



NORTHERN SPIRIT
REGIONAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



Events Newsletter: December 6, 2023

Upcoming events 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.

Local Advent Events: ✨ ✨

Many Communities of Faith have posted their Christmas season events on our web calendar: [CLICK HERE](#) to see local craft sales, bazaars, concerts, worship services, and learning gatherings planned for December.



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

News From the Pews & Other Ministries

★ December 6: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

God of hope and love,
Today we stand somewhere between peace and joy,
unsure where to find them
in a world where women continue to be subject to violence
because they are women, because they are Indigenous.
Today it is hard for us to imagine the lamb and the lion together,
to know that our hearts will rejoice at the arrival of justice.
And yet we persevere.
We remember, and we persevere.
— an Advent prayer by Sara Stratton, written for the [National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women](#) and in honour of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

★ Video from three-Region Remit learning circle Nov 23

Many thanks to the 140 people from our Prairies and North Regional Councils and beyond, who came out to learn and discuss with knowledge keepers Charlene and Russel Burns and Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy. A recording of the session is now available on our Regional YouTube channels: [click here to access it](#). In the new year we will host one or two more such circles.

Letter from the church to the PM: ceasefire now; naming the genocide taking place

At its recent meeting, the General Council Executive, its corresponding members, and the members of the National Indigenous Council issued a plea to Prime Minister Trudeau to advocate for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, recognizing that, in the view of legal experts, genocide is currently taking place. Its central calls can be echoed and added to through a letter or call to the Prime Minister's Office and your Member of Parliament. Our pressure is important here, because until a ceasefire is reached, there is no way forward. Currently the federal government is still not pushing for a ceasefire. To quote the letter, "The failure to clearly do so is unconscionable." [Please see the letter here and share widely.](#)

Upcoming Events & Learning Opportunities

CCS Friday on engaging youth in climate justice: December 8, 12:00 CT, via Zoom

This summer, 15 youth from across the church participated in the United Church of Canada's first ever Climate Motivators program. Each student was sponsored by, and in partnership with, a local community of faith where they worked together on local

climate justice or environmental needs. Our special guest will be Amy Crawford, team leader for Faith Formation and Mission with the General Council of the United Church of Canada. She will share some of her insights about getting youth involved in educating about climate change. CCS Fridays are free. [Please register here to receive a zoom link.](#) | *CCS Fridays are online conversations to help us respond faithfully to emerging issues in local contexts. These workshops are open to anyone who might be interested.*

★ **Invitation to simple local vigils: Candles for COP28, December 8-10, 2023**

For the Love of Creation is inviting groups across Canada to host candlelight vigils in their own communities on the weekend of **December 8-10, 2023**. This will be a time to reflect and share our love for our planet, our concern for ourselves, humanity and all our non-human relations at risk from climate change. Please consider hosting a vigil in your community. A gathering of any size is welcome - anything from a small gathering of 3 people in your church to larger public events will help us unite and share hope across the country. [See the FLC website for more information](#) to help you get started, including instructions, prayers, and more. [Add your vigil to the For the Love of Creation Map!](#) For vigils in your community, [stay tuned to the map](#) as events are added.

Faithful Footprints energy carbon reduction for faith buildings webinar, December 15th at 1:00pm *CST, noon MST.

Join other Prairies and North people to learn more about strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of your faith spaces, and how to access the Faithful Footprints grant program to support energy efficiency upgrades and investment in renewables. Free! [Register today here.](#)

~ *Into the New Year:*

★ **Advance notice: January 7 and 31 prep for Affirming PIE Day (Thursday March 14).**

The Affirming movements in our three Regional Councils will host an open house online to talk about our local plans for celebrating Affirming PIE Day: Public, Intentional, and Explicit support for 2SLGBTQIA+ people and allies. It's also a great excuse to share in whatever desserts are a sign of celebration in your culture and area. More information to come but for now: Living Skies will host a conversation on **Tuesday 9 January** at 7:00PM CST/ 6:00PM MST and Prairie to Pine's Equity and Diversity committee will host another on **Wednesday January 31** at 7:00PM CST/ 6:00PM MST.

Virtual Learning Opportunity: receive a certificate in Ministry of Supervision!

The Certificate in Ministry of Supervision provides participants with the information and skills to mentor individuals preparing for ministry by equipping them for supervision including pastoral practices, leadership, reflection, feedback and spiritual guidance. It is designed for clergy and lay individuals who are interested in supporting students and communities for supervised ministry education (SME), internships and field education. PREREQUISITES: A minimum of five years of post-ordination or commissioning,

experience in congregational ministry leadership OR equivalent lay leadership. Mark your Calendar Now! The course will take place as a once a week intensive with three-hour synchronous class time on zoom each week. Here is the schedule: Jan 11, 12:00 – 3:00 pm ET; Jan 18, 12:00 – 3:00 pm ET; Jan 25, 12:00 – 3:00pm ET; Feb 1, 12:00 – 3:00 pm ET; Feb 8, 12:00 – 3:00 pm ET. You can [register at United in Learning](#). For more information please [contact Andrew Richardson](#).

Planning Worship Retreat Session One: January 18, 2024 - Registration now open!

Come and do your worship planning in good company! United Church worship leaders, including DLMs and ordered ministry, lay worship leaders, and worship committees, are invited to St. David's United Church in Leduc, Alberta, for facilitated experiences, individual reflection, and planning time. Registration is now open for the January 18th session: Planning for Lent 2024. [Click here for more details + to register!](#)

★ **Save the Date: How's it Going Now?**

St. Albert United Church invites the churches in Northern Spirit Region to join us on **Saturday, February 3, 2024**, from 10:00 am to 2:00pm for a time of worship, fellowship, sharing, and exploring possibilities. This is a follow-up to the workshop sponsored by McDougall United Church in Spring 2023, but everyone is welcome to come together in this Epiphany time. More details and registration information will be available in January.

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- [Click here to view our regional events calendar.](#)
 - [Click here to view the United Church's main online events service, United in Learning.](#)
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- [Click here to access past Newsletter issues.](#)
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