



# **NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL**

## The United Church of Canada

### **Regional Council News**

May 25, 2021

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Announcements and information of interest to the people of the Northern Spirit Region.

If you have news to share or information about an upcoming event or learning opportunity, please write a short article, and send it to Kathy Jackson, Administrative Support: [kjackson@united-church.ca](mailto:kjackson@united-church.ca). We are unable to include posters or other attachments, but links to further information may be included. Alternatively, our Community of Faith Events Calendar is open 24/7 for posting about online events that are open to the public. Events can be posted directly to the Newsfeed: <https://northernspiritrc.ca/add-your-community-event/>.

### **3rd Annual Regional Council Meeting Follow-Up ...**

#### **On the Regional Council Web Site**

The Annual Meeting Sessions on May 4 and 6 were recorded, and the recordings have been linked to our Regional Council web site. On the [Annual Meeting](#) page, you can find links to view the proceedings, and/or read the written summaries, as well links to the recorded greetings from United Church Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, and a thank-you from Mission and Service. Links to the final wording for the proposals and a list of the elected General Council Commissioners are also posted to the page. Have a look and see what the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Regional Council Meeting was all about.

#### **Planning for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Council Meeting**

Plans will be soon underway for the next Annual Meeting, to be held in 2022. One of the key tasks to help that process will be to appoint members to the Planning Team. The hope is that we'll be able to host an in-person meeting. If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining the fun, please complete an [Expression of Interest Form](#) and let the Nominations Committee know you're interested. Of course, there are other vacancies in our Regional Council, which you can read about [here](#). The same Expression of Interest Form can be used to let us know where you might fit into the Regional Council. Get involved. There is room for you!

### **Featured News ...**

#### **Celebrate 96 Years of The United Church of Canada!**

The anniversary of Church Union, June 10, 1925, will be celebrated on **June 6**, with a national Service of Celebration. Please join Moderator Richard Bott and others for this special online worship. The service will be livestreamed on the United Church [YouTube channel](#). Bring some water along to participate in the service.

#### **Worship Resources for Upcoming Special Sundays**

The United Church web site offers a variety of worship resources for Communities of Faith. You can visit the page [here](#), and have a look at what is available. Of particular interest in the next few weeks are

resources for Asian Heritage Month 5, Trinity Sunday and Environment Sunday on **May 30**; Pride Sunday and Union Sunday on **June 6**; and Indigenous Day of Prayer and UN World Refugee Day on **June 20**. At the same time, you can check out the upcoming liturgical dates and various themed worship resources.

### **Indigenous History Month and Day of Prayer**

This year the Indigenous Day of Prayer falls on **Sunday, June 20**. You are invited and encouraged to include the Day of Prayer in worship, recognizing the many words of truth and witness Indigenous leaders in and beyond the United Church have shared with us over the years. [See resources here](#).

### **Call to End Violence in Palestine and Israel through Meaningful Negotiations**

The United Church has followed the lead from its partners in Palestine and Israel and has [released a letter](#) calling for the cycle of violence to stop. "Palestinian and Israeli partners are clear that negotiating a just peace is the only way out of the cycle of bombs and guns" says Moderator, the Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott. "I invite United Church people to [pray for the peace of Jerusalem](#) and to put faith into action by [writing to urge Minister Garneau to uphold international law](#)."

In some cases, media coverage is missing the fact that a spark for the current violence was the eviction of Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah, a neighbourhood in East Jerusalem targeted by militant Jewish settlers. [Read more background and see a related action here](#).

## **In Other News ...**

### **Family Picnic-In-a-Bag**

Vegreville United Church has shared another good idea for connecting with its community and some fundraising. They are offering a Picnic-in-a-Bag for pre-ordered take out or delivery. Everything is included. Fried chicken, salads, pickles and dessert: who can resist? Orders are taken by telephone to the church, and payment is by donation to general funds.

### **Music United: Seeking Regional Convenors**

Music United is a volunteer association of people passionate about music in The United Church of Canada. Musicians, clergy, laity, worship committee members - all are welcome to join in as they seek to further the cause of music within the church. People give of their time and talents as they are best able to do. Regional Convenors act as resource persons for area musicians and worship leaders, providing networking opportunities, either virtually or in-person, as well as liaising with the regional Music United office. For more information about Music United, and the Convenor position description, please visit their web site: <http://musicunited.ca>.

### **Surprise Lake Camp Update!!**

The Surprise Lake Society would like to invite you to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Camp this summer on the weekends of **July 18<sup>th</sup>** and **August 8<sup>th</sup>**. There are numerous events planned as well as opportunities to meet up and reminisce with old friends. For those folks who were out at camp in the 80's and early 90's, there was a ZOOM reunion with former camp friends. It was so much fun other alumni are requesting reunions for their time at camp. If you want to share your SLC memories, we are accepting donations of camp photos, or letters or anything of interest, they would be scanned and returned or donated to the Archives. To stay up-to-date with the plans and events, sign up for our society newsletter "The Surprise Laker" on our website, <https://surpriselake.ca>, or on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/surpriselakecamp>. See you for a sunset!

## COVID-19 Concerns Continue ...

### Seeking Information and Guidance from the Church?

As we continue to face the challenges of the current pandemic, new information is produced almost daily. In order to keep up with this kaleidoscope of change and concern, we invite you to visit our [Regional Council web site](#). If you visit the [United Church web site](#), and search for “covid” you will find links to a page on *Faith Communities and COVID-19*, as well as links to reflections, news, prayers, stories of hope, and much more.

### Resources for Online Congregational Annual Meetings

Many communities of faith are going ahead with congregational meetings online, and have many good questions about voting. [Here are some thoughts](#) from Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy on not-so-secret ballots and your online Annual Meeting. [Here's a good resource](#) from some of our kin in the Shining Waters and Canadian Shield Regional Councils that outlines the various options. (Hint: there's really no such thing as a completely secret ballot for everyone.) The Centre for Christian Studies has released a great [“how to” video](#) workshop (and a [hilarious video](#) that may sound just a wee bit familiar).

### Federal, Provincial and Territorial COVID Pandemic Guidelines

Please continue to check the Federal, and all Provincial and Territorial Governments for updated guidance and direction related to the pandemic: [Health Canada](#); the provinces of [Alberta](#) and [British Columbia](#); and the [Northwest Territories](#).

## Events and Learning Opportunities ...

### Affirming Gathering for Northern Spirit: Pride Planning Edition

All Northern Spirit Affirming and LGBTQIA+ supportive ministries and people are welcome to join in tomorrow evening, **May 26**, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm (MDT) as we share plans for supporting Pride month through June and beyond. Hold the date and watch for more details. Here's the Zoom link (please do NOT share this on social media or post on a website - share by email only): <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/95326115161?pwd=YW1HZ0NDQ3JNSm5hc3FwQld2SXB5Zz09>

### Calls to the Church: Listening to the Wisdom of the Elders

As we begin Indigenous History Month in June, John and Tony Snow will offer a four-evening reflection on engaging with the Calls to the Church, **June 1, 2, 3 & 4**, from 7:30-8:30 pm (MDT). For more information, or to register, please visit [LeaderShift](#), Pacific Mountain Regional Council.

### Introduction to Indigenous Lands and Issues in Canada

Final session: Traditional Lands and Environmental Protection, **Saturday, June 19**, 9:00-11:00 AM (MDT). Gitxsan Elder, Ray Jones, will lead an examination of un-ceded Indigenous territories and traditional Indigenous duties to the lands and peoples. The long history of Indigenous resistance to colonial exploitation and the current vitality of Indigenous identity will be the focus. [Registration info here](#). Please check the times carefully!

## United in Learning

[Click here](#) to find out about upcoming learning opportunities being shared by United in Learning. There is always something new, so visit the site often.

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