

July 9, 2026

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Drop-In with Julia!

Please **drop-in** for a visit with Julia on the last three Tuesdays of July (14, 21, 28) from 10:00 - Noon.

Stay for a while,
or stay the whole time!!

This is a chance to just visit with Julia.

PLUS!! Shop at Julia's Office Sale! There's lots to choose from. Visit Julia and buy a memento!

Mission Possible

Have you been intrigued by past presentations about our church's partnership with TEARS in the Dominican Republic? Have you seen the videos and pictures and thought, ***"Maybe I would like that kind of adventure?"***

We are planning a family trip for Easter break next spring, travelling from Friday, March 26 through Sunday, April 4, 2027. This trip will feature an easy-paced agenda focused on relationship building. Together, we will visit churches, schools, programs, and homes in the Dominican barrio of María Auxiliadora and the Haitian barrio of Soto.

Trip Details:

- **Estimated Budget:** \$1,900 to \$2,100 per traveler (includes flights, room, board, transportation, translators, and activities).
- **Information Meeting:** Sunday, August 9, 2026, directly following the service. Come learn about past trip adventures and see the proposed agenda for this upcoming trip! If you cannot attend the meeting or have immediate questions, please contact Gary Dzurka at 403-992-3334 or email gdzurka@explornet.ca





At the service on June 21st twenty-six people joined Julia for worship. As this is the longest day of the year, the beginning of summer, in Canada this day is also known as National Indigenous Peoples Day. Julia entitled her message "Connected for Life" and we heard the scripture from 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 which speaks of reconciliation which is the process of moving from mistrust to trust. In today's society trust is eroding and often broken. However, God has given us a ministry of reconciliation as we practice integrity where trust is built. Reconciliation is not "cheap" grace but rather integrity, truth, and trust upon which the church continues to be built. Because we are human, we all make mistakes and God's movement continues to be towards humanity where new creations and transformations are built. Our apologies are signs of strength towards ultimate reconciliation. (And as an aside, Julia said that those we have known continue to be connected for life and so we will always be connected with one another. As the new clergy person comes into our midst, let them know our story and let that person get to know us.)

The June 28th service saw twenty-seven people join Julia for worship. She entitled her message "Thank You" and we heard the scripture Ephesians 1:15-19a where Paul gives thanks for the faith of the Ephesians. Before meeting Jesus, Paul's life revolved around himself but afterwards he realized that he required others in order to survive. So it is for the church, for the community of church is based upon love and the authentication of one another as we work together. As this was the Sunday following Julia's farewell gathering on Friday the 26th, she thanked us for the gifts she had received from the pastoral charge that evening and throughout her years of ministry here. She said that she could not have done it without us thus reiterating what Paul wrote to the Ephesians.

At the joint pastoral charge service on July 5th, twenty-two people from St. Andrew's United gathered with Okotoks United for worship and the meeting following the service. Julia entitled her message "New Energy" and we heard the scripture from Isaiah 40:28-31. Isaiah wrote to the Israelite people in exile in Babylon that "those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (NRSV) God thus reminds the exiled Israelites that God is a forever God and always with us no matter what our circumstances are. Nearing the end of her nineteen years with Okotoks DeWinton Pastoral Charge, Julia asked us to consider and answer two questions: 1. What are you excited about for which we shared our answers around the tables and then with the whole group; and, 2. What are you anxious about which we reflected upon silently. As we rebuild our communities of faith in new ways and continue to show our faith in God, we continue to be the church and are the church. At the conclusion of the service and as we waited for the meeting to begin we partook of lunch. At the meeting upon hearing from the Joint Search Committee, the vote was taken and passed to call Marco Ste-Marie to Okotoks DeWinton Pastoral Charge beginning August 17, 2026.

- P. Marie Wedderburn

Thank you from Julia

Dear Friends;

There are no words to express the depth of gratitude I have for you. You have blessed me in so many ways and will continue to do so after I leave.

Thank you for your very generous gifts, your kind cards and notes and your presence at the best retirement party I could ever imagine. So much thought and care went into everything. Thanks to those who organized a fun, meaningful time of food and fun. You outdid yourselves.

The financial gift, the retirement book and all the other gifts offered are so appreciated. As I announced last Sunday, your gift will go toward partially paying for a trip to France in October and an electric bike. If you see me around the countryside biking, know that I am thinking about you for you made it possible.

You will remain in my heart and prayers as you launch into the next chapter of your ministry. Once you have connected with someone, they will always be a part of your journey. You are a big part of mine.

Love, Julia



Our New Minister

At an Okotoks – De Winton Pastoral Charge meeting held Sunday July 5, 2026, 79 members and adherents of St. Andrew's United and Okotoks United Churches met to approve the Call of Reverend Marco Ste-Marie as our new minister. Marco will start work in the office on Wednesday August 19th and will lead us in worship beginning Sunday August 30th .



Over the next six weeks we will share more information about how we will welcome Marco into our communities. In the meantime, the following is a brief bio about Marco that was shared at the meeting on Sunday.

Rev. Marco brings 12 years of dynamic, justice-rooted ministry experience. Originally from Quebec, he has served in French, English, and Italian ministry contexts and is fluent in all three — meaning he can preach, care, and occasionally get into trouble in multiple languages.

He has ministered in Lacombe, Rimbey, and most recently in Canmore and Banff. His ministry has focused on preaching, pastoral care, outreach, and creative social-media ministry — because sometimes the Spirit shows up in a sermon, and sometimes in a well-timed post.

In all aspects of ministry, Marco carries church growth in mind. For him, growth is not only about numbers, though that matters too; it is also about growth in faith, in justice, in service, in community, and in the courage to live the Gospel more fully.

Marco's ministry is grounded in systemic and social justice, faith expression, Indigenous and First Nations issues, and LGBTQ inclusion. What has drawn him to the Okotoks/St. Andrews Pastoral Charge is its deep engagement with the wider community and its commitment to justice, both of which are close to his heart and central to his call to ministry.

Marco brings a collaborative spirit, a pastoral heart, and a wicked sense of humour — taking ministry seriously, but not himself. He looks forward to the possibility of walking alongside the Okotoks/St. Andrews Pastoral Charge in ministry, faith, service, and shared hope for the future.

Hello friends!

A peer support group for Allies of LGBTQ+2SIA folks meets in Okotoks on the second Saturday of each month at 43 Riverside Drive.

Our next meeting will be July 11 at Okotoks United Church starting at 4 pm. You will find moral support, helpful information, non-judgmental listening, anonymity and confidentiality. Let's strengthen the network that supports our loved ones!

Questions contact Kathleen & Judy: kmhnychrch@gmail.com

Seeking physical, mental or
spiritual healing?
Come try a healing session!

To book a session, please contact:
Gisela Dyck at 403-938-2506



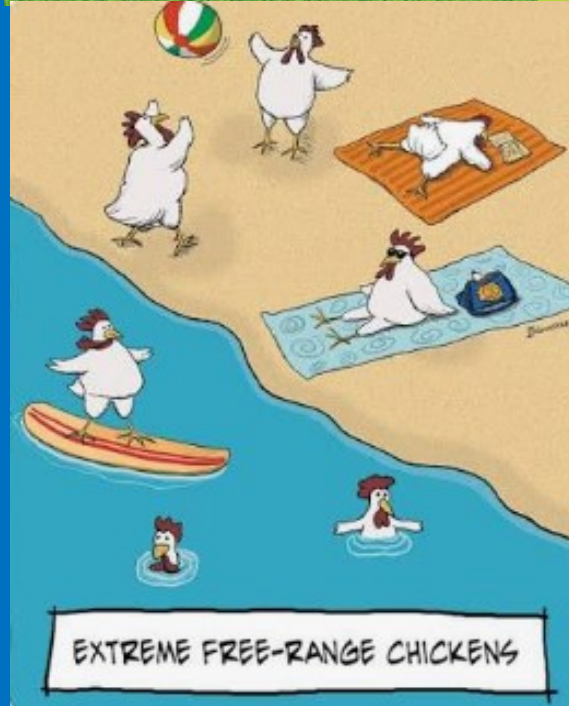
**After candle-lighting,
kids are welcome to join our
Sunday School Leaders
upstairs!**



“In any given
moment we have
two options: to step
forward into growth
or step back
into safety.”

- Abraham Maslow





Some of the best memories are made in flip flops.

- Anonymous



Laughter .. not only the best medicine but the cheapest.