



News from the Region: February 18, 2026



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.

[Check out our local events calendar](#), and [submit your own community events!](#)

Family News

♥ We celebrate with **St. David's United in Leduc, AB**, as they celebrate their church becoming officially Affirming! 🏳️ They will be celebrating this designation on [March 15 at 10:30 a.m.](#)

★ Welcome Rev. Sarah Giles, Stewardship Support!

Sarah has jumped in to help communities of faith with their stewardship needs while Vicki Nelson is on leave. Sarah is the navigator for all aspects of community of faith stewardship, including annual giving programs, year-round stewardship, planned giving and more. Sarah's waiting to help steer you in the direction that is best for your community of faith, and to help you to journey through conversations about

stewardship. To book a meeting with Sarah [click here](#) and choose *Book Sarah Giles for a 30 minute Stewardship conversation*.

[Read Sarah's full bio on our website](#). Sarah has also shared this [Sharing Is Caring: Stewardship Thoughts poster](#), which includes links to resources and upcoming events.

★ **Register now for the Regional Connection Event, April 25 and 26, Grande Prairie**

The Regional Council is travelling to you! The weekend of April 25 and 26, all of Northern Spirit is invited to join us in Grande Prairie for a time of connection, learning, and worshipping. [More details are now available on our website](#), and you can [register to attend this event here](#). (*Future connection events are also in planning, for those not neighbouring Grande Prairie or those who can't attend in April.*) We look forward to gathering this Spring!

Wider Church News & Resources

★ **Black History Month: Here From the Beginning and other resources**

Here From the Beginning: Unveiled last year as a Centennial project, [Here from the Beginning](#) is an in-person and [virtual exhibition](#) that showcases the contributions and experiences of Black people within the United Church, amplifying voices that have long been overshadowed. It is a celebration of faith, history, and community. [Learn more and explore the exhibition online](#).

Explore additional resources for Black History Month and anti-racism work throughout the year on the GC [website](#).

★ **Resource now available: Moderator's Easter Message**

The Moderator's Easter Message is now available for pre-viewing and pre-planning. Access it along with use guidelines in [this letter from the United Church](#).

★ **Lent series: Kitchen Conversations with the Moderator**

Now Playing — *Episode 1: Pancakes with Anna and Hanah* . Join us for the [debut episode](#) of [Kitchen Conversations with the Moderator](#), a new six-part series exploring faith, food, and the power of inviting one another to the table, hosted by [The Right Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath](#).

The Moderator's PIE Day message: now available

Every year, on March 14th The United Church of Canada celebrates National Affirming PIE Day. This year for PIE Day 2026, we celebrate every kind of creator—woodcutters, crocheters, gardeners, and bakers—who help weave connections in our communities. [Access the Moderator's PIE Day video in advance and review release information at this link](#).

Faithful Footprints: 2026 Funding Cycle Opens

The Faithful Footprints Grant supports United Church communities of faith in making decarbonization upgrades to their buildings. Grants of up to \$20,000 are available to help reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions while strengthening long-term sustainability. **The 2026 funding cycle opens January 28, 2026, with Expressions of Interest accepted beginning that date.** Learn more about eligibility, timelines, and how to apply on the [Faithful Footprints Grant webpage](#).

In Case You Missed It...

Resource: Description of Lay Representative Role

As many churches prepare to hold annual meetings and elect Lay Representatives to the Council, the Executive has prepared a document outlining the purpose and responsibilities of this role. [Click here to view this document \(pdf\)](#), and share with anyone in your community considering or taking on this important role.

Toward 2035 Strategy Resources Now Available

[Toward 2035 \(T2035\)](#) is a hopeful, church-wide strategy designed to guide us toward a future that is resilient, inspired, and diverse. This strategy is grounded in the truth of our emerging reality and compelled by our continued call to discipleship. To include people in the pews in this vital conversation, a [new resource page](#) has been developed. Please use these resources in your communities and share them widely.

2026 Annual Declaration – Now Open

The portal for completing the **2026 Annual Declaration** is now open on ChurchHub. All ministry personnel (active, voluntary associates, and retired), including candidates, are required to complete the annual declaration **before April 30** in order to remain in compliance with United Church standards for ministry personnel and to maintain eligibility for calls, appointments, and licenses for sacraments and marriages.

Access the declaration by logging on to ChurchHub: <https://churchhub.ca/>.

Once logged on, you will need to:

- Declare whether you have had any criminal charges in the past year
- Attest that you have reviewed the *Creating Safe and Respectful Environments Policy and Procedures*
- Attest that you have reviewed the *Ethical Standards* and *Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel*

Follow [this link](#) for a guide to assist you in this task or contact Laura Fohse, Vocational Minister, for assistance.

Worship Resources:

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

[Ash Wednesday - February 18, 2026](#)

[First Sunday in Lent - February 22, 2026](#)

[Black History Month 4 - February 22, 2026](#)

[Second Sunday in Lent - March 1, 2026](#)

[World Day of Prayer - March 6, 2026](#)

[International Women's Day - March 8, 2026](#)

[National Affirming PIE Day - March 14, 2026](#)

[Fourth Sunday in Lent - March 15, 2026](#)

[International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - March 21, 2026](#)

[Earth Hour - March 22, 2026](#)

[Fifth Sunday in Lent - March 22, 2026](#)

* [Click here to access Northern Spirit's 2026 Prayer Cycle](#)

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



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