

# Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council  
The United Church of Canada



December 15, 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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca)).

## 1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

**Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 30](#) - new**

Tracy's ponderings offer updates of each of the support committees and a note for M&P Committees.

**Last Rambler for 2021 - new**

This will be the last Regional Rambler for 2021. **Watch for the next edition on January 12, 2022.** In 2022, we'll be changing the Regional newsletter to make it more accessible. We'll be managing this in two ways: Every two weeks, we'll send a "news" highlights Rambler, covering the Regional Council and a short list of wider church and ecumenical or interfaith news. On the alternating week, we'll send an Events summary. COVID has moved many, many events online, and keeping up with all the many options can be difficult. We'd like to see if an Events-only listing helps us navigate this.

We hope this alternating format will reduce length and confusion, and make it easier to share specific content with your community of faith. We will also try to reduce length by using a clear headline, short summary text, and a link to the website. As always, most of our newsletter items will be available [through our main newsfeed](#) or through a variety of national websites.

We'll try this out through Easter, then offer you, our very valued community, a chance to evaluate and make suggestions. We want the *Regional Rambler* to be a good resource for you!

**Thank-You! Encore Celebration: "For Unto Us A Child Is Born" 2021 Advent Concert - new**

**When:** Anytime      **Where:** YouTube Concert Link: <https://youtu.be/ecJkqJQgq7A>

A heart-felt thank-you to all the musicians, storytellers, and technical gurus who selflessly offered their talent and creativity as part of our Advent celebration. We had a wonderful evening together, raising over \$1200 for mission-supported ministries in addition to amounts donated directly to local communities of faith. Don't worry, even if you missed it live (there was a fairly important football game going on!), you can still catch it anytime at the **Living Skies Region YouTube Channel**.

**Updated: COVID Guidelines**

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](#) that includes a significant change regarding proof of vaccination requirements was highlighted in [this E-Share](#) letter from Tricia Gerhard last week.** Should your community of faith be considering developing a Proof of Vaccination policy, please review the documents found on the Living Skies [COVID-19 news](#) section of our website.

**Comings and Goings internally - new**

As the year comes to a close, we want to acknowledge the following changes in pastoral relationships in Living Skies Regional Council between June 3 and December 31. We welcome Danna Wiebe to Regina: St. James, Wendy Gibson to Assiniboia, Carolyn Woodall to Regina: Wesley, Jonathan Worrall to Melfort-Ethelton, Carla Blakely to Regina: Lakeview / Yellow Grass United Lutheran Partnership, and Koshy David to Indian Head / Grenfell. We also want to extend our gratitude to Laura Sundberg, Bonnie Morton and Bernice Saulteaux who begin their retirement and will be celebrated at our Regional Council Gathering next year. We wish all of you many blessings in these changes.

**Opportunity at Sandy Saulteaux Centre - new**

The Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, Indigenous theological school of the United Church, is seeking our next Keeper of the Circle and a Keeper of Learning Pathways. You can find the job descriptions posted here: <https://sandysaulteaux.ca/employment-opportunities/>.

**Lumsden Beach Camp Executive Director search**

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

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

**Delegate Application Deadline: TODAY – 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.

**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.](#)

**January-February Regional ice and snow art competition!**

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.](#)

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

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.

**2022 Prayer Cycle**

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.](#)

**Minimum salaries for Ministry Personnel**

The minimum salary guidelines for ministry personnel are available for 2022. You can get [it here](#). It includes an increase in both the visiting ministry personnel rate (pulpit supply rate), and the continuing education allowance. If you have questions, please contact Tracy Murton at [tmurton@united-church.ca](mailto: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.*

### **General Council 44 equity support team opportunities**

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.)

### **Full Mission & Service Boxing Day service available now**

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 leader or many. They can be shared separately or gathered into one sermon. The liturgy also contains prayers, hymn suggestions, and children's time.

### **Gifts with Vision resource**

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.

### **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](#).

## 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](#).

### **Engage Difference! Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry - new**

Twelve, weekly, 3-hour online sessions will be held from 8:00 to 11:00 am (Mountain), on Mondays, **January 10 to April 4, 2022**. Class time will offer creative uses of on-line tools for large group, small group and individual reflections, conversations and activities, facilitated by a variety of resource people. Activities between classes will help participants engage course content in their local contexts. For information about bursaries, contact: [schmidt@councilofchurches.ca](mailto:schmidt@councilofchurches.ca) For more information, visit: [www.interculturalleadership.ca/duimonline](http://www.interculturalleadership.ca/duimonline)

### **Anti-Racism and Your Music Ministry, 12 January 2022 at 11:00AM MST/ noon CST. - new**

Is it racist to sing hymns or anthems from a culture that is not your own? Should worship leaders be concerned or enthusiastic when they want to share a new piece of music that doesn't come out of North America or Western Europe? To explore these and other key questions, join this 90-minute United in Learning webinar. [Click here to register](#).

### **Dialogue circles: Listening to Indigenous Voices: A Dialogue Guide on Justice and Right Relationships-new**

**Jan. 19, Feb. 16 and March 16** from 4:00-6:00 CST; 3:00-5:00 MST. Three sessions over the course of 3 months starting Jan. 19, 2022. Each group of 5-8 participants, led by one facilitator, will meet three times for 2 hours in length. To learn more or to register: <http://tiny.cc/LTIVcircles> To learn more about the dialogue process: [www.ltiv.ca](http://www.ltiv.ca)

**SAVE THE DATE: Living Skies Youth Confirmation Weekend****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](mailto:kmohn@united-church.ca) or Josie at [LSYAYAC.Josie@gmail.com](mailto:LSYAYAC.Josie@gmail.com).

**Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre**

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****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](http://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](mailto:assessments@united-church.ca).

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

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 \(legassembly.sk.ca\)](http://MLAs(legassembly.sk.ca)). If you click on the member's name you will get their contact information.

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

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](#).

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