



HOLY WEEK

Between the Aisles
A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly
SPRING 2016

Who is Elsie Coon?

Most of us know Elsie Coon. She is the gracious lady whose smile lights up an entire room. She seems to be at R-W a lot, whether she is working in the kitchen, greeting visitors, or generally being helpful wherever she is needed.

Elsie was born in Newfoundland, just outside of St. John's. Her parents were dairy farmers. She grew up in the Anglican Church, although she recalls that at some point in her youth her family switched to a Pentecostal Church but she did not attend with them. After high school she enrolled in an Anglican College in NL where she studied to become a secretary.

She moved to Victoria as a young woman and soon met her future husband, Gordon, who was in the Navy. She and Gordon have two children, seven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren, all living in Alberta.

Nancy: Can you tell me what brought you to this church and when that was?

Elsie: I think it was 1980. My husband Gordon and I retired to Edmonton the year before because we had family here.

N: What activities have you been involved in at Robertson-Wesley?

E: I taught Sunday school, I was the chair of the pastoral care committee, I have worked in the Food Depot, I have helped with hospitality, counted the offering on Sunday mornings, and I have been involved in Outreach.

N: Who most influenced you when you were growing up?

E: My father, definitely. he knew the Bible inside and out, and he read it every day. He was a strong man with a strong voice, but he never raised his hand to anyone.

N: Do you have a favourite memory about R-W?

E: I think my favourite memory was the retirement party for Aubrey Edworthy. That was a very special occasion.

N: Do you have anything you would like to say about R-W?

E: I would like to see Robertson-Wesley continue to preach the Gospel through its Outreach. This is a beautiful building with beautiful staff and wonderful members. It is a happy place to be.

N: Where would you like this church to be in twenty-years?

E: I want to see the Gospel being lived out here. I wonder how people get through their daily trials and tribulations without a faith.

Upcoming Events

Ash Wednesday Service

Feb 10, 2016 7:00PM

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a journey of 40 days leading to Holy Week and Easter. This is a quiet, meditative and prayerful service that provides people with the opportunity to discern and explore their relationship with God. This service marks the day of Atonement which actually means "at-one-ment." It is the call to be at one with God, ourselves, our neighbours, and all creation. Through the ritual burning of last year's palm leaves, turning them into ash, people will be invited to be marked on their hand or forehead with the sign of the cross thus symbolizing the opportunity to start fresh and open ourselves up to the transforming power of God.

Spiritual Practices

March 20, 2016 7:00-8:30PM

We will begin Holy Week on the eve of Palm Sunday by inviting people to come and engage in some silent spiritual prayerful practices. Please feel to come any time during the posted hours. This is a self guided practice that will provide you with a space to reconnect with God, a space that will nourish and calm your spirit. There will be a variety of stations set up in Memorial Hall with instructions indicating what you can do. Some examples of the stations are a Labyrinth Walk, Meditation on images, sculpting scriptures, writing a letter to God just to name a few.

Rev. Karen Bridges

Minister of Congregation and Community Development

SERIOUS READERS TAKE NOTE!!

Two book studies: Participate in the discussion of Kenneth Bailey's outstanding book *The Good Shepherd: a Thousand Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament*. Saturday, February 20, 9:30 to noon.

The Purchase by author Linda Spalding won the Governor-General's Award for Literature in English in 2012. The book was chosen to be Amnesty International's Book Club selection for the month of August 2015. This gripping story about people struggling to live in a harsh and complex world is based on Spalding's family history. Discussion takes place on Saturday April 9, at 9:30 AM.

Remembering General Council: a Volunteer's View

The question: "What was it like to be a volunteer at GC42?"

Hmmm, here are some recollections for you.

When the call arrived to apply for volunteering about six months before GC42, my feelings tumbled about: excitement; humbleness; and delight to act and serve elected delegates. After all, I attended GC41 as a delegate, and had a pretty good idea of what was ahead for everyone who would be attending this GC. Well, being a volunteer is different from being a delegate.

For example did you know that all expenses for delegates are paid by General Council Office but volunteers must pay their own way? The financial chasm between delegate and volunteer can be significant, especially if the meeting is not close to home. Volunteers are essential; they prepare the food, run errands, run to the newsroom, set up interviews, provide first aid, drive registrants, set up displays, take care of behind the scenes work, and much more. Nevertheless, much about General Council 42 was rewarding.

We learned the Covenant like a mantra and began each day in English and French and sometimes included Mohawk or M'Kmaq or other languages used by guests from away. The Seven Teachings of the Covenant are Be Love, Be Wisdom, Be Truth, Be Respect, Be Humble, Be Honest, and be Brave. These Seven Teachings are shared and practised by many Indigenous nations.

One hundred and fifty-four volunteers served the delegates and shared stories of their experiences. When having quiet moments, many of us knitted squares that we later blessed for constructing blankets for a shelter in St. John's. One of my favourite activities was collecting lapel pins from all over NL and Nunavut.

The music—I loved the post-modern music. But the highlight for me was when the Rev. Jordan Cantwell became The Right Reverend Jordan Cantwell, Moderator of the United Church of Canada!

NL greeting: How's it going?

Three Answers: "Best kind!" when all is well." or "All right." when all is so-so; or "She's gone b'y, she's gone!" this, when all is not well.

And now I'm gone - am glad I attended. It was an historic GC42. Peace to us all. And may we all follow the Spirit, and the remits.

Donna Krucik

Lenten Music Recital Series

Robertson-Wesley is hosting a noon-hour recital series this Lent, for five Thursdays in February and March. The concerts will run from 12:10-12:50, and admission is by freewill offering with donations for the performers and for the Robertson-Wesley Music Society in support of the Robertson-Wesley Ringers trip to the International Handbell Symposium in Vancouver, and the Choir of Robertson-Wesley's trip to New York City to sing in Carnegie Hall. The series will feature many musicians closely associated with Robertson-Wesley.

February 11 – Tammy-Jo Mortensen, organ

February 18 – Vaughan String Quartet

February 25 – to be announced

March 3 – Warren Mack, organ

March 10 – small ensemble and solo instruments, including classical guitar, violin, cello, and flute

Did you forget to make resolutions for 2016? Here are some suggestions:

- Learn to bake bread using locally-grown flour.
- Make, rather than buy, gifts for family members.
- Borrow books from the library instead of buying them.
- Try to eat foods grown locally.
- Buy foods that are in season. Berries are not in season in Edmonton in the winter.
- Get to know your neighbours; host a Saturday coffee party, or canvas for a local charity.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Marg and Denny May who received one of four Recognition Awards from the Edmonton Historical Board at a ceremony to be held on February 4, 2016. The award recognizes their contribution to Edmonton's aviation and historiography, and to their community volunteerism.



Robertson-Wesley Ringers In Vancouver

The 17th International Handbell Symposium is being held in Vancouver, July 26-30, 2016, and the **Robertson-Wesley Ringers** will be there! Entitled "Soundings, Music of Our Lands and Our Lives", this Symposium is attracting handbell choirs from across the globe, and promises to be an exciting opportunity for the R-W Ringers to enrich our musical ministry.

More information about the Symposium, and the unique ways in which the R-W Ringers will contribute to this bi-annual event will be published in the next Newsletter. Additionally, we will be playing during the service on February 28th, and any one of us would be pleased to tell you more about this wonderful upcoming event after the service.

Jan Millson

**Next newsletter Deadline:
Sunday, April 3, 2016**

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Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.**



Let us gather to celebrate
Holy Week and Easter

Holy Week Spiritual Practices

Sunday, March 20, 7:00 pm
Meditative Prayerful Practices

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, March 24, 7:30 pm
Recalling the Last Supper with Special Music

Good Friday Service

Friday, March 25, 10:30 am
Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, March 27, 7:30 am
Outdoors on the promenade at 100 Ave & 121 Street

Easter Sunday Service

Sunday, March 27, 10:30 am
Choir of Robertson-Wesley & Pergolesi Brass

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Attention Writers

Do you have poetry trying to escape from your head and hands? Write some poetry and submit it to Robertson-Wesley!

The submission should be on a post-Easter subject or Biblical story: resurrection, creation, new life, growth, the early church (Acts, Epistles), discipleship, transformation or other topics that would work in the Easter season. The text should use inclusive language.

We are looking for texts that could be set as a hymn, or could be used in a variety of other ways including: Facebook, web site, newsletter, bulletin covers, or as inspiration for music, prayers or sermons.

Submissions can be emailed to Tammy-Jo by the deadline of February 29 (Leap Day!) to music@rwuc.org