

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



November 3, 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:

Updated: M&P Committee Refresher

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. **Registration deadline – Friday, November 5 at NOON.**

Sask UCC Women's Network AGM - new

The Saskatchewan United Church of Canada Women's Network will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Zoom (free) on **Sunday, November 7 at 3 p.m.** All women within the Regional Council are welcome to take part, but they **MUST** pre-register with Mary Mohn at d.mohn@sasktel.net. The link to the meeting will be send closer to the actual date.

Benefits changes for active members - new

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.

Saskatchewan CGIT Apology and Reconciliation Efforts – new

Sask GCIT has issued on apology and addresses future plans. [Click here](#), to see the full letter.

Rural Connect comes to Living Skies Regional Council! - new

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](#).

Youth Forum At General Council 44 (Delegate & Home Group Leader Applications) – new**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.

Mark Your Calendars!: Living Skies Advent Concert 2021 (Youtube Live) - new**When:** Sunday, December 12th, 7pm**Where:** Online YouTube Live**More Info:** Coming very soon! Watch the Region’s website & social media.

Description: To be perfectly honest, November kind of snuck up on us! But, planning is rolling for the return of the Living Skies Online Advent Concert. Once again, we’ll celebrate the joyful song & story of our faith communities. Plus, we’ll raise some funds in support of our wonderful community ministries and congregations.

Wanna join the planning team? Or just have other Questions? Contact Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca or 306-221-5529.

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

[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 SK. [This media story offers more personal stories and details](#). **Your voice is needed**, wherever you live. Poverty is a reality for so many in SK, 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.

Take action in support of Palestinian Mission and Service partner designated “terrorist” - new

Six leading, respected Palestinian civil society and human rights organizations have been extraordinarily and suddenly designated as “terrorist organizations” by the Israeli government. [Defence for Children International-Palestine](#), a Mission and Service partner, is one of the six organizations. This means all their activities are now banned, and it authorizes the Israeli government to close their offices, seize their assets, and arrest and jail their staff members. It also prohibits funding or even publicly expressing support for their activities. Imagine this happening to your congregation, your Regional Council office, or the General Council offices. Please see this action summary from The United Church’s General Council office. Please consider a short email to your MP and the new Foreign Affairs Minister Hon Mélanie Joly (Melanie.Joly@international.gc.ca) See [the action invitation posted on the United Church's United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel](#) webpage. See a [letter from General Secretary Michael Blair here](#).

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

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.

When COVID is both global and personal - new

On November 1, All Saints Day, the United Church held a [service of remembering](#) that carried hundreds of names of those who have died from COVID. We are a global church, a small part of the body of Christ, and so many of those names came from around the world- especially the Global South, the majority of the planet's population, where millions cannot get access to vaccines or enough medical care. Rev Japhet Ndhlovu, Church in Mission Executive Minister, [shares his personal story of a dear friend lost to COVID](#), and weaves Rev Reuben Daka's story into the reality of a world where the equity God calls us to is not practiced.

As we remember the dead, may we fight for the living. Mission and Service continues to work with global partners to secure vaccines and [your donations to this urgent work](#) make a difference. The church also continues to call on the Government of Canada to use its influence and global aid budget to make desperately needed vaccines and medical supports available.

44th General Council in 2022: more details - new

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](#).

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](#)

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.

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.

Updated: Get Involved with then Let Us Sing!

[Then Let Us Sing!](#) is an exciting, new online music portal coming in Fall 2024. It will contain most of the pieces you've come to love from *Voices United*, *More Voices*, and *Nos voix unies*, plus a growing collection of NEW music. We also hope to discover a broad range of new material that will fully express our United Church identity and the desire to be in relationship with each other and God. [We are seeking submissions](#) until January 22, 2022

Donate! All financial contributions are greatly appreciated! **Lastly, please pray** for the *Then Let Us Sing!* Development Committee and all its teams for guidance in supporting God's future church. Thank you.

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](#).

Updated: 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@mclureunitedchurch.org.

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

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](#).

CCS Friday—Unanswered Questions about 9/11

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**. Full details about this event and program [are available here](#). **These sessions are free, but you must register:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0scOyvqzMtHdDn9rFw92whQ4Z2NqonzKg2>

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.

Exploring *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan* together, November 6, 7:30PM – 2nd session

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

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](#).

YOUTH MINISTRY MINI-SUMMIT (Well...actually it's more of a brunch) - new

When: Saturday, November 13th, 10-11:30am

Where: McClure UC in Saskatoon and also ZOOM.

More Info: Contact Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca or 306-221-5529

Description: Let's get a bunch of people passionate about youth ministry in a room together. We'll eat brunch, dream big about Youth & Young Adult ministry, and incredible things will happen. Virtually or in-person, we want you there. Share your vision, hopes & commitment to ministry with young people. It's gonna be great! Free brunch!

InterChurch Health Ministries Canada is hosting a free webinar – new

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/>

Workshops: Faithful Footprints grants for green retrofits of church buildings - new

November 15 and 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.

Updated: Decolonizing ourselves, November 20 at NOON (MST) 1PM (CST)

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.

Updated: Riding the Waves of Advent: Presiding at Funerals & Ministering to the Bereaved (A Retreat for Lay People Interested in Funeral Ministry) 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. To register, please go to <https://form.jotform.com/212926135693258> Contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca for further details. **Registration deadline November 12, 2021**

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

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> **Registration deadline: November 15, 2021**

Practically Prophetic: "Treasure Chest Of Prayer: An Ecumenical Panel Discussion Of Traditional & Devotional Practices" - new

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)

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.

4. Reminders:

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

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

St. Andrew's College offerings

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

Young adults talk poverty and guaranteed livable income

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.

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 final episode, **Thursday, November 4 (Compassion) at 3 pm**. Register in advance for this series: <https://bit.ly/3iwyPfm>
For further information, contact Archdeacon Cheryl Toth at stewardship@sasktel.net