



The Common-tater

This spud's for you

Volume 3

LIVING SKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING NEWS

Issue 1

June 13—June 15, 2024, Saskatoon

Welcome to LSRC Meeting 2024

Living Skies Regional Council (LSRC) Convenor Darrell Reine called the meeting to order – introduced the theme for our gathering, which is also the UCC New Vision Statement: Deep Spirituality Bold Discipleship and Daring Justice! After introducing the people on stage (including Mari, who is a voting delegate but will NOT be swayed by doggie treats) - we were quickly launched into our opening Worship and Affirming Celebration, lead by Aurora Espenand and SunDo Hyun.; and assisted by our Meeting Music Team Mark Ziekle and Dylan Mowbray.

After the opening song, prayer, lighting of the rainbow candles and territory acknowledgment, we were blessed by the amazing group of people who crossed the stage including our special guests Rachel Yahyahkeekoot and Melody Wood. Through out the next hour we were taken on an incredible journey to mark the affirming process the Region has been on for the last number of years (yes even through COVID) and to celebrate that the Living Skies Regional Council is now officially an affirming ministry of The United Church of Canada (UCC). (Yeah!) At one part in the service, we also heard for our Moderator, Rt Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne who began by recognizing those who are blind or sight impaired by giving a visual description of herself including the gold shoes she was wearing because if the pope can wear red leather shoes, The Moderator of the UCC can wear gold shoes. Following this she shared her wisdom, strength and hope with us reminding us that we continue to be on a path of learning and un-learning as part of our collective journey of faith AND living into the promises we make as an Affirming ministry.

To quote our Convenor of the LSRC, Darrell Reine, "This is the beginning of our affirming journey, not the end. The work continues!" After singing together, *We are a Rainbow*, our Moderator Carmen sent us into the World (and the rest of our meeting) by reminding us to "Always Make Room for Love!"

The 17 Affirming Ministries in Living Skies Regional Council

The first ministry was in Saskatoon—St. Thomas-Wesley and the most recent, Heritage in 2024.

The current affirming ministries are: Regina: St. James, Sunset, Eastside, Wesley, Knox-Metropolitan, Lakeview, Heritage; Saskatoon: Grosvenor Park, St. Martin's, McClure, Mayfair; Moose Jaw: St. Andrews; Prince Albert: Calvary; Swift Current: First; Humboldt: Westminster; St Andrew's College and NOW Living Skies Regional Council.



Living Skies YAYAC (Youth and Young Adult Community) is here - find us at the rainbow table! We're your hosts for YAYAC events in the region: Retreats, Confirmation, leadership events, and other exciting opportunities at the national church level. We're also your source for resources, workshops, and conversations that support YOUR ministry!

Wondering how you can be involved in ministry with young people in our region?

- Share info about our events
- Drive a youth to a YAYAC Event
- Volunteer to help plan a YAYAC Event (sleeping on church floors optional)
- Sponsor a youth to attend an event
- Buddy up with a United Church Camp

Join our mailing list by contacting Meghan.

Follow our socials: we're on Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok Living Skies Youth & Young Adult

Minister: Rev. Lindsay Mohn livingskiesyaya@united-church.ca

Living Skies YAYAC Animator: Meghan Drabble lsyayac.meghan@gmail.com

Living Skies Camp Liaison: Rod Leuty rod.leuty@sasktel.net

In the quiet curve of the evening of our first day of the 2024 Living Skies Regional Council meeting we took time to remember and celebrate the lives of people lay and ordained who no longer draw breath and walk among us since we last met. We gave thanks for the lives and love that they shared. We lit candles and remembered. We also gave thanks for four communities of faith that ended their journeys this past year and gave thanks for the faith that they nurtured and expressed as they worshipped and worked together these past many years. As we celebrated and remembered, we were blessed.

Congratulations

Ordinands:

Sheila Deforest	Deborah Ferber	Ryan Sawchuk
Roy Bortolotto	Lynette Callfas	Cam Fraser
Peter Gilmer	Doreen Hewitson	Gary Johnson
Lorna King	Jo Mader	Bonnie Morton
Darrell Reine	John Sellwood	Gayle Wensley

Commissionand: Dave Whalley **Admittand:** David Mugadzi

Retirees: Jim Balfour, Mohandas Barnabas, Tim Ellis, Kathleen James-Cavan, Connie Sykes, Bill Unger and Jim Wolff

Celebrating: Years of Ministry:

50 YEARS—Thomas Powell

45 YEARS—Dexter van Dyke, Mark Wartman

40 YEARS—Carolyn Conarroe, Carolyn McBean, Nancy Steinbachs

35 YEARS - Hazel Arbon,

Nobuko Iwai, Flor Linantud, Mary Young

30 YEARS - Debra Berg, Lorna King, Marilyn Leuty, Noreen Powell, Louise Robson, Ken Schrag, Erin Shoemaker



In Memoriam:



Bernice Saulteaux
Celia Ricker
Marilyn Petrie
Mildred Harper
Howard Hanson

June Newsham
George Holliday
Betty Anne
Williamson
Elsie Livingston

Evelyn Gay
Victor Greenlaw
Reg Mooney
Gladys Pavo Penny
George Brown



2024 PROPOSALS

The first day of the LSRC was a warm one! We listened to people clarify the six proposals ranging from Anti-Poverty to Congregational Governance. Then we surged onto the discussion phase of our process. Table groups had 30 minutes to recap, debate, tease and take notes for Regional Council Executive. Step three will work for a decision and our proposals. If we don't get to a decision, it will be referred to the Regional Council Executive. The proposals are:

- Responding to the Crisis in Palestine / Israel
Clergy Members from Saskatoon.
- Anti-Poverty Concerned Anti-Poverty People
- Growth Priority St. Paul's United Church, Saskatoon
- Church Improvement Grant
Mount Royal Emmanuel United Sktn
- Congregational Governance St. Paul's United Church Sktn
- Review Questions Required by of The Manual of Candidates at the Time of Ordination, Commission or Recognition.
St. James United Church, Regina

Are you growing warts??

Growth Animator for the Tri-Region Jordan Cantwell asked us, "Are you growing warts?" W.A.R.T.S. is the acronym for **W**elcome, **A**ttract, **R**etain, **T**ransform, **S**end out. Growth is more than numbers or finances, but deeper spirituality and relationships with neighbors. It's being unapologetic in sharing our faith—others need to know what has made our lives better. Evangelism isn't a bad word. Word of God at the center of the lives that we've experienced must be gotten out. Being confident and humble in sharing our faith with a world in need—that's what God is leading us to do. Talk about what gives us life: a relationship with Jesus, God's love—and look for situations to spread it to others.

Nominations

The General Council Commissioners were chosen from a long list of applications. The committee prepared a list of diversity characteristics to make their selections. The commissioners (and alternates) were brought to us and elected. **WE NEED YOU!! LSRC NEEDS YOU!!** Please consider whether you have skills and gifts to offer, or should you consider tapping someone else. Please complete the application form. Committees still needing more members are: Affirm (4), Nominations (2) and Regional Council Executive.(3).

We are invited to join Dian Bosman, Member Engagement with General Council who will be offering a workshop for how to engage and recruit volunteers. It will be over the Friday supper break. We'll share lots of ideas and best practices.

Friday's opening worship

I thoroughly enjoyed a shift in perspective as I listened to Aurora's message. During the opening worship on Friday morning. She started with sharing the challenge of being subjected to opinions and scrutiny about her own personal body and instructions on how to present "it" to others. In the weaving of story on her faith and journey she spoke to various points:

- The opinions and comments made are issues of the speaker, and she only owns the need to be herself.
- relationship to your body is an important and integral part of worship. To detach from your body is not an effective way to worship.
- we are asked to fully and wholly worship - our joy / sorrow, as well as soul/ body/ mind.
- spirit and the breathe of the body are the gifts for life - and they are one.
- Jesus rose to heaven body and spirit. Does that not say how important the body is.

TRC Report

Darrell Reine began the report by sharing the story of Westminster developing a healing garden as an act of reconciliation Julie Graham framed the discussion with us, before sending us to table groups for conversation. She expressed gratitude for her relatives that have helped shape her understanding of reconciliation and the realities of our history.

We were offered a number of points to frame our discussion

1. Apologies we have made to Indigenous People
2. TheTRC calls to action, and the ones especially referring to the church. This is generational work. If you haven't looked at them recently, take another look.
3. The landfill searches and the murdered and missing indigenous women and girls and 2Spirit folk.

The Blanket Exercise is being worked on to be made available again and is an important experience an opportunity to learn our history.

Julie Graham named the challenge for us in this work as white people. The remit passing is a great step forward but does not mean the work is over. It was a challenge because of the (colonial) rule that a community of faith not voting is counted as a no vote. Julie expressed deep gratitude for all those who worked hard to educate and learn together to make the vote happen.

We need to live with the discomfort of experiencing indigenous stories and realities and culture.

There was a book recommendation for the book *True Reconciliation* by Jody Wilson Raybold. A quote was read, which included the important elements of Learn, Understand, Act as important elements of reconciliation.

We went into table groups to discuss the following questions:

1. What are obstacles to right relations work in your context?
2. Where have you seen signs of change or hope?
3. What support do you need from the Regional Council?

These would be good questions to take back to your community of faith for discussion as well!

DISPLAYS Seventeen colourful displays are a great place to get information. Please check out the many displays on a variety of group and organizations. Thanks to all who have completed the Display quiz, there are still several Tim's gifts cards still to be won. Thanks to all who brought their informative displays that helps us learn more about the work done with in our United Church.

