



## *News from the Region:* March 4, 2026



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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).*

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

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## **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.](#)

### **★ Northern Spirit Staff Updates**

\*Julie Graham, Justice and Communications Minister, has ended her medical leave and started back to work March 2, beginning at quarter time. Julie thanks everyone deeply

for their support and understanding over the five months she had to be off, and has missed you all. Please be patient during this time of transition back to her busy portfolio.

\*Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, has also returned from her sabbatical.

### ★ **A Joint Message from Alberta's Regional Councils**

A letter was sent out by Chinook Winds Regional Council, our Alberta neighbours, from their Region's Presider and Executive Minister, co-signed by our own. *"I write to you, the members of The United Church of Canada within Alberta, to express my concern with Premier Danielle Smith's televised remarks on February 19, 2026. Concern that is shared by my leadership colleagues in Northern Spirit Regional Council who have asked me to write this letter on behalf of our two Regional Councils that represent the Province of Alberta."* [Read the full letter and share](#) these words of support with our diverse and beloved communities.

### ★ **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!

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## **Wider Church News & Resources**

### ★ **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](#).

### ★ **General Council Executive February Summary**

Read the full summary now on the [General Council website](#).

### ★ **Stewardship Seconds (NEW Update for January-June 2026!)**

Short, pithy sayings that pack a punch, to help infiltrate stewardship thinking into your community of faith. Add them to newsletters, worship, announcements, webpages, wherever people gather! Find them at the [Stewardship in Worship webpage](#).

★ **Stewardship: DID YOU KNOW?! ~ a message from Sarah Giles, Stewardship Support**

The Legacy Planning course is **FREE** until June as part of the UCC's Centennial offer of free fees. This 'on-demand' course Bequests & Estate Planning can be done at your own pace. You won't believe how many times you will say "I wish I'd known that sooner!" when working through these short lessons. (You could even donate some money to M&S instead of paying to take the course! Just an idea from Sarah's brain, to your newsletter!) Find the link to Bequest & Estate planning here on ChurchX: [Called to Be the Church: The Journey](#) As always – I'd love to chat with you about ways that you are becoming more devoted disciples of Christ through your stewardship programs, or about digging into a stewardship plan! Email or book time Sarah Giles, Stewardship Support for the Western Regions at [sgiles@united-church.ca](mailto:sgiles@united-church.ca) or [Book time to meet with me](#). Let me know you've read the newsletter, tell me a good news story out of your church, ask for a great cookie recipe... let's connect!

**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](#).

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*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.

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*Worship Resources:*

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

[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](#)  
[Palm/Passion Sunday - March 29, 2026](#)  
[Maundy Thursday - April 2, 2026](#)  
[Good Friday - April 3, 2026](#)  
[Holy Saturday - April 4, 2026](#)  
[Easter Sunday - April 5, 2026](#)

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

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

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