



NORTHERN SPIRIT
REGIONAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



News from the Region: November 15, 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

★ **Reminder: Regional Council learning time on the Remit, Thursday November 23 at 6:30 Mountain on Zoom.**

Please join Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils online for a learning time on the Remit on an autonomous Indigenous organization within the United Church. We are grateful that elders and knowledge keepers Delores Kenny

(National Indigenous Council), Charlene Burns (Community Capacity Development Coordinator) and Russel Burns, elder, will be joining Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy for the conversation. All welcome! Content will be designed for pastoral charge council or board members, pastoral charge supervisors, and ministry personnel. [Please register here](#); this will send you the link automatically.

Pastoral Charge Supervisors & Liaisons: Policy Update and Call for Volunteers

- The Northern Spirit Pastoral Charge Supervisor Policy has been updated. Key changes include specifications around appointing Lay Pastoral Charge Supervisors, and Retired Ministers to their former Pastoral Charges. **Please note that as of January 1, 2024, all Pastoral Charge Supervisors should be reimbursed for their time & effort with \$30 per hour of work on the Pastoral Charge's behalf**, in addition to having their travel costs reimbursed by the Pastoral Charge. For any active ministers, this should be paid in the form of an honorarium. [Click here to read the full updated policy](#). *(Last Newsletter incorrectly said this policy would come into effect on January 1, 2023 - this was a typo: 2024 is the correct year. Thanks to those who noticed!)*
- **The Region is in need of both Supervisors and Liaisons.** Training is being offered, and no previous experience is necessary. *Pastoral Charge Supervisors* support Charges who do not currently have appointed or called ministry personnel, by acting as a resource and attending governing body meetings (in-person or online) ([Manual I.2.5.2](#)). *Pastoral Relations Liaisons* assist Charges with Pastoral Relations processes by supporting Community of Faith Profile and Search Teams (this does not require being on those teams) ([Manual I.1.5.3](#)). Both roles can often be carried out by phone, email, and Zoom. **Please contact Adam if you are interested in learning more about either or both of these important Regional roles:** Adam.Hall@united-church.ca.

***Tomorrow: Pastoral Relations Workshop Invite: Community Profile and Living Faith Story Training: November 16, 7 p.m., via Zoom**

The Pastoral Relations Commission will be offering a workshop on **November 16, 7 p.m.** for any Communities of Faith interested in learning about the development of Community of Faith Profile and Living Faith Story, and related ChurchHub processes. If your church is beginning, considering, or will be in these pastoral relations processes in the near future, you are welcome to join! [Please contact the office to RSVP & to receive the Zoom link.](#)

Featured News

★ **Please support calls for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas**

Urgent action is required to prevent further mass death of civilians in Gaza. The United Church and many other groups are [calling for an immediate ceasefire in the battle between Israel and Palestinian paramilitary group Hamas](#). 2.3 million civilians are trapped in the middle, including over 200 Israelis and international citizens taken captive by Hamas October 7. [Please click here for a simple urgent action to the federal government](#), and further background to help us hear what global partners living through this terrible violence are saying.

★ **Remit update: Letter to pastoral charge boards sent; online learning coming up Nov 23**

If you are involved in the governance of your pastoral charge, your chair, secretary, Regional Council lay delegate, and minister or Pastoral Charge Supervisor should have received a letter. Currently a Category 3 Remit is before the church, focused on creating space for a National Autonomous Indigenous Organization within the United Church of Canada. Every Regional Council and every Pastoral Charge governing body has the right and responsibility to vote between now and 31 March 2024. Didn't receive it? See below. The Regional Council has created a [resource page to help your process of learning, listening, and deciding](#). Between now and February, the Regional Council will also offer open online learning circles, and we hope we will see you there. Please bear in mind that if your governing body does not vote on this Remit, that will be counted as a No vote. We urge you to ensure that your Council or Board votes! *Questions? Concerns? Your letter didn't show up?* Call Chloe Burns, Regional Council administration staff, at 780.435.3995, or email Regional Minister Julie Graham: jgraham@united-church.ca.

★ **Treaty Land Sharing Network on the Alberta side of Treaty Six-landholders sought**

The [Treaty Land Sharing Network](#) is thrilled to announce that they will be formally **expanding to the Alberta side of Treaty 6 in 2024**. "Since shortly after we launched in 2021 we have been in discussion with a committed group of people there who have formed an Alberta working group, and, earlier this year, completed a successful pilot project in the [Beaver Hills Biosphere](#) east of Edmonton. We are busy updating our outreach materials, printing more signs, applying for grants, and connecting with potential members. **If you know of any landholders in Alberta** who may be interested in joining the network, please send them our way!" Contact the network at alberta@treatylandsharingnetwork.ca.

Wider Church News & Resources

★ 2023 M&S Givings Reminder!

2023 is drawing to a close and on behalf of Mission and Service we want to thank you for your contributions. The money received from Communities of Faith like yours enables us to feed hungry children, help those devastated by natural disasters and war and fund the vital work our partners are doing. And now we are asking you to send in your Mission and Service contributions as soon as possible to ensure this work continues. **Remember, to have your contributions counted towards 2023 you must send them in postmarked before January 15th, 2024.** Thank you in advance for your ongoing support.

★ Advent liturgy on witnessing to peace in Palestine and Israel

The [United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel](#) (UNJPPI) [offers us this Advent liturgy](#) (PDF file), drawing on the lived experience and stories of United Church members who have been [Ecumenical Accompaniers through the World Council of Churches](#) in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It includes new words to O Come Emmanuel, and stories from accompaniment with Palestinians living under military occupation. As Israelis and Palestinians continue to confront the impacts of horrific violence, in the name of the Prince of Peace may we add our prayers, worship, resources, and action to efforts to support them and to do what we can to support them in creating a just peace. A reminder that there is an action posted on the Regional website which links to United Church tools and information from other sources.

No Room In the Inn Campaign for 2023-24

The No Room In the Inn campaign this year is in support of **A Safe Place**. A Safe Place is a residential facility opened in 1984 for those who are escaping intimate or family violence. It is located in Sherwood Park. A recent review of their facility found major and unexpected issues with the roof. [Click here to view the poster with full details.](#)

In Case You Missed It...

Gift Sharing Season: a Letter from our Chair....

[Click here](#) to read a letter from our Executive Chair, Rev. Helen Reed, with reminders of our shared blessings and opportunities as Advent season approaches.

United Church Group Insurance update

All you folks who are part of the United Church's insurance group, [take a look at this extensive update](#) or pass it on to the wise people who keep your insurance ticking along.

Refugee sponsorship news

The latest national sponsorship newsletter is out; [click here to have a look at some important updates](#). Thank you to all who are sponsoring and supporting; it has been a hard few years in this work, with many continuing complexities, and some understandable fatigue. A number of congregations in the Region are finally seeing some movement and are preparing for or working with long-awaited arrivals. Blessings to you and to those arriving here and taking the hard step of beginning a very different life.

Volunteer Ask: Good Samaritan Society

The Good Samaritan Society in South Edmonton is looking for a United Church minister to volunteer to visit their seniors once or twice a month to provide some form of musical and/or reflective worship. If you are interested in this possibility, contact Salomon @ sbeguel@gss.org.

Worship Resources:

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

[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](#)

[First Sunday of Advent - December 3, 2023](#)

[UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities - December 3, 2023](#)

[National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women - December 6, 2023](#)

[Second Sunday of Advent - December 10, 2023](#)

[UN Human Rights Day - December 10, 2023](#)

[Third Sunday of Advent - December 17, 2023](#)

[Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 24, 2023](#)

[Christmas - December 25, 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.

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