



Local, National and Global Outreach Committee

SEPTEMBER 2026

Southminster United Church

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back, everybody! I'm afraid we are having difficulty getting off holiday time, so we are starting off a little late with the September edition of our newsletter. My apologies.

September is a month of contradictions. The children are all back to school and it seems exceptionally quiet out there. The gardens are beginning to wind down, yet there are still beautiful Autumn plantings to admire. The birds seem more frantic at the feeders, and the mice (oh, the joys of country living) are hiding stashes of winter food in the strangest of places: inside my big bath sheet, in the bottom drawer of my bedside table (cheeky to get that close), and inside the toilet rolls I have on a shelf in my bathroom!

September also has a surprisingly large number of "celebratory days", so my description of each one will be quite short this time around, in an attempt to save space!

October and November will be very special to Southminster, as the Community Forum Committee is planning two special events. For those of you not aware, long-time Congregant Peter Kemp left the church a Bequest in his Will, and it is the Committee's job to honour it by holding "An Events Series". According to his wishes, this series "is understood as contributing to the overall ministry of Southminster United Church, and as an expression of Christian faith in action."

Southminster is grateful to our Committee Co-Ordinator, Kimberlee Barter, who worked on this effort throughout the summer months and will continue leading us throughout September and October. Kimberlee describes the vision for this exciting endeavour as follows:

Our two events spotlight the rich diversity of Indigenous Nations, honour shared values and ways of life, and foster lasting relationships between Indigenous cultural ambassadors and the broader community. We hope to strengthen community bonds and support Indigenous people in Ottawa by bringing everyone together for celebration, learning, and meaningful exchange. By centring Indigenous-led programming, we amplify Indigenous perspectives, sustain cultural practices, and create welcoming spaces where families and neighbours can connect, ask questions, and build allyship.

We will have more detailed information in the October and November issues of this newsletter.

LOCAL

Because so many of this month's special dates are provincial, national, or global, we do not have anything to report under Local this month. However, I have added a Provincial section.

PROVINCIAL

Ukrainian Heritage Day (Sept. 7): This observance celebrates the history, culture and contributions of Ukrainian Canadians and recognizes the important place they hold in Ontario's heritage.

Provincial Day of Service (Sept. 11): Honours those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, as well as the courage and compassion shown in its aftermath, encouraging Ontarians to respond through acts of kindness, charity and community service.

Franco-Ontarian Day (Sept. 25): Celebrates the history, culture, and contributions of Ontario's French-speaking community.

NATIONAL

Labour Day (Sept. 7): Grew out of the 19th Century movement for better working conditions, fair wages and workers' rights. It became a statutory holiday in Canada in 1894. Today, it is both a celebration of the contributions of working people and, for many Canadians, a chance to enjoy the last long weekend of Summer.

Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day (Sept. 27): Honours Canadian police and peace officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. This observance has special meaning for your Editor, as I lost my cousin, David Utman, a Nepean Police Officer, on October 4, 1983, when he was shot and killed at Bayshore Shopping Centre.

British Home Child Day (Sept. 28): Honours the more than 100,000 British children who came to Canada through child migration programs between 1869 and 1948.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sept. 30): This day honours survivors of residential schools, the children who never returned home, and their families and communities, while reminding all Canadians of the lasting effects of the residential school system. It is also **Orange Shirt Day**, a day of remembrance, learning and reflection, as Canada continues its journey toward truth and reconciliation.

Mennonite Heritage Week (2nd week of September): Recognizes the history and contributions of Mennonite communities to Canada's cultural and agricultural heritage.

Gender Equality Week (4th week of September): Promotes awareness of gender equality and encourages conversations about creating a more inclusive society.

GLOBAL

International Day of Charity (Sept. 5): This United Nations observance encourages people around the world to support others through charitable giving, volunteering and acts of kindness, recognizing the important role charity plays in reducing suffering and helping communities.

International Literacy Day (Sept. 8): Promotes the importance of reading, writing, and education as keys to opportunity and lifelong learning.

International FASD Awareness Day (Sept. 9): Raises awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and encourages understanding and support for affected individuals and families. Canada also recognizes September as **FASD AWARENESS MONTH**.

World Suicide Prevention Day (Sept. 10): Encourages open conversations about mental health and reminds us that help and hope are always available.

International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer (Sept. 16): This day reminds us of the importance of the ozone layer, which protects life on Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, and celebrates international cooperation in reducing ozone-depleting chemicals through the Montreal Protocol, an international agreement adopted in 1987 to phase out such chemicals.

International Day of Peace (Sept. 21): A United Nations observance promoting peace, co-operation, and non-violence around the world.

Autumn Equinox (Sept. 22): Marks the first day of Fall in the Northern Hemisphere, when day and night are nearly equal in length.

International Day of Sign Languages (Sept. 23): Celebrates sign languages and recognizes the rights and contributions of Deaf communities worldwide.

MISSION & SERVICE

The three goals of **Mission and Service** are:

TO HELP TRANSFORM LIVES

INSPIRE MEANING AND PURPOSE

BUILD A BETTER WORLD

How do we help transform lives through Mission and Service?

Locally, we help people in need by supporting homeless shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, and refugee programs. We reach out to young people through camping and campus ministries. We care for people who are sick or at the end of life by supporting addiction, mental health, and counselling services as well as hospice care.

Globally, we help people access clean water, food, and medical care. We support skills training and economic development. We help with peace-making and sustainable agriculture efforts. We provide disaster relief and advocate for the rights of those who all too often don't get a say, like children and migrant workers.

How does Mission and Service help inspire people to live with meaning and purpose?

We provide opportunities for people to grow spiritually in all kinds of amazing ways.

Locally, we support theological schools, education/retreat centres, and events that promote spiritual development and personal reflection. We help create and sustain new and innovative ministries and help communities of faith that are remote or in need.

Globally, we support theological schools and church organizations that change lives by offering practical training in vital areas of need like agriculture and health.

When we help transform lives and inspire people to live with meaning and purpose, we build a better world.

The 2025 **Mission and Service** Accountability Report reminds us:

"Through **Mission and Service**, we can dare to imagine new possibilities and follow where the Spirit is leading, even when the path ahead is not clear. Your gifts power innovative ministry approaches, support emerging expressions of church, and encourage faithful risk-taking in pursuit of a more just and loving world.

Together, we are answering God's Call, responding to immediate needs and helping to build lasting hope and transformation.

While challenges remain, our commitment to act with faith, courage, and imagination is as strong as ever.

Mission and Service, we will continue to change lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and work together for a better world."

In 2025 **Mission and Service** partnered with organizations across the globe, supporting vital work in numerous countries and contexts. In Canada, each regional council received dedicated funding to resource local ministries, enabling responsive, community-based support where it is needed most. 87 percent of funds were spent in Canada, and 13 percent were spent globally.

There are four ways to make a gift:

1. Donate today at united-church.ca/donate
2. Call [1-800-465-3771](tel:1-800-465-3771)
3. By mail, The United Church of Canada Foundation PO Box 9777, Stn A, Toronto, ON, M5W 1R6
4. Or contribute directly at Southminster United Church Sunday worship or by contacting the church office.

CCSAC

Walk For The Centre

October 4, 2026 from 1:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Come and join the 11th **Walk for the Centre** along the scenic Rideau Canal, in support of food security for all our Centretown neighbours.

The walk, hosted by **Canadian Martyrs Church** at 100 Main Street, begins with music, a silent auction, prizes, and guest speakers. **The Sons of Scotland Pipe Band** will lead us off at 2:15 p.m.

As a **CCSAC** initiative involving 22 member churches, our goal is to raise \$55,000 for the **Centretown Community Food Centre**.

Online donations and full details at:

centretownchurches.org/walkathon

OTHER NEWS

Nepal Flood

Here is some extracted material from an article by Wen Stephenson, published in *The Baffler* in April 2025. The article addresses the effects of global warming, as well as socio-economic factors which contribute to crisis in modern Nepal.

To see the full article, please click on the following [LINK](#).

“They came in broad daylight, the police and their bulldozers, on the afternoon of November 28, 2022. Their orders were to destroy the makeshift houses and evict the people living on public property along the banks of the Bagmati River in the Thapathali section of Kathmandu. As word spread, the people of this long-established slum community of perhaps a thousand — families with children, poor and landless, many having lived there for decades — grabbed stones, bricks, bamboo poles, and whatever else they could, to resist the machinery of the state. Squaring off against hundreds of police where the thoroughfare of Shiva Marg meets the riverbank, they fought in the street — injuring about two dozen police personnel, three seriously, according to the city government.

It is not clear exactly how many people live in the informal settlements of Kathmandu Valley, but it’s a relatively small number compared with other major cities in South Asia. According to rights advocates, there are 54 settlements in the Valley, with about 5,000 households — perhaps 50,000 human beings — in a swelling population of up to five or six million. What *is* clear is that informal settlements along the Bagmati River corridor stand in the way of lucrative riverfront real-estate development, along with a much-touted “beautification” effort, known as the Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project.

I visited the Thapathali settlement in late January 2024, 14 months after its second eviction battle was fought. With me was Bhagavati Adhikari, the energetic 36-year-old executive director of a grassroots organization with a network of more than 57,000 landless women living in informal settlements across 15 districts of Nepal ... When I asked her about the floods and how she and the community survive them, she told us that the floods have grown worse. Now, “every year there is a flood. The river enters the house, up to three or four feet. That is normal. The utensils float here,” she said, gesturing around us. She keeps food items in a high-up space for protection, or hangs them from the ceiling. During the intense rains, no one sleeps. They have to stay awake all night because the floods can come without warning.

Such is the city and the country that now faces an accelerating climate catastrophe. December 2023’s United Nations climate negotiations, COP28, held in Dubai ... marked an acknowledgment that the era of what is referred to as “loss and damage” — the inevitable results of global heating — is [well under way](#), particularly for the most vulnerable countries of the Global South, among which Nepal ranks in the top ten.

It makes no sense to talk about climate policy in isolation from the political and social realities in which it plays out. And if there is anything I have come to understand about Nepal, it is that this is a traumatized and precarious country.”

2026 Federal Budget Consultations

As we are all aware, the Federal Budget will be presented this Fall. The **UCC** would like us to remember that “Budgets reveal our priorities and values as a society. At a time of deepening global inequality and instability, as well as ecological crisis, Canada’s **federal budget** should not prioritize increased military spending; rather, it should demonstrate courage, compassion, and commitment to human dignity and respect for the planet.”

Our friends at the **David Suzuki Foundation** are encouraging us to submit comments to the **pre-budget consultation** before the deadline on September 8. The **Foundation** feels strongly that: “We have a generational opportunity to build a 100 per cent renewable grid in Canada. A project of this scale could reduce our energy reliance on the U.S. and create thousands of well-paying union jobs in the process. It could bring energy bills down for millions of households. And most importantly, it would guarantee us a safer climate future than the one Big Oil is steering for.”

In the meantime, the **UCC** has its list of priorities, which follow:

- Advancing racial equity;
- Respecting reconciliation and Indigenous rights;
- Acting for climate justice;
- Protecting Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ rights;
- Standing for global solidarity and peace; and
- Defending public healthcare.

While you are considering these issues, we encourage you to follow this link to the **UCC** website for its full submission.

<https://united-church.ca/news/bold-investment-needed-advance-equity-human-rights-and-climate-justice>

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