

# Regional Rambler

## Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



October 4, 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:** The 2023 - 2024 Living Skies Regional Council Directory is ready

The updated version of the LSRC directory has been posted to the LSRC website, under Contact Us. Please be aware that you will need the **new password** – handed out at the Regional Meeting held in May. If you need the new password, please call Bev Diebert at 306-704-0181 or check with someone that attended the meeting. The password will not be emailed.

#### **NEW:** Attention treasurers: new salary schedule

The updated Minimum Salary Schedule for 2024 has been published on The United Church of Canada website. [You can view it at this link](#). This contains important information for the cost of living adjustment for ministry personnel (effective January 1, 2024), as well as the visiting minister rate.

#### **NEW:** United Church Hospital Chaplaincy - Call for Board Members

Hospital Chaplains provide an essential role in Spiritual Care for patients. Whether it is being the face of the United Church for a patient and their family, offering prayers and support at end of life, or having a continuing conversation on faith and suffering, the Hospital Chaplains are ready to serve.

North Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy (NSHC) and South Saskatchewan Hospital Chaplaincy (SSHC) **need** of board members. The boards are essential to employing the Hospital Chaplains and providing support. The work of the board members is not onerous. Please consider volunteering for either board. Contact Daryl Woods, [daryl.gracewest@sasktel.net](mailto:daryl.gracewest@sasktel.net), for the NSHC Board and Randy Graham, [randygrahamn369@gmail.com](mailto:randygrahamn369@gmail.com), for the SSHC Board.

[Here is a poster](#) that highlights our Hospital Chaplains and outlines ways to financially support Hospital Chaplaincy.

#### **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.

**NEW: Clergy appreciation post #1**

October is the month that we officially recognize the ministry personnel who offer leadership in our communities of faith, although we are grateful for their presence all year long. [Here is a list of ways you might express your appreciation](#) – the first one is to pray for your minister and those in church leadership. Stay tuned for other ideas all month.

**NEW: Call to send letters on schools pronouns policy and to your MLA**

The Saskatchewan government has been told its [policy on pronouns and names in the classroom](#) contravenes the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and plans to [use the Notwithstanding Clause](#) at a special sitting of the Legislature October 10. You and your community of faith or ministry are invited to share your thoughts on this matter and the matter of the policy in a letter to your MLA (no matter what party). Please do so by Friday, October 6 if possible, but if you can't make that deadline, send it anyway. [Here's the contact info for your MLA](#).

The Executive of the Regional Council earlier [sent a strong expression of concern to the provincial government](#). The national United Church [added its concern](#) regarding the growing wave of legislation and hate targeting gender-diverse people in particular. Since the Regional statement was sent, it has emerged that the consultation with parents, teachers, and students cited by the government never happened. Many groups in the province have expressed grave concern with the policy, its targeting of an already-marginalised community, and its impact on students and families as well as the wider community.

**NEW: Updated resources on Indigenous church remit**

Our church is in the midst of an important journey that requires a vote from your pastoral charge governing body between now and the end of March 2024. Remit 1 asks the church to give pre-emptive approval for whatever the Indigenous Church determines in the future as the place it will have in the United Church, guided by the Calls to the Church—and without the need for further remit approvals. Now there are more resources to help your Board or Council's discernment, discussion, and decision-making. [Have a look at this updated list](#), which includes Regional meeting 2023 presentations and discussion, with time stamps for different focus area identified in each video.

**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:****NEW: Day of Action Missing and Murdered Women**

October 4th is the National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit people. There are many local events and vigils, and your church signage and property are good places for words and symbols to honour the day, along with picking one thing from the report of the national inquiry, which offers 200 calls to action.

#### 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.

#### **Wednesday Oct 11 from 7:30 – 9pm ... Histories and Trajectories of our Schools' Journeys**

Please join us on **zoom**: (Meeting ID: 816 4899 4435      Passcode: 992776 )

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81648994435?pwd=SW9NZFVkaHdvc1RxTWNKTXhOS2hyQT09>

**Please mark your calendars now!** All events will happen online

Specific information to follow closer to these dates:

- **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)

#### **I love You and It Hurts – Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm**

A presentation brought to Regina (Sunset United Church – 177 Sunset Dr.) by [Circles of Support and Accountability \(CoSA\)](#), Theatre of the Beat has developed three short plays that reflect lived experience of elder abuse, healthy masculinity, and intimate partner violence in your relationships, with a focus on how to recognize the subtle early signs of abuse. For more information about them, see: <https://theatreofthebeat.ca/>. Admission is by donation.

**Daring justice: Western Intercultural Ministries Network Conference, 19-21 October**, at Star of the North Retreat Centre, **St Albert AB, Treaty Six**. Registration is now open! [Please click here](#). All are welcome to our first in-person gathering since 2019! Theme: ***Daring Justice: intercultural and decolonizing lenses on truth and reconciliation***. Song and worship, speakers, workshops, and lots of time for visiting and telling stories are all in the plans. **October 21** we will join Northern Spirit Regional Council at their Celebration of Ministries service and Affirming celebration. [Check here for all information and ongoing updates](#).

#### **NEW: General Council Executive meeting summary**

Last week's meeting of the General Council Executive addressed (among many other things): Principles-based Justice; renouncing claims to former mission properties in the Democratic

Republic of Korea; and COLA and grant decisions as a first step in the 2024 budget process. In further work from GC43, five proposals presented to the GCE about eliminating functional distinctions between Designated Lay Ministers and Ordered Ministry were all carried, and will be presented to the General Council for discussion and decision on **Oct. 21, 2023**. [Please find the summary here](#).

**KAIROS Prairies North annual gathering Saturday Oct 28 from 11am – 4pm** in Lloydminster (and online). Come and explore the timely theme of “Energy for Change”, and find out ways you can get involved! More details and registration links here: [You’re invited! Oct 28 KAIROS Annual Gathering “Energy for Change”](#) ([kairoscanada.org](http://kairoscanada.org))

**Rural Ministry Town Hall, Monday October 30 (and the last Monday of every month), afternoon.** All are welcome to this ongoing series of open space and focused conversation on topics near and dear to rural and remote ministries. Please note that you need a free account to sign for the whole series, and then you’ll get reminders sent to your own email. [Register here](#).

### **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’.

**Evolving Faith Conference: October 13-15, 2023, Minneapolis, USA**

A group experience for ministry personnel to be encouraged, inspired and renewed. Both digital & in-person attendance options. [Click here for more information about the Evolving Faith Conference](#). And [click here for details about a travel group being organized by Leadershift](#).

**44th General Council Annual Meeting.** On **Saturday, October 21**, the 44th General Council Annual Meeting will take place from **11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EDT** on the CHURCHx platform.

Commissioners will receive an email inviting them to register and receive regular updates. The meeting will be live-streamed, with more information available closer to the event. Find out more on [GeneralCouncil44.ca](http://GeneralCouncil44.ca). For minutes and summaries, go to [United Church Commons](#)>Shared-Publicly>Governance>General Council Executive>GC44 Executive (2022-2025)/.

**Registration is Now Open** for the [2023 Lester Randall Preaching Fellowship](#), which will take place at Yorkminster Park Church in Toronto from **October 22-24**.

**Canadian Centre for Christian Charities' Webinar.**

Join CCCC on their next webinar: [Three Ways a Small Church Can Be an Effective Church](#) on **October 25th (2:00 pm-3:00 pm EST on Zoom)**. Small churches can be strong, healthy, and effective! In this CCCC webinar, [Karl Vaters](#), author of [The Grasshopper Myth](#) will share the three main principles behind effective small churches: **1.)** Realize you can be effective; **2.)** Discover how small churches function differently from big churches and **3.)** Understand and use the unique DNA of your small church for God’s glory. This webinar is perfect for ministers and elders at small churches; denominational officials; family members of small church pastors; or anyone with a desire to deepen their understanding of small churches and how to participate in their flourishing. Registration is free but you have to enter your CRA Charity number. [Register Here](#)

**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. Among upcoming programs are: a book study on *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*; a workshop on a wide range of losses - *Transitions: Your Journey of Transformation through Grief and Loss*, and guest facilitator, Dr. David Maginley, bringing *Near Death Experiences: Hope, Hypoxia and Hypotheses*, as well as the workshop below.

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).

**Who Do You Say That I Am? Wednesdays, 2-4:00 pm CST, Nov. 8, 15, 22, 29, and Dec. 6**

A five-part course by Don Schweitzer, offered in person (\$95) or on Zoom (\$75), tracing how Christians and some others have understood who Jesus is and the reasons for this, moving through the New Testament, early church debates and then to the present, looking at gains and losses that have occurred along the way. **For more information:** [click here](#). **For in-person registration:** [click here](#). **For zoom registration:** [click here](#).

#### **4. Reminders:**

**PR Ponderings** - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 45](#). Updates from the PR desk.

**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.

**New Pathways now launching at St. Andrew's College!**

Applications are open and flowing into our new Lifelong Learning certificate programs (<https://standrews.ca/lifelong-learning-pathway/>) as well as our renewed degree programs (<https://standrews.ca/academics/programs/master-of-divinity-and-master-of-theological-studies/>). Whether you are in training for ministry, looking for ongoing educational engagement and support, or just plain curious about theology, we have something for you! For more information, please be in touch with the College Recruitment Officer at [shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca) (306-441-6367).

**Introduction to Godly Play: One Day Learning Experience: ongoing opportunity**

*Online or onsite*, this experience is designed for leaders in congregational ministry, parents, caregivers or volunteers who would like to know more about Godly Play. Originally developed with children, Godly Play is both spiritual practice and a process applicable to all ages and many settings. [Click here for more information](#), or email [firstunitedwetaskiwin@gmail.com](mailto:firstunitedwetaskiwin@gmail.com).