



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada

Regional Council News

May 3, 2022

Articles and Information of interest to the people of the Northern Spirit Region.

If you have news to share, 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. Our Community of Faith Events Calendar is open 24/7 for posting about events that are open to the public. Events can be posted directly to the Newsfeed: <https://northernspiritrc.ca/add-your-community-event/>. Upcoming deadlines: Friday, May 6 for the next Events issue, and Friday, May 13 for the next News issue.

Family News

Northern Spirit 2022 Regional Celebration of Ministries Service

We will be celebrating one ordination and a number of retirements this year, as well as installing the next Chairperson for the Regional Council Executive, and remembering those who have died since the 2021 Annual Meeting. If you know of someone who should be included in the Memorials, please let Kathy Jackson know: kjackson@united-church.ca. On **Sunday, June 5, 2022**, at 1:00 PM (MDT), you are invited to celebrate with us at Spirit of Hope United Church, Edmonton, or live-streamed via YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMOKXwV3sLQ>.

News from the Pews ... and other Ministries

First United Church, Fort Saskatchewan: Caring for the Caregivers

Are you, or someone you know, caring for an adult in your family? Are you the caregiver for your grandparent, parent, adult child, partner, or close family friend? If these questions apply to you please take note. The Rev. Trisha Elliot has written, *How the Light Shines: Stories, Strategies and Spiritual Practices for Caregivers of People with Dementia*, for caregivers want to not only hone their caring skills, but also to deepen their relationship with God through their care. It explores feelings of loss and challenge, but turns always towards potential and hope. A Study of the book will be held online, May 11 and 18 (MDT), and is open to all persons. To register by May 5, please contact the church office, 780-998-4060, or fspc@shaw.ca.

First United Church, Wetaskiwin: A Gathering with Douglas Cardinal

On Saturday, May 14, 2:00 pm (MDT), at the Manluk Theatre, Wetaskiwin Family and Community Support Services will have the honor of hosting a speech and Q&A with Douglas Cardinal. We are hosting this event with hopes of opening an important and needed dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Wetaskiwin. Douglas Cardinal is a Canadian Indigenous architect, based in Ottawa. He was born in Calgary, Alberta, and attended St. Joseph's Convent Residential School near Red Deer. He has also worked extensively throughout his career to advocate for, and promote, the rights of

Indigenous peoples in Canada. To register for this FREE event, fill out this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/iYpBXBds5G37gNJx7>. Please note that space is limited.

Grace United Church, Lloydminster: Soup for the Soul

Grace United Church uses its core value of innovation to help community members feel safe, loved, and comforted. In its third year of operation, their Soup for the Soul program serves containers of homemade soup, as part of their food hamper program, supporting homeless individuals, low-income individuals and families, and other marginalised groups in the community. The containers have an encouraging Bible verse on them, to provide hope, and a reminder that GUC is there to support them. Donations from individuals and community groups keep the program running by the volunteers that prepare the soup each week, bringing joy and comfort on many levels, according to Family Support Worker, Lana Lane. Zoe Chaytors of EDGE interviewed Lana: click to view [Lana's conversation with Zoe](#).

Living Spirit United Church: Partnership for Learning about Justice and Reconciliation

Living Spirit United Church, Drayton Valley, Alberta, in partnership with All Saints Anglican Church, were excited to offer our community the "Blanket Exercise" on April 20. Twenty-six people shared the interactive educational program to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The session was facilitated by Wilson Bearhead and his daughter, Seneca Dueck. It was a moving and powerful experience. Funds for this event were provided by the United Church Justice and Reconciliation Fund, and the space was graciously contributed by All Saints. Our partnership has made a difference in our community! We look forward to new possibilities to partner and live out God's light and love in our corner of the world.

Hardisty Lake United Church Camp: Staff Positions Available

Hardisty Lake United Church Camp is happy to announce that they will be OPEN this summer! And they need you to make camp happen. Check out the available positions: Director, Life Guard/Waterfront, Cabin Counsellors, Camp Cook, Cook Assistant. You can see [full details and application forms](#) on the camp website. LET'S BRING THE FUN BACK INTO SUMMER!

Featured News ...

Soul Tending: An Evening to Nurture the Soul for our Community of Faith Members

The Regional Council is offering a gift of appreciation and connection to lay leaders in its Communities of Faith. On Friday, May 6, from 7:00-9:00 pm (MDT), please join this online event, via Zoom, hosted by the Lay Leadership Support Committee. The evening will begin with listening to Biblical Storyteller, Renee Inglot, a member of Robertson-Wesley United Church, Edmonton, unravel a tale that will draw you into imagination and cradle your soul. Then we will move to a time of meeting old friends and new for conversation and reconnecting as a people of faith belonging to the United Church community. The evening will end with a lovely experience of connecting body and soul as Carrie Schmidt, a friend of the United Church from Wetaskiwin, leads a gentle releasing session of chair yoga (suitable for those with mobility challenges and general creaky bones). If you would like to join us, please let us know by email to northernspirit@united-church.ca, and we will reply with the Zoom link.

General Council 43 Executive

On April 30, the Executive elected at General Council 43 (2018) held the last meeting of their 4-year term. We extend our appreciation for all of the work they did on our behalf, through the restrictions,

stresses and singular decisions due to COVID-19, including the extension of their term of office when General Council 44 was postponed to this year. To read about their last meeting, or to catch up on other news from GC43, please visit the [General Council 43 web site](#).

Let Us Gather: Worship Services for Seniors' Homes and Hospital Chapels

With over-worked ministers and lay leaders in mind, retired United Church Minister, Barbara Zimmerman, of Castor AB, has published this tried and true, pick-up-and-go resource, which is now available for purchase. The book contains 23 worship services, each about 30-40 minutes in length, complete with prayers, printed Bible passages, hymn suggestions, and a "reflection" on the theme or the passages. It is available as a PDF (\$15) or printed (\$29.65, including postage). To order, contact Barbara Zimmerman: bdzim@yahoo.com. Payment by E-transfer is preferred.

Anti-Racism Action Planning for Communities of Faith

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils invite one lay member and one ministry personnel from up to 24 communities of faith within our bounds to this series of four weekly sessions **June 8, 15, 22, and 29**. We'll focus on the new book [Wait - is this racist?](#), by Kerry Connelly, with Bryana Clover and Josh Riddick. We'll bring this work into the Canadian and United Church context with resource people and a focus on the United Church Anti Racism Action Plan. We hope this will support and encourage your anti-racism commitments and work, and that you will help the Regional Council move its own commitments forward. This is advance notice with more details to come. Please [see the registration form](#) for a few more details.

Mental Health Week Resources

Mental Health Week continues May 2-8, 2022. Please take a look at the national church's [new collection](#) of Mental Health and Wellness Worship Resources, [created in partnership](#) with the Mental Health Network of the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Christ, and The United Church of Canada.

Summer Job Postings for Young Adults

Get your youth and young adult thinking cap on! The United Church has just posted a number of excellent opportunities for students under the federal government's summer work program. We can thank COVID-adaptation that most can be done from anywhere. Please have a look at the link and share widely with students in this age group. Help our national church hire from across the land, and help students connect with our wider church. The application deadlines are coming up fast, so hurry and check out the [details of Canada Summer Jobs](#) listed here.

Summer is Coming and Camping Ministry is Here!

We have five United Church camps here in the Northern Spirit region: [links to them are here](#). They are all very busy gearing up for summer programs, including that long-delayed return to in person camping. Keep them in mind for your support and volunteer hours, and for the youth and kids in your life.

Camp Fyrefly

In addition, there are camping programs for Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ children and youth throughout Canada. [Camp Fyrefly in Alberta](#) is a ground-breaking program, based out of the University of Alberta, and beyond. [Rainbow Camp in Ontario](#) has a strong United Church connection, is 2SLGBTQIA+ focused, and is open to campers near and far. There are currently no camps in the United Church that are Affirming, under the Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble process, which has been endorsed by the General Council. Many are already working on an affirming pathway and transforming their programs,

making such a positive difference for youth and adults alike. Consider how your outdoor ministry or Community of Faith can become a space that offers public, intentional, and explicit inclusion of gender- and sexually-diverse people of all ages, year-round!

In Other News ...

May is Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Have a look at the [many worship resources and personal reflections](#) available through the United Church as we celebrate the diverse cultures, languages, faith traditions, and struggles of the majority of the world's population. The United Church is blessed with many sibling churches throughout the Asian continent, which have shaped our history, theologies, liturgy, and understandings of justice and dignity. With United Church members of Asian and Pacific Island roots, we give thanks for these relationships in God's family. Two recent hymn videos for our worship use include [Cast Your Boat Out](#) (Korean version), and [The Bird Song](#) (in honour of a young queer Korean.)

Prayer for the People of the Philippines

We add a prayer for the people of the Philippines, and our full communion partner, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, as the country votes in national elections on May 9, at a time when the pandemic, natural disaster, escalating violence and human rights violations have created profound poverty and fear for many.

What's Up with Minutes for Mission?

Of course, you want to share inspiring stories of the transformational work of Mission & Service! Of course, you enjoyed the booklets that used to be mailed to Communities of Faith. Times are changing though, and we want to make sure you are still reading these meaningful stories and sharing them with others in your congregation. Stories are now created on an ongoing basis so that they are relevant and connected. They are shared on the [United Church Website](#). You can also have them delivered right to your email inbox, packaged nicely in the *God's Mission, Our Gifts* newsletter. [Sign up for that here](#). If you want to dig in to Mission & Service a little deeper, check out these [resources for congregational enthusiasts](#), annual planning documents, and Your Generosity Matters stories, worship materials and videos. If you have any questions about Mission & Service, please contact vnelson@united-church.ca.

Vacation Time!

Attention Community of Faith Worship and/or Ministry and Personnel Committees.

Summer is coming ... (as evidenced by the arrival of spring, we hope). If you are wondering about arranging for visiting preachers during your Ministry Personnel vacation time, please have a look at the [Worship Resources](#) page on our web site. Among other resources, there are links to a list of Lay Worship Leaders and Ministry Personnel who have indicated a willingness to provide pulpit supply.

Korea Peace Appeal Continues ...

The [Korea Peace Appeal](#) continues to collect signatures since the January launch of the United Church Korea Peace Appeal. Each signature on the petition brings the Appeal closer to its goal of 100 million signatures world-wide. Please consider signing, and encouraging others! [Sign the petition here](#). See a video and [the full update here](#). What is the continued impact of a war that never really ended? Rev. Dr. Kyongja (Kay) Cho [shares the story of two Korean brothers](#) forced into the military on different sides during the Korean War.

Significant Poll and Study on Canadian Perceptions of Religion

During Holy Week, the non-profit Angus Reid Institute launched a comprehensive look at the faith journeys of Canadians, not just among majority religious communities, but across the religious spectrum. They write, “This data explores not only the connection and conviction of Canadians of faith among more traditionally prevalent demographics – Catholic, Mainline Protestant, and Evangelical communities – but also among Canadians who identify as Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh. What do these communities of faith have in common? How are they different?” This extensive work can help us as the United Church better understand our community context. [Please click here to see the summary and full documentation.](#)

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