

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



November 29, 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.*

**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: Video from three-Region Remit learning circle **November 23**

Many thanks to the 140 people from our Prairies and North Regional Councils and beyond, who came out to learn and discuss with knowledge keepers Charlene and Russel Burns and Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy. A recording of the session is now available on our Regional YouTube channels: [click here to access it](#). In the new year we will host one or two more such circles.

NEW: M&S Contributions

2023 is drawing to a close and on behalf of Mission and Service we want to thank you for your contributions. The money received from Communities of Faith like yours enables us to feed hungry children, help those devastated by natural disasters and war and fund the vital work our partners are doing.

And now we are asking you to send in your Mission and Service contributions as soon as possible to ensure this work continues. Remember, to have your contributions counted towards 2023 you must send them in postmarked before **January 15th, 2024**. Thank you in advance for your ongoing support.

NEW: [Advent Greetings and a letter of introduction](#) from Jordan Cantwell, Your Growth Animator

NEW: A message from the Committee on Community of Faith Support

Dear Communities of Faith. We are the committee whose mandate is to support you. We are aware that these last few years have been rough, and we would like to take a moment and congratulate you on making it thus far. Your commitment, ingenuity and creative ministry has served your communities in vital ways. We know this is an ongoing process. We know the worry that is out there and that many of you are walking with your faith in God through this time. You've rolled with the twists and turns well, and we would like to remind you of the opportunity to review your self-assessments. In the past, you completed your self-assessments and wrote down goals for the future. Please let us know how that is going. It would be wonderful if you could include this reflection in your Annual Report, or send it to us separately.

One area we have found troublesome in our reading of the Annual Reports is that many of the financial books are not reviewed. Please note that a bookkeeper, or accountant is required to review your financial books; charity or not. THIS CAN NOT BE A MEMBER OR ADHERENT OF YOUR CHURCH. We thank you for your co-operation in this and hope your Christmas is a sacred time with family and friends alike. In the darkness of our world right now, may you continue to be a beacon of light, offering hope. May the blessings of the baby who brings joy, and God willing, peace, stay with you through this dark season.

NEW: Licensed Lay Worship Leader policy updated

Great news! Based on feedback from communities of faith and licensed lay worship leaders, the Committee on Lay Leadership Support has updated the policy for LLWLs in Living Skies. If your community of faith enjoys the worship leadership of one of these folks, please read the [updated policy here](#) for information regarding remuneration and number of allowable services in each calendar year. This updated policy is effective **January 1, 2024**.

Treasurer reminder:

If there is a called or appointed minister in your community of faith, please ensure that you have made the necessary salary adjustment with ADP to ensure a smooth transition for payroll in January. [Here is the link for the most accurate salary amounts.](#)

Equipping the Saints: Thursday, December 7, 1:00-2:30pm

Are you engaged in visiting folks on behalf of your community of faith, either in a health care setting or in their home? Then this gathering is for you! As a follow-up to our training session in October, join our chaplains Lorna King and Emily Carr on **Thursday, December 7, 1:00-2:30pm** on Zoom for a time of check-in and learning. The topic this month will be led by Michele Rowe: "The 4 C's of pastoral visitation: Cause. Control. Care. Connection." Contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca to register.

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.

2. Wider Church Information:

NEW: Camp Tapawingo Year Round Job Opportunity

Do you love United Church camping ministries and want to spend the summer AT camp and then the rest of the year THINKING about camp? Then this amazing job opportunity is for you! Camp Tapawingo at Candle Lake is hiring a Year Round Operations Coordinator! Find the details at this link and share them with everyone you know who is passionate about all things summer camp! <http://www.camptapawingo.net/operations-coordinator.html>

NEW: Broadview article on Prairie people supporting transgender dignity and rights

In September, a number of United Church people involved themselves in opposing the "Million Person" marches that opposed transgender rights in schools, and school curricula that respects diverse sexualities, gender identities, and families. [Have a look here](#), and look for the article in the February print edition.

Letter from the church to the PM: ceasefire now; naming the genocide taking place

At its recent meeting, the General Council Executive, its corresponding members, and the members of the National Indigenous Council issued a plea to Prime Minister Trudeau to advocate for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, recognizing that, in the view of legal experts, genocide is currently taking place.

Its central calls can be echoed and added to through a letter or call to the Prime Minister's Office and your Member of Parliament. Our pressure is important here, because until a ceasefire is reached, there is no way forward. Currently the federal government is still not pushing for a ceasefire. To quote the letter, "The failure to clearly do so is unconscionable." [Please see the letter here and share widely.](#)

3. Upcoming Opportunities:

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

*Please check out our CoF calendar for upcoming local events— 'dining/eating' opportunities, family friendly events and more. 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'.*

St. Andrew's College Contemplative Gathering: The Gift of a Pause Friday, Dec 1 @ 10-11am (Sk)
December 1 is between seasons; a time to pause and.... Each of us will pause in ways unique to our lives. Join us for an hour of prayer, scripture, quiet meditation, and conversation.

Please register here: https://form.jotform.com/232975380744263?fbclid=IwAR1uSNJyULTvOTdERN1uGlxRHSjdA7XLs_e5eQQ6z8F5rlekn_Aj46KQmGc

Climate vigils December 8-10: lots of resources available to help host one

From **November 30 – December 12, 2023**, the [United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties \(COP28\)](#) will be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. This global conference can serve as an important catalyst for leaders and communities of faith to pray, learn and act for climate justice. Please see [For the Love of Creation](#), an ecumenical site for climate justice advocates, for lots of ideas. The theme of COP 28 is Unite. Act. Deliver. Let's help this be so.

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.

4. Reminders:

PR Ponderings - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 47](#). Updates from the PR desk.

Advent liturgy on witnessing to peace in Palestine and Israel

The [United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel](#) (UNJPPI) **offers us this Advent liturgy** (PDF file). It draws on the lived experience and stories of United Church members who have been [Ecumenical Accompaniers through the World Council of Churches](#) in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It includes new words to O Come Emmanuel, and stories from accompaniment with Palestinians living under military occupation.

As Israelis and Palestinians continue to confront the impacts of horrific violence, in the name of the Prince of Peace may we add our prayers, worship, resources, and action to efforts to support them and to do what we can to support them in creating a just peace.