

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



January 12, 2022 - News

*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:

Thank you for seasons greetings - new

To all who sent Advent/Christmas greetings to staff members - your greetings and wishes mean so much to us. We also hope that 2022 is a kinder and gentler year.

Omicron conversation - new

Due to the increased prevalence of COVID in our communities once again, we have received requests for conversation regarding options for communities of faith. Join others in the Regional Council **this evening at 7pm on Zoom** to discuss how we might respond faithfully to the request from Dr. Shahab who says **“this is not the time for gatherings at all”**. [See the website](#) for further information. Tricia Gerhard, chair of the Regional Council Executive, has written [this letter](#) to help articulate the issues at stake.

2022 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - new

This 8-Day online Bible Study series is presented by the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism and the Regina Council of Churches. This year’s theme “We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him” (Mt 2:2) was prepared by the [Middle East Council of Churches](#), based in Beirut, Lebanon. Each day’s study will run from 12:15-1:00 pm except Sunday Jan. 23 which will be at 3 pm. For leadership and registration details as well as daily themes, see the [prepared schedule](#). **Pre-registration required.**

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

Home Group Leader Application Deadline: January 14, 2021

Summer employment is part of Youth Forum at GC44! You will be paid for your participation, leadership and dedication to General Council throughout the summer. **More info:** <https://livingskiesrc.ca/youth-forum-at-general-council-44-delegate-home-group-leader-applications/>

Thank-You! Encore Celebration: “For Unto Us A Child Is Born” 2021 Advent Concert

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 February 28, 2022. 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 before Christmas.** 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.

Update - Regional Snow and Ice Art Competition

We're stuck with COVID for another winter. Let's create some beauty and community out of it! Our Regional Council is hosting a low-key competition whose goals are to bring us together safely across all ages, spark creativity, and show love for our neighbours. Think especially about children and youth, and how your local seniors'/ elders' community or building can be included (Can you build on their lawn with permission? Decorate trees outside the window with ice ornaments?). Any team or individual can register, or can simply post photos and follow along. [Full info is available](#) under "Events". [Here's our public Facebook group](#). Please join! [And here's the latest update](#).

Continuing work on the TRC, residential schools, and burials - new

The national church has grouped all resources together on one page, [Bringing the Children Home](#). Please have a look, so that you're up to date on important work that often continues quietly. In Saskatchewan, the latest in the United Church's continuing journey includes a gathering with Cote First Nation survivors who are working very hard to set up a language program. The gathering was to have taken place January 15 in Kamsack, shared between the elders and non-Indigenous Anglicans, Presbyterians, Catholics, and United Church people. We are very disappointed that Omicron has forced a postponement. The United Church carries shared responsibility for the Cote Federal Day School, recognized under the settlement agreement. Until recently Cote First Nation also included a United Church community of faith.

Discounted surplus supplies available through public auction - new

Government of Canada Surplus wrote to the Regional Council, asking us to help raise awareness of the wide range of discounted, surplus government supplies available through public online auction. The sign up is simple, and could benefit your community of faith, camp, and more. Everything from office furniture to small engines to canoes is covered. [Have a look by your region here](#). And [sign up here](#).

Unsubscribe at your Peril - new

Hopefully, you are finding the *Rambler* helpful in reporting to your congregations what is going on within Living Skies Regional Council. At the bottom of each Rambler and E-share, there is an *unsubscribe from this list* and *update your preferences* link. Here you can change email address or, if you inadvertently unsubscribed, there is now a link that enables you to re-subscribe. Or, if you have just discovered the Rambler, you can subscribe yourself. The form is on our website, on the [Newsletter Archives page](#).

Opportunity at Sandy Saulteaux Centre

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/>. **Apply by January 15, 2022.**

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.

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](#).

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.

An Ecumenical Milestone for Theological Education! - new

The partner schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union are pleased to invite you to a short online service of worship, as we **sign and celebrate our new STU Covenant**. Join us at **11am on Thursday January 20th** as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Representatives of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, and St. Andrew's College will give brief reflections on the significance of this Covenant in the deepening relationship we share together in the task and joy of theological education. For more information, please contact Shawn at shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca, or call 306 441 6367. Event Zoomlink: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87803664220>

The Academic Awards and Scholarships Sub-Committee - new

The national church is seeking an individual with the skills and experience to assess the merits of various applications. This committee awards grants and scholarships for theological and academic work, including the McGeachy Scholarship. **Closing Date:** 2022-01-27

To apply for this vacancy, please [express interest or nominate someone](#).

Emmanuel College Offerings - new

Emmanuel College is sharing it's upcoming events. For full details and registration, see their [Centre for Religion and Its Contexts](#) page.

St. Andrew's College Opportunity - new

St. Andrew's College invites applications the full-time position of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), commencing 1 March 2022. For more information, [have a look here](#).

General Council 44 and Commissioners: overview - new

Unbelievable as it may seem, the upcoming General Council 44 is the first since the major church restructuring in January 2019. There are many changes to how General Council will take place, above and beyond the reality that it will also be only online. [Please click here for a basic overview](#), and share this link as needed. [Click here to see the main GC44 website](#).

And, while Commissioners do not "represent" the Regional Council or group they are drawn from, they are an important connecting point for us all. [Click here for a list and biographies of General Council Commissioners and alternates](#) from within this Regional Council.

Stewardship news and resources: Discover Your Gifts—Share Your Gifts

Five weeks of sermons, prayers, liturgies, and children's/youth resources for the season of Epiphany make combining worship with stewardship easy. Now available on the United Church [Stewardship in Worship](#) webpage.

And: Your annual giving program is here! The newly updated resources for the *Called to Be the Church: Congregational Giving Program* are now available. The giving kit will not be mailed to congregations this year. It is available [from the United Church Bookstore as a free digital download](#) or the regular paper kit.

Worship planning: February is Black History Month - new

The celebration of February as Black History (or African Heritage) Month continues all through February. Officially recognized in Canada since 1996, this is a time to honour the contributions and struggles of peoples of African descent. [Click here for a wide range of worship resources](#).

Submission deadline: Let Us Sing!

[Then Let Us Sing!](#) an exciting, new online music portal coming in Fall 2024, 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 are seeking submissions until January 22, 2022](#)

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 January 2022 online learning opportunities [are detailed here](#).

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

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

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

Invitation to Contemplative Gathering: Wednesday, January 26, 2022, 10am or 1pm SK time - new

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.

Registration info at: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/invitation-to-contemplative-gatherings-jan-mar-2022/>

Update: SAVE THE DATE: Living Skies Youth Confirmation Weekend - postponed

Following health policy advisories, we've postponed the confirmation weekend with a new date TBA. 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

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 30](#)**

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

2022 Prayer Cycle

The Prayer Cycle is posted on the LSRC website under Worship > Resources. [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.

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.

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>