

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



April 21, 2021

- Living Skies News:** Pastoral Relations Ponderings; Camping Sunday Resources: April 25, 2021; Spring 2 Life Regional Concert! - **Sunday**; New resource and reminder: writing a proposal for Regional Council; COVID Guidelines; Living Skies calls on the province to ban conversion therapy; **Updated:** Regional Council signs on to letter to stop Crown / Treaty land sales; Stewardship – It is a Journey; **Worship service in support of those seeking refuge**; Opportunities to serve the wider church in Living Skies now up!; **Ministry & Personnel Committee 101**; **ATTENTION: Ministry Personnel**; Ministry Personnel Gatherings; Practically Prophetic: Tools & Tips for our Ministry Together: MINISTRY WITH YOUTH ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM – **Updated** ; Zoom Gathering for Young Adults;
- Wider Church Information:** National Church: opportunities to serve; **Camping Sunday, April 25th**; Moderator town halls on the church's future directions; Asian Canadian Women: Support, Strength, and Solidarity gatherings; National Worship Service of Apology and Lament for the Church's Role in Coerced Adoptions; Video: Centre for Christian Studies event on anti-Asian racism; Opportunity for young adults: **2022 World Council of Churches Eleventh Assembly, Germany**; Emmanuel College;
- Upcoming Learning Opportunities:** Community of Faith calendar; **New at United in Learning**; **Updated** KAIROS Prairies North online potluck; **Engage Difference: Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry**; Moderator town halls on the church's future directions; **Seeking to Reduce Harm, national series on the idea of drug decriminalization**; **Updated:** Intro to Indigenous Lands and Issues in Canada; 2021 Virtual Festival of Homiletics; St. Andrew's College ReJUNEvation 2021; Queen's House;
- Reminders:** CanadaHelps.Org for online Donations; Seeking new participants in the KAIROS Prairies North Region; Church Leaders and the SK Vaccination program;

*The **Regional Rambler** is our primary resource for sharing information across the Regional Council. To be added to the list, please email Bev Diebert (bdiebert@united-church.ca) .*

1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 24](#) new

Please review this document for important updates for retired ministers, M&P Committees, annual reports and covenants, pulpit supply and more.

Camping Sunday Resources: April 25, 2021 - new

Worship materials & other resources in support of UCC Outdoor Ministries are available at <https://united-church.ca/worship-special-days/camping-sunday>.

Spring 2 Life Regional Concert! *This weekend*** - Sunday, April 25th, 7pm**

Spring is here, and it is time for a celebration of music! An incredible diversity of United Church musicians from throughout the Living Skies Region have prepared an amazing evening of musical entertainment & story!

Ticket proceeds support UCC Communities of Faith (congregations), and other UCC Ministries throughout the Living Skies Region. When you order your ticket, simply indicate the Ministry that you would like to support. **Order Tickets:** <https://form.jotform.com/210804545521246>

More Info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/spring-2-life-concert/>

Download Poster (pdf): <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Spring-2-Life-Poster-pdf.pdf>

New resource and reminder: writing a proposal for Regional Council – new

Proposals call on the Regional Council or General Council to make a decision or set policy on behalf of the church. These replace older formats like petitions or resolutions. If you know of a pressing issue that should come before our annual meeting, have a look at [this short guide](#) on who can make a proposal and how to prepare one. Deadline for proposals to the June 4 and 5, 2021 Regional Gathering is: **May 14, 2021**.

COVID Guidelines - new

Effective **Friday, April 16**, a change to the Public Health Order for Saskatchewan limits the total number of people for worship to 30. While concurrent gatherings are still possible, it is a maximum of 30 people allowable in the building at one time. This does not include worship leaders and *essential* volunteers (the minimum number to support compliance). As previously indicated, the Regional Council cannot dictate how individual communities of faith adhere to the guidelines from the provincial government. However, we can urge you to meet or exceed these guidelines and discern the most faithful path forward knowing the risks the variants pose. For clarity regarding the best options for communion in your community of faith, [please see this document](#). The full provincial guidelines may be found [at this link](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tricia Gerhard at lsrcexecutive@gmail.com or Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

Living Skies calls on the province to ban conversion therapy - new

Living Skies Regional Council of the United Church of Canada, acting on a proposal passed with over 95% approval in November 2020, has called upon the Government of Saskatchewan to:

- a) Enact legislation banning “conversion therapy” for people of all ages in Saskatchewan, thus making it illegal for individuals or entities to engage in the practice of conversion therapy or to refer an individual to practitioners of conversion or reparative therapy; b) Include conversion therapy and bans on it in the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code; c) Ban health coverage for conversion practices; d) Ensure that the Government of Saskatchewan does not provide grants or contracts to any entity that engages in or refers individuals to practitioners of conversion or reparative therapy; e) Make a public statement against conversion therapy.

[Please read and download the letter here](#). Many thanks to the many people who reviewed drafts and helped create a strong voice for our Region. Please share the letter with supportive community groups and individuals, and with Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people who may appreciate receiving it. Consider sending a letter of your own, whether personally or as a community of faith, to your MLA and/ or the ministers mentioned in the Regional letter. It doesn't need to be long in order for your voice to make a difference. Short is sweet. Look for more suggestions on this, coming soon!

Updated: Regional Council signs on to letter to stop Crown/ Treaty land sales -

After consideration of past and current United Church apologies and commitments, the Executive will sign on to a coalition letter to the provincial government that expresses strong concerns with the ongoing sale of “Crown” land to private groups. [Please read more details here](#).

Communities of faith are also welcome to sign on to this letter. [Here is the full text and more information for your sign-on](#). If your ministry decides to do so, please contact treatylandsharingnetwork@gmail.com and Regional staff Julie Graham at jgraham@united-church.ca

Stewardship – It is a Journey

You are not alone. Really. You're not.

Join other communities of faith from Living Skies Regional Council on **The Journey** as together we learn the Stewardship Best practices that can help you increase revenue in order to better fulfil your mission. This May interested Communities of Faith can form a Learning Team, and participate in four 2-hour sessions to learn about best practices in stewardship, plus receive ongoing coaching and support.

Spaces are limited, so reach out to Vicki Nelson (VNelson@united-church.ca) right now for more details or to express interest.

Don't walk alone.

Worship service in support of those seeking refuge - new

St. Andrew's United Church, Moose Jaw, offers us the Welcoming the Stranger worship service to support and strengthen both those seeking refuge around the work and those who welcome them. Please use freely. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9uRKakGGGk>

Opportunities to serve the wider church in Living Skies now up!

Currently there are a number of **openings within Living Skies Regional Council**, representing a wide range of tasks, skills, and interests. [Click here for all the details](#).

A message was sent to the newsletter list on Friday March 5. [Click here to read it](#). All Nominations news, and relevant form links, can be found at all hours of the day and night [right here](#). As always: please share widely! Questions? Ideas? Please contact convener Susan Reed at lsrcnominations@gmail.com or phone Susan through the Living Skies office: 306-704-0181.

Ministry & Personnel Committee 101 - new

Back by popular demand! If you have a new ministry and personnel committee, or would just like a refresher of the roles and responsibilities plus insights from the wellness survey for this most important task, please feel free to join Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister, for **one** of the following Zoom workshops: **Wednesday, May 5, 7:00-8:30pm, OR Saturday, May 8, 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.

ATTENTION: Ministry Personnel - new

Thanks to all of you have already completed your annual declaration. I just wanted to up date some information for you all. The closing date for annual declarations is June 30 2021. You **do not** need to get a new police records check if you completed your annual declaration last year. If there is a reason you will not be able to complete your annual declaration by June 30, please email me at kmedland@united-church.ca so that we can make other arrangements for you.

Remember that ChurchHub is not compatible with Safari. To access all the aspects of ChurchHub, we recommend using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge as your web browser.

Once again if you have any questions about or problems with ChurchHub, please contact me via email.

Always happy to set up a zoom meeting to walk you through your annual declaration.

Karen Medland, Minister for the Office of Vocation

Ministry Personnel Gatherings

Join your colleagues on *Tuesday afternoons at 1pm* for conversation and support over Zoom. For specific topics and connection information, please check the Regional Council [calendar](#).

Practically Prophetic: Tools & Tips for our Ministry Together

"Practically Prophetic" is a new webinar series focused on tools and tips for our UCC ministry together.

Think of it as Com-Ed (Community Education) for all: speakers, presentations, and panel discussions related to just about anything and everything in the vibrant faith-life of the church. We're excited that Practically Prophetic is a pretty cool collaboration of [Living Skies Region](#) Faith Formation, [St. Andrew's College](#), and the [Centre for Christian Studies](#).

UPDATED: MINISTRY WITH YOUTH ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM (*Practically Prophetic Webinars*)

We're constantly searching for new ways to share in Jesus' ministry with neurodiverse children & young people who experience life on the autism spectrum. Erin Scrivens is a special education teacher and life-long member of the United Church who brings over 20 years of experience working with, caring for, and laughing alongside neurodiverse kids. **Date: Wednesday, May 12, 7pm**

Register: <https://form.jotform.com/211086316900246>

More Info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/ministry-with-youth-on-the-autism-spectrum-practically-prophetic-webinars/>

Download Poster: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PP-Autism-Youth-Ministry-May-12-21.pdf>

FAITH FORMATION**Zoom Gathering for Young Adults (18-35 Yrs)**

A safe space for open-minded, faith-based and engaging conversation every Wednesday at 6:30pm

Contact Rev. Laura Fohse for the ZOOM link: Text 306-291-5838, E-mail laura@mcclureunitedchurch.org
<https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/zoom-gathering-for-young-adults-18-35-yrs/2021-01-13/>

2. Wider Church Information:

Our world seems smaller and more confined since COVID began. May these stories help widen it, and help us see where our prayers and actions from home can support those we may never meet in person, but with whom we are part of the Body of Christ. Most of the ministry and resources you see here is supported by our Mission and Service givings.

National church: new opportunities to serve

From conflict resolution facilitators to researchers about Black experiences in the United Church: please [see details here](#), and consider both your own call and others' gifts.

Camping Sunday, April 25 - new

A reminder that the final Sunday in April is Camping Sunday - a great opportunity to highlight the ministry camps and outdoor ministries have continued to carry out over a difficult year. Please check with your local camp for any updates they'd like you to share, and [have a look at these resources from the national church](#) to help your worship preparation.

Moderator town halls on the church's future directions, May 1 and 4 – new

Our Regional Council is invited to sign up to participate on either date. Members of the Indigenous Church can also choose to attend special focus groups in May and June, details to come. [Click here for details and to register](#).

Asian Canadian Women: Support, Strength, and Solidarity gatherings, May 2 and 5 - new

If you are of Asian descent in The United Church of Canada and self-identify as woman, genderqueer, and/or nonbinary, you are invited to gather together in Asian Heritage Month this May. We will have time to get to know one another, to talk about our places in the church, and explore the intersections of our racial identities and gender identities. Asian women are particularly visible and vulnerable during this pandemic time. Please be welcome to a safe meeting space to connect, lament, and honour one another. **Please see the Event listing in this newsletter.**

National Worship Service of Apology and Lament for the Church's Role in Coerced Adoptions May 9 – new

The United Church of Canada will acknowledge its role in forced adoptions through maternity homes operated by the church. During the service The Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Moderator, will offer a formal apology to mothers and all affected by historical adoption practices. Please [see this link for more information](#).

Video: Centre for Christian Studies event on anti-Asian racism – new

On March 12 the Centre for Christian Studies hosted an online discussion of the ways in which the Covid-19 pandemic exposes long-standing racial divisions and systemic injustices, and perhaps to imagine opportunities for change. Our special guest was Kim Uyede-Kai, minister for Communities of Faith Support and Right Relations at the Shining Waters Regional Council of the United Church of Canada. [Have a look at the video here](#).

Opportunity for young adults: Ecumenical Stewards Programme, 2022 World Council of Churches Eleventh Assembly, Germany - new

The United Church of Canada is encouraging young people to apply to serve as an Ecumenical Steward with the [Stewards Programme for the 2022 Eleventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Karlsruhe, Germany](#). [Click here for more information](#).

Emmanuel College

At Emmanuel College, the learning environment mirrors the religious and spiritual diversity of the world its graduates will serve. Future leaders of the United Church of Canada along with Muslims, Buddhists, and folks of many other faith traditions unite in a common purpose - to meet the world's needs. Our graduates educate, administrate, make music, lead congregations, and provide spiritual care in secular and religious institutions across North America. Emmanuel is reimagining theological education. Come, reimagine with us! Applications are due April 30 for September admission. For more info: bit.ly/exploremmanuel or email emmanuel.admissions@utoronto.ca.

3. Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Community of Faith Calendar

Reminder: our [Community of Faith events calendar](#) is open 24/7 for online events! As long as the public is invited, you can post it. From workshops to worship, go for it. [Here's the handy form](#).

New at United in Learning: [Click here for details](#) on many new April and May opportunities

Updated: **KAIROS Prairies North online potluck and meet up**, Thursday, April 22 at 6:00pm SK/AB/NWT

This informal gathering is planned for **April 22**, 6:00 pm (MDT) to include an ecumenical justice check-in. To learn more about the potluck and to register and receive the meeting link, [click here](#). Please plan to join the potluck!

Engage Difference: Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry – new

April 22 & 29 from 6:30 to 8:30pm. [Register here](#). Sponsored by Anglican and Roman Catholic ecumenical partners in SK.

Moderator town halls on planning for the future – new May 1 and 4. [Click here to register](#).

Seeking to Reduce Harm, national series on the idea of drug decriminalization – new

May 12, May 19, & May 26, 2021, 5:00 pm Central Standard. [Click here for details and registration](#).

Our Regional Council Executive is a co-sponsor of this series, which talks about this complex issue without taking a position on it. Themes: May 12th – Harm Reduction and UCC Engagement; May 19th – Decriminalization of Illicit Substances for Personal Use; May 26th – The Theology of Harm Reduction

Updated: **Introduction to Indigenous Lands and Issues in Canada** April 14- June 19

Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre invites you to join a series of online conversations in response to the Indigenous education mandates from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Final Report. **Next session:** May 15 Indigenous People and Resource Development. [Registration info here](#). Please check the times carefully!

2021 Virtual Festival of Homiletics Registration Open

The COVID pandemic has made life harder for just about everyone. To uphold the health and safety of our communities, the Festival of Homiletics will be hosted virtually again in 2021. [Registration is now open](#) for the virtual Festival of Homiletics, **May 17–21, 2021**. We're excited about the [superb thinkers and teachers](#) who will present on this year's theme, "Preaching for the Future Church".

St. Andrew's College ReJUNEvation 2021

St. Andrew's College ReJUNEvation is going virtual for 2021. It will be held **June 16 – 18, 2021**. Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman will present 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. ReJUNEvation will also feature online workshops and conversation among participants. We welcome new participants and long-time friends. For more information, please visit <https://stu.usask.ca/standrews/students/rejunevation.php>.

Queen's House

Our programming formats have significantly changed – while they will be offering occasional programs in-person at the retreat centre, following all safety protocols, much of our programming will be offered through Zoom. To see Queen's House programming, please see their [Our Programs page](#).

4. Reminders:

CanadaHelps.Org For Online Donations To UCC Communities Of Faith

CanadaHelps.org information is available below: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CanadaHelps-What-Every-United-Church-Needs-to-Know-Mar-2020.pdf>

Seeking new participants in the KAIROS Prairies North Region

KAIROS is one of the United Church's main Canadian ecumenical partners. It has a broadly-based grassroots network that engages communities and faith communities in its work for social and ecological justice. It's looking to refresh leadership and involvement in that network's leadership for the Prairies North Region, which covers SK, NWT, and AB. [Have a look at the detailed description here](#). Here in Living Skies, recent KAIROS-supported work has included climate justice local engagement through KAIROS Regina and For the Love of Creation, and an event series on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Church leaders and the SK vaccination program

As leaders in our churches, and in our communities, we have a role in making sure that the people we minister to and with have helpful, concise and trustworthy information regarding the vaccine and its roll out. The Faith Leaders Working Group requested that the Business Response Team provide some basic, clear information that we can share with our congregations. Please [see and share this letter from the executive](#), which also links to important resources.