



News from the Region: June 13, 2023



News of interest to the people of the Northern Spirit Region.

If you have news or events 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.



★ Add your local events to our Northern Spirit events calendar! ★
[Click here to view upcoming events.](#) And [click here to submit your event.](#)

Family News

★ **Regional letter and resource on Pride vigilance and courage**

A [Pride season letter has been sent to all ministries](#) in Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils. In light of vandalism involving United Churches across Canada, and angry words sent to 2SLGBTQIA+ Affirming ministries, the letter thanks the many ministries of all kinds who offer a public, intentional and explicit support to Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people in the face of a sharp increase of hate speech and attacks. It invites faithful vigilance and courage through the summer Pride season, and offers resources on dealing with harassment. [Download it here](#) (PDF) and share widely.

An [accompanying article on our website](#) outlines a little of the history and context of the extremist movements that have gained strength in Canada in recent years. Many thanks to Chloe Burns for transforming a lot of text into clear and colourful layout and to Affirming ministry and task group members for their wisdom. If you have any concerns, or further ideas for addressing the situation outlined in the letter and article, please call your Regional Council office or Regional Minister Julie Graham, jgraham@united-church.ca

★ **Open House: Pastoral Relations Minister's Retirement, June 14, 3-6 p.m.**

You are invited to join us for a celebration on the occasion of Pastoral Relations Minister Rev. Earl Reaburn's retirement. An open house to celebrate Earl Reaburn's years in ministry will be held on June 14th, from 3 – 6 p.m., at Kirk Community Centre (13535 122 Ave NW, Edmonton). in Edmonton. This is an opportunity for you to drop in to wish Earl well, and partake in some refreshments. If you are unable to attend in person, you are invited to [tune in via Zoom at 4:30 pm while Earl shares a few words](#). We hope to see you tomorrow for this time of celebration & gathering!

★ **Congratulations to St Paul's Grande Prairie on becoming officially Affirming!**

St Paul's, blessings on your continued journey of deep inclusion in the name of the Holy One who taught us to love first and always. As this [CBC article notes](#), St. Paul's United in Grande Prairie is the first affirming ministry in the Peace Country. Council chair Karen Scott notes, "... work toward inclusion also happens outside of Sunday service. She attends the annual Grande Prairie Pride events on behalf of St. Paul's — often to the surprise of attendees. "And people over and over again have come up and said, 'Wow, you're a church, you're here? I'm amazed.'" May you keep on amazing; may the Spirit keep breathing life into your Affirming ministry!

Featured News

June is Pride Month: Celebrating Our 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities

As June begins, Pride celebrations take place in communities across the country. We wish the Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ community a happy Pride Month and encourage allies to renew their commitment to fighting alongside the 2SLGBTQIA+ community for a future where all can live in freedom and security. [Read the full statement from the United Church of Canada.](#)

National Indigenous History Month & National Indigenous Peoples Day

June is National Indigenous History Month, a time to commemorate and honour the history, contributions, and diversity of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples in Canada. The summer solstice, celebrated by many Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island for millennia, is recognized as National Indigenous Peoples Day in Canada (**June 21, 2023**). For those looking to prepare for Indigenous Day of Prayer (**June 18, 2023**),

we have [two new worship resources available](#). We encourage you to make connections with Indigenous neighbours, dive deeper into Indigenous history, and experience the beauty of Indigenous cultures and traditions. Please look carefully at your local gatherings, which are a rich opportunity to learn. Show up whenever and however you can; use your community of faith signage, space, and budget to lend your public support.

★ **Radically Welcoming and Rural: The Opportunities of Diversity in the Rural Church: Thursday June 22, 2023 at 11 am Mountain Time**

This workshop is about diversity in the Rural Church, LGBTQQ2SIA+, immigrants as parishioners, ministers from other countries, – anyone who identifies differently... How do rural communities embrace diversity? This workshop is sponsored by the United church Rural Ministry Network and is offered at no charge to the participants. You can [register here](#).

★ **Diane Strickland Presentation: *Releasing More Gospel Ministry in a Complex Context*: June 20, 7 p.m.**

Diane Strickland will be giving a presentation on **June 20, at 7 p.m.**, open to Communities of Faith, Lay Representatives & Leaders, and anyone interested. Diane, a Community and Workplace Traumatologist, will discuss topics such as complex ministry context, identifying a biblical model for ministry in these days, and revisiting connections and relationships in and outside communities of faith. [Please contact the office to register & receive the Zoom link.](#)

Wider Church News & Resources

★ **Indigenous Peoples Day video from the Moderator; Indigenous Day of Prayer resources**

In her message for National Indigenous Peoples Day, Moderator Carmen Lansdowne offers many ways you and your community of faith can celebrate or mark this day. Stream the Moderator's message on [YouTube here](#), or [view and download the file here](#). Sunday June 18, honour the Indigenous Day of Prayer [using these resources](#) (or others!) and sharing the video in worship or through an email list for home viewing.

In Case You Missed It...

From the Affirming Task Group: A Note of Thanks to the Region

Northern Spirit voted to become an Affirming Region at the 2023 Annual Meeting, on May 6th. [Click here to read a note of thanks from the Affirming Task Group, whose work over the last three years guided our Region in discerning & exploring this decision.](#)

Connecting Lay Leaders in our Region

The Lay Leadership Support Committee is working on developing ways to connect Lay Leaders across Northern Spirit. **Note that this is not exclusively for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders, but all Lay people**, whether you lead by sitting on a committee, volunteering with church fundraisers, or connecting people in your community. Are you feeling isolated? Are you seeking time and safe space for sharing challenges and concerns, ideas and solutions? If you are looking for reconnection and/or learning about the Regional Council and how to access the various resources that are available, [please click here to fill out a brief survey with your thoughts](#). Responses received will help the Support Committee discern what form these gatherings or connections might best take.

Worship Resources:

See United Church [Worship Resources](#) for upcoming Sundays and special celebrations.

[Third after Pentecost - June 18, 2023](#)

[Indigenous Day of Prayer - June 18, 2023](#)

[Fourth after Pentecost - June 25, 2023](#)

[Fifth after Pentecost - July 2, 2023](#)

[Sixth after Pentecost - July 9, 2023](#)

[Seventh after Pentecost - July 16, 2023](#)

** Votes for the remit process now underway!* We invite you to learn more and explore the [remit process](#). / [Click here for more information about this remit!](#) The deadline date is March 31, 2024.



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