

# Regional Rambler

## Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



August 25, 2021

*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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca)).*

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

#### **REMINDER: be careful with photo copyright! Here are some tips**

As we begin a new church year, let us be respectful of copyright laws. Sometimes other peoples work or photos are vital to our websites, social media, worship PowerPoints and much more. They add a lot to our online ministry and in-person PowerPoints. And they're sometimes a little too easy to take and share. So please beware, and follow good copyright practices. [Click here for some further information](#), resources, and ideas for copyright-free or fair use photos.

#### **COVID guidelines - new**

The provincial government has not provided any further direction regarding the prevention of COVID-19 in our communities of faith; each local context must discern what is best. As cases continue to rise in Saskatchewan, we would strongly recommend the use of masks and enhanced cleaning protocol for any in-person gatherings. If you have questions or concerns, contact Tricia Gerhard at [lsrcexecutive@gmail.com](mailto:lsrcexecutive@gmail.com) or Tracy Murton at [tmurton@united-church.ca](mailto:tmurton@united-church.ca).

#### **Advice re United Church Communities of Faith and vaccination policies**

Some communities of faith and church leadership have been asking whether communities of faith may set rules around COVID vaccinations for members and others who participate in church activities on site. Cynthia Gunn, Legal Counsel for The United Church of Canada, has prepared a Q&A resource to help communities of faith discern how they will deal with this issue. [Click here to have a look](#).

#### **YAYAC is back! - new**

The Youth And Young Adult Community has returned and is ready to plan some fun activities for youth! We are sending out an email newsletter that anyone can subscribe to here: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/programs/yayac/>. If you know any youth who might be interested, let them know! We also have an Instagram now @Lsyayac! We will be posting new information there and on our Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2314532113/?ref=bookmarks>.

#### **Celebrations galore - new**

As communities of faith begin to worship together in person, many postponed covenanting services and retirement celebrations are being planned. We ask you to hold in prayer (or take a lovely fall road trip) the following events:

- **September 12** – covenanting with Rosetown United Church and Allan Gairns, beginning at 7pm
- **September 26** – retirement celebration and release from covenant with Strasbourg United Church and Donna Rumpel, beginning at 2pm
- **September 26** – covenanting with Melfort United Church and Jonathan Worrall, beginning at 3pm

#### **Celebration of Ministry service - new**

Living Skies Regional Council is thrilled to celebrate two significant milestones on the leadership journey for two members of our Regional Council. On **Sunday, September 26**, we will participate in the ordination of Jonathan Worrall, and the admission of Emily Carr at Melfort United Church at 3pm. Stay tuned for details regarding options for how you might participate.

**Ministry Personnel Gatherings - new**

Beginning September 7, join your ministry colleagues over Zoom for conversation, support and information sharing. Facilitated conversation begins at 1pm; connection information is found in the [calendar](#).

**Strength and blessings to Indigenous Walkers and supporters this summer - new**

Since May, Indigenous communities have been carrying the weight of confirmation of hundreds and likely thousands of unmarked burials of children forced to attend residential schools. Powwows, feasts, and ceremonies have helped carry this pain. Walking the land and honouring the lands and waters are an expression of healing and sacred commitment.

Two examples that invite your prayers and support are the Saskatchewan River Walk (<https://www.facebook.com/SKriverwaterwalk>) and the Walk of Sorrow across Ontario, organized by Patricia Ballantyne and visiting communities and residential school sites:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/337465634463813>

Please have a look and see what support you can offer. The River Walk will also resume in 2022 at the Forks of the Saskatchewan, and carry on along the North Saskatchewan to Lake Winnipeg.

**Supporting equitable access to vaccines for all our neighbours**

As many Canadians begin to see the way out of the COVID-19 pandemic through vaccines, The United Church of Canada is adding a [vigorous advocacy campaign](#) to its [COVID-19 Global Response](#) and continuing to ask people to financially support global partners dealing with the ongoing pandemic. ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches, notes that Global South nations will reach herd immunity levels only in 2024, if ever. [Click here for the summary page](#).

The new chapter of the COVID-19 Global Response appeal asks people to:

- [advocate](#) with the Canadian government for more vaccine sharing
- [donate](#) to the ongoing appeal
- show solidarity by [buying a vaccine](#) for someone in the Global South (you can do this as a gift, and even choose when the gift is delivered.)

**What do Chaplains do? - new**

Most of us probably have a reasonably good idea of the role and work that a hospital chaplain does. Here, in Emily Carr's words, as United Church Chaplain for the Northern Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy, are the many and multifaceted ways spiritual care is offered.

**Chaplaincy Exists to Provide Spiritual Care** - For many people, being in the hospital presents an array of spiritual challenges: fear, loneliness, confusion, changing self-image, loss of hope. Spiritual care provides a non-anxious presence that allows people to feel and express their spiritual state, and to foster growth and strength. Spiritual Care may use elements of a person's faith tradition, or other spiritual practices, to help them recover and build spiritual strengths such as courage, patience, hope, and acceptance.

**Chaplaincy Exists to Facilitate Communication and Advocacy** - The world of the hospital is not easy to understand and even more complicated when one is sick. In many cases, especially when decisions are required to be made by a patient or family, spiritual care providers are able to act as a bridge in communication between patient and family and hospital staff. We help families understand what it means to end life support, and what will happen in this process. We are able to communicate with staff when a family is ready. We help and support patients who are choosing Medical Assistance in Dying, and are able to help them communicate their decision to their children and families. When needed, we are able to help patients connect with resources such as social workers within the hospital or other programs and services provided in the community upon discharge.

**Chaplaincy Exists to Carry Out Rites of Passage** - Hospitals or long-term-care facilities are not where most of us would choose to mark or celebrate rites of passage, but the reality is that it is a place where families find themselves at some of life's most important intersections. The Northern Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy seeks to help families honour the meaning, beauty, and dignity in their lives by providing rites of passage upon request, including baptisms, prayers for the end of life, marriage ceremonies, and celebrating important birthdays and milestones.

**Nominations update: Several Opportunities still open**

The Nominations Committee is still receiving names for Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners for General Council 44 as well as a diverse array of openings in the Regional Council structure. See the [Nominations page](#) on the Living Skies website (under Governance and Administration) for more information about these opportunities and a link to our online nominations form. Remember, lay people are just as welcome as ministry personnel. We all have diverse skills and experience to bring!

**Liaisons needed - new**

As communities of faith continue to discern ministry and vision, we want to be able to support the work with our Regional Council Liaisons. The description is on the Nominations page – contact Tracy Murton at [tmurton@united-church.ca](mailto:tmurton@united-church.ca) if you want further info.

**Volunteer Opportunity - new**

We have received a request from one of the chaplains at the Regional Psychiatric Centre (Saskatoon) for assistance in finding volunteers. In particular, they are looking for female volunteers to work with female patients in minimum to maximum security. Support and training would be offered. If interested, contact [Michael.Diegel@csc-scc.gc.ca](mailto:Michael.Diegel@csc-scc.gc.ca). We would also like to remind folks of the relationship that the United Church has with Micah Mission, who will help to support and equip the volunteers who wish to work with folks who are incarcerated and their families, including at the RPC. Micah Mission is also committed to walking with Indigenous families and respecting Indigenous culture and teaching. For more information on Micah Mission, email [info@themicahmission.org](mailto:info@themicahmission.org).

**2. Wider Church Information:**

*May these stories 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.*

**Opportunities to Serve St. Andrew's College**

You are invited to share your gifts and experience to the fulfillment of God's mission through a committee of St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon. The college has is currently seeking volunteers to serve in a variety of committees. Two of the most urgent opportunities are as Chair of the Academic Committee and member of the Audit Committee. The College also has vacancies on the Academic, Audit, Nominations and Board Education, and Personnel Policy Committees.

If you are interested in any of these committees or the Board of Regents, please contact Melanie Schwanbeck at the College at [melanie.schwanbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:melanie.schwanbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca).

**Protesting the killing of Palestinian children - new**

As part of its continuing concern about the routine human rights violations aimed at Palestinian children living under Israeli military occupation, the national church has released this action call to Minister Marc Garneau following the killing of two Palestinian minors. [Please click here](#) for background and letter-writing resources.

**Emancipation Day service available on YouTube - new**

August 1, Emancipation Day, honours the ending of the enslavement of Black people in Canada and across the British Empire - though much liberation work remained and remains. A panel discussion entitled: "Challenging Colonial Legacies Through the Commemoration of Emancipation" examining the legacy of black slavery and the ongoing ways systemic anti-black racism exists in Canada [is available here](#). For additional resources and further reflection on anti-black racism in Canada we recommend Reflection on Emancipation and Anti-Black Racism. [You can order your copy 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** - a quick look at fall events - [click here!](#)

### **Growing in Wisdom: Seeking Deeper Generativity**

This is a two year ecumenical program designed for those seeking to engage in their maturing years with wisdom and grace, supported by a number of United Church learning centres. First sessions begin in September. [Please click here for details.](#)

### **Listening to the Land: A conversation on the stewardship of creation - new**

During the Season of Creation, you are invited to participate in a webinar panel presentation on **Thursday, September 16 at 3pm** entitled "Listening to the Land: A conversation on the stewardship of creation." Our three panellists will reflect on what listening to the land means from their perspective, tradition, and experience; what they hear the land saying and how we might respond.

- **Bishop Chris Harper** is from Onion Lake Cree Nation and served in ministry in the Anglican dioceses of Saskatchewan, Algoma, and Toronto before being elected bishop of Saskatoon in 2018
- **Elder May Desnomie**, Regina Catholic School Board, was born and raised on Wapaskokimaw in northern Saskatchewan, also known as Sandy Bay First Nation
- **Reverend Mitchell Anderson**, minister at St. Paul's United Church in Saskatoon, is dēnesuḡiné and a member of the English River Dene Nation

**Registration required.** Free registration at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUlcuuopjosGtQNGqLMtMf77EeV7MZFc6F>

For further information, contact Cheryl Toth, [stewardship@sasktel.net](mailto:stewardship@sasktel.net)

The Season of Creation is observed in many Christian churches from September 1 to October 4 each year.

Since 1989, September 1 has been a Day of Prayer for Creation. More information on the Season of Creation and prayer resources are available at <https://seasonofcreation.org/>.

### **Upcoming important justice days this fall - new**

Enjoy the rest of the summer; this is just a small reminder of important spaces for education and prayer coming up in the fall. We'll include links to resources closer to the time. We hope these will give you extra support for putting the Gospel and prophetic calls to justice and peace into worship and programs.

**Thursday September 30: [Orange Shirt Day](#)**/ National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (a new federal holiday). Not limited to the children in your life! This day is for everyone. Please consider looking into plans at your local school and within the community; and planning on how your community of faith or ministry can use its resources (including your building in some cases) to hold space for an all-ages focus on truth-telling and learning about residential schools.

**Monday October 4:** some communities will hold vigils in support of missing and murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit people. This is an important part of our church's commitment to the TRC Calls to Action and Apology. Please check local options; we will post online events open to all.

**Sunday October 17:** International Day for the Elimination of Poverty. Look for resources from the national church and our related Regional networks, with a special focus on learning about [Guaranteed Livable Income](#). Also keep in mind a six part series on bridging from charity to ending poverty, starting October 13 at [United in Learning](#).

**RAPM:** Also, on October 17 and other dates that week, the [Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry](#) will celebrate fifty years of anti-poverty community advocacy and education with special events. Please watch for more details!

### **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:**

### **Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 26](#)**

Please review this document for volunteer opportunities and updates. **Please be aware** that effective immediately, Tracy Murton, has changed her office phone number to 1-800-268-3781 ext 6322.