

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



December 13, 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: Last Rambler for 2023/LSRC office closure for the holidays

This will be the last Regional Rambler for 2023. Watch for the next Events edition on **January 3, 2024** and a new News edition on **January 10, 2024**. The Living Skies Regional Council office will be closed **December 21, 2023 to January 1, 2024** inclusive. If you have an emergency, please contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca or 1-800-268-3781 ext 6322. To learn of other staff's plans, please see their bounce back messages.

NEW: Pastoral Relations Ponderings - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 48](#). Update from the Pastoral Relations desk.

NEW: Annual Meeting date change

The Regional Meeting dates have been changed to **June 13 – 16, 2024**. Please mark your **calendars** with this updated information.

NEW: Comings and Goings internally

As the end of the year nears, we want to acknowledge the following changes in pastoral relationships in Living Skies Regional Council since the Regional Meeting:

We welcome: David Mugadzi to Preeceville-Sturgis, Joan Kessler to Watrous Young, Peter Kugba-Nyande to Eatonia-Mantario, Marilyn Leuty to Saskatoon: Mount Royal Emmanuel, and effective January 1, 2024, Emily Carr to Saskatoon: McClure and Bill Unger to Saskatoon: St. Martin's.

We celebrate: Cam Fraser and Jordan Cantwell moving to the Growth and Ministry Development Division of the GCO; Don Schweitzer and Bill Unger retiring; North Battleford: Third Avenue and Speers collaborating with Jo-Ann Hills; and finishing ministry for Ray Purdie (Imperial), Koshy David (Grenfell), and Emily Carr (Langham).

Many blessings in all of these transitions.

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: Advent Unwrapped resources continue

A reminder that there are great last minute and first minute resources at the national [Advent Unwrapped project](#)! And for alternative gift giving that prioritizes community needs, [Gifts with Vision](#) remains a great choice to share with your community of faith.

NEW: 2024 Living Skies Prayer Cycle

The 2024 prayer cycle, available for use in your bulletins, announcements or during your Prayers of the People, is now posted on the Regional Council website under [Resources> Worship](#). It can be found in the Prayer Cycle box, near the bottom of the page (just click on it and it will open). Also, in that expanding list, is the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle [link](#).

NEW: An Ecumenical Opportunity - World Day of Prayer 2024 (wicc.org)

The theme for 2024 is written by Palestinian Women. The service is offered in two formats: a 55-minute video service or the traditional format of using the paper copy. The WDP service can be any time of the day from March to September. The women who have done these services in their local area are not able to carry on and WDP is looking for new coordinators. We are trying to revive this great ecumenical tradition among churches in Canada. Please contact me for more information. Linda M. Ervin (Diaconal Minister) at filedrep567@wicc.org or call 250.493.5333.

NEW: Did you know?

Printable PDFs of the last few months of the Regional Rambler issues are posted on the Living Skies Regional Council website. If you can't find the emailed copy in your inbox, you can find it on the website under NEWS & EVENTS > REGIONAL NEWS > REGIONAL NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES. You can also find E-Shares and Tracy Murton's Pastoral Relations Ponderings there as well. Please share this with other folks who might be interested, but aren't yet subscribed.

NEW: Our Regional ecumenical partner **the Micah Mission is looking for a United Church representative on our Board of Directors**. Seeking to be an ecumenical organization, the UCC rep will be a key voice in sharing insights as we discern our present and future. Meetings occur monthly on the first Monday via Zoom. Board Members are NOT required to live in Saskatoon. The time commitment would be approximately 3 hours per month and might include some light fundraising or promotional duties. For more information or to express interest please contact Debz Ferber: deborah@themicahmission.org.

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

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.

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.

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**.

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.

2. Wider Church Information:

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. 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'.

Faithful Footprints energy carbon reduction for faith buildings webinar, Friday, December 15th at 1:00pm CST. Join other Prairies and North people to learn more about strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of your faith spaces, and how to access the Faithful Footprints grant program to support energy efficiency upgrades and investment in renewables. Free! Register today at: <https://forms.gle/WsPbu6tEvuzx89JP8>

Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre welcomes you! Their ecumenical programming combines in-person and online events using Zoom. Please visit their webpage for a list of all upcoming programs and to register for all programs: <https://www.queenshouse.org/programs/> ***Nourish Your Mind and Nurture Your Spirit at Queen's House!*** For inquiries/additional information contact Sarah Donnelly, Programming Director: 306-242-1916 x226. If you are considering an event at Queen's House, please connect with Bookings Coordinator, Angela Brockmeyer. Angela can be reached at 306-242-1916 x230; bookings@queenshouse.org.

4. Reminders:

Final reminder: Video from three-Region Remit learning circle **November 23; Board process**

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. The main resource page has also been updated with a new [conversation process for pastoral charge governing bodies](#).

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>