



NORTHERN SPIRIT
REGIONAL COUNCIL
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



Today, June 11, I joined in the Ministry Personnel online gathering. Part of our topic for today was to share what summer is looking for our congregations.

There is a lot of variety: some churches close for the summer, some close for select weekends, some offer worship all the way through summer with either Minister or Lay Leadership. Some are following a strict lectionary schedule, others are introducing new themes, or more laid back worship styles.

There are plans for ecumenical summer sharing – we'll come to your church in July and you are welcome to come to ours in August. What struck me was that we were all excited about what we are doing and what others are doing

Whether we are going to be offering weekly worship or be actively engaged in a Summer Sabbath, our churches are planning what fits best for them. What works for one may not work for another – and we celebrate the flexibility to find worship-filled moments that connect for us.

I find myself going to church camp every year - it's full of energy and a different kind of connecting. In the summer, I don't mind a nap every so often too... hoping to be ready for the September whirlwind that is coming.

I encourage my congregation members to do what fits for them best. I know that whatever we all choose to do, God is there. God is there helping us rest, offering us moments of connecting – not just in church buildings but also in campgrounds, in backyards, in boisterous gatherings of family and friends, in a good book read sitting in the shade of a tree.

Do you and your congregation have tough decisions to make before summer? God is there in big decisions and small. Is your congregation finding new destinations for living your faith in community? God is walking beside you as you search. If summer will mark new endings and therefore new beginnings, God will be there holding you in your transitional moments.

My hope and prayer is that as we move into the summer season; we will all recognize the gift of the Holy in our days; we will give thanks for the sun, for the neighbours, for shared smiles and spaces; we will find our hearts and heads opened to new possibilities; we will be refreshed and rejuvenated for the work ahead that God invites us into.

May your summer have all that you need to know you are God's beloved.

Blessings,

Helen Reed,

Northern Spirit Chairperson