

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada



February 14, 2024 – Events *Happy Valentine's Day*

*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*

In this **EVENTS** edition of the Rambler, events are listed in order of occurrence. **Date/s of the event** are highlighted in green for easy identification. **Registration deadlines** are highlighted in dark orange. Events included for the first time will have **NEW:** beside the title of the event. And, it's hoped the [Into the Future](#) will help facilitate your long-term planning.

Check out the Community of Faith Calendar (on the Living Skies Regional Council website - 3rd option down under News & Events). [Click here to view it](#). Don't miss the many fun and interesting upcoming seasonal events. **Communities of Faith**, be sure to **submit your events** to the calendar (use the form, 4th option down under News & Events), so folks don't miss the festivities.

All the offerings from **United in Learning**, our national online home for courses, training, and conversation, [are listed here in their latest newsletter](#). The United Church's Edge Network also offers online courses related to Change and innovation. [See their courses here](#).

1. This month:

Voting date for Remit 1. An important event only you can create: set a date for your vote on Remit 1! Need help finding the right resource? Want to connect with someone for a conversation about questions? Let us know. Contact the Regional office and we will help you find who and what you need. Phone: 306-704-0181. Email: livingskies@united-church.ca

NEW: Give it up for the Earth! 2024 runs from February 14 to March 28. The climate crisis demands action, and [Give it up for the Earth!](#) makes it easy for you to make a difference. This national ecumenical Lenten campaign empowers Canadians to reduce emissions, embrace [eco-spirituality](#), and demand bolder [climate action from the government](#). Visit the campaign website for more information, resources, and to register your community of faith.

Daring Justice: Uniting in Dialogue and Reflection, online February 15 - April 25, 2024.

A six week LeaderShift course exploring how our work for justice is rooted in United Church of Canada faith tradition and sacred scripture. [Click here for full details](#).

PIE in the Public Square, Affirming PIE Day preparation, Thursday February 15 at 6:00PM Central
Get ready for dessert with a purpose! Affirming PIE Day is coming up **March 14**, and to help us get ready, Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble is inviting three dynamic faith leaders to reflect on what this year's theme means to them: Rev. Franklyn James; Rabbi Dr. Nachshon Siritsky; and Rev. Tricia Gerhard. Together we'll be Public, Intentional, and Explicit with our Affirming welcome. [Register here!](#) [Here's the Facebook event link.](#)

Annual Declaration – Early Bird Draw

We know, and appreciate, how much you have put into your ministry as you leave Epiphany and enter this season of Lent. Of course, there are always more tasks and ministry waiting for you.

The **Annual Declaration** process is one of those important (and simple) tasks to add to your list. Follow the link below to ChurchHub and complete your **Annual Declaration** by **February 16th** and your name will be entered into an **Early Bird Draw** for a chance to win a \$50 Gift Card, of your choice. <https://churchhub.ca/> **Need help accessing ChurchHub?** Please contact ministry@united-church.ca. Questions about the Annual Declaration process can be answered by your Vocational Minister or feel free to send an email to LGiffin@united-church.ca.

Beloved Is Where We Begin: An Online Conversation with Author and Artist Jan Richardson

You are warmly invited to join us for an amazing online conversation with author and artist Jan Richardson on **Saturday, February 17th, 2024 from 9:30am - 12:00pm PT**. This event is co-hosted by Oasis United Church and Naramata Centre, and registration is now open! For more information, please see [the Naramata Centre website](#).

Living Skies Justice Team Open House, Tuesday February 20, 10:00AM-11:30AM

The new Living Skies Justice Team invites you to come and share your social and ecological justice work and interests! All welcome, both individuals and group representatives. Come connect with us and re-connect with each other as this new team begins its work. [Please click here to register](#). An email with the link will be sent automatically; please check your spam folder if it doesn't arrive.

NEW: National Lenten study: Act Fast: Spiritual Practices for a Climate in Crisis,

February 20-March 26, Tuesdays at 12:00PM CST / 11:00AM MST. Grief, anxiety, hope, love, pain, despair, awe – many emotions are used to describe our relationship with all of Creation. What is your personal, physical, and spiritual relationship with God's Creation? How does this relationship affect how you follow Christ? This Lenten devotional invites us to deepen our love for Creation and take action or fast for a climate in crisis. [Click here to register](#).

Ministry Personnel Gatherings - Tuesdays at 1pm

Facilitated gatherings for all ministry personnel (active or retired) will continue every on Zoom. Please check the website calendar for [connection information](#).

Getting Started 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](#).

NEW: Centre for Christian Studies offers CCS Friday: Creating Harmonious Space

On **Friday, February 23 from 12:00 to 1:00 CST** join an online conversation about creating "harmonious space" rather than "safe space". Harmonious space is the condition in which diversity and inclusion truly grow. Guided by author and educator bell hooks, who said, "Learning takes place in harmonious space" and "Community that allows for risk, the risk of knowing someone outside your own boundaries is love." We will consider harmony and risk as opposed to "safety" as the best environment suitable for diversity.

Our special guest will be Deaconess Adrainne Gray, who was consecrated a Lutheran Diaconal Association (LDA) deaconess and ordained an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) deacon in 2017. She is currently the Director for Recruitment for the LDA with a focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and works remotely from her home in Atlanta, GA.

CCS Fridays are free. [Please register to receive a zoom link](#).

CCS Fridays are online conversations to help us respond faithfully to emerging issues in local contexts. These workshops are open to anyone who might be interested. There will be a presentation that will be recorded for future viewing, plus opportunities to engage with the ideas in small groups.

NEW: Bearing Faithful Witness- addressing anti-Judaism,

February 26–March 11, 2024, 6:00-7:30PM CST, 5:00-6:30PM MST. Join members of faculty from our United Church theological schools and guests, to explore [Bearing Faithful Witness](#), a United Church resource that addresses anti-Judaism in worship, liturgy, Christian education, and scriptural interpretation. Participating schools are: Vancouver School of Theology, St. Andrew's College, and Emmanuel College. [Register now!](#)

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.

2. Next Month

Updated: World Day of Prayer 2024 (wicc.org) **Friday, March 1** or a day of your choice.

This year's service has been prepared by Palestinian Women and includes material and a full video of the service. [Please have a look at their many prayerful and thoughtful resources here.](#) Please contact Linda M. Ervin for more information at fieldrep567@wicc.org or call 250.493.5333.

NEW: You're invited: In person discernment for our new Affirming Committee: March 12, Calvary United Church, Prince Albert or by Zoom. In May, Living Skies voted to become Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Affirming. To carry this work into the future, the Region needs to move from an interim task group to a longer-term committee, and for that, people with a passion for this work of public, intentional, and explicit commitment are needed and welcome. Come out in person or online and discern with the Affirming task group to see if you're called to help Living Skies live into its commitments. Please contact Justice Minister Julie Graham for details, jgraham@united-church.ca

NEW: Equipping the Saints Save the Date!

The next gathering of folks interested in pastoral visiting will be on **Thursday, March 14 at 1:30pm**. Details including content and special guest to follow.

St. Andrew's College "Year of Intention"

The last event will be **Tuesday, March 19** - Transgender and Non-Binary Realities (panel discussion). Specific information will follow, closer to the date. Our "Year of Intention" will culminate in a splendid worship service, the date is still to be decided.

For more information, please contact shawn.sanfordbeck@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca

3. Into the Future:

Anti Racism Work and Action conference for those in ministry with children and youth, April 4-6 2024, Vancouver. Held in-person at the Epiphany Chapel on the University of BC Campus.

An [amazing line up of speakers](#), worship leaders, and hosts are already preparing to welcome, educate, and inspire *you* in Spring 2024! [Click here for full details.](#) If you are considering attending, please let justice minister Julie Graham know: jgraham@united-church.ca

NEW: Save the date – Sask UCCW AGM and Gathering – Saturday, April 27, 2024

The Saskatchewan United Church of Canada Women AGM and Gathering will be held on **Saturday April 27 2024** at St. David's Trinity United Church in Saskatoon. Details to follow.

Hear ye; hear ye. Good News is here!

The Living Skies Regional Council Meeting Planning Committee is pleased to announce the next regional meeting will be held from **June 13 to 15 (2024) at the Travel Lodge** (Idylwyld Dr. N. and Circle Dr) **in Saskatoon**, with the **Moderator, the Right Rev. Carmen Lansdowne attending** for part of our meeting. The Service of Praise will be at a United Church in Saskatoon (as yet undetermined) on **Sunday, June 16**. This year the **registration fee will remain at \$175.00**.

At your upcoming Annual Meeting, **please remember to elect or appoint your Community of Faith's Regional Council Representative** (each congregation is entitled to have and send at least one). Their involvement in the wider church is extremely important in keeping our Living Skies Regional Council functioning and healthy for the long term.

Watch for the more information about the Regional Meeting coming out soon!

Advance notice: Rural ministries conference: experience the rural culture of the Alberta Foothills, June 18-21 2024, Cochrane, AB. Hosted by the Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry and by the Rural Church Network of the United States and Canada.

Accommodation, meals, and some programming at Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre; transportation offered from Calgary airport to people from out-of-province. Program includes visits with the Wray Farm (involved in regenerative agriculture); Land of Dreams (Immigrant and Indigenous urban gardening); Mînî Thnî (a Stoney Nakoda community in the foothills, with roots in the history of the Indigenous Day of Prayer), and Banff (rural church life in a tourist region). Total cost for residential conference and all tours will be \$500. Options available for people not staying at Mount St. Francis. Information at www.circle-m.ca and [registration is now open at this link](#).