NUASM Board Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2026

The October meeting of the NUASM Board was held by Zoom teleconference on Tuesday October 20, 2026 at 1:00 pm.
Present: Rita Friesen, Anita d'Armada, Judy Elgert, Daphne Hall, Pat Fedoruk, Lynda Lowry, Jane Goudie, Betty Ebner, Rev. Leith Saunders, Murray Hart
Regrets: Susan Phillips, Liz Sumner

1. Welcome and Call to Order – by Acting Chair Rita Friesen

2. Opening Prayer – Rev. Saunders

3. Additions/Changes to Agenda – by general agreement the agenda was amended by the addition of these items to New Business: Lay Ministry Position and NUASM Nominating Committee.

4. Approval of Agenda
Motion: Lynda Lowry / Jane Goudie
That the agenda be approved as amended. **Carried**.

5. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting (September 15, 2026)
Motion: Murray Hart / Judy Elgert
That the minutes of our September 15, 2026 meeting be approved as circulated. **Carried.**

6. Business Arising from the Minutes
a) Affirming Church – has this topic been raised with the local boards
- the topic was taken to the NUC board at their September meeting. The Open Hearts document has been shared with NUC board members; they have been asked to read it over and be prepared for a discussion at their next meeting which will be in November.
- Nancy Hunter has informed the St. James' Vestry about the topic. Anita mentioned that a motion dealing with 2 Spirit LGBTQIA relationships is coming to the floor of the Synod, showing that the Anglican Church is discussing topics that are related to the Affirming Church idea.
- It was reported that a small committee (Susan Phillips, Nancy Hunter, Betty Ebner, Liz Sumner) has been operating informally to gather information and resources and examining what procedures might be involved in providing information about the Affirming Church idea to our congregation.

7. Correspondence – none.

8. Committee Reports
Board members presented reports as follows:

a) Treasurer – Judy Elgert
- no recent expenditures

b) Worship – Pat Fedoruk
- We met on October 5. The Remembrance service will be Sunday November 8. We are looking ahead to Advent which begins November 29. Rev. Ray will lead a joint communion service on December 13. This is a bit later than usual on the church calendar, (Advent 1), however, that is the first opportunity that an eligible sacrament leader is in the pulpit.
- Judy had been trying some changes to the overhead screen with using a black background. It will be returned to the lighter background following some concerns that the black was harder

to read. Thank you Judy for all the work you do each week to prepare our Sunday service for projection onto the screens so that it is easy to follow for our congregation members!
-There had been some inquiry about the land acknowledgment. The message continues to scroll on the screen each Sunday prior to the start of the worship service and will continue to be read on the first Sunday of each month by the M&S&O representative.
Discussion:
- there was some discussion as to whether there is/could be an office key available in a safe location to provide office access if required outside of office hours. Rita will check with the Office Manager.

c) Ministry & Personnel – Jane Goudie

- expecting to receive word in early November regarding salary increments for next year.

d) Mission & Service and Outreach – Susan Phillips

We have collected donations for schools and have done some investigating about where the need might be greatest. Looks like there is a shortage of books at the middle school. They're needing books for the grade four classes. So I think that's where the money will go. I don't have the final $ count to report.
We will be joining the PAC women to sew denim quilts again. Sounds like that will be happening in December. We've had good participation from the women in the congregation in the past and are looking forward to that again.
We'll be putting up the mitten tree and outdoor nativity scene on November 25th.
White Gift Sunday is December 13th.

e) Stewardship – Lynda Lowry

- two of the three stewardship letters have been completed with input provided by Glen and Rita. Dawn will make copies.
- Susan Phillips and Linda Hart are translating the NUC financial figures into a narrative budget which will be part of the Fall Stewardship mailing.
- Treasurer Judy is supplying some budget information.
- the Reply Card has been edited.
- envelope stuffing will take place on Tuesday October 27th at 1:00 pm; envelopes, stamps and receipts will be ready by then
- Fall Stewardship envelopes will be available in the Narthex in early November, and a related announcement will be made from the pulpit.

f) Pastoral Care – Betty Ebner

Cards sent in September
•Sympathy…0
•Get Well…3
•1 Year Anniversary of Death…2
•Celebration…3

Visits/Calls…0

g) Pastoral Assistant - Rita Friesen

September 2026 report:

Sunday morning service 1
Elks Manor morning coffee 1
Funeral 1

Meeting with family 1
Home visits – 3
Church family meetings: Worship, NUASM and NUC

It was a much quieter month. I worked with Mary Ellen – a family from Langruth with no home church requested a chaplain and I was able to meet with them for prayers and space, twice a day for five days until the gentleman passed. I officiated at a civil marriage for a young couple, new to Neepawa, originally from India. They had purchased their license from the church and with my name being first on the list of suggested officiants – they chose me. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and start to get to know some of the newest set of implants in our town.

h) Regional Representatives

i) Prairie to Pine – Liz Sumner

ii) Brandon Diocese – Anita d'Armada

a) - I spoke to the editor about the loss of the Mustard Seed online, he said that it was a problem that was currently being resolved, hopefully we will have access soon.
- here is a link to the October 2026 edition of the Anglican Journal which features national news, commentary, and updates from the Anglican Church of Canada:
https://anglicanjournal.com/archives/october-2026/

b) The following is a précis of Bishop Rachel's Synod Charge. The entire "Charge" can be found in the Mustard Seed Journal that can be found pinned to the Bulletin Board in the Narthex of the Church.

Synod theme- We Have to move together as a Diocese- Theme of Synod – REVIVAL.

To bring back to life and to revive, as a Diocese we must grow, seek, serve, and grow in Christ both as individuals and as a church. This can be seen as a daunting challenge for a church of our age. We have to look at who we have become and where we are going, our trajectory is not looking great right now. As a Diocese we are closing churches, and experiencing a decline in numbers, together with a shortage of clergy and lay leadership.

In the Diocese of Brandon, the Anglican Church seems to be more of a Palliative Church rather than a Church of Revival! Palliative can mean giving time to recover, regroup as we together participate in new possibilities, new treatments, and a new way of looking at our lives. Palliative can be seen as a beautiful and new opportunity to regroup, rethink and prepare for life differently. In fact, it can lead to a time of powerful revival.

Our Diocese our Parishes and individual churches are being called to take a good look at where we are, how we feel and how we are being called to embrace revival. We have to say "yes" to Christ and follow Him with renewed energy, and commitment to share our love for Jesus and Jesus' love for us, with all the work we are called to bring the life of Christ to every corner of our churches and our communities. First we have to welcome strangers, feed the hungry, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in our communities.

We begin with prayer, praying for ourselves, our families our church and community, our lay readers and clergy. Pray with expectation for the people around us, that they might come to know Christ better as we also come to know Christ better as well. Prayer is the first step. The next step in our journey into Revival is a commitment to better communication between us and God. We have to learn new ways to share with one another on the local Diocesan level, read the Mustard Seed, and look at Facebook posts from the Diocese.

To better our communication efforts we will establish a monthly email, with the hope that in the future the Diocese will be creating a volunteer position for a communication director. This Communication Director will facilitate our database and communication strategies and will help us all to remain connected communications within the Diocese will always need to be multi directional. In addition to our focus on Prayer and Communication we cannot invite the Holy Spirit to engage in true Revival if we do not allow ourselves to first engage in relationship building.

These relationships are primarily with God and our response to the call God has upon our hearts, we have to share our gifts and our dreams with the world, we need people well trained and willing people. We need lay people to participate as Licensed Lay Readers as well as regular readers of Scripture, leaders of Prayers of the People, Wardens, Sunday School teachers, and Bible Study facilitators and Synod delegates. But at the heart of who we are as Christians who identify as Anglicans, we need sacramental leaders we need Priests.

Archdeacon Kara and Henry Budd College have some powerful and unique resources and opportunities to share for those who are discerning a call to both Diaconal and Priestly ministry. Quote from Bishop Rachel, "I know that God is not telling the Church in Brandon or across the country, that our time is wrapping up. We are being called to embrace the truth that we are called to be the "Revived Anglican Church."

The reality of our situation both Diocesan and National is that the costs of doing business have been increasing, and revenue and donations decreasing. The Council of the North grant has been shrinking and there have been grumblings about fairness. Our Council of the North is dependent upon the "Fair Share" collected collected by National Church. When Diocese do not send in their full amount of Fair Share, there is less money to grant to the nine Council of the North Dioceses. The Council of the North will work to become financially self- sustaining with assistance from National Church.

The Diocese of Brandon will be called at some point to work together with Sacred Circle and ACIP ie. (Anglican Council of Indigenous People, a National Indigenous advisory body within the Anglican Church of Canada, represents Indigenous Anglicans across Canada; members are Indigenous People of Canada who have chosen to be partners in the Worldwide Anglican Communion and the universal church, members are from First Nations including the Arctic Regions, the Métis and others of mixed heritage, to participate in the new ways. God is calling the Anglican Church, and our Indigenous Anglican siblings to walk in a Good Way. This will require a recommitted effort by both Indigenous members of our Diocese, and our Diocesan leadership to revive Diocesan Council for Aboriginal Affairs and prepare one another to engage in what may come. Many Dioceses with considerable Indigenous communities have been seeing a rise in church attendance, and a greater interest in the interplay of Anglican expression of Christianity and traditional teaching including traditional languages.

Two Motions coming to the floor of this Synod are with respect to, "2 Spirit LGBTQIA relationships", and "MAID" (Medical Assistance In Dying).

Our Diocese of Brandon is Beloved in the eyes of God, and we are being invited to be leaders in Hope, in Love, in Proclamation and in Leading. We will show the world what true Revival can mean! We must believe and then walk out in that belief.

i) Pastoral Charge Supervisor – Rev. Leith Saunders

- Rev. Saunders reported that she appreciates the information and assistance which comes from Bishop Rachael; and also appreciates her contact with our local boards and all the work they do.

j) Website – Murray Hart

Recent updates include:

- added minutes of the September board meetings of NUASM and NUC
- regular update of meeting dates and events to the Events and Calendar pages
- added poster to Events page publicizing the Soup and Sandwich event in October

- Photo Page was updated with photos of the 6th Anniversary Brunch:
https://www.nuasm.com/photos.html

k) Acceptance of Reports
Motion: Betty Ebner / Judy Elgert
That the reports be accepted as presented and discussed. **Carried**.

9. New Business
a) 2026 Self Assessment Report to Regional Council
- as happens approximately every three years, we have recently received the 2026 Self Assessment form which is directed to the Neepawa United-Anglican Shared Ministry Community of Faith in the Neepawa United Church Pastoral Charge.
- our last self assessment report was submitted to Regional Council in November of 2022.
- a small committee has volunteered to work on this report: Rita, Lynda, Judy and Murray. They will have a final report ready for perusal and approval by the NUASM and NUC boards at their November 17th meetings.
- the form consists of seven questions requiring a longer written response and some short answer checklist questions.
- Treasurer Judy will supply answers to the two questions which refer to financial matters.
- the secretary will circulate the Covenant document to committee members so that it can be reviewed as required by one of the questions.

b) Lay Ministry Position

i) The Search Committee and Ministry and Personnel Committee presented the following information:

- Rita Friesen has asked Prairie to Pine Regional Council and Bishop Rachel if she could be appointed as an interim leader at our church while we look for a new minister. She is motivated by the desire to provide some continuity and stability at the pulpit as well as reduce the workload of the GAP Committee and Worship Committee. Judy Hare has indicated that the only form of lay ministry that would work for the United Church of Canada, would be as a Congregational Designated Minister (CDM). Link: Congregational Designated Ministers (March 2020)
- Rita has indicated that she would like to preach for three Sundays each month and would be in the office for one half-day per week to meet with parishioners who want a visit.
- Rita would not be allowed to perform communion as a Sacraments Elder as that is a volunteer position. Leith Saunders has offered to be available for sacraments for us. Bishop Rachel could also be invited to help us with communion once during the next year.
- This position would start January 1, 2027 and continue until we hire a full-time minister.

ii) The Position Description compiled by the Search Committee is as Follows:

Position Description – Lay Ministry Position

Position Title: Congregational Designated Minister (CDM) to lead Neepawa United-Anglican Shared Ministry (NUASM) on a part-time basis while the pastoral charge looks for a full-time Minister/Priest.
Position Summary:

We wish to hire a CDM in the United Church tradition who will provide worship leadership and spiritual guidance in an ecumenical mix of United and Anglican parishioners, on a part-time basis (48 hours per month). Salary to be negotiated. The CDM would be accountable to the NUASM Board, the Neepawa United Church Board and St. James' Vestry. For the purposes of disciplinary oversight, the CDM would be accountable to Prairie to Pine Regional Council.

Responsibilities

Worship (75%)

- Prepare and lead three Sunday morning worship services per month, with support from the Worship Committee. Services will include elements which are meaningful and familiar to members of both founding denominations e.g. prayers, lectionary readings, children's time and a reflection.
- Encourage and continue the participation of children, youth and adults in the services.
- Prepare and lead special services e.g. Baptism, Christmas Eve, Good Friday.
- Collaborate as needed with the choir director to obtain assistance when selecting hymns and music.
- Pastoral Charge Supervisor is in place, if support is needed. The PCS has agreed to lead communion services as requested.

Administration (1%)

- Maintaining a regular schedule of office hours, one-half day (three hours) per week
- Work collaboratively with the office manager

Denomination and Communities (1%)

- Maintain a positive relationship with the other local Christian churches and collaborate on joint services such as Good Friday and Remembrance Day.

Pastoral Care (22%)

- Provide pastoral care one-half day per week, in the church office, and refer those needing more support, to the Pastoral Care Committee.
- Listen and be empathetic to those visiting the office.

Self Care (1%)

- Maintain a schedule which includes self-care by ensuring a healthy balance of work and time off for rest and relaxation.

Other Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Biblical knowledge and an ability to help the congregation understand and apply scripture to everyday life
- Strong communication skills so that scriptures can be related to life experiences, current issues, and be easily understood by all ages
- Appreciation of music in a worship context

- Reverend Saunders assumed the chair

iii) Discussion:
- according to the position description, Rita would do some of the Sunday services and have time allocated for some pastoral care. The remainder would be filled in same way it is presently covered.
- this idea would require approval of our three boards, and also approval from Bishop Rachael and the Prairie to Pine Regional Council.
- On November 9, the Search Committee is meeting with Judy Hare and Bishop Rachael; an opportunity to discuss this proposal, to ask if they have other ideas relating to our search for a new minister/priest.
- **Motion**: Lynda Lowry / Jane Goudie
That the NUASM board ask the Prairie to Pine Regional Council and Bishop Rachael to consider our request to appoint a Congregational Designated Minister (CDM) in the United Church tradition who will provide worship leadership and spiritual guidance in an ecumenical mix of United and Anglican parishioners, with the following conditions: a part-time basis (48 hours per month); salary to be negotiated; the CDM would be accountable to the NUASM Board, the Neepawa United Church Board and St. James' Vestry; and for purposes of disciplinary oversight, the CDM would be accountable to Prairie to Pine Regional Council. **Carried**.

- Rita assumed the chair.

c) NUASM Nominating Committee
- according to the NUASM Policies and Procedures Manual the members of the NUASM Nominating Committee "will include the chair and vice-chair of the NUASM board, a member appointed by the Neepawa United Church board, and a member appointed by the St. James" Anglican Vestry".
- in the absence of a NUASM vice-chair, Betty Ebner volunteered to work with Rita representing NUASM on this committee. The committee will seek input from others as deemed necessary. The secretary will correspond with the two local boards to request that they each appoint a representative as mentioned above.

10. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday November 17, 2026 at 1:00 pm by Zoom.

11. Closing Prayer – Rev. Saunders

12. Adjournment – by the Chair.

Signatures:

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(Acting Chair – Rita Friesen) (Secretary – Murray Hart)