Denominational News
Reported to the NTESM Parish Council Meeting on April 25, 2025

All Three Denominations

- All three denominations have responded with statements and information about the conflict and humanitarian disaster in the Middle East. They have all called for a just and lasting peace.

- All three denominations encouraged participation in the World Day of Prayer.

- All three denominations provided resources and statements for Lent and Easter.

- Resources have been made available through the denominations and the Canadian Council of Churches to assist with discernment as citizens make voting decisions for the federal election.

- All three denominations offered condolences and reflections following the death of Pope Francis.

- The Shared Ministries Network continues to meet most months. Lay and ordered leaders from shared ministries in the PMRC / Kootenay Diocese / Territory of the People / and Diocese of British Columbia have been attending. The facilitators will be reaching out to the BC Synod to invite them as well. Leslie Ross and Leslie Stirling have been attending.

Anglican

- On Saturday, January 18, 2025, the House of Bishops and the Provincial Council of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon elected Bishop John Stephens as their new Metropolitan.

- The Council of the General Synod (CoGS) met from March 7th to 9th at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga, Ontario. Highlights of the meeting will be found on the Parish's website.

- The House of Bishops met from March 31st to April 4th. One of the agenda items was to determine who would be nominated for the position of Primate. The Order of Bishops have nominated the following four bishops for the office of Primate of The Anglican Church of Canada:
  - The Most Reverend Christopher Harper
  - The Most Reverend Greg Kerr-Wilson
  - The Right Reverend David Lehmann
  - The Right Reverend Riscylla Walsh-Shaw

  Biographical information and photos of the nominees have been released and will be found on the Primatial Election page of the Anglican Church of Canada website: https://gs2025.anglican.ca/election/. The election will be conducted on June 26, 2025, during the meeting of the General Synod. More information about the process is available in a post on the parish's website.

- Bishop Clara Plamondon led the Good Friday worship service at the Church of St Paul.

- The Territory of the People publishes a Monthly Bulletin that includes a message from the Bishop, her upcoming schedule, events in the territory, and many pictures. It is available for download from the Anglican page on the Parish website and the Territory or the People's website.

Evangelical Lutheran

- BC Synod continued to have monthly online meetings for lay leaders.

- In February, the Board of Canadian Lutheran World Relief announced the departure of their CEO, Karin Achtelstetter. They announced the hiring of Rev. Dr. Michael Pryse, who will join the organization as the Interim Executive Director.

- On February 11th, the national and synod bishops wrote the church regarding non-binary safety.

- The Southern Interior Region of the BC Synod held three zoom meetings in February and March to do some discerning about church leadership in light of the election of a new national bishop this July. The conversations were based on the following three scripture readings: Acts 8: 26-39; Acts 16: 6-15; and Acts 10: 1-33. A few of the participants will be delegates to the National Convention which will be held in July. They found the discussion and the attributes that the group determined would be necessary for a national bishop at this time helpful. Leslie Ross attended all three sessions.

- On March 17th, the national and synod bishops wrote a message of hope to the church in the midst of uncertain and anxious times. "Climate crisis, wars, famine, natural and climate related disasters… the list goes on. Added to it recently is the uncertainty that has arisen with the government of our southern neighbours. Threats of tariffs and of annexation have both created more anxiety and fueled a new sense of Canadian pride. . . We must be careful as a church not to fall into patterns of Christian nationalism that we see being manifested in other countries around the world. God's call for us is to walk humbly as the baptized, loving our neighbour as ourselves. Right now that may feel hard to do. Supporting Canadian products and taking pride in our country is wonderful, and we can do so while respecting and valuing our neighbours – many of whom are our family, friends and full communion partners."

- The BC Synod held a gathering on March 22nd and 23rd at King of Life Lutheran in Coquitlam. This gathering, "We Are One Body: Synod Wide Dialogue", was a visioning and dialogue session designed to explore the profound meaning and practical implications of embracing the idea that We Are One Body in Christ. One of the initial email invitations to this event outlined the purpose more fully:

  As we navigate the challenges and opportunities of our geographically diverse Synod in this time and place, it is crucial that we come together to:
  - Consider and deepen our understanding of the unity we have in Christ.
  - Envision innovative ways to collaborate across congregations and distances
  - Work together to strengthen our collective mission
  - Share insights and practices from our varied contexts

  Charles Holmes was the facilitator.
  Alex McGilvery and Leslie Ross attended from Trinity Shared Ministry. Alex McGilvery, who has attended many church conferences, was very impressed that the process concluded with definite action plans that are already underway.

  Charles Holmes introduced the intentions of the gathering:
  1. A greater sense of connection to the whole: One Body in Christ
  2. Connect with others from different congregations and locations
  3. Gain deeper understanding as to how the Synod operates
  4. A list of things we believe are critical to conserve during times of change
  5. A list of things we may need to let go of – to hospice
  6. Insights and ideas for enhancing collaboration across congregations and geographies
  7. Agreements on actions to take from this time together

The process led to the development of ten groups that will be proceeding with the action plans that the groups developed. The groups are

- 3rd Space and Community Ministry
- Children and Family Ministry
- Church Property Development
- Intentional Shared Ministry of All the Baptized
- Learning Together Action Team
- Online Hubs
- Sharing Resources
- Truth and Reconciliation First Nations
- Voices for Justice
- Youth Group and Young Adult Gatherings

Alex McGilvery is member of the Intentional Shared Ministry of All the Baptized Group; Leslie Ross, the Voices for Justice Group.

- The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Bishop Dr. Sani-Ibrahim Azar, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; and The Rev. Susan C. Johnson,National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada issued a joint statement following an Evangelical Lutheran Solidarity Visit to the Holy Land in April.

- ELCIC Bishops and Assistants to the Bishops will provide a series of sermons available for congregational use from May to September 2025.

Anglican and Lutheran

- Leaders of the Anglican, Lutheran, and Moravian churches made a joint statement for World Interfaith Harmony Week held in the first week of February.

- On April 9, 2025, the Rev. Susan Johnson (National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada), The Most Rev. Chris Harper (National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop), and the Most Rev. Anne Germond (Acting Primate, Anglican Church of Canada) sent an open letter to the church prior to Earth Day identifying that climate justice is Easter work.

- On April 15, 2025, the Rev. Susan Johnson (National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada) and the Most Rev. Anne Germond (Acting Primate, Anglican Church of Canada) issued a statement regarding the bombing of the Al Ahli Arab Hospital, an institution operated in Gaza City by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday.

United Church

- Town Hall Meetings are continuing but they have been held inconsistently so far this year. At the January meeting, Pacific Mountain Regional Council Archivist Blair Galston brought United Church history to life! In celebration of the United Church's Centennial, some of the stories that made us who we are were unearthed and animated with the help of friends. A January 10th post on the parish's website provides a link to the recording of the meeting.

- This is the centennial year of The United Church of Canada. This webpage - https://united-church.ca/100years - provides much information as the church gets ready to mark its 100th Anniversary on June 10, 2025.

- In a post published January 23, 2025 to The United Church of Canada's website, Moderator Carmen Lansdowne shared a letter that she wrote to the Right Rev. Dr. Mariann Budde of the

Episcopal Diocese of Washington thanking her for her bold, prophetic words during the Service of Prayer for the Nation at the Washington National Cathedral.

- The 44th General Council Executive met in person in London, Ontario, on March 6-9, 2025, for the final planned meeting of the triennium.

- Moderator Carmen Lansdowne shared video messages for both PIE Day and Earth Week.

- On April 2nd, an online cross-country conversation with the General Secretary of The United Church of Canada and members of the General Council Executive was held.

- Prior to the PMRC's Annual General Meeting, a Financial Forum will be held on Friday, May 23rd via Zoom.

- The Pacific Mountain Regional Council Annual General Meeting will be held virtually and in person at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in Nanaimo from Thursday, May 29th to Sunday, June 1st. Our representatives, Leslie Stirling (Church of St Paul) and Leslie Ross (Trinity Shared Ministry) will attend in person. The theme is "Cracked Open". The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephanie Spellers is the theme speaker.

- One of most recent events as part of the 100th Anniversary celebration is a photograph that was taken as a reimagining of the Da Vinci's Last Supper in the current context of The United Church of Canada.

- On June 8th, there will be a special National Centennial worship service held at Gower Street United Church, 99 Queens Rd, St. John's, NL. The service will be livestreamed on the United Church's YouTube Channel.