

# Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council  
The United Church of Canada



May 4, 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:**

### **NEW - Temporary Mileage Rate change**

General Council Executive approved the following proposal at its recent meeting: “Considering the recent spike in gasoline prices and the prediction that they may remain at these levels for some time, it is proposed that the Executive of the General Council temporarily, to September 30, 2022, increase the current minimum reimbursement rate to 75% of the CRA 2022 “reasonable allowance rate for the first 5,000 kilometers driven”, or \$0.46 per kilometer, and authorize the General Secretary to extend this temporary increase to December 31, 2022 if fuel prices remain high.” Treasurers will also be informed directly of this change.

### **NEW – Daryl Woods is retiring.**

Join us at Grace-Westminster United Church (Saskatoon) for an afternoon full of laughter, music, memories and of course food as we celebrate the retirement of Rev. Daryl Woods. **Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 1:30pm in our Sanctuary.** Please RSVP to Shannon by **Wednesday, May 11, 2022** at 306-653-1766 or [gracewest@sasktel.net](mailto:gracewest@sasktel.net) .

### **NEW - VBS Roundtable**

Join us by zoom to chat all things Vacation Bible School! **Tuesday May 17 at 7:30 pm**

Zoom link: <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/83655356264?pwd=RFBKdHhoUjNBU0oxRFJ3ZnMyctJ3QT09>

### **NEW - Harm reduction petition to the SK government (deadline May 15)**

Grosvenor Park United Church, Saskatoon, requested that their petition to the provincial government be shared with all members of Living Skies Regional Council, with the agreement of other advocates in other communities of faith. It addresses strong concerns with the provincial government’s continued failure to fund supervised drug consumption sites, particularly [Prairie Harm Reduction](#) (PHR), and the [Newo Yotina Friendship Centre](#), despite hundreds of overdose deaths in SK alone. **[Please click here to download the PDF petition, and share freely.](#)** Instructions are included on page 1. Please note the tight deadline for getting this to the Legislature. **[More details are available on the Regional website.](#)**

### **NEW - Exciting news - two ways to celebrate being the Regional Council!**

As you are aware, there is no Regional gathering planned for 2022. Therefore, the staff of the Regional Council have created two opportunities for you to connect with the important life and ministry we are all engaged in. First, we are thrilled to invite you to join folks from Living Skies Regional Council for a celebration of ministry service on **May 28 at 4pm at St. Andrew’s United Church in Esterhazy.** This service will be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person. Second, we would like to invite you to a Regional Council check-in on **June 9, at 7pm on Zoom to celebrate those who are retiring,** and to hear an update on the work of the Regional Council this year. Further details on both events will be available soon!

**Annual Declaration deadline is May 15**

The Annual Declaration (AD) process for ministry Personnel remains open until **May 15**. 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).

**NEW - Bonnie Morton is Retiring**

The Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry invites you to Bonnie's Retirement Celebration, **Sunday, June 5 1:30 - 3:30pm** in Regina. Service of Release is 1:30 in front of the Sask Legislature, reception at 2:30 at Wesley United Church 3913 Hillsdale Ave. Written expressions of gratitude for her ministry and videos can be sent to [RAPMOffice@gmail.com](mailto:RAPMOffice@gmail.com). Cards can be mailed to RAPM, 2330 Victoria Ave. Regina S4P 0S6

**NEW - Anti-racism action planning for communities of faith weekly in June**

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils invite one lay member and one ministry personnel from up to 24 communities of faith total within our three Regions to this series. In four weekly sessions **June 8, 15, 22, and 29**, we'll focus on the new book [Wait- is this racist?](#). We'll bring this work into the Canadian and United Church context with resource people and a focus on the United Church's Anti Racism Action Plan. We hope this will support and encourage your anti-racism commitments and work, and that you will help the Regional Council move its own commitments forward. This is your advance notice with more details to come. Please [see the registration form](#) for a few more details.

**NEW - Women's Day Camp at Camp Shagabec in Cypress Hills Park**

**Monday, June 13, 2022 10am – 4pm** All United Church of Canada Women and guests are welcome, you do not have to be a UCW member to attend! Please bring a history book from your community, if you have one and are willing to have others look at it. Our theme is "Small Town Saskatchewan" Registration cost—\$20 includes lunch. Please register with Donna Barber prior to **Wednesday, June 1, 2022**. [Email—donlyn@sasktel.net](mailto:donlyn@sasktel.net), phone - 306-773-6081 (home) or text - 306-750-8810. Bring the names of the deceased women from your congregation for the memorial service. AND, Bring your cookies for Camp! More details will be in the Women's network newsletter.

**Self-Assessment checklist update**

Thanks to those of you who have been sending this in. We hope that the process has been a meaningful exercise in affirming the good work in your community of faith. If you have not begun this task, please use the versions found [here](#) – look in the file on Committee on Community of Faith Support. This information has been shared with ministry personnel and Pastoral Charge Supervisors – if you are the chair of your governing body, please contact Tracy Murton [tmurton@united-church.ca](mailto:tmurton@united-church.ca) so you can be added to the list. Completed forms can be sent to Tracy by email (preferred) or by mail c/o St. Andrew's College, 1121 College Dr. Saskatoon. S7N 0W3

**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.*

**Accessing General Council 44 documents and learning sessions**

Everyone is welcome to the learning sessions currently underway weekly. Information on these is [on the General Council 44 site](#). All related documents are also publicly available. Some people who are not signed up as visitors have had some difficulty accessing these, so new summary instructions have been checked with General Council staff and [posted on our website](#). Please have a look, and remember - do not share the actual folder link, as this causes access problems. Instead, share these instructions.

**NEW - Mental Health Week resources**

Mental Health Week continues **May 2–8, 2022**; please take a look at the national church's [new collection](#) of Mental Health and Wellness Worship Resources, [created in partnership](#) with the Mental Health Network of the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Christ, and The United Church of Canada.

**NEW - Summer job postings for young adults at the national church**

Get your youth and young adult thinking cap on! The United Church has just posted a number of excellent opportunities for students under the federal government's summer work support. We can thank COVID-adaptation that most can be done from anywhere. Please have a look at the link and share widely with students in this age group. Help our national church hire from across the land, and help students connect with our wider church. [Please see full details of summer jobs here.](#)

**NEW - Significant poll and study on Canadian perceptions of religion**

During Holy Week the non-profit Angus Reid Institute launched a comprehensive look at the faith journeys of Canadians not just among majority religious communities, but across the religious spectrum. They write, "This data explores not only the connection and conviction of Canadians of faith among more traditionally prevalent demographics – Catholic, Mainline Protestant, and Evangelical communities – but also among Canadians who identify as Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh. What do these communities of faith have in common? How are they different?" This extensive work can help us as the United Church better understand our community context. [Please click here to see the summary and full documentation.](#)

**NEW - What's up with Minutes for Mission?**

Of course, you want to share inspiring stories of the transformational work of Mission & Service! Of course, you have enjoyed the booklets that used to be mailed to communities of faith. Times are changing though, and we want to make sure you are still reading these meaningful stories and sharing them with others in your congregation.

Stories are now created on an ongoing basis so that they are relevant and connected. They are shared on the [United Church Website](#). You can also have these stories delivered right to your inbox packaged nicely in the *God's Mission, Our Gifts* newsletter. [Sign up for that here.](#) If you want to dig in to Mission & Service a little deeper, [check out these resources for congregational enthusiasts](#), annual planning documents, and Your Generosity Matters stories, worship materials and videos. If you have any questions about Mission & Service, please get in touch [vnelson@united-church.ca](mailto:vnelson@united-church.ca)

**NEW - May is Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month**

Have a look at the [many worship resources and personal reflections](#) available through the United Church's collection as we celebrate the diverse cultures, languages, faith traditions, and struggles of the majority of the world's population. The United Church is blessed with many sibling churches throughout the Asian continent; they have shaped our history, theologies, liturgy, and understandings of justice and dignity. With United Church members of Asian and Pacific Island roots, we give thanks for these relationships in God's family.

Two recent hymn videos for our worship use include [Cast Your Boat Out](#) (Korean version), and [The Bird Song](#) (in honour of a young queer Korean.).

We add a prayer for the people of the Philippines, and our full communion partner, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, as the country votes May 9 in national elections at a time when the pandemic, natural disaster, and escalating violence and human rights violations have created profound poverty and fear for many.

**Korea Peace Appeal continues**

The United Church of Canada has heard from our colleagues at the [Korea Peace Appeal](#) in Korea that the number of **Canadian signatures** collected since the January launch of the United Church Korea Peace Appeal is **690**. That's 7 percent of our goal of 10,000 by July 2022, and considering each sign-on will encourage others—we are well on our way! [Sign the petition here.](#) See a new video and [the full update here.](#) What is the continued impact of a war that never really ended? Rev. Dr. Kyongja (Kay) Cho [shares here the story of two Korean brothers](#) forced into the military on different sides during the Korean War.

### Ukraine Appeal update

The extreme violence in Ukraine continues to be beyond words, as is the case for so many around the world who confront armed conflict in their communities.

The United Church community has raised \$402,000 for humanitarian relief so far. Of that, \$240,000 has been sent via the ACT Alliance. Spanning 127 countries, the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance is the world's largest network of Protestant and Orthodox churches and agencies, including the United Church. Your generosity through Mission & Service has long supported ACT's humanitarian relief and advocacy efforts. Plans are being finalised for disbursement of \$162,000 and funds that continue to come in. What are these funds supporting? [Click here for details](#). To donate, [please click here](#).

### 3. Upcoming Opportunities:

#### NEW - Community of Faith Calendar

Please check out our CoF calendar for upcoming local events. There are upcoming retirement events as well as an art challenge currently posted there. Watch for other upcoming events to be added.

**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** *upcoming* online learning opportunities [are detailed here](#).

#### NEW - CARING FOR CAREGIVERS Book Study

First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan (AB) invites you to join them in the study of the book, *How The Light Shines: Stories, Strategies, and Spiritual Practices for Caregivers of People with Dementia*. The study will be on line on **Wednesdays, May 11 and 18, 2022 at 6:30pm (MT)** facilitated by the author, Rev. Trisha Elliot. This study is open to all persons! To register please call 780-998-4060 or email [fspc@shaw.ca](mailto:fspc@shaw.ca). Please be sure to leave your name and email address. **Please register by Thursday, May 5, 2022.**

#### NEW - UCW ZOOM Event

Maritime UCW Executive are hosting through Zoom "UCW Spirituality Morning" with Janice MacLean of Prayer Bench ([www.prayerbench.ca](http://www.prayerbench.ca)) on **Monday May 16, 2022**. To register, please contact Ruth Kennedy at [ulvashepherds@hotmail.com](mailto:ulvashepherds@hotmail.com). THEME: "Continuing in Hope." Three wonderful stories from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles of women knowing Jesus: What Tabitha, Lydia and an un-named slave girl teach us about knowing Jesus in a new way and *continuing in hope*. (Acts 9:36-43; Acts 16: 9-15)

#### 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. *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. We are also a scent-free facility.*

Queen's House is committed to serving the ecumenical Christian community in Saskatchewan and beyond by offering a quiet, nourishing space where people can come to be renewed. Thank you for supporting the programming being offered at Queen's House.

### 4. Reminders:

**Pastoral Relations Ponderings** – [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 34](#)

#### Help is on the way

The Living Skies Regional Council pulpit supply list contains the names and contact information of people who are ready and authorized to provide worship leadership. It is updated frequently to ensure the list is current and accurate. If the person who regularly provides worship leadership is taking a break, contact Bev Diebert at the Regional Council Office for access to the list: 306-704-0181

#### Children's Ministry Chatgroup - Faith Formation, Ideas, Resources, Discussion, Creativity, and Fun

Looking for a connection with people who share your passion for Ministry with Children? Let's build a community to share our ideas, resources, and discussions together. Join us at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/303460978552514>