



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada

Regional Council News

October 18, 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 northernspirit@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 events that are open to the public. Events can be posted directly to the Newsfeed: <https://northernspiritrc.ca/add-your-community-event/>. Upcoming Newsletter deadlines: Friday, October 21 for the next Events issue, and Friday, October 28 for the next News issue.

Family News

NEW: Northern Spirit regional annual meeting wraps up; hold May 4-7 2023!

Many thanks to the hundred delegates and visitors registered for our annual meeting this past weekend. A highlight for many was the small group conversations that built on three stories of ministries surviving and learning through COVID. We talked together about envisioning church differently, our needs and hopes for the future, and about decisions made at General Council 44 and how these affect our Region. Prayer, communion, song, and reports from across the Region and church rounded out our time together.

Notes from the small groups will be made available soon on the [Regional Council meeting page](#), along with summary notes thanks to Susan Waldie and Bev Diebert (Living Skies). Thank you to planning team Sharon Adams, Deborah Hoekstra, Leslie Penny, and Helen Reed for our time together.

Please hold **Thursday May 4- Sunday May 7** for a hoped-for in person meeting of the Regional Council, location to be announced. People are needed for the planning committee! Please email northernspirit@united-church.ca if you are interested in helping create this long-delayed meeting space.

Update on coverage of the office coordinator's work: We will have further announcements soon; for now, please see [this summary of who is doing what](#) to cover Kathy Jackson's work following her retirement.

News from the Pews ... and other Ministries

Vegreville United Church: Busy Fall

Vegreville United Church invites you to participate in any of their fall events. On **Wednesday, Oct. 19th 5:00-7:00 pm**, they will hold a Ham Supper (Take Out or Dine In) with payment by donation. Next, everyone is welcome to their Messy Church event on **Friday, October 21st from 5:00-7:00 pm**. Come for Games, Crafts, Bible Stories, Music, and Supper. Please call the office at 780-632-2338 or email vegucc@telusplanet.net if you are interested in joining in on the fun.

Historical Society Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the United Church Historical Society will be held **Saturday, 22 October 2022 at 10:00am** at Spirit of Hope United Church, 7909 82nd Avenue NW, Edmonton. Business will be followed by a speaker, yet to be determined. For further information, contact Dr. Robert MacDonald, Secretary, at 403-282-2014 or rjmacdon@ucalgary.ca.

NEW: Dragging Church Halloween

Mill Woods United Church (15 Grand Meadow Crescent) invites you to please join them for a **SPOOK-TACULAR** evening on **Saturday, October 29th from 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm**. All Proceeds going to CHEW Project. Suggested \$5 donation for the all ages drag show. For more information call 780-463-2202.

Featured News ...

NEW: New United Church national insurance plan for your ministry starting December

Effective December 1, 2022, The United Church of Canada is launching an insurance program aimed at providing United Church ministries with more affordable and accessible property and liability insurance coverage. **UCC Protect/United Assurance** insurance offers coverage to address the unique needs of congregations and incorporated ministries such as camps, seniors' homes, and education centres. This plan is the only insurance program endorsed and funded by the General Council Office. [See these Frequently Asked Questions](#) for details on the transition from UCC Protect to United Assurance. [Here's a website summary](#) to share with your Trustees, Board or Council.

NEW: Emergency funds/ Mission and Service update on Hurricane Fiona

Hurricane Fiona has caused devastating damage across Atlantic Canada and Eastern Quebec. Communities throughout the regions of Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters, First Dawn Eastern Edge, Regional Council 15, Nakonha:ka and beyond will need support as they navigate the road to recovery. [Donations are being accepted here](#); gifts will go towards long-term rebuilding.

NEW: CCS Friday's are back!

Join the Centre for Christian Studies and meet new program staff, Alcris Limongi, on **Friday, October 28th**, as she helps us explore *Getting Rid of "Us and Them" in the Church*.

In this session we will briefly name the processes of exclusion, marginalization, and structural inequality that are often unexamined - what we call "othering" - and seek actions that move towards a church of belonging where there is mutual power, access and opportunity for all people who share the space. It's free to attend, you just need to register for a zoom link. To register, head here:

<https://ccsonline.ca/2022/09/ccs-fridays-are-back-2022-2023/>

Coming up on CCS Fridays: **November 18**--Christmas Rapture—a look at the apocalyptic lectionary scripture for November 27. **December (date TBA)** Lambeth Learnings--what are the important Lambeth Learnings that could inform inter-church and ecumenical relations?

NEW: KAIROS Prairies North annual meeting: Activating Hope: Faith and the Climate Crisis,

Saturday Oct 29, 9am-2pm Mountain Daylight/ Central Standard. Online or at Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary, join ecumenical movement KAIROS in SK and AB for a time of learning, community, and a brief annual meeting. Come out and support this movement for church justice here in our area. The United Church is a founding member of KAIROS. [More about the theme.](#) [Register here.](#)

NEW: Palestine- Art as Resistance - sponsored by ECORC and Shining Waters Palestine Networks.

Wednesdays 10-11:30 a.m.(EST.) November 9, 16, 23 Join us for a three part series of videos, speakers and conversations on the topic of how arts are used as acts of resistance in Palestine . The series will hear: **1.** Yahya Natour speak about using the art of storytelling with youth and young people to reduce stress and trauma while empowering them. **2.** Alaa Abu Saa .Dar Qandil, the Community and Arts Centre in Tulkarem. The Centre encourages young people to feel hope in their futures through joys experienced in engaging in arts. **3.** View The film *"Stitching Palestine"* and discuss the narratives of 12 women connected by the ancient art of Embroidery. Directors will be available for questions. To register: email barblloyd@rogers.com

NEW: Climate justice vigils invitation coming up Nov 11-13

The ecumenical group For the Love of Creation invites groups across Canada to [host candlelight vigils in their own communities](#) on the weekend of **November 11-13, 2022**. This will be a time to reflect and share our love for our planet, our concern for our fellow human beings at risk from climate change, and our hopes for truly transformative action to happen through the governments gathering for the United Nations “Conference of the Parties” (COP). This is a meeting of governments who have signed on to the global climate action agreement. This includes Canada and US.

End the Korean War Appeal; 7,000 more signatures needed

At this eight-month mark of The United Church of Canada’s 10,000 Signature Korea Peace Appeal, the campaign has moved [2,812 people to sign the appeal](#). Korea Peace Appeal champions continue to invite you to sign and to encourage others to participate. This is a special support and solidarity action requested by our long-time church partners in South Korea, where the continued state of war has a real impact, especially on family reunification. [Please find the petition and background here](#).

NEW: Starting yesterday, Albertans six months of age and older can get their flu vaccine.

Albertans over 65 are eligible to receive a high-dose flu vaccine, while those aged six months to 64 years will receive the regular dose. Both protect people from four common strains of the influenza virus. “Getting your flu vaccine is an easy way to reduce your risk of getting the flu, help to limit the spread of the virus and reduce your risk of being hospitalized due to influenza.”

In Other News ...

Affirming Connections Leaders’ Day, October 29

This is actually an Event notice, but we’re sneaking it in because it’s of special relevance to Northern Spirit. From conversations hosted by Northern Spirit’s Affirming Task Group over the past two years, we know that rural, remote, and smaller communities face some specific and unique challenges in any Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ affirming journeys. And they have specific gifts they bring to that journey, along with real impacts. On **October 29**, Alberta’s and the United Church’s own Affirming Connections will host a gathering looking at “Small town- big impact”, honouring the role of smaller communities in creating Affirming cultures and spaces, and discussing needs, supports, and ideas. Your presence is important! Please try to send a rep or two from your ministry. [Click here for full details](#). [Tickets are available here](#).

Bold Witness, Relentless Grace Conference

November 4-6. In-person in Calgary, with online options available; [Click here for full details](#)
This conference is offered by the Chinook Winds and Pacific Mountain Regional Councils for everyone. Can’t attend in person? [Have a look here](#) for information about setting up satellite communities.

For Church Treasurers and Payroll Administrators: Travel Reimbursement News

The United Church General Secretary, Michael Blair, has extended the temporary travel reimbursement rate of \$0.46/km until **December 31, 2022**. The General Council Executive is also reviewing the rate for 2023, as well as the 2023 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Stay tuned for more information once it becomes available.

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