



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada

Regional Council News

June 8, 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://northernspiritrc.ca/add-your-community-event/>.

Please note that there will be no Northern Spirit E-Newsletter next week, June 15. The editor/publisher will be taking a vacation week. We will be back on track again for the June 22 Edition. Stay tuned ... and stay safe and well.

Family News

The Pastoral Relations Commission reports that there several Ministry Personnel changes to celebrate. We extend appreciation for the ministry of Linda Roberts who is completing her appointment to Spirit of Peace United Church, Spirit River.

At the 3rd Annual Regional Council Meeting, we celebrated and gave thanks for the ministries of those retiring from active ministry: David Lloyd-Pearce, Hinton United Church; Nancy Monteith, Jasper United Church; and Larry Wright, Spirit West United Church, Edmonton.

At the Annual Meeting, we celebrated with Matthew Heesing, whose ordination will take place on at the Celebration of Ministries Service on **June 27**.

We also celebrated with the Rev. Johnny Rhoad, who serves the Grimshaw-Peace River Pastoral Charge, and who has been admitted into the Order of Ministry of The United Church of Canada. Johnny's Admission will be formally recognized at the Celebration of Ministries Service on **June 27**.

The Celebration of Ministries Service will be held at First United Church, Fort Saskatchewan. The service will be livestreamed on YouTube, and you are invited to join in using this link, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCozqA9U5k4S7jES7EjInq9Q/live>, or by going to the church web site, fsunited.org, and clicking on the link that will take you to the Sunday morning service.

Featured News ...

Unmarked Burials: A Time of Mourning

With the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit of the United Church, we continue to xx 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.

On **June 4**, Indigenous Ministries and the national church offered [a further summary](#) of the work the United Church is currently doing in response to the many layers of anger, grief, and trauma uncovered by this profoundly shocking, through not surprising, discovery. For more information, reflection and resources, [please also see this summary on our website](#). Please share these resources and more as widely as needed in your community of faith and other circles.

Edmonton Food Bank Award for McClure United Church

McClure United Church, Edmonton, is one of 12 organizations that have been acknowledged by the Edmonton Food Bank with a Janet Hughes Award for “pivoting and remaining open during the Pandemic”. Staff from the Food Bank presented the award to volunteers unloading the Food Bank Hampers on Wednesday, June 2nd. This award has been well earned by the 31 volunteers who have worked hard to make the McClure Food Bank distributions a success throughout a difficult 16 months. Congratulations and thank you!

Pride Month Resources for Northern Spirit

Pride Month is underway, and Shylo Rosborough, resource to the Affirming Ministry Task Group, [shares some resource ideas for the whole month](#). Please also note some of the [excellent events planned by United in Learning](#). A reminder, too, of the [resources on the national website](#), and at the Round the Table blog, which brings together stories of belonging, struggle, and identity from all over our church. Pride Month leads off with a reflection on why Pride remains a source of hope and of struggle for Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people. [Read it here](#).

Indigenous History Month and Day of Prayer

This year the Indigenous Day of Prayer falls on Sunday June 20. You’re invited and encouraged to include the day 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](#).

Attention: Ministry Personnel - Last Chance Coming Up!

From Karen Medland, Office of Vocation Minister: Thanks to all of you who have already completed your annual declaration regarding your police records check. I just want to remind you all that the closing date for annual declarations is **June 30, 2021**. You **do not** need to get a new police records check if you completed your annual declaration last year. If there is a reason you will not be able to complete your annual declaration by June 30, please email me at kmedland@united-church.ca so that we can make other arrangements for you. Remember that ChurchHub is not compatible with the Safari web browser. To access all the aspects of ChurchHub, we recommend using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge as your web browser. Once again if you have any questions about or problems with ChurchHub please contact me via email. I am always happy to set up a Zoom meeting to walk you through your annual declaration.

In Other News ...

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.

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>.

The Regional Council Needs You ...

Before you wind down to your summer relaxation ... while you enjoy the sunshine, garden, or simply "veg", we ask you to consider where you might feel called to be involved in the work of the Regional Council. The Nominations Committee continues to seek out and invite nominations for vacancies, in particular, members for the Regional Council Executive, the Pastoral Relations Commission, the Communities of Faith, Lay Leadership, and Ministry Personnel Support Committees; the Annual Meeting Planning and Nominations Committees; and the Youth Council. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Church, and we rely on the wisdom and talents that committed individuals bring to their involvement in the work of the Regional Council. Nominations and self-nominations are equally valued and can be submitted via the Expression of Interest and Nominations form on the Regional Council web site:

<https://northernspiritr.ca/about-us/get-involved/>.

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

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 ...

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!

Two-Spirit People: A Part of our Circle and our Teachings

On **Monday, June 28**, at 5:00 pm (MDT), please join this online gathering that will provide attendees with some of the basic knowledge of, and vocabulary for, building relationships with and among Two Spirit people. This includes pronouns and the importance of respecting people's pronouns at work and everyday life. [Click here for details and to register](#). This webinar is free, thanks to our support for Mission and Service.

United in Learning: Brand New Programs

[Click here](#) to read about upcoming learning opportunities in the June Newsletter from United in Learning. There is always something new, so visit the [United in Learning](#) web site often.

Northern Spirit Regional Council Office
13535 122 Avenue NW Edmonton AB T5L 2V7 780.435.3995
www.northernspiritrc.ca

Earl Reaburn, Pastoral Relations Minister
ereaburn@united-church.ca

Kathy Jackson, Administrative Support
kjackson@united-church.ca