

# Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council  
The United Church of Canada



April 17, 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](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:** This week is National Volunteer Week

We know that Living Skies Regional Council and The United Church of Canada couldn't operate without the hard-working volunteers that contribute to the life and work of our great organization. Those of us who work with you are very aware of the significant role you play. **Please know you are really appreciated!!**



**NEW:** Pastoral Relations Ponderings - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 52](#). Updates from the Pastoral Relations desk.

### **NEW:** Are you missing the Rambler?

The Living Skies Regional Council office has been contacted by several folks to say they aren't receiving the Rambler anymore. We aren't entirely sure why, but we haven't changed anything. If you (or someone in your congregation or you know) isn't getting the Rambler, you / they will have to sign up yourself to get back on the list. Please use the sign-up form - [here is the link](#).

### **NEW:** Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization has passed!

All 16 Regional Councils, the National Indigenous Council, and just over 80% of pastoral charges in The United Church of Canada voted in the recent remit process. Huge thanks to all who participated in learning spaces, especially Indigenous knowledge keepers; to all who were on the phoning teams that helped push us into a large majority voting on the remit; and to all who voted, participated, and learned together. The conversation is not over! More detail on numbers and next steps [is available here](#).

### **NEW:** Duty of Care 101

This short tutorial will provide the fundamentals for developing Duty of Care practices within your faith community and time for Q & As. The United Church of Canada has a legal, moral, and spiritual duty to care for and protect participants in our church programs. This is a legal principle called "Duty of Care", and all groups, including church groups, have been, and will be, held legally responsible for ensuring reasonable measures are taken to ensure safety.

**Leadership: Terri Sparling**, M.S.W., R.S.W. (retired Social Worker), active member and youth leader at Avondale United Church, Stratford; **Kathy Douglas**, Faith Formation Minister, Antler River Watershed, Horseshoe Falls, Western Ontario Waterways Regional Councils.

**Date(s) Tuesday, April 23 @10:30-11:30am (ET) OR Wednesday, April 24 @ 7-8pm (ET)** (same event/content offered in two time slots)

**On Zoom:** To register and receive Zoom link contact [Kdouglas@united-church.ca](mailto:kdouglas@united-church.ca) Ph: 519 441 0656

### Your fabulous, sparkly Nominations Committee introduces itself!

If you have long wondered who the Nominations Committee is, and what they do, and why: wonder no more! [It's all right here in this new short video](#). It's amazing what you can explain in less than three minutes, and invite people all over our Region into the journey while you're at it. Please enjoy, and please share.

### **NEW: Speaking of the Nominations Committee**

Your Living Skies Nominations Committee is hard at work trying to fill vacancies on our commissions, committees, task groups and positions, both lay and ministry personnel, to be Commissioners to General Council 45. Over the next few weeks, we will highlight the work of some of Living Skies working groups that have some vacancies. This week, we would like to introduce you to the work of the **Pastoral Relations Commission**:

*Do you like to make decisions that will have a concrete and positive impact?*

*Are you good at understanding policies and applying them to real-life situations?*

*Do you enjoy the challenge of finding good solutions to complex issues?*

Then the Pastoral Relations Commission is for you! This Commission reviews and makes important decisions about all of the work associated with pastoral relationships, including ministry profiles and calls and appointments of ministry personnel, candidates and pastoral charge supervisors. As part of this team, you will assist communities of faith and ministers going through times of transition, conflict, and redevelopment. You will also support the work of Regional Council Liaisons as they accompany communities of faith through times of change.

If this doesn't sound like you, [here is the Current Opportunities list](#) with a description of the work for other committees. If something is of interest to you, please fill out the [expression of interest form](#) and someone from the Nominations Committee will be in contact with you.

### **Proposals to the Regional Council meeting, June 13-15 2024**

Proposals to the Regional Council or to General Council are the main avenue for asking the church to adopt policy positions or take specific and relevant action. They use a template for consistency, and to ensure that all the needed information for representatives or commissioners is included.

### **Updated: The Regional Council proposals template is now updated and ready for use.**

Please click here for the [Proposals PDF overview](#) (best for sharing and reviewing) and [click here for the Word version](#) (best for copying and pasting into a new document so you can build your proposal with the correct information and format.) **Deadline: May 17**, to allow delegates enough time to read and reflect in advance.

Completed proposals should be sent to the office, to Bev Diebert: [bdiebert@united-church.ca](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca)

Please do not hesitate to contact the office with any questions, so that staff can help you find the right person to speak with.

## **2. Wider Church Information:**

### **NEW: Are you from a church without a minister?**

Are you a member of a search team and looking for your next ministry personnel? Are you a pastoral relations liaison? If so we would like to an hour-long Open House with the Admission Matching Committee through Zoom on **Sunday April 21st at 4 pm EST**.

The Admission Matching Committee is part of a pilot project to bridge the gap between Ministers who are available and excited to work in The United Church of Canada and Communities of Faith who need a minister. As a follow-up to two previous Open Houses where we provided an overview of the program, this Open House will provide you with an opportunity to meet the four ministers still seeking a match through this program and to ask any questions you might have. This information should be relevant to search team members and pastoral relations liaisons, regardless of whether or not you attended one of our previous program.

To register for this free program, please send your name, location, email, and reason for registering to Beverly at [btthurst@united-church.ca](mailto:btthurst@united-church.ca).

**NEW: April/ May Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage: in your own community and with national church leaders** Throughout Lent, many communities of faith across Canada, and around the world, with their bodies prayerfully mapped Gaza onto their own communities through the worldwide Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage.

This renewed invitation is for everyone! Walk or roll together in your own community, preferably before **May 13**. Pray and act for a ceasefire, and for more than a ceasefire- for a just peace for all in Palestine and Israel. Then, if you can, join national church leaders for the final leg of their pilgrimage. KAIROS member church leaders, including Moderator Carmen Lansdowne, will gather in Ottawa on **May 22-23** to bring these calls in person to the Government of Canada and Parliamentarians. They'll urge them to take immediate and sustained steps to advance and promote the calls made in the [Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage](#).

Please see the [United Church site](#) and the [KAIROS site](#) for more details. If you would like to plan a pilgrimage in your community, please let the Regional Council know so that we can support you. Email Regional Justice Minister Julie Graham at [jgraham@united-church.ca](mailto:jgraham@united-church.ca)

**NEW: Earth Day Monday April 22: resources and plans!**

For Earth Week, **April 21-28**, [Moderator Carmen Lansdowne](#) reminds us that change takes all of us. Each action brings hope. Let's make hope visible across the country. During Earth Week, let's show up [For the Love of Creation](#)! Let's pray, learn, and act for Creation. Read the [full news story](#), and [host and participate in climate justice events](#). A worship service for Earth Sunday can be downloaded from the [Worship page](#).

### 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 [vnelson@united-church.ca](mailto:vnelson@united-church.ca).

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

#### **From Fear to Faith: How to talk about money in church - Thurs, April 25 at noon MT & 1pm CT**

This 60-minute session is for church leaders—both clergy and lay—to unpack some of the fears we have around talking about money and giving in church. Let's chat how we can move from scarcity, secrecy, obligation, and transaction towards abundance, transparency, joy and transformation. We will cover the practical and theological rationale for straightforward conversations about individual giving and how the church receives and uses money. [To register click here](#).

**Setting Up Your Giving Program** – Starts the week of **April 30** 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](#).

### Advance notice: call for General Council 45 Commissioners

In 2025 we'll celebrate the United Church's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, and see a return to an in-person General Council in Calgary. It's going to be a big and busy year. Important preparation for the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the General Council will include the election of General Council Commissioners, who serve a three-year term, attend the in-person meeting, and attend multiple online meetings through those three years as part of the overall governance of our church. Your Regional Nominations Committee will soon launch a process for identifying people who wish to stand for election, which takes place at their Regional Council meeting. For now, [here's the description of a Commissioner's role](#) for your discernment pleasure. Please share it freely.

### 3. Upcoming Opportunities:

**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'.

**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](mailto:bookings@queenshouse.org).

#### Summer Camp in Saskatchewan!

Spring is here and with it the excitement amongst campers, volunteers, and staff at our amazing UCC Camps! **Lumsden Beach Camp** (near Regina Beach): *Registration is open!*

<https://www.lumsdenbeachcamp.com/>

**Camp Shagabec** (Cypress Hills): *Registration is open!* Applications for Volunteers are open.

<https://shagabec.com/>

**Camp Tapawingo** (Candle Lake): *Registration is open!* Staff applications are still being accepted for head cook and lifeguard/medic. <http://www.camptapawingo.net/>

**Camp Christopher** (<https://www.campchristopher.ca/>): *Registration is open!*

**Camp Woodboia** (<https://www.facebook.com/p/Camp-Woodboia-100070296482386/>)

### 4. Reminders:

#### **ATTENTION: Pastoral Charges with Manses**

We have been notified by Erik Mathiesen, Chief Financial Officer of The United Church of Canada, about a requirement for all Pastoral Charges with manses to submit a CRA form related to "Underused Housing Tax" by **April 30, 2024**. **It is the responsibility of the UC General Council and Regional Councils to flag the risk related to not complying. There is an apparent duty to file - with a penalty for noncompliance.** For more information about the Underused Housing Tax, please read this [memo](#). The General Council website offers some information [here](#). The Tax was also discussed at the Treasurer's webinar held on **February 28**, including a bit of a "how to" complete the form. To watch the recording, [click here](#). The discussion about the Underused Housing Tax begins at 33:45 minutes. **To keep up-to-date** on the latest news and advice for treasurers, trustees, payroll contacts, and more, join every month.