



Spirit of Hope United Church

THE SPARK

MARCH 8, 2026



WELCOME TO ALL!

Our Sunday morning worship services are conducted in person, following the protocols listed on page 5. 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!



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
Set clocks one hour ahead

NARRATIVE BUDGET DISCUSSION



Please join us today after worship for an opportunity to understand and discuss the 2025 financial statements and proposed 2026 budget. Please bring a bag lunch!

You can also join by Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86294123712?pwd=HynLlIeruA4gaiBVBbE8RGI0RK8IKgH.1>

The 2025 Annual Report has been emailed out to those on our distribution list. Printed copies are available on request. Copies are available at the Welcome Desk for those who have already signed up for one. Please sign up for one and it will be available for you next week.

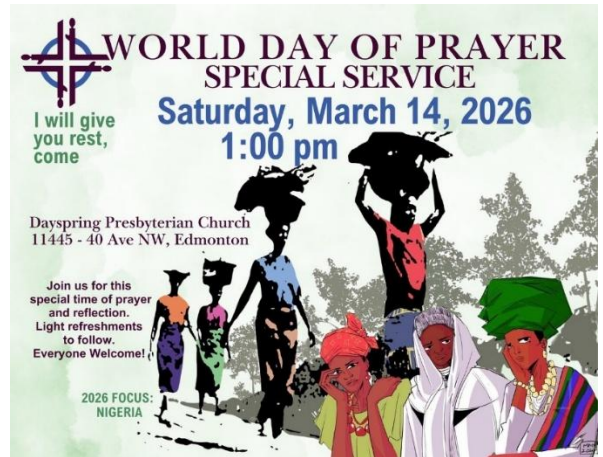
COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND UPCOMING EVENTS

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!



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

I Will Give You Rest: Come (Matthew 11:28-30)

An ecumenical service of hope and prayer hosted this year at **Dayspring Presbyterian Church**
11445 - 40 St NW, Edmonton
March 14, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

PRAYER SERVICES IN LENT



United Churches are coming together for special prayer services on **Sunday afternoons at 4:00 p.m.** during the season

of Lent to pray for the renewal of the church, discernment of congregations for future witness and ministry, the work of the regional council, the plans of the National Church for Vision 2035, strength and equipping of leadership for the present time, current concerns for the community, nation, and world.

- March 8: First United (5115 51 Ave, Wetaskiwin)
- March 15: Highlands United (11305 64 St NW, Edmonton)
- March 22: St. David's United (4614 48 St, Leduc)
- March 29: Grace United (6215 104 Ave NW, Edmonton)

People can also join in by Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86475167860?pwd=HKXBqMbin1oADzFCfbapYgKa9bLz0c.1>

Meeting ID: 864 7516 7860; Passcode: 803578



IMAGINE CHILDREN'S RETREAT 2026

Imagine Children's Retreat (ages 8–12) by First Third Ministry offer a fun, welcoming United Church of Canada experience for children and leaders of all backgrounds and family types.

Children explore faith through stories, worship, music, drama, play, and community in a safe, inclusive setting.

Learn more & register:

<https://www.firstthirdministry.ca/imaginechildrensretreat.html>

SOUTH EAST EDMONTON COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

Volunteers are needed to assist with hosting at this event. Please let Eva or Judy know at coffee time or at community.spiritofhope@shaw.ca if you can help.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Everyone interested in the life of Spirit of Hope United Church is invited to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting after church on **Sunday, March 15th** (about 11:45 a.m.) Pizza will be provided!

You can also join by Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86294123712?pwd=HynLIeruA4gaiBVbE8RGIORK8lKgH.1>.

The 2025 Annual Reports are now available to read and explore.



SPIRIT OF HOPE LEADERSHIP TEAM

OFFICERS

- Chair (two year term, non-renewable)
- Vice Chair (one year term, non-renewable) or
- Past Chair (one year term, non-renewable)
- Secretary (one year term, renewable)
- Treasurer (one year, renewable)
- Minister (ex officio)

FAITH IN ACTION TEAM LEADS (alternating two year terms, renewable)

- Just & Caring Community (2 positions)
- Learning & Growth (2 positions)
- Worship (2 positions)

CHAIRS & REPRESENTATIVES (appointed by committee annually)

- Board of Trustees
- Communications Committee
- Ministry & Personnel Committee
- Property, Finance & Stewardship Committee
- Northern Spirit Regional Rep

Six positions will need to be filled on the Leadership Team (church board) at the **Annual Congregational Meeting on March 15th, 2026**.

- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- One Just and Caring Community FIAT Co-lead
- One Learning and Growth FIAT Co-lead
- One Worship FIAT Co-lead

Except for the Vice Chair, current position holders are eligible to be re-nominated.

The Nominations Committee has found people willing to take on each of these positions, but additional nominations are welcome. To express interest or for more information, please contact the church office.

DOLLARS & DECORATIONS FOR A DIFFERENCE

During the season of Lent, people are invited to help out the Garneau-Strathcona Food Security Program (which operates out of Spirit of Hope United on Saturday mornings)



by decorating 100 paper bags that will be used for the food hampers to be given out on Easter Weekend.

People are also invited to make financial donations to help fill those bags with good protein items. The goal is to raise \$2,000 between now and Palm Sunday (March 29th) - \$20 per bag. Mark your donations (envelope or e-transfer) with "food security."

PIE BAKERS NEEDED FOR MARCH 15



On March 15, the Affirm Team would like the congregation to recognize and celebrate PIE Day.

PIE day is officially March 14, and Sunday March 15 is the closest Sunday. PIE stands for Public, Intentional and Explicit. In terms of being an Affirming Ministry it means that we are Public in our support, Intentional about it, and Explicit in our welcoming, acceptance and support for members of the Rainbow Community (LGBTQIAS 2+).

At our Annual Congregational Meeting at coffee time that Sunday, we would like to serve pie in celebration of this day. The Affirm Team will be bringing some pies, but other members of the congregation are invited to bring pie too. If you are a baker we would love to share in your creation, and if you are not but want to help, a store-bought pie will be gratefully accepted too.

Come join in the celebration as we recognize PIE Day and participate in our Annual Congregational Meeting.

PROMOTIONS PROJECT 2026 UPDATE



Thanks to everyone who has already provided input and suggestions to the Promotions Project Team. Check out the responses to the questions posed on the poster at the Welcome Desk and downstairs. If you haven't already done so, please complete the survey, and place your responses in the box on the Welcome Desk.

Thanks to Anna who has been assisting with our social media accounts. We've already noted 300 more views of our posts in February than those in January!

The core team has recruited three consultants with amazing, complementary skills to work with us on the project. They have already begun plans for modernizing our website and increasing our effectiveness and efficiency in spreading the word about our incredible Spirit of Hope community.

If you have suggestions - or you're interested in being involved in any way with this fun and engaging project, please talk with Susan Bramm, Judy Meintzer or Cathy Martin.

A REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER

Our updated Sustainability Strategy was established by the congregation in 2025 to ensure we can maintain our mission of being a sustainable and relevant United Church presence in this part of town - fulfilling our vision in alignment with our shared values.

The objective of the strategy is to be able to balance our budget by 2030 and maintain that balanced budget into the future by taking the following collective action:

Each year, our goal is for the average giving household to increase their financial givings to the church by \$10/month for local.

Half of this (\$5) is to offset the impacts of inflation on our budget. And the other half (\$5) is to close the gap between our income and expenses year over year until we are in balance.

It is understood that not everyone is in a position every year to increase their financial givings - the church budgets are based on an average that doesn't reflect the situation or choices of any specific individual or family.

But, each year, please do consider the \$10 average monthly increase when making decisions about your financial offering to the church.

Remember that our Spirit of Hope is a registered charity and a charitable tax receipt is provided for all financial givings, which may be of benefit to individuals.

Also, if you are on PAR, please remember at this time of year to make a quick call or email to Catherine in the office if you choose to increase your offering.

Youth Empowered Together

**Mondays | 4-6pm | 7909 82 Ave NW
Edmonton, AB**

Hangouts for Queer and Allied Youth

Free Youth-led Events and Activities

Games, Crafts, Friends, and Food!

Young adults welcome

@yetedmonton yetedmonton@gmail.com

MARCH 21 - CELEBRATE QUEER JOY

Please show your support to our YET (Youth Empowered Together) group by promoting and attending this exciting and entertaining Queer Talent Showcase and Resource Fair.

Let Judy know at coffee time today or at community.spiritofhope@shaw.ca if you're able to assist with hosting this event.

Posters and handbills are available on the Welcome Desk for you to share with friends, family, businesses or neighbours.



SUNDAY MOVIE AFTERNOON MARCH 22 AT 12:30 P.M.

The Shack (2017) PG-13
Sam Worthington, Octavia Spencer and Tim McGraw star in this inspirational drama fantasy about a grieving man who receives a mysterious invitation to meet with God.

Popcorn will be provided.

Everyone is welcome to join an online discussion of the movie at 7:00 p.m. that evening at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91937034300?pwd=rZ18hVJhjaqbzyMBtkAHgZlW4kaMbB.1>

Meeting ID: 919 3703 4300 Passcode: 623451



BLT! BREAKFAST – I INTERESTING LOOK AT MEDIEVAL HISTORY

On Saturday, February 28 Naomi Gue delivered a very informative and interesting talk on a Medieval Bishop, Gregory of Tours, considered The Father of French History.

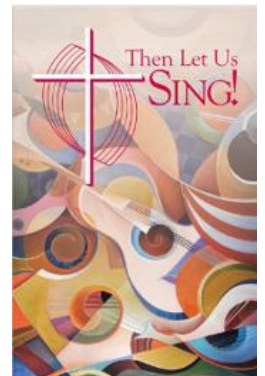
About 55 members enjoyed a hearty breakfast and then were treated to Naomi's great presentation.

The success of Naomi's talk can be measured by the number of interesting questions the audience had for her at the end of her presentation.

Thank you, Naomi!

The next breakfast is planned for Saturday, April 25. Reverend Blaine Gregg will be our guest speaker that morning.

Then Let Us Sing (TLUS) is a new music resource developed by The United Church of Canada. It includes new hymns that bring us fresh language for God as well as accessible musical styles.



The songs are intended to lift up and prioritize racialized, Indigenous, francophone, and 2SLGBTQIA+ voices, people with disabilities, and people of diverse linguistic communities. Spirit of Hope had begun to include some of the TLUS hymns in worship service.

The words are projected and come copies of the hymns with full music are included in the bulletin. In the near future, a limited number of books will be available at the sanctuary entrance for use during the service.

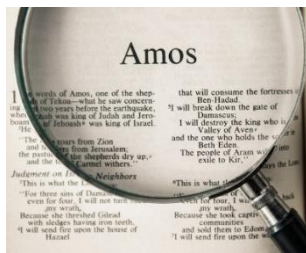
An order will be place for additional copies of TLUS on April 10, 2026. If you are interested in purchasing a copy for personal use, or to be donated to Spirit of Hope, please sign up during coffee time by April 9, 2026, or contact Catherine at officeadmin.spiritofhope@shaw.ca to arrange payment of - \$30 for the Full Music Edition and \$50 for the Accompanists' Edition.

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY AMOS – A PROPHET OF RESISTANCE

Gather to discuss the Book of Amos over four **Wednesday evenings: April 8, 15, 22, 29 beginning at 6:30 p.m.**

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86048937851?pwd=dppoit3Y0xobhLke1FM4pxpMJzclLbp.1>

Meeting ID: 860 4893 7851 Passcode: 976154



SPIRIT OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH

GARAGE SALE

OFFERS YOU CAN'T RESIST, RIGHT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

jewelry • housewares • gardening • puzzles
• sports equipment • tools • toys
• small furniture • home decor, etc.

SAT APRIL 18
10:30 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.
7909 82 AVE NW

PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCES (PAR)

One option for financial givings to the church is to sign up for PAR. This is an automatic monthly payment system, and your offering can be set up to be split between local givings, Mission and Service, and givings to others.

Choosing this option provides valuable stability to the church and helps us all to plan for the future.

It's also very easy! 34 households currently use PAR, and our goal is to spread the word and increase this number every year.

If you'd like to sign up for PAR, please ask for the simple application form at the welcome desk in the foyer, or contact Catherine in the church office.

For consideration when signing up - the church budgets for 10% of all offerings on average to be designated to Mission and Service, with the remainder covering our local expenses.

Thank you for considering PAR and its benefits!

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.

BROADVIEW MAGAZINE

Spirit of Hope maintains a subscription to *Broadview* for every household in our faith community. This award-winning magazine was founded in 1829 and is an important way to stay connected with the national church, and to explore how faith relates to the issues of the day in our nation and for our world. *Broadview* also produces high-quality digital content and engagement.

If you are able, please consider a special donation to the church of \$30 to cover the cost of your annual subscription.

Indicate "*Broadview*" in a note on the donation.

If you do not currently receive the *Broadview* in the mail but would like to, contact Catherine in the office to ensure your contact info is up to date and ask to be added to the subscription list.

Happy Reading!

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.



STAY UP TO DATE AND SHARE THE NEWS!



Find us at www.spiritofhope.ca or follow 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



A little imagination can make the world a more vibrant place.

DID YOU KNOW?

We've been deep greening our building over the past 5 years. We've experienced great results as we've replaced lightbulbs and installed motion sensor light switches, changed out the windows in the older wing, reinsulated the roof, replaced and weather-stripped doors, and installed water-saving fixtures and water bottle filling stations, new thermostats, a modernized building controls system for the sanctuary and lower hall, a new high-efficiency hot water tank, 4 new high-efficiency furnaces, and a solar array up there on the roof. We have benefited from having wonderful partners in this work - both the United Church of Canada's Faithful Footprints program and the City of Edmonton's Clean Energy Improvement Program.

Taking these actions is aligned with our church creed that calls us to live with respect in creation – reducing our GHG emissions and other environmental impacts. It has also improved comfort and air quality in the building...and saves us money!

This allows our precious resources to be redirected toward the valuable programming and services that we all hold dear.

Congratulations, Spirit of Hope!

Upgrade	Electricity Energy Savings (kWh/yr)	Natural Gas Energy savings (GJ/yr)	Total Energy Savings (ekWh/yr)	Cost Saving (\$/yr)	GHG Reduction (TCO₂e/yr)	Measure Lifetime	Lifetime Energy Savings (ekWh)	Lifetime GHG Reduction (TCO₂e)
Furnace	1,000	63	18,500	\$500	4	17 yrs	314,600	64
Solar	58,400	-	58,400	\$11,600	28	25 yrs	1,460,000	692
SubTotal	59,400	63	76,900	12,100	32	-	1,774,600	756
Non-CEIP	15,800	142	55,300	\$16,000	15			
Total	75,200	205	132,200	28,100	47			

Save These Dates!

MARCH TO APRIL 2026

Sun. March 8 - Spirit of Hope United Church Narrative Budget - 11:30 a.m.
 Mon. March 9 - YET Hangout For Youth and Young Adults - 4:00 p.m.
 Sat. March 14 - SE Edmonton Community Resource Fair - 1:00 p.m.
 Sun. March 15 - Spirit of Hope Annual Congregational Meeting and PIE Day - 11:45 a.m.
 Mon. March 16 - YET Hangout For Youth and Young Adults - 4:00 p.m.
 Sat. March 21 - YET Queer Talent Showcase and Resource Fair - 2:00 p.m.
 Sun. March 22 - Afternoon Movie *The Shack* - 12:30 p.m.
 Mon. March 23 - YET Hangout For Youth and Young Adults - 4:00 p.m.
 Sun. March 29 - Palm Sunday
 Sun. March 29 - Jazz and Reflections - 3:30 p.m.
 Mon. March 30 - YET Hangout For Youth and Young Adults - 4:00 p.m.

Thu. April 2 - Maundy Thursday Potluck Service and Communion - 5:30 p.m.
 Fri. April 3 - Good Friday Choral Service - 10:30 a.m.
 Sun. April 5 - Easter Sunrise Service (Emily Murphy Park) - 7:00 a.m.
 Sun. April 5 - Easter Sunday Worship and Communion 10:30 a.m.
 Mon. April 6 - Easter Monday

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE: MARCH 8TH TO MARCH 15TH, 2026

Sun. March 8	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service (Sanctuary and YouTube) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791
	11:30 a.m.	Narrative Budget (Lower Hall))
Mon. March 9	4:00 p.m.	YET (Youth Empowered Together) Monday Hangout (Lower Hall, Kitchen, and Gym)
	7:00 p.m.	ESSC (Dodgeball) (Gym)
	6:30 p.m.	Chancel Ringers (Sanctuary)
Tue. March 10	9:30 a.m.	Stretch and Flex (Lower Hall)
	6:30 p.m.	The Edmonton Needlecraft Guild (Lower Hall)
	6:00 p.m.	ESSC (Dodgeball) (Gym)
Wed. March 11	1:30 p.m.	Creative Connections (Lobby)
	6:00 p.m.	ESSC (Dodgeball) (Gym)
Thu. March 12	7:00 p.m.	ESSC (Dodgeball) (Gym)
	7:30 p.m.	Choir (Sanctuary)
Fri. March 13	9:00 a.m.	Garneau Strathcona Food Security Program Set up (Lobby, Gym, Lower Hall, Kitchen)
	6:00 p.m.	321 Fun! (Lower Hall)
Sat. March 14	8:00 a.m.	Garneau Strathcona Food Security Program (Lobby, Gym, Lower Hall, Kitchen)
	11:00 a.m.	South East Community Connections Resource Fair (Lower Hall, Kitchen, Lobby, Gym)
Sun. March 15	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service (Sanctuary and YouTube) https://youtube.com/@spiritofhopeunitedchurch791
	11:30 a.m.	Spirit of Hope United Church Congregational Meeting (Lower Hall))

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

7909-82 Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Y1

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