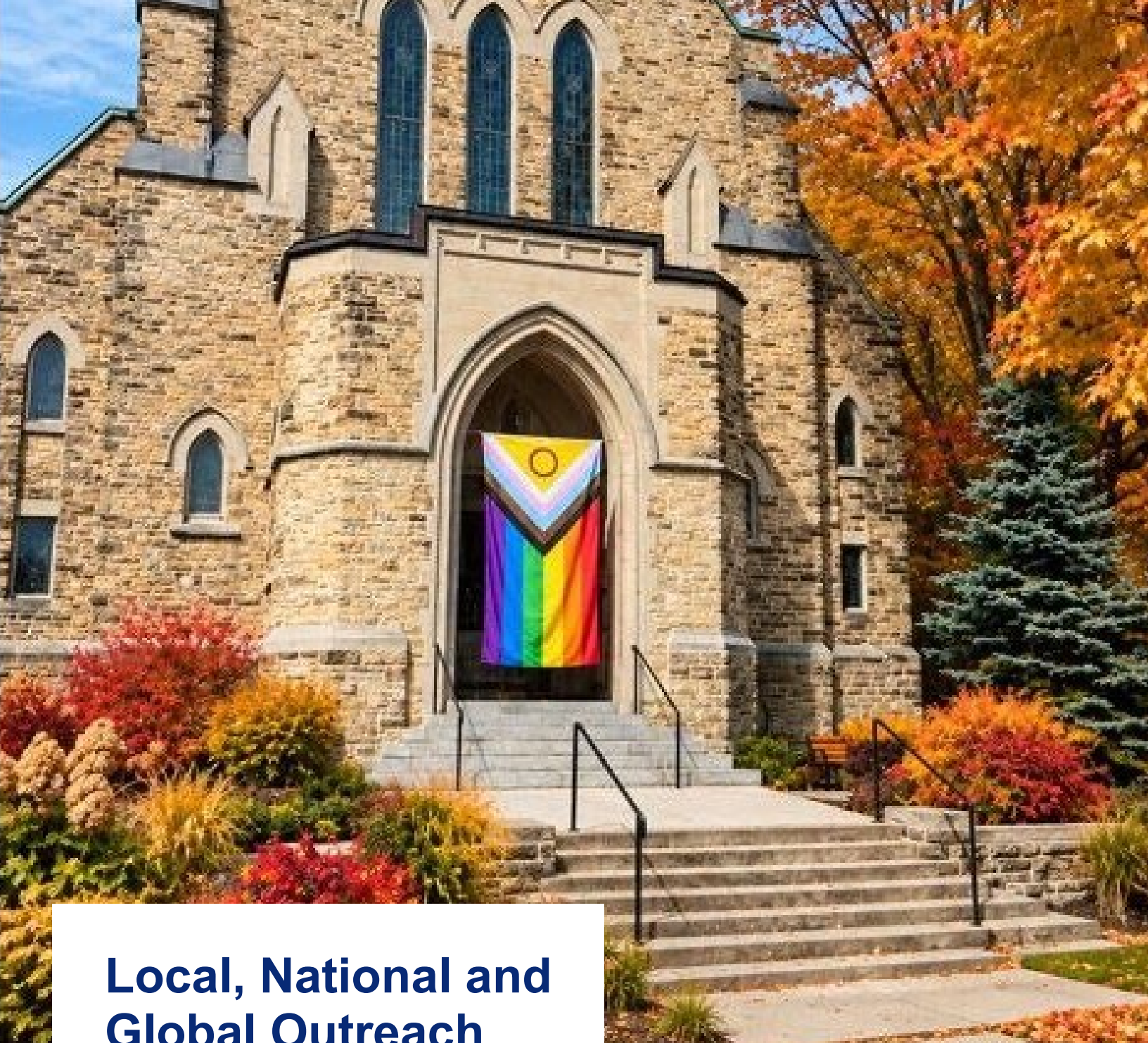




Local, National and Global Outreach Committee

NOVEMBER 2026

Southminster United Church

INTRODUCTION

Greetings, all! Wasn't October absolutely glorious, with all those leaves of yellow, orange and red? At this time of the year, such beauty is yet another gift we should be thankful for, along with our loving families, good health and a bountiful harvest. Thanksgiving affords us the opportunity to thank the Lord for His many blessings.

One of those gifts that I cherish dearly is my Church, Southminster, within whose walls I grew up, from a three-month-old baby to a young woman of 22, when I left Ottawa. As I looked at our dwindling congregation when I returned during the Pandemic, I could not help but worry about its future.

Broadview, an independent magazine with roots in the United Church, reports in its *Small Church Issue* that only 15% of Canadians regularly attend worship. In the 2021 Census, just over half of Canadians identified as Christian, more than one-third reported no religious affiliation, and almost one in ten identified as Muslim, Hindu or Sikh.

The magazine also reports that the United Church has significantly fewer pastoral charges, Sunday school participants and full-time ministers than it did three decades ago, and that 44% of pastoral charges ran a deficit in 2023.

Beneath the title of this special issue are the words, "What you have is enough." When interviewed, **Rt. Rev. Kimberly Heath** (our new Moderator) told *Broadview* that the United Church must "learn to be small again" and to recognize that its faithfulness is enough.

Rev. Cameron Fraser, the UCC's Executive Minister of Growth and Stewardship, said when communities of faith see the possibilities in what they have, that is "the secret sauce." He spoke to *Broadview* saying, "Change happens at the speed of trust. Change requires us to grieve, to lament, to learn to let go. And so it's important to do all these things and do them well." The interview with **Rev. Fraser** is well worth a read.

Julie McGonegal, a Journalist in Elora, wrote "*Called to Be Small*," wherein she talks about a storefront faith community in Barrie. She quotes **Rev. Ron Johnston**, Executive Director of Small Church Connections, as saying, "In a small church, relationships are everything. That's why people attend." **McGonegal** ends her article with, "Not every church has to be a redwood. Some are called to be tuckamores: humble, resilient, making shelter where they are."

Other articles in this special issue explore the church's changing circumstances through past statistics and future projections.

In the "*Tools & Advice*" section, Senior Planner **Leandro Santos** of the Canadian Urban Institute, discusses how churches can adapt their spaces.

With these ideas to encourage us, should you feel a call to become involved in this discussion, you could volunteer to participate in the **Southeast Ottawa Cluster**, which is composed of **Rideau Park, Emmanuel, Riverside, Glebe St. James, Centretown** and **Southminster**. The Cluster was established with a view to answering the question, "What will the United Church of Canada look like in 2035?" There is also a more informal offshoot called **The Ice Cream Group**, composed of **Centretown, Glebe St. James** and **Southminster**, which has set about to answer the same question.

Toward the end of the magazine, I read another question, this one posed by **Rev. Christopher White** in his article, "*The Little Churches That Could*": "What, then, do small churches offer that people cannot easily find elsewhere?" I loved the answer: "In a small church, you are seen, loved and accepted as you are. You are created, not in the image of TikTok or Instagram, but in the image of God. You are sacred and of great value to God and to the church community."

I will sign off for this month with a final quotation by **Rev. White**: “...hope for small churches may not be a return to former strength. It may be something humbler, but also more surprising: a willingness to loosen our grip on old models and discover new purpose...”

God bless.

LOCAL

National Remembrance Day Ceremony — November 11: Held at Ottawa’s **National War Memorial** to honour those who have served Canada in war, military conflict and peace, and to remember those who died in service.

Ottawa Christmas Market, opening weekend — November 20–22: At **Aberdeen Plaza, Lansdowne Park**. A community gathering featuring seasonal stalls, food and festivities.

Help Santa Toy Parade — November 21: Begins at 11 a.m. and finishes at Lansdowne Park. Its fundraising supports **Toy Mountain**, which in turn helps local families provide Christmas gifts for their children.

Santa’s Parade of Lights, Orléans — November 28: An evening parade organized by the **Ottawa Professional Firefighters Association**.

NATIONAL

Lebanese Heritage Month: Celebrates Lebanese Canadians’ history, culture and contributions.

Veterans’ Week — November 5–11: Honours Canadians who have served in war, military conflict and peace.

Indigenous Veterans Day — November 8: Recognizes the service and sacrifices of **First Nations, Inuit** and **Métis** veterans.

Remembrance Day — November 11: A time to remember those who served, honour those who died and reflect on peace.

National Child Day — November 20: Celebrates children’s rights and the importance of listening to children and young people.

National Housing Day — November 22: Draws attention to the need for safe, adequate and affordable housing.

Holodomor Memorial Day — November 28: Commemorates the victims of the famine inflicted on **Ukraine** in 1932–1933. Observed on November’s fourth Saturday.

GLOBAL

All Saints’ Day — November 1: Christians honour the saints and the faithful lives that inspire them.

All Souls’ Day — November 2: Many Christians remember and pray for those who have died.

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists — November 2: Calls for the protection of journalists and accountability for attacks against them.

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict — November 6: Highlights the damage warfare causes to land, water, wildlife and communities.

Diwali — November 8: **The Festival of Lights** celebrates hope and the triumph of light over darkness. Its religious meaning varies among the communities that observe it.

Bandi Chhor Divas — November 8: Sikhs commemorate **Guru Hargobind**’s release from imprisonment and the release of 52 princes with him.

World Science Day for Peace and Development — November 10: Recognizes the role of science in addressing shared problems and supporting peaceful societies.

World Diabetes Day — November 14: Promotes awareness, prevention and access to diabetes care.

International Day for Tolerance — November 16: Encourages respect for different beliefs, cultures and ways of life.

World Toilet Day — November 19: Draws attention to safe sanitation and its importance for health, dignity and clean water.

World Children's Day — November 20: Promotes children's rights worldwide; it coincides with Canada's **National Child Day**.

Transgender Day of Remembrance — November 20: Remembers people killed because of anti-transgender hatred and violence.

Guru Nanak Gurburab — November 24: Celebrates the birth of **Sikhism's** founder, whose teachings emphasize equality, service and devotion.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women — November 25: Calls for action against violence directed at women and girls. It begins the **16 Days of Activism**, continuing until December 10.

First Sunday of Advent — November 29: Begins the season of preparation for Christmas in many Christian churches, including the United Church.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People — November 29: Focuses on Palestinian rights and the continuing need for a just and peaceful resolution.

MISSION & SERVICE

Mission & Service financial update: As of the end of August, total givings to M&S for 2026 were \$6,677.14. This represents roughly 60% of our annual goal of \$11,000. Thank you for your generosity towards **United Church** supported projects across Canada and abroad.

You may recall that a recent **Mission & Service** story that was read in church dealt with a program called *Healing with Horses*. Here are some more details specifically about the Indigenous aspects of this program: "**Restoring Sacred Connections**".

In Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory, healing happens in many forms. The *Healing with Horses* program brings people together to connect with one another, the land, and the gentle and powerful strength of horses. Among them are four **Ojibwe Spirit Horses**, a rare and sacred breed with a powerful connection to the community. Their story is one of survival and return.

At one point in history, the **Ojibwe Spirit Horses** were stolen from the community. Their return to the land and the people who have always known and cherished them is an act of resilience and reconciliation. Today, their presence offers a living reminder that what has been disrupted can be restored, and that healing can begin with reconnecting to what has been lost.

That spirit is at the heart of *Healing with Horses*. supported by your **Mission & Service** gifts, the program blends equine therapy with **Anishinaabe** ways of knowing and being. Traditional teachings, the Medicine Wheel, and the importance of relationships create a foundation for emotional, spiritual, and cultural healing.

Over the winter, participants rode through the snowy bush, sketched horses outdoors, and learned about emotional regulation, boundaries, and self-compassion. Some walked beside the horses or brushed their coats. Others gathered in a circle and found a place to listen and be heard.

For some participants, sharing feelings was difficult. Through the program, they began to find their voices. Children learned ways to understand and manage their emotions, adults reconnected with their inner strength, and together, participants discovered that healing doesn't have to happen alone.

The horses help create that space. Their calming presence invites people to slow down, pay attention, and connect in a different way.

There's growing interest in expanding *Healing with Horses* so more people can take part throughout the year. Plans for a barn or indoor structure would allow this work to continue in every season.

Our **Mission & Service** gifts help make this possible. Our gifts support Indigenous-led programs that create opportunities for cultural reconnection, community, and healing. The **Ojibwe Spirit Horses** have found their way home. Through *Healing with Horses*, they are helping others find their way, too. Let's give generously. Watch the video to see how these horses, and the people who work alongside them, are changing lives." [Watch Healing with Horses](#)

CCSAC

CCSAC WALK FOR THE CENTRE: Donations to the 2026 **Walk For The Centre** were accepted until October 31, so no final tally was available in time for this newsletter.

At the time of writing, the Southminster team had raised \$2,910 for the **Centretown Community Food Centre** and was hoping to reach its 'stretch goal' of \$3,000. Thank you to everyone who has generously donated in support of our Centretown neighbours.

POP-UP MARKET: A pop-up market celebrating **Ottawa Public Foods'** fourth anniversary was held indoors at the Centretown Community Health Centre, 420 Cooper Street, on October 28. All 22 **CCSAC** member churches were invited to support a food drive for **Ottawa Public Foods** at the event.

Ottawa Public Foods is a volunteer-based grassroots organization that reduces food waste by redirecting surplus food to Centretown residents who need it most. Its community fridge and pantry are located on the grounds of Ottawa Community Housing's MacLaren Towers at 415 MacLaren Street and are accessible 24 hours a day. This service complements the **Centretown Community Food Centre**, which operates during limited hours on four days each week.

OTHER NEWS

Please note that the third, fourth, fifth and eighth articles were extracted from **Centre Oblat News 168.*

***The ninth article is from **Centre Oblat News 169**.*

Ottawa Approves 750 New Homes: City Council approved 401 transit-accessible homes near St. Laurent Station and 347 mixed-form homes in Stittsville, with conditions protecting Carp River open space. This offers a concise housing and neighbourhood planning item, including the balance among density, transit and greenspace. *(from City of Ottawa)*

Ottawa Preserves 503 Affordable Rental Homes: The **City of Ottawa** is contributing \$6 million toward **Ottawa Community Housing's** largest-ever property acquisition. The purchase preserves primarily family-sized homes, and 98 units will eventually be reserved for families experiencing homelessness. (from *City of Ottawa*)

***United Nations and Global Warming:** Temporarily exceeding the **1.5°C global warming goal** set in Paris is widely considered inevitable. The challenge now is to keep that overshoot as small and short as possible by cutting emissions faster, unlocking finance and strengthening international cooperation. The article, located at the link below, discusses why speed is imperative, as well as why adaptation, co-operation and finances matter. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/09/1168382>

***Kairos Publication:** Kairos Canada is pleased to release **Seeding an Economy of Life: A Guide for Dialogue on Just Transitions**, a new resource designed to help churches, community groups and people of conscience host meaningful conversations about the future beyond fossil fuel dependence. For further information, please read the article below. <https://kairoscanada.org/2026/09/22/seeding-an-economy-of-life-a-guide-for-dialogue-on-just-transitions/>

***Kairos and Human Rights:** **B'tselem**, an Israeli human rights organization and a **KAIROS** solidarity partner, has released *The Elimination Project: Israel's Systematic Dismantling of Palestinian Collective Life in the West Bank*. The report documents violence, intimidation, movement restrictions, economic hardship, the destruction of social and political life, and ethnic cleansing and territorial takeover. **KAIROS** says these findings echo accounts from its Palestinian partners, who often describe the situation as a "silent genocide," and underpin its calls for stronger Canadian sanctions against Israel. [Read the report here](#)

Ebola Outbreak Expands: The **World Health Organization** reports 8,728 confirmed cases and 4,205 deaths as of October 6, with an imported case detected in Kenya after travel through Uganda. The growing geographic and cross-border reach makes this both a major health emergency and a test of humanitarian capacity in conflict-affected communities. (from *Democratic Republic of the Congo*)

Kebaowek First Nation Pulls Out of Nuclear Consultations: **Kebaowek First Nation** announced Tuesday that it is suspending consultations on the proposed nuclear waste dump near its territory after it says the **Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission** and **Canadian Nuclear Laboratories** "failed to meet critical commitments." For further details, go to: aptnews.ca

***Bill C-39 Raises Environmental and Indigenous Rights Concerns:** Introduced on September 21, *Bill C-39*, the **Building Canada Strong Act**, proposes faster federal reviews of major projects. The government says it will maintain environmental safeguards and uphold Indigenous rights. Critics warn that shorter timelines and greater ministerial powers could weaken scientific scrutiny, accountability and meaningful consultation.

The Bill would shift pipeline and nuclear assessments from the **Impact Assessment Agency** to energy and nuclear regulators. It would also allow certain projects within designated "regions of national interest" to receive advance approval, subject to conditions. **Environmental lawyer Kerrie Blaise** warns that applying this approach to Ontario's **Ring of Fire** could threaten rivers, wildlife, globally significant carbon stores and Indigenous communities.

The changes could also accelerate renewable energy development. However, environmental law professor **David Wright** cautions that even clean energy projects can pose risks to Indigenous rights, ecosystems, species at risk and landowners. [Read the CBC article](#)

Read the full article by Carl Meyer in The Narwhal at <https://thenarwhal.ca/canada-bill-c-39-environmental-assessments/>

****Peace, Conflict, Refugees & Forced Migration:** As humanitarian funding declines, conflicts proliferate and high levels of forced displacement persist, the **World Refugee & Migration Council** is launching a new international initiative to build a global coalition of donor and hosting governments, multilateral institutions, local authorities and those displaced long-term by conflict (from WRM).

READING: As suggested in the October newsletter from **FOSNA**, we recommend you pick up a copy of “**Elections and Hope**” by **Jonathan Kuttab**.

If you have criticisms of, or suggestions for, items that might be included in this ongoing monthly newsletter, please send your ideas to: LNGO@southminsterunitedchurch.com

Your LNGO Committee: Linda MacDonald, Paul Mullin, Heather Macfaden