

**FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL**



**ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE**  
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Dear friends of the Living Skies Regional Council,

I am sorry that we will be unable to gather in community this year. I pray you and yours are well during these strange days. As well, please know that the college is here to offer you support and care, whether in your communities of faith, vocationally and in other ways that might be helpful during these times of isolation and concern.

I am writing to you today as we begin to enter that pause between harvest and the fallow-time. As I sit here, with the cursor waiting, the word paradox keeps repeating itself in my musings. If ever that tension, when two things exist in tension, was most apparent it is indeed in the place in the midst of harvest's abundance and deep winter's prairie slumber. This might even be a reflection of our journey as an Easter people.

For four months, up until summer's arrival, the community of staff, faculty and most tenants worked remotely. During our time away from the college's hallways and staircases, its proud stone and blessed sanctuary, the world has changed. It has changed for all of us. It seems to me that this Gospel thing, this Good News to which we are committed, speaks with a clarity to a hurting world that I do not recall in my lifetime.

We have all been touched by the pandemic. Whether that is life disrupted, illness experienced, and, in too many cases, suffering and death, we are all affected, and the world is moving on. From leadership that advocates for basic universal income to those who would sow fear and distrust, the full range of that which we are capable is on full display.

In these strange days, the college continues its work. In its unfolding mission, to prepare people for leadership through the lens of justice, I would like to highlight two places in which I have seen hope that demonstrates most clearly the ongoing relevance of this unfolding experiment called St. Andrew's College.

When the pandemic arrived, as each day seemed to bring further confusion, data overload, and questions of how to ensure all might be safe, the staff and faculty continued to respond in such a manner that illustrates the nimbleness of the college. As the pandemic arrived and the subsequent closure of the college and University of Saskatchewan occurred, the faculty were able to be up in running remotely in less than two days. Though not easy, the commitment to ensuring that learning continued was only balanced by the staff's care of our tenants and residents.

With over 60% of our residents hailing from far away, the staff have challenged me and held us all appropriately accountable to ensuring that the college roles as a *home away from home* was not only maintained, but improved. From maintaining a cleaning regiment that ensures a safe environment, to working with the university, it has been clear that St. Andrew's is a community that takes all of its relationships – tenants, faculty, residents, students and staff – as the embodiment of a body in which we are all connected.

The second highlight is connected with our denominational pastoral and liturgical response to the reality that our worshipping communities have been shuttered and quickly reopened. In such places as my Facebook feed, twitter page and on Instagram, the college's students and alum have responded in vibrant ways that within a few short weeks connects faith communities beyond traditional boundaries and offers pastoral care through such tools that range from the phone to instant and direct messaging. This emboldened ministry, literally being born in the midst of a pandemic, has many lessons for the college.

Let me just highlight one of those teachings in the short time we have left in this year's conversation. As students and alum begin to engage in the relational medium of the digital, the college has some thinking to do. We will need to begin to take seriously how we bring the best of our leadership training in the brick and mortar of life into this new space. How we offer pastoral care, nurture theological reflection and critical thinking in these new places of ministry will require careful consideration. Where do learnings and assignments, practice and ministry meet in place like Instagram and TikTok? What does it mean to bring the Good News into these places that connect with worship, which may no longer be bound to just Sundays at 10:00 and where pews are replaced with YouTube chat boxes?

These are the very challenges in which this institution called St. Andrew's has been engaged since 1912. The world has changed, and it will again. With your ongoing trust and support, friends, I am indeed hopeful that the places where death and resurrection always meet, whether in the digital or in-person, St. Andrew's will continue to prepare people for Christian leadership who help the lost find safety, the hurting healing and the mourning solace.

In Christ,  
Dea. Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis  
Principal

### **Designated Lay Ministers Program**

The DLM program continues to be a popular choice for folks wishing to follow a call to serve this United Church. Current students come from Atlantic Canada, Ontario, and Saskatchewan. Fourteen students are enrolled in this three-year, in-service program, four of whom graduate in May. Since beginning this position in January 2020, I have had inquiries from six potential students from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia.

I looked forward to welcoming everyone to the March learning circle, "The Learning Community," to talk about learning styles, the theology of Christian education, and leadership strategies in diverse communities and to learn how to facilitate effective bible studies, small group workshops, and educational events for all ages. Our start date of March 16, however, was pre-empted by restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, everyone was able to cancel airline tickets and accommodations. Instead we will meet remotely May 12-28 through a combination of live-streamed events, timed to accommodate three time zones, and flexible on-line activities enabling students to engage when their schedules permit. Professors Sandra Beardsall, Christine Mitchell, and Becca Whitla, all of St. Andrew's College, will also contribute their expertise.

Since mid-March, the program team and I have been meeting weekly with the students, who are also in ministry in communities of faith, to share ideas and resources as they develop ways of offering worship and pastoral care remotely. Although the pandemic has interrupted our plans, the time has enabled me to get to know the students and vice versa. I have learned that this is a passionate, resilient, and creative group who love to share the Word and care deeply for the people in their communities.

The October learning circle, “Organizing Community,” will run October 19-29 and focuses on such topics as church governance and polity, administration, and evangelism. Over the coming months, I will be planning this learning experience for both in-person and on-line delivery, as COVID-19 restrictions may still be in place in the fall.

A program of the national church, the DLM program is primarily funded through your Mission and Service Fund givings. This funding contributes to program expenses, salaries, honoraria for qualified resource people to teach portions of learning circles, and twice-yearly meetings of the DLM Program Team. In addition, the national church contributes a travel bursary fund and a general bursary fund for DLM students. These are vital contributions, as many students are in half-time ministry and few bursaries are available for DLM students.

I am deeply grateful to my predecessor Jennifer Janzen-Ball, the volunteer program team, and teaching fellows, past and present, who enrich the students’ experience with their expertise and counsel. The national volunteer DLM Program Team currently comprises Marc Grenon and Mary-Jo Tracy; Kathryn McIntosh and Linda Stumpf have retired from their roles. We meet twice a year to plan for learning circles, admit students, and implement policies. Program Team members volunteer about 950 hours per year, a significant commitment that makes this program possible. In addition, faculty from St. Andrew’s College offer learning modules and experts from around the church, both lay people and ministry personnel, deliver timely and innovative workshops. Jennifer’s dedication to this teaching ministry has been integral to its health. DLM students and staff join together to wish her much joy in her new role with General Council.

Respectfully submitted,  
(The Rev. Dr.) Kathleen James-Cavan,  
DLM Program Director

## CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES



**126 Years of  
Educating Students  
for Ministry**

*Hold fast to what is good, love one another with mutual affection (Romans 12:9-10)*

Paul’s words to the community in Rome speak boldly to our 2019-2020 school year at the Centre for Christian Studies. We adopted a new strategic plan; holding fast to our mission of educating for diaconal ministry, with an expansive vision of *diakonia* for everyone –diaconal education needs to be broadly accessible: not only people in formation to become diaconal ministers, but also to lay folks and working clergy for continuing education and spiritual development.

Last fall our learning circles gathered in Winnipeg for the fall Integrating Year circle (our graduating class), and for themes centred on Spiritual Practices and Storytelling. Our online learning circle focused on Power and Privilege started in January, and then as the pandemic hit in North America, we realized that the rest of the spring learning circles would need to be online as well. Our learning community, staff and students together, showed immense adaptability shifting to an online format for the spring learning circle intensives.

Through networks like online clergy gatherings, we started to hear the pressing pastoral needs emerging during the pandemic, and in April offered a series of workshops including Zoom Tips, Crisis Pastoral Care, Pastoral Care Uses of the Spiral and Trauma Informed Pastoral Care. Each workshop gathered 75 – 100 participants, a testament to the importance of adaptive approaches to pastoral care education, grounded in up to date practice, theory and theology.

Unable to hold our annual banquet, we made a donation towards feeding our local Winnipeg community through 1 Just City, and held an online tea party instead – celebrating with over 70 guests! We commend the 2020 graduating class of Diaconal Ministries Diploma: Christina Crawford, Joe Kadi, Lorrie Lowes, Barb McGill, Kim McNaughton and Karen Orlandi. We also celebrated Alison Brooks-Stark's completion of a certificate in Spiritual Care and Anne Manikel who is the 2020 Companion of the Centre.

With restrictions continuing on travel and gatherings, we cancelled our summer Learning on Purpose course, instead offering a shorter orientation in late August to new students. Our fall circles, Integrating Year, Ministry as Listening and Eco-Justice, will be again gathering online; and we are grateful for the generosity of donors, who supported our innovation into online learning before pandemic times. We are offering the Word and Example learning circle online this fall; which focusing on Anglican Deacon formation. We are finding that online learning widens accessibility to learning circles, especially for folks who are interested in taking a week-long circle as a stand alone continuing education opportunity.

God continues to call us all to diaconal ministry – whether we are laity or clergy, ordained or diaconal. Our baptism into the body of Christ requires that we care for one another, deepening our faith, responding pastorally to the needs around us and seeking justice. We are grateful for all of you who join us in the ministry of diaconal education: through participation in field placements, as learning facilitators and mentors, through donations and by serving on our council and committees. We are grateful for each discerning conversation that includes the question “Have you considered the possibility that you are being called to diaconal ministry?”

We continue to hold fast to what is good, grateful for the mutual affection found in community, encouraged by generations before us and sustained in our mission of educating leaders for justice, compassion and transformation.

Michelle Owens  
Principal

**SANDY-SAULTEAUX SPIRITUAL CENTRE**  
Box 210, Beausejour, Manitoba ROE OCO  
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Greetings to you all from the Twilight Zone of the Covid-19 worldwide pandemic reality! Now that I have your attention, Aniin Boozhoo from the territory of the Stone Fort Treaty (Treaty Number One) here along the Brokenhead River, Beausejour, MB. What a different world we are living in than the one in 2019. We have adjusted our way of working together and educating students and have moved online to Zoom like so much of the world. We have been forced to shut down our retreat operations during the best year for this business in our history here. This pandemic has brought out the best in creativity and put a huge financial challenge before us too. Our Indigenous ancestors have survived devastating pandemics in the past and we at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre will too!

When Manitoba shut down in the middle of March, we realized we took the right approach when earlier we cancelled our Learning Circles the last week of March and first week of April. This also meant we had to cancel the graduation ceremony for our five graduates: Murray Pruden from Smoky Lake, AB; John Snow Jr. from Morley, AB; Elenor Thompson from Oxford House, MB; Bruce Kakakaway from White Bear, SK; and Sam Ross from Cross Lake, MB. We were set to recognize Honored Elders Mary Courtenay (former Keeper of the Learning Circle) and Jacob Keno from Garden Hill, MB. We plan to celebrate in 2021 Creator willing!

We have transitioned our face-to-face learning circles to online Zoom sessions and continue our Indigenous ministry training program. We never considered this type of education because of the proven success of our thirty-six years of Learning Circle experience. Other schools already had experience and platforms to deliver their education this way but we at SSSC had to create ours out of whole cloth. We did it and learned along the way as our ancestors did. In order to do our connecting and educating work through Zoom we did an upgrade to our internet capability by installing a 70-foot signal tower and all the ethernet and Wi-Fi equipment necessary.

Since Wi-Fi access in many of our First Nation and Northern student communities is limited we are making arrangements for the continuation of their training by correspondence. We are assessing student technology needs and will be upgrading their equipment as well.

We hoped to have an outdoor event that brought Indigenous and Settler folk together on the land but just for two days instead of a whole week but we cancelled at the last minute due to the latest spike of infections in Manitoba. We put all our remote learning lessons together and in just a couple of days put together a free one day Zoom Mamawe Ota Askihk event and our participants were very happy how it went. We've learned a few things!

In response to our 2019 Program Review we hired Diane Meredith as Second Keeper of the Learning Circle who began her work with us May 1, 2020. She worked from her home in Toronto, ON and was finally able to move to Manitoba August 12<sup>th</sup>. After quarantining for fourteen days she has been able to work out of her office here at the Centre. Due to the Restart Manitoba guidelines we have reconfigured our current office allocations and reassigned our library and common rooms in our lodges as offices and installed internet and phone services there.

All these changes have cost us dearly and we are so thankful for the prayers and ongoing support of Living Skies Region and the whole United Church of Canada. We are at the leading edge of change in the Indigenous church and are excited about what the future holds as we move forward. I know you share our optimism because you show that with your prayers and finances sent our way. We know our success is yours as well and continually pray for your flourishing!

Sincerely,

Adrian Jacobs, Keeper of the Learning Circle

For:

Susie McPherson Derendy, Keeper of the Learning Circle

Diane Meredith, Second Keeper of the Learning Circle

## ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Greetings from Atlantic School of Theology!

Academic year 2019-20 has been a year unlike any other. Atlantic School of Theology posted a banner enrollment, with 183 students. This is our highest enrollment in many, many years. And of course we finished the year with a pandemic, scrambling to shift all courses to the online environment, and ensuring that those who have worked so hard to graduate would be able to receive their degrees and diplomas, even without an in-person Convocation. With considerable faith, resourcefulness, and inspiration, our students, staff, and faculty rallied. It has been stressful, but we have done it together. We are so grateful to our church partners – you! – for your faithful support.



We have students from every Canadian province and a few in the USA as well. Our expanding Summer Distance MDiv program allows students to “earn while they learn,” serving in a local church part-time and studying part-time over five years. Interest in the Master of Arts (Theology and Religious Studies) program is growing, especially among ministers who already have the MDiv degree.

In the past year, our Continuing Education offerings have also expanded, including on-campus and online offerings. An innovative Preaching Masterclass, workshops on Eldercare and Parish Nursing, an online program on Feminist Spirituality, an on-campus program on Indigenous Spirituality, and a drumming and song circle were among the many opportunities for lifelong learning for lay and clergy folks. Several of our for-credit graduate courses are also open to Continuing Education participants.

As the academic year draws to a close, we are saying a fond and grateful farewell to Dr. Joan Campbell, CSM, who has taught at AST since 2005. We will miss her dedication, scholarship, good humour, and excellent teaching. Sister Joan is returning to PEI to live.

Looking ahead, our popular Summer term will be fully online in 2020, and planning is underway for the fall. AST will face a significant shortfall in revenues (due to the closure of our residence for at least one term, among other financial pressures), but we will weather the storm.

AST exists to serve our churches and our society. Please let us know how we can serve you. Inquiries about programs of study and about Pine Hill Divinity Hall’s generous financial support for students are always welcome.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell  
 Academic Dean

## EMMANUEL COLLEGE

### **Pandemic Response**

The Emmanuel College community has been responsive and resilient as Victoria University in the University of Toronto responds to public health concerns. With a few exceptions in the



**EMMANUEL COLLEGE**  
 OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY IN  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

winter term, Emmanuel College courses are online this year. Internal and external events on Victoria University's campus are on hold, at least until December. Other events—such as the Christian Left Conference this summer—have shifted to online formats. Faculty have transitioned from emergency remote delivery to online pedagogies with the guidance of our new Instructional Design professor, Dr. Matthew Dougherty. The content of our courses has adapted as well, with Dr. Pamela McCarroll's new online "Pandemic Spiritual Care" summer course for students needing a curricular substitute for canceled CPE units. The Emmanuel College Library began offering curbside pickup service on September 14. Spiritual care practices, including Wednesday Chapel, are offered Monday through Thursday. Our new Spiritual and Community Life Program Manager, Dr. Sam Cavanagh, can help members of the wider community to connect. We hope you will join us!

### **Full Tuition Grants**

The John W. Billes Grant provides 100% tuition support to all full-time domestic students registered in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program and who are in The United Church of Canada Candidacy Pathway. The application deadline is April 30, 2021. For more information, contact Andrew Aitchison ([andrew.aitchison@utoronto.ca](mailto:andrew.aitchison@utoronto.ca)).

### **Annual Fund Priority**

This year's Annual Fund donations will be allocated toward emergency support for students facing financial hardship due to the pandemic. International students have been particularly vulnerable. We appreciate your generosity and support.

### **ATS Reaccreditation**

Emmanuel College is preparing to submit our self-study report for reaccreditation by the Association of Theological Schools by the end of this academic year. Under the steady leadership of Dr. Nevin Reda, we are on pace to have draft completed by the end of 2020 so that we can receive feedback from a variety of constituencies. The self-study site visit is scheduled to take place September 27-30, 2021.

### **EC Connects**

Over the summer, we launched a new digital platform, EC Connects. Alumni and other community members receive it via e-mail around the 21st of each month. EC Connects contains stories from "within the walls" of the College, from "outside the walls," thought pieces, opportunities to connect for events and continuing education, and the like. For our stories from "outside the walls," we are currently featuring one of the 2020 alumni service award winners each month. If you have a story idea for EC Connects, please share your idea with Shawn Kazubowski-Houston.

### **Centre for Religion and Its Contexts**

Friends of the College are welcome to propose and co-sponsor lectures, workshops, speakers, or continuing education through the Centre for Religion and Its Contexts. Contact Shawn Kazubowski-Houston for an application ([shawn.houston@utoronto.ca](mailto:shawn.houston@utoronto.ca)). Stay tuned in EC Connects for this year's programming, and if you haven't followed us yet on social media, please do:

**FACEBOOK**    [@EmmanuelCollegeofVic](#)  
**TWITTER**     [@EmmanuelColleg2](#)  
**INSTAGRAM**   [emmanuelcollegetoronto](#)

Blessings in Christ,  
 Rev. Dr. Michelle Voss Roberts  
 Principal and Professor of Theology

## EMMANUEL COLLEGE

### **Emmanuel College's Online Education Response to COVID-19**

The health and safety of our students, faculty, librarians and staff are our top priority. We are making pedagogical and technological innovations to ensure that all course activity and interaction in the fall 2020 semester, and winter 2021 term, will be online. Many courses are available to auditors for registration. See our course schedule for details and more information about our response to COVID-19. <https://emmanuel.utoronto.ca/current-students/course-and-registration-information/>



The College has hired an expert in Instructional Design and is in the process of long-term planning for flexible online and hybrid programs.

Email [emmanuel.admissions@utoronto.ca](mailto:emmanuel.admissions@utoronto.ca) for more information!

Submitted by  
Andrew Aitchison  
Admissions Counsellor & Recruitment Coordinator

## STEWARDSHIP AND GIFT OFFICER REPORT

**Jane Harding**  
**Stewardship and Gift Officer for the Northern Spirt,**  
**Living Skies and Prairie to Pine Regions**  
**Philanthropy Unit, General Council Office**



*Generosity is a practical expression of love.* Gary Inrig.



**LIVING SKIES**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

In 2020, your gifts to Mission & Service supported Community and Justice Work, Local Ministries, Campus Ministry, Camps, and Chaplaincy

**You supported:**

**Community and Justice Work:**

- Parkland Restorative Justice
- Regina Downtown Chaplaincy
- River Bend Inner City Ministry
- The Micah Mission

**Local Ministries:**

- La Ronge United Church

**Campus Ministries:**

- University of Saskatchewan Ecumenical Chaplaincy

**Chaplaincy:**

- Northern Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy
- Southern Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy

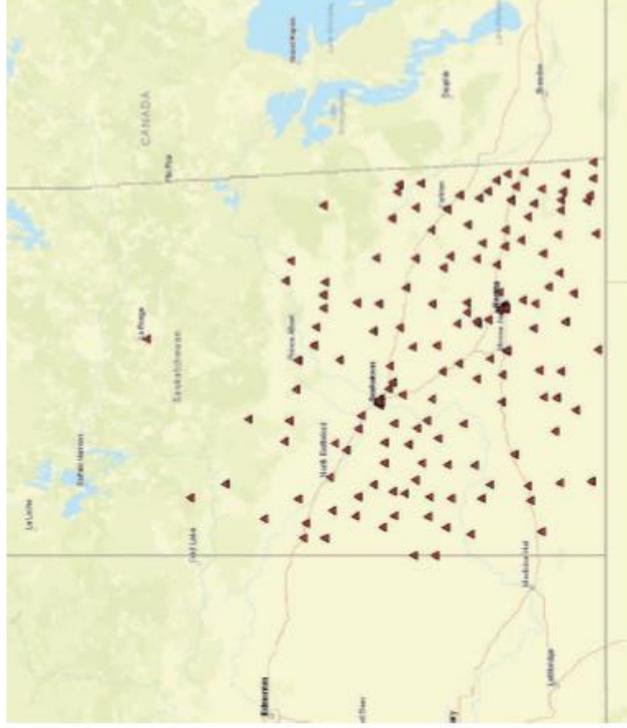
**Camps:**

- Camp Tapawingo
- Lumsden Beach Camp



We believe God is calling Living Skies Regional Council, as a court of The United Church of Canada:

- to nurture, support, and oversee Christ's ministry within the life and work of pastoral charges and presbyteries;
- to be a spirit-filled people of God who seek to journey in Christ's way;
- to acknowledge our differences as well as that which we hold in common;
- to love and serve others;
- to seek justice and peace in relationship with all humanity and the earth;





A congregational giving program created for YOU, with help from YOU!

Based as always on *Inspiring, Asking, and Thanking*,

Called to Be the Church: Loving our Neighbours is the 2020 edition of our "plug and play" congregational and Mission & Service giving program. We continue to incorporate your comments and suggestions to make this an even more accessible resource your congregation.

Called to Be the Church: Loving Our Neighbours will be at your church in early January 2020—as well it will be available (along with supporting resources) at [www.stewardshiptoolkit.ca](http://www.stewardshiptoolkit.ca)

Visit [www.stewardshiptoolkit.ca](http://www.stewardshiptoolkit.ca)

to browse a growing selection of ideas and samples from other congregations, annual giving programs, preaching and worship resources, articles, posters, brochures, bulletin inserts, narrative budget guides, webinars, and videos.

For more information or for assistance with your Congregational Giving, Stewardship, and Mission & Service programs in your pastoral charge, please contact:

Jane Harding  
Stewardship and Gifts Officer  
604-761-1677  
[jhardina@united-church.ca](mailto:jhardina@united-church.ca)



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
LIVING SKIES REGION

THE MISSION & SERVICE STORY:  
GENEROSITY FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

Our gifts for the Mission & Service of the United Church of Canada assist mission and ministry in Saskatchewan, Canada and around the world.

Thank you to congregations in Living Skies who gave \$1,100,212 to Mission & Service of The United Church of Canada in 2019!

Thank you for \$20,987 million in giving by UCW, Congregations and individuals across Canada to the Mission and Service of the church!

In 2019, giving from the United Church Foundation and specific designations, combined with gifts from wills and planned giving, has resulted in total gifts of \$24.263 million to the Mission & Service of the church!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

GOD'S MISSION  
OUR GIFTS