

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



October 20, 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:

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 28](#) - new

Please review this document for Annual meeting exemption, vaccine expectations and more.

M&P Committee Refresher - new

Whether you are new to the work of the M&P Committee or have been offering this service for years, it is always valuable to remember what the responsibilities of an M&P Committee might be, if there are any new resources out there, and generally how to offer the most effective support for the ministry personnel and staff in your Community of Faith. Hosted on Zoom by Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister, this 90 minute conversation will answer your questions and clarify your responsibilities. Contact Bev Diebert to register at bdiebert@united-church.ca for **either** Saturday, Nov 6, 10:00-11:30am **or** Wednesday, Nov 10, 7:00-8:30pm.

Clergy Appreciation Month: From THE BOARD OF VOCATION of The United Church of Canada: - new

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace and bring glad tidings of good things.

Romans 10:15

The Board of Vocation feels tremendous gratitude for the dedication and commitment of the Ministers who work tirelessly for their communities. We understand and appreciate that it takes many hours of the day to be creative, steadfast and perform the work that is necessary to fulfil that commitment of creating an atmosphere of peace and love in your church community. We see that this can be difficult in the face of the pandemic and unrest in other parts of the world as it affects us all. We want you to know that we as a board are grateful and send you our prayers in support of your well-being.

Here are some suggestions to celebrate **Clergy Appreciation Month** (From Connex Sept 2019):

Why Celebrate?

- Although ministry is a calling from God and most ministers could not imagine doing anything else, it is still challenging and stressful.
- Many ministry personnel find their work isolating even though they are surrounded by people all the time.
- Ministry personnel don't always get to hear what they are doing right, only what they could improve on.
- Through appreciating our current leaders, we encourage others to consider these roles in the future.

What You Might Do

- Pray for your minister and those in church leadership.
- Ask your minister why they went into ministry and what they love about it.
- Write a thank-you card, e-mail, or letter of appreciation.
- Invite the minister or other church leaders out for coffee or a meal.
- Get creative and have fun showing your minister and your church leaders how much you appreciate their hard work!

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](#).

Celebrations

As communities of faith continue to worship together, many postponed covenanting services and retirement celebrations are taking place. We ask you to hold in prayer: **October 24** – release from covenant service for Donna Rumpel at 2 pm at Strasbourg United Church.

Updated: COVID Guidelines

The provincial government has extended the mandatory mask mandate until November 30, 2021. This means that masks continue to be required at all indoor functions, including worship, meetings, rentals, etc. The full details of the mask mandate may be found [here](#).

Important news for M&P Committees and Governing Bodies: Ethical Standards for Ministry Personnel and COVID-19 Vaccination Status

Last week your ministry personnel received an interpretation of the Ethical Standards for Ministry Personnel with regards to Vaccination Status. The full communication from the Office of Vocation may be found here: [COVID-19 Vaccination Expectation | The United Church of Canada \(united-church.ca\)](#)

If you have any questions regarding this opinion from The United Church of Canada, you may find the answer in the accompanying FAQ found on that page.

If you have further questions regarding your responsibility as an M&P Committee or governing body in this context, please contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca. If you have questions regarding the decision or its impact on your ministry personnel, please contact Karen Medland, minister for the Office of Vocation, at kmedland@united-church.ca.

St. Andrew's College offerings - new

St. Andrew's College has recently produced a College Tour video: <https://youtu.be/t3FRRzMqPAQ>

Please feel free to share this within your congregations, and especially with anyone in your circles who might be interested in pursuing theological education. For more information, please contact the College Recruitment Officer: shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca

St. Andrew's also has a library of digital College Sunday worship services, with themes ranging from Vocation to Leadership to Wisdom in Creation. To find out how to access these services, please contact the College Secretary: melanie.schwanbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca

New opportunities to volunteer with the Regional Council

Your Nominations committee is working with a new round of openings on the many groups that do the ministry and mission of the Regional Council. There's a [complete list here](#), along with more info and a PowerPoint slide to use in your community of faith.

Sacraments Elder training

The Committee on Lay Leadership Support has received a request regarding training opportunities for sacraments elders. They are trying to determine the scope of the interest before planning a learning opportunity. If you would be interested in taking the training, or if you know of someone in your community of faith who might be interested, please let Tracy know at tmurton@united-church.ca. For more information on the process, [check the handbook](#).

Community ministries updates:

Updates from community ministries, camps, and chaplaincies in Living Skies [can be found here](#); if you're involved with any of the ministries, please remember to send Regional staff news and invitations! Below see a sampling of the latest news.

Spiritual and religious care: An essential service - new

In honour of Spiritual & Religious Care Awareness Week: October 17-23, 2021, Regina Spiritual Care Providers [offer us this reflection](#). Chaplains Angela Fraser and Lorna King, and Rev Jennifer Holtlander serve in hospitals in the Regina area; Lorna is the chaplain with Living Skies' South Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy, a ministry that serves well beyond the United Church and its members, and is supported by your Mission and Service givings, and by congregational and personal donations. For an additional perspective on hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care during COVID, [please also see this CBC article](#).

Conversations about Poverty and Homelessness in Downtown Regina - new

Recorded live from outside Knox-Metropolitan United Church, an Affirming Ministry on Treaty 4 Territory, the homeland of the Métis/Michif Nation. With presentations by Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry; the Downtown Regina Community Support Team; and Regina Plan to End Homelessness. [See the video here](#)

Supporting Circles of Support and Accountability in SK

Micah Mission and Parkland Restorative Justice are two long-time ecumenical partners of the United Church in SK. They want us to be aware of important work they support in the wider community, through Circles of Support and Accountability to help those who have offended sexually to not re-offend. Together, their mantra is "No More Victims." [Click here for details](#), and for a bulletin insert to share in your community of faith. Restorative Justice Week, the third week in November, is a good time to do this- or, any time at all.

Updated: SAVE THE DATE!:

The Micah Mission's AGM will be held **Thursday, November 4, 2021** at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Please RSVP to info@themicahmission.org. The Zoom link will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting.

Camp Tapawingo's Annual General Meeting will be on **Saturday, November 20, 2021** at 10 a.m. by Zoom. A link to the meeting will be posted on the camp website camptapawingo.net.

St. Thomas Wesley Closing - new

St. Thomas Wesley is having their last service **on December 26, 2021**. We have not been having services since COVID 19 came out but we are hoping to start in Nov where we are hoping, *and I mean Hoping*, that we can have a celebration of STW Anniversary.

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 are supported by our Mission and Service givings.

40 Days of Engagement with Anti-Racism for all ages October 12 to November 26

Continue the journey towards becoming an anti-racist church with this 40-day time of learning, reflection, activities, advocacy, and action. Each day from Tuesday, October 12 to Friday, November 26 (with the exception of Sundays) there will be a new reflection on anti-racism, as well as activities suitable for adults and children. These activities can be done alone, as a family, or in groups. And, every Tuesday will include a live workshop with a resource person. [Full details are right here](#) and include links to the newsletter, the main resources and more.

And: Looking for books that will challenge you and help you learn and grow in this area? - new

The United Church Bookstore has created a diversity collection featuring books from a myriad of authors of all backgrounds and walks of life. Challenge the way you think while learning more about the history of this country and different perspectives on growing up and living in Canada. Sign up today for the 40-Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism newsletter to get a promo code as well as weekly book recommendations.

Young adults talk poverty and guaranteed livable income - new

Here in Living Skies, we have a number of knowledgeable people who are committed to some form of Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) or Universal Basic Income (UBI). They've been out and about, educating in their congregation and beyond. In our Regional newsletter we've been sharing liturgical and video resources, to help us all engage not only our brains but our souls and heart in the question of how we could use GLI to sharply reduce poverty in the midst of plenty. [Here's a new video resource](#): young adults talking about why they're committed to the idea and reality, and how their faith supports that. So often, youth and young adults are targetted for low wage jobs, and poverty is too often the result. Let's take the time to hear these voices. We have full permission to share this in worship and everywhere else.

Faithful Footprints energy efficiency grants available! - new

\$10,000-\$20,000 grants are available to assist your energy efficiency project. Whether you're a camp, community of faith, community ministry, and more, you're eligible! Reduce your fossil fuel use and carbon footprint, and connect with others who are offering small and important steps towards reducing fossil fuel use. "Once we decided to actually go for the project and pursue it with some dedication, things went very smoothly. We went from an idea, to a grant application the next day, to a fully funded project three months later." - Justin Wheler, St. Paul's United, Edmonton. Full information at <https://www.faithfulfootprints.org/> And/ or, contact Jill Hisco at jhisco@faithcommongood.org

CCS Friday—Unanswered Questions about 9/11 - new

The next CCS Friday on **November 5 at noon** (Winnipeg time), will be an **online discussion of Ray McGinnis' recent book, Unanswered Question about 9/11** (with a study guide for churches). Join in as Ray, guest, author, and CCS grad, shares what he learned about the families of those killed in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre on Sept. 11, 2001, and their attempts to get answers from their government. CCS Fridays are Online conversations once a month to help us all to respond faithfully to emerging issues in local contexts. These workshops are open to anyone who might be interested. Each session will be on a Friday from 12:00 to 1:00 CT in the form of a Zoom workshop. There will be a presentation that will be recorded for future viewing, plus opportunities to engage with the ideas in small groups.

These sessions are free, but you must register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0scOyvqzMtHdDn9rFw92whQ4Z2NgonzKg2>

The last CCS Friday of the year will be on December 10 with Natalie Wiggs-Stevenson discussing her book Transgressive Devotion: Theology as Performance Art and theological methodologies.

Then Let Us Sing planning committee invitation

The Then Let Us Sing Development Committee will develop the new digital hymnal for the whole church.

The committee's work will include music selection, development, education, animation, and promotion.

Interested or know someone who is? [Here's the link to more information.](#)

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, the United Church's national online education space: see and share all the latest October and November events [here in their newsletter!](#)

40 Days of Anti-Racism: Conversation Tuesdays, October 19-November 23. These online sessions are a chance to go deeper on the week's readings, working with resource people and each other. [Click here](#) and scroll down for the schedule.

Faith Leaders for Such a Time as This: October 20 and November 3, 10 – Online

These times continue to be disorienting, challenging and require rapid adaptation for all church leaders.

Join Cheryl Bear and Kim Uyede-Kai to dig into this call, for those of us holding responsibility for many kinds of leadership roles in our faith communities. [Register and find details at LeaderShift](#); \$50 total.

Updated: Zoom Young Adult Gathering (18-35 years)

When: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays every month (October 20 / November 3 & 17 / December 1 & 15 for 2021)

More Info: Contact Rev. Laura Fohse at laura@mclclureunitedchurch.org.

Exploring our Sacred Texts: A conversation about stewarding our common life

All are invited to join this online series with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim panelists to discuss the scriptural sources for understanding generosity, hospitality, and compassion. Join us for this three-episode series, **Thursdays, October 21 (Generosity), October 28 (Hospitality), and November 4 (Compassion) at 3 pm.**

- **Rabbi Jeremy Parnes** is the spiritual leader of Beth Jacob Synagogue in Regina. His long involvement in multifaith and community organizations includes Regina Multifaith Forum, Habitat for Humanity,

numerous City of Regina committees on social housing and homelessness, and several inner-city boards, including Youth Connexions and The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

- **Rev. Amanda Currie** has been minister of First Presbyterian Church in Regina since 2017. She previously ministered in Saskatoon for 14 years and has recently completed a two-year term as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- **Imam Dr. Mohamed Masloh** is the leader of the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan in Regina, an RCMP chaplain, and a teaching assistant at the University of Regina. He studied at the prestigious Al-Azhar University in Cairo and the Graduate Theological Foundation in Indiana, where he earned a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies.

In these days of increased social polarization and intolerance, where racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia appear to be increasing daily, dialogue between faith communities is an antidote to ignorance and hatred. Generosity, hospitality, and compassion are social virtues that can heal the wounds of our society.

Register in advance: <https://bit.ly/3iwyPfm> For further information, contact Archdeacon Cheryl Toth at stewardship@sasktel.net. *This webinar is planned in the spirit of the LAURC Covenant by the Ecumenical Stewardship Committee of the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle, the Saskatchewan Synod of the ELCIC, and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina.*

Practically Prophetic: “Pre-Recorded Sunday School?!? Come Learn About The Go Projects New Children’s Faith Formation Program!”

When: Thursday, October 21st, 7pm (Zoom Webinar)

Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/212854840896266>

More Info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/pre-recorded-sunday-school-an-intro-from-the-go-project-practically-prophetic-faith-formation-resources/>

Description: **Alana Martin** from the GO Project will walk us through a great new Pre-Recorded Sunday School program. She'll answer questions about its functionality, and share a few of the creative curriculum lessons with us as well. **Perfect for small communities who have volunteers to be with children on Sunday morning, but not enough time to plan lessons.** Be ready to pause the video to discuss and play in person!

Updated: YAYAC Bible Trivia Night Livestream!

YAYAC (the Youth & Young Adult Committee) will be hosting a virtual Bible Trivia Night on **Friday October 22nd @7:00 on a YouTube livestream!!** We are super excited to meet you all in the chat as we play some Bible trivia on Kahoot! There will also be some cool prizes for those who come and participate! This is a completely free event and anyone and everyone is welcome. Link to the YAYAC YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdTqjlgejWBL8QpPJ4X7afA/featured>

Subscribe to get notified when we go live! Link to the livestream: https://youtu.be/_v14msFXHSI

Practically Prophetic: “Preaching Tips When The Sermon Isn’t Coming”

When: Tuesday, October 26th, 7pm

Where: Zoom online webinar

Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/212764711572052>

More info/Poster: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/preaching-tips-structures-forms-practically-prophetic-webinars/>

Description: **Brian Walton** believes that many sermons are the product of ‘holy inspiration’ and almost write themselves. For those Sundays when that doesn’t happen he offers some tips for shaping the creative process. In particular this month, Brian will **focus on structural forms, explaining some of the structures and practices that can support and enhance our sermon writing.**

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!

Exploring Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan together, October 27 and November 6, 7:30PM

Join KAIROS Prairies North and resource people to learn about Indigenous understandings and oral traditions of Treaty. [Details on the Living Skies website!](#)

Stewardship Best Practices module

Tuesday October 26, November 2, November 9, 7-9pm SK time

Join others in this special cohort of the Stewardship Best Practices module of **Called to be the Church: The Journey** for a 3-week program and dig into the best practices for stewardship specifically for your context. Whether a camp, inner-city ministry, chaplaincy, or some other form of Community Ministry, spend some focused time developing skills to find new supporters and better engage current donors. This module includes individual support sessions following to create and implement a plan to increase your year-end donations. To register or for more information contact [Vicki Nelson](#).

Honouring the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - new

St Andrew's College, October 28, 4:30pm CST/MDT. Come help launch a new book designed to help the United Church live out its commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. We'll hear from a number of the collection's contributors in conversation about their work and the book. For more information and to register for the online event, [click here](#).

Taste of Palestine live cooking webinar part 2, Tuesday November 2 at 10:30 AM CST. - new

A group of United Church people from SK, MB, and ON invite you to enjoy learning hands on about Palestinian traditional food, and the realities of living and eating under military occupation. Join Claire Anastas from Bethlehem, along with Canadian resource people Jan McIntyre and Ineke Medcalf. [Click here for details](#).

Encountering the Intercultural Iceberg: the Clergy Collar! November 2, 12:30-2:30PM CST - new

Join the Western Intercultural Ministry Network as we explore the cultural iceberg –specifically, the clergy collar. What values, histories, stories, power dynamics lie below the surface and the water lines of our lives when we see the clergy collar? Let's talk Intercollartural Ministry together! **Speaker Rev Lee Spice will give us food for thought and conversation, and we'll wrap up with a short AGM for the Network.** [Full details and the link are here](#). **Facebook event to share:** <https://fb.me/e/2aF3BzgtE>

Mental Health First Aid – Support Youth – new

When: October 28-29, 9am-1pm **Cost:** \$175

Description: There's still time to join us for a **Mental Health First Aid course** focused on **Youth & Young Adults**. The course is provided by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and includes a 2-hour pre-work module in addition to the online/zoom sessions. The Full Course overview is available for download on the Region's website: https://livingskiesrc.ca/.../mhfa_youth_virtual_course...

If you have any questions or would like to register, please contact Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca or 306-221-5529. General Council has assisted with registration costs, but if the \$175 registration fee is a factor for your participation, we also have some additional sponsorship funds available.

Engage Love and Justice national United Church conference, November 3-7 - new

An opportunity for United Church people and communities to ENGAGE! in the many and diverse ministries of love and justice in our church. The online gathering will move through 5 daily themes, with worship, keynote speakers, workshops, and interactive booths. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Building Operator Training Sessions, November 5 and 19

The Saskatchewan Environmental Society Building Operator Training Program is designed to introduce trustees, custodians, and building operators to energy conservation principles, new technologies, and facility retrofits that will save energy and money. [Click here for details and sign up](#).

Decolonizing ourselves, November 20 in the afternoon - new

KAIROS Prairie North invites us to a free online conversation with Stan McKay and Bob Haverluck as we explore together how to get ourselves out of colonization. More details to come!

Riding the Waves of Advent: Presiding at Funerals & Ministering to the Bereaved (A Retreat for Lay People Interested in Funeral Ministry) – new *November 20, 27, December 4 & 11 (1:30-5:00 pm)*

Just as Advent is a time of waiting & preparing...waiting and preparing for light to shine in the darkness, so is the experience of moving through grief. It is a very sacred moment in time to be able to journey with a family experiencing grief, and accompany them through a process of preparing a funeral service that meets their needs, and brings a smidgen of light into their lives. The focus of this program is to honor and encourage the gifts lay people have for funeral ministry, and explore and further develop the skills needed to preside at funerals and offer ministry to the bereaved. This retreat will be facilitated by Marg Janick-Grayston over Zoom. Subsidized by the Regional Council, the registration fee is \$25/ person for the whole series. Stay tuned for registration information in the next Rambler or contact Tracy Murton for details.

An Advent Journey of the Heart - A Free Flow Wellness Zoom Based Retreat - new

Mondays, November 22, 29, Dec. 6 & 13 (1:30-4:30 CST)

Advent can be a true journey of the heart. The scripture readings take us on an emotional journey from one week to the next as they invite us to explore our heavy hearts, our capacity for love and compassion, what direction we need to take to flourish, and the things that we might offer grateful praise to the Divine for. Each week we will explore the particular theme that arises through reflective processes and share our experiences with each other along this Advent journey of the heart. For full information refer to:

<https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats>

Coming Soon: Watch the Living Skies website for upcoming Practically Prophetic Webinars

November 23, 2021: "TREASURE CHEST OF PRAYER" - an interfaith & ecumenical panel discussion of traditional prayers & devotional practices.

Lent 2022: "BEYOND THE BEDSIDE: SPIRITUAL CARE FOR EVERYONE" – a day of practical workshops for the practice of pastoral & spiritual care in hospitals, care homes, and other settings. Co-hosted by the North & South Sask Hospital Chaplaincies.

Book Launches: - new

Ralph Milton has come out with a book called, *Well Aged -- Making the Most of Your Platinum Years*. It's published by Douglas & McIntyre, and will go on sale at your favorite bookstore or online on October 30th. To introduce you to the book, he's prepared [a short video on YouTube](#) .

Gordon Postill, a retired United Church of Canada minister living in Boston has written a new memoir "**CALLED! A LONGSHOT'S STORY**". Please visit www.gordonpostill.com to learn more and to buy the book.

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](#).

COVID UPDATE: As infections continue to rise in Saskatchewan, we are requesting that those attending all in-person gatherings at Queen's House wear masks and be fully vaccinated. Please note that many of our programs are also offered on Zoom, so that we are able to welcome as many participants as possible to our upcoming retreats, workshops and gatherings. Thank you.

4. Reminders:

Closed Camps

Sieuwke Stoppel is doing a research project about closed camps and/or pivoted programs and services in the last 70 years (not due to COVID). If you know of a closed camp and have information that might be helpful to Sieuwke, please send an email to sieuwke.k@shaw.ca .