To access a link in this newsletter, please press CTRL + mouse click on the highlighted link.

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| [View this newsletter in your browser](https://mailchi.mp/d4fba1e2823e/january-2021-news-information?e=f0ca4e4c45)Next Deadline for submissions: February 10 (February 16 Issue) |

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| ***Q***: How many of your leadership know about the Regional Council's Facebook,YouTube channel, website and newsletters??***A***: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_fill in the number\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. |

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| **REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICE NEWS** |

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| **New Year's Greetings from President Jane Van Patter** |

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| The picture associated with January on the kitchen calendar features a photo of two Atlantic Puffins perched on a rock. The photography is cleverly done as it appears that the Puffins share one head with two faces, each face looking in a different direction. The month of January is named after the Roman god, Janus. This is the god of doorways and of beginnings. It is the god of the rising and the setting of the sun. Janus was represented in sculpture by a figure with one head with two bearded faces. One face looks forward and one face looks backward. Apparently whenever Romans faced a new beginning or an important change in life, they paid a visit to the Temple of Janus to seek the god's support for their journey into the unknown. At this time of the year, we are like the god, Janus, with two faces. One face looks back to 2020. As annual reports are being prepared, I wonder what stories they will tell of the year in review. Early last year the COVID-19 virus created an unforeseen health crisis forcing the world’s citizenry into physically distanced lifestyles and lockdowns. This “pandemic detour” led communities of faith everywhere to venture along new roads seeking new ways to offer worship services, hold meetings and stay socially and spiritually connected with one another. Welcome to online worship and online gatherings! Looking back, who could have imagined that Zoom, You Tube and other internet platforms would play such an important role in the life, work, mission and ministry of the church in a time such as this. The other face looks ahead to 2021. Still shrouded in pandemic living we see that new roads travelled in 2020 continue to be roads we will travel in 2021. If I were still in active ministry at in the community of faith where I retired I would be lamenting the absence of the food, fun and fellowship tradition of the “hotdog lunch” provided by the Scouts before the start of the Annual Congregational Meeting in February. I would also be intrigued and motivated by the challenge of discerning alternative ways of holding the annual meeting and building on what we learned last year as we forge ahead with the church’s ministry albeit “at a distance” this year. Looking back, I am reminded of the Good News of Great Joy announced last year that will come to pass this year. Adele Halliday has been appointed as the Anti-Racism and Equity Officer of the UCC. This is a new role created to help the church explore long-standing matters and to find ways to move towards a more equitable life together. The tri-Regional Councils of Horseshoe Falls, Western Ontario Waterways and Antler River Watershed look forward to hearing from Adele early this year. More Good News of Great Joy! In December 2020 the tri Regional Councils approved the Call of the Rev. Thérèse Samuel as Minister of Right Relations and Social Justice effective March 1, 2021. We look forward the leadership and ministry Thérèse has to offer. January! It’s the month of looking back with gratitude and thanks and looking forward with joy and wonder in hopeful anticipation of what is yet to be. Either way, the blessing remains the same: Go in peace, go in safety, for you cannot go where God is not. May it be so. In Faith & Hope,*https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/images/ff3f5a42-4f2b-4bbf-96e4-5f9f377bb839.png*President, Antler River Watershed Regional Council |

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| **United Fresh Start** |

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| Does your church have a relatively ‘new to you’ minister? The Human Resources Commissions of our regional councils want to help new pastoral relationships get off to a healthy beginning by inviting you and your minister to take part in the [United Fresh Start](https://www.unitedfreshstart.ca/) program. There are over 20 modules of resources to support learning together. A couple of the core modules – ‘Transitions’ and ‘Entering a New System’ – plus one called ‘Habits, Norms and Expectations’ will be offered this winter and spring by Zoom. We invite you to register a group from your community of faith, including your minister, for these modules. ***We invite you to register a group from your community of faith, including your minister, for these modules.***

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| MODULE & Registration |             DATE |   TIME |
| [Transitions](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs22) | Tuesday, February 9 | 7 - 9 pm |
| [Transitions](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs22) | Saturday, February 20 | 9 - 11 am |
| [Entering A New System](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs07) | Tuesday, March 2 | 7 - 9 pm |
| [Entering A New System](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs07) | Saturday, March 20 | 9 - 11 am |
| [Habits, Norms, Expectations](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs12) | Tuesday, April 6 | 7 - 9 pm |
| [Habits, Norms, Expectations](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs12) | Saturday, April 24 | 9 - 11 am |
| [Family Systems](https://regionalcouncil789.formstack.com/forms/ufs10) | Tuesday, May 4 | 7 - 9 pm |

We have facilitators prepared to offer modules of United Fresh Start to individual congregations as well. If you are interested in this, please contact Diane Blanchard, Minister, Pastoral Relations, for a list of UFS facilitators. The schedule above is offered without charge. Engaging a facilitator for your community of faith alone has a suggested fee of $221 per module, negotiated with and payable to the facilitator. |

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| **Good Things To Know ... from the Covenant Commission** |

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| **Annual Meetings and Reports**Resources and updates for congregational annual meetings and reports can now be found on the regional council website in Congregational Support Toolkit #11. This includes the amendment for postponing the annual meeting until after June 30 if necessary, and allowing the governing body to approve the draft budget until such time as a meeting can be held safely. For those serving in elected positions, their term will continue until the nominating report can be approved by the congregation at the annual meeting. The governing body may fill vacancies, if required, until a congregational meeting can be held. The Covenant Commission encourages congregations to seek ways to hold the annual meeting at its normal time if at all possible. This may be by zoom or telephone conference. This is a regular part of the life of the congregation, and an important opportunity to engage members and adherents in the decision-making process. The resource “How to Hold Meetings in a Pandemic” is available on the website under the Covid-19 resources. Best practices include keeping the meeting simple, focusing on approving the annual report, budget and nominating report and possibly using the polling option on zoom for voting. This is also a great opportunity to recognize those in your congregation who have done an amazing job adapting, learning and continuing to support your shared mission and ministry throughout the pandemic. Even if you decide to postpone your annual meeting, please prepare the annual report at the normal time so that it is ready and available. **Collaborative Ministry**A new handbook outlining ways communities of faith can partner to share ministry personnel, programs, buildings and more is now available. If your congregation is considering part-time ministry this is the time to explore this option.**Helping You Stay Connected**Thanks to imagination, flexibility, determination and technology congregations have been doing an amazing job of providing meaningful worship, social connection and administration throughout the pandemic. However, one of the greatest concerns continues to be reaching those without access to the internet. For those interested, there are options available to help meet this need. For a monthly fee, your congregation can upload your worship service or message as an audio file. Members can then phone in at any time to listen to the recording. The phone number remains the same for as long as you have your account. There are several providers of this service available in Canada for you to consider, such as [Sermonbyphone](https://sermonbyphone.com/). For those using Zoom, you may want to check out the Facebook group called “[Zoom Faith](https://www.facebook.com/groups/zoomfaith)”. This group discusses and shares best practices for using zoom for worship, provides peer support, and ideas for making the most of this platform. We also encourage you to share your insight and ideas on our regional council Facebook page as neighbours helping neighbours. And for those interested in learning more about livestreaming worship, Edge has put together a great range of resources that can be found on their website <https://edge-ucc.ca/covid-19/category/live-streaming/>. Thanks be to God for the many ways we can stay connected and the people who are working to make it happen. |

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| **EVENTS** |

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| **February is Black History (or African Heritage) Month in Canada** |

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| This is a time to honour the contributions and struggles of peoples of African descent. How do you (and your congregation) plan to mark it? The United Church has many [worship resources](https://united-church.ca/worship-special-days/black-history-month-1?mc_cid=fa569b4863&mc_eid=1807891ded) for each week, including new blog posts, prayers and a new Black History Month service for 2021.This year, to accompany the blog posts, we will also be sharing video interviews of the writers, which we hope will enrich your experience. |

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| **Did You Know About This, Chatham?** |

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| https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/images/b3fe171b-b451-4348-8ad9-13caec26d8be.jpg |
| Long before Jackie Robinson integrated American professional baseball, there was a championship team of Black Canadian baseball All-Stars fighting for their right just to play the game they loved. The All-Star Baseball Champs You've Never Heard Of — North Americana Podcast included. [Click on this page](https://www.northamericanapodcast.com/shows/the-all-star-baseball-team-that-youve-never-heard-of) to read about the many connections Chatham has to Canadian-Black baseball. |

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| **The North Was Our CanaanA film by the Essex Black Historical Research Society and the University of Windsor** |

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| [The North Was Our Canaan](https://collections.uwindsor.ca/omeka-s/nwoc/page/video) takes us along the banks of the Detroit River, through the streets of Sandwich, to end up at Sandwich First Baptist Church, a congregation whose roots extend back to the 1820s. The film by the Essex Black Historical Research Society and the University of Windsor is a must-see movie that tells an important—and too often overlooked—chapter of Canadian history and the story of freedom. |

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| **Selma, Alabama 55 years Ago** |

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| A picture taken 55 years ago in Selma, Alabama showing clergy from London presenting $2000 to Martin Luther King. The clergy third from right is the late Rev. Barry Passmore. Barry was at Richard's Memorial United Church in London in 1965. He marched with Dr. King in the Selma to Montgomery march that took place from March 21 to the 25. |

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| The picture was published last week in the Villager, a community newspaper in south London. Rev. Barry Passmore is third from right. |

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| **Discerner’s Prepare: Annual Explorer’s Weekend ImmersionFebruary 4 - 5, 2021 Online** |

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| Are you feeling a call to engage your faith more deeply? Are you curious how a theological degree may influence the course of your life? Then be an Explorer! Over the course of this weekend you will be able to 'tour' the school, meet the principal, attend community worship, sit in on a class, attend the G. Peter Kay lecture (Amy-Jill Levine), spend time with the Directors of Denominational Foundation, learn some Theology 10% and have a panel discussion with some Theological Field Education & Capstone students.Please contact Julie Lees for more information and to register. |

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| In related news:The Montreal Diocesan Theological College and the United Theological College are entering into a strategic alliance. [Read the announcement](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/f0af0d28-040b-42e9-b528-ed4c913218c9/UTC_DIOPressRelease.pdf), includes FAQs. |

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| **A Taste of Palestine: Taste Food, Hear Stories, Make Change! February 16, February 23 and March 9** |

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| A three-part event: with Live Cooking with Fatma and Claire from Palestine (Zoom) Find out [more about the cooks](https://unjppi.org/taste-of-palestine.html). Cooking Demo that you can follow along & enjoy the flavours.**February 16, 9:30 am** - Fatma Nawaja from the village of Susiya in the South Hebron Hills cooks in her village which is currently under demolitionorders.**February 23, 9:30 am** - Claire Anastas, a Palesinian Christian, lives in Bethlehem in the shadow of the wall. Join her as she cooks mansaf.**March 9, 9:30 am** - Learn about the work of United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine IsraelDownload and [share the poster](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/f0d95ab1-4966-41e2-8507-e83d54248a57/TasteofPalestine.pdf). Click here to [register by Zoom](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkf-igqzoiHNF9kLQNabHBvGHZmoxTUAAH). |

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| **Affirm United / S’affirmer EnsembleTuesday, February 16 - 7 - 8:30 pm** |

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| Download the [Affirm United / S’affirmer Ensemble newsletter](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/3f83f5f4-059a-4455-863c-52ae1569d070/Affirm.pdf) which includes notice of the first of the Kitchen Sink series for 2021, Pancakes and P.I.E. with host Pam Rocker. Packed with many more notices! |

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| **The musical ‘Big Inning’Starting Sunday, February 7** |

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| Siloam United Church in London presents a musical ‘Big Inning’. A musical by David Guthrie, Rob Howard and Cyndi Nine.Beginning February 7 rehearsals will be Sundays 9:30 – 10:00 am. The concert isn’t until April – you have time! [Download the poster](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/images/829f419e-eede-425a-818e-3412b97eb63d.png) and come out and play with us! Email Allison to register. |

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| **Centre for Christian StudiesFriday, February 12 - 12:00 to 1:00 CST** |

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| This is your chance to join the Centre for Christian Studies virtually for an hour to explore timely topics of theology, life, and faith. It is open to laypeople and clergy.On February 12 from 12:00 to 1:00 CST we will look at **Zoom Tips for Annual Meetings**. We will review the basics of how to use Zoom, go over the nitty gritty of hosting a virtual annual meeting and have a chance to share tips and favourite features. The workshop is free but you must [register in advance](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEucOurrT0sH9Ll5LeO5bYPOxkbZ9zWTHvz) by clicking on the workshop name and filling in the form.If you have questions, email info@ccsonline.ca.            https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/images/0301725b-8e52-4f38-a3fb-7f10b1e93d07.png |

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| **MISSION & SERVICE** |

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| **Sign up for God’s Mission, Our Gifts** |

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| Signing up for this [e-newsletter](https://united-church.ca/e-newsletters) is the only way to get news about grants, stewardship, Mission & Service stories, Minutes for Mission and amazing generosity!Sign up for the [Gifts with Vision catalogue](https://giftswithvision.ca/) as well and help save and transform lives! |

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| **Residential School Survivor Answers the Call to Ministry** |

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| Deb Anderson-Pratt was ordained as a minister last fall. She shares her [personal story](https://united-church.ca/stories/residential-school-survivor-answers-call-ministry?mc_cid=1507c08385&mc_eid=1807891ded) of struggle with religion and her dream of a safe place. Growing up, Deb would never have imagined that she'd become a minister. A Cree/Saulteaux residential school survivor, Deb disliked the church for many years.Photo credit: Kent Stewart |

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| Mission & Service through The Healing Fund supports the Sandy-Salteaux Spiritual Centre in Manitoba, where both Indigenous and Christian spiritual beliefs are respected, shared, and understood. |

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| **RESOURCES** |

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| **Innovation Grants (for that wild idea for 2021!)** |

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| Thinking about a brand-new idea but not sure if it's a good enough, or something worth pursuing? That’s exactly what **Innovation Grants** are for! You get between $500 and $5,000 to explore a new idea; it could be a garden, a program, something online, a new partnership, an idea that came from a community partner, or something that you have been thinking about for a while, but never found a good time to start. [Learn more](https://www.united-church.ca/community-and-faith/being-community/embracing-spirit/innovation-grants?mc_cid=8b2b22dfba&mc_eid=1807891ded&utm_source=E-Newsletters&utm_campaign=8b2b22dfba-ETS_171011_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_53a49c9e28-8b2b22dfba-188942713).Already have an idea that's ready for the next level? [Check out these grants](https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/embracing-spirit/how-grow-your-idea?utm_source=E-Newsletters&utm_campaign=8b2b22dfba-ETS_171011_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_53a49c9e28-8b2b22dfba-188942713&mc_cid=8b2b22dfba&mc_eid=1807891ded) that will help to take that idea and grow it.Either way, we’d love to hear what you're up to and it's easy to reach us! Just [book a time](https://calendly.com/carlaleon/30min?utm_source=E-Newsletters&utm_campaign=8b2b22dfba-ETS_171011_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_53a49c9e28-8b2b22dfba-188942713&mc_cid=8b2b22dfba&mc_eid=1807891ded&month=2020-10) with us, or email us. April 15 is the next deadline for applications. |

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| **2021 Video License Applications Still Open** |

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| For more information about these licenses, the fee structure, and how to apply, please visit [buyingunited.net](http://buyingunited.net/video-licensing). Learn more about what the license offers and answers to some [frequently asked questions](http://buyingunited.net/video-license-faq).For more information email or call Alexandra at 1-800-268-3781 ext. 4157. |

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| **United in Learning has much to Offer YOU** |

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| The following are some of the [webinars](https://www.united-in-learning.com/index.php/webinars) on offer:* Congregational Finances During the Pandemic
* Personal and Professional Boundaries for Church Leaders
* Licensed Lay Worship Leader Training
* Racial Justice Workshop
* Faith on the Move - an online journey through Lent
* Discernment for Ministry -- Webinar Series
* Pension Information Seminar

To name a few. |

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| **Grand River Bookstore** |

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| [Download this flyer](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/54e28f94-f25c-453d-9486-e25f5f4a7ced/GrandRiverBookstore.pdf) from the Bookstore at Five Oaks. They are offering the Lenten Study Guide by Julie McGonegal ‘**Faith on the Move**’, ‘**Bible with or without Jesus – How Jews and Christians read the same stories differently**’ by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler and more … including **Zoom Book Displays**, and **Zoom Book Studies.** |

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| **Faith On The Move - an online journey through Lent: Daily Reflections on Hope & Change** |

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| Are you aching for a community of friends to walk through Lent with this year? Yearning for a few wise souls to share the risky, surprised-filled adventure and explore the places that will challenge you and stretch you to your limit?Find out more at [United-In-Learning](https://www.united-in-learning.com/index.php/webinars/369-faith-on-the-move?mc_cid=cf8bf00541&mc_eid=1807891ded). This year's Lenten book is full of reflections on hope and change to help us cherish the complex stories of the Bible. It's good to read by itself; it's even more exciting to read together with others! We'll meet every Tuesday at 1:00 pm:* February 23
* March 2
* March 9
* March 16
* March 23
* March 30
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| **Looking for Regional Council Prayer Cycles?** |

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| You found the list of ministries and community of faith prayer cycles. They are found on [www.prayercycles.ca](https://www.prayercycles.ca/). Wayne Irwin took on this task after the former Hamilton Conference ended and has expanded it. Let's live out our God-given mandate, “to pray for one another,” by providing regular, confidential prayer support that connects us to the total ministry of the community of faith.Contact prayer@churchwebcanada.ca with your questions. |

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| **Palestinian Speaker for your Worship Service** |

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| If your faith community is already doing online worship because of COVID-19, but you miss having special sermons and discovering new things then enrich your Sunday experience with a sermon from the perspective of a Palestinian Christian guest speaker?Sign up for ***Encounter***, a virtual liturgy program that gives you early access to sermons, special prayers, and music by Palestinian faith leaders. The sermon will correspond to the common lectionary, and will be 8-10 minutes in length and sent 2-3 weeks in advance as YouTube and Zoom videos.More information on the program [found here](https://friendsofsabeel.ca/featured/encounter-the-holy-land/). |

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| **SOCIAL JUSTICE** |

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| **URGENT ACTION NEEDED:Israel Must Provide Vaccines to Palestinians** |

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| [Voice your concern](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/35997470-b679-4f29-9dd8-f688e87f8ab5/UNJPPIAction.pdf) about Palestinians' lack of access to Covid-19 vaccines. |

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| **United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel** |

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| Go to the [UNJPPI website](https://www.unjppi.org/index.html) to find out about the latest news and activities. We talk about Apartheid, Air B&Bs, Advocacy Letters, Children’s Rights, Canada’s New Foreign Minister and current Campaigns..  |

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| [Sign up](https://us6.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7f4ab9a5a57204972eba6a8cf&id=3ebd6591af) to receive the United Network for Justice & Peace in Palestine & Israel newsletter to your Inbox. We welcome your questions and requests for more information by email. |

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| **World Premiere of United As One** |

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| https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/video_thumbnails_new/b4fcaa8f9820bff15ad8ae18a721938d.png |
| 23 young, talented Palestine refugees release a message of hope and unity for the world through a song composed in collaboration with a group of international songwriters and musicians.  |

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| They are all members of the 2018/2019 Agency-wide Student Parliament representing the voices of over half a million Palestine refugee girls and boys studying in more than 700 schools operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. |

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| **LOCAL NEWS** |

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| **Oxford Connections** |

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| The January edition of the [**Oxford Connections**](https://mcusercontent.com/ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b/files/9c8a3470-ac85-4f5c-91ef-dfb91ab3aaa2/OxfordConnections.pdf) offers a needed connection as we experience the fragility of our earth home during this pandemic. We are part of creation and community. |

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| The Antler River Watershed Regional Council newsletter welcomes submissions of upcoming events, regional news and educational opportunities. This is also the place to keep up-to-date on information from the regional office. Check out the https://mcusercontent.com/3430c44e426848fe31d8afb4b/images/cab77de6-f20d-465d-bca4-5af8cefd0b43.png page and the https://mcusercontent.com/3430c44e426848fe31d8afb4b/images/114af828-242c-42b9-a93f-07bc3a02816b.png channel! |

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| Holding and Encouraging Communities of Faith Antler River Watershed Regional CouncilThe United Church of Canada |

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| [SUBSCRIBE!](https://mailchi.mp/adbd57d173e1/antler-river-watershed-regional-council-newsletter-sign-up) |

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