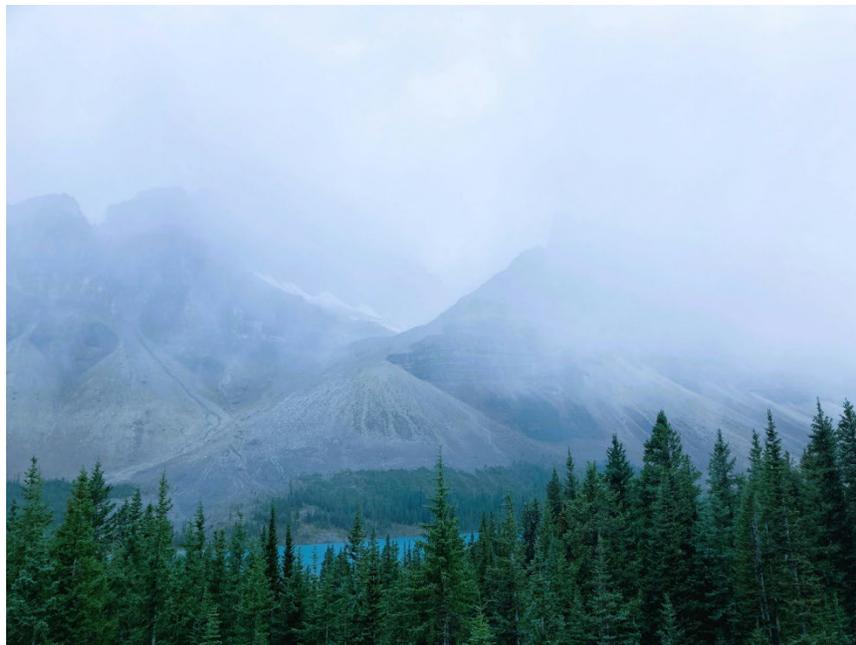




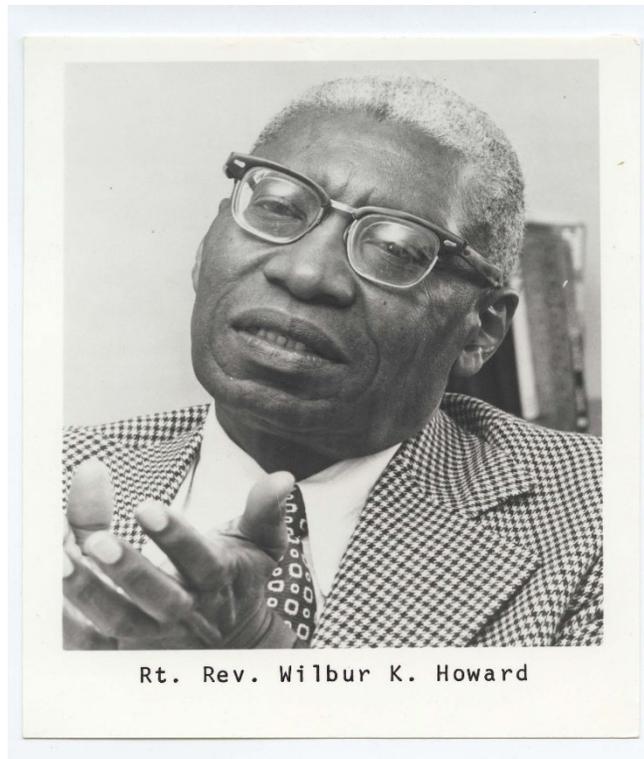
News from the Region: May 14, 2025



Short reminders of our history for this Centennial year

Throughout 2025, we'll be featuring very short stories about United Church history. Thanks to historian Gayle Simonson in Edmonton, we can also offer 100-word history vignettes for use in your own community! [Here are vignettes 1-8](#). And brand new, [here are vignettes 9-17](#). (Word format; when you click, the file will save automatically to your Downloads folder.) For our next vignette, she writes:

While his father and brother worked as train porters, in 1941, Wilbur Howard became the first Black man to be ordained by the United Church. While others during college received student mission placements, Howard worked at the Fred Victor Mission in Toronto and in summer camps. He was also not settled in a congregation upon graduation as others were, instead working in other church positions. As associate editor of Sunday School publications, he helped shape the New Curriculum of the 1960s. Finally in 1965, he received a call to Dominion-Chalmers United Church in Ottawa, then in 1970 to Emmanuel United, Ottawa. He subsequently became president of Montreal-Ottawa Conference and the 1974 meeting of General Council elected him the first Black Moderator of the national church.



Rt. Rev. Wilbur K. Howard

(Photo: Rev. Dr. Wilbur Kenneth Howard, UCC archives)

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

 Join *Living Spirit United Church* for their Centennial High Tea on **Saturday, June 7**, from 1 - 3 pm, at the Clean Energy Technology Center in Drayton Valley (5400 22nd Avenue). RSVP by June 2 to: livingspirituniteddv@gmail.com.

 There will be a 100 Year Anniversary Celebration for *Daysland and Rosalind United Churches*, including the former Bawlf, Kelsey, and Ohaton churches, on **May 25**. A joint DKR United service will be held at 10:30 a.m. with lunch to follow, all at the Daysland Sunbeam Drop-In Centre. Beef, buns, and anniversary cake will be provided; potluck is requested for salads, side dishes, or desserts. Add your memories to be included in a book. Everyone is welcome.



Goodfish United Church welcomes you to commemorate our centennial together, **May 25, 2pm**. If you feel moved to do so, please bring a food item to share. [Find us with this google maps pin](#). Several people will be staying May 24th and or the 25th at Metis Crossing - please contact Rev Kimberly Roy for directions or with any questions: 780-728-7455.



We invite you to join Westlock and Rainbow Pastoral charges as we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada. **June 15th, 2025** beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Hazel Bluff United Church Highway 18, Westlock County. Old fashioned picnic lunch to follow (outside if weather permitting). Bring a lawn chair if possible. Ride share may be available. **RSVP by June 6th** to wuchurch@telus.net / 780-349-3556.

★ **Northern Spirit regional meeting and more, 29 May - June 1, Edmonton and online**

We are looking forward to gathering, both in-person and online, at our annual meeting, Thursday May 29 - June 1. A draft agenda and report documents will be posted to our meeting page as they are finalized. Everyone is welcome to join for our [public Affirming event Friday evening](#), and our [Celebration of Ministries & Centennial service on June 1](#).

★ **Financial Administrator for Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils**

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils are seeking a Financial Administrator on a full-time permanent basis (35 hours/week). This position is opening due to the upcoming retirement of Heather Dootoff, who has been a valued member of the three regional councils since 2019. We are grateful for Heather's contributions and look forward to welcoming someone to continue her work. [Please click here for the full job description and how to apply](#). **Deadline for applications is May 23, 2025.**

★ **Inclusive space/ Affirming resource from Living Skies**

The Living Skies Affirming Committee's Rev Sarah Beynon Giles and the entire committee have been working on a short starter guide to invite thinking about the many ways all our ministries in our Regional Councils can extend a wider welcome- whether you're officially Affirming or not! Here is [the PNG image](#). And [here is the PDF version](#). (Also featured below!) Use and share freely!

This is a permanent work in progress, of course, and these are just a few suggested ideas you can implement or build on. As we move through Asian Heritage Month and Jewish Heritage Month, and prepare for Pride Month and Indigenous History Month, this is a call and a support to help us keep on reflecting on how we live out God's radical hospitality in our own context.

★ **Job Opportunity: St. Paul's, Edmonton is looking for a bookkeeper**

St. Paul's is hiring a part-time bookkeeper. For full details and qualifications, email office@stpaulsunited.org. Apply by **June 20, 2025**.

Wider Church News & Resources

★ **May: Take Action to Support Indigenous Peoples**

This May, continue to raise your voices and speak out against colonization, racism, and the injustice of Murdered and Missing Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S). **Monday, May 5** was Red Dress Day, the National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S. **Tomorrow, Thursday, May 15** is Moosehide Campaign Day—a time to take action. *What can you do?* Take time in worship to pray for action to end this epidemic of violence; Hang a red dress outside your church and home as an act of public witness; Participate in Red Dress activities in your community; Wear a [moosehide pin](#), and participate in [this year's activities](#); Support the [Healing Fund](#).

★ **Revised resources for the M&P Committee**

Revised resources for the M&P Committee were [recently posted on the UC website](#). Some of the changes include: additions to M&P committee procedures, and new supplementary resources on annual performance reviews, developing healthy teams, and staff transitions. Please direct your M&P committees to these valuable [new and updated resources](#). If you have any questions about these documents please [contact Adam Hall](#).

★ **New Toward 2035 Initiative**

The United Church of Canada has unveiled an inspiring new initiative, "Toward 2035," as part of its centennial celebrations. This forward-looking vision aims to honour the legacy of past generations while charting a bold path for the future. In an open letter, Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary, emphasized the importance of this moment for reflection and imagination. [Read the full news story and the open letter from Rev. Michael Blair](#).

★ **2024 Strategic Plan Annual Report**

As we live out our church's Centennial, we hear the call to be deep, bold, and daring in renewing our church for the next 100 years. The General Council Office's [Strategic Plan](#) is helping the church realize our Vision, working closely with regional councils across the country. We hope these stories of progress from year two of our plan will engage, inspire, and compel. Learn more about the plan by going [to Our Call and Vision \(opens in a new tab\)](#) on united-church.ca. Please [scroll down](#) to download the full text of the 2024 report.

In Case You Missed It:

May is PAR Month!

Communities of faith all over Canada will be promoting consistent monthly giving through PAR all month long. Your community of faith should get involved! PAR makes both giving and receiving simple for donors and communities of faith. If you haven't promoted your PAR program recently, or are not currently accepting automatic monthly donations, May is your month to grow generosity in your congregation. There are resources—like letter templates, flyers and even a sermon—in the Downloads section of [this website](#). You can also reach out to your stewardship support person Vicki Nelson via [email](#).

Reminder to Communities of Faith: In 2019 with the change in structure to Regions, the wider United Church also changed the assessments process. Assessments shifted at that time from being based on *total membership* to **total revenue**.

Worship Resources:

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

[International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia - May 17, 2025](#)

[Fifth Sunday of Easter - May 18, 2025](#)

[Asian Heritage Month 3 - May 18, 2025](#)

[Sixth Sunday of Easter - May 25, 2025](#)

[Asian Heritage Month 4 - May 25, 2025](#)

[Rural Life Sunday - May 25, 2025](#)

[Pride Sunday - June 1, 2025](#)

[Seventh Sunday of Easter - June 1, 2025](#)

[Environment Sunday - June 1, 2025](#)

[Union Sunday - June 8, 2025](#)

[Pentecost Sunday - June 8, 2025](#)

[Trinity Sunday - June 15, 2025](#)

[Indigenous Day of Prayer - June 15, 2025](#)

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

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



Living Skies Regional Council Affirm Committee



Ideas: Affirming inclusion



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| <p>Communication in your church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use expansive language (ie: they instead of he, use feminine or gender-neutral images of God.) ● Ask people for their pronouns- this helps show your respectful curiosity and acceptance. ● Ask questions! Eg: Is there anything we can do to make church easier or better? <i>Do it!</i> One small thing can make a huge difference. <p>□</p> | <p>Your building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notice ease of entry: curbs, ramps, location of door handles, door swing, weight of the doors. ● What images are greeting people upon entering? Do they reflect the diversity of God’s creation? Different ethnicities, family types, abilities, and more? ● Gender neutral washrooms boosts a person’s safety and comfort if they identify outside of gender norms. Accessible washrooms are key, and they benefit everyone. |
| <p>Hospitality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make it clear on your website, door signs, etc that you welcome people with additional needs and the queer community. ● List the access arrangements you have, from large print, or Braille bulletins, to ramps and hearing loops. ● Vary where you sit at services, from week to week. Meet new people! ● Ensure support for 2SLGBTQIA+ culture, history and traditions. Events like Pride celebrations, and queer film festivals are examples of cultural expression and celebration that could be supported by an announcement or involvement. | <p>Questions to guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are members and guests in the community of faith treated as full participants in all church places? ● Is the community of faith using “people first language” and focusing attention on abilities, similarities, and interests in the same way for all people? (Eg, use person with a disability or individuals with disabilities vs. the disabled). ● Is your website accessible for persons with disabilities? ● How easily can someone who is not familiar with Christian worship join in and learn to worship God through the worship service? |



Inclusive space/ Affirming resource from Living Skies
[PNG image](#) / [PDF version](#). Use and share freely!



Northern Spirit Regional Council Office
8510 95 Ave NW Edmonton Alberta
1-587-407-0330
northernspirit@united-church.ca
www.northernspiritrc.ca

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