



Events Newsletter: June 17, 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.

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

News from the Pews and Other Ministries

♥ We are sad to share the news of the death of **The Reverend Wm. Dale Irving** on Tuesday June 9, 2026. Dale turned 83 on May 12. He served The United Church for 41 years. He was in congregational ministries in Alberta and Nova Scotia and also served 12 years as Conference Personnel Minister for Alberta Northwest Conference. A

memorial service will be held on **Saturday June 20**, 1 pm at Southminster Steinhauer United Church, located at 10740 - 19 Ave NW, Edmonton.

★ **Weekly News Summer Schedule**

The last issue of the Northern Spirit Weekly Newsletter before the summer break will be on **June 24**. Regular newsletters will resume at the end of August. Until that time, we will only publish the newsletter if there is urgent news to share!

★ **Forget where's Waldo... Where's your church!? 🙄**

If you have ever wondered if it is worth ensuring your community of faith's information is on Google Maps, this story might inspire you. In 2025, Bill Gillard updated the listing for St. Peter's on Google Maps, as it was incorrectly named. Since then, 5,000 visitors have viewed the updated profile, even though St. Peter's is in a small town. Recently, a colleague of mine was asked to visit a local community of faith to preach. When they got the email, they immediately went to Google to see how long the drive would be. But guess what? They couldn't find the church on Google! It took a couple of phone calls to track down their physical address because not even their ChurchHub account was up to date (they had accidentally entered their mailing address under physical address). If it's hard for a United Church staff person to find you, how much harder is it for new people seeking community!? So, if you do one additional task this week, perhaps it should be this: **Google your community of faith and make sure what's listed is correct (or that there is a listing at all!)** [How to Edit your Google Listing](#) | [Claim your Google Listing](#).

Email Jordan Cantwell for more ideas on how to strengthen your invitation jcantwell@united-church.ca.

★ **Job Opportunity: Stony Plain United Office Administrator**

Stony Plain United is hiring a Church Office Administrator: in-office at Stony Plain United Church; 24 hours per week; Previous office administrative experience preferred; Position start date August 1, 2026. [Full position description is available on the Stony Plain United website](#). For further information contact the Church by email at job@stonyplainunitedchurch.com.

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 or visit firstthirdministry.ca/youth-council.

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

New & Featured Events

★ **How to be Prophetic, Pastoral and Non-Partisan during the Alberta Referendum Campaign, June 24, 2026, 2:00 pm MT, online**

Northern Spirit is invited to join this Chinook Winds Regional Town Hall, where we will discuss the October Alberta referendum. Chris Mah Poy, Chinook Winds First Third and Justice Networks Coordinator, will share information and best practices on how you can engage in a prophetic, pastoral and non-partisan response with your communities of faith and wider networks during the referendum campaign and how the region will be engaging the referendum. Please join us for this vital conversation. Register for this to receive the Zoom link: [Chinook Winds Regional Town Hall](#).

★ **Save the Date: Region Connect Gathering**

The next Region Connect Gathering will be held in Camrose, AB, on **October 24 & 25, 2026**. More details will come soon, but for now save the date for this gathering!

Upcoming Events and Learning Opportunities

TOMORROW: 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](#).

Indigenous Day of Prayer, Sunday June 21: resources available

This year, Indigenous Peoples' Day and the [Indigenous Day of Prayer](#) coincide. This is an important opportunity to dedicate your Sunday worship to honouring the past, present and future of Indigenous Nations in your area, and in our church. We offer gratitude to the elders' council and Indigenous Ministries and Justice for giving us all words to share in worship. [All resources are posted here](#). Our Anglican kin have

also [shared multilingual resources](#). As always for this day, and this entire month and indeed year-round, please support all local invitations and spaces generously shared by local Nations. Show up! Express support online and through your church signage for the relationships that we are blessed with, and stand up publicly to any expressions of racism and stereotyping. May the Apology, our TRC commitments, and above all, our Creator, be our guide towards truth and reconcili-action.

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.

August 10-14 - Indigenous and Racialized Youth Retreat

Applications are still open for the Indigenous and Racialized Youth Retreat this summer at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre in Manitoba. At this retreat, young people will come together to learn on the land, form friendships, and deepen their intercultural understanding. To apply, visit <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/n2Jb0ep7Vw> or **contact Inzwi Munikwa** (Lead for emerging Indigenous-Racialized Interfaith Community) at IMunikwa@united-church.ca for more information.

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 has been extended to June 30*. Financial assistance may be available. For more information, contact KGuentherTrautwein@united-church.ca or visit collective-gathering.ca. **REGISTER HERE**.

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. 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 or go to 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 or Brandy Emmerich at office@stmartinsuc.com.

Mark your calendars! YouthTREK, October 23-25, Whitehorse & Camrose

Calling Jr. Youth (13-15) from across the Pacific Mountain, Chinook Winds & Northern Spirit regions: Gather together for a weekend of church sleepovers, faith conversations and fun! Join us **October 23-25 at YouthTREK**, in Whitehorse or Camrose. The cost is 350\$, with a variety of bursaries available, including special discounts for Whitehorse locals and folks driving their own youth to Camrose, where you can attend for 100\$. Be in touch about bursaries, as we have a variety available — don't let money be the barrier to attendance. Registration is limited, so get registered now! We have 20 spots available for Whitehorse, and 28 for Camrose. Learn more at this link <https://www.firstthirdministry.ca/yt2026.html> and reach out to firstthirdministry@united-church.ca with any questions.

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.](#)

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



Northern Spirit Regional Council Office
8510 95 Ave NW Edmonton Alberta
1-587-407-0330
northernspirit@united-church.ca
www.northernspiritrc.ca

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