



## *News from the Region: January 8, 2025*



### **Short reminders of our history for this Centennial year**

*Throughout 2025, we'll be featuring very short stories about United Church history. Many thanks to Gayle Simonson, a lay member of the United Church at Southminster Steinhauer in Edmonton, an experienced history researcher, and a writer who has written for historical journals and UCC publications. She is a key volunteer in the United Church archives for both Northern Spirit and Chinook Winds. Gayle's generosity means that we'll have frequent reminders of our history with a focus on ordinary people. To lead us off, she writes,*

"As western Canada was settled, communities sprang up but populations remained sparse. It was difficult to sustain a church congregation, so many churches of different denominations came together to form union churches. As the idea spread, denominations were encouraged to look at amalgamation. By 1925, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists had agreed and the United Church of Canada was formed by an act of parliament; in the end, not all Presbyterian congregations agreed to join, so they remain an ecumenical partner today.

Over the next year, we hope to present some highlights of our church history here in our Regional newsletters. We must not be bound by the past, but we do well to remember our history and to celebrate those who have brought us to this place."

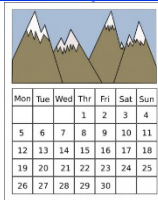
★ **Reminder for treasurers: Communicating salary changes to ADP** ★

The 2025 Minimum Salaries and Reimbursements for Ministry Personnel document is now available online. You can find it in the Downloads section at the bottom of the [Ministers' Salary Schedule and Cost of Living Groups webpage](#). **The increases to salaries of ministry personnel are not automatically made by ADP. General Council Office staff do not update ADP with minimum salary data. Your pastoral charge ADP administrator must update the minister's salary in TeamPay or inform ADP of the new salary amount for the pay period beginning January 1.**

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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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## Family News

★ **New Staff Phone Numbers**

The United Church Staff phone system is changing as of the new year.

**Adam Hall's new phone number:** 1-587-407-0329

**Northern Spirit Office / Chloe Burns' new phone number:** 1-587-407-0330

These numbers are already set up and in service. The former 1-800 numbers will still work until **January 15, 2025**. Please spread the word and save our new phone numbers! Many of the tri-Regional and National staff numbers are changing as well: [all staff contact information is available on the website](#).

★ **New Prayer Cycle Available for 2025**

The Northern Spirit prayer cycle for 2025 is [now available at this link](#)! This prayer cycle is created to ensure every congregation in our Region is held in prayer over the course of the year. Our prayer cycles are always linked on the [Worship Resources page](#) of our website.

★ **Annual Declaration Reminder: A Message from Vocational Minister, Laura Fohse...**

**This message is for alllll ministry personnel (including candidates in an appointment and voluntary associate ministers)** - GUESS WHAT?! Its that wonderful time of the year when you get to dust off your criminal record check, visit ChurchHub and complete your annual declaration!

**First time doing this? Forget what you did last year? NO PROBLEM!** I'm here to help. This link... [How to Complete the Annual Declaration](#)... is a handy dandy info sheet that will explain the whole process to you. BUT if you find this confusing (or would just like to chat with me), feel free to email me [lfohse@united-church.ca](mailto:lfohse@united-church.ca). So why not visit ChurchHub now while your excitement is peaked?

★ **December Update from your Executive:**

The Executive is in the midst of two ongoing discussions and their related action items:

- 1) How can we measure and improve the Covenantal Relationships between Communities of Faith and NSRC? Keep an eye out for next steps.
- 2) How can we support transgender people of Alberta and add our voices of outrage regarding Alberta's new laws targeting their basic needs? We would love to hear what you are doing as individuals and as Communities of Faith and will have suggestions for you very soon to add to your ministries.

Remember to **save the date** for the 2025 in-person Regional Annual Meeting, which will be held **May 29 - June 1 in Edmonton.**

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## **Wider Church News & Resources**

★ **Here from the beginning: the story of Black people in the United Church project**

Whatever your ethnic or racial background, you're invited to support a Centennial story-telling project focused on the lives and contributions of Black people in the United Church of Canada. This exhibition celebrating Black individuals' remarkable contributions and experiences within the church amplifies these voices and showcases their incredible impact on our faith, history, and community. *Here from the beginning / Ici depuis le début: Celebrating the history of The United Church of Canada through the lens of Black people is the overall project, and it has two related parts:*

*Telling the stories of individuals we want to honour.*

*A travelling historical exhibit.*

[Click here for details and a shareable poster.](#)

## ★ Youth Climate Corps support letter from the Regional Executive; invitation for your community of faith

In December 2024, the Northern Spirit Executive voted in favour of sending a letter of support to the federal government, calling for the creation of a Youth Climate Corps at the invitation of a young adult member of a United Church in Edmonton. [Here is a link to the letter.](#)

Your community of faith or ministry is also invited to consider this invitation from young adults, and to sign on. **You can find the [full text of the open letter here](#), and you can [sign onto the letter here](#).**

## ★ Call for nominees for Moderator

The next Moderator will be elected by the Commissioners of General Council 45, in August 2025. The Moderator is responsible for giving spiritual leadership to all in The United Church of Canada, presiding at meetings of the General Council and its Executive, visiting throughout the United Church, and serving as the primary spokesperson and representative. [Learn more about the nomination process and responsibilities at this web page](#), which will also be updated with nominees' names.

## ★ Opportunity: Pilgrim in Mission, between May-September, 2025

Are you interested in engaging with global partners in their own contexts to witness first-hand the mutuality of partnership? About the rich history of Mission & Service partners, and the priorities that they are addressing? The United Church of Canada invites United Church of Canada individuals interested in learning about global partners and the Global Partnership Program to apply to the Pilgrimage of Learning initiative, comprising of 4 delegations each visiting one partnership region (Latin America & the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Middle East) between May and September, 2025. Join this pilgrimage to intentionally live into The United Church of Canada's commitment to Mutual Radical Accompaniment and to decolonizing the church's participation in global partnership. [Click here for full details.](#) Deadline: 31 January 2025.

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### *In Case You Missed It:*

## **Upholding Sacred Obligations: Final Report of the Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Burial Sites**

On October 29, Kimberly Murray released her final report as the Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials. Her final report is an Indigenous-led framework for reparations and is [available to download](#). You can also watch an overview of the report's findings, and how they relate to the United Church of Canada, in this 40 Days

of Anti-Racism presentation on [An Indigenous-Led Framework on Healing and Reparations](#). This session also features a review of the United Church's [Healing Programs](#) and a brief update on the [Bringing the Children Home](#) initiative. The Regional Council is planning a late February in-person or hybrid event exploring this important report and the responsibilities of our church. More details to come.

**Mission and Service Updates:** Read a full end-of-year update from Mission and Service [on the Regional website here](#).

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### *Worship Resources:*

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

[Stewardship Epiphany Resources: Discover Your Gifts—Share Your Gifts: Five Sundays in Epiphany](#)

[Baptism of Jesus - January 12, 2025](#)

[Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - January 18, 2025](#)

[Second after Epiphany - January 19, 2025](#)

[Third after Epiphany - January 26, 2025](#)

[Fourth after Epiphany - February 2, 2025](#)

[Black History Month 1 - February 2, 2025](#)

[Fifth after Epiphany - February 9, 2025](#)

[Black History Month 2 - February 9, 2025](#)

[Sixth after Epiphany - February 16, 2025](#)

[Black History Month 3 - February 16, 2025](#)

\* [Click here to access Northern Spirit's 2025 Prayer Cycle](#)

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



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