

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



December 1, 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:

Congratulations to the Mohn family!! - new

On November 7th, Kent, Lindsay and big brother Emmett welcomed Maggie-Rae Melissa to their family. Maggie-Rae was born at 1:01pm and weighed 7lb 5ounces.

COVID Guidelines - new

The provincial government has extended the [mandatory mask mandate](#) until January 31, 2021. This means that masks continue to be required at all indoor functions, including worship, meetings, rentals, etc. **An additional [public health order](#) includes a significant change regarding proof of vaccination requirements for all activities outside of regular worship.** Please read this letter from Tricia Gerhard for further information. Should your community of faith be considering developing a Proof of Vaccination policy, please review the documents found on the [Living Skies website here](#).

Living Skies Advent Concert 2021 (YouTube Live) Sunday, December 12th, 7pm - new

Living Skies Regional Council is excited to invite you to a wonder-filled virtual evening of music & story for the entire UCC family! **Congregations & ministries are invited to record Advent & Christmas Greetings to share** as part of the Advent Concert. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Please send your video message to Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca by **Sunday, December 5**. Thank-you!

Covenanting service - new

As communities of faith continue to worship together, many postponed covenanting services are taking place. We ask you to hold in prayer **December 5** – covenanting service with John Sellwood and Strasbourg United Church.

Full Mission & Service Boxing Day service available now – new

This year, Boxing Day lands on a Sunday. In order to support ministry leaders planning two back-to-back services and because Boxing Day has social justice roots, the Mission & Service team has prepared a [full Boxing Day service](#). Reflections can be offered by one worship leader or many. They can be shared separately or gathered into one sermon. The liturgy also contains prayers, hymn suggestions, and children's time.

2022 Prayer Cycle - new

The Prayer Cycle is now posted on the Living Skies Regional Council website under Resources on the Worship page. It can be found under Prayer Cycles near the bottom of the page. [The link to it is here](#).

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

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](#).

Updated: 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](#). Next week, reflections on joy; December 14, reflections on love including communion. All are welcome.

A note about Annual Reports from the Committee on Community of Faith Support - new

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the mission and ministry of communities of faith and the need to reflect on this, the Committee is recommending that no exemption be given for the requirement to write an annual report for 2021. The committee feels that the annual report will be a good opportunity to do this reflecting, and serve as a marker for this time in our faith story, both as individual faith communities and as part of the whole United Church of Canada. Therefore, they will happily review your full report in the spring. A resource is being prepared to help guide the leadership of communities of faith in the process of writing annual reports with best practices from other Regional Councils.

The Nativity and Palestine Today: resources and actions - new

A group of United Church people from across the Prairies and Ontario have gathered some resources for Advent, Christmas, and the November 29 United Nations' International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Have a look at the [actions, events, and worship resources here](#).

Tell Your MLA To Read: *A Good War* – new

The book *A Good War: Mobilizing Canada for the Climate Emergency*, by Seth Klein, describes how Canada's political leaders implemented the war effort during WWII, and why similar government action is needed now to respond to the climate crisis. Our climate discussion group at Broadway United Church in Regina would like to encourage all of our MLAs to read this book, therefore we have delivered a copy of *A Good War* to every Saskatchewan MLA. Please help us by calling or visiting your MLA and urging them to read the book. Together we can influence our politicians!

You can find your MLA at: [MLAs \(legassembly.sk.ca\)](#). If you click on the member's name you will get their contact information.

Updated - 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 voices have had some impact, but the substance of the cuts hasn't been changed - yet

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.

Moms Stop the Harm group and Overdose book: continue conversations about addiction (edited slightly)

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.

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>

And, the book *Overdose: Heartbreak and Hope in Canada's Opioid Crisis* by Benjamin Perrin. If your community of faith might be interested in learning about these two resources, you can share this same summary [directly from our website](#).

Update: Shauna Powers, of CBC Radio, interviewed Heather Balfour, a parent who can relate. [Click here to hear that interview](#).

Advance notice: Regional ice and snow art competition! – new

As a wise person once said: “If you choose not to find joy in the snow, you will have less joy in your life, but still the same amount of snow.” To help us find joy in snow and ice this continuing COVID winter, and to help us strengthen community, we’re holding an **all ages Regional Council Snow and Ice Art competition**. This is your chance to dust off your creativity and your communal spirit (and your good mittens); to dream up some plans for freezing art or magnificent snow sculptures or mighty castles, and to gather your team. Our theme: *Love our Neighbours*. Our timing: mid January to late February. Who: everyone! Kids and elders especially welcome.

Prizes, judging, and ways to upload photos and videos of your masterpieces: details to come soon. In the meantime, [please share this summary and invitation](#).

Lumsden Beach Camp Executive Director search – new

Help the camp by spreading the word about this exciting posting with a vibrant outdoor ministry! [Click here for the posting](#).

2022 Assessments

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.

Minimum salaries for Ministry Personnel

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.

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.

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>

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.

40 Days of anti-racism wrap up: survey; online resources; online retreat Dec 21 - new

Thank you to all Living Sky-ers who were able to take part in any aspect of the “40 Days”, in community with the wider church. The forty-day journey has now ended, but the trail to living into anti-racism continues. All resources are available online; a survey to help future work, and a retreat opportunity for December 21 are more immediate opportunities. [Please see the full summary here](#).

General Council 44 equity support team opportunities - new

The General Council (national church) is looking for six individuals to form a team to support General Council 44 as it strives to be a space of equitable participation and decision-making. [Please have a look at the details here](#). **Closing date is January 10** (not Nov 24 as noted on the website.)

Assistance for flooded communities in BC - new

Pacific Mountain Regional Council has [updated us on options](#) for supporting flood-affected communities in the province. We have confirmed there will not be a Mission and Service appeal at this moment; the longer term impacts of the floods and associated trauma will be part of ongoing conversations. If in doubt, please contact the Pacific Mountain Regional Council office, 1-800-934-0434 (toll free in BC) or 604-431-0434, or pacificmountain@united-church.ca

Gifts with Vision resource – new

This year, we're providing our widest choice of gifts ever on giftswithvision.ca! Celebrate special occasions and make a difference in the world through Gifts with Vision—with no excessive packaging and no exchanges. Select gifts online now or anytime at giftswithvision.ca and help save and transform lives without even leaving home.

CCS Friday - new

You are invited to join a CCS Friday on Transgressive Devotion. Join in on **Friday, December 10**, from 12:00 to 1:00 CST, for an online conversation with Natalie Wigg-Stevenson on her new book "*Transgressive Devotion: Theology as Performance Art*". Natalie teaches theology at Emmanuel College. In *Transgressive Devotion* she argues that theology done as performance art stops trying to describe who God is, and starts trying to make God appear.

CCS Fridays are hosted by the Centre for Christian Studies, to help us all respond faithfully to emerging issues in local contexts. These are in the form of workshops and are open to anyone who might be interested. There will be a presentation that will be recorded for future viewing, plus opportunities to engage with the ideas in small groups.

You must register to participate at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYqd-6vqDopE9zwGGJVthDNuSnjvbUXTciz> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the meeting.

Updated: Advent resources!

The season of Advent is here, 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](#). The Moderator's video message is [available 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. [Here's the handy form](#). **Check out the calendar for local Advent / Christmas concert and events in your surrounding community!**

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 (Dec. 1 & 15 for 2021)

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

Contemplative Gathering: "Waiting in the Darkness" - new

Monday, December 6th, 2021 at 10:00 AM or 1:00 PM SK Time Zone

To Register: 10:00 AM Gathering: <https://form.jotform.com/213261565093252>

1:00 PM Gathering: <https://form.jotform.com/213264834766261>

These one-hour gatherings are an opportunity, in Presence, to discern and listen, to rest and receive. This coming together gives us a chance to find our grounding and to renew our sense of common belonging.

Please note that there is a **limit of 21 persons per session**.

Regular Contemplative Gatherings are offered through a collaboration between St. Andrew's College and the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support of the Livings Skies Region (UCC). The facilitation team for the Gatherings includes Janet Clarke, Jane Doull, Rick McCorrister, Brian Walton.

Get Your Tickets!: Living Skies Advent Concert 2021 (YouTube Live)**When:** Sunday, December 12th, 7pm **Where:** Online YouTube Live**Tickets available:** <https://form.jotform.com/213156058212245>**More Info:** <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/unto-us-a-child-is-born-advent-concert-celebration/>

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 an beautiful evening of Advent Celebration.

Ticket proceeds support UCC Communities of Faith (congregations), and other UCC Ministries throughout the Living Skies Region. When you order your ticket, simply indicate the Ministry that you would like to support.

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!

SAVE THE DATE: Living Skies Youth Confirmation Weekend – new**When:** Friday, February 4 to Sunday, February 6, 2022 **Where:** St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon**Who:** Youth & Young Adults grade 9+**More info:** Details coming soon! Watch the Region's website & YAYAC Instagram!

We're looking forward to the 2022 version of the Youth Confirmation Weekend. Youth in Grade 9 & older are invited to learn & share their faith together with a great group of ministry leaders from throughout the Region. More info is on its way, but if you have questions in the meantime, please contact Kent at kmohn@united-church.ca or Josie at LSYAYAC.Josie@gmail.com.

Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre - new

Welcome! Our programming combines in-person and online events using Zoom. Please visit [Our Programs page](#) for a list of all upcoming programs and to register for all programs. **Nourish Your Mind and Nurture Your Spirit at Queen's House!** *We are requesting that all those participating in our in-person programs wear a mask and be fully vaccinated. Thank you for helping us to keep everyone as healthy as possible.*

4. Reminders**Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 29](#)**

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

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>

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](#).

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

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.