

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



September 2, 2020

1. **Living Skies News:** Nominations Committee; Pastoral Relations help; Community of Faith conversation; At Home Children's Resources during COVID-19; Ministry & Personnel Committee 101 – **new dates**; Thank-you, United Church Camps!; Youth and Young Adult Community; Plans, plans, plans; Ministry Personnel gatherings; Insurance and money – fun COVID times;
2. **Wider Church Information:** Infopac Mailings; Action invitation for SK: stand up for children's right in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; Season of Creation Resources; September is also Climate Action Month at KAIROS; National opportunities to serve the church;
3. **Upcoming Learning Opportunities:** Zimbabwe Online Conference; New Wine: Western Intercultural gathering online this fall; Spirals of Call: a Free Flow Wellness Retreat; Expressing Wonder Conference;
4. **Reminders:** Put your community event on our website; Funds available for your anti-racism learning; **National Time Sensitive Webinar: August 12;**

1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee of the Living Skies Regional Council currently has a number of vacancies which we are seeking to fill, including two positions on the Property Commission. The Property Commission oversees and makes decisions on various property related matters in our Region. This Commission meets primarily electronically or by phone, and sometimes needs to meet on short notice. If you have an interest in property matters, and might be willing to fill one of these positions, we'd love to hear from you! For more information or to volunteer, please be in touch with the Nominations Committee by email at lsrcnominations@gmail.com, or you can phone co-chair Susan Reed at 306-482-3932.

Pastoral Relations help

As you are likely aware, the new pastoral relations system requires a Regional Council Liaison to work with communities of faith who are exploring their future ministry needs. The role is primarily one of accompaniment and guidance, with lots of support in terms of [written materials](#) and collegiality. If this is something you feel called to offer, please contact Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister – tmurton@united-church.ca.

Community of Faith conversation

As questions about buildings and finances continue to emerge, Regional Council Staff want to invite you to a Zoom Q&A, **Wednesday, September 9, 6:30pm.** <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/93569054266> * **Please use local numbers when feasible to save costs for the church.** * 1-647-374-4685; Toll-free 1-855-703-8985; Meeting ID: 935 6905 4266. If you have specific questions, please feel free to send them ahead of time so that we might prepare the answer! tmurton@united-church.ca

At-Home Children's Resources during COVID-19

Many congregations have chosen to delay in-person Children's Ministry programs for the fall. Links for alternative online and **"At-Home" Faith Formation** resources will be updated regularly at <https://livingskiesrc.ca/resources/faith-formation/>.

On that note, please don't hesitate to share your favourite resources too. Just send the info to Kent at LivingSkiesYAYA@united-church.ca.

Ministry & Personnel Committee 101 – new Dates

If you have a new ministry and personnel committee, or would just like a refresher of the roles and responsibilities for this most important task, please feel free to join Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister, for **one** of the following Zoom workshops: **Wednesday, September 30, 7:00-8:30pm, OR Saturday, October 3, 10:00-11:30am**. Email Bev Diebert to register bdiebert@united-church.ca. After registration, you will receive the Zoom link and the background materials.

Thank-you, United Church Camps!

2020 was a unique and difficult summer for outdoor ministries, but our United Church Camps faithfully met the challenge. Summer camps and leaders really are an inspiration to everyone in the church, serving God with the offering of online community, videos, spiritual reflection, interactive polls & activities, in-person daycamps, and leadership training. Thank-you for your incredible ministry with children & young people!

For more info and to provide financial support, please contact the faithful camp people at each of our camps:

<https://www.lumsdenbeachcamp.com/>

<http://www.camptapawingo.net/>

<https://shagabec.com/>

<https://www.campwoodboia.ca/>

<https://www.campchristopher.ca/>

<https://wellmanlakeuccamp.ca/>

Youth & Young Adult Community

Based on the recommendations of the Saskatchewan Healthy Authority, we're going to hold off on scheduling Regional in-person YAYAC events for at least the first couple of months of the fall. Ideally, once the school year gets rolling and everyone is safe & healthy, we'll be able to come from far and wide to gather in person too!

In the meantime though, please keep an eye out for online connections for Junior Youth (gr.7-9), Senior Youth (gr.9-12), and Young Adults (age 18+). There are a few groups in the works throughout Living Skies. If you're looking to connect or if you have a group that people can connect with, please contact Kent at LivingSkiesYAYA@united-church.ca or 306-221-5529.

Plans, plans, plans

In June, staff offered to review building re-opening plans to add a second set of eyes to the process. The offer remains open as communities of faith continue to assess risk and discern the most appropriate strategy for their context. We have also received a request for copies of rental agreements for daycares. We would be happy to put any of the plans we receive on the website so that others might learn from them. Please send them along to tmurton@united-church.ca. If you are looking for resources in developing your plans, you can check the resources on the website [here](#). *If you are sending in your plan, please be sure to add the date to your document so folks know how recent it is.*

In addition to the written resources, Diane Strickland has developed a two-part series to aid in the conversation about building re-opening. These are excellent videos that could be viewed by a small group involved in the decision-making. Making Faithful Decisions on Re-entry – [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#).

Ministry Personnel gatherings

The fall has arrived and with it the need for support. Join your colleagues in ministry on **Tuesdays**, at **1:00pm** for this optional conversation. Join weekly, bi-weekly, or whenever the Spirit moves you for an hour of connection and learning. Zoom Meeting: <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/94637623120>

* **Please use local numbers when feasible to save costs for the church.** * 1-647-374-4685; Toll-free 1-855-703-8985; Meeting ID: 946 3762 3120

Insurance and money – fun COVID times

The national office has created a list of Frequently Asked Questions related to COVID and insurance issues. You can find the list [here](#). There was also a webinar a few weeks ago with some helpful information regarding the need for Communities of Faith to have a registered charity number and deadlines for some of the funding resources. You can watch the recording of the webinar or view the slides at United-in-Learning. There is also a list of helpful email addresses for folks who could answer your broader questions: [Congregational Finances During the Pandemic](#).

2. Wider Church Information:

Infopac Mailings

As a result of the recent General Council Office reorganization, staff reductions, and cost-cutting measures, our quarterly Infopac mailing to the church will be coming to an end effective immediately. Information about General Council Office programs, events, and resources that have traditionally been included in Infopac will now be shared through our other existing communication vehicles, such as E-ssentials, the United Church website, and our social media channels.

E-ssentials comes out weekly and is sent to all communities of faith and regional councils. Individuals are also encouraged to [subscribe to the e-newsletter!](#)

To receive news about United Church Bookstore's products, please [subscribe](#) to the UCRD newsletter or visit UCRDstore.ca.

Action invitation for SK: stand up for children's rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Imagine having the military force their way into your house in the middle of the night, isolate your 13 year old, question him, drag him off handcuffed to some unidentified prison where he is interrogated and held for months. That's what happens to hundreds of Palestinian teenagers each year.

Several groups are working together to bring this to the attention of Canadians and our government.

We are asking for the appointment of a special Canadian envoy to investigate what is happening to Palestinian children. The campaign called "Canada, Stand Up for Children's Rights" focuses on education and a [Parliamentary e-petition](#) through MP Paul Manly's office open for signatures until November 3rd. Let's get Saskatchewan on board with this action.

How can you be involved? [Sign and share the petition](#); **learn more through this [background resource](#), written by United Church members; and contact** Renee and/ or Donna at rnunanrappard@gmail.com to learn about the plans to involve people and build momentum in Saskatchewan as part of this cross-Canada campaign.

Season of Creation resources

September is a season of abundance that will help see us through the cold of winter. Whether we fish or hunt, farm or garden, what better time to honour the deep generosity of God and God's creation in worship and reflection? In this liturgical Season of Creation, consider centering Creation and ecological justice in your community of faith's life.

Worship resources from the United Church: [September 13](#) ; [September 20](#) ; [September 27](#)

Ecumenical options through KAIROS, the Canadian churches' justice movement: **For the Love of Creation** is a faith-based initiative for climate justice, bringing together Canadian faith communities and organizations under a unified banner to mobilize Canada-wide education, reflection, action and advocacy for climate justice. Click here for more information: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/ecological-justice/for-the-love-of-creation>

September is also Climate Action Month at KAIROS:

Each day in September, KAIROS will focus on an aspect of the climate crisis – sharing resources, events, stories from our members and global partners, and actions for climate justice. The calendar will focus on five weekly themes: Season of Creation, Just Transition, Indigenous Rights, Global Climate Justice, and Water: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/ecological-justice/climateactionmonth>

National opportunities to serve the church

The national church has several important openings for lay and order of ministry people in our Regional Council. Please see the link below for a summary and please share! Opportunities include: Healing Programs Working Group (1–3 vacancies); Justice and Reconciliation Fund Committee (2 vacancies); [More details are here](#).

3. Upcoming Learning Opportunities – this week, summer and fall:

Zimbabwe Online Conference – September 3, 2020 at 8:00am EST (6:00am Saskatchewan time)

Church in Partnership Zimbabwe Conference presents 'Mending the World'. **Note new contact/link information** on the Regional Council calendar, see [link here](#).

**New Wine: Western Intercultural Gathering online this fall with Eric Law and Tony Snow
Fridays, September 25th, October 2nd & 9th, 2020.**

Join us for a cross-Canada gathering of people living out the United Church's intercultural vision. Rev. Dr. Eric Law and Tony Snow will be our lead resource people.

Cost: FREE. (*Thank you for your support through Mission and Service!*) These will be **three-hour sessions**, with presentations, reflection, song, and small group discussion. Tools for engaging with your ministry between sessions will be offered, and so will afternoon/ evening informal conversation groups. **Full information:** <https://bit.ly/2CqFRjt> Sessions are free but registration is still required; [please click here](#) to register.

If you would like more information, please contact the Western Intercultural Ministry Network Executive through staff support Julie Graham, jgraham@united-church.ca

Spirals of Call - An online *Free Flow Wellness Retreat* led by Marg Janick-Grayston

Monday, September 28 - Thursday, October 1 (1 - 5pm) Deadline to register: September 20

In this online retreat, we will explore the Spiral of Call that visits us again and again over the course of our lives, as well as the patterns of change that accompany the Spiral of Call. Each day will begin at 1pm with an introduction to the material via Zoom, followed by a couple of hours for you to go off to reflect and create. The last 30-45 minutes will be spent back on Zoom for a time of sharing that will wrap up by 5pm. **Cost:** \$100 - \$150. For more info, see <https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats> or Email Marg at marg@freeflowwellness.ca or call her at 306-563-8650.

Expressing Wonder Conference -

You are invited to participate in the fall on-line conference, **Seeing the World with Eyes Wide Open.**

October 2-4, 2020. Sponsored by Southminster-Steinhauer United Church – Spiritual Seekers United in Community, Edmonton and Saskatoon.

Theme Presenters: **Ali Akbar**, CEO for the Saskatoon Open Door Society. A refugee and immigrant himself, he is passionate about social justice and overcoming social inequity. **Ernie Louttit**, a member of the Saskatoon Police, is a Missanabie Cree. Award winning author, he blows the lid off of taboo topics around policing and racism. **Mitch Babin** will share his art. On hand will be **Nancy Steeves and Christopher New** as well as **Gretta Vosper and Scott Kearns** with their spiritual message and music leadership.

Cost is \$75 per viewing device. For all the information, the conference schedule and registration form, follow the link <https://ssucedmonton.com/expressing-wonder-2020>

4. Reminders:

Put your community event on our website!

You can still promote your local event through our website. Regular worship should be registered with the national church's map and listings, but everything from bible study to a workshop to drive up pie or bannock fundraisers can be shared on our Communities of Faith events calendar through our [community form](#). The event needs to be a United Church event open to the public. Give it a try!

Reminder: funds available for your anti-racism learning

Your Regional Council is offering the beginnings of a [recommended reading and viewing](#) self-education resource list. The Regional Council is offering up to \$30 for resources of your choice, whether from this list or beyond. Please see the link above for details. Consider taking the time to reflect on a book or movie that points us towards and challenges us to live into the commitment to being anti-racist churches, whether individually or in a group. If you are interested in organizing a group discussion, the Regional Council will help you promote and try to make its Zoom account available.

National Time-sensitive Webinar – August 12

If you missed the August 12 update from our Chief Financial Officer Erik Mathiesen, you can find it recorded on the United in Learning website – <https://www.united-in-learning.com/> under Webinars> Recordings> COVID-19. This webinar reviewed the details of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program as it applies to churches, and walked through the steps churches need to follow to apply for it. **United in Learning** will continue to offer its regular programming as well. [Click here for info](#).