

Clusters and Networks in Living Skies Regional Council (SK): Spring 2019



What are Clusters and Networks? Who's working on them, and how do the people of the United Church in Saskatchewan get involved?

Turn over or scroll down for a working definition of Networks and Clusters, and read on for the latest on Clusters and Networks in Living Skies Regional Council.

Clusters and Networks Task Group for Living Skies: In March 2019, the Regional Commission created a task group to help sustain and explore Clusters and Networks in Living Skies Region (Saskatchewan). Its members are: **Elaine Little, Margaret McCallum, Karen Mitchell, Vicki Nelson, and Kevin Sprong.**

Interested in starting a Network or Cluster? Confused? Have ideas to share? We want to hear from you! Contact the group through Julie Graham, Regional Council Minister-transition and education, jgraham@united-church.ca or 306-244-2157 (Saskatoon).

So far, Living Skies Regional Council includes the following Clusters and Networks. Note that "Networks" under the SK Conference structure were somewhat different, and that these have either wrapped up, or will do so at the inaugural annual meeting May 30-June 1 in Swift Current. The Regional Council will discern which former Networks may become part of the governance structure.

Chinook Worship Circle (Cluster)

"Most pastoral charges in southwest Saskatchewan have been without ministers, especially full time ones, for some time. To help ensure that there are services each Sunday in churches that would like them, the vacant charges in the region developed a 'Worship Circle' a number of years ago, which rotates a number part-time ministers, lay ministers and LLWLs from across the southwest through the different charges. Twice a year, members of the Worship Circle get together to figure out a schedule for the next six months. Together there are 10 ministry personnel who rotate through six pastoral charges. This model has worked very well for our congregations, and has given us a chance to get to know people in other communities, spread over about a 300 km radius."

Contact: Elaine Little, elittle19@gmail.com or 306-678-4918

Korean Ministers Cluster

“We stand for the efforts for promoting intercultural ministry, affirming ministry, the Truth and Reconciliation process, and thriving congregation ministry. We hope that we will help each other not only for our ministry but also for our life-giving works, especially in SK.”

Contact: Rev. Hyun Heo, hheo4107@gmail.com

Former Twin Valleys ministry personnel gathering

Ministry Personnel of the area formerly known as Twin Valleys Presbytery meet to worship, visit, and mostly check in with each other four times a year. **Contact:** Susan Reed, susanafitch@gmail.com

Reconciliation United (Saskatoon area)

Saskatoon communities of faith are gathering every two months over soup to share their responses to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. Support, accountability, and sharing are the focus of this community. **Contact:** Dave Moors, davemoors@gmail.com

Regina and Area Cluster

“The Coordinating Committee of Regina and Area Cluster has been meeting since early January 2019. Our committee includes Cam Fraser, Randy Graham, Donna Rumpel, Vicki Nelson, and Kent Stewart. In that time we have started to develop a communication strategy. At this point we have set up a monthly [email newsletter](#) and a Facebook Group ([Regina & Area Cluster of the United Church of Canada](#)). Communities of faith, ministries, and others can connect and share their work and events on either or both of these platforms.

We also bring communities of faith together for strategic conversation. On February 27 we invited urban Regina communities of faith to a gathering to discuss future ministry and mission, and we will meet again this spring. An invitation has gone to rural communities of faith in the Regina catchment area to explore interest in similar gatherings. We are currently polling both rural and urban members of our mailing list about a possible joint gathering to discuss future ministry and mission including education, community ministries, justice and right relations, mutual support and nurturance. We also look forward to connecting with other clusters!”

You can reach our staff person, Catherine Barnsley at: catherine.barnsley@sasktel.net ; the committee at ReginaAreaCluster@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2205391406391275/>

Sign up for our newsletter: <https://mailchi.mp/61751e94f32b/cluster>

Saskatoon and Area Cluster

This group is gathering at least twice a year to look at the future of Communities of faith in Saskatoon, and encouraging discernment, formal and informal resource sharing, and collaboration. **Contact:** Gary Storey, ggs188@mail.usask.ca

United Church Sask Camps Network: This Network includes contacts at Camps Tapawingo, Christopher, Shagabec and Lumsden Beach (so far!! All camps welcome! **Contact:** Vicki Nelson, info@lumsdenbeachcamp.com

Wynyard-area Cluster: A cluster group with the worship leaders from Wynyard, Foote-Copeland, Lanigan, Nokomis, Raymore, Semans is forming. Contact: Cindy Goodman, shamrock01@sasktel.net

Other continuing or emerging areas of interest: All My Relations; Refugee support and sponsorship; Medical Assistance in Dying conversations... and whatever else is needed.

What are Networks and Clusters, anyway?

(Excerpted from <https://www.united-church.ca/news/clarity-clusters-and-networks>)

Clusters and networks are mentioned but not clearly defined in Remit 1: Three Council Model. The GC42 motion provides the following definitions:

- **Clusters:** local clusters of communities of faith that would provide community and support for communities of faith and their leaders, and focus on worship, mission, learning, collegiality, and strategic planning
- **Networks:** linking people working on specific issues (e.g., supportive housing, intercultural ministry, youth ministry) or for project work (e.g., event planning) that function through the whole church, depending on the issue

The General Council Executive agreed in fall 2017 that:

- those involved in clusters and networks will define their own meaning and responsibilities
- church councils will not define clusters and networks
- the church is encouraged to experiment with how clusters and networks can assist in living out the faith of The United Church of Canada
- clusters and networks are encouraged to seek support from local resources
- local bodies that wish to support clusters and networks are encouraged to do so
- church councils may support clusters and networks to their level of ability and within their areas of responsibility
- clusters and networks are encouraged to share their experiences with others in the church and the wider world through media available to the church
- following a period of experimentation, the church will learn intentionally from the experiences of clusters and networks

The background material for the motion notes that Remit 1 briefly describes clusters and networks as “ways in which The United Church of Canada can live out its faith. There is minimal definition and there is no mention of funding.”