

# Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council  
The United Church of Canada



October 16, 2024 – News

*“I don’t know who has done this. You did not tell me, and I heard about it only today.” Genesis 21:26*

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 Admins, please feel free to use these announcements in your 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 55](#). Updates from the Pastoral Relations desk.

### **NEW: October is Clergy Appreciation Month**

Our ministry personnel create opportunities for us to engage our spirituality through both community worship and personal accompaniment. Perhaps you have a story of a time your minister said or did something that touched your heart or nurtured your spirituality? Take a moment in the next few weeks to reach out to that person to tell them that story and express appreciation.

### **NEW: The 2024 - 2025 Living Skies Regional Council (LSRC) Directory is ready**

The revised version of the LSRC directory has been posted to the LSRC website, under Contact Us. The password is the same as last year (handed out at the Regional Meeting held in May 2023). If you need the password, please call Bev Diebert at 306-704-0181. The password won't be emailed.

### **NEW: Manses in Living Skies Regional Council**

Having finally got a good list of cemeteries, vacant lots and corners of fields owned by the United Church, the Property Commission is now moving on to manses. Some are occupied by clergy, some are rented out, and some are vacant awaiting clergy. Please look at [our current list](#) and check if not only the names associated with your Community of Faith but that of your neighbour's is correctly listed. If you have any corrections or additions to the list, please contact Bev Kostichuk at [bkosti@gmail.com](mailto:bkosti@gmail.com).

### **40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism 2024: Live event every Tuesday, Oct 15 –**

**Nov 19, 7:00 p.m. ET Saskatchewan focus: 22 October!** (please convert the time, noting that Daylight Savings Time ends Nov 3).

[40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism](#) has released its list of events. [Please click here and scroll down for details](#). There are also accompanying [study groups](#), which offer ways to integrate and reflect on the content with learners from across the church. [Register for this year's live events](#)— and please [sign up for the newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date with regular content for this year's exciting program.

**NEW: Video License Applications Now Open**

Video license applications are now open for annual licenses from January 2025 to December 2025. Many churches benefit from the opportunity to show films and clips during worship and at events, and require a public performance license (or video license) to do it legally. The United Church of Canada offers discounted access to annual licenses from both Audio Ciné Films and Criterion Pictures. To access more information about the licenses, including pricing, please visit: <https://rtps.ca/UCC/Categories/license.php>. If you have not had a chance to register for Buying United, please do so using the code **united** (all lowercase).

Apply here: <https://forms.office.com/r/6u3DdenSF8> **Applications Due by November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**NEW: Living Skies' Nominations is back at work**

The Nominations Committee has begun it's work of looking for people to fill positions that will become vacant next summer. Today we feature:

**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 interested, [please complete this interest form](#).

**Attention Treasurers:**

The annual salary scale is now available for 2025. [You can find the updated information here](#). Please note that this includes information to be communicated to ADP regarding cost of living increases for your ministry personnel, as well as the minimum amount for visiting ministry personnel (pulpit supply) for 2025. The schedule is now posted on the Living Skies website under Governance & Admin>Policies and Guidelines, under both the Pastoral Relations Commission and Committee on Ministry Personnel Support drop down menus.

**Ministry Personnel Gatherings**

Facilitated gatherings for all ministry personnel (active or retired) continue every **Tuesday at 1pm** on Zoom. Please check the website calendar for [connection information](#) to join colleagues for conversation and support.

**What are your plans for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary? New resources are now available**

We're not far from turning 100! We have [a Centenary resource and supports summary page](#) up on the regional website, and that includes an invitation to share your events with everyone. And find here [a short planning guide for communities of faith](#) from our Northern and Prairie Regional Council archivists Erin Acland and Leanne Templeton.

**Updated/NEW: Save the date - Covenanting Services**

Living Skies Regional Council will be participating in **three** upcoming covenanting services: On **November 3 at 2pm**, Rev. Shelly Manley-Tannis with Davidson United Church (315 Lincoln St.). A light lunch will follow. Also on **Nov 3 but at 3pm**, Heather MacKinnon with Battleford United Church. And, on **Nov. 10 at 3:30pm**, Maple Creek United Church will covenant with Sheila Deforest.

**You Are Loved t-shirts and bunnyhugs are available again!**

We have had so many requests for a third round of this lovely clothing and logo that the Regional Affirming Committee will be re-opening the store. This is your advance notice for Christmas shopping! [Please find all the updated details here.](#)

**Olive harvest focus and resources for Palestine, October 2024**

You're invited into this opportunity to understand the violence facing Palestinian farmers and villagers as they commence their annual olive harvest. Together, we will explore why this violence is happening, and what Canadians can do. We hope people who live in rural or remote areas closer to the rhythms of harvesting, fishing, and hunting will bring their lived experience to this work. Planned by SK United Church and Mennonite members, we warmly welcome everyone to film viewing, learning, worship, personal reflection, and advocacy. For October we offer resources and hybrid events for World Communion Sunday and World Food Day. [Information will be shared throughout on this web page.](#)

**2. Wider Church Information:****Strengthening Invitation | United in Prayer**

Each **Thursday at 11am Central / 10am Mountain** the Growth Department prays for and with communities of faith in our shared ministry of Strengthening Invitation. This event is hosted primarily in English.

Let us know how we can pray for your community of faith. \*Are you planning a special service to invite your neighbours? \*Are you reaching out to your neighbours through an event? \*Are you asking hard or exciting questions about your future?

Join us on Zoom and pray for others. Register to join us [here](#)

Send your prayer request to [growth@united-church.ca](mailto:growth@united-church.ca) (you can send a request even if you're not attending)

**General Council Executive meeting summary**

The GCE met September 27-28, as the church begins to prepare for an upcoming online meeting of General Council Commissioners, and the 45th General Council in Calgary next August. [Please click here for a summary.](#)

**Called to be the Church the Journey: Fall Stewardship Courses**

**Stewardship Resource Kits** - If you want to get started right away, consider downloading stewardship resource kits online. You can find links to 4 different themed [kits online here.](#)

**Set Up Your Giving Program – Begins Week of November 19** - This two-session course is for teams that have completed Getting Started in Stewardship and are wanting to focus on creating a stewardship campaign for winter or spring of 2025. [You can read more here.](#)

**Next Getting Started in Stewardship Course is November 20 at either 3 or 5:30pm (CST)**

Curious about how to revitalize stewardship in your community of faith? Register now for our next session of Getting Started in Stewardship. This 90-minute session is the foundational course to help your community of faith move away from the annual cycle of panicking about the budget, to an on-going, sustainable ministry of gratitude and generosity, which supports people in their lives of faith. You can participate as an individual or in a team. After the course, we'll support you in taking the next steps. [Register here on CHURCHx.](#)

If you have any questions, or want to discuss your community of faith's context, reach out to stewardship support staff, Vicki Nelson – [vnelson@united-church.ca](mailto:vnelson@united-church.ca)

### 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'.

#### **Bequests and Estate Giving – October 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm (CST).**

Did you know? *One-third of United Church people would consider including the church in their Estate plans if they were asked.*

This course will help you get your Planned Giving program set up and running, so that your community of faith can benefit from these financial gifts. A Planned Giving program can excite your community of faith and offer them new ways to financially support your ministry. These gifts from your donor's estates or savings can be transformational to both the donor and the church.

Attend both of these 1-hour on-line sessions with Jess Smith and Roger Janes to learn

- why you should offer a Planned Giving program and how to set it up and maintain it,
- what exactly are the different kinds of Planned Gifts?
- how to inspire and invite people to make a Planned Gift,
- how to recognize those who make a Planned Gift.

For more information, and to register, click here: [Bequests and Estate Giving](#)

#### **LeaderShift Rural Ministry Conference, Deadline: October 18**

**Friday, October 25 – Sunday, October 27, Trinity United Church, Fort Macleod AB.** In person, online TBC. This conference is for lay leaders and ministry personnel whose church life and work is rooted in a rural setting. Come experience rural hospitality, inspiring theme sessions and practical workshops tuned to today's rural ministry contexts! Workshops include a focus on intercultural ministry and anti-racism; Affirming ministry; youth; and much more. [Click here for full details.](#)

#### **General Council cross-country check-in, Tuesday October 22, 5:00PM CDT, 4:00PM CST/ MDT.**

Spend an hour with members of the General Council Executive, the decision-making body for the United Church between meetings of the General Council, in an informal, thoughtful town hall on **Oct. 22**. With the annual General Council meeting scheduled for October 19, this is an opportunity for you to engage with the decisions and dialogue from the annual meeting – right after it happens. [Here is a video invitation](#) from the General Secretary. **Everyone is welcome.** [Please click here to register.](#)

#### **General Council Nominations**

General Council is excited to launch their Fall 2024 Call for Nominations. This round of nominations closes on **Thursday October 24**. There are several open calls to engage volunteers. **Please visit our website to learn more about these [volunteer opportunities](#).** Please use this [form to nominate or express interest](#).

**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 24 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](mailto:bdiebert@united-church.ca).

**Updated:** *The Stones Cry Out* (2013) film viewing, **Tuesday, October 29th at 7:00 pm CST**, in person at Grace-Westminster United Church, Saskatoon, with an in person discussion after, plus a local option. This documentary lifts up the voices of Palestinian Christians who are often left out of coverage of the military occupation of Palestine. Although they are a small minority, Palestinian Christians have played a critical role in the territory's history and, as Palestine is the birthplace of Christianity, this community has a global significance for Christians.

The film covers Palestinian Christians' experiences from 1948 to the modern era, including the effects of the Israeli military occupation on Bethlehem. \*\*For those who cannot attend in person and want to view this film [you can see online for free here](#), and we encourage you to host a local group viewing followed by discussion. For discussion suggestions, see [Stones Cry Out discussion](#). Organized by the Just Peace Palestine Israel working group of Living Skies and Mennonite Church SK

**NEW: MCC Saskatchewan Peace Conference, "Climate Action for Peace"**

Join us at this year's event, on **November 2, 2024 at Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon**, where we will explore the connections between peacebuilding and a changing climate. Throughout the day, we will learn how MCC and its partners are addressing questions like: \* How can faith and peacebuilding drive action in the face of climate change? \* How can we inspire meaningful change within our communities?

**What to Expect: Plenary sessions:** 1) **Leah Reesor-Keller**, author of *Tending Tomorrow: Courageous Change for People and Planet*, will share insights on reimagining how we care for our world. 2) **James and Joan Alty**, former MCC staff, will discuss conservation agriculture in southern Africa. **Workshops:** focusing on practical responses to climate challenges from local churches, MCC Thrift Shops, and partners like KAIROS and Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

**Lunch** will be a nature-inspired feast, curated by Métis **Chef Jenni Lessard!**

To learn more and register, visit [Peace Conference SK 2024 | Climate Action For Peace | Mennonite Central Committee \(mcc.org\)](#). We hope to see you there as we learn together!

**4. Reminders:****Houselessness Resource**

The Warm Welcome Coalition of Regina has put together a resource of questions for people to use when engaging with candidates for the provincial election, October 28. While the Coalition is focused on Ending Houselessness, it recognizes the importance of a wide variety of issues so the questions cover a variety of topics. [This resource](#) is offered to people of Saskatchewan as they discern who to vote for this election season. There is also a pamphlet for the municipal election that is focused on Regina. If people wish that resource they can contact Russell Mitchell-Walker at [russell.eastside@gmail.com](mailto:russell.eastside@gmail.com)