

Return to Hope...

September 2023

Here we are in Fall already. As each Season and Month ends and a new one rushes in we find ourselves wondering where the time runs away to.

In my own community we are jumping in to Fall with a stewardship program to reconnect our congregation members with each other and also with the wider community. We are recognizing that we need to be reminded of the gifts that our community holds and can share with others.

I want to encourage all of the churches in our Region to move into this season with Hope. What are the possibilities for you this Fall? Are you going to engage in rich conversations about your church? Are you willing to reach out to other congregations to share energy and hope with each other? Do you have projects that we could highlight or rejoice in with you?

We know that, in our Region, we have churches who are in areas severely affected by fires, churches who are finding that they are struggling to be church with the weight of finances and changing demographics. Under these circumstances, Hope can be hard to find.

If you know of such a church, please reach out to them. Offer your prayers, offer your gifts, walk with them in their discerning and their grieving. Be Hope for them the best you can.

If you find yourself as part of one of those churches please accept what is held out to you, and name if there is something else you need. Hope is standing at your door wanting to hold you on your journey.

There are opportunities to be Hope Bearers in your local community and for your regional community. Having engaged supervisors for churches without ministers offers Hope that churches are not alone. Having engaged liaisons for churches looking for ministers offers Hope as guides through visioning and naming each community's gifts. Having facilitators, mediators and church geeks to guide communities through letting go of "what was" to move toward re-envisioning what church might look like now offers Hope in challenging moments. How can you bring hope to someone in our Region by sharing your gifts with them? We are no longer as constrained by distance as we used to be. If you want to talk about where you can best serve as Hope – be in touch with Adam Hall (AHall2@united-church.ca) and he'll explore some options with you.

You've heard me say this before... but you don't need an invitation from the Region to go and talk to your neighbor about what you can share and be for each other. Just pick up the phone and do it!

In this Fall beginning, let's find and be the Hope for each other on our various journeys.
Come on church...we really can do this, I know we can.

Blessings,

Helen

Rev. Helen Reed, Chairperson, Northern Spirit Regional Council

