

# Between the Aisles

A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly

SPRING



## Did you know?

The graphics you see in R-W's pamphlets and now featured on this cover were all drawn and created by...  
Matthew McGuigan!

## Welcome

This is a very newsy edition of *Between the Aisles*. In it are lots of announcements about the life and work of Robertson-Wesley, what with Lent and Easter just around the corner.

As well, because we want to encourage discussion about issues, both inside and outside the congregation, readers will notice a new column entitled *Conversations*. The first conversation, by Rev. Leigh Sinclair, is her response to an article, submitted anonymously, that appeared in the last *Between the Aisles*. Because BTA is a mouthpiece for all members of the congregation, we look forward to your feedback in the future.

We wish you all a meaningful Easter season.

Your co-editors,  
Nancy Heule and Janet M Clark



## Confirmation & Reaffirmation Circles

Leader: Rev. Leigh Sinclair

**Wednesday, February 14, 2018 (Ash Wednesday Service)**  
**Five Wednesdays, February 21 through March 21, 2018**  
from 7:00 — 8:30pm

Offered each year, this five-week course is designed to be a brief survey of the foundational elements of church membership with opportunity for discussion and exploration of our religious background. You can read the topics we cover below.

In 2018 we will have an exciting program with two parallel circles. The two will share in opening and closing worship and have separate discussions in between. These circles will attend the February 14 Ash Wednesday service to mark the beginning of both Lent and your journeys of exploration. We will then meet the next 5 Wednesdays (February 21 to March 21) from 7:00–8:30pm.

The **CONFIRMATION** circle will be for people who seek to affirm their faith for the first time as adults (as they prepare for baptism and/or confirmation of membership). If you are new to Christian faith or to the United Church of Canada this is for you!

The **REAFFIRMATION** circle will be for people who have been active in a church family, Robertson-Wesley or another, who seek to explore their faith and publicly re-affirm their faith.

To register, please contact the Church office or contact Rev. Leigh directly.

Rituals to celebrate your baptisms, confirmations and/or Re-affirmations will take place on Sunday, March 18, 2018 or Sunday, May 13, 2018.

If you would be interested in being part of a circle of faith exploration but need a day-time or weekend course please let Rev. Leigh know and we can choose a time together!

## *Wine and Cheese Cabaret*

### *AND THE OSCAR GOES TO....*

Has "Fame" ever made you feel like dancing? Does "Sooner or Later" mean more than just a time of day to you? Do you miss the "Days of Wine and Roses"? Have you "Just Called to Say I Love You"? Did you ever want to walk the "Streets of Philadelphia"? Do you still wonder about "The Way We Were"?

**On SAT. FEBRUARY 24 at 7:30** you will be able to walk the red carpet! The wine and cheese cabaret theme this year is...Oscar winning and nominated songs. Come check out our R-W singers in a completely different environment! Tickets to this event make a great Valentine's gift for someone special and will make a wonderful outing for friends, family or neighbours! Tickets are on sale after church on the Sundays in February – just \$15.

## Conversations

In the Advent issue of *Between the Aisles*, a very complex and timely question was raised: How do we present and describe a piece of art that both honours important legacies and also has within it images that can disturb or challenge?

When I first arrived at Robertson-Wesley, I found the stained glass windows both a comfort and a challenge. They are creations of seven different artists from Europe and Canada over 50 years. They were installed between 1913 and 1971. They portray the Biblical story from those artists' imaginations (including a "startling to me" figure of a devil represented in red with horns) and important figures in Protestant and Edmonton history. Questions may arise when pondering whom we honour, how we honour them, and how to "fill in the blanks" of these storytelling pieces of art (for example, where are the indigenous folks or immigrants of colour who attended the early Methodist and Presbyterian churches?).

We are not alone in pondering how to have these conversations! Museums, historians and libraries have been having this conversation forever. What do we keep? To what and to whom do we allow access? How do we both preserve history and enhance understanding? The good news is that more communities than ever are having this debate/discussion, such as schools named after historical figures (all of whom are human and thus each is a combination of good and more difficult characteristics) and sports teams identified with names that nowadays are considered pejorative. The bad news is that this is a complicated topic needing many diverse voices' input. All human communities and groupings we can name have within them dissenting voices that wish to be heard.

As a church though, we have some resources, not on finding easy answers but on how to find the patience to build consensus and understanding. Congregations have been using processes to create mission statements and call ministers. Wider church bodies in the United Church have had to discern when economic boycotts are called



for, how to apologize for our errors, and how to be explicit and proactive in our "all are welcome" mission (such as the 1988 decision that all people can be members regardless of sexual orientation).

Along with these resources and the circles we have here at Robertson-Wesley United Church for just such complicated issues (for example, the Mission and Outreach Pod), we bring the gifts of God. We must listen deeply to Spirit and one another; we must study broadly, seeking out the quiet voices. We must travel slowly and gently with one another, respecting that we are all children of God.

May we use the courage that raises these conversations to also discuss them, assuming best intentions in one another in the long journey of faith and justice.

***Do you have an experience you would like to share with the congregation?***

*Between the Aisles* accepts unsolicited submissions from members for each quarterly issue. Submissions can be emailed to: [rwucnews@gmail.com](mailto:rwucnews@gmail.com)

## *Spiritual Formation Pod*

Our first conversation in 2018 will happen **Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, in the Club Room after church.**

Come and let us explore together **Relationship deepening**: What questions arise when we seek to deepen our relationships with God and with one another? We will create a list of topics and questions for future Bible studies and activities.

## *1988: A Historic Decision*

In 1988, The United Church of Canada made a historic decision to welcome all people, regardless of sexual orientation, into full membership in the church, thus removing sexual orientation as a barrier to ordered ministry. That decision has had profound consequences for how we see ourselves as a church and what we understand our mission in the world to be. Over the last 30 years, we have continued to wrestle with what it means to be a church that honours diversity and recognizes sexuality as a gift from God.

As we seek to live into our identity as an open and affirming church, we discover much about ourselves, and about God. We discover that the beauty and diversity of humanity seems to be almost infinite. We are reminded that whenever we try to put people into any kind of box – of race, gender, sexuality, you name it – the reality of what God has created us to be is always bigger than all our words or ideas about God. Such is the mystery of incarnation, the divine nature revealed in human form.

The journey we began 30 years ago continues today. We are still learning how to truly celebrate the Whole Body of Christ, in all its glorious diversity. One of the challenges we are facing on this journey is to consider how our language, our assumptions, and our liturgy exclude, deny, or make invisible those who do not conform to traditional binary notions of gender. The Spirit is inviting us to expand our hearts and minds a little further than perhaps is comfortable, to recognize, honour, and celebrate the tremendous diversity of gender identities that make up the human community.

The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell, Moderator, The United Church of Canada

"Gathering, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2017-2018, page 75. Used with permission.



**Affirm/S'affirmer**  
UNITED ENSEMBLE

## *Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper*

It's that time of year again. On **Tuesday, February 13** Robertson-Wesley will be having their annual Pancake Supper. All are Welcome!! Bring your family and friends

Time: 5:30 to 7:00 pm

Cost: Adults - \$8.00

Children (12 & under) - \$5.00

Family - \$18.00



Get your tickets after the service in Memorial Hall, from the church office or at the door.

## *Meet Rev. Leigh Sinclair – Our new Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development: Part 2.*

(In the second part of our interview with Rev. Leigh, we talked about what she believes her role in the Robertson-Wesley community is, where she sees areas that the church covers really well, and a little bit about her personal life and hobbies).

When I first met with Rev. Leigh back early in her tenure at the church, we discussed what and where she saw her role being and growing. She mentioned she was drawn to apply for the job by the Joint Needs Assessment that was done, seeing that the job would include sharing with Rev. Karen in worship and pastoral care. But the other piece was the aspect of the job called "Spiritual Formation," which would help people grow and develop in their own "maturing faith." She was looking forward to being the staff resource to one of our existing Pods: "Spiritual Formation." This includes supporting some of the programs that were already currently running, some that were in their infancy and some that needed to be developed. She also mentioned that she found the church to be extremely inviting, wide and open, with our staff and congregation to have shown courage with the changes that it had to undergo. She liked that the Governance of the church had flexibility and wasn't rigidly structured. So she felt early on that she was going to spend the 1<sup>st</sup> year listening and figuring out where the church was doing very well, and to where the "holes" were that needed to be filled.



## *Ash Wednesday*

**Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Its roots lie in the ancient Jewish festival of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Atonement means "at-one-ment." If we are to be at one with God, with creation, with each other, we must face honestly who we are, make our confession, and open ourselves to the supportive power of God and our faith community in the Lenten struggle for new life. So Ash Wednesday is a day of honest confession, commitment and healing. Please join us for a time of reflection, worship and ritual. During the service we will be burning the palm branches from Palm Sunday last year, turning them into ashes and then the congregation will be invited to receive the sign of the cross with ashes on their hand or forehead. It is a very reflective and meaningful service. **Everyone is welcome.**

**Link: [www.rwuc.org/easter.html](http://www.rwuc.org/easter.html)**

## *Lent Noon Hour concerts*

**Thursdays, 12:10 pm to 12:50 pm**

The Robertson-Wesley Music Society is hosting a noon-hour concert series again 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. Come and enjoy some tranquil, reflective music for the Lenten season and find an oasis in the middle of your busy day. The concerts will be **February 15, 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22.**

*Let us gather to celebrate*

## *Lent and Easter*

### *Ash Wednesday*

**Wednesday, Feb 14 7:00 pm**  
Reflection and Ritual

### *Palm Sunday*

**Sunday, March 25 10:30 am**  
Choir of Robertson-Wesley &  
Robertson-Wesley Ringers

### *Maundy Thursday Service*

**Thursday, March 29 7:00 pm**  
Recalling the Last Supper  
Music: Córtet

### *Good Friday Service*

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

### *Easter Vigil*

**Saturday, March 31 7:00 pm**

### *Wake for Jesus*

**Saturday, March 31 8:00 pm**

### *Easter Sunrise Service*

**Sunday, April 1 7:30 am**  
Outdoors on the promenade at  
100 Avenue and 121 Street

### *Easter Sunday Service*

**Sunday, April 1 10:30 am**  
Choir of Robertson-Wesley  
Pergolesi Brass

## **Tattoos on the Heart**

THE POWER OF BOUNDLESS COMPASSION



**Gregory Boyle**  
FOUNDER OF HOMEBOY INDUSTRIES

## *Attention Book Lovers*

Gregory Boyle, an American Jesuit priest, has worked with gang members in Los Angeles for several decades. His views on compassion are heart-wrenching and life-changing. Join Robertson-Wesley's Book Buddies to discuss his powerful book *Tattoos on the Heart* on **Saturday, April 14, at 9:30 am.**

Books are available for sale after church on Sundays or from the church office. Price \$20.



*Interview with Rev. Leigh Sinclair continued*

In a follow-up discussion I had with her, a few months after she had been in the job, Rev. Leigh indicated to me that she was impressed that there weren't many of these "holes" to be filled. She has been quite impressed with the fact that everybody picks up the slack when things need to be accomplished, without having to be cajoled into doing it. The church has been very good at setting up empowered teams that don't need to turn to the board constantly for guidance and such. In terms of the "Spiritual Formation Pod", there have been some very good developments, like the Prayer Series, and the Pastoral Care Workshop that was held in November with 20 participants. She also noted that there are programs that are currently being extremely well run, though a few small tweaks for even greater accessibility could occur.

Still, Rev. Leigh has been quite amazed at how fast she has become emotionally involved with the people of Robertson-Wesley. Whether the rest of the staff team (who she finds "really awesome"), or the congregation, via regular services, baptisms, weddings, the speed at which she's made connections here has been amazing.

Lastly, just to let us get to know her a little more personally, Rev. Leigh gave me a bit of insight into what she likes to do with what little spare time she has. She loves being back in Edmonton, as it allows her to be much closer to her family (parents, siblings, nephews, etc, as well as her best friend from school). She likes to sing, and take part in theatre (she has even done improv shows in the past and wouldn't mind trying to get back into them). She likes hitting the gym, doing the elliptical and practicing yoga (though she mentioned at our second meeting that due to an increase in her "social life," she hasn't had as much of a chance to work out as she would like). But I think we can all agree in our time with Rev. Leigh, a lack of energy is the last thing she would have to worry about.

So, in closing, I hope this has given everyone a little bit of insight into Rev. Leigh. I also hope she knows how glad we are to have her as part of our church and that she's here for several more years (decades even). I personally think she's been an excellent addition to our spiritual leadership and look forward to getting to know her even better over the next few years.

*Marilee J. Stephens*

## *Spirited Saturdays* **"Saying No to say Yes"**

Come and learn through listening and discussion how setting boundaries and saying "no" can lead us to better love of self and others. We will gather with coffee/tea/juice and our Bibles to explore how to make our "yes" count by using "no"! We will meet **the third Saturday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am, January to May, except April.**

Come to one or all of the workshops and bring friends and/or family! We will meet in the Club Room.

**February 17** -Exploration of how we make decisions about life and death (faithful responses to dying, grief dynamics, pre-planning funerals, caring for someone you love in palliative care).

**March 17**- Exploration of how Jesus said "yes" and "no" and how we can best follow Jesus.

**May 19** -Exploration of our Spiritual Gifts/Strengths by saying "no" to create more "yes" time and energy.

Note: On **Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>** come to a breakfast event, hosted by the Stewardship Team, to explore how we can live out our Passion!

### *DIY! Apple Bird Feeders*



To make these apple bird feeders, all you need is an apple, a cookie cutter (we used a

heart shape), a melon baller, natural peanut butter and some bird seed. To make it easier to hang, we threaded the apple with some twine. (Photo by Jenna Renwick)

Article courtesy Lee Valley Tools .

## ”What will your legacy be?”



...she asked. What a question, I thought. Afterwards I pondered her words. What kind of legacy do I want to leave behind? Hmm. Well, I love music. I am committed to the work of Robertson-Wesley. I like learning new things, I love being in nature, and I enjoy being around

children. None of those have anything to do with illness or death. They are, however, related to what I live for. I know. My legacy will live on through this church. I will include Robertson-Wesley in my will, so that the many programs we deliver can carry on into the future. That’s a nice thought!

For more information on Legacy giving, see [www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca](http://www.unitedchurchfoundation.ca), or check out the pamphlet *Legacy Gifts at Robertson-Wesley* in the rack outside Memorial Hall and at [www.rwuc.org/publications](http://www.rwuc.org/publications).

Submitted by Nancy Heule, co-editor of *Between the Aisles* and member of Robertson-Wesley Legacy Committee

## *Contemplative Practices*

Are you seeking an escape from the world, an oasis in your crazy life? Are you seeking some quiet? Are you seeking time for yourself or inspiration? Then we invite you to engage in **contemplative practices** at Robertson-Wesley United Church in Memorial Hall. When you enter Memorial Hall you will find pockets of inspiration that will clear your mind, open your heart, and bring your spirit into connection with the sacred and the world. Throughout Memorial Hall there will be different spaces with different contemplative practices that invite you to meditate, pray, while engaging in some artistic exercises. Drop by anytime between the hours of 7-8:30 PM on the designated Sundays. Stay for as long as you would like. This is a self-directed program with instructions throughout the room to give you some guidance on your journey. There are 5 more Sunday evenings each with a different theme. Invite your friends, family and neighbours to enter this oasis and emerge inspired, enlightened, grounded and feeling nourished.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Mar 18, 2018</b>  | <b>Caring for the caregivers</b> – a night to recharge, to fill up your cup                |
| <b>Apr 29, 2018</b>  | <b>Earth Day Healing Creation</b> – caring for the earth and all creation                  |
| <b>May 6, 2018</b>   | <b>The World Vigil</b> – holding the world in thoughts and prayer                          |
| <b>June 17, 2018</b> | <b>Thanksgiving and Gratitude</b> – a night to celebrate and give thanks for our blessings |

## *Art Studio*

Facilitated by Laura David Foster

**Mondays, 7:00-8:30 pm, and**

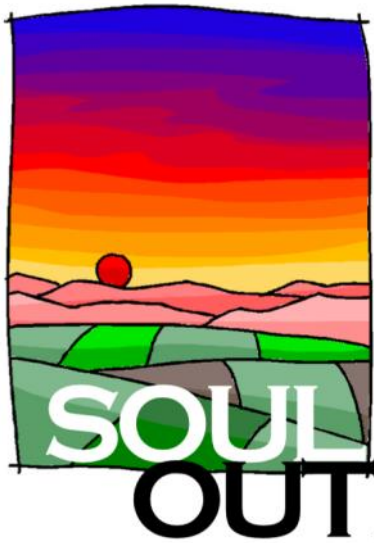
**Tuesdays, 1:30-3:00 pm**

The studio is a place for people to explore art and connect with each other in an informal creative environment. People are welcome to drop in any time and try out these different art-making processes. Some people like to work on their own ongoing projects, and this is encouraged as well. The studio's purpose is to bring people together, to enjoy art, and be in community. We are all creative and the studio community nurtures creativity, authenticity, and friendship... and it’s just a fun place to hang out! Regular attendance is not required but registration via email is recommended to stay informed with studio developments. For example, this fall we have expanded our program times, and we’re looking at new possibilities like exhibiting our art.

For more information, please contact Laura:

[spiritedartstudio@rwuc.org](mailto:spiritedartstudio@rwuc.org)

Deadline for the  
Summer edition submissions:  
**April 15, 2018**  
Distribution: **May 13, 2018**



A safe place where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons can explore the sacred and connect with each other.

The second Sunday of each month at 7:00 PM

Hosted by Robertson-Wesley United church



Art therapy combines creative arts with psychotherapy. Imagery, colour, and art processes are central in the therapeutic process. This therapeutic approach allows for artistic expression of thoughts and feelings that are difficult to articulate. Art therapy serves to activate the source of creativity that encompass all human beings. It is beneficial to people of all ages for self-expression, awareness, growth, and healing.

Art therapists facilitate the creative means to connect with issues that are otherwise difficult to communicate such as grief, anxiety, and other psychological, interpersonal and spiritual issues.

Through art-making, reflections on imagery, and relationship building, art therapists support people as they develop self-esteem, solve psychological and interpersonal problems, and manage stress. Whether for overall personal growth or for specific issues, art therapy enhances life!

Laura David Foster is in private practice located at Robertson-Wesley United Church. **She is offering professional services in individual and group art therapy and counselling.**

New 2018 art therapy groups added with dates and times.

Contact: [Laura@FosterArtandWellness.com](mailto:Laura@FosterArtandWellness.com) for more information on fees for individual art therapy and/or make an appointment.

[www.fosterartandwellness.com](http://www.fosterartandwellness.com)

Did you know?

You can donate to the church using PayPal?



Visit [www.rwuc.org](http://www.rwuc.org) and click DONATE

## Spring Rummage Sale

Saturday, April 28  
from 9 am to 3 pm



People come from far and wide to look for treasures - books, records, home decor, toys, jewelry, records, fine china and antiques - to name just a few. The funds raised are used for the following year's general revenue to enable Robertson-Wesley to continue to be a vibrant Christian Community.

Full details are on our website! [www.rwuc.org](http://www.rwuc.org)

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