



## *Events Newsletter: October 8, 2025*



### **Upcoming events 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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## **News from the Pews and Other Ministries**

♥ ***Congratulations!*** On October 5<sup>th</sup>, Vegreville United Church and St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church — two faithful church communities from two different denominations — officially came together to worship and create a single congregation to serve the community of Vegreville, Alberta. Two representatives from each faith community along with one representative from the Northern Spirit Region of the United Church of Canada

and another from the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, part of the Anglican Church of Canada came forward in the middle of a joint worship service to sign their new Ecumenical Shared Ministry (ESM) Agreement.

*Pictured above, left to right: The Reverend Adam Hall, Pastoral Relations Minister for the Northern Spirit Region, Ardythe Butler, People's Warden, St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church, Janet Julian-Hopchin, Rector's Warden, St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church, Rev. Laureta Blondin, Minister (behind the altar), Holly Cependa, Trustee, Vegreville United Church, William (Bill) Rowe, Trustee, Vegreville United Church, The Venerable Reverend Jonathan Crane, Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship in the Diocese of Edmonton.*

### ★ **The 2026 Minimum Salaries & 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.*

**100 Centennial Events Continue:** Thank you for all the local Anniversary events - send us your stories, photos, and video links! We are happy to feature your celebrations in newsletters for the rest of our Centennial year. Materials can be sent to [chburns@united-church.ca](mailto:chburns@united-church.ca).

★ **Available: Geneva Gowns**, free, from a retired UC minister. Interested people can contact Gibson Glavin: [gglavin@shaw.ca](mailto:gglavin@shaw.ca) / (780) 464-1476.

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## New & Featured Events

### ★ **Notwithstanding, We Rise: A Virtual Town Hall, Wednesday, Oct 15, 7-8:30pm, online**

Join us as we come together in the face of the notwithstanding clause and its impact on trans rights. This webinar-style town hall is open to all & features a panel presentation and Q&A space as we navigate the current legislation and how its implementation, impact and next steps might look, in light of the recent news the NWC may be used to force through these policies in the weeks ahead. Together, we'll honour our strength and navigate what's next, hand in hand. [Register today at this link.](#)

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## Upcoming Events and Learning Opportunities

### **United in Learning upcoming programs**

Here's the [latest newsletter from the national church's online education, action and community program](#). Upcoming opportunities include a cross-country check up, and much more. Please also see the [very handy latest national newsletter, E-ssentials](#), which goes over highlights for national work.

### **Growth Animator Online Bible study, Every Wednesday at 1 pm (SK time)**

Deep conversation - Spiritual friendships - Faith exploration. New participants always welcome! Contact [jcantwell@united-church.ca](mailto:jcantwell@united-church.ca) for more information. [Click here to join](#).

### **Rural Ministries Town Halls: Monthly: Today! October 8**

[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 meeting: **October 8, 2025, 2:00 p.m. ET – Toward 2035**

### **★ Blanket Exercise, October 15, 6:30 p.m., St. Albert United**

In honour of Truth and Reconciliation Day, a blanket exercise will be held at St Albert United church on Wednesday Oct 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. The fee is \$10.00 per person. The blanket exercise program was designed by Indigenous Elders as an interactive opportunity to learn more about Canadian history and particularly the perspectives of the First Nation, Metis and Inuit that have not been regularly taught or discussed. It has been updated to include the local history in partnership with the Michif cultural connections. The program lasts 1 ½ to 2 hours. Please bring a towel or blanket that can be walked on. There is a maximum capacity of 30 participants so register early. Email [kathypackford@gmail.com](mailto:kathypackford@gmail.com) to sign up.

### **World Council of Churches Webinar: AI and Our Information Society—The Good, The Bad and The Ugly, Oct 15, 6 pm MT (8 pm ET), online**

Join the [World Council of Churches Faith and Science Working Group](#) on October 15, 2025 at 8:00 p.m. ET, for a crucial discussion on the impact of artificial intelligence on communication, ministry, and advocacy. This timely webinar will explore the opportunities and challenges presented by AI, from its potential to democratize technology and boost creativity to its risks, including the spread of disinformation and the perpetuation of bias. [Registration is required to attend this webinar](#). This event is the first in a series on AI and faith, with future sessions to be announced.

### **World Food Day (October 16) resources from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank**

This year, CFGB invites churches, groups and individuals to mark World Food Day with a variety of thoughtful resources that can be incorporated into church services, used in small group gatherings, or personal reflection. Drawing from the story of Gladys in our new film called [A Legacy Taking Root](#), which will be released to the public this fall, our

resources invite to pray, learn, advocate, and give. Our collection of worship resources on our [World Food Day website – Until All Are Fed](#) includes calls to worship, prayers, videos, scripture readings, group discussion guides, sermon starters, and diverse activities for children. You can also find a [postcard action for food security here](#).

**- Northern Spirit minister Rev. Dr. Neville Smith has also offered a reflection for World Food Day.** [Read it at this link](#), and share it with credit to Rev. Smith.

**Messy Church Tips and Ideas Session, October 16, 12 pm noon MT, online**

As we move into fall it seems a great time to come together and discuss how to start a Messy Church, how to enrich a Messy Church, and to connect with others who are leading Messy Churches in our country! Please join Messy Church Canada as we share some ideas about Messy Church and offer some tips and ideas for starting a Messy Church. [We will meet on ZOOM](#) -- for about an hour: **Thursday, October 16, 2025**, 11:00 a.m. British Columbia / 12:00 noon for Alberta, Yukon and Northwest Territories.

**How did we get from the Bible to a genocide in Gaza?, with Dr. Dan Epp-Tiessen, Wednesday evenings, October 22, 29, and November 5 at 6:00 p.m. (MDT).** This popular three-part webinar series returns on Zoom, free of charge. Oct. 22: How the Bible helped generate Israel's settler-colonialism and the dispossession of Palestinians. Oct. 29: How Christian antisemitism, inspired by the New Testament, led to the creation of the state of Israel and the oppression of Palestinians. Nov. 5: How Christian Zionist readings of the Bible have enabled the genocide in Gaza. [Register here](#). The Zoom links will be sent to registrants closer to the dates.

**Stewardship Best Practices Series, five weeks, starts Thursday, October 23 – 1pm Mountain (2pm Central), online**

This course is for a team or committee who are keen to see generosity grow and gratitude transform their community of faith. Five sessions on zoom, that unpack the theological and practical components of stewardship, are followed by the development of an annual plan and consistent online coaching. After almost 5 years of offering *Stewardship Best Practices* we have seen that congregations who participate in the course, and do the follow up work see higher giving and morale—teams report to us optimism about their ministry and hopes for the future. [Register on ChurchX at this link](#).

**Doughnuts and Timbits: Edmonton and area Affirming support day, November 1, 10:00AM-2:30 pm at Southminster-Steinhauer United Church, Edmonton.**

The Affirming Committee is trying something new! Come join them for a day of Affirming support, planning, and community (and presumably doughnuts). The entire Region is welcome; the focus is the doughnut circle around Edmonton, and the timbit that is Edmonton itself. [Please see the website listing for details](#). This event is free-



sponsored by your Mission and Service givings and your community of faith's Regional assessment.

★ **Youth Social Justice Day, November 1, 12 - 5 pm, Saint John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Edmonton**

Youth ages 13-30 are invited to a Youth Social Justice Day. Puzzled by injustice in the world around you? Looking for ways to live out what you believe? Have we got a day for you!!! Learn about and advocate for Economic Justice, Environmental Justice, Racial Justice, Indigenous Justice, Queer Justice, Prison Justice, Disability Justice, and Peace in God's World. - And enjoy a pizza lunch! [Register for free at this link.](#)

**Art for the Heart: A Youth Wellness Retreat, Friday November 7, 10 am - 5 pm, Kasota East Camp**

Youth (grades 8-12) are invited to a day of creative play and courageous expression on November 7 (a school free Friday in Red Deer) at Kasota East Camp on Sylvan Lake. Participants will work with professional artists in improv comedy, songwriting and painting while also exploring themes of mental and spiritual health, gratitude, honesty, courage, justice, love and generosity. Sponsored by Central Alberta Youth HQ and Spirit of Wellness (a ministry of the United Churches in Red Deer). Email [spiritofwellnessreddeer@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofwellnessreddeer@gmail.com) for more information.

**Save the date: Church Admins Retreat, Nov 7 & 8, Strathmore AB**

All Northern Spirit church administrators are invited to join the Chinook Winds Region's church admins retreat: November 7 & 8, in Strathmore, AB. Stay tuned for more details!

★ **Conversations Worth Having: Forum for Spiritual Leaders, November 11 and 13, 6:30 - 9 pm EST, online**

The CWH Institute is hosting a Forum for Spiritual Leaders with the vision of bringing together faith leaders, both clergy and lay, to equip them to lead a shift in how their communities of faith talk with each other. If you are a spiritual leader, or have a spiritual leader in your circle who could benefit from this training that builds trust and engagement, please pass on the invitation. There are scholarships available that cuts the cost of the workshop in half. We are holding the two-part Conversation Forum for Spiritual Leaders on November 11 and 13, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. EST. For more information and registration, [follow this link.](#)

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\*[Past Newsletter issues are archived on our website.](#)

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*Image:* Photo from Vegreville United + St. Mary the Virgin Anglican, courtesy of Rev. Laureta Blondin

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