

Regional Rambler

Living Skies Regional Council The United Church of Canada



January 13, 2021

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1. Living Skies Regional Council News:

Pastoral Relations Ponderings – [Pastoral Relations Ponderings Vol 21](#) - new

Please review this document for important updates regarding policy changes, volunteer opportunities, requirements for retired ministers, sabbaticals, and more from the Pastoral Relations Commission and the Committee on Ministry Personnel Support, Community of Faith Support, and Lay Leadership

Important update: Congregational annual meetings for 2021 - new

A reminder of a notice sent late last year: The General Council Executive has suspended the requirement to hold congregational annual meetings until June, in light of the pandemic. You can still hold an online meeting as possible, but meetings are not required. [Please click here for details.](#) Further details about related matters like budgets and annual reports this will be shared later this month.

COVID Guidelines - new

The Provincial government has extended the current restrictions and guidelines related to the pandemic until **at least January 29**. This means that restrictions on numbers (max 30), physical distancing, and masks required continue to be in place. The full list is [here](#). If you have any questions or concerns, contact Tricia Gerhard at lsrcexecutive@gmail.com.

Reminder: Regional Meetings 2020 evaluations - new

If you registered for the Regional Council's annual meeting/ gathering, you would have received an evaluation invitation in mid December. Please remember to fill it out! Need the link? It will be in your inbox - or possibly in your spam folder, despite our best efforts.

Ministry Personnel Gatherings - new

Join your colleagues on Tuesday afternoons at 1pm for conversation and support over Zoom. For specific topics and connection information, please check the Regional Council [calendar](#). Stay tuned for an invitation to participate in a survey regarding the next few months.

Letters of support to Korean minister disciplined for same sex blessing - new

In August 2019, Rev Lee Dong-hwan of the Korean Methodist Church accepted an invitation to bless the crowd at the Incheon Queer Festival. As a result of this support, in October of 2020 he was stripped of his ability to practice as a minister in the Korean Methodist Church for two years. Members of the Korean Ministers' Network of the United Church have offered a public solidarity letter, as have some United Church ministries. [Please click here](#) for a copy of the Network letter, further information, and a gracious thank you video from Rev Lee speaking to his decision and commitment.

Pensioner Benefit Plan Premium Increase: - new

A group of pensioners/retirees with concerns about the significant increase in benefit premiums have sent a letter to the General Council Executive expressing those concerns. If you wish more information please contact Rick McCorrister at rlmccorrister@sasktel.net.

Lenten Retreats via Zoom with Marg Janick-Grayston - new

A Journey From Lent to Easter: A Roller Coaster Ride of Emotions, Deferred Dreams, and The Breaking of a New Dawn. **LLWL Retreat:** Saturday, Feb. 6 from 9-12 (with optional cohort time over lunch); **Ministry Personnel Retreat:** Thursday, Feb. 11 from 1-4. **Pre-Register by Feb. 2** by contacting Bev Diebert via email at bdiebert@united-church.ca. This event is being sponsored by Living Skies Regional Council who is covering the costs. More details in the Ponderings.

Living Skies YouTube channel wants to meet your YouTube channel! - new

Thank to Kent Mohn and all the techy work that went into our Region-wide Advent concert, we have a YouTube channel, just like all those darn kids! What about you? Got a Churchy YouTube Channel for your Community of Faith or Ministry? Here's the plan...

1. Join our [Regional Facebook group](#), which is a good place to hang out anyway, and post your channel's link. Or email Kent at livingskiesyaya@united-church.ca or Julie at jgraham@united-church.ca
2. Subscribe to the **Living Skies YouTube Channel:**
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQumvdyab1_LIPiluOPgArg
3. Subscribe to everyone else's Churchy YouTube Channels too!

A Note from the Committee on Community of Faith Support re your Annual Report:

Dear Friends in Faith;

It has been a volatile year for our world and our communities of faith. Many of our Congregations have remained closed for several weeks if not months. Committees have been less than active in many cases due to the disruption. Others have been extremely active in creating safe space and connections in your midst. In light of this and of the suspended requirement for an annual meeting until June 30, 2021, our committee wants to lighten your load. Here are suggested guidelines for the 2020 Annual Report. Please include:

- A letter from the Chair of the governing body with an overview of the life and work of the congregation.
- An overview from the Minister or Supervisor of the Pastoral Charge.
- 2020 financial report
- 2021 budget.

The abbreviated Manual requirements are provided below for your convenience. *Please submit a condensed report by March 31.* Thank you for your faithful commitment in such challenging times.

In faith,

Sheila Deforest, Bill Pollock and Deborah Smith
Committee on Community of Faith Support

B.5 Meetings of a Community of Faith That Is a Congregation or Pastoral Charge

B.5.1 Frequency. The congregation or pastoral charge must meet annually. This meeting must be held as early as possible in the calendar year.

B.5.2 Annual Meeting. At the annual meeting, the congregation or pastoral charge is responsible ford) considering and making a decision on the draft annual budget.

B.7.4.8 Reporting. The governing body reports to the pastoral charge at least annually on

a) the life and work of the pastoral charge; and

b) the pastoral charge's financial situation, with details of all income, expenses, assets, and liabilities

Online worship national map: share, and add your ministry - new

As more and more communities of faith join in online worship, or refresh your skills and expand your reach, make sure you update your listing and help people find you! [Here's the national map](#). Share it on your website and social media, as many Canadians are looking for supportive spaces in this difficult time. You can add your ministry [through this form](#).

Canadahelps.Org For Online Donations To UCC Communities Of Faith - new

As we adapt to more online ministry, do you have a "Donate Now" element to facilitate charitable giving on your Community of Faith website or social media?

CanadaHelps.org information is available below: <https://livingskiesrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CanadaHelps-What-Every-United-Church-Needs-to-Know-Mar-2020.pdf>

Embracing The Spirit – 2021 Innovation Grant Deadlines - new

Innovation Grants up to \$5,000 in funding. Application due dates for 2021 are: January 15, April 15, July 15, October 15 <https://livingskiesrc.ca/embracing-the-spirit-2021-innovation-grant-deadlines/>

FAITH FORMATION – all new**2021 Faith@Home Packages**

Innovative 2021 Faith Formation resources from our UCC Friends in Pacific Mountain Region.

<https://www.pmrfirstthirdresources.ca/empowering-faithhome.html#/>

Young People Of Faith And The Climate Crisis—A Conversation

Sunday, January 17th, 2021, 4:00-6:00pm EST

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/young-people-of-faith-and-the-climate-crisis-a-conversation/>

Employment Posting: Camp Director, Lumsden Beach Camp

Application due date: February 4, 2021

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/employment-posting-camp-director-lumsden-beach-camp/>

Zoom Gathering For Young Adults (18-35 Yrs)

A safe space for open-minded, faith-based and engaging conversation every Wednesday at 6:30pm

Contact Rev. Laura Fohse for the ZOOM link: Text 306-291-5838, E-mail

laura@mccloreunitedchurch.org

<https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/zoom-gathering-for-young-adults-18-35-yrs/2021-01-13/>

Zoom Bible Study

An opportunity to read, learn and discuss the Bible with other UCCan folks.

Wednesdays from 1-2pm <https://livingskiesrc.ca/event/zoom-bible-study-lectionary/2021-02-03/>

Lent resource now available: Faith on the Move

The Lenten devotional, *"Faith on the Move: Daily Reflections on Hope and Change,"* is now available from the **United Church Bookstore (UCRD)**. This new book focuses on themes of movement and change, physical and spiritual journeys. In this Lenten devotional, daily reflections by diverse contributors invite us to reflect on and embody God's welcome and love for people who are on the move for a variety of reasons.

A study guide for in-person or online groups is included. [United in Learning](#) will also be hosting six webinars throughout Lent to explore the book so you can connect with others walking the Lenten journey. [Order your copies today!](#)

Facebook group to support your live streaming learning curve

Also, there's a great new Facebook group that you may find helpful: **Canadian Churches That Live-Stream** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/676613006560597>

Seriously, it just makes sense to pool our knowledge for this stuff, right? We'll have a resource library available to everybody in Living Skies. This is gonna make the other regions so jealous!

Just send your recommendations & favourites to livingskiesyaya@united-church.ca. Thanks!

2. Wider Church Information:

Our world seems smaller and more confined since COVID began. May these stories help widen it, and help us see where our prayers and actions from home can support those we may never meet in person, but with whom we are part of the Body of Christ. Most of the ministry and resources you see here is supported by our Mission and Service givings.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity resources - new

This year's global Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from January 18- 25. The theme for 2021 is "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit"(John 15:5-9). A [wide range of ecumenical resources are available here](#); add your own [event listings here](#). A communion service from the United Church [is available here](#). See Events, below, for a related invitation.

Up to date 2021 Minutes for Mission: where to find them! - new

The national church is pleased to share with us the 2021 Minutes for Mission in two formats in addition to the basic print booklet, which has been mailed to all congregations:

Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQDu-SgFb3Rjbi4t2qvhNhbEA17GXiLNo> (These are under their own playlist on the UCC's YouTube site; bookmark this!)

Online text and photos: COVID means that our Canadian and global partners' work is adapting quickly. In order to help us keep up to date, Mission and Service Minutes are also being offered online. Please find them along with accompanying photos for use in your presentations or social media, here: <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/get-involved/generosity-through-mission-and-service/stories-our-mission>

And finally, the national Stewardship newsletter comes out monthly and has lots of good updates. [Sign up here](#).

3. Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Community of Faith Calendar

Reminder: our Community of Faith events calendar is open 24/7 for online events! As long as the public is invited, you can post it. From workshops to worship, go for it. [Here's the handy form](#) .

Blanket Exercise Teaching & Sharing Circles, Winter 2021 Series - new

Led by Indigenous Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers with extensive KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) experience, these (90-minute) interactive Zoom-based sessions aim to build positive relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through truth, sharing, and open dialogue.

Topics offered in the Winter 2021 public sessions (\$25 registration fee per session) include: the Impact of Residential Schools, We Are All Treaty People, the Doctrine of Discovery, Métis Teachings, Shannen's Dream & Jordan's Principle, Social Injustice in the Court System, the 60s Scoop, Child Welfare & Practice Standards, Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, and the power of Growing Healing Gardens. Each topic can also be booked as a private group session by contacting cumana@kairoscanada.org

Visit <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/kbe-virtual-teaching-sharing-circle/> for the full schedule and to register.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - new

Saskatchewan's first ever **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity online 8-day Bible study**, daily January 18- 25. Sponsored in partnership with The Prairie Centre for Ecumenism and the Regina Council of Churches. [Click here for details and to register](#).

Online National Ecumenical Service, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Sunday January 24 at 2 - new

The service will be offered in French and English. [Register here](#) to receive the Zoom or YouTube links.

Church finances webinar, January 27 at 6:00PM Central - new

For January 27 we will focus on any loose ends from 2020 including PD27 filing, whether to issue T2200 forms for employees working from home, payroll upgrade to Teampay, assessment processing and of course the latest on federal support programs. [Click here for details and to send in your questions.](#)

Deepening Practices of Restorative Solidarity, February 12-15, 2021, Live on Zoom from unceded Chumash territory, in the Ventura River Watershed, California. - new

The Bartimaeus Institute has lots of ecumenical Canadian connections, including resource people Harry and Germaine Lafond, of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation and the Metis Nation, respectively. Considering creating the usual Canadian delegation online this year, and deepen engagement with decolonizing discipleship. <https://www.bcm-net.org/study/bki2021>

Queen's House re-opening

Queen's House has re-opened their doors to groups who have arranged to use our facility – and would love to see you. For individual retreats or dropping by the centre for personal prayer, please call us to inquire about what can be arranged.

Our programming formats have significantly changed – while they will be offering occasional programs in-person at the retreat centre, following all safety protocols, much of our programming will be offered through Zoom. To see Queen's House programming, please see their [Our Programs page](#).

4. Reminders:**Unsubscribe at your Peril**

Hopefully, you are finding the *Rambler* helpful in reporting to your congregations what is going on within Living Skies RC. At the bottom of each Rambler and E-share, there is an *unsubscribe from this list and update your preferences* link. Please be aware that if you unsubscribe, the Regional Council office can NOT re-subscribe you to the list again using the same email address.

2021 Prayer Cycle

The Prayer Cycle is now posted on the Living Skies Regional Council website under Resources on the Worship page. It can be found under the Prayer heading. [The link to it is here.](#)

New phone numbers and extensions for two staff

Executive Minister Shannon McCarthy and Program Assistant Jamie McKay have new phone numbers: Jamie: 1-800-268-3781 ext 2040 ; Shannon: 1-800-268-3781 ext 2028

Compensating time for ministry personnel

This note is for lay community of faith leaders from Tracy Murton, Pastoral Relations Minister. If you are fortunate enough to have ministry personnel who are called or appointed to offer leadership in your midst, please acknowledge the difficult challenge that 2020 has placed on their work. In the same way that you have re-imagined how to navigate your personal and professional lives, they have had to re-imagine how to live out their call without many of the practices that embody ministry. Do not underestimate the toll that this has placed on your minister. We are a long way away from the end of this pandemic, even if a vaccine is near. Please consider offering compensating time to your minister following Christmas. Contact Bev Diebert at bdiebert@united-church.ca for the pulpit supply list or postpone worship for a week or two to allow your minister some time to re-charge before beginning the year anew. It is one way that you might offer appreciation; feel free to offer others!

Camp News: Updates & Info from UCC Outdoor Ministries

Please watch for regular Camp News from all of our United Church Camp ministries in the coming months. This month includes Reports & Fundraising info from Camp Tapawingo, Lumsden Beach Camp, and Camp Christopher. <https://livingskiesrc.ca/camp-news-updates-info-from-ucc-outdoor-ministries/>

Clinical Pastoral Education Program

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is training in the art and skills of spiritual and religious care that is person-centered, honors religious differences, and evokes the spiritual capacities, resilience, and resources of people in times of medical and/or spiritual transition. Employing an adult education model, CPE integrates personal learning goals with practice-based goals. CPE provides in-depth training for persons who desire a learning environment where feedback from peers, teachers, and interdisciplinary colleagues enhances skills and develops increased self-awareness. Course instruction will be 'Zoom - based' and clinical internship hours will be required in an Emmanuel Care Health Care Facility. The course begins mid-January and ends in April 2021 and is approximately 30 hours per week. This program is sponsored by Emmanuel Care and hosted by Santa Maria's Senior's Citizen's Home, Regina. Instructors: Brian Walton, Certified Educator Supervisor and Francis Maza, Provisional Educator Supervisor. For more information and/or to apply contact Francis Maza at Emmanuel Care f.maza@emmanuelcare.ca or call 306-249-5865

Clusters and Networks update (and reminder of \$\$!)

We know more online meetings may be the last thing on your mind. But just in case: If you are considering starting a new Network or Cluster, or if you've already been gathering, please take a moment to make sure that the Regional Council knows you're meeting.

If your Cluster or Network is open to new members (and we hope it is) please make sure you're listed. Please contact your Regional office (at the bottom of this newsletter) or Julie Graham (jgraham@united-church.ca) to make sure we have contact information and a short description. And remember: there is money in the Regional budget to support your work. Maybe you want to offer to pay for event registrations or resources. Maybe you want to submit receipts for a get together lunch over Zoom to support a sense of community. Don't let funding worries get in the way! Questions about this? Contact the office.

Blue Statistical Forms

In this unprecedented time, to calculate your average weekly attendance for your 2020 annual statistical submission, please add the number of people in in-person worship to the on-line count and report that number. While the on-line count might be inflated by people coming into and out of a stream/broadcast, there doesn't appear to be any way to take that into account. For Year Book purposes, the column will be marked with an asterisk and a footnote added to indicate why the figures might be significantly different from other years. Should you have any questions, please contact statistics@united-church.ca