

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



March 18, 2020

1. **Living Skies News:** Pastoral Relations Ponderings #13; Stewardship Information; Summer Camp Information; COVID-19 updates; Live streaming UC Worship services; MP Re-appointments; SK hospital chaplaincies during COVID-19; Nominations Committee seeking GC #44reps; Gifts and Abilities; Contribution to the Wider Church; Public Performance Licenses for 2020; Covenant Writing; Birth Announcement: It's a...website!; Accommodations for the RCG;
2. **Wider Church Information:** Big Sing and Workshop – **cancelled**; ReJUNEvation 2020; STU Convocation; Opportunities to serve the wider church;
3. **Upcoming Learning Opportunities:** Online national and conversations reminder; United in Learning webinars... continue!; Be Bold! Be Inspired! Become a United Church Ministry Learning Site today!; Queen's House; Leadership Development and Continuing Education - **online**; Women's Retreat - **cancelled**; National webinar: A Trans Christian Faith Perspective; Living Skies Event Calendar Highlights;
4. **Reminders:** Financial Name Change; YAYAC Newsletter– March 4, 2020; Annual Reports;

1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

The work of the Pastoral Relations Committee - [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 13](#)

Stewardship Information

Jane Harding, Western Canada's Stewardship and Gifts Officer provides us with [some useful donation information](#) to use during this unique time.

Summer Camp Information

Folks looking for summer camp information should check out the [Summer Camps](#) page on [our new website](#) for information on their upcoming activities. Camp Tapawingo's March 2020 newsletter is there.

COVID-19 updates, including special meetings for lay leaders and ministry personnel

The Regional Council has sent out an update on COVID-19. [Please see the full text here](#). Please share with your community of faith! Let's keep each other informed and supported. Note that there are lay leadership support meetings happening March 18 and 19, with more to be announced. Everything will be posted to our nice new website; www.livingskiesrc.ca

The new national church homepage for COVID-19 matters and resources is:

<https://www.united-church.ca/covid-19>

Live streaming United Church worship services: please add yours!

As most of our communities of faith close down worship services and buildings, the national EDGE Network set up this handy resource for us. Numerous United Church communities of faith are live-streaming Sunday worship services during the COVID-19 pandemic. See this interactive worship map for links to some of them and PLEASE ADD the link to your own worship livestream:

<https://arcg.is/1TaKqS>

Ministry Personnel Re-Appointments

If the end date for the pastoral relationship with your ministry personnel is June 30, 2020, please see the description in the Pastoral Relations Ponderings for information regarding the process for renewal.

SK hospital chaplaincies during COVID-19: update

Deep thanks to chaplains Lorna King (Regina- South Chaplaincy) and Cathy Coates (Saskatoon- North Chaplaincy) for their vital ministry, not only to the United Church and its members, but to the wider community. We will continue to share updates.

Here's an update regarding UCC chaplaincy in Saskatoon acute care hospitals. Chaplain Rev Cathy Coates writes, "Right now, I am still able to work though with some restrictions. That may change as the situations is so fluid. Community clergy are asked to NOT visit except in cases of end of life.

Denominational chaplains are not able to visit in ICU, CCU, Stem cell unit, NICU, PICU, or maternal health other than end of life care. The lack of government-funded spiritual care is being felt even more than usual. Those of us who work for our denominations continue to try to fill the void." **Cathy can be reached at 306-227-8707.**

Chaplain Lorna King writes, "I am the South SK Hospital Chaplain, and visit United Church patients and residents in health care facilities in Regina. (Pasqua and General Hospitals, Wascana Rehab Centre and Wascana Grace Hospice) The health authority is restricting 'volunteers' who are over 65 from non-essential work in all health care facilities. I am currently keeping in touch with patients and residents by sending Well Wishes messages to them, and phoning/texting when I have cell phone numbers for them. Because I am over 65 and considered by the health authority to be a volunteer, I will be limiting any visiting to requests for visits with patients who are in critical condition or at end of life. I will also be exploring ways to get the technology to patient rooms for FaceTime/Zoom conversations with me and/or with family. **Patients and their families can contact me or request staff to contact me at 1-306-551-7755."**

Nominations Committee: seeking names for our Region's General Council Commissioners – July 2021

Are you interested in being a Commissioner to General Council 44? Do you know someone who might be?

Here is an [information letter with details](#) about the nominations process. [Use our new Nominations form](#) to express your interest to the Nominations Committee. **Application deadline is April 15th, 2020.**

Gifts and Abilities

The Nominations Committee of the Living Skies Regional Council has a new email address!

lsrcnominations@gmail.com If you have questions, or would like to offer yourself for a vacant position, you are welcome to contact the committee there! Carolyn Conarroe & Susan Reed, Co-Chairs

Contribution to the Wider Church

In the new structure, every time a community of faith makes any kind of change in their pastoral relationship, a Regional Council Liaison is required to assist in the process. Similarly, every community of faith without a called or appointed minister is required to be served by a Pastoral Charge Supervisor. Both of these roles need to be filled by a member of the Regional Council – an active minister, a retired minister, or a lay representative from a community of faith. As the number of people retiring and communities of faith undergoing changes increase, the demand for folks to take on these roles also increases. If you are currently serving on a committee/ commission of the Regional Council or the Denominational Council, we thank you for that contribution. ***If you are not***, please consider how your gifts and skills might best be used for the wider church.

Public Performance Licenses for 2020 (DVD/Video Licensing)

Due to high demand (and the awkward application period over the Christmas season), Buying United, a program of the United Church's EDGE, has negotiated a second round of Public Performance Licenses for 2020. If there are groups within your Community of Faith who might wish to use feature films or film clips as part of their programming, a Public Performance License is required. The video licensing application information is now available online at <https://buyingunited.net/video-licensing> . Please share this information as widely as possible.

The current application round offers licenses that will start on May 1st, 2020 until April 30th, 2021. **The deadline for this round of applications is March 27th, 2020.** For any additional questions, please email or call Alexandra Belaskie at abelaskie@united-church.ca or 1-800-268-3781 x4157

Covenant Writing

Tracy Murton (Pastoral Relations Minister) has received many questions regarding the writing of the Covenants between communities of faith and the Regional Council. Yes, every community of faith should be engaging this process, and no, it is not complicated. A description of the mission and ministry of the community of faith, and a description of the governance model being used is all that is required. It does not need to be approved by the community of faith, although it should be approved by the official board (or equivalent). Contact her for background material or a sample covenant: tmurton@united-church.ca. She promises it is an easier process than you think. Our goal is to receive them by **April 30, 2020** so that they may be celebrated together at the Regional Council Gathering in Humboldt. This is a way to acknowledge the new relationship between the Regional Council and communities of faith in the structural change.

Birth Announcement! It's a..... website!

Born March 6 at 5:00PM and weighing in around 60 pages, 20 posts, 25 events, and way too many PDFs. Web team/ parents are: Jamie Mckay, Cherry Abad, Kathy Jackson, Bev Diebert, Kent Mohn, Julie Graham, and A Plus Computing. **Thank you to our colleagues and to the people of all three Regional Councils for your gracious patience and support as we laboured over this.**

The sites also have a feedback form to help you identify where changes need to be made, or where you have an idea for making the site even better. Please use this!

Bonus: community of faith calendars and events forms: Our new online home includes a calendar just for your community of faith events, and a form that lets you upload them. We know this will take a little practice, but we hope you'll find this a helpful way to promote and view all public local events for communities of faith and associated ministries and groups like outreach ministries, camps, chaplaincies, and more. These could include special worship services and vigils, workshops, bible studies, Blanket Exercises, fundraising events, and whatever your imagination.

Addresses you'll want to bookmark and keep checking:

Living Skies website: www.livingskiesrc.ca

Regional Gathering 2020 page: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/governance-admin/regional-gathering-2020/>

Event submission form: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/events/community/add>

Living Skies feedback form: <https://form.jotform.com/200507625553047>

Accommodations for the Regional Council Gathering

The list of accommodations for the 2020 Regional Council Gathering being held in Humboldt is ready. [See the list.](#)

2. Wider Church Information:

Big Sing and Workshop: Free and Open to the Public - **cancelled**

BIG SING: Thursday, March 19, 2020, St. Andrew's College, 1121 College Dr. Saskatoon

WORKSHOPS: Friday, March 20, 2020, St. Andrew's College) - **cancelled**

RSVP: <https://congregational song.org/event/student-community-workshop-saskatoon/>

St. Andrew's College ReJUNEvation

Registration is now open for ReJUNEvation 2020 scheduled for June 17-19, 2020, at St. Andrew's College.

Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman will lead discussion on the theme, "Now it Springs Forth: Looking for Ecumenical Movement with Fresh Eyes." Sharman, an academic and ordained minister who serves as the national Animator for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations in the Anglican Church of Canada, will invite participants to reflect on some of the most interesting and promising new directions for the ecumenical movement as we head further into the 21st century. He will address the "sense of stall and stagnation and 'ecumenical winter' that came to dominate during the '90s and '00s." He will offer a theological, methodological, and spiritual diagnosis as to why that might have happened and offer examples of things that seem to be leading to new life and impetus for a renewed ecumenical movement – an "ecumenical spring" – especially in the Canadian context.

For more information, please visit <https://stu.usask.ca/standrews/students/rejunevation.php>.

Saskatoon Theological Union Convocation

The Saskatoon Theological Union Convocation will take place on Friday, May 8, 2020, at 7:00 pm at Knox United Church in Saskatoon. This will be the nineteenth joint Convocation of the colleges in the Saskatoon Theological Union: the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad (Anglican), Lutheran Theological Seminary, and St. Andrew's College. All are welcome to attend the Convocation event.

In addition to the other colleges' earned and honorary degrees, the St. Andrew's College anticipates awarding seven earned degrees, diplomas and certificates at Convocation as well as awarding Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa) degrees to Peter Gilmer and Bonnie Morton of Regina, SK, and Allan Shaw of Nipawin, SK.

Opportunities to serve the wider church

There are some great opportunities for young adults in particular to connect with global partners [available here](#), and important openings in governance. Please share this widely.

3. Upcoming Learning Opportunities:

Online national and conversations reminder

United in Learning and other partner groups have lots of affordable or free webinars on offer... meaning you don't need to travel to yet another meeting. [Click here for the latest.](#)

United in Learning webinars... continue! At least some things can carry on as planned and give us a space to connect. [Please click here for opportunities.](#)

Be Bold! Be Inspired! Become a United Church Ministry Learning Site today!

Obviously, your community of faith has a lifetime of discipleship to share, right?

Ministry transitions or vacancies can be challenging. When your congregation experiences transition or vacancy, remember to prayerfully consider a call to become a Learning Site for Supervised Ministry Education (SME). God has an incredible way of providing life-giving opportunities to share our talents, wisdom, and creativity. As local congregations, we can not only leap forward to support and equip the students we've asked to be our church leaders, but we also reap the benefit of their exciting new ministry at the same time. Plus, there's even funding to assist with salary and moving expenses. The Holy Spirit calls us all to ministry together, and we respond!

Lots of options for info about the requirements of Ministry Learning Sites:

- 1) Talk to Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister (Living Skies Region) at tmurton@united-church.ca.
- 2) Download the handbook: [Candidacy Pathway: Supervised Ministry Education \(pdf\)](#)
- 3) Learn about two financial supports: [SME Salary Support Grants](#), [SME Moving Grants](#)
- 4) Check out YouTube: [Office of Vocation: Becoming a Learning Site.](#)



Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre

Queen's House has closed their doors for meetings and gatherings during the COVID-19 situation. Please watch upcoming Ramblers for their programming when they re-open.

Leadership Development and Continuing Education

For lay people and clergy who want to learn, explore, and wrestle, the *Centre for Christian Studies* is offering two one-week learning circles: [Oppression and Resistance](#) (Apr 15-21) and [Ages and Stages](#) (April 23-29) **will both be offered online**. Click on the name of the circle to find out more. If you have questions call 204-783-4490 or e-mail info@ccsonline.ca

Women's retreat - Cancelled

WOMEN'S GATHERING for ALL women in the United Church takes place at **Calvary United Church in Prince Albert on April 24 - 26**. The theme for the week-end is "Women & Mindfulness". All registrations will be fully refunded. For information please contact Barbara Byers Bradley at 306-249-2433 or Mary Mohn at 306-749-3446.

National webinar: A Trans Christian Faith Perspective March 31 7:00pm ET / 4:00pm PT

[Full information here](#). All welcome. **Note:** *If you are a delegate to your Regional Council's annual meeting/ gathering, please note that this webinar might be very helpful background to [Remit 1](#), which will be voted on at the meeting.*

Join this 90-minute webinar where five trans and non-binary people will share a little of their personal stories, and how their Christian faith has made a difference along the way. Hear about how they understand their gender identity, and why the church has been an important part of their lives. Consider how these stories might impact your congregation, leadership, or ministry. How they might encourage deeper reflection of your own place within the remarkable diversity that God has created.

In the course of the 90-minute webinar you will:

- Understand basic terms and definitions
- Deepen your faith and ministry by listening to trans and non-binary people of faith
- Hear why faith matters to trans and non-binary people and how they bear witness to their faith
- Learn what trans and non-binary people need from communities of faith in order to feel fully affirmed, supported, and respected
- Learn about concrete resources that help you go deeper

* **trans** refers to a person who has a gender identity that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth, and/or expresses their gender in ways that differ from societal expectations. **non-binary** is an umbrella term used to describe a number of gender identities: people who do not identify as a man or a woman, may feel like a combination of man and woman, who have a sense of their gender being beyond the categories of man and woman entirely, or who do not identify with any gender at all.

Events in Living Skies: highlights - All of these are posted on the Living Skies [Events calendar](#).

March 21 Regional Party Calvary United Church, **Prince Albert** - postponed

April 24: Women's retreat for the whole Region, Calvary United, **Prince Albert** - cancelled

May 9: Regional Party, Grace United Church, **Weyburn** – postponed

May 19-21: Regional Affirming Retreat, at Queen's House of Retreats, Saskatoon. All who support a deep welcome to LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people are welcome. Worship, community, coffee, music, listening, strategizing, and support.

May 21-23: Regional Gathering (Humboldt) – watch upcoming Ramblers for more information.

May 24: Service of Praise and Celebration (Humboldt)

4. Reminders:

Financial Name Change

The official name has now been changed on the bank account. Cheques should now be made out to "Living Skies Regional Council". Please pass this to anyone who may send a cheque to the Regional Council office.

[The YAYAC Newsletter - March 4](#) News for the Youth and Young Adult Community

Annual Reports

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Annual meeting season. The time to celebrate all that has been offered within and around your community of faith. A few things to keep in mind:

- A copy of your annual report should go to Tracy Murton c/o St. Andrew's College 1121 College Drive Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W3 or by email tmurton@united-church.ca. The Committee on Community of Faith Support will be reviewing these in the coming months using the template, attached for your information. [Annual Report Checklist](#)
- The name of the person that has been elected as the representative to the Regional Council should be sent to Bev Diebert bdiebert@united-church.ca. We are hoping to send communications regarding the Regional Gathering in Humboldt directly to them.