

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



June 2, 2021

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*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:

Living Skies Regional Council Gathering Registration Closed - new

Registration for the 3rd Annual Gathering (virtual) **has closed**. If you missed registration and would still like to attend, please contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca.

The meeting will be **Friday, June 4 from 7:00 – 9:30pm; Saturday, June 5 from 9:30 – 11:30am and 1:30 – 4pm**. The ZOOM room will open about a half-hour before the session start time to allow you time to test your internet connection and get comfortable.

Registered Participants Email - new

The most up-to-date information regarding the Regional Gathering, including the Zoom link to the meeting room, was Emailed to Registrants yesterday afternoon (just after 4:00pm). If you did not receive this Email (please check your Junk Mail folder), please contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca.

June 6 Sunday service for the Regional Council: God's Family of Faith – A Recipe for Unity – new

Westminster United Church in Humboldt in partnership with S. Andrew's Anglican Church in Humboldt and Quill Plains United Church Pastoral Charge in Watson and Quill Lake have created this worship service. In a spirit of collaboration, we share our hope and joy as we discover what it means to worship and work together in new ways. Thanks to volunteers: Matteo Carboni, Phyllis Arnst, Andrew Cebryk, Maureen Whalley, Carol Gossner, Deborah Bryson, Elan Buan, Ruth Mostowy, Roxanne Bagnall, Elsa Hancock, Chris Hancock, Yoonjin Park Bott, Tyler Skogen, Doug Berger, Allison Sarauer, April Pauli, Cindy Goodman, Brenda Curtis. Special THANKS! to Sarah Miller for video editing.

You tube link: <https://youtu.be/ct529VVKx2A>

[June 6th Regional Council Service](#) – Word (for download) ; [June 6th Regional Council Service](#) – pdf

Docket and other resources for the Regional Council Gathering - new

All parts of the dockets, as well as a draft agenda have been posted. Also posted are the draft minutes from last year's Gathering, financial audit information, the Pastoral Relations Commission report, *Delegate Responsibilities* brochure and helpful guidelines to Zoom Meetings, among other documents. Please check out the [Regional Gathering page](#) on the Living Skies Regional Council website.

Unmarked burials and a call to a time of mourning - new

With the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit of the United Church, we join in saying, "As news came on May 28, 2021, that the remains of 215 children were found in a mass unmarked grave on the grounds of the former Kamloops Residential School, we entered into a time of mourning for these relatives, their families, and their communities."

Many people are asking what they can do. First, we come together as people of the United Church and take the first step of mourning and remembering. The United Church web site includes this [page of reflection](#), which includes links to prayers from Murray Pruden, Executive Minister for the Indigenous Ministries and Justice Unit, and Richard Bott, Moderator. For more information, reflection and resources, [please see this summary on our website](#).

Updated COVID Guidelines - new

The provincial government developed a Roadmap outlining a plan for releasing restrictions which has an impact on communities of faith; the maximum numbers permissible for worship increased to 150 or 30% capacity on May 30. ***It is important to highlight that all current health orders and guidelines remain unchanged at the present time.*** In the news yesterday, the projected lifting of the mask mandate and physical distancing requirements is expected on July 11. Tricia Gerhard, our representative to the Faith Leaders, has written a letter outlining the impact of this decision on communities of faith, [see this link](#). Stay tuned for further guidance to help your community of faith make decisions for your context. As a reminder, [here is the letter](#) from the Regional Council Executive highlighting the church's role in supporting accurate vaccination information. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Tricia Gerhard at lsrcexecutive@gmail.com or Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

Re-open Step 3 Q&A - new

Understanding the implications for the removal of COVID restrictions can be time-consuming and confusing. Join Tricia Gerhard and Tracy Murton for a question and answer session about some of the things to take into consideration as you make decisions for your community of faith. This opportunity will be on **Thursday, June 10 at 7pm** on Zoom and is open to lay leaders and ministry personnel. Connection information will be in the Regional Council calendar. Any questions, contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

Statistical urgency - new

This is an urgent reminder to those communities of faith who have yet to complete the annual statistics forms. They need to be done within the next few weeks in order that assessments for 2022 might be calculated. Remember – ***the assessment levied by the General Council is directly connected to the information contained within the statistics.*** If income has changed due to COVID, the only way your assessment would change is if the stats reflect that change. Further information regarding statistics and assessments may be [found at this link](#).

VAM status - new

The Pastoral Relations Commission has only received 15 applications from retired ministry personnel to be a Voluntary Associate Minister. **Retirees** – if you are interested in performing any of the functions of ministry, you need to complete this process. **Communities of faith** – if you are blessed with the presence of a retiree (or two) who offers leadership in any way, please check with them to ensure they have begun the process. The [policy may be found at this link](#), and the [form may be found at this link](#). Let's work together to support these folks and the important ministry they offer among us. Any questions, contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

VAM Q&A - new

If you are a member of a Community of Faith with a retired minister who is offering leadership in any way, or if you are a retired minister who is interested in occasionally offering leadership either in your home community or elsewhere in the Regional Council, you are invited to join the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support for a Question and Answer session regarding the Voluntary Associate Minister process. As background, the [policy may be found at this link](#), and the [form may be found at this link](#). We will gather on **Thursday, June 17 at 10:00am by Zoom** – connection information will be in the Regional Council calendar. Let's work together to support these folks and the important ministry they offer among us. Any questions, contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

Summer is coming - new

As the weather warms, a reminder to discuss with your ministry personnel their plans for vacation leave and to offer generosity so that they might have additional time for renewal and replenishment during this extra-ordinary year. Ministry personnel have transformed everything about their practice of ministry in the last 14 months, from pastoral care to providing worship to understanding COVID guidelines. As we all discern ways of recovering together, please ensure generous support for self-care and rest for your ministers – perhaps an extra week off? Contact Bev Diebert at 306-704-0181 for access to the pulpit supply list.

Annual meeting exemption extended

The General Council Executive has extended the suspension of the requirement to hold an annual meeting to December 31, 2021. If your community of faith will not be able to hold an annual meeting in the first half of 2021, the governing body can make a decision on the budget. If your community of faith is able to meet online or gather safely in person, it is still optimal to do so, but not required. Further information regarding this decision may be found [here](#).

Nominations update: Opportunities still open

Please have a look at this diverse array of openings in the Regional Council. Your Nominations committee is working with the many people who have generously offered their time and skills, or have approached others. The committee has put together this update of continued needs. Remember, lay people are just as welcome as ministry personnel. We all have diverse skills and experience to bring. Please consider these carefully! [Click here for the summary](#) and please share.

CAMPING & OUTDOOR MINISTRIES – SUMMER 2021

As you're making family summer plans, some of our UCC Camps will be able to offer daycamp programs & volunteer opportunities. You can check out the registration info & details at:

- 1) Lumsden Beach Camp: <https://www.lumsdenbeachcamp.com/>
- 2) Camp Shagabec: <https://shagabec.com/>

Updates for all of our regional UCC Outdoor Ministries are available at:
<https://livingskiesrc.ca/programs/yayac/camps/>

Additionally, online Camps/Summer programs specifically for **2SLGBTQ+ youth**:

- 1) Camp fyrefly (OUT Saskatoon & UR Pride Centre): <https://www.fyreflysask.ca/>
- 2) Rainbow Camp (Welcome Friend Association): <https://www.welcomefriend.ca/camp/>
- 3) CampOUT! (University of British Columbia): <https://campout.ubc.ca/>

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](#).

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.

Indigenous History Month and Day of Prayer June 20

This year the Indigenous Day of Prayer falls on Sunday June 20. You're invited and encouraged to include the day in worship, recognizing the many words of truth and witness Indigenous leaders in and beyond the United Church have shared with us over the years. [See resources here.](#)

St. Andrew's College is seeking your wisdom

If you are willing, there are several short surveys regarding ministry training (of all kinds!), and what the College needs to be offering in the years to come.

If you have not already received the invitation to participate in those surveys, and would like to, please contact the College's recruitment officer, Shawn Sanford Beck: shawn.sanfordbeck@usask.ca

Call to end the violence in Palestine and Israel through meaningful negotiations

The United Church has followed the lead from its partners in Palestine and Israel and [released a letter](#) calling for the cycle of violence to stop. "Palestinian and Israeli partners are clear that negotiating a just peace is the only way out of the cycle of bombs and guns," says the Right Rev. Richard Bott. "I invite United Church people to [pray for the peace of Jerusalem](#) and to put faith into action by [writing to urge Minister Garneau to uphold international law.](#)" <https://united-church.ca/news/call-stop-violence>

In some cases, media coverage is missing the fact that a spark for the current violence was evictions of Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah, a neighbourhood in East Jerusalem targeted by militant Jewish settlers. [Read more background and see a related action here.](#)

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.](#)

United in Learning - [Click here](#) to see the Newsletter from United in Learning, with information about many new June and summer learning opportunities.

Intercultural Chai and Coffee series: Continuing awkward conversations

3 June 2021, 10:00-11:30AM Mountain Daylight. Our theme: Let's Get Uncomfortable. All welcome! Register and get link info here: <https://form.jotform.com/211374793399267>

Calls to the Church: Listening to the Wisdom of the Elders

June 1, 2, 3, 4, 7:30-8:30PM Mountain Daylight, 8:30-9:30PM Central.

As we begin Indigenous History Month in June, John and Tony Snow offer a four-evening reflection on engaging with the Calls to the Church. [Register at LeaderShift](#), Pacific Mountain Regional Council.

ReJUNEvation event, St Andrew's College, June 16-18.

Open to all! Theme: "Now it Springs Forth: Do you Not Perceive it? Looking for Ecumenical Movement with Fresh Eyes". [Check this link for full details.](#)

UPDATED Introduction to Indigenous Lands and Issues in Canada, June 19

9:00-11:00AM Mountain Daylight; 10:00AM to noon, Central Daylight.

Hosted by the Sandy Sauteaux Centre. SESSION 5, final session: Traditional Lands and Environmental Protection, Gitxsan Elder Ray Jones. An examination of unceded Indigenous territories and traditional Indigenous duties to the lands and peoples. The long history of Indigenous resistance to colonial exploitation and the current vitality of Indigenous identity will be the focus. [Registration info here.](#) Please check the times carefully!

An Earthy Experience: Awakening to New Perspectives of Wisdom July 11-17, 2021 (9:30-12:00 PD)

At Naramata Centre, BC; Leadership by Marg Janick-Grayston and Janicka Grayston
 Beautiful mountains, sunny beaches, and luscious trees - explore the beautiful Naramata this summer at the Naramata Centre. Like you, we are looking forward to the end of winter and isolation. Fortunately, The Naramata Centre has officially opened registration for their Summer Week-Long Retreats. Marg and her daughter Janicka will be leading this program in Week 2 of the Centre's summer program focusing on "Celebrating Diversity". This retreat will offer nature-based wellness practices through invitations to connect with the earth and create with the very gifts it offers us. Full Description at <https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats> or <https://www.naramatacentresociety.org/summer-2021#/event/3276/celebrate-diversity> Please register through the Naramata Centre link above.

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:**ATTENTION: Ministry Personnel**

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 Office of Vocation Minister, Karen Medland 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.

If you have any questions about or problems with ChurchHub, please contact Karen at kmedland@united-church.ca. She's always happy to set up a zoom meeting to walk you through your annual declaration.

Research Study: Bi-Vocational and Part-Time Ministry

With the support of the United Church Foundation, the Rev. Dr. Ross Bartlett, Director of United Church Formation, and Adjunct Professor at Atlantic School of Theology, is conducting a study of the experiences and conditions of the growing number of bi-vocational and part-time ministers within The United Church of Canada. Some estimates suggest that over 40% of clergy will be serving in part-time appointments/calls by 2030. Yet we know very little about this rapidly growing group. Dr. Bartlett is hoping to provide the church with a baseline of data from which to consider a wide range of its governance and employment policies. More information can be found [here](#).

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 25](#)

Please review this document for important updates for M&P Committees, a call for pastoral charge supervisors, and a new self-care video resource.

Round the Table intercultural blog series: Grosvenor Park UC in Saskatoon

Our commitment to becoming an intercultural and anti-racist church takes many forms, and in this blog series, [found here](#), you can find many personal stories of overlapping identities and journeys. The latest reflection, on being LGBTQIA and Asian, comes to us from Grosvenor Park United Church in Saskatoon. [Click here to read it](#); all of these stories are public and can be shared in sermons and beyond.