

# Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council  
The United Church of Canada



November 13, 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 56](#). Updates from the Pastoral Relations desk.

**NEW:** Congrats to St Andrew’s United Church Yorkton on becoming Affirming!

Our Regional Council’s newest Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ affirming ministry is St Andrew’s United Church, and as an Affirming ministry itself, Living Skies offers its congratulations! This was a journey taken with faith, integrity and care by the [St Andrew’s Affirming Committee](#), amongst many others, and we’re delighted that there’s now official recognition of ministry that has been going on for a long time. We wish you many blessings on your continued path.

A reminder that Living Skies’ [Affirming Committee](#) is ready to support any ministry or person that wants to further their Affirming work, consider the process, or have thoughtful conversations. This includes online gatherings of Affirming or curious ministries and people (and hopefully an in-person gathering one day). You can contact them through the office: [livingskies@united-church.ca](mailto:livingskies@united-church.ca). Just put “Affirming Committee” in the subject line. Read more about their work here.

**NEW:** Honouring Advent’s radical roots: Resources on Palestinian human rights, event on avoiding anti-Semitism. As enormous violence continues in the Holy Land in Gaza and the West Bank, including Bethlehem, the United Network for Justice in Palestine and Israel is again offering an Advent candle-lighting liturgy for public worship and household prayers. [Click here for a copy](#). Two songs, written by Rev Juanita Austin, are also available for public use: O Town of Bethlehem ([YouTube link here](#)) and Will You Grieve for Gaza ([YouTube link](#)). [Here’s the PDF of lyrics for both songs](#), and an explanation. These biblical places are real communities that today are gripped by immense violence and trauma, and our Christian family and human rights activists in Palestine are asking us not to erase their lived realities as we re-tell our sacred stories.

There is also a live national online event on Advent scripture and avoiding anti-Semitism coming up November 19 with Dr Amy-Jill Levine that will be a rich time of learning and discussion. [Click here to register](#).

**NEW:** Advent Unwrapped liturgical resources

As planning for Advent continues, or as the need for creative new liturgy comes up at the last moment, don’t forget to check out the United Church’s Advent Unwrapped and its many and diverse resource. [All the resources are listed here](#), and there’s a [Facebook community here](#).

**NEW: Clarity on 100th anniversary package sent to communities of faith**

In October, many communities of faith or pastoral charges received communication from Brian Arthur Brown, chair of Friends of the United Church Foundation. The Regional Council notes that you are free to accept or ignore the invitation to plan a worship service, and offers some details on worship related to the United Church's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. [Please click here to read and share the clarification.](#)

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

The Nominations Committee has begun its work of looking for people to fill positions that will become vacant next summer. Today we feature: [The Nominations Committee](#)

*Do you delight in connecting people with opportunities that will feed their spirits?*

*Do you want to help strengthen regional bodies for the sake of our common good?*

*Are you a 'people person' who enjoys making phone calls and chatting with folks?*

*The Nominations Committee has a spot with your name on it!*

On Nominations, you will get to know the people of the Region and help match their gifts and passions with opportunities to serve the wider church. This committee gathers a slate of nominations for the officers of the Regional Council and its executive, commissions, committees, task groups, steering committees, and teams. It also provides nominations for unexpected vacancies or new positions which occur during the year. Only join this committee if you like to have fun and laugh a lot.

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**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.

**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. 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)

**Update on United Church policy on Palestine and Israel**

On October 19, the online meeting of General Council 44 adopted new policies related to Palestine and Israel. In summary, the United Church is: \* adopting the strategies of Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) movement and; \* responding positively to the request of NEW04 - Join the Apartheid Free Communities Movement, and; \* joining the consensus of the international human rights community in recognizing and rejecting Israel's apartheid system of laws and legal procedures towards the Palestinian people.

[Please click here for more details](#), including a letter from the Moderator. These policies are an invitation to the entire church, not just the General Council, so we are all encouraged to be informed of the details.

### Saskatchewan connection to the Gaza crisis asks for our help

Gaza is far away, and its suffering is incomprehensible, but Saskatchewan people do have connections. One of those is orthopedic surgeon Dr. Deirdre, originally from SK, who is currently serving with a medical aid organization in southern Gaza despite the immense personal risk. She has shared some heart-wrenching accounts about conditions in the hospital since she arrived in Gaza again in mid-October. **Dr. Deirdre has asked us to plead for the world to take note of the slaughter in North Gaza, and the targeting of hospitals, where many of her Palestinians colleagues are labouring in desperate circumstances while Israel withholds aid and deliberately kills health workers.** We can put our faith into action; we can do something. [Please click here to find action suggestions](#), and please share this brief write up and its link within your community of faith.

### 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'.

**All you need to know about Faithful Footprints energy efficiency grants, December 6, online, 3:00PM CST.** The Faithful Footprints Prairie Hub wants to give you money! These events are for United Church ministries interested in lowering carbon emissions and investing in energy efficiency and green energy projects in their faith spaces. These events will provide detailed information on how to apply for the grant, eligibility criteria, and tips for a successful application. Don't miss out on this opportunity to take the first step towards creating a more sustainable future! Click here for full [information](#); and [click here for December 6](#).

**Western Intercultural Ministries Network AGM and workshop, Thursday, November 14, 12:30 MST, 1:30PM Central Standard.** Your presence and ideas make intercultural ministry work! Please come for a short AGM, and a focus on the church's recent deep dive on diversity and equity in ministry leadership. WIMN's Executive represents the five Western Regions, and meets monthly. This supportive and fun space welcomes additional Regional representatives, and this meeting is a great chance to learn more about the network and how it runs. [Learn more about our work here](#). And [click here for full details on the meeting, workshop, and Zoom info](#).

### **40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism 2024: Event summary for November!**

**Time: 6:00PM CST, 5:00PM MST.** [40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism](#) comes to a close this month, and there are some great events coming up. [Click here for full information](#); a summary:

**Tues. Nov. 19:** The Texts of Advent: Finding Good News and Avoiding Antisemitism with Amy-Jill Levine. There will be English-French interpretation.

**Tues. Nov. 26:** What Will We Sing When We Need to Sing a New Song? with the Then Let Us Sing! Committee

### **UC Rural Ministries Network workshop for LLWLs: Thursday November 21, Zoom**

UCRMN is aware that many rural congregations are ministered to by Licensed Lay Worship Leaders. Each quarter UCRMN holds a free Zoom Workshop that allows folks to come together and share their stories, struggles, successes and blessings. **Thursday November 21, 2024** is for our many LLWL to check in and share their stories. [Please register!](#)

**“Finding Our Way Into Advent Hope”** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82963758924>

St. Andrew’s College, in partnership with Living Skies Regional Council, invites you to our next **contemplative gathering**, to be held with the Saskatoon Theological Union Chapel community on **Tuesday Nov. 26, at 11:40am Sask time**. Come spend 40 minutes or so in quiet contemplation, centered on the ancient practice of *lectio divina*. Join us via zoom, and be welcome!

**A Time for Awe - A Free Flow Wellness Zoom-Based Retreat** **Tuesdays, Nov 26 – Dec 17, 2024 (1:30-5 CST)** From our first breath to our last, experiences of awe create moments of connection to a vast mystery beyond ourselves, and inspire us to live our lives with greater unity and reverence. Leading up to Christmas, when we prepare to be awe struck by an incredible birthing story, we will explore the top four wonders of life that bring awe our way as identified by Dacher Keltner: moral beauty, collective movement, nature and music. For anyone interested, this theme will be further explored leading up to Easter with 4 other wonders of life that bring us awe. For full details visit: <https://www.freeflowwellness.ca/retreats> **Deadline: November 23**

**Youth Forum at General Council 45** **Application deadline is November 30.**

Youth Forum is an opportunity for young people ages 15-25 to participate in the education, decision-making, and community of General Council 45 of The United Church of Canada. Its aim is to ensure that young people have a voice in the denomination-shaping issues and decisions for the next three years in the life of the church. It is an opportunity to speak to issues that matter to young people, to share ideas, and to connect with peers and other members and leaders of the General Council. For more information and to apply: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/youth-forum-2025/>

## **4. Reminders:**

### **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.

### **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).

### **Volunteer Opportunity: Accountant Needed for Camp Tapawingo**

Camp Tapawingo, a not-for-profit ministry of the United Church, is seeking a CPA to volunteer their time to review our financial records and ensure compliance with governance requirements. We need your expertise to help ensure our books are accurate and transparent, reflecting our commitment to financial integrity as we continue to serve our community. This would be a review engagement once a year.

Your support will directly help us continue to offer meaningful programs to campers of all ages. If you’re willing to share your skills and make a difference, please reach out!

**Contact:** Terry at [info@camptapawingo.net](mailto:info@camptapawingo.net) Join us in supporting Camp Tapawingo and its mission!