



NORTHERN SPIRIT
REGIONAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



News from the Region: October 18, 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 Affirming celebration postponed until 2024; Celebration of Ministries going ahead Oct 21: all welcome!**

Illness and limited capacity are too common a refrain for many of us this fall. The members of the former Affirming Task Group have decided to postpone the Affirming Celebration that was to have taken place Saturday October 21 until there is more capacity for planning a celebration that can include as many people in the Regional Council as possible. Pride Sunday in June 2024 is one alternate possibility.

Everyone is still invited to come out to the celebration of ministries service. [Full details are here.](#) In person or online, celebrate the ordination of Myeongnam Park and the recognition of Linda Roberts, and to covenant with pastoral relations minister Rev Adam Hall. Dessert to follow (BYOD if you're online). The service will be [livestreamed on the Region's YouTube channel.](#)

★ **Invitation: Hiding in Plain Sight: The Impact of Immigration, Friday October 20, 6:30 PM, in person at Grace United Church, 6215 104 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB T6A 0X9.**

[Live streamed on the Grace United YouTube channel.](#)

Join Chris Pullenayegem, Vancouver School of Theology, and members of the Western Intercultural Ministries Network as we continue our multi-year tradition of hosting deep and sometimes difficult conversations on pressing intercultural issues. Immigration is a complex and sometimes hot topic in our churches and our society. Come out in person or online and join the conversation! Bring your questions and dilemmas, your respectful curiosity, and your hopes for an intercultural church Coffee and fellowship after.

Book Sale! Pre-order for Celebration of Ministries Gathering - Last Chance!

Sharon Adams is selling the Wood Lake books left over from the Regional Meeting plus a few more that she tried to save from the landfill when Wood Lake closed. [Here is a list of the books available](#) and she would be happy to bring some / all to the October 21st Celebration Gathering at Kirk United for pick up or purchase. Please contact Sharon at sharad2224@yahoo.ca, or text or call 587-297-1570 if you want any of these set aside for you.

Featured News

★ **United Church global partners in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories**

With the rest of the world, the people of the United Church are watching the terrible violence gripping Israelis and Palestinians, and longing for a different way forward. Prayer, checking in on our neighbours of different faiths and roots, honest and respectful conversations, and an eventual financial appeal are all choices we can make. In doing this, may we hold in our hearts and souls the horrific human and ecological impact of war. The United Church has particular connections to specific partner groups in the region. [Here is the link to the global partner list](#) (PDF). In Gaza, which is currently being bombed, Mission and Service supports the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees, which is a very longstanding partner of the United Church. Team Leader for Global Partnerships Patti Talbot said DSPR's offices in Gaza were bombed and destroyed on October 16.

★ **October 21 demonstrations against 2SLGBTQIA inclusion in schools**

Saturday October 21 the country will again see anti-2SLGBTQIA+ activists plan to rally at legislatures, government offices or legislatures, and school board offices across the country under the "[1 Million March 4 Children](#)" banner. While they claim to be in support of "[parental rights](#)," this is explicitly an anti-2SLGBTQIA+ rally. Unfortunately, the demonstrations in December included many people of different faiths. Numerous social media posts noted United Church presence with appreciation. Please be aware of 2SLGBTQIA+ and allies events taking place the same day in your location. The Million March for Inclusion group on Facebook is tracking all events as best it can. [Here is a summary of ideas](#), and some graphics for you to use, shaped in part of over 60 congregational Affirming leaders from the Prairies and north who gathered in September to plan a response to this ongoing movement. As Regional Council that has voted to become Affirming, we encourage your ministry to be aware of the fear and hate that exist in so many of our communities, and the possibilities for a public, intentional and explicit expression of God's love. Christians need to publicly proclaim that love in word and deed, given the immense hurt already caused by this movement.

Wider Church News & Resources

★ **Updated Resources on Indigenous Church Remit**

Our church is in the midst of an important journey that requires a vote from your pastoral charge governing body between now and the end of March 2024. Remit 1 asks the church to give pre-emptive approval for whatever the Indigenous Church determines in the future as the place it will have in the United Church, guided by the Calls to the Church. This would also remove the need for further remit approvals. In May Northern Spirit Regional Council voted in favour of the Remit. Now it's your Board or Council's turn. Now there are more resources to help your Board or Council's discernment, discussion, and decision-making. [Have a look at this updated list](#), which includes Regional meeting 2023 presentations and discussion, with time stamps for different focus area identified in each video. We are also planning Regional Council open learning circles. If your Board or Council has questions, please [contact Julie Graham](#).

Minimum Salary Schedule for 2024

The updated Minimum Salary Schedule for 2024 has been published on The United Church of Canada website. [You can view it at this link](#). This contains important information for the cost of living adjustment for ministry personnel (effective January 1, 2024), as well as the visiting minister rate. You will note that the schedule includes an increase in terms of the cost of living (6.3%). This amount was communicated to the communities of faith and Ministry personnel earlier in the year (2023), yet it may still come as a surprise to you and may have implication for your 2024 budgets. This

amount will only be in place for 2024. The General Council executive has determined that a new process of determining these cost of living increases is needed and that process will be put into place for 2025. If you have any questions at all about these guidelines please reach out to our Pastoral Relations Minister, Adam Hall, by email or phone: adam.hall@united-church.ca | 1-800-268-3781 ext. 6443.

Webinar for Church Treasurers Summary Highlights

Some highlights for those who were not able to attend the September 27 webinar:

CEBA and UCC Covid loans – Repayments are due by **December 31**. If you don't pay in full by that date, you will not receive the benefit of the forgivable portion. If your Community of Faith is in danger of not being able to pay off the CEBA loan, General Council will consider loans for the purpose of paying the CEBA loan in time so you receive the benefit of the forgivable portion. Please send your request to the hdootoff@united-church.ca by October 31. General Council is recommending paying your CEBA loan by end of November. Interest on loans start Jan 1, 2024.

Other items covered – Information now available for 2024 budgeting. UCC Protect insurance December renewals coming soon. Changes coming for T4 reporting effective Jan 1, 2024. Best option to run all payroll through ADP. Possible increased CRA reporting requirements related to trust and restricted funds. CRA putting pressure on charities who are behind in T3010 and other reports. Fines and/or revocation penalties may apply.

This is a summary and does not cover all the information provided. [Click here to watch the full seminar, which is highly recommended!](#)

In Case You Missed It...

Faithful Footprints energy efficiency opportunity for Northern Spirit

[Faithful Footprints](#) is a national church program that helps congregations lower their energy use through careful retrofits. They asked the Region to tell you that they have some free energy audits available to congregations within a three -our drive of Edmonton (and they apologise to those outside that radius- but are very happy to work with you on other options). And they have other options on tap for everyone. Please [contact Jessica Ryan](#) if you'd like to look at reducing your carbon footprint as part of the United Church's wider climate commitments.

General Council Executive Meeting Summary

September's meeting of the General Council Executive addressed (among many other things): Principles-based Justice; renouncing claims to former mission properties in the Democratic Republic of Korea; and COLA and grant decisions as a first step in the 2024 budget process. In further work from GC43, five proposals presented to the GCE about eliminating functional distinctions between Designated Lay Ministers and Ordered Ministry were all carried, and will be presented to the General Council for discussion and decision on Oct. 21, 2023. [Please find the summary here.](#)

Interconnect Fundraiser

The Central Alberta Spiritual Circle/Center and Interconnect Foundation (the new Indigenous community of faith being established in the former Beverly United Church in Edmonton) has created orange t-shirts with the new Centre's logo on them. They are **\$30** each, and are available to purchase and pick-up from the Regional Office - only a few remaining!. [Please contact Chloe in the office to request your orange shirt!](#)

Worship Resources:

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

[Twenty First after Pentecost – October 22, 2023](#)

[Reformation Sunday– October 29, 2023](#)

[Twenty-third after Pentecost – November 5, 2023](#)

[Remembrance Day – November 11, 2023](#)

[Twenty Fourth after Pentecost– November 12, 2023](#)

[Childrens Sunday – November 19, 2023](#)

[Twenty Fifth after Pentecost– November 19, 2023](#)

[Transgender Day of Remembrance – November 20, 2023](#)

[World Aids Day – December 1, 2023](#)

** Votes for the remit process now underway!* We invite you to learn more and explore the [remit process](#). Please also see a post on the Northern Spirit website with answers to frequently asked questions & further resources, [here](#). The remit vote deadline date is March 31, 2024.

- [Click here to access past Newsletter issues.](#)
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Available:



Sangudo United Church is offering the following items for sale (by offer):

- Samick piano – very well tuned and in good condition
- Hymn books and Bibles
- Choir gowns
- All kitchen supplies – dishes, cutlery, bowls, pots and pans, tablecloths
- Christmas decorations
- Filing cabinets

If you may need any of the above please call Bev at 780-785-3266 and she will be pleased to help you.



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