

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada



November 17, 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 29 - new](#)

Please review this document for information for VAMs, AM exemption, vaccine expectations and more.

2022 Assessments - new

2022 Assessment information is now on Church Hub. Communities of Faith are able to access 2022 assessment information including the calculations through your Church Hub account (www.churchhub.ca). Once you sign into your account, go to the Assessment tile, select Reports, then Target Assessments and click on "Download PDF". You can also access the current status of your 2021 assessment. Assessments were discussed during the October 27 Treasurers webinar (starting about the 50min mark). This recording is posted at [United in Learning](#). If you have questions, please email assessments@united-church.ca.

World Day of Prayer Coordinators networking event on Zoom - new

Coordinators AND anyone else that might be interested in World Day of Prayer preparations for next year are invited to register. Event Date: **Saturday, November 20, 2021 Time: 1 p.m. EST** (one hour in length) This Zoom event is for World Day of Prayer coordinators to receive information about World Day of Prayer. You can learn how to access the materials, discuss different ways to have a service, understand key people to contact for information and support. And you will have an opportunity to ask questions. Coordinators are encouraged to send questions in advance to communications@wicc.ca. A confirmation with the zoom link and password will be sent to you upon registration. To register, please go to: <https://wicc.org/get-involved/events/>

Updated: SAVE THE DATES!:

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.

Covenanting with Rosetown United Church and Allan Gairns on **Sunday, November 21** at 3:00pm - **new**

Apply to the Master of Theological Studies at St. Stephen's College! - new

St. Stephen's College, Edmonton is now accepting applications for the 2022-2023 academic year to all of our programs, including Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry. Applicants interested in various dimensions of human services, care, and social transformation are invited to explore [newly crafted MTS programs](#) in "Faith and Culture", "Spiritual Care", and "Contemplation, the Arts, and Social Engagement". For more information, please contact st.stephens@ualberta.ca or 780.439.7311.

Job posting: helping Living Skies ministries with grants and story telling - new

Living Skies and the United Church's EDGE network are collaborating on an eleven-month contract that focuses on supporting the Regional Council's [mission grant-supported ministries](#). Particular focus will be given to: researching available grants and assisting ministries in preparing successful applications; assisting leaders and staff in telling the ministry's story to diverse audiences through different media. Please spread the word and please think about who you know who might be interested, or who might know someone who is. [Click here for the PDF job posting](#).

Minimum salaries for Ministry Personnel - new

A reminder for all communities of faith that the minimum salary guidelines for ministry personnel are available for 2022. You can [find this document here](#). This includes an increase in both the visiting ministry personnel rate (pulpit supply rate), as well as the continuing education allowance. If you have questions, please contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca.

Advent resources! - new

The season of Advent is almost upon us, and [Advent Unwrapped](#) is here to support you with at-home activities, worship resources, blog posts, and lots more! Keep up to date with all the latest news and content by checking out the [Facebook page](#) or subscribing to [the newsletter](#).

Moms Stop the Harm group and Overdose book: continue conversations about addiction - new

You might remember a national United Church spring 2021 series on harm reduction and decriminalization of hard drugs. Living Skies Regional Council Executive voted to co-sponsor the series, feeling that the ongoing epidemic of overdose deaths needs to open us to hard but crucial conversations. Many, many people in our communities and communities of faith have been hit by the tragedy of overdose and addiction; this is very much an issue for the church.

In that series, two resources were recommended: **Moms Stop the Harm**, a network of Canadian families impacted by substance-use-related harms and deaths. See <https://www.momsstoptheharm.com/> and FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/MomsStopTheHarm> We were also asked to commend this group and its work through the newsletter and website, and are happy to do so.

And, the book **Overdose: Heartbreak and Hope in Canada's Opioid Crisis** by Benjamin Perrin. Perrin used to be an advocate of Canada's current drug laws, but had a change of heart and mind, informed in large part by his Christian faith and the need for a spiritual and legal response to the enormous pain caused by the opioid crisis, and by addictions generally. If your community of faith might be interested in learning about these two resources, you can share this same summary [directly from our website](#).

Call to action: Grave concern with Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) Program

[Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry](#) is asking Living Skies Regional Council to write to our MLAs and the minister of social services. The concern: much evidence of growing poverty and sharply rising homelessness as we move into winter, due to deeply troubling changes in key social assistance programs in Saskatchewan. [This media story offers more personal stories and details](#).

Your voice is needed, wherever you live. Poverty is a reality for so many in Saskatchewan, across all kinds of communities and many identities. We can do something about it. Please [have a look at the action](#) (website and PDF versions available) and share it widely.

Conversations about Poverty and Homelessness in Downtown Regina

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](#)

Benefits changes for active members

Ministry personnel and lay staff who are active members of the United Church of Canada benefits plan have recently received notification by email and hard copy of the changes effective January 1, 2022. For a thorough description of these changes, please view [this video](#) as produced by the General Council Office staff responsible for this portfolio.

Rural Connect comes to Living Skies Regional Council!

Rural Connect is a program of The United Church that brings together the wisdom, experiences and faith of those in rural and urban communities of faith. These are partnerships that have the potential to be incredibly exciting, energizing, life-giving and faith growing. Two urban communities of faith are ready to move forward with this amazing program and are now looking for rural partners interested in exploring a new way to worship together. If you would like to learn more, please watch this video:

<https://youtu.be/OYHG3EA6q4c>

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](#).

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](#).

44th General Council in 2022: more details

Asking Jesus' question to his disciples, "Who do you say I am?", General Council 44 is meeting in virtual space in 2022. This venue will offer some exciting challenges and opportunities. Plans are well underway. If you are a Commissioner, Youth Forum Participant, invited guest, or someone who wants to know what is being planned, visit the [GC44 website](#). And, if you're looking for information on Moderator nominations, [please click here](#).

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.

Updated: 40 Days of Anti-Racism

As we move through these days together, we'll encounter people from our own Region, and the wider church and world. Please consider joining this important journey of reflection and transformation. [Here's the latest newsletter](#), for November 1 onwards. [Full details are right here](#).

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

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.

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 national webinars of all shapes and sizes [can be found here](#).

Zoom Young Adult Gathering (18-35 years)

When: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays every month from 6:00 to 8:00PM (November 3 & 17 / Dec. 1 & 15 for 2021)

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

InterChurch Health Ministries Canada is hosting a free webinar

Wholistic Care and Wellness, made possible by a UCC Embracing the Spirit Innovation grant, will be on November 17 at 12:30pm EST. For more information, see <https://www.ichm.ca/wholistic-care-and-wellness-webinar/>

Updated: KAIROS Prairie North AGM and learning event – Saturday, November 20

Come out and support the KAIROS ecumenical movement in AB and SK. 10AM MST. AGM with updates and Regional sharing, followed by **Decolonizing ourselves: Rediscovering Treaty with the Earth**, 1:00pm SK/MB Explore ecological racism and Treaty as covenant with Rev. Dr. Stan McKay and Rev. Dr. Bob Haverluck. Presented by the KAIROS Prairies North Decolonization Group and the Treaty Land Sharing Network. [Register here for both!](#) Facebook event link to share: <https://fb.me/e/3VTmNt4Lo>

Practically Prophetic: “Treasure Chest Of Prayer: An Ecumenical Panel Discussion Of Traditional & Devotional Practices”

When: Tuesday, **November 23rd**, 7pm (Zoom Webinar)

Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/212794773700258>

More info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/practically-prophetic-treasure-chest-of-prayer/>

Description: In an age which values spontaneity and personal expression, we find ourselves occasionally bereft of devotions which have stood the test of time. Join us as a panel of faith leaders share the prayers and traditions which support them and their communities in the ongoing life of the Spirit.

Panel Participants: **Rev. Nora Vedress:** Calvary United Church (Prince Albert, SK), **The Venerable Dan Hughes:** All Saints Anglican Parish (Saskatoon, SK), and **Anastasia Gheysen:** Roman Catholic Hospice at Glengarda (Saskatoon, SK)

Workshops: Faithful Footprints grants for green retrofits of church buildings

Nov 30, noon in Alberta, 1:00 in SK and MB. Access up to \$30,000 in grants to improve the energy efficiency or invest in renewable energy for Faith Buildings, as well as resources, energy efficiency tips and tricks. Join us! Please contact jhisco@faithandthecommongood.org to register.

National Webinar for Church Treasurers - new

A continuing series. November 24 at 5:00PM Mountain Standard time. [Click here for details!](#)

Updated: Tickets now available for “For Unto Us a Child is Born” 2021 Advent Concert Celebration

When: Sunday, December 12th, 7pm **Where:** Online YouTube Live

Tickets now available: <https://form.jotform.com/213156058212245>

More Info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/unto-us-a-child-is-born-advent-concert-celebration/>

Description: Once again, Living Skies Regional Council is excited to invite you to a wonder-filled virtual evening of music & story for the entire UCC family! An amazing group of United Church musicians from throughout the Living Skies Regional Council have prepared a beautiful evening of Advent Celebration. Plus, we'll raise some funds in support of our community ministries and local congregations.

VERY IMPORTANT: Send your Advent & Christmas Greetings! Congregations & ministries are invited to record Christmas greetings to share as part of the Advent Celebration. Please send your video message to Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca by **Sunday, December 5**. Thank-you!

Youth Forum At General Council 44 (Delegate & Home Group Leader Applications)

Delegate Application Deadline: **December 15, 2021**

Home Group Leader Application Deadline: **January 14, 2021**

More info: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/youth-forum-at-general-council-44-delegate-home-group-leader-applications/>

Description: General Council is the United Church of Canada's triennial business meeting where justice issues are discussed, visions are cast, proposals are examined, decisions are made, and inspiring worship and community are offered. The voices of leaders ages 15-19 are needed to speak into this space. **And yes, summer employment is also part of Youth Forum at GC44!** You will be paid for your participation, leadership, and dedication to General Council throughout the summer.

Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre

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.