

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada

November 16, 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).

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

In this **NEWS** edition of the Rambler, new and time-sensitive items are listed near the top of each section. Items included for the first time will have **NEW:** beside the title of the event. **Dates** are highlighted in green for easy identification.

1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

NEW: **Pastoral Relations Ponderings** – [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 38](#) .

Updates from each of the support committees.

NEW: **Welcome to Chantal Winslow, Executive Assistant**

We welcome Chantal Winslow as the new Executive Assistant! She will work with Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine, as well as areas of work that include all three Regional Councils. Chantal will work closely with Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy, and will bring her skills of administration, communication, and planning to key work such as: the minutes for the three Regional Council Executives and the annual meetings; planning Shannon's schedule; communications and connecting work; and more. [Please click here for Chantal's bio.](#)

NEW: Deadline for Mission & Service Transfers Changed!

Beginning in January 2023, the deadline for Mission & Service transfers will be January 15. That means that pastoral charges need to make their final 2022 Mission & Service transfer by **January 15, 2023**.

We are making this change because it will improve our accountability, accuracy, and transparency when reporting back to you on annual results. We also expect that January 15 is closer to when the majority of communities of faith have finalized—or nearly finalized—their year-end financial statements.

If you have questions or need support to set up electronic transfers, please contact Nicole Chicote at 1-800-268-3781 x3072 or nchicote@united-church.ca.

NEW: Regina Cluster statement on Christian homophobia and transphobia

A few weeks ago a story appeared about a young Regina queer teen being dismissed from volunteering with her church's kids program because of her sexuality. During the process in which she was removed it was suggested that to be LGBTQ+ is demonic. [A news story is available here.](#)

Members of the Regina Area Cluster have prepared a statement in response to this situation and more over affirming queer and trans children, youth and adults who face similar things in their communities. Sadly, even as this statement was being prepared more instances of religious organizations in SK doing similar things have come to light.

In the coming days the cluster will be putting this statement out publicly through Regina COF social media feeds as well as reaching out to local media. Folks from the cluster have spoken to the family involved in the situation who appreciate the support and are pleased with the statement itself. [Please click here to read and share it.](#)

NEW: Nominations wants YOU- yes, you!

Well, they'll take your friends and your recommendations too. Help out this group who matches needs with skills, gifts, and time. [Click here for all the latest opportunities](#) and some resources to help you engage your community of faith.

Update: Ministry Personnel Gatherings

Ministry Personnel are invited to join colleagues for conversation, support and discussion. For the next four weeks, our focus will be the themes of Advent. Check the [calendar](#) for the connection information.

Childcare Survey

The Regional Gathering Planning team is polling potential delegates to see if childcare will be needed. Please email Bev Diebert (bdiebert@united-church.ca) if there is a possibility of you bringing children to the Gathering in May (25-28, 2023). Please include the ages of the children attending. Your responses will help decide if we need childcare for children under 5; or Children at the Gathering (ages 5/6 to 12).

Books to Arrive for International Children's Day - November 20.

Eastside United Church in Regina has mailed to each Community of Faith in Living Skies Regional Council a copy of *Just Max Stories* by Max Ediger, for use with your children's ministry or with the whole congregation. Max was drawn to address the consequences of poverty and injustice and has worked with children in highly difficult situations.

A companion curriculum of activities for age 8 to adults by Dr. Mavis Olesen, an Eastside member, [is available here](#). While each November for the next 8 years is an ideal time to use these resources, they can be used anytime and in any way that suits your context and planning. We hope you find this a valuable and useful resource as we work together to address poverty and support children around the world. **Note:** In the children's book, there is mention of a fundraiser (on the inside cover). Please disregard, as it has happened already.

Increase to the Regional Council mileage rate

On October 27, the [Living Skies Executive](#) decided on a mileage increase to 40 cents per kilometer, for Regional Council volunteers when their work requires them to travel. This is effective 1 November. This is one way to support the much-appreciated ministry you offer the wider church, and to try to ensure that you aren't paying personally for fuel prices remaining high. As always, for environmental reasons, carpooling is encouraged wherever possible.

Updated again: Minimum Salary Schedule for 2023 is here!

The minimum salary schedule for ministry personnel for 2023 was released a couple of weeks ago and has been updated, again. It is **effective January 1, 2023**. You can find that [document at this link](#). Included in the salary schedule is an increase to the mileage rate to \$0.55/ km, as well as an increase to the visiting ministry personnel rate (pulpit supply) to \$231. If you have questions or concerns regarding this, please contact Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister at tmurton@united-church.ca.

2. Wider Church Information:

NEW: Christmas Rapture – CCS Online Conversation

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

The next CCS Friday is on **November 18 at noon** (Central). It will be a discussion of rapture and [Matthew 24:36-44](#) (lectionary reading for the first Sunday in Advent, in time for your worship preparation at the end of the month) with Canadian Mennonite University professor Dan Epp-Tiessen.

The event is free but you must register by clicking the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0pc-mpqTotGdA7luPcONaoDSd4i8kOj1iL>

NEW: Transgender Day of Remembrance this Sunday, November 20

[Transgender and gender non-conforming people](#) face exceptional violence and exclusion all over the world.

Every November 20, Trans Day of Remembrance creates a space to mourn those murdered over the past year, and to work for change. [Please see the United Church's worship resources here](#).

Work on full celebration of gender diversity continues all year long. Have a look at [Affirming Connections' expansive list of resources](#), including those under "Gender". [PIE Day](#) is coming up on Tuesday March 14 2023, and is another great (and fun) way to honour diversity in gender identities and expressions.

NEW: Advent Unwrapped spaces and resources coming up

Get ready for Christ(mas)! Advent—a holy, four-week countdown to Jesus' birthday—begins on **Sunday, November 27**!

Get ready to make room for Christ and the radical, countercultural messages that Christ brings. Throughout the season, videos, prayers, family resources, and reflections on this page will introduce and explore the Christmas story. [Click here for more information](#).

NEW: Gifts With Vision

The United Church of Canada provides Mission & Service support to partners for their ongoing work in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and right here in Canada. Gifts with Vision turns gift giving into an opportunity to do something extra for our church partners. Through Gifts with Vision, you give gifts to friends or family to support specific partner activities. With your gifts, we help create healthy places to live, promote justice, provide social services, and enliven worship.

Check out the online gift catalogue today! - <https://giftswithvision.ca/>

NEW: Book a time to talk about stewardship

Are you thinking about year-end or wanting to make a stewardship plan for 2023? Would you like to talk about legacy giving to your congregation, but don't know where to start? Do you have questions about growing giving to Mission & Service?

Vicki Nelson is your stewardship support person and is available to share resources, answer questions, or brainstorm with. Don't know where to start? Book a phone or zoom conversation with Vicki today using [this link](#).

NEW: Get Support to Create your Stewardship Campaign!

If your congregation hasn't undertaken a stewardship campaign in a while, consider registering for a 2-week learning module on creating a congregational giving program with Called to be the Church: The Journey. There are 2 opportunities to participate in the program coming up in **January 2023**. [Learn more here](#).

Updated: Lawsuit against the UCC on maternity homes; and apology resources

The United Church has been [named in a lawsuit](#) related to its role in running maternity homes, often known as "homes for unwed mothers". [Read the General Council statement here](#). The United Church ran a number of such homes, often with other denominations. In 2020, the Church apologized for "...our participation in the separation of mothers from their children. Our role in pressured, coerced, or forced adoptions created a legacy of pain and suffering. We helped create a culture of shame."

Please see, and refer people to, this [link for all resources related to the 2020 apology](#). Living into this apology is the work of the whole church, and all members of our United Church community are urged to read and reflect on these resources. Thank you for making your community of faith aware.

New United Church national insurance plan for your ministry starting December

Effective **December 1, 2022**, The United Church of Canada is launching an insurance program aimed at providing United Church ministries with more affordable and accessible property and liability insurance coverage. **UCC Protect/United Assurance** insurance offers coverage to address the unique needs of congregations and incorporated ministries such as camps, seniors' homes, and education centres. This plan is the only insurance program endorsed and funded by the General Council Office. [See these Frequently Asked Questions](#) for details on the transition from UCC Protect to United Assurance. [Here's a website summary](#) to share with your Trustees, Board or Council.

3. Upcoming Opportunities:

Community of Faith Calendar

Please check out our CoF calendar for upcoming local events. Watch for other upcoming events to be added. 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](#).

NEW: Songs in the Night: An Advent Retreat - Saturday November 26, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Offered onsite at Queen's House with Facilitator, Pastor Ann Salmon. Through time spent with scripture, song and craft, retreatants will experience an essential discipline of Advent – Waiting...for Jesus who is born at Christmas and who has promised to come again. Our retreat time will be divided into four parts, or songs: Our Song of Darkness - Our Song in Silence - Our Song of Gladness - Our Song of Hope. An excellent retreat for parishes/congregations who would like to bring a group of people to this retreat. Contact Sarah Donnelly, 306-242-1916 x226 to explore a group rate. **Fee includes lunch: \$65.** **Registration deadline: November 23.**

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.

4. Reminders:

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."