



News from the Region: August 27, 2025



 PUBLIC, INTENTIONAL, EXPLICIT 

On August 23, 2025, about seventy people from at least ten different United Churches rolled and walked through downtown Edmonton in the city's first Pride Parade in seven years.

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 [history short stories 1-8](#) / [vignettes 9- 17](#) / [vignettes 18-22](#) / [vignettes 23-30](#). And, brand new, [vignettes 31 to 40](#)! (Word format; when you click, the file will save automatically to your Downloads folder. For our next vignette (#14), she writes:

The church has a long and varied history, providing both education and medical care across the country as communities developed. While the early workers are gone, many kept records and some of those records have survived to tell us of people and of the work they did under difficult conditions. In the early 1950s, the United Church established a central archive in Toronto at Victoria University though it has recently moved. Others were established across the country and today an archives network includes eight regional archives to protect our stories. As stated in 1924 by Canada's Dominion Archivist Arthur G. Doughty, "Of all national assets, archives are the most precious. They are the gift of one generation to another."

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

♥ *Rev. Jeff Challoner* died in August, in Red Deer, Alberta. He served at Metropolitan United, Sherwood Park United and Gaetz United in Red Deer, as well as offered supply ministry in various congregations in Central Alberta.

♥ *Dr. Nancy Kerr*, who served as secretary for Edmonton Presbytery for many years, died in July. Her obituary can be read [at this link](#).

♥ *Rev. Albert McNeil* died in July. He served many charges in Alberta, including in Fort Saskatchewan, Edmonton, and Daysland. His full obituary can be read [at this link](#).

★ Pastoral Charge Supervisors Needed

Northern Spirit is looking for people, lay or ordered, who are willing to act as Pastoral Charge Supervisors. Supervisors offer support to churches without Called or Appointed ministry personnel. Please reach out to [Adam Hall](#) if you would be willing to take on this role.

Interested but unsure of what this role requires? [Email the office](#) if you are interested in attending a training and Q&A session on the evening of **October 8**, for current and potential Pastoral Charge Supervisors.

★ Fall Sacramental Elder Training:

If your community of faith is without a minister, your board can nominate someone from your congregation to become a Sacramental Elder. We are planning a round of training for new Sacramental Elders for this Fall. This training is held in two sessions, online over Zoom, one evening per week: Wednesdays September 17 and 24, 6:30 - 8:30. If your community wishes to nominate a Sacramental Elder or would like more information, please [contact the office](#).

★ Regional pastoral letter regarding controversial Christian concert in Saskatoon & Edmonton

Throughout the summer, people across the country have been dealing with a [string of concerts planned by an American extreme right-wing pastor](#), all of which were deliberately booked at publicly-owned venues, rather than churches. Saskatoon and Edmonton are currently the only two cities in Canada to have not cancelled Pastor

Feucht's permit. [Please read and share this letter](#) from Mickey Wilson and Rev Leigh Sinclair, the convenors of the Affirming Committee and the Regional Council. People across the province are still contacting the Alberta government, urging cancellation and respect for the human rights of the communities Feucht targets. If you or your congregation shares these concerns, please make them known, in order to offer a different Christian perspective.

★ **Invitation: Decolonizing Ourselves: Residential School Tour and Our Future in Treaty: Saturday 6 September 10:30AM-4:30PM MDT/ CST at [University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills](#)**

This is an invitation to those in the southern and eastern parts of our Regional Council, and those who happen to be in the area. Please join KAIROS Prairies North for a day that will include a tour of the former Blue Quills Indian Residential School building led by survivors/Elders, lunch, and learning about Treaty. All welcome! This **in-person only** event is within a reasonable drive of the Edmonton area to the west and the Battlefords area to the east.

This gathering is hosted by the KAIROS Prairies North Decolonization Group with gratitude to our community partners, in particular University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills and the United Church of Canada's Reconciliation and Justice Fund. This gathering is free of charge, including lunch. We do ask you to register so we know numbers and can send you material. Optional free transportation (carpooling) from Edmonton will be offered and details will follow by email. Here are [details and a shareable invitation link](#). [The registration link is here](#).

Wider Church News & Resources

★ Here is the [latest national United Church newsletter](#), including an introduction to our **new Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Kimberly Heath!**

★ **Resource and action call for aid to Gaza, and for ending Canadian military sales to Israel**

It is beyond difficult to witness the deliberate starvation taking place in Gaza, alongside continued deaths at the hands of the Israeli military, and a huge rise in extremist settler violence in the West Bank. It may feel like we have nothing to offer. But that isn't true. Even though our federal government hasn't been listening enough, and in fact [has been proven to be lying about ending Canadian arms sales to Israel](#), we need to press on and use our voices. Our global partners are pleading with us to not forget them.

Please join people around the world in holding elected leaders to account. Please see a recent [letter from Canadian church and ecumenical leaders here](#). Please [use the action posted here](#). In the same post, there's a link to an excellent new video with Canadian and church experts talking about the aid situation in Gaza and its deadly consequences, organized by Living Skies Regional Council's Just Peace group. We are fortunate to have

such experts within our church community, and we urge all church members to learn more.

★ **Seeds of Hope Grant Applications Now Open!**

The Foundation's Fall 2025 *Seeds of Hope* granting cycle is now accepting [applications](#)! The Seeds of Hope granting program supports innovative, unique projects which enable us to live out the New Creed's call to seek justice, live with respect in Creation, and love and serve others. Deadline: Applications must be submitted by 11:55 p.m. on **October 15, 2025**. [Apply today!](#)

★ **Rural Ministries Town Halls**

[Rural Ministry Town Halls](#) are a chance for those in rural ministry to gather together to share joys and concerns, insights and challenges, successes and failures. We hope to create a network where folks can share ideas, ask questions, raise concerns, and build a network of support. Aware that rural can take different formats, if you define yourself or your church as rural, please [join us and share your thoughts!](#)

Upcoming meetings: **September 10, 2025, 2:00 p.m. ET – Check-In!** | **October 8, 2025, 2:00 p.m. ET – Toward 2035**

★ **A Call to Support Global 2S and LGBTQIA+ Rights**

The United Church invites you to join a national Love, Faith, and Bold Action [letter-writing campaign](#). Urge the Canadian government to uphold and advance the rights of gender-diverse and 2S and LGBTQIA+ people around the globe—your voice truly makes a difference.

★ **Join the conversation: Cross-Country Check-in: September 22, 4 p.m. ET**

Mark your calendars for a special Cross Country Check-In on **September 22, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. ET!** This is your chance to meet the [new Moderator, Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath](#), along with the new members of the General Council Executive (GCE). We will also share important details about the upcoming GCE meeting in September. This live online town hall is an opportunity for you to ask your questions, share what matters to you, and hear what's ahead. It's your chance to meet our new leaders and be heard by the church's decision-making body between General Councils. Everyone is welcome.

Worship Resources:

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

[Twelfth after Pentecost - August 31, 2025](#)

[Thirteenth after Pentecost - September 7, 2025](#)

[Creation Time 1 - September 14, 2025](#)

[UN International Day of Peace - September 21, 2025](#)

[World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel - September 21, 2025](#)

[Creation Time 2 - September 21, 2025](#)

[Orange Shirt Sunday - September 28, 2025](#)
[Creation Time 3 - September 28, 2025](#)
[Creation Time 4 - October 5, 2025](#)
[World Communion Sunday - October 5, 2025](#)
[Creation Time 5 - October 12, 2025](#)
[Thanksgiving Sunday - October 12, 2025](#)

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

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



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