

# Regional Rambler

## Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



February 9, 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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca)).*

**Church office workers, please feel free to use these announcements in your church bulletins or newsletters.**

### **1. Living Skies Regional Council News:**

#### **Vaccine mandate lifted - new**

Effective February 14, the provincial government has lifted all requirements for proof of vaccination in the province. This means that while places of worship could choose to maintain the requirement for all church-related activities, there is no longer a requirement for outside groups to do so. Masking remains a requirement until February 28. For further information, see [this news release](#).

#### **Annual Declaration information from Karen at the Office of Vocation - new**

We are now into February and you may have noticed that the Annual Declaration (AD) is now open. After some consultation about when is the best time to complete the AD, it is now active from **January 1 to May 15 this year**. It is hoped that this will be a more convenient time to complete this. You do not need to get a new police records check done each year. A new police records check is only required if you are declaring new criminal charges or if your police records check is older than 2011. If you need assistance with completing your AD please contact me at [kmedland@united-church.ca](mailto:kmedland@united-church.ca).

#### **Have a Heart Day, now through February 14 - new**

All United Church Communities of Faith are invited to take some time by February 14 to mark a different kind of Valentine's Day. Have a Heart Day is a project of the [First Nations Child and Family Caring Society](#). Led by Dr. Cindy Blackstock, the Society educates about and advocates for the rights of Indigenous kids across Canada, working directly with Indigenous kids and communities to do this.

Have a Heart Day is about kids, and we hope non-Indigenous kids can learn about the different experiences of kids in Canada and take action out of a sense of compassion. We also hope Indigenous kids can speak from their hearts about what they want and need. Visit the [United Church Have a Heart](#) web page. And have a look here for suggestion on [linking our Regional Council Snow and Ice Art project to Have a Heart!](#)

#### **Executive support for restorative justice initiative; invitation to your congregation - new**

At the end of March, federal funding for Circles of Support and Accountability comes to a close. This vital program provides a community-based circle of volunteers to support and hold accountable sex offenders as their sentences end. Our Restorative Justice partners who are supported through Mission and Service and the people of our Regional Council are Parkland Restorative Justice and Micah Mission; they are working together with CoSA Canada to mobilize a letter writing campaign to the federal government advocating for funding COSA. [To learn more, please click here](#). The Regional Council Executive has also voted to send a letter of support.

#### **Self-Assessment for Communities of Faith - new**

The Committee on Community of Faith Support has developed an online questionnaire and background information to fulfill the Manual requirement. Details will be distributed to ministry personnel, pastoral charge supervisors, and governing bodies through the secretary.

**Social assistance concerns continue; new report with details of the impact - new**

In November we shared an action detailing great concerns with the SK government's changes to social assistance. ([Click here for that action](#), which is, unfortunately, still up to date, and welcomes your participation.)

Peter Gilmer, ministry staff with the Regina Anti Poverty Ministry, points us to a report detailing the results of grassroots listening circles which talked about social assistance and homelessness, to help us see the changes from the experience of those facing the impact. The report was prepared by Meara Conway and team; she is an NDP MLA, and is the opposition critic for Social Services, Housing, Human Rights, and Community-Based Organizations. It is in the latter role that we recommend the report for reading. [The full report is here](#). [The summary report is here](#).

**Appeal for Tonga after massive volcanic eruption - new**

Three weeks ago the Pacific island nation of Tonga experienced a devastating volcanic eruption. We think especially of the impact on Rev Salesi Takau and Amelia Takau, Abbey-Lancer/Portreeve Pastoral Charge, and their loved ones. [This article details some of the devastation](#). The United Church is a member of the ACT Alliance, and one of its members, Act for Peace, is raising funds for Tonga. [Please click here for full details](#).

**Ministry Personnel Lenten event online March 17-18 - new**

The Committee on Ministry Personnel Support in Living Skies Regional Council and St. Andrew's College are partnering again to host an online Lenten event on March 17-18. A prepared worship service will be provided for March 20 to enable ministry personnel to fully engage in this continuing education event. Details including registration information to follow.

**Regional Snow and Ice Art Competition: share your photos**

More teams are signing up to share their group art, sculptures, or mighty snow forts. Any team or individual can register if they want a shot at a prize, or they can simply post photos and follow along. Share your photos with us! [Here's our public Facebook group](#). [And here's the latest update](#).

**Excitement for all! Updated list of opportunities to serve the Regional Council**

Your Nominations committee has been hard at work. Susan Reed, Yvonne Terry, and Jeanette Warrian work to find people for the many committees and task groups that keep our Regional Council working (and thriving, pandemic or not). [Please have a look at the openings](#), which include the brand-new Justice Committee. Consider who you may know; brand new people are welcome. The link also leads to PowerPoint slides you can share. You can nominate yourself or someone else [through our private form](#), though please discern with them first. Submitting the form is not a life-long commitment; you can still discern further with the committee.

**Upcoming Covenanting Services**

- **February 19** – covenanting with La Ronge and Janae Brownley at 7pm. [Service details are on the calendar](#).
- **February 27** – covenanting with Regina: Lakeview and Yellow Grass United Lutheran Partnership and Carla Blakely

**Spiritual Direction**

Would you like to receive free spiritual direction sessions with a student-in-training? Rev. Joy Cowan is looking for 3 volunteers who will receive 3 sessions during Feb - April. Please contact [rev.j.cowan@gmail.com](mailto:rev.j.cowan@gmail.com) for more information or to take advantage of this exciting opportunity.

**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 key information – new**

The 44<sup>th</sup> General Council begins February 13 and our prayers go with Commissioners, faith and global partners, staff, resource people as they embark on a great deal of work on our behalf. [Click here for a blessing, information on how to access visitor registration](#), and more. And, [this post introduces Commissioners](#) from within the Regional Council.

Much about this process was new even before COVID meant the church could not gather in Calgary this summer. Please help your community of faith engage the important work of General Council by sharing these links and helping them access the [General Council 44 website](#).

**Korea Peace Appeal: petition and young adult opportunity**

The [Korea Peace Appeal](#) is a global campaign that seeks to collect 100 million signatures by 2023, the 70th anniversary of the armistice. **The National Council of Churches in Korea, a long-time United Church partner, has challenged The United Church of Canada to add ten thousand signatures by the summer of 2022.** [Click here for the petition link, a video from the Moderator, and full information.](#) And, adults aged 18-30, [please click here for an opportunity to work and witness alongside our Korean partners.](#)

**St. Andrew's College Opportunity**

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](#).

**3. 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](#).

**CCS Fridays continue in 2022 - new**

Starting on **Friday, February 11 at 11:00am** Sask time with "Painting Canadian Lives", an online discussion of art and history and learning with artist Kellen Hatanaka. You can find more information on the CCS website at <http://ccsonline.ca/2022/01/february-ccs-friday-painting-canadian-lives/>. You can register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlod-qqrzMoHdO-hygWuiVBithZknhPsi-h>

**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 Pondering Vol 31](#)**

Updates from each of the support committees, including information about annual reports.

**All of February** is Black History Month. [Click here for a wide range of worship and reflection resources.](#)

**Introducing Living Skies Affirming Task Group**

As children of God through our thoughts and actions each of us strive to exemplify what Jesus wants each of us to do – Love one another! One way to put these words into action is becoming an Affirming Region. Our new Affirming Task Group has been asked to design a process through which our Regional Council might consider becoming an Affirming Region. Members: Joy Cowan, Bob Hayes, Allison Sarauer, Yoonjoo Shin, Shelly Manley-Tannis, Tony Thompson, Jackie van't Voort, and staff support Julie Graham. [Click here to share the full announcement](#) and see an invitation.