

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



January 10, 2024 – 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

Reminder: Mission & Service Contributions

Please remember 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.

Treasurers 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.](#)

NEW: Reminder of Remit vote; new video and upcoming open learning circle

Many thanks to all pastoral charges who have already voted on the Remit about creating a self-determining Indigenous organization within The United Church of Canada. We have until 31 March 2024 to submit our voting results, and you are respectfully encouraged to remember that not voting at all is recorded automatically as a No vote. The Regional Council wants to support you in this process, so please don't hesitate to get in touch through the office. Please remember that [we continue to update the Regional Remit resource page](#).

Updates: Both the Regional Council and the General Secretary will be sending letters to all congregations soon and we ask you to watch for those. On **Tuesday January 30, 7:30PM Central**, you are invited to an open learning conversation with elder Gloria Cook, member of the National Indigenous Council, Rev Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister, and (we hope) a third knowledge keeper, to be announced. [Please click here to register.](#)

And lastly, a brand-new video about the Remit is now live: [please click here to access it](#). It answers additional questions about the remit process, and features people from the non-Indigenous church.

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: To All Women of the United Church in Saskatchewan

We are changing the AGM meeting from 3 p.m. on Saturday, 27th January, 2024 to **7 p.m., Friday, 26th January, 2024**. Please register with Barb Bradley at greenview@sasktel.net or (306) 370-0136. We are looking to fill the position of secretary.

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**.

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.

Did you know?

Printable PDFs of recent Regional Ramblers, E-Shares and Tracy Murton's Pastoral Relations Ponderings are posted on the Living Skies Regional Council website. You can find it on the website under NEWS & EVENTS > REGIONAL NEWS > REGIONAL NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES. Please share this with other folks who might be interested, but aren't yet subscribed.

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.

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. In the darkness of our world right now, may you continue to be a beacon of light, offering hope.

2. Wider Church Information:

NEW: Upcoming Stewardship Online Courses

If you have any questions about resources or ways to receive support with stewardship work in your community of faith, please reach out to Vicki Nelson at ynelson@united-church.ca.

A great place to kick-start your stewardship work is through one of our programs. Here is what is upcoming:

Setting Up Your Giving Program – Starts the week of **January 16** and requires a team (3-5 people) to participate. This course is designed for you to develop the resources you need to get your Congregational Giving Program off the ground! [To register or learn more click here.](#)

Communicating Impact: Narrative Budgets and Storytelling at your AGM - Tuesday, January 23 at 3pm Central. This 60-minute session for church leaders--both clergy and lay--will talk about how communities of faith can better communicate their amazing impact during their annual meeting and through annual reports. We will do a special look at narrative budgets and how this tool can transform how ministry is spoken about in connection to finances. [To register click here.](#)

Stewardship Best Practices - is a 9-session deep dive into the spiritual practice of stewardship. This course that begins in January, and wraps up in April, will help your team create a full year stewardship plan, and transform how you talk about money and generosity in your congregation. [Find out more and register here click here.](#)

Getting Starred in Stewardship – February 22 at 3pm or 5:30pm Central Time. Come on your own, or come with a team and join United Church people from across the country to learn some stewardship first principles. This 90 minute course is the place to start if you are new to stewardship or need a refresher. [Register or learn more right here.](#)

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity resources, January 18 to 25, 2024

The 2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is on the theme "You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself" based on Luke 10:25-37. This year's theme was prepared by an ecumenical team in Burkina Faso. Resources include an Order of Service, a Bible study, and various reflections on the theme. There are also hymn suggestions and resources for children, high schools, and university campuses. [Download all these free materials here.](#) The United Church also [offers resources here.](#)

NEW: FAQ on General Council decisions re Designated Lay Ministers

At the October 2023 Annual Meeting of the 44th General Council, General Council offered individual Designated Lay Ministers a pathway to commissioning or ordination. [Click here for additional information](#) and clarification about what this means and how it works.

3. Upcoming Opportunities:

Reminder: Heat Pumps in Saskatchewan: What You Should Know - Saturday 13 January 10:30-

Noon, live streamed and in person. What's all the fuss about heat pumps in Saskatchewan? Are they efficient enough to heat your home when it's -30 outside? How do they compare to natural gas heating? What is the carbon footprint? Does it make sense in Saskatchewan? Join our panellists who will explore the economics and environmental impact of heat pumps for Saskatchewan homeowners. **Livestream** at <https://bit.ly/kairos-yqr-heat-pumps> or **in person** at Central Regina Public Library - meeting room C-1 (2311 12th Avenue, Regina). This event is planned by KAIROS Regina, an ecumenical social justice network. Contact the KAIROS Regina leadership team at kairos.yqr@gmail.com

NEW: A [Wellness Weekend](#) at Shekinah Retreat Centre from **January 27-29, 2024!**

Whether you seek connection with others or crave solitary moments, Shekinah's 287 acres, featuring forest trails and open meadows, provide a unique setting for rejuvenation. Guided activities, both indoors and outdoors, such as social gatherings, interpretive walks, fitness and yoga sessions, and evening campfires, await you. With the arrival of snow, the excitement of tubing adds an extra touch of adventure.

This weekend experience is meant to nourish your mind, body, and soul by providing opportunities to immerse yourself in nature, enjoy good company, engage in physical activity and savor nutritious meals. Everything is a choice, and you can choose to relax or embark on adventures at your own pace.

Treat yourself to a winter getaway only 40 minutes from Saskatoon! For more information, visit <https://www.shekinahretreatcentre.org/winter-refresh> or call us at 306-945-4929.

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.

Please check out our CoF calendar for upcoming local events on the LSRC website.

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'.

[4. Reminders:](#)

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>

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

Annual Meeting date change

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

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](#).