



NORTHERN SPIRIT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The United Church of Canada

Regional News: January 10, 2023

News of interest to the people of the Northern Spirit Region.
If you have news to share, please write a short description,
with a clear headline and a link to more information,
and send it to northernspirit@united-church.ca.

Our local events calendar for United Church ministries is coming back to life!

[Click here to view it.](#) And [click here to submit your event.](#)

Family News

★ We have a Regional Council directory!

And we hope it will be a good connecting/ re-connecting tool for you. It's a password-protected PDF designed to connect Regional Council members with: Regional governance; ministry personnel on call or appointment, retired ministry personnel and lay delegates who attended the 2022 Regional Council Meeting; communities of faith and other ministries; some partner and wider-church groups; and staff. An email invitation was sent out last week. Please [have a look at our new directory page](#) for instructions if you didn't get an email, keeping in mind that for reasons of privacy and security, there are some restrictions on who can access the directory.

★ 2023 Annual Declarations

It's a new year AND... it's time for alllll ministry personnel (including candidates and honorary associate ministers) to locate your most recent criminal record check, visit ChurchHub, and complete your annual declaration! First time doing this? Forget what you did last year? NO PROBLEM! Vocational Minister, Laura Fohse, is here to help (contact info is on the website) or you can follow the handy dandy how-to guide [by clicking here](#). Why leave for tomorrow what you could do today?!

★ Financial and Ministry Assessments

Have you completed your Financial and Ministry Assessment yet? These provide valuable information to the Region, and help connect Communities of Faith with the resources they need. [To access the forms, click here](#). If you are unsure whether your Community's Assessment has been completed already, or if you have any further questions, please contact the Northern Spirit Regional Office.

★ Pastoral Relations Minister on medical leave

Pastoral Relations Minister Earl Reaburn is on medical leave until at least mid-January. Your prayers and support are most welcome; Earl tells us the situation is not life threatening. For now, Wendy Galloway has offered to do some coverage - many thanks, Wendy. Her email: wgalloway@telusplanet.net. Thank you to the people of the Regional Council for your patience and understanding.

Featured News

★ Cost of living changes

A reminder that on December 21 Community of Faith treasurers and administrators received information regarding the outcome from the triennial review of cost of living group assignments. The revised [cost of living group assignments data is here](#). Northern Spirit data begins on p. 22 of the document called "Revised COL Group Assignments 2022". [Have a look at our website for more information](#); this is a national process, and the Region is sharing this as information only.

★ Embracing the Spirit grants on pause; lots of other options available to your ministry

A number of ministries in our Regional Council have benefitted from Embracing the Spirit grants over the years. As The United Church of Canada embraces the exciting transition into the new strategic plan it will pause some current granting opportunities, including Embracing the Spirit (Innovation, Growth, and New Ministry Grants). However: please read on, because there are still many, many national grants available to your ministry. [Please click here for an overview](#).

Some key Regional Committees need your help!

Can you share the load - a shared job makes the work easier! Helen Reed, Chair of the Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive, explains some of the urgent needs for your time and skills. Please [see the invitation from Helen](#), and let us know how you can help.

Get Support to Create your Stewardship Campaign!

If your congregation hasn't undertaken a stewardship campaign in a while, consider registering for a 2-week learning module on creating a congregational giving program with Called to be the Church: The Journey. There are 2 opportunities to participate in the program this month. [Learn more here](#).

In Other News ...

★ Streaming It Forward

A large number of Communities of Faith in the region are now publicly live-streaming or posting recordings of their church services -- thanks covid ;). One of the opportunities this creates is that churches without in-person worship leadership can still gather and watch a church service on a screen in their sanctuary as an alternative to bringing in pulpit supply. Here's an idea: ***if your church regularly streams another congregation's service, consider sending them a donation as a note of appreciation for their online ministry.***

★ The Art of Living and Dying

The Art of Living and Dying workshops and Circles of Trust study series draw from the wisdom of our ancestors that quality of life is enhanced when we do not live in fear or denial of suffering or our mortality. The first workshop will be taking place **Friday, March 3 and Saturday, March 4 from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm..** Special UCC member discount is available, as well as group discounts for groups of 5 or more. For registration & more information, please contact karin@sacredartofliving.org, or call 888-383-4171.

★ Reminder: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023

This annual week of ecumenical collaboration runs January 18-25. [Click here for resources and much more](#).

Reminder: Deadline for Mission & Service Transfers Changed!

Beginning in January 2023, the deadline for Mission & Service transfers will be January 15. That means that pastoral charges need to make their final 2022 Mission & Service transfer by **January 15, 2023**. We are making this change because it will improve our accountability, accuracy, and transparency when reporting back to you on annual results. We also expect that January 15 is closer to when the majority of communities of faith have finalized—or nearly finalized—their year-end financial statements. If you have questions or need support to set up electronic transfers, please contact Nicole Chicote at 1-800-268-3781 x3072 or nchicote@united-church.ca.

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

Notes on the proceedings and from the small groups are now available on the [Regional Council meeting page](#), along with summary notes thanks to Susan Waldie and Bev Diebert (Living Skies). 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.

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