

# Between the Aisles

A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly

Summer

**“And so I go out each day  
To Worship and commune  
In God's universal Cosmic  
Church of Creation  
Just outside my door”**

*-Herb Stone*



# Editor's Welcome

## *Welcome*

What a surreal time this has been for the last few months. When the last "Between the Aisles" came out, we were still having services, still seeing each other in person, not living in this weird "in-between" situation. If this period of time has demonstrated anything to me, it's that you never know what is right around the corner, and just how adaptable we, as humans, can be.

However, we still must move forward, while maintaining proper measures to promote safety. Having a regular schedule can help with that. As such, I'd like to invite you to read this new edition of "Between the Aisles". While a bit shorter than normal, inside you will find a couple of different perspectives about the situations that have arisen from our new normal. There is a good review about what appears to be a very interesting book, and an examination of some of the issues that arose from the development of Treaty 6, both from our own Nancy Heule (a fellow editor on BTA). There is also a historical perspective on how the use of certain words from the Bible can be distorted over time, resulting in attitudes that have very little, if anything, to do with the original intent of the words. There are a couple of interesting poems, and some various bits and pieces of Church news. Hopefully, you will find something that will bring you some interesting reading, and possibly comfort, in these really unprecedented times we are living in.

Before I go, I do want to thank the various staff members of the church who have worked hard over the last few months to make sure that services are available to our community. Coordinating all of this can not have been easy, and they deserve all our thanks for doing the exemplary job they have in this situation. Have a good summer. Take care and stay safe.

Marilee J. Stephens (*editor*)

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## **Learning about R-W: Group Goals and Budgets**

For each area of the life of the church, there is a group which takes primary responsibility. At Robertson-Wesley United Church, we use the term "Group" in a generic way to refer to many types of circles, each made up in different ways and meeting at different intervals. Some names include: committee, a pod, a team, a task group, etc.

Each group discerns its own purpose, goals, procedures and duties. Some receive tasks from other groups or the Board. This enables each group to evaluate and revise their own goals with a periodic review.

Each group is responsible for monitoring their expenditures (and revenue if applicable) throughout the year in relation to the budget. The Treasurer may be consulted at any time for information in this regard.

Every group whose work is funded through the operating budget is asked annually to submit an estimate of their financial needs for the coming year. The Finance Committee then assembles the budget for presentation to the Church Board. Once the draft has been approved, it is shared with the Stewardship committee. The Stewardship committee uses the draft to help inform the October Stewardship Campaign. The Board approves a draft budget, making any appropriate modifications, by January of each year. The Congregation, at its Annual Meeting in February, discusses and (when ready) passes and adopts the Budget.

## The History of Arsenokoitai & Malakoi

These words have wrongly been the base of homophobia within the Church due to their poor translations throughout recent history. Biblical literalists and conservative Christians often translate this ancient (Koine) Greek word to mean “homosexual” in English. This translation solidifies their belief that God condemns sexual activity between two people of the same sex regardless of context or situation.

The Greek word Arsenokoitai (ἀρσενοκοίτης ) is used only twice in the New Testament. The first being in Paul’s letter to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and the second in his letter to Timothy, 1 Timothy 1:10. Arsenokoitai was created by the Apostle Paul, and throughout history is only ever used in those letters. Many historians, theologians, and translators have been trying to decipher what the true meaning of this word is. Many believe that Paul was referencing Leviticus 20:13 when he combined “arsén” which means male and “koité” which means bed.

English translators struggled with the concept of arsenokoitai. Some examples of early 16-20<sup>th</sup> century translations are “Liers with mankind”, “Sodomites”, “Abusers of themselves with mankind” and “those who abuse themselves with men.” Many of these translations fit the context of the word and the context to which Paul was living and writing in. It is clear that Paul is talking about same-sex activity, not in the sense of sexual orientation as we know it, but rather condemning same-sex sexual and economic exploitation. The Hebrew words “arsen” and “koiten” were used to describe events 1,600 years before Paul and those events always related to some form of pedophilia or abuse. In Biblical times, grown men in Greece and Rome often owned a Catamite, who was a pubescent boy that was used as an intimate companion. These were considered pederastic relationships. Men and women were often subjected to live a life of prostitution, which was also a common practice within the temples of that time. Furthermore, these activities were also happening by men who were already married to women. This means that Paul was condemning the use of power for abusive purposes, any and all excess lust, and prostitution. From this, we can infer that the concept of arsenokoitai is sexual and economic exploitation, and thus there is no way we can relate these verses to the committed, loving, consensual same-gender relationships we see today.

The Greek word Malakoi (μαλακία) is used three times in the New Testament. The first two instances being in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke. Both are referring to the softness of a piece of clothing. It is not until we reach Paul’s letter to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 6:9, where it is paired in context with arsenokoitai that it is translated to effeminate. This term also suffered complications when it was translated into English. Some of the original translation in the 16-20th century stated that Malakoi meant “Weaklings”, “effeminate”, “those who make women of themselves”, and “the sensual.” Malakoi was used to describe women since they were considered at that time to be “weak”, “submissive”, and “lazy.” This word was often used to characterize men who were emotional, passionate, and partook in excess food, drink and/or sex.

These types of men were considered “effeminate” because these men “acted like women.” A shift happened in 1946 when the Revised Standard Version began translating Arsenokoitai to mean “homosexual.” This shift is connected to the emergence of discrimination against gay people in North American society. Later translations followed suit and started using other translations such as “pervert”, “sexual pervert”, “sodomite”, “homosexual” and “those who practice homosexuality” This shifted the concept of Arsenokoitai from being about sexual and economic exploitation to someone’s sexual orientation.

Similarly with Arsenokoitai, in the latter portion of the 1900’s we see Malakoi translated to “those who participate in homosexuality”, “sexual perverts” and “male prostitutes.” This is where we see the emergence of gay stereotyping influencing the choices of translations that occurred in the late 1970s. It is clear that in the New Testament, we see that Paul condemns same-sex sexual and economic exploitation. Today, we still condemn those types of exploitation regardless of the gender involved. It is within the last 80 years that we have seen a huge shift in language, understanding, and translations. Based on these verses, with the insight of the context and original languages, we can argue that Paul is not condemning same-gender relationships. It is unfortunate that all of the verses used to condemn LGBTQ identities are often poor translations or verses that have a deep and complicated context. The history of these words is complicated, but it is now time for us to undo history and share the truth about these two words.

Submitted By: Shylo Rosborough (He/Him)  
Affirming Ministries Coordinator

## Essential: Changing the Language from Life to Living

You are Enough,  
You are Loved  
BUT you are NOT Essential.

Ouch

Does that sound right?  
Does it *feel* right?  
Of course not.

Essential is a word that gives perspective of what is needed, what is important. When someone is deemed essential they can feel important and necessary. Their work is justified, their movement or travel unavoidable and better than the risk because it meets a need. Of course, there is a lot of pressure for those essential folk and sometimes we neglect their actual needs as they meet our needs.

But what about when we are told we are not essential, or that our work is not important? What does that do to our psyche? For folks who already struggle with maintaining routine and mental health, the loss of work or restriction of access to loved ones can feel more like a death sentence than a defensive action with best intentions. Self esteem is often linked to our feelings of being enough in what we do and our other bits of identity. Feeling important, or having purpose to our life, we can boost our self esteem and mental health. But when those structures are lost; structures that most certainly include our communities and support systems - social creatures that we are - we also lose what gave us life, the thing we are working so hard to keep.

The problem is that so much of this conversation is opinion and personal experience based. Someone who has a job, a partner at home and a community to support and be supported by, telling someone *else* to be patient, to learn a new way of life, a new way to work, a new way to relationship... is at times a bit off the mark. It can land as callous and dismissive, further reducing that self esteem and quality of life, making one feel even less essential or even unheard.

Love. There's another word we throw around a lot, especially as a Christian organization. We use it often as a way of guiding our actions towards others, our beliefs of how to act in the world, and sometimes we use it to define our individual relationships with others and how we feel about them.

Sadly, in the "essential" conversation, love in the relationship sense takes a huge backseat to economics and "practical and normal" things like whether bike shops should be open: hair salons and barbershops, meat packing plants, pipelines, etc.



My (American) partner moved to Bangladesh at the beginning of February. When Covid-19 started heating up in mid-March, she made the decision to leave Bangladesh and return to Canada, where we could quarantine and shelter in place with our cat in the house we are renting together. Two hours before her flight left Bangladesh, Canada abruptly sealed its borders to all "non-essential" travel. Since we aren't married, and she isn't Canadian, she wasn't allowed to board her flight and had to buy an emergency last minute plane ticket to the US. Despite the fact that her home, her cat, and her life were in Canada, she wasn't judged essential enough to travel back here. Thank goodness she had family to stay with in the States, otherwise she would have been lost in her own nation, stranded away from home, essentially homeless.

It seems a bit ironic really that the mere fact we are kept alive and not adding to a death toll is (right now) the most essential part of life. When my mom was dying of cancer, she opted to stop the chemo treatments that could have prolonged her life, maybe even destroyed the cancer at one point. Why? Because it made her sick. Her quality of life was more important than her length of life. She did not want to die having pushed another few months just to live that tiny bit longer if it meant she was reliant on drugs that made her feel even more ill than the cancer.

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*Continued from page 3*

I feel at times that we are putting an extreme amount of energy on simply ensuring lives are not lost but not considering the repercussions of being alive but not living. There are so many balances to set these days. How do children grow up with the anticipation and expectation that they will not be allowed to hug anyone aside from immediate family? I am not saying we should not be diligent, nor would I say “ignore all health recommendations just to go back to the way life was”, but I think we need to reconsider our approach. We need to live with love, not fear.

Try this:

Because I love you, I will hold your hand, because I love you I will wash my hand before I hold yours. Because I love others, I will wash my hand after holding yours. Because I love you, I will wear a mask to come see you. Because I love you, I will meet you in a park. Because I love you, I will support your decisions if they are the best for your mental health, not just your physical health. Because I love you and care about you, I will help you find the safest way to meet your needs, even if what is essential to you is different than for me.

So just do remember,  
You are Enough.  
You are Loved  
AND  
You ARE *Essential*.



*Submitted by:* Pan Graham  
(They them their)  
(writing happily from Minneapolis, MN with  
Anna and cat, Roxie!)

**Editor's Note:** With regards to this poem, what resonated with me was even though Julie was contemplating her father's passing, it could also refer to what happened to all of us back in March... One moment, everything is going one way, and in the next moment another, with very little fan fair. Strange how life works sometimes...

## THAT WAS IT

That was it  
Simple exhale  
Like a sigh  
No fuss  
No warning  
No proclamation  
No fanfare  
No credit roll  
Not even a pause  
Noise around didn't cease  
Traffic beyond didn't halt  
Birds didn't land  
Dogs didn't howl  
Trees didn't shed their leaves  
Flowers didn't droop their petals  
The rivers continued to flow  
The hillside kept its shape  
The ground didn't cave in  
The stars didn't fall  
The sun hadn't extinguished  
The sky hadn't folded up  
No earthquake was felt  
No hurricane raged through  
Not a shriek from the universe  
Just one  
Simple  
Exhale  
That was it  
So easy  
So like you

*Submitted by:* Julie Golosky



**Reflections: Dark Days and Silver Linings:**

(Life in the Time of Covid-19)

Sitting here, I wanted to take a moment and reflect on some of the changes I have had to deal with in the last couple of months. This has been a unique time in all of our lives, and depending on how things progress in the next several months, it may cause a real change in how we conduct ourselves going forward.

For myself, the first few weeks of staying home were quite hectic. I was learning how to present my university courses online (which we were basically given a 4-day weekend to learn how to do). I was trying to figure out the best way to keep my students as engaged as possible, but also having to realize that this way of delivering my course content, as I was doing it, was not optimal, for either them or me. Needless to say, my stress levels were quite high.

I was also missing my regular routine. Not having my voice lessons or choir practice, not going to our regular Sunday service, not seeing my friends (or anybody, really, as I live by myself and was only going out for daily walks and once a week to the grocery store), was an issue. This can be very detrimental to me, as I have suffered from clinical depression in the past. One of the ways that I deal with it (through behaviour modification techniques I learned over time) is to try and maintain a very good schedule of eating, exercise, and work. "Staying home", while great for avoiding Covid-19, at least so far, was not great for my mental health. I've had a few days where, at least for short amounts of time, life was not something that seemed very welcoming.

There was also the fact that I have not physically touched anyone since this whole ordeal started. As a neuroscientist, I am aware of how physical touch can impact our mental health (it causes the release of neurotransmitters that activate our "reward" system and make us feel better). So yes, there have been some Dark Days in the past few months for me. But there have also been some Silver Linings. I have been having weekly "Zoom" sessions with my sister and two of my three brothers. As a result, I've probably had the opportunity to talk to my two brothers more in the past several weeks than I have in the past few years, which has been quite nice.

I also realized, as a few of my students were actually graduating from the University of Alberta this term, that it's been 30 years since I graduated from my undergraduate program.

Realizing this, I reached out over email to a few of my friends from those days, and ended up organizing a virtual "reunion" with several of them (23 at the first session, with more planned). Catching up with them was both surprising ("how has it been 30 years since our undergrad" was a common feeling amongst us) and amazing. As well, I have found time to do some "stream of consciousness" writing that I've been meaning to do for several years. In addition, I've had the opportunity to really sit and look at how I teach and ways I can improve on that (the University has been really good at providing some online classes and webinars to help with that going forward into the fall). As for the mental health aspect, I have tried to adapt to make sure I do stay on a schedule, and take part in activities that can help alleviate a number of the issues that can arise. For example, singing, while not replacing physical touch, can help with the release of some of the "happy" neurotransmitters... So I actually have a good reason to sing every day. All of these are things that if the pandemic hadn't happened, I probably wouldn't have done. So, yes, while this is a dark time in our lives (especially if you're like me, and watch way too much of the news channels on TV), it is also a time when we can take a moment, a deep breath, and maybe do a little reassessment. Right now life has thrown us some lemons. Hopefully, we can make some lemonade out of it. When I was a kid, there was a saying, from Charles Schultz (of "Peanuts" fame) "Happiness is a warm puppy".

I also have a book, "Happiness Is: 500 things to be happy about", by Swerling and Lazar, that was given to me as a joke gift a few years ago. It includes a number of "Happiness is" sayings that we have to avoid right now (like, "Happiness is checking in at the airport for a vacation", or "Happiness is a good High Five"). But it also includes ones like "Happiness is when you suddenly understand the meaning of a song", or "Happiness is untamable curly hair" – one I personally have a lot of experience with. Even, "Happiness is Simplicity". Right now, we have to look for happiness, or at least, contentment, where we can find it. And if we can all do that... we'll hopefully come out of this in a good place. Maybe not the place we want to be, but a place where things will be better than what they could have been. So, I guess what I'm trying to say here is to look for where the good is in life right now, as strange and disconnected as everything is, and focus on that. Well, that... and wear a mask, wash your hands and stay at least 6 feet apart when social distancing (the scientist in me has to put that in there, or I wouldn't feel right about myself). Stay safe, everyone, and hopefully we'll all have a chance to see each other in person in the future.

Submitted by: Marilee J. Stephens

*Editor's Note:* Julie Golosky is a member of the R-W church and choir. In the last few years, she has dealt with her father's cancer and subsequent death. As part of her process of dealing with this, she took to writing poetry and songs, approximately 80 of them. She submitted to me some to consider for this edition of *Between the Aisles*. While they are all excellent, I found these two to be both beautiful and relevant to what we are experiencing now. I hope you enjoy and relate to them as much as I do.

#### THE OLD MAN AND THE RIVER

It only saw him once that last Spring  
 In fact, it was the shortest of moments...  
 What It remembered vividly  
 Was how the man had grown  
 So shockingly thin and old  
 What It didn't remember  
 Was how the man's visits down  
 Had gradually lessened  
 So when It saw him that last June  
 The river naturally waited for him to return  
 As he always did  
 And so... It waited... and waited...

It waited throughout the Summer  
 Which felt odd, remarkably still...  
 Then It waited  
 Throughout each day of Fall  
 Their favorite time of year  
 When the man would visit the most  
 And when they would casually  
 Drink each other in...  
 ... As much as they possibly could...  
 Before the punctual arrival of Winter  
 The annual freeze  
 When sheets of ice would eventually  
 Weave and attach themselves together  
 Like patchwork quilts  
 Gathered and spread out  
 Layer upon layer  
 Over the deepest, widest beds  
 With corners neatly tucked in all around  
 In preparation for that darkest, longest slumber...  
 Which the River always  
 Secretly, embraced  
 For the winter season was Its only time  
 To truly relax, unwind, regenerate  
 A time to wander and meander through old memories  
 To dream  
 And that following Winter  
 Dream It did...

Once deeply settled down into Its bed  
 The River began to dream of that last visit  
 And within the dreaming

It began to realise  
 That something was different  
 Something was wrong  
 In fact, this was when the river  
 Began to understand that the man  
 Was in fact, gone...

Throughout all of that Winter  
 The dream meandered slowly  
 Sorting through each memory  
 A reflection of the River's yearning  
 As well as the deeply profound need  
 To know what could have happened to the man  
 Why had he not returned  
 Where did he go???

You see, the River knew this man  
 Like It knew the contents of Its own waters  
 It had known the man his whole life  
 From the first time he had been carried down  
 And layed by Its waters edge  
 Wrapped and contented  
 Cooing among the grasses and wildflowers  
 While his brothers and sisters played...  
 It was also by the River  
 Where he had taken his first steps  
 His mother holding onto each hand  
 While the River reached out  
 With trickling, rippling tickles for each little toe...  
 Then, there were all those wildboy years  
 Hour upon hour  
 Month after month  
 Swimming, fort building, fires, wiener roasts  
 Trapping, fishing, dreaming...  
 Until he became a young man  
 When he got his first job  
 Beside the River  
 Quickly embracing his new routine  
 Caring for the barges and ships  
 Of a transport company...  
 Other firsts would follow as well:  
 Introducing his soon-to-be wife  
 And then, as well, each of their children  
 Who, with the changing seasons  
 Played with the River; swimming, digging clams  
 And on weekends, riding waves together

Every visit, every outing  
The River oversaw  
With the quiet pride of a grandparent...  
And yet, in a way, the most special times  
Were those years that followed  
When the man, now a grandparent himself  
Spent even more time with the River  
Building his own boats  
And transporting materials  
To build his own cabin further on up  
That truly was when their spirits had merged  
Sharing without the need for words

Now, with Winter almost at an end  
The meandering dreaming  
And the meandering need for answers  
Grew, and grew, and intensified  
As the dormant River replayed  
Over and over, that last visit  
A meeting so different from anything else...  
It recalled that moment when  
A square, white vessel backed onto Its waters edge  
How those double doors soon opened wide  
To reveal an old man lying within  
Someone unrecognizable to the River  
At first...  
But as that smile slowly spread across his ashen face  
The River knew without a doubt...  
Yes... For sure... It was his best friend  
But then, as fast as it came, the vessel was gone...

So then, as fast as that last moment replayed  
The River  
Still bundled beneath its wintery shell  
Jolted awake with the terrifying realization  
That his friend must have come  
That last Spring  
That last moment  
To say... Goodbye  
And in that sobering moment of frozen clarity  
The River at once began to stir  
Its movement so sudden  
So intense, so loud, so great  
As great as Its need to be free  
That It burst out from beneath that shell of ice  
Gasping, gnawing and screeching  
Creating the densest of damning walls  
Which It used to brace against  
And to redirect Its flow  
In order to propel Itself over and backwards  
Stretching and shifting  
Backing up simultaneously  
And then backing into the nearest bend  
Stopping, only long enough  
To redirect Itself once more

Before moving left, moving up  
And climbing onto the land;  
For the River knew that land was  
The only other place the man ever walked...  
And with the stealth of an insatiable  
Thousand limbed creature  
Reaching, grasping, pressing, seeping  
Pushing through, pushing past  
Pushing beyond anything  
As if needing to devour everything in Its way  
The River surged and swelled  
Spilling out in all directions  
In a mad, ravenous search  
Enveloping vehicles, streets  
Buildings, entire neighborhoods  
Almost the entire townsite...  
It was, as some would say  
A flood for a hundred years  
A flood of a lifetime of tears

The search didn't take long, however  
For soon, Its spirit sensed what could almost be  
Perceived as a vibrational beacon  
Leading Its surge instinctually  
Upwards to the highest point of the valley  
And onto a serene, unassuming  
Small square piece of land  
With trees, casting shade on either sides  
Similar to Its own waters edge  
There too, strewn about, were numerous erected stones  
Of various sizes and shades...  
That steady vibration  
Like a familiar heartbeat  
Had, in fact, lead the River  
To the old man's resting place  
Where his name was clearly etched  
Into one of those erect stones  
And among so many others  
That bore the names of the man's sisters and brothers  
Comforted now, by that knowledge  
That his friend was still nearby  
And that somehow  
The man's spirit was still within reach  
Would always be felt  
The River, having enveloped that square area  
Like loving arms, embracing, enfolding  
Protecting the most precious  
And dearest belonging  
Gradually receded Its hold  
Bidding his old friend farewell  
... Without the need for words...  
Then, in Its time, when It was ready  
The River ebbed his way reluctantly back  
Back to the comfort of Its bed of memories  
Back to the start of Spring...



## Learning about R-W:

Feedback for the Staff of R-W

Participants in the life of the church may have feedback for staff. Generally, such feedback can be given in person at a time agreed to by staff and person (to allow active listening). Some persons may want to bring along a support person to be present during the conversation. These conversations are most welcome by staff.

If anyone has these conversations and finds them unsatisfactory, or if anyone feels uncomfortable approaching the staff person, then the person can approach the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

The Ministry and Personnel Committee is a group made up of a chairperson and one liaison per staff member. Their role is to facilitate feedback and to ensure a healthy and safe workplace for our staff. Please contact the Chairperson (through the office or in person) if you are seeking a conversation.

## Thank You

We are so grateful for the amazing support we are receiving from all of our community of faith's participants in person and online! What do your donations do? Through these gifts of time and financial contribution R-W Church programs and building operations are well supported, as well as outreach projects and programs in the city and around the world. Anyone can donate time by emailing [mail@rwuc.org](mailto:mail@rwuc.org) or one of the ministers to be added to a phone tree, helper list or prayer circle.

Generous financial donations can be made by cheque, cash, pre-authorized remittance, PayPal on our website, or by E-transfer to [pay@rwuc.org](mailto:pay@rwuc.org)

All these ensure the continued work of the church in this time and in the long term planning of our ministry.

Tax receipts are issued at the end of the year for donations over \$20 if your name and address are provided.

## Coming Soon

July and August will have our staff bringing you one live stream experience each weekday at noon. This will include Affirming Ministries on Monday (with Shylo R), Theological and prayerful learning Tuesday and Thursdays, a continuation of our Hymn Sing tradition on Fridays and a very fun all ages learning experience every Wednesday! Watch the website for more details coming very soon!

## Live Stream Schedule

Watch live at [rwuc.org/live](http://rwuc.org/live) or on Facebook [facebook.com/RobertsonWesley](https://facebook.com/RobertsonWesley)

### Sunday:

Kids' Church live stream 9:30 am  
Sunday Worship 10:30 am

### Monday:

Affirming Reflections 12:00 pm  
Spirited Art Studio at 7:00 pm

### Tuesday:

Scripture Reflections at 12:00 pm

### Wednesday:

Kids' live stream at 11:00 am  
Devotional at 12:00 pm  
Spirited Art Studio at 1:30 pm

### Thursday:

Devotional at 12:00 pm

### Friday:

Hymn Sing at 12:00 pm



## GROCERY CARDS

Do you know about our grocery card program? When you pay for your groceries with grocery cards purchased through Robertson-Wesley United Church, the church will receive between 4% - 8% of the proceeds! The cards are available in denominations of \$25, \$50, or \$100 for Superstore/Loblaws, Safeway/Sobeys, and Save On. Buy a \$100 gift card and you will get \$100 worth of groceries! Order your grocery cards by writing [bradcampbell@rwuc.org](mailto:bradcampbell@rwuc.org) with the store and amounts of your choice. Brad will let you know when to pick them up (it will be sometime on Wednesday afternoons). You can pay by e-transfer or cheque.

## The Unintended Consequences of Treaty Six\*

Like much that has happened in the past, Treaty 6 (and Treaty 7 to the south) had unintended consequences.

### Hunting and Fishing: Recreation or Sustenance?

Many settlers, especially those of British background, considered hunting, fishing, and trapping to be recreational activities, pursued only when farm chores were done. They didn't appreciate that native peoples had been successful hunter-gatherers for centuries.

### Private Property or Common Responsibility?

In the 1870s, only small patches of the land within the North West Territories were used for agricultural purposes. Virgin soil was considered by many settlers and government officials to be "undeveloped" and "useless" without private ownership. Although First Nations peoples were bound to the land, there was no concept of ownership of land. Instead, they believed that land could be shared, honoured, and useful.

### Legalism (rule of law) or Paternalism?

Unfortunately, the newly-formed North West Mounted Police and the government-appointed Treaty Commissioners functioned within a mindset of legalism. First Nations, on the other hand, expected that they would be dealt with in the same paternalistic way as the Hudson's Bay Company had done. In fact, it is highly likely that no one other than the Commissioners and the NWMP knew that the HBC had been purchased by the Canadian government.

### Farming: Maybe or Maybe Not?

The Canadian government expected that farming would be well-developed within Treaty 6 land in three to ten years, at which time financial support could be reduced. However, without appropriate seeds, equipment, knowledge, and skills, the transition to agriculture was a failure. In fact, it would take until the early 1900s before Marquis wheat, the wheat that gave our Canadian Prairies the reputation as the breadbasket of the world, was developed.

### Starvation or Laziness?

Because of the decline of the buffalo, those who were starving were unable to repair their tipis or clothe themselves. Starvation led to lack of energy and motivation, which was seen by non-indigenous persons as evidence of laziness and disinterest.

Settlers valued individual effort and worth, whereas the native populations were collective in their actions and relationships.

### To Market! What Market?

The capitalist economy that was on the rise throughout much of the world required access to markets. Until the coming of the railroad to western Canada, transportation was primarily by water or overland. Remote reserves were often far from markets, should there be extra fish or lumber to sell.

### Put "them" in schools so they will be like us!

Federal payments to reserves were based on numbers. It was often difficult to have an accurate head count because many people carried on traditional hunting and fishing that took them off the reserves for several days at a time. The difficulty in getting definite numbers also affected the public's view towards the financing of education, as money was allocated based on registrations rather than attendance. Many reserve children didn't attend school so there was a move to establish boarding schools, so they could learn settlers' ways. After all, many British had been sent to boarding schools for their education. Surely the same system could work for others!

### Us and Them raises its Head!

Not all government representatives thought alike, although they believed they were acting in the best interest of native peoples. Nor did native peoples themselves think alike regarding all aspects of Treaty 6. Because of the differences in understanding and experience, Treaty 6 cannot be judged solely on the basis of Us and Them.

The writer of [From Treaties to Reserves](#), Dr. D.J. Hall, summarizes the treaties in these words, "Consensus on ends didn't mean agreement on means". How true.

\* Readers are invited to read Treaty 6: A Time of Despair, Instability, and Expansion in the Spring 2020 issue of *Between the Aisles*.

*Submitted by:* Nancy Heule

## The Green Good News:

### Christ's Path to Sustainable and Joyful Life

Why read this book? T. Wilson Dickinson gives us a missing link in our understanding of Jesus. He draws us into the Jesus stories by providing the context of the Roman occupation and the social conditions that resulted. He presents Jesus as fully Jewish, well-versed in the Hebrew Scriptures, and one whose understanding of the Law is much more than purity alone. He also demonstrates Jesus's understanding of the Sabbath and of Jubilee. Perhaps the author's most important contribution is that he offers many "aha" moments as the reader begins to fully appreciate the actions of Jesus. In fact, this book has garnered rave reviews from renowned theologian Walter Brueggemann and the founder of 350.org, Bill McKibben.

**The Green Good News** is more than an opinion piece. Rather, the author cites many well-known scholars of religion, history, and anthropology who have contributed to his knowledge. There are many "Jesus" books on the market, but this one is special in offering actions that go far to establish a vision of justice and sustainability that includes the earth and all that is in it. It is not a "Jesus Saves" book. It is a "Jesus Gives" book.

**The Green Good News** is published only on demand by Wipf and Stock of the US.

*Submitted by:* Nancy Heule

## BTA wants to hear from you!

Between the Aisles is made possible by your submissions. If you have content to share please think about submitting it for the next issue. Submission guidelines can be found online at [www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles](http://www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles)

The Deadline for the Fall Edition submissions: August 23, 2020. Release date: September 7, 2020

Did you know You can donate to the church using PayPal?



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and click DONATE

### Learning about R-W: Fundraising

Fundraising for general revenue of RWUC is to help supplement the regular operations. Supporting general revenue is important as general revenue pays for our costs of operations including our staff, our programs, our facility upkeep and our utilities.

**Fundraising Events** raise General Revenue to help pay for our costs of operations, including our staff, our programs, our facility upkeep and our utilities. The fundraisers in our church follow a "one fundraising event per month" guideline. The reason for this is to avoid overwhelming our volunteers and our members who give financially at most of these events. The Board facilitates a discussion helping the event coordinators schedule their events for each year, and also receives in writing any requests for an exception to the monthly guideline.

**Sunday Fellowship Fundraisers** help add monies to R-W's General Revenue, R-W's Legacy Fund, or The United Church of Canada's Mission and Service. The organizers of the fundraiser will choose which of the above funds they will support and are responsible for indicating with a sign where the money raised will be donated to on the day of the sale.

In addition, we have weekly sales of grocery cards, a program that fundraises for the general revenue of the church.

**Fundraising for Mission and Service** in The United Church of Canada happens in many ways. Mission and Service is a United Church of Canada fund that supports mission and outreach work across Canada and the world.

At R-W, we encourage our congregation to designate a certain percentage of their offerings to Mission and Service (M&S). We also invite our congregation to contribute to this important fund through a special donation in a blue envelope six times per year. In addition to these donations, the Stewardship committee invites people to donate four times a year to the M&S Bucket in celebration of or in honour of recent important events in our lives that we are thankful for. The UCW and the Catering Ministry also donate to M&S. Some individuals sell their baking or preserves and donate the proceeds to M&S.

