

# Regional Rambler

## Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



March 4, 2020

1. **Living Skies News:** YAYAC Newsletter– Mar 4/20; Calling all educational supervisors - **cancelled**; Introductory Boundaries and Refresher in person? - **postponed**; Annual Reports; Accommodations for the RCG; Covenant Writing; Public Performance Licenses for 2020; Nominations Committee seeking GC #44reps; Gifts and Abilities; Communication Priority;
2. **Wider Church Information:** PIE Day updates for 14 March 2020; Big Sing and Workshop: Free and Open to the Public; Opportunities to serve the wider church;
3. **Upcoming Learning Opportunities:** Online national and conversations reminder; Diploma in Missional Leadership at the Atlantic School of Theology – **Deadline March 15**; Be Bold! Be Inspired! Become a United Church Ministry Learning Site today!; Listening for the Still, Small Voice Within Retreat; Queen’s House programming; Leadership Development and Continuing Education; Women’s Retreat; Living Skies Event Calendar Highlights;
4. **Reminders:** Financial Name Change; Pastoral Relations Ponderings #12; YAYAC Newsletter – Feb19/20; Online Licensed Lay Worship Leader Training / The United in Worship Project; United Church Bookstore; Moderator and Elders’ Council on the Wet’suwet’en land struggle;

### **1. Living Skies Regional Council News:**

**The YAYAC Newsletter - March 4** News for the Youth and Young Adult Community

#### **Calling all educational supervisors! Cancelled**

Thank you to those who registered for the Office of Vocation’s time of learning and reflection for our educational supervisors at Queen’s House planned for Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Due to low registration we are canceling this event. We are looking at setting up a regular Zoom gathering of all those who are actively supervising at this time. Please watch out for information in a future edition of the Rambler.

#### **Introductory Boundaries and Refresher in person? Postponed**

The Introductory Boundaries course for Sacraments Elders, LLWLs, Camp Directors, M&P committees, etc, that was being offered in Saskatoon on Saturday, March 14 has been postponed until the fall. Please watch for new registration opportunities in the June Ramblers.

#### **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](mailto: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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca). We are hoping to send communications regarding the Regional Gathering in Humboldt directly to them.

#### **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.](#)**

## 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](mailto: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.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 until April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. **The deadline for this round of applications is March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020.** For any additional questions, please email or call Alexandra Belaskie at [abelaskie@united-church.ca](mailto:abelaskie@united-church.ca) or 1-800-268-3781 x4157

## 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](mailto: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

## Communication Priority once again

**“Good communication doesn't just happen; it is the result of good design” – Stephen Few.**

The key stumbling block over the past year has been figuring out the best way to communicate with one another, for a wide variety of purposes including upcoming events, changes in policy, and just general news. Therefore, the staff team has discerned that a major priority throughout the Regional Council this spring will be strengthening communications networks and newsletters, and completing the new Regional Council website. Communication is a huge part of vibrant community and ministry together, so please contact Bev Diebert at the Regional office [bdiebert@united-church.ca](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca) to make sure that the contact info is up to date for your pastoral charge or cluster/ network (e-mail address, phone, names/contacts for lay representatives, etc.).

In addition, there are a number of ministry programs and events already scheduled for the spring that we want to support as part of our focus on strengthening relationships. Therefore, the Regional Parties scheduled for Prince Albert in March and Weyburn in May have been postponed for a few months until the fall. Stay tuned for updates regarding those events later in the spring.

You may find that it takes a little longer for staff to answer your questions as we focus on this communication priority. We thank you for your patience, support and understanding. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this focus, please feel free to contact Pastoral Relations Minister, Tracy Murton ([tmurton@united-church.ca](mailto:tmurton@united-church.ca)).

## **2. Wider Church Information:**

### **PIE Day updates for 14 March 2020: new worship and video cuts!**

Public+Intentional+Explicit= PIE. These are our standards for the full inclusion and celebration of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people. Get your recipes/ ice cream/ creative planning tools ready. **PIE Day 2020, Saturday March 14, is happening!** This is an initiative by [Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble](#) and [Affirming Connections](#) with the support of the United Church.

We've updated our online home, [www.pieday.ca](http://www.pieday.ca) and there are already lots of free planning resources and ready to use graphics posted. [They're all right here](#): just download and put them to use. And [here's the national Facebook event](#).

The United Church of Canada has dedicated a worship page to PIEness! [Click here](#), and watch the space (and [www.pieday.ca](http://www.pieday.ca)) for a **special PIE order of service** from United Methodist-rooted group [Enfleshed](#). Remember that the free 15 minute **PIE Day video** is still as fresh as ever, and we've also released three shorter versions for everything from sermon use to social media. [They're all right here](#).

**All can participate:** you do not need to be part of an Affirming ministry; you don't need to be United Church; your event can be big or small; and pie substitutes are welcome. You just need to be enthusiastic or curious about a Public, Intentional, and Explicit celebration of diverse genders and sexualities in your community and place of worship. That's all. Have at it and [remember to register your event!](#)

### **Big Sing and Workshop: Free and Open to the Public**

**BIG SING: Thursday, March 19, 2020, 7-8 pm - Chapel**, St. Andrew's College, 1121 College Dr. Saskatoon  
John St. Andrew's Worship Professor Becca Whitla and our two ambassadors in an evening of singing together

**WORKSHOPS: Friday, March 20, 2020, 1:30-5:30 pm** (The Meeting Room, St. Andrew's College)

With Josh Zentner-Barrett from Ottawa, Ontario and Joslyn Henderson from Waco, Texas.

Session 1: "Congregational Song and Forming Identity"

Session 2: "Black Hymnody Matters: The Music of Charles A. Tindley, C.P. Jones, and Margaret Pleasant-Douroux"

Session 3: "Risking it All: The Songs that Make Us Uncomfortable"

Session 4: "Breaking Through the Traditional/Contemporary Divide"

**RSVP:** <https://congregationalson.org/event/student-community-workshop-saskatoon/>

### **Opportunities to serve the wider church**

[All opportunities are listed here](#), as always. This week, please note especially the many "Pilgrim in Mission" opportunities to connect with our church's global partners.

## **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](#).

### **Diploma in Missional Leadership at the Atlantic School of Theology**

Are you a leader of a faith community committed to nurturing your own faith, growing in your understanding of the missional context around you, and networking with other ministry leaders? Are you passionate about mission in the Canadian context? If so, you are invited to apply to be part of the first cohort of participants in this exciting new Diploma program that focuses on developing practical leadership skills and attributes, while learning about the Canadian context as well as the nature and practices of mission-oriented leadership. [Poster](#)

#### **Admissions Requirements:**

- You must currently be serving in a recognized form of ministry in Canada.
- You must commit to attending all four modules with the first component of the Diploma taking place on the AST campus in Halifax, June 8-12, 2020.

- Access to an up-to-date computer and Internet access (preferably high speed) is required.
- If you have questions please contact Rev. Dr. Stephen Harper, Convener of the Diploma in Missional Leadership: [sharper@astheology.ns.ca](mailto:sharper@astheology.ns.ca) OR go to [http:// www.astheology.ns.ca/future/diploma/diploma-in-missional-leadership.html](http://www.astheology.ns.ca/future/diploma/diploma-in-missional-leadership.html) for more information or to apply now.

**Application Deadline: March 15 2020.**

**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](mailto: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.](#)

**Listening for the Still, Small Voice Within Retreat,**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (5 pm) – Thursday, March 19, 2020 (2:00 pm), Ancient Spirals, Saskatoon**

In this retreat we will be invited to engage in energetic practices that boost our energy throughout the day. We will be inspired to connect with the still, small voice within us creatively as we reflect on the challenges the biblical character Elijah had in hearing the still, small voice. **Leadership:** Marg Janick-Grayston; and Janicka Grayston. **For full details visit:** <https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats>

**Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre programming**

Queen's House has posted their [upcoming programming](#) on their [website](#) . Please check out their offerings to see if there is something that would fit for you.

**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). Both are offered in Winnipeg. 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](mailto:info@ccsonline.ca)

**Women's retreat**

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". Check-in is from 6:30 - 7:30 on Friday. Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister of Northern Spirit, Living Skies and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils will be in attendance. There will be a Wellness Presentation as well as a speaker on Forever in Motion. Workshops include: choice of Gentle Yoga or Meditation in the morning and choice of Prayer Bracelets, Container Gardening, Drumming or Beading in the afternoon. Saturday's evening entertainment will feature local Indigenous Dancers. We will lead Sunday's worship service and plan to include a Women's Choir. Cost for the Gathering including all meals is \$50 plus \$10 for workshop supplies. **Registrations forms must be in by April 1**. For information please contact Barbara Byers Bradley at 306-249-2433 or Mary Mohn at 306-749-3446.

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

**Medical Assistance in Dying workshop, Sat. March 7 1:00-4:00pm, First United Church, Swift Current**

Presenter: Cathy Coates, North Hospital Chaplaincy staff, Saskatoon. This workshop will provide an opportunity for education, exploration, and theological/spiritual reflection of the complex issues generated by this new truth in the landscape of Canadian health care. All welcome to this Cluster event.

**March 14:** National Affirming PIE Day, all day! Local events **all over the region**, to eat pie, draw the circle wide, and strategize on a real and radical welcome for LGBTQIA+ people in our faith communities.

[www.pieday.ca](http://www.pieday.ca) for free videos, planning materials, worship, and event registration.

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

**March 17 Listening for the Still, Small Voice Within Retreat:** Tues, Mar 17 (5 pm) – Thurs, Mar 19, 2020 (2:00 pm), Ancient Spirals, Saskatoon. **For full details visit:** <https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats>

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

**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 work of the Pastoral Relations Committee - [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 12](#)**

**[The YAYAC Newsletter – February 19, 2020](#)**. News for the Youth and Young Adult Community

##### **Online Licensed Lay Worship Leader Training / The United in Worship Project**

The next Module of the Licensed Lay Worship Training Program is beginning near the end of February and registration for new intakes to the program has begun. We hope to meet the needs of Communities of Faith currently without paid accountable clergy, help themselves. Details about this program [are here](#)

Also, the United-in-Worship Project website is now up and running and providing Worship Resource materials for Communities of Faith without paid accountable leadership or trained laity. The resources are available by annual subscription for the cost of 1 pulpit supply at \$216.00 providing weekly worship services including: Order of Service, Digital version of the Order of Service (PowerPoint); Text of an original sermon and a video version presented by its author. Details about this can be [seen here](#).

Both projects are joint projects of St. John's United Church, Marathon, ON and the Canadian Shield Regional Council. The Online Training is hosted by United-in-Learning.

##### **United Church Bookstore**

The United Church Bookstore has undergone many changes in the past few months to improve your shopping experience, and we're so excited for you, our valued customers, to be here! Thank you for your patience as we updated the online store--we've completely redesigned the [United Church Bookstore](#) and made it easier for you to search for products and to place orders. We've also brought our [customer service back in house](#), and have a new warehouse for picking and packing the orders. Be sure to follow our [Instagram](#) account, filled with inspiring, thought-provoking quotes paired with beautiful art.

We're thrilled that you can now experience it all for yourself! Use promo code EMAIL20\* for 20% off your first purchase on [UCRDstore.ca](http://UCRDstore.ca).

### **Moderator and Elders' Council on the Wet'suwet'en land struggle**

Moderator Very Rev Richard Bott and the National Indigenous Elders' Council have joined their voices to express concern about the current situation on traditional Wet'suwet'en territory. They note the different interpretations of whether consent to Coastal Gas Link's natural gas pipeline was given or not. "This difference in interpretation of who makes decisions is a collision of Indigenous and colonial law. We believe it is being used by governments and the pipeline company as a wedge to push this project through. We believe this must stop, and be replaced by genuine dialogue honouring the sacredness of the land and Indigenous people.

If right relations between Indigenous and Settler peoples is to have any chance, then Canada must, in compliance with Article 27 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, respect Indigenous peoples' decision-making according to their laws and traditions."

[Please read and share this letter](#) with your community of faith and beyond. This is a hard issue for many in our communities, and difficult to talk about. But our Apology as a church and our commitment to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hold us to the responsibility Jesus and the prophets model for us: to speak and listen to hard realities with open hearts.