

# Regional Rambler

## Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



September 20, 2023 – 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 at [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.**

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:** PR Ponderings - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 44](#). Updates from the PR desk.

**NEW:** New Affirming resources and United Church statement on the “Million Person Marches”

On **Wednesday, September 20th**, anti-2SLGBTQIA+ activists plan to rally at legislatures, city halls, and school board offices across the country under the “[1 Million March 4 Children](#)” banner.

While they claim to be in support of “parental rights,” this is explicitly an anti-2SLGBTQIA+ rally.

They’re supported by a big tent of far-right groups, including Christian Nationalists, white supremacists, and anti-public education activists.

By the time you read this, most of these marches will be over. But they’ll be back. As an Affirming Regional Council, we encourage your ministry to be aware of the fear and hate that exist in so many of our communities- and the possibilities for a public, intentional and explicit expression of God’s love. Christians need to step up and proclaim that love in word and deed. [Here is a summary of ideas](#), and some graphics for you to use, shaped in part of over 60 congregational Affirming leaders from the Prairies and north who gathered last week to plan. [And here is a statement from the national church](#).

**Please join us as we celebrate the covenant relationships between:**

**Kyle Feader**, the Saskatoon and Area Youth Ministry, and **United Church communities of faith in and around Saskatoon** on **Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm** at McClure United Church (4025 Taylor St E). (Check the Regional Events calendar for livestream link).

**Rev. Brenda Curtis** and **Grace-Westminster community of faith** on **Sunday, October 1, 7:00 pm**.

**NEW:** LAST Call – 2023-2024 LSRC Directory

The 2023-2024 version of the Living Skies Regional Council directory will be posted on the website shortly. If you haven’t already, please contact [bdiebert@united-church.ca](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca) to add your information.

**NEW: The latest news from the wider church: Orange Shirt Day, Mission and Service**

**Thanksgiving Resources, and more!** [Click here to read some great summaries](#). And remember: the national church has a number of short, focused newsletters to support your ministry and interests. [Click here to have a look at the options](#).

**Orange Shirt Day/ National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Saturday September 30, and Sunday Sept 24 or Oct 1** Orange Shirt Day/ the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is an important public space for truth telling, and for commitments to challenging ongoing colonization. As part of our church's [living into the Apologies](#), let's join with others to help ensure the ongoing history and impacts of the residential schools system are never forgotten - and that together, we bring about real change. Please make plans for Sunday worship on **September 24; Sunday October 1** is also an important space for naming the ongoing violence facing Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit people in preparation for **October 4**, National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). [Please click here for ideas and resources](#). Thank you for any prayerful space and public commitments you and your ministry can offer.

**NEW: SK free resource: *Creation Care in Our Places of Prayer***

KAIROS Regina invites the Region on a journey of faith, one that challenges our comfortable lives and changes the very buildings we worship in. In **October 2022**, they hosted a workshop called "Creation Care in Our Places of Prayer: Energy Retrofits and other Faith-based Climate Action." This booklet contains six articles that KAIROS Regina released in the lead up to that event to prepare hearts and minds for the deep transformation that is needed. Perfect for your Season of Creation journey! Written by members of the Climate Justice Working Group of KAIROS Regina, the [booklet is available for free download here](#). And remember, the [Faithful Footprints program](#) is available to help you reduce your building's energy use.

**NEW: Grants opportunity for your social and spiritual programs**

Our Lady of the Prairies Foundation is a Saskatoon-based foundation that supports spiritual programs, among others, primarily in Saskatchewan. They are interested in supporting projects that empower people, strive to be inclusive, avoid duplicating similar services, plan for future funding needs, and set measurable objectives. Please [have a look at their website](#), and contact them for details. **Deadlines: October 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>** each year. Average amounts: Up to \$10,000. Many thanks to General Council staff Alexandra Belaskie for this notice.

**Ministry Personnel Gatherings**

Facilitated gatherings for all ministry personnel (active or retired) continue every **Tuesday at 1pm** on Zoom. Please check the website calendar for [connection information](#) to join colleagues for conversation and support.

**So you want to be a Pastoral Charge Supervisor? Wednesday, September 27 at 7pm.**

We are exceedingly grateful for the folks who offer their time and wisdom to serve as Pastoral Charge Supervisors throughout our Regional Council. If you are new to this role, need a refresher, or are wondering whether this might be a place for your skills and gifts, join Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister for a training session on **Wednesday, September 27 at 7pm**. This Zoom learning opportunity will clarify the responsibilities of the role, including accountability to the Regional Council, and will provide space for all of your questions to be answered. Contact Bev Diebert at [bdiebert@united-church.ca](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca) to register.

**Sask UCC Women Gathering Today is the last day to register!!**

The Sask UCC Women are gathering in Esterhazy on **Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 9:30 to 3 p.m.** All women of the United Church, not just UCW members, are invited to join us. Our Guest Speaker will be Dawn Weber (from around Esterhazy). The registration form is here: [Women's Gathering Registration 2023.](#)

Communities of faith in Living Skies are asked to send the names of any woman of the United Church who has passed away in the last year and a little bio. We will be doing a memorial service for these women. Please send these to Barb Bradley at [greenview@sasktel.net](mailto:greenview@sasktel.net).

**Equipping the saints - Thursday, October 12, 1-4pm**

Do you feel called to walk with others when they are facing difficult circumstances? Do you have a gift for listening and practicing compassion? Join **Emily Carr**, chaplain with the North Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy, **Lorna King**, chaplain with the South Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy, and **Tracy Murton**, Pastoral Relations Minister for Living Skies, for an afternoon of learning and sharing wisdom for the task of lay pastoral visiting. You will learn practical tips for visiting both within and outside health care facilities, understanding your boundaries, and navigating the SHA system. This learning opportunity will be on **Thursday, October 12, 1-4pm** over Zoom. To register, contact Bev Diebert at [bdiebert@united-church.ca](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca).

**2. Wider Church Information:****Confronted by Grace: Finding Balance in God - Friday September 22, at 10am or 2pm**

An online contemplative gathering, with lectio divina and space for quiet shared reflection around a theme gifted by the fall equinox on **Friday September 22, at 10am or 2pm**. Please pre-register by emailing [bernon.lee@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:bernon.lee@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca) and indicate your preferred session time.

**NEW: General Council's Call for Nominations Fall 2023 – Deadline to Nominate: September 25**

General Council is seeking nominations for multiple vacancies in a variety of areas. [Click here for the list of the various vacancies](#) and the link to express interest or to nominate some one.

**Rural Ministry Conference 2023: September 29 - October 1, 2023, High River Alberta**

A weekend gathering, for today's rural ministry context: come experience rural hospitality, inspiring theme sessions and practical workshops tuned to today's rural ministry contexts! [Click here for tickets & more information.](#)

**An invitation to active Ministry Personnel from The Right Reverend Dr. Carmen Landsdowne....**

The program is for ministry personnel, is **3 weeks per year in 2024 & 2025**, with prescribed weeks (avoiding church busy seasons and regional meeting season, based on what we knew when we chose the weeks). **Cost: Up to \$1,500/year, for a total of \$3,000 over two years.**

**Deadline for all applications is September 30<sup>th</sup>.** See [here](#) for more information and to access the application form.

**40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism: October 10-December 1 2023**

There's brand-new content coming for this year's [40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism](#). In addition to the daily written content that will be posted online, a dynamic set of speakers will be sharing their insights on Tuesdays. The speakers will explore these diverse themes: race shifting; anti-racist and decolonial theologies; raising anti-racist children; environmental racism; countering antisemitism; intergenerational Asian voices; and copyright justice and musical misappropriation. There's no cost for the online events! You can register for all of the [live events on ChurchX](#). Consider [signing up for the 40 Days newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date on all of the developments related to the 40 Days for this year!

**UPDATED St. Andrew's College "Year of Intention"**

Throughout this coming academic year, we will be hosting a series of four online events celebrating St. Andrew's commitment to being an Affirming Ministry, and [Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon](#)'s commitment to being "Reconciling in Christ". We'll be educating ourselves about sexual orientation and gender identity, and exploring new ways to be in solidarity and celebration with LGBTQIA2S communities in the church and beyond.

Please mark your calendars now! Specific information to follow closer to the dates. All events will happen online at **7:30-9pm Sask time**

- **Wed Oct 11** Histories and Trajectories of our Schools' Journeys (panel discussion)
- **Mon Nov 27** Queer Christology (a public lecture by Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein)
- **Thurs Feb 8** Liturgical Resources for LGBTQIA2S Christians (panel discussion)
- **Tues Mar 19** Transgender and Non-Binary Realities (panel discussion)

And our "Year of Intention" will culminate in a splendid worship service of recommitment, celebrating 15+ years of [Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble](#) Affirming Ministry and 4+ years of [ReconcilingWorks](#) Reconciling in Christ ... the date for this service is still to be decided.

For more information on any of these events, please contact [shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca)

**3. Upcoming Opportunities:**

**Community of Faith Calendar** (on the Living Skies Regional Council website)

*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](#). Be sure to **submit your events**, so folks don't miss events in their own 'backyard'.

**New Horizons for Seniors Program funding deadline extended to September 28, 2023.**

For more information, [see here](#). The Toronto United Church Council has put up a webinar on how to apply, Find it on CHURCHx at <https://churchx.ca/local/shop/product.php?id=42>

**Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre** offers a variety of topics in their programming that combines in-person and online events using Zoom. Please visit [Our Programs page](#) for a list of all upcoming programs and to register. Bookings Coordinator, Angela Brockmeyer, looks forward to connecting with you if you are considering an event at Queen's House. Angela can be reached at 306-242-1916 x230; [bookings@queenshouse.org](mailto:bookings@queenshouse.org).

**4. Reminders:**

**First anniversary of the killings on James Smith Cree Nation**

On **September 4, 2022**, many across Saskatchewan woke to emergency alerts on our cell phones. Throughout a frightening and confused day, it emerged that 11 people were murdered and 18 injured on James Smith Cree Nation and the neighbouring village of Weldon. The fear, grief, and trauma that marked this terrible day continue to deeply affect the communities, especially JSCN. Below are some stories from survivors, some told publicly for the first time. Please be aware that they are emotionally difficult to read. But they also let us hear and see the survivors, learn from them, and pray with them. May the stories be a guide for our continued prayers, our learning journeys, and whatever accompaniment we can offer.

[James Smith Cree Nation reflects on grief and healing one year after stabbing rampage](#)

[James Smith Cree Nation survivors still struggle with trauma, addiction 1 year after tragedy](#)

[First Nation reflects on grief and healing one year after stabbing rampage](#)