

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada



May 15, 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

NEW: Pastoral Relations Ponderings - [Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 53](#). Updates from the Pastoral Relations desk.

NEW: First of a three-part series from Jordan Cantwell, the Prairie Growth Animator
Check out Jordan's [Ideas for Summer Family Ministry: Take-Home Activities](#).

UPDATED FINAL CALL: Proposals to the Regional Council meeting **Deadline: May 17**

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

NEW: Moderator's Flourishing workshop, open to all, **Saturday June 15, 10:00AM-4:00PM**

Saskatoon Travelodge and conference centre, 106 Circle Dr. W, Saskatoon
Join our Moderator, the Right Rev. Carmen Lansdowne in this public all-day workshop! United Church folks from across the Region are invited to attend and participate. [Here's the shareable invitation](#) and full details.

Registration: You don't need to be a delegate to the full meeting to attend - all are welcome, especially as a team from your community of faith or ministry. **If you're already registered as a delegate, visitor, or guest for the full meeting, you don't need to register again.** [Here's the Saturday registration form](#) . **Deadline: May 27**, because of catering deadlines.

Cost? Free. You will need to pay for lunch if you wish to have it at the hotel, but the day is free.

What's this about? It's a space to collectively engage questions about how our communities and churches can thrive, instead of just survive.

Registration for the upcoming Regional Council Meeting is now open

The Living Skies Regional Meeting will be held from **June 13 - 15, 2024** at the Saskatoon Travelodge (106 Circle Dr.), with the Service of Praise being held at Knox United Church 83 Spadina Cres. E.) beginning at 10am. The theme of this meeting will be '**Bold, Deep, Daring**', a variation of the United Church's Call and Vision. **Please ensure you have elected a Regional Representative** for your Community of Faith who will be able to attend. Please see [the Accommodations List](#) on the Regional Gathering page for **recommended accommodations and blocked room deadlines. Billeting will not be available at this meeting.** This year, the registration fee is \$175 for the full in-person meeting and will include meals and break items provided at the meeting. The registration fee for joining on-line is \$50.

To Register for the full meeting:

- Click on the link to open the registration form found on the [Regional Gathering page](#) (first line in the second paragraph). Please answer all the questions on the form.
- Payment Options: You can pay by mailing a cheque to the Living Skies Regional Council Office (60A Athabasca St. E. Moose Jaw, SK S6H 0L2), by E-transfer by emailing livingskies@united-church.ca (no password) or through PayPal (credit card). If you are paying by cheque, please ignore the final PayPal section. You can also purchase tickets to only attend the **Saturday evening Celebration of Ministry Banquet.**

If your Community of Faith representative can't access the website or encounter problems, please contact **Bev Diebert at the Regional Council Office** (306-704-0181) and she will register for you when you are on the phone.

Registration deadline: Registration for both full meeting participation and for the Saturday Moderator's Event will close on **Monday, May 27**. This is to allow the office time to get final meal numbers to the hotel catering the meals.

Living Skies Regional Council Affirming celebration Thursday June 13, 2:00PM

Having finished the formal requirements of the Affirming process, Living Skies now moves into new commitments to living into being Affirming. All are welcome to the Affirming celebration, online via YouTube, and in person, **Thursday June 13 at 2:00PM**, at the Living Skies Regional Council meeting opening worship, **Saskatoon Travelodge** and Conference Centre, 106 Circle Dr, Saskatoon. Absolutely everyone is welcome! You do not need to be a meeting delegate to attend, and the space is accessible. Free parking is available. [Please use this link to invite others!](#) If you would like to send a note of congratulations and support, please email livingskies@united-church.ca, or send a card to 60A Athabasca St. E., Moose Jaw, SK, S6H 0L2 (the card needs to arrive **by June 10, please**).

Affirming You Are Loved T shirt and bunnyhug sales for the Region

You might remember the You Are Loved t shirts and bunnyhugs for sale at last year's meeting. Artist Yoonjoo Shin has updated the design a little, and we're again making these available for online purchase, with pick up at the meeting to save on the considerable mailing costs. As of the newsletter deadline, the ordering page hasn't been updated, so please watch Facebook, the website, and next week's newsletter. T shirts are around \$32 and bunnyhugs (aka hoodies) \$56.

Ordering deadline: May 31.

Invitation to send photos of your ministry to the Regional meeting!

In keeping with the theme “DEEP | BOLD | DARING” of Living Skies Regional Meeting 2024 being held in Saskatoon, **June 13-16**, we are creating a slideshow to bring greetings from all parts of the Region.

Help us make sure your community of faith, ministry, or partnership with the United Church is represented through some creative photos and short text. **Deadline: June 2.** [Click here for all the details!](#) Thank you to Mark Pitman, member of the planning committee, for wrangling all the photos and helping us greet one another.

NEW: Thanks for the Party

The Nominations Committee would like to thank all who turned out for the *Prepping for Pentecost* party last night. There was much fun and laughter as well as some learning. And, some folks left with prizes.

NEW: the Nominations Committee introduces *The Justice Team*

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 [Justice Team](#).

Are you concerned about struggles for social justice and wellbeing for all God’s creation?

Do you want to hear stories about these, and then help engage the people of the Regional Council, and our community partners, in prayerful action?

Do you want to hold space for diverse groups to connect their justice concerns with each other?

Do you want to help the Region develop good policies and engagement on these joys and struggles?

If so, you could find fulfilment on the Justice Team! This group is responsible for connecting groups in Living Skies who work on a wide range of concerns, and it also connects the people of the Regional Council to United Church and ecumenical or interfaith commitments to justice. Meeting monthly by Zoom, it also holds open houses to help people connect with each other stay up to date. It will also be reviewing our Regional policies and commitments. If you’ve got the passion for justice, this Team is all about that.

If this doesn’t sound like you, here is an [updated 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.

To see what the Nominations Committee does and who they are, [it’s all right here in this new short video](#). Please enjoy, and please share.

Invitation: plan for SK Arbor Week, May 19 - 25

Walter Farquharson, Moderator 1990-92, encourages the people of Living Skies Regional Council to help celebrate Arbor Week in Saskatchewan. [Have a look at his invitation here](#). The province inaugurated this focus on trees three years ago in response to a request from nature groups, and Walter believes churches have a unique community contribution they can bring. The week runs annually **the last full week in May** (Saturday to Sunday) and celebrates Arbor Day on the Friday of that week. Have a look at his reflection and invitation below. As an additional resource, [this is an editorial Walter wrote for the Yellowhead Flyway Birding Trail Association](#), and you have his permission to use it as you wish. Go forth and hug, plant, or save a tree!

2. Wider Church Information:

Climate justice/energy transition opportunity for young adults! May 20 deadline

KAIROS is seeking young adults to participate in its Strengthening Voices for a Just Transition project. This project aims to nurture a cohort of up to 12 changemakers from Edmonton or Saskatoon to help guide us through the next stages of the energy transition and strengthen just transition policies and programs with principles from Indigenous peoples, young people, and those most affected by the climate crisis. [Click here for full information.](#)

[Click here to apply.](#) **Deadline** to apply has been extended to 11:59 p.m. PDT on **Monday, May 20**. You can also share these posts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#). If you have any questions, please contact Beth Lorimer, Ecological Justice Program Coordinator at blorimer@kairoscanada.org.

Updated May Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage: in your own community and with national church

leaders The worldwide Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage which began in Lent continues. This renewed invitation is for everyone! Walk or roll together in your own community, preferably before **May 22**. Pray and act for a ceasefire, and for more than a ceasefire - for a just peace for all in Palestine and Israel. KAIROS member church leaders, including Moderator Carmen Lansdowne, will gather in Ottawa on **May 22-23** to urge government 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. **Here's a new, introductory little guide for planning your pilgrimage, especially in smaller communities.** 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

Reminder: call for General Council 45 Commissioners

In 2025 we'll celebrate the United Church's 100th 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 45th 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'.

Updated Wait- Is This Racist, new online community to explore anti-racist practices!

Still time to join! **Ministry beyond the adults in our spaces, Tuesday, May 21, 6:00 pm–7:30 pm CDT OR Thursday, May 23, 12:00 pm–1:30 pm, CDT.** How do our buildings; grounds; and ministry with children, youth, and people beyond our doors reflect our relationship to this racist society? Together, we'll be drawing from some of the themes of the book [Wait—Is This Racist? A Guide to Becoming an Anti-Racist Church](#) to explore very practical ways of co-creating anti-racist congregations. Full description: "[Wait—Is this Racist?](#)" on Church X, the national church's online learning platform.

Rethink Children and Youth Ministry: and Online Summit

Hey all you awesome people involved in working with kids and youth - this online conference looks REALLY GOOD and it's FREE! It's the week of **May 20-24** and there will be online content all day. Sign up and take in a session or two or grab your coffee and snacks and settle in for the whole week! <https://convergencecolab.org/.../rethink-children-and...>

I'm familiar with several of the speakers (including Sarah Bessey and Brian McLaren) and can't wait to hear from some new voices as well. If you're in the Saskatoon area and would like to join me in person to go online, please be in touch and I'll bring the snacks! Sent an email to Lindsay Mohn at LivingSkiesYaya@united-church.ca.

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.

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!* Hiring for Head Cook, assistant cook and maintenance. <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!* <http://www.camptapawingo.net/>

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

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

Registration is open! They are also looking for Leaders-In-Training (under 16) and Cabin Leaders (age 16+)

4. Reminders:

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, please check the spam / junk folder(s), it may be there. If not, then you / they will have to sign up yourself to get back on the list. [Here is the sign up link.](#)

Reflections from a Growth Animator

One of the simplest ways to grow our community of faith is to be genuinely welcoming when new people come to our church. Folks who show up are looking for a community where they can experience belonging. How we welcome them - or fail to - will determine whether they come back again. Although most people describe their community of faith as friendly and welcoming, newcomers often tell a different story. How does someone experience your community of faith when they don't already know people there? [Here is a story](#) from a United Church Growth Animator about a community of faith who offered exceptional welcome to their family. Perhaps there are lessons for all of our communities of faith for how we can strengthen our welcome and grow our church.