



2017

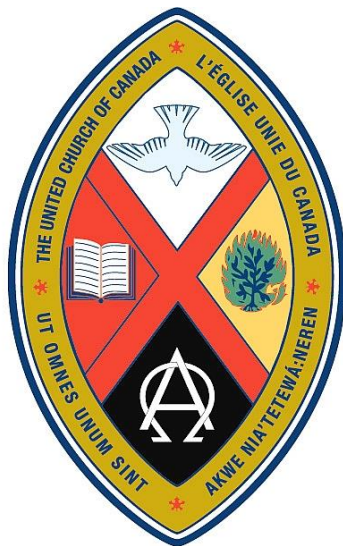
Robertson-Wesley Annual Report

Budget Information Session

Sunday, February 4, 2018

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 11, 2018



Minister of Congregation and
Community Development:
Minister of Spiritual and
Pastoral Care Development:
Director of Music:
Office Administrator:
Facility Manager:
Financial Manager:
Event Assistants:

Rev. Karen J. Bridges
Rev. Leigh Sinclair
Tammy-Jo Mortensen
Tanya Eckenswiler
Brad Campbell
Garth van Herwaarden
Richard Kennedy
Roderick Mamita
Rhea Sola

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Trustees of Robertson-Wesley United Church

General Purpose: The Trustees are authorized on behalf of the Congregation to hold in trust all properties of the Congregation.

Membership: There shall be no fewer than 8 Trustees. Vacancies shall be filled by election by the Congregation.

Specific Duties: To erect and repair buildings; to permit use of property for church purposes; to sell, mortgage, exchange or lease the property with the consent of Presbytery. Trustees' activities are restricted and governed by public statute, the UCs "Trust of Model Deed" and lawful directions of the Official Board or Church Board or Church Council and of other courts of the UC having jurisdiction.

Current Trustees:

Harry Bridges, Karen Hansen, Lorne Langman, Ray McCall, Vital Ouellette, Allison Seymour, Bud Squair, Sylvia Duffus

2017 Statistics

Average Sunday Morning Attendance

January	158
February	180
March	160
April	230
May	149
June	161
July	101
August	113
September	147
October	176
November	176
December	173

Confirmations	13
Reaffirmations	6
Transfers	6
Baptisms	25
Funeral/Memorial Services	12
Weddings	9

Minutes: Annual Congregational Meeting
Robertson-Wesley United Church
February 12, 2017, 12:00PM

MINUTES

Chair: Michelle Salomons

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1. Call to Order	Michelle welcomed and called the meeting with a reflection.	
2. Invocation	Karen opened the meeting with a prayer.	
3. Opening Hymn	We Are One	
4. Act of Remembrance	A sign of continuing Faith and Comfort. Karen read the names of whose funerals were performed in 2016.	
5. MOTION to allow adherents be allowed to vote:	MOTION: John Fleming Moved to allow adherents be allowed to vote at the 2017 Annual Congregational Meeting. Seconded by Lorna Berlinguette. Motion Carried.	
6. Approval of Agenda	MOTION: Gary Pecknold moved to accept the agenda for the 2017 Annual Congregational Meeting be approved as presented. Seconded by Colleen Ouellette. Motion Carried.	
7. Approval of the 2016 Meeting Minutes	MOTION: Karen Hansen moved to approve the meeting minutes for the 2016 Annual Congregational Meeting held on February 21, 2016. Seconded by Lorna Berlinguette. Motion Carried.	
8. Approval of Annual Report	MOTION: Louie Berlinguette moved to accept the 2016 annual report as printed. Seconded by Betty Squair. Motion Carried. Question: How frequently do trustees need to meet? Answer: Only if property or assets are sold as well as annually for fire drills.	
9. Motion to accept financial statements	MOTION: Roy Skoreyko moved to accept the 2016 financial statements as audited year ending December 31, 2016. Seconded by Lisa Fairweather. Motion Carried. Robert provided a brief overview of financial performance over 2016.	
10. Motion to accept 2017 budget.	MOTION: John Fleming moved to approve the 2017 annual budget as presented. Seconded by Geoff Anderson. Motion Carried.	
11. Appointment of Auditors	MOTION: Robert moved to continue using Ellis Group to audit Financial Statements. Seconded by Gary Pecknold. Motion Carried.	

12. Recognition of Retired Official Members	Jill Lambie (Presbytery) Ron Soans (Past Chair)	
13. Election of 2017 of Official Board Members and Trustees	MOTION: Colleen Ouellette moved to accept Colleen Graves as incoming Chair of the Board. Seconded by Lorna Berlinguette. Motion Carried.	
14. New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Thanks to those individuals that brought food for the ACM. • Formal recognition to the participants of the Christmas Day Service. • The Flower group is disbanding. • Recognition to Karen for her continued hard work during the absence of a second minister. 	
15. Closing Hymn	We Are One	
16. Benediction	Karen Bridges offered some closing remarks.	
17. Adjournment	MOTION: Michelle moved to close the Annual Congregational Meeting. Adjourned. 1:23pm	

Michelle Salomons, Chair

Darren Neigel, Secretary

Robertson Wesley United Church
Official Annual Congregational Meeting
February 12, 2017
12:00 p.m.

Official Robertson-Wesley United Church Board

My second year as chair of the Official Board of Robertson-Wesley has been supported by an outstanding team, many of whom are new to Board positions. Our Leadership Manual, completed in the previous year, is serving as an efficient guide. I am thankful for the hard work and dedication of all our volunteers, giving special thanks to members of R-W serving as committee and pod leaders. Our wonderful staff continues to give their very best at all times: Ministers, Administrators, Director of Music, Facilities and Events Staff. We continue to see families and people of all ages joining our congregation. It is a joy to see us grow in numbers and in the Spirit.

The Joint Search Committee's work in 2016 led to the calling of the Reverend Leigh Sinclair as minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development. Radiating positivity, Leigh has quickly fit right in to our team, and we're eager to watch how our staff team evolves around her skill set.

Garth van Herwaarden began his work in the role of financial manager of the church. The need for this position became apparent when seeking a new treasurer for the board. Simply put, the financial demands of our church in our present time cannot and should not be performed solely by volunteers. The JNAC report also identified the need for an increased web-based communications presence. This year, that role has been filled wonderfully by our contractor, Iain Gillis.

One exciting side effect of belonging to a growing congregation is to see where new energy and ideas are appearing. New people are stepping into roles just as they are being vacated by dedicated volunteers who've done more than their share. It's truly humbling to watch as people answer the call to serve God through the work of this church.

We also bid farewell to several of our R-W friends who have died over the past year. We continue to be blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst, as evidenced by the warmth shared amid generations and people from all walks of life. I am grateful for the continued financial contributions that sustain our mission to do the work of Christ.

It has been a pleasure to serve as chair, and I will serve as Past Chair for 2018. Colleen Graves will become Chair. Special thanks to Ron Soans who has served an extended period as chair and past chair. His service and dedication to the well-being of our congregation is acknowledged and gratefully so.

Submitted by,
Michelle Salomons,
Chair, Robertson-Wesley Official Board

Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” Paul wrote of these fruits in his letter to the Galatians (5: 22-23). I was called here in March of 2017 and ever since have enjoyed both the bounty of shared fruit that is our current ministry and am listening for the many seeds waiting for our cooperation with God’s Spirit to sprout in our future!

Peace and Joy – Worship Experiences.

I began my ministry with you on Ash Wednesday and experienced the peace that worship in our beautiful sanctuary brings. The blending of Scripture and story, interactive conversations and silence, sung voices and ringing instruments are the outcome of behind the scenes planning, teaming, rehearsing, ushering, and administration. It has been a great joy to become part of the Robertson-Wesley worship creation teams which lead to Sunday morning experiences as well as worship in the chapel, Memorial Hall, Canterbury Chapel and Memorial Gardens.

Love and Patience – Training, Databases and Pods

This amazing place has more people and programs than my past churches so it took many people to train me on the administrative and facility support networks that keeps it all flowing. I am grateful for the patience shown to me, especially by our staff team. I am also grateful for the Pod structure in this congregation which allows for prayer and discernment to weave into the pragmatic details of events and programs! Our love of Christ and trust in God show forth in these practices.

Generosity and Faithfulness – Stewards of time, talent and monies, working hard and leaving legacies.

The teams, committees, Board, Pods and you, the members of all ages, allow us to continue looking to what is next! It is amazing to learn about all your legacy funds and programs we use to support all in our community and the supportive education provided in UCW, Stewardship, *SoulOUTing* and *Koinonia* programming. We all witnessed this year the courageous faith it takes to step out of leadership roles to allow new things to grow and develop—thanks for the inspiration *Flower Group* members!

Self-control – Self Care, Study Leave and Sabbaticals

This gift of the Spirit allows staff and members to remember that self care (caring for our body, mind and spirit) enhances our care for others and the mission of this church. I have been so blessed by the staff and Ministry and Personnel’s care to ensure we have time apart for rest, leisure, prayer and study. This year for my part I undertook intentional study of congregational sizes and dynamics, Reformation theology and began a clergy peer support online circle. Rev. Karen modelled the intentional work/rest balance that is ‘Sabbatical’ and the congregation pulled together to ensure programs and caring could continue during those months.

Kindness and Gentleness – Next Steps

As we continue to journey together to follow Christ, share God’s love and listen to the Spirit we are called as disciples to nourish one another’s gifts with kindness and gentleness. We must give people opportunities to try new things (new to us or new to them) and celebrate things that are completed and those things we learn from to keep growing.

In the coming year, I will be focusing on the continuing development of a structure to support formal and informal visiting with one another (to communicate needs, support, pray, teach, share). I hope you can join in our collective visiting work or perhaps a program, a small group or team. Come and be guided by the Spirit!

If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:26)

Submitted by,
Rev. Leigh Sinclair

Minister of Congregation and Community Development

Bobby Kennedy used to say, "There are those who look at things the way they are and ask why...I dream of things that never were and ask why not?" These are the words of a man with a religious heart.

Romans 8:24-28 says it this way:

"For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose."

As a faithful follower, I believe we live in hope, of what is to come, and how the Spirit can and will transform each one of us and the world as a whole. During this past year of transition and new beginnings these sayings kept me focused and provided me with encouragement. The key words for me in 2017 were patience, hope and trust.

There has been a lot shifting in the past year as we welcomed Leigh to the team, and as we honoured long-time volunteers who were stepping down from key leadership roles, while supporting new leadership that have stepped up to continue the mission and ministry of Robertson-Wesley. Through all this change, it has become abundantly clear that we are a church that is thriving because of our willingness to dig deep into our faith, while discerning where the spirit is leading us. It has been said that a thriving church:

- Takes risk
- Has good relationship with leadership
- Expresses vulnerability
- Leaders are healthy
- Willingness to push the boundaries of structure tied to the denomination

This past year we have had many people of all ages inquiring about faith, willing to commit to active participation in the work of this congregation. People are engaged, asking difficult questions, willing to share their joys and pains, while being open and honest about our fears, challenges, and hopes. We continue to strive to be an inclusive community that honours diversity. We meet people where they are at with no expectations. We truly believe that if you are present in our midst and participating then you are a member of the church family.

We value personal relationships, inclusivity, the energy and spiritedness of this congregation, the artistic creative responses to our mission and ministry, the sense of trust and empowerment that exists for the leadership of this church, and the willingness and courage to take risks. This congregation is successful and healthy because we work as a team, a team that has trust in one another, a clear mission, so that we can work in harmony, and we are committed and hold each other accountable to our mission and our calling.

We have been working hard at continuing to evolve our outreach programs, adding sandwiches to our bag lunch program, more free BBQ's for the community, a new leadership team for the community dinner, more volunteers to assist with Messy Wednesday, and a rebranding in the Spirited Arts Movement and Art Studio.

After 7 years at the church I was grateful to be given the opportunity to take a three-month Sabbatical. The ability and opportunity to completely unplug from the world for a time while travelling in Botswana and South Africa was enriching and inspiring. Being on safari helped me to enter into true Sabbath practice. It is important to live in the present, to slow down, and to keep silent while remaining patient while listening. Observing the animals in nature reminded me that we all have a role to play and we each serve a purpose. We all participate in the circle of life and are essential to its continuation. I am grateful to everyone who stepped up to fill in on much of the work that

I oversee. I especially want to thank the staff for pitching in during this time. I left with great confidence that all would be well, and I came back ready and excited to re-engage my ministry. We have a wonderful staff team, and a committed congregation, and for this I give God thanks.

Submitted by,
Rev. Karen Bridges

Office Administrator

I don't need to tell you that Robertson-Wesley is a special place. When strangers choose to come in to the church I can see a change. They are in a safe space.

Only 20 steps further into the building and come into another sacred space where you can talk to God. Release tension and stresses and give it to God. I haven't found many spaces like this, we are so fortunate. I also feel fortunate to work with the staff at R-W. We all provide open doors to each other. We trust each other enough to talk about the day and struggles we face. Although we have many more good times to share.

In 2017 I stepped back from hiring staff and reporting/checking in to (part time) staff as Brad is now a liaison with Ministry and Personnel.

In late 2017 I also stepped away from most of the website work when Iain Gillis was hired as a communications assistant. Since Iain's contract concluded in December 2017, Garth is now taking on this specific role of website development. In the near future our website will have a face-lift and will become more mobile. Garth has also relieved me of all basic bookkeeping duties. This frees up my time to become more successful and expand in my own job duties.

With the help of all staff, especially Brad and the Property Committee we continue to see growth in rentals. Not only financial growth, but growth with the community. The Spirited Arts Movement brought in many new faces alongside people that have been attending R-W for years. We should feel proud that our space offers welcoming warmth to the wider community with free art and music programming.

In 2017 we made many technological advancements. We all have updated workstations and have moved away from the in-house server to the Cloud. The cloud stores our information securely on an offsite server that is accessible 24 hours a day and can be accessed remotely from anywhere in the world. The cloud project was a process and it took some time and money, however it was becoming a necessity in these changing times. Our church database, Servant Keeper is also offsite. This means less time troubleshooting computer and server problems. More so than ever our data is secure.

There are times when working in a church can be challenging and I find myself emotionally drained. But without these challenges the reward would likely be less. I have no doubt that this position will continue to provide lessons and will only help me continue to grow.

Psalm 128:2

You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.

Submitted by,
Tanya Eckenswiller

From the Music Director

“Music . . . can name the unnameable and communicate the unknowable.”

— **Leonard Bernstein**

What a fantastic year of music-making at Robertson-Wesley United Church!

The **Choir of Robertson-Wesley** had the opportunity to sing a wide variety of music. We have continued our joint cooperation with the Choir of Knox-Metropolitan United (now United on Whyte) and this year presented 5 concerts in 4 days in the Edmonton region with the generous support of the Community Fund for Canada’s 150th. The choirs, in partnership with the Robertson-Wesley Ringers and Indigenous singer/songwriter Karen Donaldson Shepherd, presented music in Ft. Saskatchewan, Seba Beach, Beaumont, Morinville, and here at home at Robertson-Wesley. As always we worked hard preparing music from Sunday to Sunday and for special occasions. For Holy Week and Easter this year we had the a cappella Córtes singing for Maundy Thursday, choir at Good Friday, and Brass and Choir on Easter Sunday. To celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the choir with instrumentalists shared Bach’s Cantata No. 4, “Christ Lag in Todesbanden” which was set by Bach on a text of Martin Luther. Some of the services with an abundance of music included Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve. Over the year in worship, the choir sang almost 100 anthems at approximately 35 services. We sang at one wedding this year as well. Thanks to the section leaders for their strong musical and professional leadership: Claire Rolheiser, Julie Golosky, Gavin Belik, Stuart Sladden and Matthew McGuigan.

The choir was able to participate at events in the community many times last year including the Christmas Community Dinner and several choristers sang at the Christmas Bureau caroling at the Winspear Centre. Our quartet was very busy being hired for caroling gigs around town. We also hosted a very successful cabaret dinner – “Hot Picks and Jazz Licks” in January.

The choir was active in non-musical ways as well, with the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, hosting fellowship after church and social events hosted by Clara Dyck, Maria Adria & Leah Gramlich, Kathleen & Chris Gowers.

The **Robertson-Wesley Ringers** prepared diligently for each service this year. During this past year the R-W Ringers played at five Robertson-Wesley services. The R-W Ringers played a concert at Holy Spirit Lutheran as part of a monthly seniors lunch program in May, at Handbell Discovery in Calgary in October, and at Canterbury in November. The Ringlets handbell quartet were very busy. They played during three R-W services, at Handbell Discovery in October, and at the Southside Pentecostal Assembly Christmas Dinner. June saw the R-W Ringers working at maximum capacity, hosting a concert and lunch to celebrate 50 years of ringing at Robertson-Wesley! What a wonderful celebration, with many alumni in attendance, many wishes from afar, and a great celebration of the amazing community which was begun 50 years before with Mr. Millson’s purchase of the Schulmerich handbells. After that grand celebration, several ringers decided that it was time after many, many years of involvement, and due to health, jobs etc. that they would bid “adieu” to handbell ringing, at least temporarily, so you may see many new faces in the R-W Ringers in 2018! The Ringers also served at the pancake supper and at coffee hour.

Our second handbell choir, **Nova Bells**, has been doing exceptionally well and played for a few services last year as well as one Sunday at Spirit West United Church. They also played in June at the 50th anniversary concert, and on a Saturday morning in November at the Edmonton General. Such a beautiful way to share music with the patients and residents there. It is just great to have a multi-generational group such as this at R-W!

The **Cantilon Choral Society** under the direction of Heather Johnson continues to be based at our church, and provided music at eight of our services during the year, as well as filling the building with beautiful music during the week.

Our outreach choir, **Choral Morphosis**, continues to thrive and grow. Director Melissa Hladyshevsky is on a one-year maternity leave, and she has been ably replaced by Rebecca Parsons. Rebecca and pianist Pamela Graham have been hard at work teaching, inspiring, laughing, dancing and singing with the choir which has grown from about 3 people in its first year to over 40, now into our 10th full year! A few years ago, they started a second group so that more advanced members are able to do some acting, musical theatre etc. This musical outreach ministry would not have been possible without funding from the United Church Seeds of Hope fund, R-W Trust Funds, and continued funding through the Helen Mack Fund and the Robertson-Wesley Music Society, through two anonymous donors. They presented a year-end concert in June, a Christmas concert in December, both at St. Timothy's Anglican and they sang at a service at Robertson-Wesley, one solo piece and one in combination with the Robertson-Wesley choir.

Special music was provided throughout the year, especially during the summer. On Easter Sunday we had the Pergolesi brass quartet. During the year we had additional singers and instrumentalists including Belinda Chiang, Marilee Stephens, Jill Hoogewoonink, Amber Stefanyk, Ewald Cheung, Jim Findlay, Mingmei Xu, Joni Soans, Robin Doyon, the Strathcona String Quartet, Erik Reinart, Claire Rolheiser, Julie Golosky, Oliver Munar, Matthew McGuigan, Andy Melson, Dushan Bednarsky, Marilee Stephens, Ron Soans, Warren Mack, Melisa Guilbeault, and the Córtes which has sprung up from some of the choristers here at R-W. Thanks to all who provide music at special services during the year as well – at Koinonia, UCW, community dinners, teas, and Soul OUTing. Many thanks to the volunteer singers and players who give generously of their time and talents, to all those who have contributed to the annual budget, the Music Endowment Fund, Special Music Fund and the Robertson-Wesley Music Society. I'm deeply appreciative of the congregation for their strong support of the music program at Robertson-Wesley.

Founded in 1986, the **Robertson-Wesley Music Society** is a separate entity independent from R-W United Church - an incorporated society under the Alberta Societies Act. It has a constitution and by-laws and a volunteer board that operates the society. They file reports with the granting agencies, with Alberta registries and with Canada Revenue Agency to keep their charitable status.

Its aims and objectives as outlined in the founding documents are:

- to promote cultural events, specifically musical events, at Robertson-Wesley church
- to promote a high standard of handbell ringing, choral singing and musical performances

The music society operates through donations, fundraising, and ticket sales. The society also applies for grants, and monies from those grants, as stipulated by the granting agencies can only be used for concerts and public performances, not church services.

All members of the music society benefit directly from the ability to perform in the community, to invite others to perform, and the community at large benefits from accessible (often free) music in their community.

Submitted by,

Tammy-Jo Mortensen

Ministry & Personnel

The Ministry and Personnel Committee consisted of seven members of Robertson-Wesley United Church in 2017: Karen Gabert, Christopher Gowers, Nancy Heule, Kathryn Rambow, Eric Sauze, Sarah Wiens and Lisa Fairweather.

We are a thriving faith community AND modern organisation, inclusive, progressive, affirming and spirited. We have an incredible variety of people who find nourishment here and we continue to be impressed by the professionalism of the staff and volunteers who light up our facility and our community.

Highlights of this year from our Committee's perspective:

- Leigh Sinclair joining our ministry team, humbly contributing her many gifts with a sense of fun that we love and value.
- Celebrating Karen Bridges' well-earned sabbatical, which involved seeing with fresh eyes the energy and devotion she brings to our community.
- Iain Gillis joining our team on a contract basis to maintain our website and lay the foundation for future communication improvements.
- Garth Van Herwaarden joining our team in a new part-time staff role. After reviewing his performance in the financial management role in 2017, the Board approved the position as a permanent part-time staff role in 2018. The intent is to ensure that Robertson-Wesley United Church has the necessary financial and operations staff support for the many volunteers and thousands of dollars which flow through our community to make a difference in the world.

We also spent time updating job descriptions, hiring evening/weekend and summer staff, and looking at ways to deliver on the Joint Needs Assessment Committee recommendations. Upcoming in 2018 are plans to renew the website and host a health & safety workshop for staff and volunteers.

The Ministry and Personnel Committee looks after confidential staff matters, and as such, regular meetings are attended only by committee members and staff members. We are available any time to answer questions or discuss matters - please let any one of us know!

Submitted by,

Lisa Fairweather,
Chair of Ministry and Personnel

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee met in 2017 to plan and evaluate our worship experiences on Sundays and other special services. We are a team made up of the Usher/Greeting coordinators Brenda Shepherd and Pat Stewart, Communion elements and serving coordinators Susan Hutson and Jill Lambie as well as some members at large such as Bob Klakowich. Staff resources are the Music Director and the Ministers.

This year's planning focused on training Rev. Leigh as to our traditions, ensuring Holy Week and Advent/Christmas seasons' extra services were well lead and supplied and planning a farewell to the Flower Group.

We heard from the new Sanctuary Environment Group about what areas they would be focusing on in the coming months such as candle care, parament creation and use of symbols in the sanctuary. A representative of this group will join us in 2018.

One of our key discussion topics included how we can celebrate our large numbers on Life Passage Sundays without the service feeling crowded or too long. We will continue to set Sundays for these celebrations into our planning schedule while continuing to be open to adding occasional services when family needs and/or the number of people/families involved are going to be over 10. What a wonderful challenge it is to have too many folks wanting to mark their faith journeys! The number of Life Passages in 2017 is listed on page 2. See below for the report from our coordinators.

We also delegated the care for flowers and candles, chose our budget hopes for 2018, planned for future learning for lay readers and leaders in our worship and re-worked our "role description" as a committee. We look forward to great discussions and meaningful, moving worship experiences in the New Year!

Life Passages

As the Life Passages Co-ordinator and working alongside Rev. Karen Bridges and Rev. Leigh Sinclair, it was a VERY busy year of Confirmations, Baptisms, Blessings of an Unborn Child, Re-Affirmations AND Transfers at Robertson-Wesley United Church.

My job, along with Susan Huston (Mentor), is to greet everyone who is taking part in the Life Passages ceremony by explaining to them what will be taking place up front, showing them the Millson Room or "Quiet Room" they can go to if the little ones among them need feeding, changing or quieter setting and to simply help ALL the participants, feel relaxed and a part of our wonderful Church.

I am looking forward to an exciting 2018 with many Life Passages ceremonies throughout the year.

Submitted by,

Brenda Sheppard

Ushers and Greeters

Pat Stewart and I would like to thank ALL of you who agreed to be Head Ushers and Greeters when asked in 2017. Your help was so appreciated.

Head Ushers: Greeting and being a Head Usher is a very important part of our Sunday worship as you are the "first" person newcomers see when, for whatever reason, they decide to come to R-W. This gives you a chance to let them know a little bit about our Church and who knows, that person may become a very good friend later on. Some people when asked if they would like to be a Head Usher, think they can't do it because it's a hard job....so they quickly say "No", but what they don't realize is Pat and I will help you and you will also receive a Check List to guide you. We only ask you to be a Head Usher ONE Sunday a month for four months, so just four times...that's it. Greeter: Being a Greeter means you will greet at one of the three entrances to the church, help the Head Usher and then take the offering, but for the most part, you are sitting in the Sanctuary for the service.

Pat and I would really appreciate if everyone in the congregation would help us out by considering to be a Head Usher or a Greeter. You will find that it is a rewarding job and you will also meet people you've seen in the Sanctuary and maybe thought you would like to know a bit more about them, you will get that chance when you are a Greeter.

So, when you are asked by myself or Pat to be a Head Usher....and when you are asked by a Head Usher to be a Greeter on his or her team, please don't quickly say "no," think about it a bit more and help us out by saying "YES", you won't regret it. Thank you!

Submitted by,

Brenda Sheppard and Pat Stewart

Coordinators for Head Ushers and Greeters

Submitted by,

Rev. Leigh Sinclair

Pat Stewart

Brenda Sheppard

The Joint Search Committee

The Joint Search Committee, formed in September 2016, is pleased to report that it successfully completed its mandate in 2017. Rev. Leigh Sinclair accepted the call to serve as Robertson-Wesley's Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development, joining Rev. Karen Bridges and the rest of the staff team in March.

It was a wonderful learning experience and a sincere pleasure to work with congregation members Patrik Foff, Betty Squair and Hal Thiessen, and Presbytery members Katharine Moore (United on Whyte) and Rev. Stuart Jackson (Kirk United) on the Joint Search Committee, which was officially disbanded at the covenanting service on November 5. Praise be to God for being our helper throughout this journey!

Submitted by,

Colleen Ouellette

Chair of the Joint Search Committee

Report of the Nominating Committee

The purpose of the committee is to find qualified nominees for elected positions on the church board. The committee will also identify members who could fill other key positions such as Presbytery Representatives and pod coordinators.

The committee is now in the process of finding persons who can fill these positions: Incoming Board Chair, and Secretary to the Board. The Nominations Committee is looking for a couple of volunteers to help with the work of the Nominations Committee in identifying people willing to serve on the board in 2019.

Members of the congregation interested in filling any of these roles are asked to talk to members of the Nominations Committee. The committee members are: John Fleming, Ron Soans, Ted Bleazard and Rev. Karen Bridges (ex-officio).

Submitted by,

John Fleming

Family Ministry Committee

We are very happy with all of the opportunities for families to worship together and be in community at R-W. Our committee meets about 4 times a year to touch base on our ongoing programs and to plan for special events.

Beginning with the youngest children...Garden Patch

The Garden Patch continues to be a lively place this year! Attendance has been steady and we have a large number of young kids at Robertson-Wesley, whether they are visiting for just one Sunday or attending regularly. We have been fortunate to have several volunteers who take turns leading the lessons - thank you all! In the Garden Patch, our pre-school and kindergarten children learn the stories of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus through story, song, drama, games, crafts and play. Every week is a different adventure! We also teach the youngest members of our congregation about the community that is our church and help them to discover how they are important members of this community. It is amazing to see the bonds they are building, even at such a young age!

Elementary Aged Children - Kid's Church

This year Kid's Church has continued to grow. Many children made the leap from Garden Patch up to Kid's Church, and new families have brought new energy to the group. There is a more even balance of boys and girls in the group this year. This has brought a calmer energy to the group- although the kids still enjoy moving around and having fun together a lot!

Because the age range from grade 1-6 is so pronounced, we decided to try occasionally splitting Kid's Church into two groups this year (grade 1-3 and 4-6). This was only possible when there was an extra volunteer to help with leading a group. It was particularly successful in the month of November when the kids were working on presentations that they would make to each other. The older kids (grade 4-6) worked on their own with a volunteer, Janann, to create a fun skit. They really enjoyed this time together. The younger kids also worked on a skit, and at the end of the month the two groups presented their skits to each other and the Youth, and then had a fun party together.

Each week we try to engage the kids in the scripture themes through a range of activities. This can involve reading, acting out the scripture together, making crafts related to the themes, or playing games to demonstrate the meaning behind the scriptures. One big success this year was when we built temples in Memorial Hall. Well, forts, but they seemed like temples to the kids!

We wish to thank Tory Bachmann and Reverend Karen for creating the dynamic curriculum that we use each week.

Youth

Fun things are happening at Youth Group! We're a growing group of great kids from grades 7-12. On Sundays during our discussions we talked about belonging, creation, peace, new beginnings, social justice, stigmas and acceptance. We also discussed why we come to church and being on Team Jesus. We created a stop motion video about how church is a place to grow together and belong. Youth Events included going to Launch Pad, Frisbee golf, Family Games Night and the Corn Maze. We value giving back to our community so this year we made sandwiches for the Magic Pantry! We raised money for the sandwich supplies by selling popcorn in Memorial Hall during fellowship after worship.

Young Adults

We have continued to offer God on Tap which happens approximately every two months. Young adults meet to discuss God and their faith at a local café.

Mom & Dad's Group

This is a drop-in group for parents with babies and toddlers. It is a group that provides support to parents as they navigate parenthood. It is also a starting place for babies and toddlers to begin socialization with one another. Many of the children first met in this group and are now friends and are growing up together in the church. It is also open to the community.

Fun Family Programs and Events

Messy Wednesday

This program continues to support families as we feast over a meal and build community together. Our wonderful chef and menu planner, Lindsey Esau, and Richard Kennedy and our alternate cook Garth van Herwaarden our ongoing volunteer host continues to support the program. This allows families to simply come and relax after a hard day at work. We average 16-20 people each time we meet, which presently is on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.

Games Night

In January 28 we had our first games night in Memorial Hall. This is a very informal evening of fellowship. Karen broke the ice with some group games, then small groups were formed around the various games. With 10 – 20 games to choose from, there was something to appeal to anyone and everyone, regardless of age or interest. This games night was a perfect way to spend a cold winter evening, and we look forward to repeating it in January 2018.

Live Nativity Scene

The Live Nativity was held on December 16. This event has expanded over the past two years to now include a complimentary barbecue for community members and participants. Thanks to some warmer weather and perhaps the alluring aromas of the BBQ, we had greatly increased attendance relative to the past few years. The Youth Group was a great help in setting up for the event and posing as every character imaginable! Community members who stopped by appreciated the free meal and hot drinks and a few put on costumes and spent some time beside the manger. This is an event that brings a peaceful respite for some, as they sit quietly by the manger, and huge excitement for others, as they try on every costume and sing carols loudly for all to hear.

Highlights of the year also include transitions, new beginnings and endings, Blessing of the Backpacks has become an annual ritual that is looked forward to by all ages and our end of the year. Celebration of Faith Sunday is memorable and fun.

With lots of intentional planning and preparation by Rev. Karen we, lay leaders, were able to get the programming started in Sept. while she was on sabbatical.

Submitted by,

Tory Bachmann, Rhonda Black, Elizabeth Nash, Heather Warkentin, Rev. Karen Bridges (ex-officio)

Family Ministry Committee

Spiritual Formation Pod

“Finding a Safe Place to talk about things that really matter”

Some days “Spiritual Formation” isn’t always obvious to me. What exactly is that? Why does it always seem to involve talking? What if I can’t figure out how to put my questions or longing for God into words? Am I doing “spiritual formation” when I am making a picture trying to paint a prayer? Can I include singing in the choir (making a joyful noise) as spiritual formation? Surely spiritual formation includes more than just education. Doesn’t include spiritual expression?

Spiritual Formation includes learning about, growing in and celebrating God’s love for us. In 2017 this included learning about and using different types of prayer. This happened in early Sunday morning prayer events. My favourite is a breath prayer. Who could forget the prayers Rev. Leigh taught us where we used our fingers as reminders of the things we need to ask for God’s forgiveness and the things we need to offer thanks to God for?

This fall Rev. Leigh began the series of training events to support pastoral visitors. Over 20 people participated! In the spring she is planning another series called Spirited Saturdays. As the first one is January 20th, “Saying No to say Yes”, you may have already have participated or heard how it went! Confirmation/Re-affirmation classes were quite large during Lent 2017. These classes will be held again during the upcoming Lenten season in a slightly different format.

If you wish to share your hopes and dreams for Spiritual Formation (or growth) then join us February 17th as we contemplate how we can deepen our relationship with God and with one another.

Submitted by,
Sarah Wiens

Fellowship

Fellowship involves the planning for and presentation of the reception after the church service each Sunday: organizing the food and drinks (buying, making, accepting donations); setting everything out; serving; and cleaning up afterwards.

Sylvia Duffus and Janet M Clark, co-chairs of the Fellowship Committee, have many people to thank this year for their contributions to this very important event in our Sunday experience, especially Monica Gerla and Ruth Belford with frequent helpers Sue Hutson and Felicia Drever. We appreciate groups such as choir, youth and the Men’s Group taking over occasionally. We also value the frequent support of Jennifer Dixon, Richard Kennedy and, most delightfully, certain ladies and gentlemen from Kid’s Church. We also receive the support, when they can, of other members of the congregation. Needless to say, we wouldn’t have Fellowship without Brad Campbell. We would also like to thank all those, such as Sandi Darrell with her loaves and cupcakes, who have contributed supplies to supplement that which we purchase with the money donated during Fellowship Hour and a church fund. Rarely a Sunday goes by without a sweet or savoury offered by members of the congregation. With few exceptions, every thing we put out disappears! Obviously more contributions will be happily received. It makes our hearts happy to witness the buzz of conversation, the laughter, the welcoming of guests, the glee of cheerful children, and all of us involved in one of the most important offerings of our church--a vibrant community.

Submitted by,
Sylvia Duffus and Janet M Clark

Presbytery

“We affirm that we are part of God’s creation, now gathering on the traditional territory of Treaty 6 First Nations and in the traditional territory of the Métis nation.
May we honour the past as we preserve this land for future generations.”

We are not alone, we live in God’s world – United Church “*A New Creed*”

This affirmation begins every Presbytery meeting the Robertson-Wesley’s four delegates partake in prior to the commencement of a Tuesday evening or all-day Saturday session.

The new structure continues to undergo many changes. The United Church of Canada is moving towards a 3-court structure, with an implementation date of January 1, 2019. The Presbyteries and Conferences will be replaced by regional councils, which will assume the current responsibilities of those bodies. This transition will take time; the regional structure may not be fully functional for several months.

The mission and ministry of the United Church of Canada within the Capital Region will continue in the meantime. As stewards of that mission and ministry, Edmonton Presbytery needs to develop a process to facilitate the transition, establish short-term priorities and provide support for current partnerships while maintaining conciliar way of working.

A working group is to be formed, consisting of representatives from Presbytery Council and its teams, made up of Property and Finance, New Ministry Development Team, Outreach and other partners financed and supported by Presbytery. Members-at-Large may be added to this working group as needed with a completion date of May for implementation of Autumn 2018.

The Boundaries Commission is proposing 17 regional councils to replace Conferences and Presbyteries. Boundaries Commission Chairperson, the Rev. Andrew Richardson, hosted a live YouTube event on the Commission’s processes in January, 2018. It is available at www.youtube.com/unitedchurchofcanada.

Submitted by,
Gary Pecknold,
Joan Pecknold,
Geoff Anderson,
Trisha Lee Wasmund

Mission and Outreach Pod

In March, 2017, Dawn Allan agreed to become the coordinator for the Mission and Outreach Pod. We decided to call a gathering to discern our calling, with staff support from Rev. Karen Bridges, around Reconciliation and the Calls to Action pertaining to Churches (Recommendations 58-61).

These recommendations are:

The Calls to Action pertaining to the Churches are 58-61.

58. We call upon the Pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools. We call for that apology to be similar to the 2010 apology issued to Irish victims of abuse and to occur within one year of the issuing of this Report and to be delivered by the Pope in Canada.

59. "We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary."

60. We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

61. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement, in collaboration with Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal organizations, to establish permanent funding to Aboriginal people for:

- i. Community-controlled healing and reconciliation projects.
- ii. Community-controlled culture- and language revitalization projects.
- ii. Community-controlled education and relationship building projects.
- iv. Regional dialogues for Indigenous spiritual leaders and youth to discuss Indigenous spirituality, self-determination, and reconciliation.

Two gatherings of those interested were held on April 2, 2017, and June 18, 2017. Participants in the gatherings identified education for our congregation regarding Indigenous Peoples and their world view, culture, and spirituality as the most immediate action. Some thoughts from that meeting have been implemented:

- Bulletin Board space with items of interest posted;
- hosting a Blanket Exercise in conjunction with Inner City Pastoral Ministry Common Ground program;
- hosting the Thanksgiving gathering with Bishop Jane Alexander presenting the ways that the Christian faith traditions and Indigenous Spirituality traditions are similar;
- presenting educational opportunities within the congregation, e.g., Bridgewalkers film;
- providing a calendar of forums within Edmonton at the U of A, Athabasca University, MacEwan University, and the Art Gallery of Alberta, to name a few.

Several items that are pending are:

- a link to a web page to post current topics of interest and upcoming educational events;
- the possible recognition of Treaty Six and Métis Homeland Territory in the bulletin, and events hosted at the church if deemed acceptable;
- purchase of resources such as books and films to further our understanding and knowledge.

Yoga classes with Colleen Ouellette continue to serve the wider community on a weekly basis. These classes are so popular that all the "sitting" space is used!

Free BBQ's were held in September to celebrate the opening of the new elevator, and in December in conjunction with the Live Nativity. Community response was fantastic with over 150 people enjoying the food and environment of our Church. Participation in the Pride Parade celebration on Whyte Ave continues along with other congregations in the city. The Oliver Community Festival and All is Bright festival continue to be venues where we partner with others and share the beautiful space of our church.

All of these programs take considerable involvement and commitment from dedicated, passionate volunteers. Thank you all for sharing your compassion.

Submitted with thanks to Rev. Karen Bridges for her support and guidance,

Dawn Allan

Communications

Robertson-Wesley has taken on a very intentional role of communicating about the congregation, our events, and the outreach in the community beyond our walls. This has been paying off in newcomers to the church, in attendance at community events, and in the amount of coverage we've received in the media. We know our website, eNews, newsletter, as well as our YouTube, Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter are reaching more and more people because of our creative and timely approach to getting the word out.

Tammy-Jo continues in the role as communications coordinator – sending out media releases, public service announcements, coordinating advertising to print media such as the Edmonton Journal and local community newsletters. While Tammy-Jo is handling the majority of the media connections, Tanya designs and places our ads, keeps on top of deadlines, does some updates to the web site, formats and sends out the eNews, and oversees the photo directory. For most of 2017, Iain Gillis kept the web site fresh and current. Tammy-Jo also handles some bulletin boards, completed and updated sixteen pamphlets with graphic designer Matthew McGuigan, and oversees the print and web newsletter “Between the Aisles”, along with editors Nancy Heule, Marilee Stephens, Janet M Clark and Maria Adria. Tanya makes it look fantastic with layout and design. Karen and Leigh each instigate much of the material that flows onto all our communication platforms, and they create events to engage the congregation and community. They each have been creating Facebook events, making some posters and Karen is overseeing the display window. We have gotten a lot of photographers to take pictures at various events and have gathered them into our digital files for use everywhere, as well being posted on a bulletin board in Memorial Hall for all to see all celebrate great moments at R-W. Thanks to photographers Hal Thiessen, Jim Triscott, Jane Chesebrough, Yaroslav Veremenko and Tanya. It is a truly a team effort!

During the past year Tammy-Jo was able to research and expand our media lists in the fields of religion, reconciliation, literary, music, visual arts, various sales, charitable, and LGBTQ and established some solid relationships with various media outlets. We appeared in print, on the radio and on TV many times this year. With the help of Steven Turgeon, we also shot a video advertising our Christmas services and another one highlighting the Lent/Holy Week/Easter services, that are able to be updated easily. We have also expanded our methodologies for free advertising, including many on-line sources for listings. Advertising studies show that people have to have multiple visual exposures to something before they identify with or act upon that advertising. So – we need to constantly, consistently, and intentionally get the word out!

We are continually updating our forms of communication, and will seek out new ways to engage our city in the great things that Robertson-Wesley is offering! We look forward to how the board of R-W will move the communications plan forward in 2018.

Submitted by,

Tammy-Jo Mortensen

Property Committee

This past year has been a busy one for the property committee. We received a Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) Grant and a Federal Handicap Accessibility Grant. We renovated the 2 bathrooms in the basement, we put down new flooring in the hallways and Room 11, and the elevator was replaced. The finance room upstairs had its floor replaced too. The library is in the process of being moved to Rm. 7 to make room for an office for Laura David Foster.

Our building is a busy place. With the addition of Laura as a tenant, we are getting closer to our vision of the building paying for itself. Since we are so busy, we have to make sure that we maintain our building and we do. Thanks to Brad, our building is in great shape. Our building is old and needs constant updating. We are pricing out a new kitchen as our next project. This comes with considerable expense. We will be applying for grants to do this project. The security system upgrade is waiting for grant approval, hopefully in the new year.

We were extremely lucky this year in receiving many grants. The actual cost to the church for the projects was around \$20,000 for \$120,000 work. We would like to thank Pat Stewart for his help in applying for these grants. Doug Densmore is applying for our security grant. We are so lucky to have people like this in our congregation.

Our yard was kept in great shape by our outside gardening group, Lea, Rosemary, Rhonda, Jim, Sarah and Arnold. Next year watch for some garden boxes for vegetables.

There are hundreds of projects that are done every year, way too many to mention. Brad, with the help of many, many people keep this church going. To all those people - thank you.

Finally to the property committee, we appreciate all the time you put in for the congregation. The members are Lorne Langman, Karen Hansen, Arnold Maki, Louis Berlinguette, Doug Densmore, Albert deVos, Morris Treasure, Rosemary Dunbar, Brad Campbell, and Jack Waters. It's a fun committee and very rewarding to be a part of.

Looking forward to another great year.

Submitted by,
Jack Waters,
Chair of Property

Legacy Committee

The Legacy Committee was formed in early 2017. Its purpose is to encourage members of our congregation to include Robertson-Wesley in their wills. Committee members Ron Soans, Tony Jansen, Nancy Heule, and Rev. Leigh Sinclair have often thought it is better to give to something someone lived for rather than to something he or she died from.

Some members of our congregation who have remembered R-W in their wills include Helen Mack, Don Milne, Belva Piercey, and James Swanson. In fact, many of us participate in activities made possible through generous bequests. Our monthly community dinners, begun in 1997 which feed between one hundred and two hundred and fifty people each time, are an example of a long-lasting legacy. While some members have left legacies that support education, pastoral care, outreach activities, and music, others have chosen to have their bequests used as the board sees fit.

The word legacy is derived from the Latin word, legatus, meaning a person delegated to do something. Our legacy to the church can be understood as a way of carrying out our wishes by delegating the use of our money to those who come after us.

So far the Legacy committee has prepared a brochure describing how to go about naming the church as a beneficiary. More activities are planned for 2018 to facilitate legacy giving.

Submitted by,
Nancy Heule

Mission and Service Fund

Mission and Service fund donations from Robertson-Wesley included \$18,863.66 from congregational givings and \$1,000 from the UCW, a total of \$19,863.66. Unfortunately our givings are continuing to decline. That being said, thanks are offered to all who gave to M & S this year whether by your regular givings, special offerings on Communion Sundays or quarterly M & S bucket celebration days. Thanks especially to Donna Krucik whose sale of baked goods and preserves brought in \$802 for the fund.

Monies raised by our congregation are submitted to the United Church of Canada to support the church and its mission. It provides funds for local organizations such as the Bissell Centre here in Edmonton and other similar organizations in Canada serving the poor and homeless. It also supports special humanitarian projects in developing countries working with partner organizations.

We continue to raise awareness about the importance of the Mission and Service Fund this year with readings from **Minutes for Mission** on Communion Sundays. These stories illustrate how the M & S Fund is touching the lives of so many people. This publication is made available in both print or online through the United Church Website. The M & S Bucket Sundays encourage us to share the joy of our special celebrations with our donations.

In conclusion, a quotation from **Minutes for Mission**: "In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing Thanksgiving to God".

Submitted by,
Sylvia Duffus
Mission and Service Coordinator

Discernment, Envisioning, and Policy Pod (DEAP)

The DEAP Pod is comprised of individuals from Robertson-Wesley who feel called to contribute to the development and growth of the congregation by cultivating and modeling deep listening* and discernment as ways of relating within our church. We strive to remember, among ourselves and through our community, that we are the hands and feet of Christ, enabled by Spirit to serve with joy in a world that needs our love and our work.

*Deep listening is miraculous for both listener and speaker. When someone receives us with openhearted, non-judging, intensely interested listening, our spirits expand.

--Sue Patton Thoele

2016 was an exciting year for Robertson-Wesley, and set the stage for renewal and change in 2017. Our staff team continued to grow with fresh leadership; the elevator that served us for decades was upgraded; bathrooms and hallways in the lower floor were renovated; Rev. Karen took a 3-month sabbatical; and some active volunteers in our Ministry had to step down in order to focus on their own care. Through these changes, our community supported one another with patience, affirmation, and assurance. God had blessed us with opportunities to further our desire to transform from a welcoming and warming community to a loving community. One positive picture that comes to mind for me was seeing our members using DATS being assisted into the church via the back door ramp.

At our gatherings, we share and discuss what is happening as a way of understanding and celebrating our congregation's service to one another and the larger community. We also take time to consider issues and questions. For example, to the question "what do we value as a church," responses included: being spirited; inclusivity; a sense of trust within community; courage to take risks; creativity; and spiritual presence. Other questions that we are continuing to ponder include:

- Are newcomers welcomed and supported to get as involved as they wish to be?
- How is the congregation open to trying new experiences?
- How may our volunteers and the community-at-large be supported when volunteers want or need to step back from long-time service?
- Could our statement of inclusion be updated to better speak to who we are as Christians and as a congregation?

Currently meeting as the DEAP Pod are Geoff Anderson, Joann Cooke, Carol Anne Inglis, Jill Lambie and Robert Mah who listen and try to discern the direction that the Spirit is moving this community. If becoming a member of DEAP is of interest to you, please contact one of the current members or one of the ministers. We meet the first Tuesday of almost every month from 5 – 6:45 p.m. at the church.

Submitted by,
Carol Anne Inglis

United Church Women

We continue to work hard to support our own members and the good works of this church community. Our executive in 2017 was comprised of Chair Janet M Clark, supported (in order of their service) by Secretary Lorna Berlinguette/ Margery Wright, Treasurer Janet Hughes/Janet Clark, Catering Chair Donna Krucik/Colleen Ouellette, Card Chair Shirley Campbell-Pearse/Elsie Coon/Victoria Fedorak, and telephoners Elsie Coon & Shirley Campbell-Pearse. If the above seems confusing, please realize that a number of changes have occurred throughout the year as members resigned or took on new responsibilities. More changes occurred at our AGM held on January 9, 2018.

The 2018 executive is now: Past Chair and Mentor Janet M Clark; Co-Chair/Coordinator (a possibly rotating position) Victoria Fedorak, Lorna Berlinguette, Margery Wright; Treasurer Donna Krucik; Secretary/Notetaker Margery Wright; Card Chair Victoria Fedorak; Catering Chair Colleen Ouellette; telephoners Elsie Coon and Shirley Campbell-Pearse; and vocal presentation Melisa Guilbeault, accompanied with our thanks by Tammy-Jo Mortensen.

Our **2017 UCW membership was 23-25** fairly active members (came to meetings, donated) with an average at meetings of 14, not including guests, which ranged from three to 19, depending on the topic (we invite the congregation to the meetings). We have 15 on our "Friends of UCW" list. The membership changes also with deaths of cherished members and welcome additions of new members. Also certain members often are unable to attend meetings due to weather, transport availability, or health. Our **memorial service**, led by Donna Krucik, included candlelighting for our sisters Rose Shedden, Melba Kent, Hattie Griffis, and Isabelle Verdin who died in 2017. Our members spoke about their involvement, personality and gifts to UCW and our church. Corrinne Tanner, Jane Seymour Davis and Gwen Strandz, long time members of R-W, were also remembered.

Our **programs** have been well presented and received. **January** AGM-Tim Wright and Lyn Bishop, cofounders of the Sauti Moja Project, working with indigenous people like the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania. **February**-sharing stories of the great loves of our lives. **March**-video of Martha Juillerat speaking at Epiphany Explorations on the Women's March on Washington. **April**-Tony Jansen and his DVD on his "India Unveiled" trip in February. **May**-NOOMA video "Rhythm-Are your lives in tune with God's plan for the world?" offered by Rev Leigh; **June**-Discussion of the future of UCW, supported by Rev Leigh with ideas for the September meeting. **We realized that our members, aside from UCW alone, contribute in some way to all RWUC committees, organizations and events.** **Summer**-Barbecue at Janet's for ideas. **September**- Catherine Christie on her United Church work in Korea. Discussion of future of UCW continued. **October**-Lori Young of the Canadian Mental Health Association spoke to us on Stress, Education, and Mental Health in a power point presentation. **November**- Daina Benson on Decluttering our Lives. **December**-A Christmas Celebration planned by Rev Leigh with Carole Treasure, Melisa/Tammy-Jo, Margery Wright, candle lighting, song, sharing, praying and fun. Thank you ladies for your gifts.

Disbursement of Funds: The disbursement of our 2017 funds (7699.18 as of Nov 30/17 report) voted at the AGM on Jan 9/18 was fairly typical of that of previous years (find our 2016 disbursement in parentheses). M&S 1500 (1000); Bissell 300 (300); Rundle Mission 200 (200); St. Stephen's College 200 (St Andrew's 200); Centre for Christian Studies 200 (200); Food Bank 200 (200); Alberta Northwest Conference (UCW) 300 (400); Kitchen Renewal Fund 3000 (1500) + 100 for a charitable cause=6000. We leave money in our account for emergencies in the next year.

Future plans for UCW: As noted under the heading **2018 Executive**, I am now Past President/Chair and will be happy to mentor if necessary. Continuing responsibilities of the members are to find people and ways to book meetings, advise office of requirements for meetings, organize speakers/programs, set up, provide lunch, and clean up.

In closing, **we must acknowledge those who support and guide us** in our efforts to fulfill R-W's UCW mission (previously the Women's Association and the Women's Missionary Society) of supporting worthy causes mainly through donations and catering. These people are: Rev. Leigh Sinclair, Rev. Karen Bridges, Tanya Eckenswiller, Brad Campbell, church accountants, Richard Kennedy. I am honoured to belong to Robertson Wesley United Church Women. Submitted by, **Janet M Clark**

Stewardship Committee

The 2017 **Stewardship Campaign** theme was:

RISE UP! RISE UP! GET IN THE HABIT!

The Stewardship Team met in June to begin planning a year-round program designed to inspire, invite and thank supporters of R-W. In worship for October we explored themes of how we can embrace the Spirit. We examined how God provides abundantly, connects us and calls us in many ways. Bread was chosen to symbolize God's abundant gifts for us. During the Coming into God's Presence section of our October services the Committee engaged our younger members to experience the elements of bread through hands-on activities. Many children and youth had not seen or handled wheat in a sheaf, wheat kernels, canola seed or flour. On October 29th we mixed the elements together {flour, oil, salt and water}. But something was missing. All we had was flat bread. What we needed was action. We needed leaven or yeast to make our bread rise up and make the whole greater than the parts. Members added leaven and the bread rose up! The congregation was invited to respond to God's call and promises by pledging of our talents and treasure.

At R-W every member is an important element. When we add the SPIRIT to our lives it will add the leaven which inspires us to action. We can begin where we are, use what we have and do what we can.

PLEDGING supports a planned response to God's call at R-W. EVERYONE is an important element. Be LIKE LEAVEN! RISE UP! MAKE PLEDGING A HABIT!

Pledge forms are available in the display racks at the church or on the website. It's never too late to send in your pledge to the office!

Pledging:

The following is a summary of Pledges comparing 2018 to 2017:

	2018		2017		Increase/(Shortfall)	
	Pledges	Amount	Pledges	Amount	Pledges	Amount
Regular	62	\$175,803	70	\$185,689	(8)	(\$ 9,886)
M&S	35	\$ 15,136	40	\$ 15,294	(5)	(\$ 158)

The number of people Pledging has dropped in 2018 compared to 2017 as well as the amount of money pledged. However, there are also 37 people on PAR who have not submitted a Pledge Form with a dollar value of \$65,000

Stewardship Breakfast:

On the morning of Saturday, January 21, 2017 our Stewardship committee hosted our second **Stewardship Speaker Breakfast**. Memorial Hall had been prepared for our guests. Before our speaker presentation the audience feasted on a continental style breakfast and chatted with the people sitting around them. But the real reason most people were there was to hear our speaker **Vern Thiessen**. Vern is an award winning playwright who returned from New York in 2014 to be the Artistic Director of Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre here in Edmonton. Vern was asked to speak on our 2017 Stewardship theme **Knock, Knock.... Believe, Seek, Open**. Vern shared stories of times in his life when an opportunity was given to him. He had a choice to make. At each of these times Vern said the decision he made changed the direction in his life and helped him to grow in ways he never knew could happen. He helped us to understand that if we **Believe, Seek**, doors will **open** for us.

Members: Sylvia Duffus, Jill Lambie, Pat Stewart, Ian Inglis, Christopher Gowers (stepping down in 2018), Rev. Karen Bridges, and Rev. Leigh Sinclair

Koinonia

2017 was a full and happy year for Koinonia Worship group! Several newcomers were welcomed to our evenings of fellowship over potluck, worship and the annual social get-togethers. We explored our faith through Scriptures, music, discussions, activities and prayer led by members of the group.

Meditation, quiet music, words, and listening started the New Year, under the theme of “In My Father’s House are Many Mansions”. We explored how we connect from the awe of Creation/The Universe down to Earth/Our city, Our lives/Our worship. February saw us singing our hearts out with favourite hymns and Lenten readings. The evening included ice cream sundaes. We call it Sunday Sundae Sing!

Epiphany Explorations Conference 2017 in Victoria, produced an excellent DVD presentation, Planetary Health/One Health/Our Health by Tom Axworthy, which became the March worship theme for Koinonia.

Members of Koinonia Worship group worked with Rev. Leigh on the annual outdoor Sunrise Service, and followed with a scrumptious pancake breakfast back at the Church. Several families from R-W and the community-at-large were part of this Easter celebration.

May worship saw “gardening” as the theme. “Are We Looking After “God’s” Garden?” posed several questions for us to ponder: God’s Creation is a gift to us – are we caring for and preserving it? How do we practice the Sabbath? Do we live within Nature, not outside of it?

Approximately 14 people were able to enjoy the generous hospitality for a wonderful long weekend retreat at the Waters’ lake home at Lac Santé where we walked, talked, shared meals, slept-in, held a short Sunday morning worship and discussed our beloved R-W!!

Very early in July the whole group joined together for a BBQ, short worship and lots of chatter in the beautiful garden of Joy and Garnet.

At the end of August we were at the DeRoche/Stronach home once again for another delicious BBQ, followed by the annual Koinonia Worship planning workshop for the coming 12 months. A record crowd attended this event!

To start up the new Koinonia worship season, the September theme was appropriately themed: Renewal.....a time to reflect on a new school year beginning, our church activities and other activities resuming after the summer break. We were reminded that “Renewal was the Hallmark of Jesus’ ministry” also.

In October, with direction from a local elder and her assistants from the indigenous community, we were led through a Blanket Exercise where participants took on the roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Standing on blankets that represented the land, we walked through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. What an amazing learning experience!

A stirring, award-winning DVD, Bridgewalkers, became the base for worship in November. It focused on indigenous people from around the world, making peace with others and the earth. This DVD has become very popular, providing thought and discussion for various groups at R-W. It is available in the Church Library.

The year-end event for Koinonia Worship group was once again in the form of a Progressive Dinner, held in three different homes, where sharing a scrumptious meal, singing carols and happy chatter prevailed!

Koinonia Worship holds an **open door for all!** You are most welcome to join the group (usually the 4th Sunday of the month) for potluck and worship. Check out the Sunday bulletins for particulars or call the Church office for information.

Submitted by,
Joann Cooke

Outreach Committee

Membership: Brad Warkentin (chair), Lois Field (secretary), Gail de Vos, George Ford, Garnet Thomas, Norma Johnston, Bart McCaughey, Rev. Karen Bridges

We were very sorry to lose the involvement of Gail de Vos and George Ford in the latter half of the year, as due to illness they had to resign. They have both given invaluable service to R-W and to the community.

The Outreach Committee is very grateful for funding from the Helen Mack Fund, which is designated for outreach projects. To facilitate this, we have a Helen Mack Funding subcommittee which meets twice yearly or as needed, to allocate funds. (Members: Brad Warkentin, Pat Stewart, Robert Mah, and Bart McCaughey; formerly also, George Ford and Gail de Vos) A total of approximately \$20,600 was drawn from the Helen Mack fund in 2017. This money was used to help fund both Robertson-Wesley programs - Community Dinners, Magic Pantry, Messy Wednesdays, and Community BBQs; and to contribute to worthwhile external organizations/initiatives – Choral Morphosis, Bissell Centre, Operation Friendship, ICPM (Inner City Pastoral Ministries), Edmonton General Hospital, and the Concrete Theatre Society's Play/Laeib! summer camp for Syrian refugee children. Further details on some of these programs are provided below.

Community Dinners – During 2017 twelve dinners were served, usually on the second Saturday of the month, with the Christmas dinner a week earlier. Average attendance was 122, costing \$2.78 per person, with a total cost of \$4,074.48 and a total attendance of 1,466. Sadly, we are losing our much appreciated long time volunteer head cook Jean Millard who served her last meal at Christmas, but we have a new cook, Allie Romao who has accepted the position of cook as of January 13, 2018. Rhonda Black is graciously assuming the position of Community Dinner Co-ordinator in the New Year, taking over from Gail de Vos, who had to resign in September due to illness. Acting co-ordinators until December were Bart McCaughey and Norma Johnston. Our Santa's Workshop was a big hit on December 2nd in supplying warm winter wear – mitts, scarves, toques gloves and socks for those attending, through the capable direction Victoria Fedorak and the generosity of our congregation.

Bissell Sandwich Program – Every May, a group of dedicated volunteers meet on Tuesday morning to make sandwiches for the Bissell Centre. This program has been running for a number of years and some of the volunteers have been there from the start. This dedicated group aims to make 100 loaves of sandwiches (approximately 900 sandwiches) each week. The Bissell Centre uses these sandwiches for their various programs. Although this may sound like a large task, the group has a fun time and the kitchen is filled with chatter and lots of laughter.

In 2017 Gail deVos retired from the coordinating role and we are grateful to Derek Sutherland and Connie Waters who have stepped forward to coordinate this program. Thank you Gail for the many years you passionately dedicated to the inner city and Robertson-Wesley.

Submitted by Connie Waters & Tanya Eckenswiller

ICPM (Inner City Pastoral Ministry) Service and Lunch at Bissell - We again participated in this worthy project, on Sunday July 23, when 9 R-W volunteers made and served sandwiches, fruit, veggies and sweets to over 300 persons, sharing duties with Highlands United. We also participated in the service which included a "stone ceremony" and smudging. Aboriginal assistant Michelle Nieviadomy also did a presentation at R-W on another occasion.

The Food Bank Depot- Our Food Bank Depot operated on 51 out of 52 Wednesdays in 2017. The morning intake crew, drawn from a rotating roster, included Janet M Clarke, Elsie Coon, Irene Morin, Colleen Ouellette, Jan Millson, and Victoria Fedorak, and they plugged in their dedicated phone line just after 8:00 AM and began taking requests for hampers. This information, including any special dietary needs, was then faxed to the Main Food Bank by 10:00 AM. Food Bank volunteers then made up their orders and loaded the delivery truck. By late morning the afternoon crew set out tables in Memorial Hall, put out chairs and ramp, and prepared to unload the

truck, varying from 25 to 60 boxes. By 2:00 PM the unloading had been completed and the hall put back in order. Afternoon volunteers included Nikki Stein, Derek Sutherland, Connie and Jack Waters, Andrei Dobrovolsky, Mel Hauca, Kathy Juszko, Garnet Thomas and Sherry Belcourt. Frequently young LDS missionaries also helped. Victoria Fedorak and Sylvia Post attended on some afternoons to display and give out donated winter clothing and footwear, as suggested by Sarah Wiens. We are thankful for all our cheerful volunteers, and we know that the main Food Bank values our work in the Oliver neighbourhood. (Submitted by: Garnet Thomas)

Operation Friendship Lunches – Financial support and donated dessert cakes provided for four lunches, June through September, as well as R-W volunteers to serve the lunches to an average of 150 seniors each time. Volunteers included Karen Hansen and Norma Johnston.

Magic Pantry – In a diverse neighbourhood that serves the inner city, we understand there is a need in our community for a necessity in life- Food.

To help serve and engage with our community we hand out free bagged lunches (approximately 1000 in 2017) every Tuesday to Thursday during the lunch hours of 12 pm to 1 pm. The lunch menu can change every week thanks to volunteers. One week we may have fresh baked cookies, another week we gave out peanut butter rice crispy squares. We received fresh carrots and fruits from volunteers as well. Sometimes on cold days the volunteers will make hot chocolate. On hot days we try to have cold water available. This lunch program is funded through the Helen Mack Fund and carried out weekly through volunteers. Thank you to all the volunteers. Without you the lunches would not be possible.

In the cold season, in addition to a bag lunch, Magic Pantry guests may choose from our collection of ***Warm Winter Wraps and Footwear***. This need was observed by Victoria Fedorak and Magic Pantry volunteers, who coordinated the clothing and footwear collection. Thanks to the generous donations of congregation members, guests have received over 30 coats, over 30 pairs of boots and sturdy shoes, and many hats, scarves, gloves and sweaters. Thanks to Sylvia Post for sorting these donations.

In September the long time coordinator of this program, George Ford retired from this leadership role. Sarah Wiens quickly stepped forward as a temporary coordinator to ensure the program continued on. The Magic Pantry is looking for a new coordinator. The coordinator would ensure that there are supplies to make the lunches and would coordinate sandwich making parties when needed. The coordinator will also help to train and orient volunteers.

Thank you George Ford and Sarah Wiens for your leadership and dedication to serving our community in 2017. Looking forward in this transitional phase we welcome feedback and ideas for 2018.

Submitted by Sarah Wiens, Victoria Fedorak and Tanya Eckenswiller

Messy Wednesdays – On Wednesdays, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, families with children gathered for dinner, activities and discussion. The families gather to eat a meal together, at no cost, which is usually served around 5:45 pm. This program serves on average 20-30 people and provides a space for children to play together and for families to build relationship. We give thanks for Lindsey Esau, Garth van Herwaarden, and Richard Kennedy for food preparation and set up.

Refugee Sponsorship – Although our official sponsorship period for the Al Masoud (Syrian) family ended in March 2017, The Refugee Response Group continue to offer support in the form of occasional transportation to medical appointments, etc. We celebrated with the family when Abdul Fettah, 19, was chosen to be part of the Canada 150 C3 trip for youth through the NW Passage, and enjoyed the pictures of the trip he shared during a presentation at R-W in November. Abdul was encouraged to apply for this Canada Youth Project by RRG members Ryan and Michelle Young, and was the only refugee applicant chosen. It was a wonderful experience for him. The family moved in December to a beautiful new low-income complex in North Glenora, the building of which was facilitated by the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers specifically for large refugee families, on the

property of Westmount Presbyterian Church. They were warmly welcomed into the community, and the school sent Christmas baskets to all the refugee families in the complex. All family members are becoming proficient in English. We continue to watch the family's progress with great interest, and also wait for the arrival of eldest daughter Hajar, her husband and two children who are being sponsored by another group.

Submitted by,
Lois Field

Fundraising

Rummage Sale- The *April, 2017 Rummage Sale* raised \$2401.45 after expenses. Unsold clothing, backpacks, purses, shoes, clothes, and CDs were donated to the Bissell Center. All other unsold items were donated to the Diabetes Association. Thanks to the congregation for generous donations of items for sale and delicious refreshments for volunteers. Thanks to the many volunteers who worked long hours, sorting, organizing, and selling. Thanks to Michelle Salomons for co-coordinating the sale and coordinating concessions. Thanks to Sylvia Post for her support to Victoria Fedorak, 2017 rummage sale coordinator.

Submitted by,
Victoria Fedorak

The Lunch Bunch for Happy Women

Come and join us for lunch and friendship. The Lunch Bunch, started two years ago by Shirley Campbell-Pearse, meets at Violina's or Manor Café every second month on the 4th Wednesday at 1:00. Contact me at lornaber@telus.net if you would like join R-W ladies and be put on the list. We do nothing but talk, eat, and have fun. The next one is March 28.

The Wesley and Clarke Funds

The Wesley Trust Fund

The Wesley fund was established in 1971 when the Wesley United Church (originally, Wesley Methodist Church) building was sold. Proceeds of the sale were designated to be invested, with the proceeds donated for social development in the Edmonton area.

The E. I. Clarke Memorial Fund

The Clarke Fund was established in 1968 by a member of the Robertson United Church congregation, the late Edwin Irwin Clarke (d. 2009). This fund is designated to be invested, with proceeds donated to outreach projects. The Clarke family, presently of Victoria, have made additional contributions to the fund in recent years.

Wesley & Clarke

The Wesley & Clarke Trustees meet annually, usually in late November, to consider requests for funding in relation to the amount available for disbursement that year. The current trustees are Rev. Karen Bridges (Chairperson, *ex officio*), Donna Chmielewski (Treasurer, *ex officio*), Dr. David Buchanan, Robert Mah, and Marg May.

2017 Allocations

	Wesley	Clarke	Total
Bissell Centre	9,000	5,000	14,000
George Spady Centre	2,000	3,500	5,500
Boyle McCauley Health Centre	5,400	2,000	7,400
Inner City Pastoral Ministry		2,500	2,500
Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities		2,000	2,000
No Room in the Inn (Canadian Mental Health Ass.)	100	1,500	1,600
R-W Benevolent Fund		3,000	3,000
R-W Elevator Refurb	3,000		3,000
R-W Spirited Arts Movement	6,000		6,000
Total Allocations	25,500	19,500	45,000

Total Allocations in Recent Years

	Wesley	Clarke	Total
2016	23,000	18,000	41,000
2015	22,000	18,000	40,000
2014	22,500	17,000	39,500
2013	21,000	15,500	36,500

Commitment

Robertson-Wesley continues its commitment to the management and allocation of these Trust Funds according to their originally specified purposes. Along with these disbursements go our prayers for the thousands of people whose lives are supported and enhanced by these contributions.

Submitted by,
Karen Bridges

Report from the Treasurer

The financial outcome of Robertson-Wesley United Church for 2017 is positive in several aspects. A small surplus is projected for the year (audited financial statements have not been concluded at the time of writing), several major projects were funded, and some positive trends were accomplished when compared to 2016.

The unaudited December 2017 financial statements show Robertson-Wesley United Church with a surplus of approximately \$12,500. Compared to the 2017 budget, Donations came in at 94%, Property Income at 84%, and Fundraising at 66%. Although, there were some shortfalls on the Revenue side, all of the Expense categories (with the exception of Administration) were under budget for the year.

Several Capital Improvements (new elevator, washroom improvements, and new sound system) were completed in 2017 and, in excess of Government Grants received, were funded through the Robertson-Wesley Capital Reserve Fund (\$31,470). Also, through our Designated Investment Accounts, the church was able to donate \$45,000 to various programs, both externally in the community and internally within our own church, to assist with our mission.

Some exciting trends, compared to 2016, include Regular Member Offerings increasing by 6% and Non-member Offerings increasing by 79%, suggesting growth in our congregation. A 30% increase in salaries, although at first glance may not seem like an exciting trend, but has allowed the church to grow through the addition of a second Minister as well as a Financial Manager, making our work more encompassing and efficient, as well as increased presence at the door to manage the augmented evening activities at the church. Increases in Computer Services Expense (37%) and Communications Contract (73%) have helped to modernize technology within the church and utilities remained relatively the same compared to 2016, with the only increase being heat (27%). These numbers clearly indicate that Robertson-Wesley United Church is growing in many important directions and is financially responsible.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making 2017 a successful year for Robertson-Wesley United Church.

Donna Chmielewski,
Treasurer

Financial Statistics

Robertson-Wesley United Church Financial Statistics (Before Amortization and Gain/Loss on Investments) For The Twelve Months Ended December 31, 2017 (Unaudited)

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Revenues			
Donations			
Bequests & Capital Donations			
Unidentifiable Offering (Loose)			
Total Donations	\$452,044	\$ 479,501	\$ (27,457)
Property Income (Rent, Weddings, Funerals)	61,458	75,753	(14,295)
Investment Income	73,232		73,232
Total Fundraising	15,835	24,135	(8,300)
Oliver Community Event	(78)	1,500	(1,578)
Government Grants	103,906	-	103,906
Interest Income (Cantilon)	-	-	-
<i>Transfer from Anniversary Legacy</i>		-	-
<i>Transfer from Reserve Fund</i>	31,470	3,200	28,270
Total Revenues	\$737,867	\$ 584,089	\$ 153,778
Expenses			
Ministry & Personnel	\$400,342	\$ 407,336	\$ (6,994)
Music	\$ 14,984	\$ 15,930	(946)
Family Ministries	\$ 763	\$ 1,270	(507)
Service Programs	\$ 714	\$ 1,100	(386)
Communications	\$ 13,803	\$ 22,550	(8,747)
Property	\$ 52,798	\$ 56,628	(3,830)
Building Improvements (2017 Projects)	\$126,715	\$ 3,200	123,515
Presbytery & Conference	\$ 29,402	\$ 30,005	(603)
Spiritual Formation POD	\$ 3,174	\$ 5,800	(2,626)
Stewardship	\$ 437	\$ 867	(430)
Administration	\$ 49,071	\$ 39,403	9,668
Designated Fund Expenditures	\$ 33,000		33,000
Total Expenses	\$725,203	\$ 584,089	\$ 108,114
Operating Surplus (Shortfall): Year to Date	\$ 12,664	0	\$ 12,664

Notes:



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