

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



September 8, 2021

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

1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

COVID guidelines - updated

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 or Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca. We will also be hosting a Zoom gathering for anyone wishing to ask questions or consult with other communities of faith on **Wednesday, September 14, at 7:00pm**. Connection information will be in the calendar.

Updating the Regional Council Directory - new

The Regional Council Directory is created from information gathered during registration at Annual Gatherings of the Regional Council, including permission to include. If you registered for the Regional Council annual meeting in 2020 or 2021, and answered “yes” to inclusion, your contact information has been included in the directory. If you have **not** registered for an annual meeting in the last 2 years and wish your contact information to remain included in the directory, please send Bev Diebert an email (bdiebert@united-church.ca) with your current contact information (name, address, phone number(s) and / or email) and permission to include it in the directory. Any questions, contact Bev.

Networks and Clusters list for Living Skies: help us update! - new

[Please click here for a PDF list of all known Networks and Clusters](#). (Updated Fall 2021). We'll update this a couple of times a year, and these contacts are also included in our Regional Council directory. Don't see your group listed? Give the office a call! Holding a public event or sharing a resource? Please let staff know so we can share it in the newsletter or on the website. You can find the [Networks and Clusters home page here](#).

YAYAC is back!

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>.

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](#).

Ministry Personnel Gatherings

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

September 30th National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - new

The Government of Canada recently passed legislation making September 30th a federal statutory holiday called the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The Bill responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action number 80 which calls on the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish the holiday to commemorate the history and legacy of residential schools and honour the survivors, their families, and communities.

The new holiday only applies to federally regulated employers. The United Church of Canada and its communities of faith are not federally regulated employers. They are governed by provincial employment statutes. *The General and regional councils will be closed on September 30 this year while conversations with the National Indigenous Council and the National Indigenous Elders Council determine future practice. Communities of faith may offer September 30th as a designated paid holiday for their ministry personnel and employees at the discretion of their governing body and the guidance of their regional council.*

This day provides an opportunity for Canadians to recognize and commemorate the legacy of residential schools. As this day also coincides with Orange Shirt day, [Indigenous Ministries and Justice](#) will be curating an online event and offering some resources for Orange Shirt Day.

This may present itself as a day of quiet reflection or participation in a community event.

Liaisons needed

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 if you want further info.

Celebration of Ministry service

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.

Celebrations galore - updated

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, at 7pm
- **September 19** – service of release for Laura Sundburg, at 10am
- **September 26** – retirement celebration and release from covenant with Strasbourg United Church and Donna Rumpel, at 2pm
- **September 26** – covenanting with Melfort United Church and Jonathan Worrall, at 3pm
- **September 29** – Covenanting with Saskatoon: St. Paul's United Church and Mitchell Anderson, at 7pm.

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.)

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!

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.

All Saints Day service remembering those who died of COVID: names needed – new

Please assist the national church with this important work. [Please use this link](#) to submit the names of people to be remembered during the service. Names can be submitted up to October 1st, (please note that every effort will be made to include names shared past this date).

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.

Protesting the killing of Palestinian children

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

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](#).

Regional Online Bible Study – new **Wednesdays from 1-2pm beginning Sept 15.**

This study is open to everyone interested in chatting with others from across the region (and even beyond) about the upcoming lectionary passages each week. No previous Bible knowledge necessary. All are truly welcome.

You must register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcpcOmsqzorGtbNopaMhsmCZ8bjZU0LxA1M>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting and a link that is good for every week. If you have questions, please contact Laura Fohse: Email is laura@mccclureunitedchurch.org and phone number is 306-291-5838.

Listening to the Land: A conversation on the stewardship of creation

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. **Registration (free) required.**

- **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

To register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUlcuuopjosGtQNGqLMEtMf77EeV7MZFc6F>

For further information, contact Cheryl Toth, stewardship@sasktel.net

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

More information on the Season of Creation is available at <https://seasonofcreation.org/>.

Practically Prophetic: "Church Websites...Maybe It's Time To Ditch The Fax Line?" - new

When: Tuesday, September 28th, 7pm

Where: Zoom online webinar

Registration: info will be posted on Region website & Facebook by the end of the week.

What else: The idea of making a church website can be intimidating. Our prophetic goal this month is to de-mystify the scary stuff and introduce a basic website template & process to get congregations set up easily. It's always good to have goals!

Remember: *Practically Prophetic* is a webinar series collaboration with Living Skies Faith Formation, St. Andrew's College, and the Centre for Christian Studies. Everyone is welcome to take part!

Hold space for important justice days this fall

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. [Click here for information on a full week of online learning events](#) from the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

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](#).

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!

Save The Date: Living Skies Youth Retreat (Gr. 9-12) – New

When: October 15 -17, 2021

Where: Probably Moose Jaw & Lumsden Beach Camp (we're just sorting out the details!)

What else: Watch for more info & registration info at <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/youth-retreat-grade-9-12/>

Questions: contact Josie at lsyayac.josie@gmail.com or Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca (306-221-5529)

Remember: Lots of opportunities for ministry personnel & youth leaders to join the planning & leadership team!

Korean United Church: Jesus and the Marginalized – new **October 18, 7:30 pm (EDT)**

Online panel discussion of *Jesus and the Marginalized*, the fourth and latest book from *An Intercultural Adventure*, an ongoing series of seminars for Koreans in The United Church of Canada. Theologians, clergy, and a United Church of Canada national church staff person will discuss how this book relates Jesus Christ to the hopes, joys and struggles of Koreans in the United Church. They will assess its attempt to inculturate Christology into the Korean diaspora context in Canada, its meaning for the United Church as an intercultural church, and its contribution to Asian American theology. Non-Koreans are welcome to attend and join the conversation. The panel discussion will be in English. Following it there will be Korean and English-speaking break-out groups. Participants can indicate which they prefer when registering for the event. Register here: united-church.zoom.us/j/97926572021 Buy this book: <https://stu.usask.ca/standrews/bookstore/bookstore.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:

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.

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.

What do Chaplains do? (Part 1)

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.