



Spirit of Hope United Church

THE SPARK

CHRISTMAS 2025



WELCOME TO ALL!

Our Sunday morning worship services are conducted in person, following the protocols listed on page 3.
We broadcast our services on our YouTube Channel, live-streamed beginning at 10:30 a.m.
and recorded and posted for later viewing.

The recordings of the services can be found on our YouTube page:
<https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791>

Our office hours: Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Spirit of Hope is an Affirming Ministry within The United Church of Canada
striving to be fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

GOD BLESS YOU. WE ARE NOT ALONE!



SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The Spirit of Hope United Church
office will be closed on
**Tuesday, December 23rd, 2025 to
Thursday, January 1st, 2026**

Office hours resume on
Friday, January 2nd, 2026.

For pastoral emergencies, please call the office of
Rev. Blaine Gregg at **(780) 468-1418 (2).**

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Catherine, Office Administrator



**STAY UP TO DATE AND
SHARE THE NEWS!**



Find us at www.spiritofhope.ca or like us on Facebook and
Instagram – share our posts with your family and friends.
If you have an announcement to place in The Spark, please
call Catherine in the office at **780-468-1418** or email to
officeadmin.spiritofhope@shaw.ca

IT'S ANNUAL REPORT TIME AGAIN!

Work has begun on compiling the story of our
community of faith in 2025.

What a lot of things there are to tell and celebrate!
From weekly worship services to open community
funfests and mic sessions; music concerts and plays to
committee work and building maintenance; tracking
finances to encouraging new building users; food
security to community collaborations, the variety and
effort is amazing.

To those responsible for chronicling the past year,
please submit your reports (including photos if you
have any you haven't sent in yet) to the respective
Faith in Action team leads and Susan Bramm,
coordinator, by **Friday, January 16, 2026**. This will give
us time to compile the report and have it reviewed by
the Leadership Team before it is printed at the end of
February.

A big thank you to all those who participate to make
this a vibrant, welcoming, and caring community of
faith.

NO ROOM IN THE INN 2025

Each Christmas, the Edmonton and District Council of
Churches help congregations pool their resources to
make a big difference in their community.

By donating to the No Room in the Inn campaign this
year, you will join Christians across the capital region
to help bring much-needed safety improvements to a
play space at WIN House.

You are welcome to donate anonymously by placing
cash in the collection box at the back of the church at
one of the two Christmas Eve services.

You can also use one of the donation envelopes at the
collection box or in the pews to designate your
contribution to "No Room in the Inn" (and provide
your contact information if you wish to receive a tax
receipt).

If writing a cheque, please make it out to Spirit of Hope
and add a note requesting that the money be directed
to "No Room in the Inn."

CHANCEL RINGERS BRING JOY

Thank you to members of the Chancel Ringers who played during the third Sunday of Advent worship service last Sunday. They played two well-known Christmas carols, “*What Child is This*” and “*Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*.” Heather Buckie directed. Thanks to her and Vici Wynn who have been filling in for director Lois Samis Lund who took a break from directing for the fall. We look forward to hearing them again in the new year!



Chancel Ringers (from left to right): Heather, Vici, Suzy, Susan, Dawn, Carol, Justine, Frances, Gaelyn, and Michelle

AN EVENING OF CAROLING AND TREATS – GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS

On the evening of Tuesday, December 16, about 60 people gathered for a fun evening at Spirit of Hope to sing Christmas carols and enjoy hot drinks and goodies afterward. Those present included many people from our church family and the community. Some joined by Zoom, including Marg from Australia.

Many thanks to Warren for accompanying us and performing a lovely Christmas organ piece; to Reverend Blaine for running the sound booth, the PowerPoint slides and managing the Zoom connection; and to the volunteers for providing snacks.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES NOW AVAILABLE

The 2026 Spirit of Hope United Church weekly offering envelopes are now available for pickup in the Lobby.

If you don’t see your envelopes, please contact the office at officeadmin.spiritofhope@shaw.ca or call **780-468-1418**, and we will be happy to prepare a set for you.

Thank you!

HOLIDAY BREAK ANNOUNCEMENT

Our Online Hymn Sing, Creative Connections, and YET sessions will not be held again until the **New Year**.

We hope you enjoy a restful and joyful holiday season!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Check out the great volunteer opportunities during coffeetime today.

Your assistance helps your Spirit of Hope family in working towards its vision.

If you, or anyone you know needs volunteer hours for school or your resume we can provide documentation.



COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND UPCOMING EVENTS

The Northern Spirit Regional Council is dedicated to fostering community and faith through various events and activities. To learn more about the upcoming events open to the public, please visit the Community of Faith Events Calendar.

Stay connected and get involved by exploring the diverse offerings across the region. You can find the calendar here:

<https://northernspiritrc.ca/community-of-faith-events-calendar/>

We hope to see you at one of these events soon!

KEEP A LOOKOUT! – DECEMBER ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

This December, Edmonton will be the focus of a new United Church of Canada advertising campaign which aims to spark curiosity and spiritual reflection during the Christmas season through digital billboards in high-traffic areas near United Church communities. The advertisements will use the *A Place at the Table* image, a reimagining of Da Vinci’s *Last Supper* as a representation of our faith community: one committed to welcoming people of all backgrounds, identities, and experiences.



The billboards will include the United Church crest and name, as well as a URL with information about the image and a map with a listing of local congregations. Keep an eye out for the ads and an ear to the ground to listen to what people are saying about the campaign!

Let’s be prepared to welcome new people who may come through our doors this season looking for a place to belong.

WINTER WARMTH THROUGH GENEROSITY

THANK YOU SO MUCH to the knitters at Spirit of Hope who have donated a total of 25 beanie toques to ICPM.

Last Sunday, December 7, Bissell Centre received 92 beanie toques, 38 scarves, 14 pairs of mittens, 13 pairs of slippers as well as a bag of ‘frilly’ scarves.

The yarn, for these items, is from the Donation box at the church as well as purchases made by knitters.

Thank you for these and other anonymous donations made to the Bissell Centre.

May these donations add warmth during this winter season.



TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS

Infectious conditions such as the common cold, influenza, Covid-19, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are affecting some of us. If you are feeling ill, have recently been exposed to an infection or have significant health issues, you are encouraged to stay home and attend online services and meetings. When food is served in the church, groups are encouraged to take precautions to prevent or slow down the spread of germs by, for example, having servers or setting out food in individual portions.

Spirit of Hope has masks available at the Welcome Desk and hand sanitizer as you enter the Lobby, Sanctuary, and lower hall. Portable HEPA filters are in the Sanctuary, Church School Room, and Youth Room. They can be moved to other spaces as needed.

The current communion practice on bi-monthly first Sundays is to have individual portions of bread and juice available.

The Leadership Team will continue to review church practices in response to changing circumstances.

Save These Dates!

DECEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

- Sun. December 21 - Fourth Sunday of Advent - 10:30 a.m.
- Sun. December 21 - Christmas Lunch- Donations to SEEDS - 12:00 p.m.
- Sun. December 21 - Shortest Day Service To Remember Our Loved Ones - 2:30 p.m.
- Wed. December 24 - All Ages Christmas Eve Service - 4:30 p.m.
- Wed. December 24 - Communion Candlelight Christmas Eve Service - 7:30 p.m.
- Thu. December 25 - Christmas Day
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- Thu. January 1 - New Year's Day
- Mon. January 5 - YET Hangout For Youth and Young Adults - 4:00 p.m.
- Sat. January 10 - Family Open Mic - 7:00 p.m.
- Sat. January 24 - Leadership Team Retreat - 10:00 a.m.

Tracking of Givings				
		11/12		Variance
Categories	Budget	Budget	Year to Date	from Budget
Local Envelope Offering	\$ 170,000	\$ 155,833	\$ 141,821	\$ (14,013)
Other Receipts for Local	\$ 24,476	\$ 22,436	\$ 22,723	\$ 288
Givings to M&S	\$ 19,448	\$ 17,827	\$ 20,194	\$ 2,367

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE:
DECEMBER 21ST, 2025 TO JANUARY 4TH, 2026

Sun. December 21	10:30 a.m. 11:45 a.m. 2:30 p.m.	Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service (Sanctuary and YouTube) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791 SEEDS Christmas Lunch (Lower Hall and Kitchen) Shortest Day Service to Remember Loved Ones (Sanctuary)
Mon. December 22	7:00 p.m.	Property and Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)
Tue. December 23		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Wed. December 24	4:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED – CHRISTMAS EVE All Ages Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791 Communion Candlelight Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791
Thu. December 25		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED - CHRISTMAS DAY
Fri. December 26		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Sat. December 27	2:00 p.m.	Jane Austen Society (Lower Hall)
Sun. December 28	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service (Sanctuary and YouTube) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791
Mon. December 29		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Tue. December 30		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Wed. December 31		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S EVE
Thu. January 1		SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S DAY
Fri. January 2	7:00 a.m.	Garneau Strathcona Food Security Program Set Up (Lobby, Gym, and Kitchen)
Sat. January 3	8:00 a.m.	Garneau Strathcona Food Security Program (Lobby, Gym, and Kitchen)
Sun. January 4	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service (Sanctuary and YouTube) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791

NOTES

- Anne's Kinder Kastle Daycare has use of the kitchen as needed during the day on Mondays to Fridays (for breakfast and lunch preparation and cleanup). They also have access to the gym for a one-hour period on some days. The gym is not available for active or noisy games from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please contact our administrator, Catherine, so arrangements for use of these spaces can be coordinated with the Daycare.
- With others interested in renting space in our newly renovated building, it is important to ensure that the room or space needed for Spirit of Hope group activities and special events has been booked through our office. These are posted on our Google calendar posted on our website and in THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE. **Please contact our office administrator Catherine to find out what space is available and to book the space you need.**
- There is a simple form on our "Contact Us" page at: <https://www.spiritofhope.ca/contact> you are welcome to use.

SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH
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Telephone: 780-468-1418
Email: officeadmin.spiritofhope@shaw.ca
Rev. Blaine Gregg: minister.spiritofhope@shaw.ca
Catherine Evoy, Office Administrator
Leo, Custodian
Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.
Our office hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Spirit of Hope is an Affirming Ministry within The United Church of Canada
striving to be fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
WIFI ACCESS WHILE AT CHURCH
Network: Spirit of Hope Guest
Password: SOHGuest