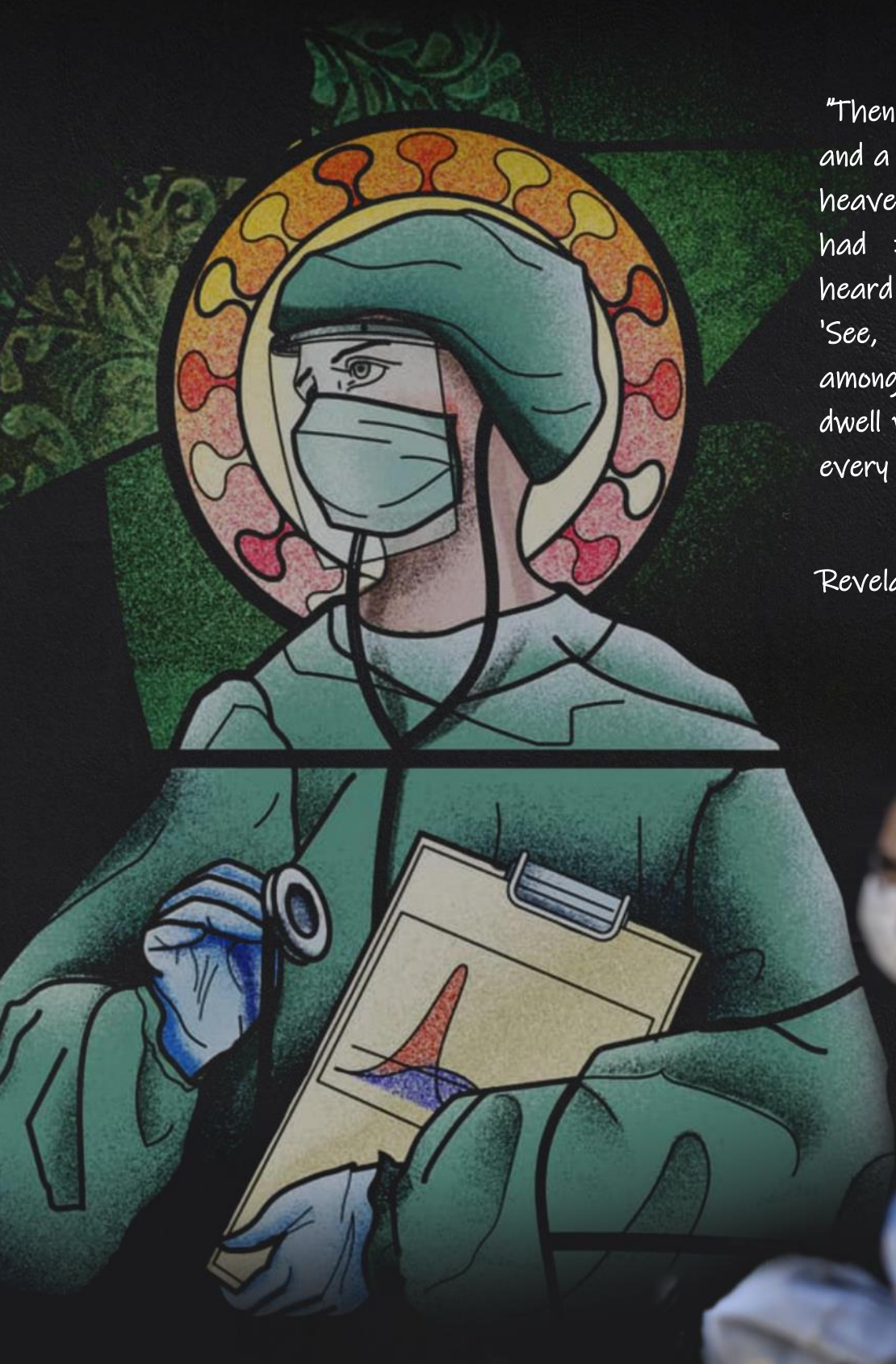


Between the Aisles

A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly
AUTUMN 2020



"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away... And I heard a loud voice... saying, 'See, the home of God is among the peoples. God will dwell with them...and will wipe every tear from their eyes.'"

Revelations 21:1



Editors' Greeting

Greetings Everyone,

We are happy to have the opportunity to do this issue of BTA. We have been blessed with so many insights from our R-W friends regarding their COVID experiences. What we see in their responses are Faith, Hope, and Charity — blessings for us all.

Janet Clark and Nancy Heule



DRIVE BY BLESSING

On Aug 30th in the afternoon, it felt like a homecoming. I carried the blessed water from the morning service outside. It was very windy, but that didn't stop anyone from dropping by, for the Spirit was truly at play.



With palm leaves in hand, the water was sprinkled on backpacks, bags for teaching, pets, a flag, bikes, a trumpet, cards, shoes and people. It was a beautiful and joy filled day. The added bonus was trying to identify people through their masks. In these blessings we asked God to inspire, protect and remind the people that the Spirit goes with them in their daily lives. We are not alone! Thanks to the Family Ministry Committee!!

Rev. Karen Bridges

Front cover image is of street art by artist Wanda Hutira

Have you ever been body surfing in the ocean?

It feels like the blows keep coming in 2020. The recent explosion in Lebanon, and the destruction caused by Hurricane Isaias remind me of what it is like to body surf in the ocean when the waves are strong.

I love playing in the waves, and boogie boarding or body surfing (in Hawaii). I love the feeling of bobbing on the ocean and floating as the waves slowly build to a really big wave.



Photo is of Rev. Karen Bridges boogie boarding and was taken by one of her friends in Hawaii in 2019.

Half the fun is trying to figure out which wave will provide you with the opportunity to surf all the way back to shore, and then the question is what is the timing in order to catch the wave and not simply get hit by it. When you hit the wave just right it is a glorious and exhilarating experience, but when you miss time a wave...that is a whole painful out of body type experience.

I can remember quite clearly the moment of sheer panic and fear as you find yourself suddenly facing a ten foot wave that is about to crash right on top of you. The feeling that it is too late and there is nothing you can do, when the wave crashes over you suddenly you are a rag doll being pushed and pulled and tossed around by the power of water...only to be pushed into the sand and dragged along the floor of the ocean, not sure which way is up any more. Then suddenly there is a sense of relief when you see the sky, finally breaching

the water and gasping for air. Then there is the aftermath, with hair sticking to your face making it hard to see and finding that there is literally sand in every nook and cranny of your body, and to make matters worse, there is now water coming out of your nose and mouth.

It is a humbling moment to realize how insignificant you really are, and how there are truly moments when you have no control. If you lose your concentration for even a moment, you can end up in a pretty precarious and dangerous position. This is one of the best ways that I can describe my experience of COVID. For every wave that takes me out, there is always one more wave when suddenly everything aligns and you skim across the top of the water, laughing and with a huge smile across your face. Its the feeling that anything is possible.

We have all been hit by a wave, either physically or metaphorically. This year, 2020, has felt like all we have been doing is dodging wave after wave. On Sunday, August 9 we heard the story of the disciples in a storm and the moment when Jesus calms it. What I love about this passage is that even in Peter's moment of doubt and danger in the waves, Jesus reaches out and helps.

Faith, and the teachings of the scripture are like the hand of Jesus reaching out to each of us, with words of hope, encouragement, affirmation, compassion and love. Isaiah 43:2 says (a paraphrase) "When you pass through raging waters in the sea you shall not drown. When you walk amidst the burning flames you shall not be harmed. When you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side, know that I am with you through it all."

God is with us lifting us to the surface after we have been hit by the waves. Jesus reminds us to not be afraid. What I have learned in my time in the water, is that acting out of fear ends with me at the bottom of the ocean. Acting with courage and calm ends with a moment of peace and exhilaration that brings much joy and hope. In the words of the band Smash Mouth... "I get knocked down but I get up again." May we all take Jesus' hand and keep moving through this time with courage and with peace.

Rev. Karen Bridges

What to Expect on Sundays

Entering

- ◆ People will be asked to use the main entrance to the church on the corner of 123rd Street and 102 Avenue.
- ◆ People who require the use of the elevator will use the Memorial Hall entrance
- ◆ For contact tracing purposes and as a requirement of the City of Edmonton everyone must sign in and provide a means of contact (e-mail or telephone). Sanitizer will be available at each sign in station.
- ◆ Bulletins and offering envelopes will be available at the sign in sites.
- ◆ Mask must be worn at all times from entry to exit. If you don't have a mask one will be provided for you.
- ◆ Seating is marked with a square on the pew. People are asked to move to the centre of the row if they are the first to arrive in that row so others do not have to step over them to take a seat.
- ◆ Ushers will show people to their seats. Please keep your belongings with you at all times

During the Service

- ◆ As required by the city of Edmonton for public gatherings, masks must be worn at all times
- ◆ Although there may be music at services, no singing is allowed.
- ◆ Collection will not be taken in the usual manner; collections plates will be placed on tables so offering may be left in those on your way out.

Exiting

- ◆ People sitting on the east side of the sanctuary will be asked to leave by the east door on 102 Avenue.
- ◆ Those on the west side will leave by the main west door on 123 Street.
- ◆ People needing to use the elevator will go through the chapel and move into Memorial Hall so they can social distance.
- ◆ Brad will organize those who are waiting for DATS.

We look forward to seeing everyone again.

What's on my Night Table?

Ragged Company by award-winning author Richard Wagamese,

The terminology you use frames your attitude. When I was in Toronto in the late 60s, “bums” lived on skid row. Keith, a minister who worked with them at Fred Victor Mission, called them “single displaced persons.” What a difference a name makes. Many of us are still struggling with stereotypes today. While we may care deeply about disadvantaged people, it's still hard to put ourselves in their shoes.

Enter Richard Wagamese. He's the brilliant Ojibway author who wrote *Indian Horse* and *Medicine Walk*. He was born in 1955 of parents who'd been damaged by Indian Residential Schools. When he was two, he and his three siblings were abandoned in the bush. When the food ran out and temperatures dropped, they went to a train station for shelter. A police man found them and turned them over to Children's Aid. A number of foster homes and beatings followed, and led to his leaving at age sixteen. After spending several years on the streets, he took shelter in a library. It was there he started reading ... and writing. And the librarian who befriended him left him sandwiches at his desk every day.

Ragged Company reflects many of his experiences but starts with fantasy: four homeless people — one indigent woman and three men — take shelter in a movie theatre on a particularly cold afternoon and, when leaving, find an abandoned cigarette package in which is a winning lottery ticket for \$16 million. There they meet “a straight John,” a retired journalist, who becomes their friend and helps them collect their money. What you learn in coming to know these people is four completely different reasons for homelessness. You see real people whom you care about. You learn about loss — of family, culture, love and self. And you see the importance of respect and friendship and the development of a new type of family.

Wagamese died all too young at the age of 61, but the award-winning author was able to use his gift of storytelling in a way you won't forget.

Lorna Berlinguette

A Meaningful Link to Grow Your Faith

Check out www.radicaldiscipleship.net and sign up for its newsletter. The writers dig deeply into matters of faith-in-action and provide hope when one's heart and soul are in need of inspiration.

Nancy Heule

Hope

When I witnessed the murder of George Floyd on media, my thought was, "How much more can humanity, can I endure?" We have a covid pandemic, we have quarantine, we have floods and loss of homes in Fort Vermilion, Fort McMurray, we have the murder of a man of colour that caused pain and outrage throughout our world. And I had a fall that kept me home, alone, for 3 weeks.

At the end of an episode of the PBS program Grantchester the Vicar says to his church community, "We need to Hope for a world we want to live in." That's it! I thought. HOPE!!!

To me Love didn't seem to be cutting it in our world right then. It didn't seem that humanity was doing a good job of loving one another. So... I set love aside, for now, and started to think about HOPE.

I often hear about Hope at our church. But I am not sure that I really understand the meaning of HOPE. I thought about, "I hope you have a good day." I hope my friend recovers." I remember the story of Noah, the rainbow, and God's covenant. But none of that helped me understand the meaning of HOPE. I set Noah's story aside, for now, and began my quest for a meaning of HOPE that I can understand in this time in my history. I believe that what we need now is HOPE.

Then, the Spring 2020 edition of the University of Alberta Alumni Magazine *New Trail* arrived. In this edition there is an article about seeking hope by Amie Filkow entitled *Hope is an overused word, but the real thing can be powerful, Research shows talking about it can make us stronger and that we can learn how to find it.* At university I had studied the work of Ronna Jevne on HOPE. I was excited to read what the researchers are discovering today. But after reading the article over and over I still was not clear on what HOPE is. I needed to see HOPE.

Since I didn't know what HOPE was, how will I know when I see it, when I experience it. I started to ask friends about the meaning of HOPE. I checked out the dictionary, and on and on. But still no clarity. Then a friend suggested I read the Magnificat – "a poem blessing created by a young woman living anything but the blessing she is experiencing. This is an indication of Mary's profound capacity to remember forward."

Remember forward?? This is HOPE! "HOPE means more than just hanging on. It is the conscious decision to see the world in a different way." "Beatitude is the journey of HOPE that comes from the courage to live by heart." Maybe I just didn't have the words to describe the HOPE I wanted to experience in our world, in my life.

Okay, I may have something now. So everywhere I went, everything I read, I was looking for HOPE. One of my passions is housing for our city's homeless population. It was at this time that Edmonton city had a place set up in the Expo Centre for the homeless population even before we had the signs of the pandemic here in Edmonton. Hmmmm? Is that HOPE?

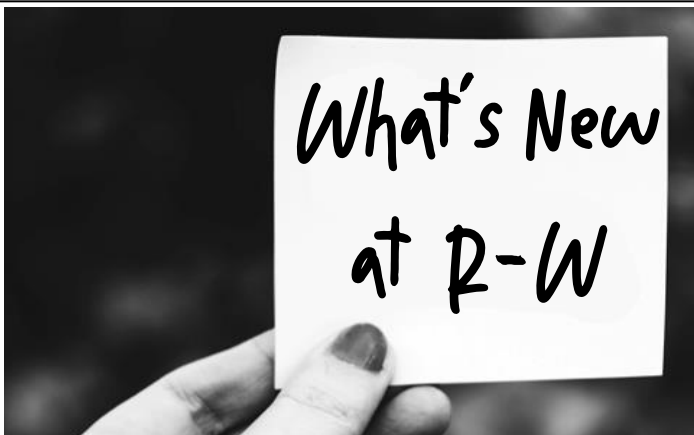
Then I started thinking about the City of Edmonton's Homeward Trust initiative that has led to Housing First, which has led to FIND, that has led to this safe place in the time of covid. That is HOPE! Now I am excited! I have a glimmer of what HOPE can mean.

A memory has come back to me when a young man had his bicycle stolen. He was distraught because he needed his bicycle to get to work and if he didn't get to work, he would lose his apartment that he had just moved into. He had reached out to the Edmonton Police and their lost bike site, and the local Bike shop. But no luck. After a question and an announcement there was this bicycle.... Well you know the result. This young man had another bicycle. Is this HOPE?

On a personal note, I felt that in the next year I would have to move. Then a friend asked, "Why don't you just move to the other side of the building?" Brilliant! I would never have thought of that. After an email I have a place on the other side of my building to move to. Is that HOPE?

By now I am sure that you are thinking, "When will Jill know the meaning of HOPE?" Well I have to tell you I am slowly coming to an understanding. I believe that all of the above examples are HOPE. Somewhere, sometime, someone asked a question that was heard in a meaningful way. And from that question HOPE was realized. I must let you know that I am not done my quest for the meaning of HOPE. There must be more to this word. I will continue my journey.

By Jill Lambie



Seeds of Change

Throughout the summer, Justice Artistic Director, Brooke Leifso, has been creating hour long videos covering the basics of some concepts: conflict theories, ways of knowing, intersectionality/anti-oppression, bias and expectations, and call out culture.

What makes change happen? What changes are happening now? What seeds are being planted for possible new futures?

Robertson-Wesley United Church presents Seeds of Change through the Spirited Arts Movement. Seeds of Change programming aims to aid in making sense of our current world and explore possibilities of future growth through these turbulent times.

To adapt to COVID, sessions will be facilitated entirely online. There are 3 types of sessions, an online interactive primer that is a lecture overview of the topic, an arts-based session using story, simple art supplies and other artistic mediums to explore the topic. Lastly, a zoom follow up conversation will happen where we'll talk about the topic. The interactive primer will be available for the entire month, please join for any and all sessions!

September: Town Hall - The Harvest

Brooke wants to connect with you to talk about the concepts presented in the summer Facebook live chats! Town Halls will capture our thoughts and feelings about this time, what we know and what we don't as we carry on into the future. What seeds have been growing? What other concepts would you like to explore?

Zoom Session Art Based Exploration:

Wednesday, Sept 16 at 9:00 am

Zoom Talk:

Thursday, Sept 17 at 1:00 pm

October: Allyship

What does being an ally mean? This month we'll explore the basics of allyship within social movements.

Facebook Live Interactive Primer:

Wednesday, October 7 at 9:00 am

Zoom Art Making Session:

Wednesday, October 14 at 9:00 am

Zoom Conversation:

Wednesday, October 15 at 4:00 pm

November: A practical exploration of the concept of Power

Let's talk about power between people! We will explore theories about power and practical ideas of power within us as individuals, in society and institutions.

Facebook Live Interactive Primer:

Wednesday, November 4 at 9:00 am

Zoom Art Making Session :

Wednesday, November 11 at 9:00 am

Zoom Conversation :

Wednesday, November 18 at 4:00 pm

The facebook live sessions can be viewed on [facebook.com/spiritedartsmovement](https://www.facebook.com/spiritedartsmovement). To Register for the zoom sessions visit [rwuc.org/artistic-justice-workshops](https://www.rwuc.org/artistic-justice-workshops) and choose the zoom(s) you want to attend, a link will be sent to you with the zoom information.

Robertson - Wesley
UNITED CHURCH Spirited

SAFETY GUIDELINES

MASK REQUIRED

Follow Directional Signage

Sanitize Your Hands

Social Distance 2M

STREAMING NOW ONLINE

At rwuc.org/live or facebook.com/RobertsonWesley

AFFIRMING REFLECTIONS

Mondays on rwuc.org/live or facebook.

Join Affirming Coordinator Shylo Rosborough for Affirming Reflections. Each week Shylo discusses different faith topics through a LGBTQIA2+ lense.

SPIRITED ART STUDIO

The Spirited Art studio is a place to explore art and connect with each other in an informal creative environment. People are welcome to tune in any time and try out different art-making processes, facilitated by Laura David Foster.

Mondays, 7:00–8:30 pm.

Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 pm.

Visit rwuc.org/spirited-arts-movement to register for the Zoom.

Scripture Reflections

Join Rev. Karen Bridges by visiting rwuc.org/live or on Facebook Facebook or by requesting the Zoom link to join the discussion by speaking to Rev. Karen Bridges. **Tuesdays** at 12:00 pm, to reflect on the scripture passages for the upcoming Sunday. We are using the practice of Lectio Divina which means we read through the scripture three times. You will be invited into some moments of silence, and if you are willing you are invited to share with the group. You don't need to be a Biblical Scholar. God speaks through the scriptures and it is always wonderful to hear the diversity of messages that are received. Come watch with a bible and a jour-

Affirming Coffee Hour

Affirming Ministries invites you to bring your coffee and join Shylo for his online Affirming Coffee Hour! On Zoom every **Thursday** from 11:00 am - Noon. Affirming Coffee Hour is a chance of connection for LGBTQIA2S+ folks and allies who are wanting to learn more, ask questions, engage in thoughtful discussions, and socialize! E-mail: affirming.ministries@rwuc.org or mail@rwuc.org for the link!



Join Erin Craig at noon on **Fridays** for Hymn Sing on rwuc.org/live or on Facebook.



GOD ON TAP

God on Tap is a gathering of people ages 18 years and up, who would like to engage in conversation about who God is, and how God is working in the world and in our lives. This is a great way to explore faith with others over a beverage of your choice (beer, wine, coffee, pop.) This is an open space for people with no faith, and those with an inquiring mind, and those who wish to deepen their understanding of faith .

On Monday, September 28th from 7:00-8:30 pm join Rev. Karen with a beverage of your choice and let's talk about God and our faith. We will be having a Zoom meeting. This will NOT be recorded in any way. It is open to all adults. If you would like to join, please get in touch with Rev. Karen who can send you the

Liminal Space is defined by the dictionary as “relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process. Occupying a position at, or on both sides of a boundary or threshold. Between, or betwix.”

The Exodus story follows the journey of the Hebrew people’s liberation from slavery and their journey to the Promised Land. Moses has been called by God to lead the people out of slavery. Their journey is long and unknown. When they leave Egypt they step into a liminal space...the in-between. We, like the Hebrew People, have stepped into a liminal time. We stepped into it as a congregation several years ago, then as a denomination a few years ago, and now today we step into it as a global world.

These transitional times involve a journey from separation, to liminality to reorientation. We can’t go back to who we were, and we aren’t clear yet, who we will be. In these times of liminality we are called to hold steady and not revert back to what was once known nor to the old patterns of behaviour. As Rev. Susan Beaumont described it, we are in God’s waiting room and we are here to learn patience. We need to acknowledge that God is working on us, and thus there is no need to resist. In God’s waiting room we are called to listen deeply, we are called to experiment and unleash our creativity, to live with compassion, with curiosity and a daring spirit, trusting in God. “Liminal seasons are thin spaces, where the presence of the divine is palpable.” Liminal seasons are ripe opportunities for communities of faith to deepen their practices of group discernment to watch for the movement of God.

Heritage Moments

This past week marked the end of the Second World War. Several members of both Robertson and Wesley churches played active roles in each war. The youngest member of Robertson church, Merlin Rae, a drummer boy, was killed in battle in World War One at only fourteen years old.

Our Memorial Hall was erected to commemorate the lives of church members who had died in both World Wars. Two pilots, John Hope and Stewart MacDonald, are commemorated with windows in the chapel, as is Rev. Gordon Brown, one of Robertson’s beloved ministers. He died when a bomb hit his chaplaincy office in Antwerp in 1944. Although church members were known for their service in two world wars, many were also involved in peace-making endeavours such as Project Ploughshares and the Gandhi Foundation.

Veteran Dr. Harold Barker who died in 2007, was very active in Edmonton’s Physicians for Social Responsibility. That organization, along with international Physicians against Nuclear War, received the Nobel Peace Prize several years ago. What a heritage, indeed!

Nancy Heule

A Prayer During Times of COVID-19

In this time of COVID-19, we pray:
When we aren’t sure, God,
help us be calm;
when information comes
from all sides, correct and not,
help us to discern;
when fear makes it hard to breathe,
and anxiety seems to be the order of the day,
slow us down, God;
help us to reach out with our hearts,
when we can’t touch with our hands;
help us to be socially connected,
when we have to be socially distant;
help us to love as perfectly as we can,
knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear."

For the doctors, we pray,
for the nurses, we pray,
for the technicians and the janitors and the
aides and the caregivers, we pray,
for the researchers and theorists,
the epidemiologists and investigators,
for those who are sick,
and those who are grieving, we pray,
for all who are affected,
all around the world...
we pray
for safety,
for health,
for wholeness.

May we feed the hungry,
give drink to the thirsty,
clothe the naked and house those without homes;
may we walk with those who feel they are alone,
and may we do all that we can to heal
the sick—
in spite of the epidemic,
in spite of the fear.

Help us, O God,
that we might help each other.

In the love of the Creator,
in the name of the Healer,
in the life of the Holy Spirit that is in all and with all,
we pray.

May it be so.

—A prayer during times of COVID-19 by the Right Rev. Richard Bott, originally posted on Facebook. Moderator Bott encourages the sharing of prayers he posts throughout his term.

Covid Comments

From Victoria Fedorak

I keep a gratitude journal, my bedtime ritual. I am never at a loss for things for which to be grateful.

ENTRY:

I am grateful for kindness and compassion that rise above differences, selfishness, and pride. Sometimes it's challenging to find kindness and compassion in a situation of conflict, yet kindness and compassion are easier to maintain compared to maintaining differences, selfishness, and pride. Kindness and compassion liberate me from the conflict, while maintaining differences; selfishness, and pride burden me with negative baggage.

From Norma Johnson

Dear friends,

It has been about six months since we were able to get together in fellowship and to worship our God in our church due to COVID-19. I hope and pray you are all keeping safe and well. I would like to share the following from the book of Moments of Peace in the Presence of God.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Some people talk about being in a great house of worship and sensing God's presence. The towering spires, stained glass windows, and deeply carved wooden altar, where private confessions are made, are elements that could stir your heart with thoughts of His unconditional love, mercy and grace.

Many times, however, the most sacred place is found in the quietness of your own room and stillness of your heart. This is where God personally meets with you, reveals himself through his word and teaches you how to live each day with hope and sense of victory. The Lord of Heaven is omnipresent—everywhere at all times. He is awesome in nature and He is next to you right now. I wish you all peace and love.

From Pan Graham

Hi everyone! It has been an odd year to say the least and I certainly did not expect to be border hopping or even traveling as much as I have. From March when my American-born partner, Anna, was barred from returning to her home (me and cat Roxie) due to Canada's abrupt restrictions, to my journey down to the US (May 1 - July 3) the Covid conundrum of tourist versus immigrant whirlwind swept us up. So, instead of finding fall accommodation in Edmonton, together we are currently settling into the student residence of United Theological Seminary of

the Twin Cities. You heard right! While Anna looks for meaningful work, I am now a new student of the Masters of Divinity program here in St. Paul, Minnesota with a goal of solidifying my work in outdoor ministry and expanding my spiritual leadership skills. The program is 3-4 years and I expect to be here for most of that, barring some major catastrophe. Oh wait... that's the whole reason I was spurred on to examine the possibilities with this school in the first place! United is a social-justice-oriented, queer and ethnically diverse and supportive, radically transformative institution with a small student body. I am excited for the inspiring learning I am about to embark on. I may be stepping barefoot from soft mossy grass to hot coals but I think it'll be worth it.

Lots of long and socially distant hugs and appreciation. Stay safe Edmonton!

From Charmaine Roux and Angel

For the last 2 weeks I have been rushing around trying to make up for an illness I have, and the news that my cat Angel has 1st stage kidney disease. I have been blessed by friends who help me cope and slowly come out of the depression I have been living in for the past month. Above all, God has strengthened me and I always call out to Yahweh when I need help, in everything, large or small.

Now, I must remember to live one day at a time and breathe, drink water, try very much to cut down from 1 large cup of coffee to a small one in the morning or early afternoon. I like cafe mochas myself.

Angel knows that I am improving our day to day lives and she is, I think, getting happier and less depressed herself. You see, kidney disease can cause depression in cats as they become seniors.

From Laura David Foster

I have experienced personal growth by reaching out to the Spirited Arts Studio community through social media. I have anxiety with any kind of formal public speaking, as those who know me understand. It took courage that came from the heart. I wanted to reach out to the people I care about whom I had seen weekly in the studio, and in this way continue with creativity and connection. It is ironic that a time of social distancing was a time I learned to push past such fears. I am grateful; doing so has been a blessing.

From Susan Kolbowicz

It's been a strange feeling not playing the piano for the Community Dinners. Preparing the program to play gave me incentive to practice. It is just such a crazy time, isn't it?

I did two things to help me get through Covid thus far:

1. Learning to play the harp. I have always wanted to learn since I was a child. I had an opportunity to buy one in December and am taking lessons. Being able to play the piano helps as far as theory goes, but learning to pluck the strings is a whole new ball of wax! I feel like a kid again, only I don't need my mom to tell me to practise. The mom in me tells me to practise- which I am only too willing to do!

2. For 58 days I posted a daily video on Facebook. This forced me to practise the piano every day in order to "polish" a piece to be ready for taping by my S.O.! The music varied from Beethoven, Chopin, Mozart, etc. to Broadway tunes to Andrew Lloyd Webber to Gospel to pop songs. I had so much fun doing this! My family and friends had fun guessing the snippet of music. I would post the answer the next day. My first day posting started off like this:

Stuck at Home: "Drop the Needle" Adventures- Day 1

"Drop the Needle" refers to randomly dropping the record player needle onto any area of a record. This was how my music professors in the Bachelor of Music program (oh, so long ago) tested our knowledge of required listening of classical works. What a rush it was to know the answer!!!

Hoping to bring smiles to you, my family and friends in these trying times, I will play a bit of music each day. Ralph will record a random 30 seconds or so of the song to simulate the "drop the needle."

Can you identify the title and/or composer?

From Janet Clark

Along with keeping up with my grandchildren whilst my daughter worked from home and thinking I could actually (or is that virtually?) clean out a lot of boxes and closets, I have found so much fun canning, jellying, freezing and bird watching. I have no idea what the individual birds are called, except for woodpeckers, but there must be about 15 different kinds, mainly small, in the bird feeders I have bought and fill frequently. The girls help me. And so did Melisa G with my gardening. My broken ribs are healing (pun intended — I stepped backwards over a garden hose). Life for us is good! We hope yours is too!

From Lorna Berlinguette

The Unexpected Blessings of Covid 19 August 2020

My schoolmate Esther Oaks, Gordon Oaks' wife, said to me

recently, "I'm never going to do four things in one day again." That's what she learned from six months of confinement and I agree. What I appreciate is running at a slower pace; until recently, my most common activity has been erasing events from my day timer. In my old life I was an English instructor, and what I loved was delving into "serious, good" books, at a slow pace because I'm a slow reader. To my amazement since the pandemic began, I've read 24 books and most of them have been escape: I'm two short of the whole Louise Penny detective series and I'm on my fourth Jerry Fallis. Mystery and humour are a great salve for the heaviness of the season. I love physical activity. In early March, to my dismay, curling, YMCA classes and skiing were all shut down on the same day. But what replaced them was walking. I've discovered all sorts of treasures in my own neighbourhood and parks, made better by seeing them in different stages of seasonal development. I've had more time to garden, a favourite pastime anytime. Louis and I have loved sharing a social bubble with our daughter's family in her backyard. And the cherry on the pie has been visiting with friends. Whenever the weather was good, we've invited two or three people, mostly from the church, to spend lazy afternoons chatting on our deck and sharing things we never knew. (About 50 have come so far, and that doesn't include the Koinonia group which recently socially distanced on our lawn.) So in spite of the constriction forced by the pandemic, my life has expanded in many ways.

From Donna Krucik

Covid-19 was scary when first it came to visit in our area of Alberta. Early on I tried the bravura stage but ended up coiled up in my bed for a day. Enough of that, so housecleaning and a renewed effort at routine took on a smiley face. Phone calls with friends and family became desired life-lines. Pots of tea, baking and learning how to use Zoom for meetings and webinars took on their own life. A throat swab for C-19 was negative.

Live Streaming for church services was truly a God-Send; thank you to the ministers, music team, and IT team; I had been dreaming for a few years of L-S for us oldies and needies; and, though I did not call on Covid 19 to help out, I do give thanks for that unusual and wonderful gift for worship. Melisa joined me for LS worship and lunch, was most appreciated.

The Fundraising Group met by Zoom and gave the OK for me to prepare some sweets and sours once again for Mission & Service. Ready so far are 250ml jars of Zucchini Pickle, Rhubarb Relish, Carrot and Cucumber Relish,

Green Tomato Pickle; Zucchini Lemon Butter, Rhubarb Jam with orange and lemon, Raspberry Jam; and tried Borage Jelly-Syrup- supposed to taste like cucumber? All of this preserve work has been soothing to my soul.

Thank you Friends for your prayers and kindnesses.

From Sylvia Duffus

COVID has made me more grateful than ever. I am now halfway through my hip surgery recovery time. In April my surgery was postponed to July, which meant my Nova Scotia sister could not help. So I am very grateful for Jill and Rosemary who stayed with me for two weeks post surgery. Then, because public home care was not available, I had to hire a private firm for another two weeks. Meals on Wheels was really quite good. Two wonderful Condo neighbours have stepped in numerous times to help with grooming, personal care and shopping. The Haymans helped with many essential items and services. And so many thanks go to our RW community for phone calls, visits, cookies, cards and caring. I am very grateful, indeed!

From Karen Hansen

During my travelling days, I kept a journal for each trip in a small booklet. The result: a mountain of small booklets in a filing cabinet drawer. My COVID-19 isolation project has been to transcribe several journals and then put the typed copy in a photo album. I began with my trip to Southeast Asia in 1962/63 and am about to start on my first trip to Australia in 1977. It's been a lot of fun reliving all those experiences.

The Covid Kitchen

Hints from the Past- Useful Today

Save cooking water such as the water left over when cooking potatoes or other vegetables. Use for making stock or whenever water is an ingredient in a savoury dish. Not only are you recycling water, you are capturing nutrients and using them in food preparation.

An absorbent tea towel works well to dry herbs. Simply spread the washed herbs on the towel, roll it up for an hour or so, then unroll and let dry. Drying may take a couple of days but the smell of herbs permeates the house. Yum!

Start a compost pile somewhere, anywhere: in your backyard, on your deck, in a bucket under your sink. Let the fruits of the earth return to the earth, NOT to the City of Edmonton's landfill! Used tea leaves can be spread around house plants for an amazing fertilizer!

Lots of apples? Try this recipe for soft cider. It is especially good warmed up and served on a cool autumn or winter day:

Tasty Soft Cider

2 litres/quarts of apple juice, or combination of crabapple, pear, apple juices
 ½ C orange juice
 ¼ C of lemon juice
 6 cinnamon sticks
 1 ½ tsp cloves
 ½ C maple syrup
 Pinch of nutmeg
 Simmer for thirty minutes. Serve warm, garnished with orange slices. May add small amount of rum or liqueur.

Lots of tomatoes? Capture summer's bounty in this cold soup, especially good for lunch on a gorgeous Fall day.

Best Gazpacho Ever

3 C V-8 juice
 ¼ tsp tabasco sauce
 ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
 2-3 T wine vinegar
 1 T lemon juice
 ½ tsp basil
 1 tsp salt
 ¼ tsp pepper
 2-3 T cooking oil
 1 large can, 796 ml, of diced tomatoes
 ¼ C finely diced green pepper
 ¼ C finely diced celery
 ¼ C finely diced cucumber
 2 T finely chopped onion
 2 T chopped parsley

Combine and chill overnight if possible, or for at least 4 hours, before serving. Serve with dollop of sour cream or plain yogurt, with a light sprinkling of smoked paprika. Serves 4 to 6.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Are you part of a single person household?

Does your family live outside of Edmonton?

Providing an emergency contact and phone number to the church is helpful. When we have this information we can provide care and help when needed or follow up when we suddenly can't find you. Did you also know you can add Robertson-Wesley as an emergency contact? When you add Robertson-Wesley as your primary emergency contact, the Reverend will be contacted first in times of need, this will allow her to visit you, provide spiritual care, and facilitate contacting your loved ones. If you would like to add or update your emergency contact please speak to Rev. Karen Bridges or Elyse Munro in the office.

Between the Aisles

Do you write poetry? Have you read a life-changing book lately? Do you have a faith question you are exploring or a passion you want to share?

Then why not submit something for inclusion in the church's quarterly newsletter *Between the Aisles*? For guidelines and publication requirements, see www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles.

The Deadline for Winter Edition Submissions is **November 8, 2020**.

Distribution of the Winter edition starts on **November 22, 2020**.

Did you know?

You can donate to the church using PayPal?



Visit www.rwuc.org and click DONATE or visit <https://paypal.me/robertsonwesley>

Volunteer Opportunity

LIVESTREAM TECH TEAM

We are looking for someone, or a few different someones, to learn to manage the R-W Sunday Worship Livestream. We will continue to stream the services while having in-person worship, and would eventually like to have a group of volunteers to take on this role each Sunday. This person or people should:

- * Be available starting at 10:00 am Sunday mornings
- * Be comfortable using computers
- * Be willing to problem-solve
- * Be familiar with, or willing to learn about: Audio interfaces, Camera interfaces, Livestreaming software, Social media platforms.

If you are interested in doing this, or want more information about what it will entail, please contact Erin

(music@rwuc.org) Brad (brad.campbell@rwuc.org)

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Robertson-Wesley United Church

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Between the Aisles is published on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground for many Indigenous peoples. We also acknowledge the Métis, who are of mixed Indigenous and European heritage. Edmonton is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 4.