

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council
The United Church of Canada



January 14, 2026 – Events

*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*

In this **EVENTS** edition of the Rambler, events are (mostly) listed in order of occurrence. For easy identification: **Date/s of the event** are highlighted in green; **Registration deadlines** are highlighted in dark orange; Events included for the first time will have **NEW:** beside the title of the event. And, it's hoped the **Into the future** section will help facilitate your long-term planning.

United in Learning - Find what's new in the [latest newsletter from the national church's online education, action and community program](#). Upcoming opportunities include a cross-country check up, and much more. **E-ssentials and more** – Please see the [very handy latest national newsletters](#), which goes over highlights for national work.

Check out the Community of Faith Calendar (on the Living Skies Regional Council website - 3rd option under News & Events). **Be sure to browse** the list for fun and interesting upcoming events. [Click here to view it](#). **Communities of Faith**, be sure to **submit your events** to the calendar (use the form, 4th option down under News & Events), so folks don't miss the festivities.

This Week's Events:

- ***Online Bible study - every Wednesday at 1 pm (SK time)** Contact jcantwell@united-church.ca for more information. Click here to join: <https://bit.ly/41Vh93V> *New participants always welcome!*
- ***Strengthening Invitation** - the Growth Department prays each **Thursday at 11a-m Central / 10am Mountain** Register to join [here](#) . Send your prayer request to growth@united-church.ca (you can send a request even if you're not attending)

NEW: Mission and Service Transfer Deadline:

Please be sure to transfer all your Community of Faith Mission and Service donations from 2025 prior to the **January 15 deadline**. The Transfer Form and information are available to treasurers and administrators through Church Hub, or contact your local Stewardship staff or Growth Animator for help: jcantwell@united-church.ca

- ***Ministry Personnel Gatherings - Tuesdays at 1:00pm on Zoom**. Connection info is in the calendar.

This Month:

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026 - Free resources available now

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling" (Eph 4:4)
Download the entire kit, including the International theme materials, and special resources developed for Canada [found here](#). The WPCU is traditionally observed from **January 18 to 25**. Weekofprayer.ca is a project of the Canadian Council of Churches, the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, and the Centre canadien d'oecuménisme.

'Kindle in Us the Fire of Your Love' - The Holy Spirit as Hope, Peace, and Unrest

A four-week series offered by Don Schweitzer, PhD on Zoom; **Thursdays, January 22, 29, February 5 & 12 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (CST)** [To learn more and register](#) . . This is a workshop offered by **Spirit River Community: A Retreat Centre Without Walls:** <https://www.spiritriverrivercommunity.org/>

NEW: Yes, Your Annual Meeting Can Be Inspiring! A Stewardship Webinar [Register now!](#)

January 28 at 11:00 am–12:00 pm CT Annual congregational meetings are required — but they don't have to be dull or discouraging. This one-hour online gathering will offer practical tools for shaping an annual meeting that reflects your congregation's ministry, tells hopeful stories, and invites members, donors, and newcomers into a shared vision for the year ahead. [See more...](#)

United Church's 100th Anniversary:**Updated: Short reminders of our history from the Centennial year continues**

As we enter the new year, here is another of Gayle Simonson's very short stories about United Church history. Many thanks to Gayle, who offers us these 100-word history vignettes for use in your own community! **Please remember to credit!** For our *fortieth* vignettes, she writes:

NEW: In 1989, Little Britain United Church, a stone building near Lockport, received provincial historic site designation as the oldest United Church building in Manitoba. Near Lower Fort Garry, it owed its early roots to Presbyterian Scottish workers for the Hudson's Bay company. In 1863 the HBC provided a land grant. The first building had a thatched roof! Like many early churches, it was also used as a school. Though most travel was by boat along the Red River, a trail for Red River carts connected it to the fort. The stone building was completed in 1874. A bell tower constructed in 1920 commemorates those killed in WW I. In 2004, a 4800 square foot hall was constructed. Recent photos are available on the website of the Manitoba Historical Society.

Next Month:**An Invitation to Wonder - Online Discernment Weekend February 20–22, 2026**

Is something stirring in you? A wondering about ministry — what it is, how it looks, and whether it might be calling your name? Join us for **An Invitation to Wonder**, a gentle online retreat for people exploring a call to ministry in The United Church of Canada.

While our original hope was to gather in person, we will now be offering this retreat online via Zoom, allowing participation from near and far. Instead of full days on screen, the weekend will unfold in intentional blocks of time, with room for group exploration and personal discernment woven throughout. *This is not a commitment. This is not a decision-point.* This is simply space to listen - to your heart, your questions, and the Spirit moving within you.

Deadline for registration is Saturday, January 31. [Click here to register.](#)

All are welcome — youth, young adults, mid-lifers, elders, lifelong United Church folks, newcomers, seekers, and those simply curious. **If something is nudging in you... come and wonder with us.**

Into the Future:**NEW: 2026 Annual Declaration – Now Open**

The portal for completing the 2026 Annual Declaration is now open on ChurchHub.

All ministry personnel (active, voluntary associates, and retired), including candidates, are required to complete the annual declaration before **April 30** in order to remain in compliance with United Church standards for ministry personnel and to maintain eligibility for calls, appointments, and licenses for sacraments and marriages.

Access the declaration by logging on to ChurchHub: <https://churchhub.ca/>.

Once logged on, you will need to:

- Declare whether you have had any criminal charges in the past year
- Attest that you have reviewed the *Creating Safe and Respectful Environments Policy and Procedures*
- Attest that you have reviewed the *Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel*

Follow [this link](#) for a guide to assist you in this task or contact Laura Fohse, Vocational Minister, for assistance.

NEW: Arbor Week - May 25-31, 2026 / Arbor Day - May 29, 2026

We live in a world increasingly detached from and alienated from creation. Personalizing, tapping memories, stories and dreams can move us into action and engagement. From Genesis to the Revelation to John, the Bible celebrates the Tree of Life, and trees of life, as an essential part of God's healing intentions for all creation and all of humankind. *"On either side of the river was the tree of life producing food every month of the year, and with leaves for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:1-2)* What could we do in our congregations to celebrate trees and to participate in **Arbour Week/Arbour Day 2026**? It might be something we could do as a congregation (maybe reaching into our community/maybe intergenerationally) or something a group within our congregation might do, or households, or even individuals. **Suggestion #2:** For a starter, everyone is invited to write a letter to a tree. Find ways to share these letters in worship, at refreshments time, or on-line. Example: *Dear Old Maple: You were old when I met you in Grandma Z's backyard. You had three great trunks and branches to climb on. One had an old swing. I used to tell you stories and you always listened to my complaints. Even thinking about you now helps me smile and even feel healthier. (see December 3/25 Rambler for Suggestion #1)*

Please contact Walter Farquharson (306-744-2214 or farg.blueheron@sasktel.net) with your ideas.

NEW: Collection 2026 – a national youth event – August 12 – 15, 2026

Only two more days until [Collective 2026](#) registration opens... but who's counting? (we sure are!) The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) and The United Church of Canada (UCCan) are coming together once again to offer inspiring workshops, meaningful worship, and plenty of recreation for Christian youth across Canada. Whether you're a youth participant, young adult, or youth leader, we can't wait to share what's in store for Collective 2026.

Registration opens in two days—learn more and get ready at [Collective-Gathering.ca](https://collective-gathering.ca).