



NORTHERN SPIRIT  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



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*News from the Region: March 6, 2024*

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***Notice: We are moving!!!***

The Regional Council office is moving into a smaller space at the end of March.

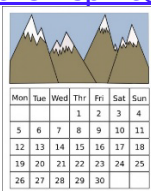
Our new mailing address will be:  
8510 95 Ave NW,  
Edmonton, AB  
T6C 1Y7

Our phone number will also be changing\*, new number TBA.  
Email will not change: [NorthernSpirit@united-church.ca](mailto:NorthernSpirit@united-church.ca).  
If you have any questions or concerns please reach out!

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**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](mailto: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.](#)

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## **Featured News**

★ **Affirming PIE Day is coming up March 14: register your event**

Large and small, all services of worship and all events are welcome. There's many being planned across the Regional Council. Please add your sweet event to the national list and put this Region on the map! [Access the form here](#). And see the rest of the website for resource galore, including new liturgies.

★ **Attention LLWLs: Registrations for the Spring 2024 sessions of Learning on the Way are now open, sessions March, April, & May**

Learning on the Way is a programme offered by United in Learning through ChurchX for the continued training and support of Licenced Lay Worship Leaders in the United Church of Canada. During the Spring 2024 sessions, we shall be delving into the Psalms — ways to include them in the liturgy and in the message. [Registration & more information at this link](#). The groups meet the week of March 11th, the week of April 15th, and the week of May 13th.

★ **Remit voting deadline approaching! Have you submitted your vote?**

The remit vote deadline date is **March 31, 2024**. Do not hesitate to call the Regional office with any questions, so that we can put you in touch with resource people. In order to vote, you will need your Mission and Service number or your Community of Faith ID. Your Mission and Service number can be found in your ChurchHub account or in your PAR info, if you use PAR. When you sign into your ChurchHub.ca, your Community of Faith ID number should be in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. If either of these aren't set up for you or just don't work, don't hesitate to call the office and we'll help. If you have voted on the Remit, have you actually sent your vote in? Please be sure that you email or mail your response in ASAP -- we are waiting for 46% of our churches to send in their vote. Let's be united in taking seriously our responsibility to care for each other.

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## **Wider Church News & Resources**

### **★ Invitation: Worldwide Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage, in Lent and beyond**

In this season of Lent, pilgrims in 125 countries are mapping the 41 km length of the Gaza Strip, by walking in prayerful solidarity with the people of Gaza and calling for a ceasefire. These pilgrimages are not demonstrations; they are times of deep lament, contemplation, and community solidarity with the many, many people and the lands and waters who have been so deeply harmed by the immense violence in Palestine and Israel. They can take place in communities of any size, in any configuration, with any partners. Please consider this for your community, and contact Regional Minister Julie Graham at [jgraham@united-church.ca](mailto:jgraham@united-church.ca) if you'd like the simple planning resource being developed. [Please see the global website](#) for principles, resources, and more.

### **★ Resource: Regional Council response to Alberta's planned legislation targeting transgender people**

The chairperson of the Regional Council, Rev Helen Reed, [has responded to Alberta Premier Danielle Smith's announcement](#) regarding the planned restrictions of the rights of transgender, non-binary, Two Spirit, and other gender diverse children and youth. A further resource on advocacy and facts is being prepared; one resource already available comes to us from Calgary's Affirming Connections, and [is a careful compilation of links to analysis and statements of concern](#) that is being continuously updated.

### **ATTENTION: Pastoral Charges with Manses**

We have been notified by Erik Mathiesen, Chief Financial Officer of the United Church of Canada about a requirement for all Pastoral Charges with manses to submit a CRA form related to "Underused Housing Tax". [Click here to read the full memo](#). Treasurer webinars held monthly on Churchx will include a bit of a "how to" complete the form. It is the responsibility of the United Church General Council and Regional Councils to flag the risk related to not complying with the requirement. There is an apparent duty to file - with a penalty for noncompliance.

### **Action: Major concerns about Canada's military sales to Israel**

United Church people are asked to keep [writing our members of Parliament using this action tool](#) or our own letters, as concern grows that Canada's military exports to Israel may risk complicity in genocide. In their December 2023 report, "[Fanning the Flames: The grave risk of Canada's arms exports to Israel](#)," Project Ploughshares reveals that Canadian corporations, with permits granted by the Canadian government, regularly export military hardware and components to Israel. (Project Ploughshares is the ecumenical peace research body related to the Canadian Council of Churches, of which The United Church of Canada is a member.) In fact, when adjusted for inflation, Canadian sales in 2023 were almost as high as the peak year, 1987. Only by ending its military exports to Israel can Canada meet its domestic and international obligations to eliminate violations of international humanitarian law in Gaza, including possible war crimes.

## **In Case You Missed It...**

### **Save the Date! 2024 Regional Annual Meeting: May 2 & 9, online**

The 2024 Northern Spirit Regional Council Meeting will be held on the evenings of **May 2 and May 9, online**, via Zoom, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.. Planning is in progress – check for updates on [the website page, here](#).

### **Lenten Letter from our Growth Animator**

[Click here to read a letter from our Growth Animator](#), Jordan Cantwell, on Lent as a season of invitation.

### **Lenten liturgy for Palestine and Israel**

In recent years, some congregations have started a new tradition; extinguishing candles on Sundays through Lent. This dimming of light during the season of Lent reminds people that this 40-day journey is leading to the cross of Good Friday. The Worship Group for the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) sees a connection between the journey to Good Friday and the journey of the Palestinian people. At the same time, we recognize and need to acknowledge that, in the West, we have been complicit in the ongoing discrimination towards Palestinians and the destruction of their culture, their land and their people. The Lenten Candle Liturgy contains stories, historical information, images and prayers. We humbly offer this resource for any to use as they see fit in worship or in other devotional practice. [Please click here to download it](#).

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## ***Worship Resources:***

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

[International Women's Day - March 8, 2024](#)

[Fourth Sunday in Lent - March 10, 2024](#)

[National Affirming Pie Day - March 14, 2024](#)

[Fifth Sunday in Lent - March 17, 2024](#)

[International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - March 21, 2024](#)

[Earth Hour - March 23, 2024](#)

[Palm Sunday - March 24, 2024](#)

[Maundy Thursday - March 28, 2024](#)

[Good Friday - March 29, 2024](#)

[Easter Sunday/Ressurrection Sunday - March 31, 2024](#)

[Second Sunday of Easter - April 7, 2024](#)

[Third Sunday of Easter - April 14, 2024](#)

[Earth Sunday - April 21, 2024](#)

[Fourth Sunday of Easter - April 21, 2024](#)

\* [Click here to access Northern Spirit's 2024 Prayer Cycle](#)

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



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*Image Credits:* Colored light bathes the interior of Saint-Julien in Brioude, France., from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=47117> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: Image donated by Jim Womack and Anne Richardson.

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