



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada

Regional Council News

June 1, 2021

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. 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://northernspiritr.ca/add-your-community-event/>.

Unmarked Burials: A Time of Mourning

With the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit of the United Church, we join in saying, "As news came on May 28, 2021, that the remains of 215 children were found in a mass unmarked grave on the grounds of the former Kamloops Residential School, we entered into a time of mourning for these relatives, their families, and their communities." Many people are asking what they can do. First, we come together as people of the United Church and take the first step of mourning and remembering. We are sad. This is horrific news. And it is evidence of the reality of colonization in Canada, and of how much more learning is still to be done. The United Church web site includes this [page of reflection](#), which includes links to prayers from Murray Pruden, Executive Minister for the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit, and Richard Bott, Moderator. For more information, reflection and resources, please visit this post on the [Northern Spirit web site](#).

Featured News ...

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](#).

Being Good Relations Northwest Alberta and Peace River Cluster

All are welcome, regardless of geography to gather together on June 4, 2021, at 7:00 pm (MDT). It's often hard to know how to network in the midst of this pandemic. These spaces are a place for support, checking-in, and planning together. Please join the Zoom gathering, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89505133488>. You can dial by your location by calling: +1 204 272 7920 Canada; +1 438 809 7799 Canada; +1 587 328 1099 Canada; or +1 778 907 2071 Canada. The Meeting ID is 895 0513 3488.

96th Anniversary of The United Church of Canada!

The 96th Anniversary of Church Union, June 10, 1925, is upon us. A national Service of Celebration will be livestreamed at 7:00 pm (EDT) on **June 10**. Please join Moderator Richard Bott and others for this special online worship, via the United Church [YouTube channel](#). Bring water along to participate in the service. **June 6** (the closest Sunday to June 10) has been designated as Union Sunday, and [worship resources](#) for can be found on the United Church web site. Happy Anniversary, United Church!

Music Video: We are Pilgrims on a Journey

In April and May of 2021, almost 70 Ministry Personnel from across the United Church submitted videos of themselves singing, *We are Pilgrims on a Journey* (VU 595). Some also sent accompaniment tracks that were added to those from The Prince George Conservatory of Music's faculty. The result is two versions that are being shared to help mark the 96th Anniversary of The United Church of Canada. One has "history and credits" included (a short intro before the anthem) and the other has "title and credits" (with no history intro). You are invited to view these, and use whichever suits your worship context. While the copyright information has been included, it is important for each community to also use their own license and appropriately report the use of the words and music.

The files can be found in these two shared drives: <https://icedrive.net/1/e3xVx4rG54> and/or: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1M5jYf65d4eA53trPyKbU1EgrOy7HTwG-?usp=sharing>.

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 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.

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 community of faith's 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

As all of our jurisdictions make their cautious way forward to re-opening and lifting health restrictions, 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 ...

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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