

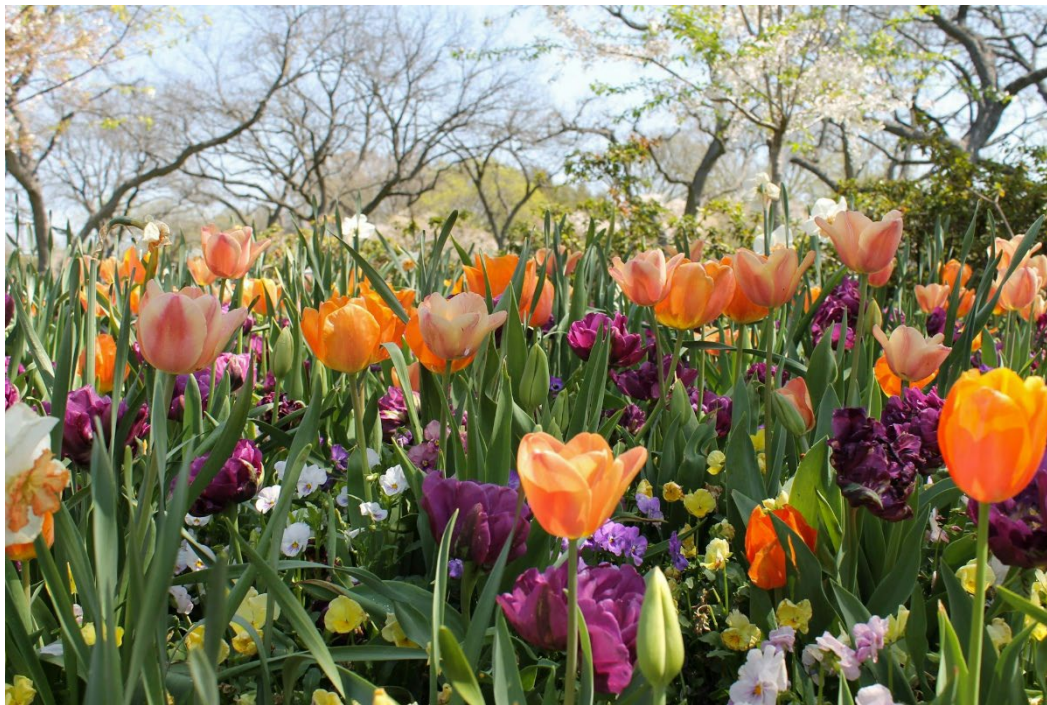


## ***Events Newsletter: May 20, 2026***

### **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).*

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





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

#### **★ Welcome to new Affirming ministries! (Updated)**

Pride Month is a busy season for welcoming new ministries to the family officially- in practice, these fine communities have been Affirming for a long time. Let's celebrate these ministries in our Prairies and North regions:

[Grace-Westminster United Church](#) in Saskatoon celebrates on Sunday, June 7 at 10:30am. Celebratory coffee and treats will be provided by the Affirm Team after the service!

 [Charleswood United Church](#) in Winnipeg celebrates Sunday, June 14 at 10:00AM, followed by a BBQ. Everyone is invited!

 [Paul's United Church](#) in Oxbow, southern SK is celebrating June 14 with details to come.

### ★ Youth Council of Northern Spirit

Do you know a high school student who's interested in faith, community, and justice? Applications for the Youth Council of Northern Spirit are now open to **youth age 14-17 (or, entering grades 10-12 in September)**. The Youth Council of Northern Spirit partners with youth from other regions to build community and grow in leadership. Members meet online during the year and in person at Uncharted – the annual senior youth retreat. Youth Council Members will also attend the Northern Spirit Regional Gathering (November 10 & 12, 2026). For more information, contact [KGuentherTrautwein@united-church.ca](mailto:KGuentherTrautwein@united-church.ca) or visit [firstthirdministry.ca/youth-council](http://firstthirdministry.ca/youth-council).

APPLY HERE: <https://form.jotform.com/242146880537057>

### ★ Summer Worship Planning: *Inventions of Summer* available through Region

*Inventions of Summer*: A simple, creative, theologically rich companion for a Summer Sabbath or Worship Series. *Inventions of Summer* is a four-week, ready-to-use Summer Sabbath booklet and worship series inviting you to enrich your summer through simple reflections on sunflowers, string beans, mosquitoes, and fireflies. [More details and an overview of this worship series can be reviewed here](#). This series is available as a **gift** from the Region, who purchased a license from Prayer Bench, to support Leaders and Communities of Faith. [Sign up to receive this series at this link](#). When you sign up via the short form, you will receive access to the booklet, the worship notes and additional resources.

### ★ Summer Job Opportunity: *Now Hiring Summer Staff at Kirk Centre!*

Thanks to the support of the Canada Summer Jobs program, Kirk Centre is pleased to be offering two exciting summer employment opportunities, starting July 6 and ending August 29th, 2026. If you're passionate about building community and gaining valuable experience in the non-profit sector, we encourage you to apply! ✎ Positions

Available: 1. Community Hub Development Coordinator

[CHECK OUT THE JOB DESCRIPTION HERE!](#) ; 2. Building Management Trainee [CHECK OUT THE JOB DESCRIPTION HERE!](#). Or go to <https://www.kirkcentre.ca/about-3-1> for full information.

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## New & Featured Events

★ *As the church and the communities we serve prepare for National Indigenous History Month and Pride Month, in June, here are some events to help us think through how we can connect with these communities.*

**From Words to Practice: Living Into the United Church's 2S and LGBTQIA+ Apology, June 9, 2026, 1:00 – 2:30 pm CDT, 12:00-1:30 pm MDT/ CST, online**

In this national **United in Learning online session**, participants will reflect on the 2S and LGBTQIA+ apology the United Church offered last year at General Council, learn from communities already living into it, and explore **practical ways to embody the apology** in worship, community life, and public witness. You will hear from members of the Interim Working Group on the apology animation, share ideas with others across the church, and leave with **concrete, context-appropriate next steps** for your own ministry or community. [Details are here](#) and the webinar will be offered via Church X, which requires a free account to join.

★ **Living into Radical Welcome: Rainbow Refugee Sponsorship, June 18th 2026, 1:00 – 2:30 pm CDT, 12:00-1:30 pm MDT/ CST, online**

In recognition of the annual World Refugee Day, this interactive webinar invites communities of faith, refugee sponsorship groups, and justice-seeking individuals to explore how sponsorship can become a meaningful expression of radical welcome, solidarity, and faithful discipleship.

Around the world, many LGBTQIA+ individuals continue to face persecution, criminalization, displacement, and violence because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Faith communities across Canada have a unique opportunity to respond with compassion, accompaniment, and concrete action through **rainbow refugee sponsorship**.

Whether your congregation is already sponsoring refugees, offering support programs, or just exploring how to get started, this webinar will provide practical guidance, real-life insights, and opportunities to connect. [Please see all details here](#).

★ **Collective 2026: (em)brace for impact, August 12-15, Ontario**

Youth, young adults, and their leaders from across Canada are invited to **Collective**, a gathering for faith, fun, friendship, and food! In August, we will be travelling to Brock University in St. Catharines, ON. It's a chance for us to connect with each other, explore faith, and grow in leadership. Cost is \$450 and **registration closes on June 15**.

Financial assistance may be available. For more information, contact [KGuentherTrautwein@united-church.ca](mailto:KGuentherTrautwein@united-church.ca) or visit [collective-gathering.ca](http://collective-gathering.ca). **REGISTER HERE**.

## Upcoming Events and Learning Opportunities

★ **Sacred Spaces to Community Places Information Session, Friday, May 22, 2026 - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Heritage Room, City Hall, Edmonton**

Seating is limited. To RSVP, visit [edmonton.ca/AffordableHousing](https://edmonton.ca/AffordableHousing) or email [affordablehousing@edmonton.ca](mailto:affordablehousing@edmonton.ca). The City of Edmonton has been working with Edmonton Community Foundation to help those groups that are considering affordable housing on their lands but lack the resources to explore options. We're developing a program to support the early stages of the development process, where most projects stall: visioning, feasibility, planning, and finding the right partners. Before it launches, we're hosting an information session to share details and answer questions. The afternoon will include refreshments, a short presentation and a discussion. **How can faith spaces play a role in solving our affordable housing crisis? How can faith spaces adapt their physical spaces to match their faith and financial objectives?** Do you know a faith leader who should be in the room? Please share this invitation with them.

**Treaty Land Sharing Network (TLSN) Spring Feast, May 23, 11:00AM-1:00PM, Davidson Farm near Alliance AB**

We know this gathering isn't accessible to many in our Region, but we want you to also know about this network, which is seeking landholders who want to share in the spirit of Treaty. If you can attend, please do, and let Julie Graham know ([jgraham@united-church.ca](mailto:jgraham@united-church.ca)) [Full details are on the TLSN site](#). And let her know if you'd like to connect with the TLSN.

★ **Rejoice in Hope gathering, June 7, 11 a.m., Hazel Bluff**

Come rejoice and celebrate with the congregations, choirs and musicians of Athabasca, Barrhead, Fort McMurray, Westlock/Hazel Bluff, Whitecourt & Jarvie United Churches. Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> 2026, 11:00am - 12:30pm, Hazel Bluff Hall: (27329 HWY-18, Westlock, right next to Hazel Bluff United Church). Free-will luncheon to follow. **RSVP by May 22 to 780-674-2412 or [buchurch2021@gmail.com](mailto:buchurch2021@gmail.com).**

**Learning on Purpose leadership development, June 15-26, Paris Ontario**

The Centre for Christian Studies' transformative two-week leadership development course is coming to the Five Oaks Retreat Centre in Paris, ON, June 15-26, 2026. Whether you are discerning a call to ministry, starting a program of diaconal formation, building your skills for lay leadership, connecting your community engagement and your faith, or just trying to figure out what your purpose is, Learning on Purpose is for you. For more information, [visit our website](#).

**Whitehorse Worship Arts Festival & Contemplative Retreat, July 2-5, 2026, Whitehorse, Yukon**

Join us in the Yukon for a four-day immersive gathering designed to heal and inspire. A partnership of the Anglican, Lutheran, and United Church traditions, this practice-

forward retreat offers a restorative balance of **deep contemplation and vibrant, embodied worship.**

Click [here](#) for more information and registration.

★ **St. Albert United Vacation Bible School, July 27 - 31, St. Albert**

St. Albert United is already thinking about SUMMER...and, in particular, Vacation Bible School! Our VBS this year is called *Changing the Game: Learning to Live in God's Love*, and it will be a board-game-themed week of FUN! As usual, we plan to sing, worship, pray, create, play and connect - we can't wait to spend a week together! *VBS 2026: Changing the Game* runs from July 27 - 31, 2026, from 9:00 - 12:00 each day. The cost per participant is \$30 for students from Kindergarten - Grade 5. We welcome children from our congregation AND community to join us, so EVERYONE is free to attend! We also welcome older students to join us as volunteers - many hands make light work, and we love watching these connections made during this week together. Registration is open NOW! Registering soon helps us to make the best plan for our busy week, so don't delay! Full details at: [stalbertunited.com/vbs](http://stalbertunited.com/vbs).

**Prairie Pilgrimage 2026: "Seeking the Extra in Ordinary" with St. Andrew's College, July 27 – 31 in and around Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Treaty Six Territory**

Join pilgrimage guides Carolyn & Blaine Woodall and GreenSpirit Chaplain Shawn Sanford Beck, in partnership with the Oliver & Gruchy Learning Centre at St. Andrew's College, for a five-day spiritual exploration of Saskatoon. Together we will travel from St. Andrew's College, through urban greenspace, along the South Saskatchewan River, sojourning in church-space and cemetery, exploring the beauty of Wanuskewin, Ancient Spirals, and Beaver Creek. As we journey, we will be joined by wise guests and guides who will help us engage creation and creativity, Indigenous spirituality, Celtic Christianity, Labyrinth mysteries, and more. Space is limited to nine pilgrims, who are also eligible to earn a Certificate in Spiritual Exploration through St. Andrew's College if so desired. The cost of the pilgrimage is \$1000 which includes food, lodging, program, and internal transportation when needed. Registration deadline is **June 1**, so sign up soon! For more information, or to register, please contact Rev. Carolyn Woodall at [carolynsparlingwoodall@gmail.com](mailto:carolynsparlingwoodall@gmail.com) or 780-385-5124 (text is a great way to connect).

★ **Emberwood Edmonton Forest School, August 22-23, Narrow Lake, AB**

If you've got little ones in your life (kids, nibblings, little cousins) this one is for you. We're delighted to be partnering with **Edmonton Forest School** again this summer to offer our family program! Family Trip: August 22-23, 2026. Accommodation for 1 night on the family trip (1 Cabin per family), all meals included, Transportation to and from the trip location (Narrow Lake, AB) available, children's programming and adults programming, and Pre-Session Playdates: **April 19, May 31, June 14** from 1:30pm - 4:00pm.

This year, the program is offered on a sliding scale - \$375 - 550 for the whole trip + all pre-trip gatherings. For full information, **email [howdy@emberwood.ca](mailto:howdy@emberwood.ca) or go to [emberwood.ca](http://emberwood.ca).**

**Save the date: UCC Office Admin Conference! October 5 - 9, 2026, Saskatoon SK**

The next Office Administrators Conference, open to all United Church of Canada Office Administrators, will take place at St. Martin's United Church in Saskatoon from **Monday, October 5 to Friday, October 9, 2026**. Thanks to the generous support of several Regional Councils, the cost of attending has been partially subsidized. **Costs** (per person) are: \$325 (no accommodation); \$525 (shared accommodation) and \$750 (private accommodation). **Registration deadline is August 1, 2026**. A [basic agenda](#) and [a letter of invitation](#) contain more details. For further information, contact Chantal Winslow at [cwinslow@united-church.ca](mailto:cwinslow@united-church.ca) or Brandy Emmerich at [office@stmartinsuc.com](mailto:office@stmartinsuc.com).

★ **Advance notice for your continuing education planning: *Joyful Resistance: Intercultural Worship Arts for Bold Discipleship, Nov 19-21 2026*** at the Providence Renewal Centre, Edmonton AB

Join the Western Intercultural Ministries Network in an immersive, intercultural worship-arts conference. This will be hosted by the five Western Regional Councils, and is open to everyone anywhere in the country. We'll explore **joy as a form of resistance** that sustains bold discipleship and justice-oriented ministry. Join in plenary, rotating stations, theological reflection with hands-on musical and arts. We'll combine theological reflection with hands-on musical and artistic practice. **HOLD THE DATE**-more details to come, including cost and full program. [All details will be posted here.](#)

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



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