hopeful developments. She is impressed by the growth in First Third Ministry activity.

There was a panel discussion with Nancy Nourse as facilitator. She asked the following questions: why do you serve on executive; where do you see flourishing in the Region; what prevents flourishing in the Region and what do you hope to carry forward into the next 100 years. The panel members were Joanne Anquist, David Pollard, David Holmes, Oh Wang Kwon, Taylor Croissant and Kathy Yamashita.

The chair was returned to Joanne Anquist.

28. Affirming Connections: Pam Rocker said that there are 20 affirming ministries in the Chinook Winds Region where there are 85 ministries in all. There are 370 affirming ministries in the United Church of Canada, which is about 12% of churches. Being an affirming ministry is the role of the church which should help people to reconnect with their true self.

- Every year she will hold a Citywide Pride Interfaith Service in Calgary which was held at Calgary Unitarian Church last year.
- Affirming Connections takes part in the Calgary Pride parade and booth.
- There was an Affirming Media Conference last November which identified the disinformation campaigns from the other denominations.
- She inaugurated PIE Day in 2018 and is impressed by how this initiative has taken hold.
- She has supported Ziya Jones, an activist, to speak on the health facts about trans persons.
- Affirming Connections has a robust presence on social media.
- In Alberta the government changed policies regarding trans-affirming health care and discrimination.
- Pam has found an increased need for information or support online.

29. Toward 2035: Treena Duncan introduced this project which is led by Cameron Fraser and Jennifer Henry. In Chinook Winds region we have been engaged in thinking about the future. She asked, “what does the United Church want to be in 2035?”

- Cameron told us that every Thursday the growth team meets online in prayer. They are working on a document to encourage conversation about the future in our churches.

- He said that we are a church that continues the story of Jesus by embodying Christ's presence in the world. He asked us to think about something that Jesus said or did that holds significance to us and our communities. He said that in thinking about the church in ten years, the conversation acknowledges grief and exhaustion, challenges and possibilities.
- He perceives a church in 2035 which is inclusive, faithful, inspired, resilient and which reflects the diversity of Canada.
- He presented graphs to deal with data to measure the change in our denomination numbers. One trend between 1991-2021 is a decline in the Roman Catholic and United Church denominations. There has been an acute rise in those who have no religious affiliation.
- Between 1992-2023 it was noticed that total membership has declined from 760,000 down to 321,000 members. This predicts 111,000 members in 2035. This may mean that there will be large swathes of Canada where there is no United Church presence and its inclusive ways.

30. Barbara Davison brought greetings as the President of the **National United Church Women**. They are working hard to be an inclusive and intercultural organization. Some Regional Councils have invited a UCW representative to a seat on council. She reassured us that the UCW is not going anywhere. Not only by word, but by action.

She offered grace before lunch.

31. **Executive Minister's Report and Introduction of the Chinook Winds Staff:** Our Executive Minister, Treena Duncan expressed her gratitude to be a part of our Region. The work of this Region is well represented by the Flourishing theme of this meeting. She talked about many of the programs which have been presented by Regional Staff and has asked each of them to talk about what kind of river they are.

- She was thankful for the hard work and dedication of the staff. Jes Beckerley, assistant to the Pastoral Relations Minister was unable to be present due to family.
- Treena said that her work is a river with rapids and whirlpools.
- Baz Skinner of First Third Ministry said she is an estuary where the river becomes a stream.
- Pam Evans from First Third Ministry chose a verse from Billy Joel's "River of Dreams".

- Lisa Penzo said she would be a thin creek that you could stumble across but which grows.
- Leanne Templeton is the archivist and would be stiller waters like a marsh.
- Chris Mah Poy said he is two different rivers as he spends his time with First Third Ministry and in the Justice Portfolio.
- Shelley Den Haan works in Communication and Pastoral Support. She says it is like paddling down a river with rapids and soft places. She travels between interesting people. It is hard to travel back upstream.
- Michelle Slater works with Leadershift which is a river that is sometimes rapids and shallow eddies and deep holes.
- Karen Medland is the Minister responsible for Pastoral Relations and Community of Faith support. Her river changes every day.
- Jess Andrews with Campus Ministry said that she has a swimming hole which can be used differently.
- Mauricio Araujo is the Assistant to Treena Duncan is a river that flows north to Canada. He has felt welcomed here.
- Joel Den Haan consults to property and new developments in the region and says his river is an artesian aquifer.
- Tony Snow said that many Indigenous nations are near bodies of water which provide travel and nourishment.

Treena Duncan thanked each of the volunteers who keep the communities of faith alive.

32. **Indigenous Ministry:** Tony Snow talked about the work that is done on an annual basis within the Indigenous Ministry and Right Relations projects in the Region. The work varies according to the concerns of each indigenous group.
- In February there is work around interfaith harmony.
 - Around Easter there is a mother feast.
 - In Morley there are concerns about drug dependance among the youth while they are losing the elders to age. There is a lot of grief and challenge. He has enabled pipe ceremony to help with healing.
 - Relationships are made with interfaith groups to work collectively in an invitational way.
 - He works with the indigenous people in urban areas to provide a spiritual center.
 - In 2024 he was able to do a Clergy Tour to Guatemala which informed the work of Reconciliation.
 - There has been a reintroduction of sites in the mountains from an Indigenous perspective.

- Red Dress Day is celebrated.
- There will be a Reconciliation Circle meeting on Zoom by the Calgary Interfaith Council.
- There was an Indigenous Lenten Study offered in March, called “Christ in the Wilderness”.
- There is work done to encourage positive action to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- There will be a Moose Hide Campaign on May 15th, 2025 at Central United Church in Calgary. This is a grassroots movement to engage men and boys in ending violence towards women and children.

33. **Theme: “Envisioning a Flourishing Future”** Carmen Lansdowne explained three models of flourishing. Social and ecological outcomes should be considered when considering the Economic impact of human living.

- Cam Fraser asked us to envision what it is to flourish as an individual, a community of faith and as a world.
- Optimists vs pessimists (realists): Need to have a combination of both natures to be prepared for what happens.
- We talked about the best future and the dystopian future.

34. **Courtesy Report: Joanne Anquist** extended appreciation to the following persons:

Theme Presenters: Carmen Lansdowne and Cameron Fraser

Theme and Worship: Chair, Karen Holmes; Robin King; Marco Ste. Marie; Eva Biederman; Nancy Chegus; MiYeon Kim. Staff support from Shelley Den Haan

Business Committee: Chair, Dave Pollard; Treena Duncan; OhWang Kwon; and Kathy Yamashita; and Joanne Anquist. Staff Support by Mauricio Araujo.

Local Arrangements: The congregation of St. Andrew’s United Church in Lacombe, David Holmes, Allan Buckingham; and Jana in the office.

First Third Ministry Team: Pamela Evans, Chris Mah Poy, Jess Andrews, Baz Skinner, Lisa Penzo. Helping with the Children’s program were Mackenzie Reid and Kendra Baxter

Keynote Presentations: Carmen Lansdowne and Cameron Fraser

Music Team: Mark Green, Barb Myers, Cheryl Dennett

GC 45 planners: Taylor Croissant, Sue Brodrick

Staff: Jess Beckerley, Mauricio Araujo, Shelley Den Haan, Karen Medland, Joel Den Haan, Accounting Team; Leanne Templeton, Tony Snow, Michelle Slater who was the online host and Treena Duncan.

Deployed Staff rom the National Church: Scott Reynolds, Cari Copeman-Heyns, Charlene Burns and Vicki Nelson

UCW president: Barb Davison

She said that the Celebration of Ministry service will be held at 10:00 a.m. at St. Andrew's United Church tomorrow morning.

David Holmes gave an appreciation to Joanne Anquist for her service as Presiding Officer.

35. **Closing Worship:** Based on Ezekiel 47: 10-12 was led by MiYeon Kim.
 36. There was a closing banquet honouring our retirees and Celebrands.
 37. The Seventh Annual Meeting of Chinook Winds Regional Council was recessed until it was officially closed at the end of the Celebration of Ministry Service May 11, 2025 at St. Andrew's United Church in Lacombe.
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SIGNATURE PAGE

CHINOOK WINDS REGIONAL COUNCIL



Joanne Anquist, Presiding Officer

Treena Duncan, Executive Minister