

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada



August 21, 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: Welcome Back

We hope you had a great summer break with some time for rest and relaxation. Watch here for information about items, events and happenings we feel is important for you to know about.

NEW: Roll of Regional Council - by the numbers:

	IN-PERSON:	ON-LINE:	TOTAL:
Ministry Personnel	67	3	70
Lay Delegates	66	5	71
Members At Large	3		3
Guests	8		8
Registered Visitors	5	1	6
GC / RC Staff	16		16
TOTALS	165	9	174

As well as these facts and figures – we had 3 youth attending (included above) and 16 additional people who came for the Saturday evening Celebration banquet.

NEW: M&S results from the Regional Meeting

The fundraisers at the Regional Meeting brought in \$5,515 and the Service of Praise raised \$1,197.25, all for M&S. If you made a pledge and have not yet sent it in, please send your donation by cheque or money order, **or** send Visa or MasterCard information with gift amount to: Philanthropy Unit / The United Church of Canada / 3250 Bloor St. W., Suite 200 / Toronto, ON / M8X 2Y4

Updated: Ministry Personnel Gatherings

The Zoom room will be open over the summer but there will be no facilitation. [Connection information is in the calendar.](#)

NEW: Women's Camp at Camp Christopher – September 6-8, 2024

Women of the United Church have been invited to join a weekend of fun, hope and joy. Camp registration starts at **4pm on Friday** and ends **after lunch on Sunday**. Register by sending your name, address, any dietary or accommodation needs and payment by e transfer to Sharon at womenscamp1@gmail.com . [Click here for the information page](#) or call Donna at 306-535-6916.

THANK YOU from Nominations to all who volunteered at the Regional meeting to fill vacancies on committees. If you didn't attend, please check [our Nominations page](#) on the website for unfilled vacancies and if you feel so called, file your [expressions of interest](#) for the group that interests you.

Season of Creation resources available now

The 2024 Season of Creation will take place from **September 1st to October 4th** with the theme "To hope and act with Creation". This year, the **September 1st** celebration falls on a Sunday, providing a special opportunity to prepare prayer services in tune with this year's theme and symbol. We invite everyone to start planning your events and celebrations! [Download the 2024 Celebration Guide here](#). Further information about the [Season of Creation is available here](#).

Canadian rural churches featured in cross border journal

Thank you to Rev Catherine Christie for her article on rural realities and ministries, published in the journal Currents in Theology and Mission. You can [read the full edition here](#), entitled *Flourishing: Rural Communities and Land in Global Perspective*; [click here for Catherine's article](#).

Directory Updates

Again, over the summer, Bev Diebert worked on updating the Regional Council Directory with the information gathered during registration for the Regional Meeting. If you registered for the 2024 Regional Meeting, (and gave permission for the next three years), your contact information will be included in the directory. Ministry Personnel who didn't register /didn't give permission will still have their name and pastoral charge contact information included. VAMs and committee members who did **not** register for the meeting, but still wish to be included, please send Bev Diebert an email (bdiebert@united-church.ca) with your name, address, phone number(s) and / or email with permission to include for the next three years (until the next in-person meeting). Any questions or concerns, please contact Bev.

Communities of Faith / Pastoral Charges, if you have updates or corrections to your mailing address, phone number/s and / or email address, please let Bev at the Living Skies Regional Office know. The new directory should be ready for posting on the website by the end of September.

Rethink Children and Youth Ministry: An Online Summit

<https://convergencecolab.org/p/rethink-children-and-youth-ministry>

Are there kids and youth in your church? Do you wish there WERE kids and youth in your church but don't really know how to make it happen in this time and context? Contact our YAYAC Minister Rev. Lindsay Mohn at livingskiesyaya@united-church.ca for access to this amazing conference. The event has already happened, but Living Skies Region has purchased lifetime access to the videos as a resource for all of our communities of faith. They are all approximately 30 minutes long, and Lindsay has a top 5 list of the Must Watch videos from the week!

Save the date:

Living Skies Regional Council will be participating in covenanting services on **September 29** at Saskatoon: Mount Royal Emmanuel with Debz Ferber, and the Regina Collaboration with Bonnie Morton, Russell Mitchell-Walker and Dexter van Dyke. And, on **November 3** at Davidson with Shelly Manley-Tannis. Details including timing to follow.

NEW: Ministry & Personnel Committees: Everything you wanted to know but were too afraid to ask Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister, will be offering an online training session on **Thursday, October 10 in the evening**. This will be a refresher for folks continuing in this role, and would also be appropriate for people just beginning. To register, please email Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca.

NEW: Equipping the Saints next gathering – October 16, 1:00-2:30pm

This initiative is an opportunity for lay folks to develop skills and gather information in an online community to strengthen and encourage visiting community of faith members, hosted by hospital chaplains Emily Carr and Lorna King. The goal is to aid caregivers in developing the sensitivities required to offer pastoral support. Everyone is welcome to attend, even if this is your first time joining. Contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca to register.

2. Wider Church Information:

NEW: The United Church of Canada Foundation's Fall 2024 grant round is now open!

Seeds of Hope grants support unique and innovative ventures that are ready to make an impact in our United Church and beyond. The Joint Grants Committee is now welcoming applications for new, unique projects which are: ****Providing innovative seniors' ministry; **Celebrating and encouraging children and youth; **Addressing environmental and social justice issues; **Looking at new ways to provide ministry and support during transition periods; **Facilitating experiencing faith and spirituality.** Also granting this round are the **Rowntree Scholarship** and **Alvin Dixon Memorial Bursary**. Seeds of Hope applications are due **October 15, 2024**. **Other deadlines vary**, so please check the terms before you apply. [Learn more by clicking here](#).

NEW: Three New UCC Foundation Grant Opportunities commence this fall:

United, we - In each of the next two years (2024 and 2025), up to \$100,000 will be available through "United, we" to support impactful existing work at United Church organizations and partners who otherwise would not qualify for funding through current granting programs.

Centennial Granting Fund - As we approach The United Church of Canada Centennial, many communities of faith will be eager to hold services and activities in celebration. This program will provide funding for events marking the milestone, emphasizing the importance of uniting to commemorate this historic achievement. Communities of faith and other organizations planning special events to commemorate the Centennial can apply for grants of up to \$5,000.

Promotion Project Fund - This program will provide grants of up to \$10,000 to support congregations in their marketing efforts as they seek to attract members, promote their vital ministries, and retain a strong community presence.

To learn more or to apply for one of these grants, [please click here](#).

NEW: Contemplative Gathering

St. Andrew's College invited you to join them on **Friday, September 20 at 10 a.m.** for an hour of quiet contemplation and conversation. As we begin a new academic year, we will explore the **Ember Day** theme of "**Birthing Hope and Harvest**". [Please join online here](#).

NEW: Lifelong Learning at St. Andrew's College

Are you looking for new opportunities to learn at your own pace, in your own space, following the questions and passions which really matter to you? St. Andrew's College Lifelong Learning Pathway offers all the tools you need to go deep in your quest for wisdom and insight. Certificate streams include "Leadership in the Faith Community", "Leadership in the World", and "Spiritual Exploration". Reasonable tuition subscription, with bursary support available!

<https://standrews.ca/lifelong-learning-pathway/>

Standing Together Against Hate Based on Religious Identity

The [Canadian Interfaith Conversation](#) has issued a statement on behalf of over 60 signatory faith traditions and institutions, including The Canadian Council of Churches, of which the United Church is a founding member. The goal: to present a common public position adopted by Canada's faith communities, on combatting hate against and between our country's religious communities. [Click here to read the statement in English.](#)

3. Upcoming Opportunities:

Please check out our CoF calendar on the LSRC website **for upcoming local events**. Our [Community of Faith events calendar](#) is open 24/7 for online events, so new events can be added at anytime - *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'.

A Spiritual Journey Rooted in Nature Tuesday, September 24 (4:00 pm) – Thursday, September 26, 2024 (1:30 CST) (Option to stay an extra day for a time of complete solitude) Qu'Appelle House of Prayer, Fort Qu'Appelle, Sk. Register by Sept 13

In this retreat, we will be inspired by Richard Rohr's contemplative practice to stop our busy lives and minds long enough to see everything in the natural world with humility and love. We will be invited to love what is right in front of us one step at a time, starting with a stone and then moving to the plant world, the world of creatures, and humanity itself. Once we see the divine fingerprint of beauty, truth, and goodness pulsing through all that is, we may have worked up to loving the divine in new and refreshing ways. For more information, visit: [Free Flow Wellness](#)

Hold the date! Rural Ministry Conference, October 25-27, 2024 in Fort Macleod, AB!

With workshops specifically designed for ministry in rural contexts, including First Third (children, youth, young adults) Ministry, Becoming Affirming, Intercultural Ministry, and Community Partnerships. Keynote speaker Rev. Bronwyn Corlett, Rural and New Ministries Coordinator, UCC. Registration opens late July!

NEW: "Faith in a Time of Genocide" - a United Network for Peace in Palestine and Israel Conference **November 1**, and **Palestine Land Exercise Training, Thursday, October 31, 2024** in Toronto, ON
This Conference and Land Exercise Training are both important opportunities to reflect on our faith and a call to faithfulness in solidarity with Palestinians. *"What does our faith call us to now?"* The conference invites you to wrestle together with these questions and find paths of effective action that bear witness to our faith. Our congregations, our United Church, our partners in Palestine Israel and our ecumenical friends need your faithful leadership now. We welcome your prayers for the people of Palestine and for UNJPPI as we prepare this conference. [Full details here.](#)

4. Reminders:

[Pastoral Relations Pondering Vol 54](#). New and updated information from the Pastoral Relations desk about the support committees and planned fall events.

Check out parts two and three of Jordan Cantwell, the Prairie Growth Animator's, three-part series. [Ideas for Summer Family Ministry #2](#) and [Ideas for Summer Family Ministry: Take-Home Activities #3](#).

Welcome back