

# **Between the Aisles**

*A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly*

**AUTUMN**

“In a cool solitude of trees  
where leaves and birds a music spin,  
mind that was weary is at ease,  
new rhythms in the soul begin.”

- William Kean Seymour

## Welcome from the Editors'

Our theme for this issue is "Perspective." Many of us are searching for it and many are finding it, sometimes in the most interesting and unusual places. Often searching and finding are daily processes or adventures. Sometimes we are overcome by our own problems, even the small ones ... and then we watch the news and our thoughts turn to gratitude: we are not in refugee situations caused by war, fire and other natural disasters, personal and family conflicts. If we are struggling, maybe we can seek help. If we are not, maybe we can learn or understand or help others.

In this issue, we hope for perspective. We hear a lot about the horrors of residential schools and now some more positive perspectives, also. We acknowledge the death of biologist Richard Lewontin, who opposed the then widely held theory of racial superiority, a theory that played out in Canada's treatment of indigenous people. We appreciate the letter from Elva Taylor, former RWUC member, about her experiences at the Camsell Hospital.

We reference Margaret May's moving account about her time teaching in a residential school in Norway House, Manitoba. Read a post modern rendition of the story of the Good Samaritan created by Sandi Darrell.

We have two church members who have offered their perspectives on being in our church: Karen Hansen who has been part of RW for decades and Rebecca Moen who joined us recently. Throughout BTA you will find other thoughts and insights about us and our world, including "Board Bubbings" by our Board Chair Douglas Sollows and Lois Field's information about the Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM). Also appreciate the poem *Progress?* by Elyse Munro.

Included is a pencil perspective drawing by Layla Fox; when asked if the clear semi-circle at the point of the road was a sunrise or a sunset, she said, "I think it's a sunrise but you can decide."

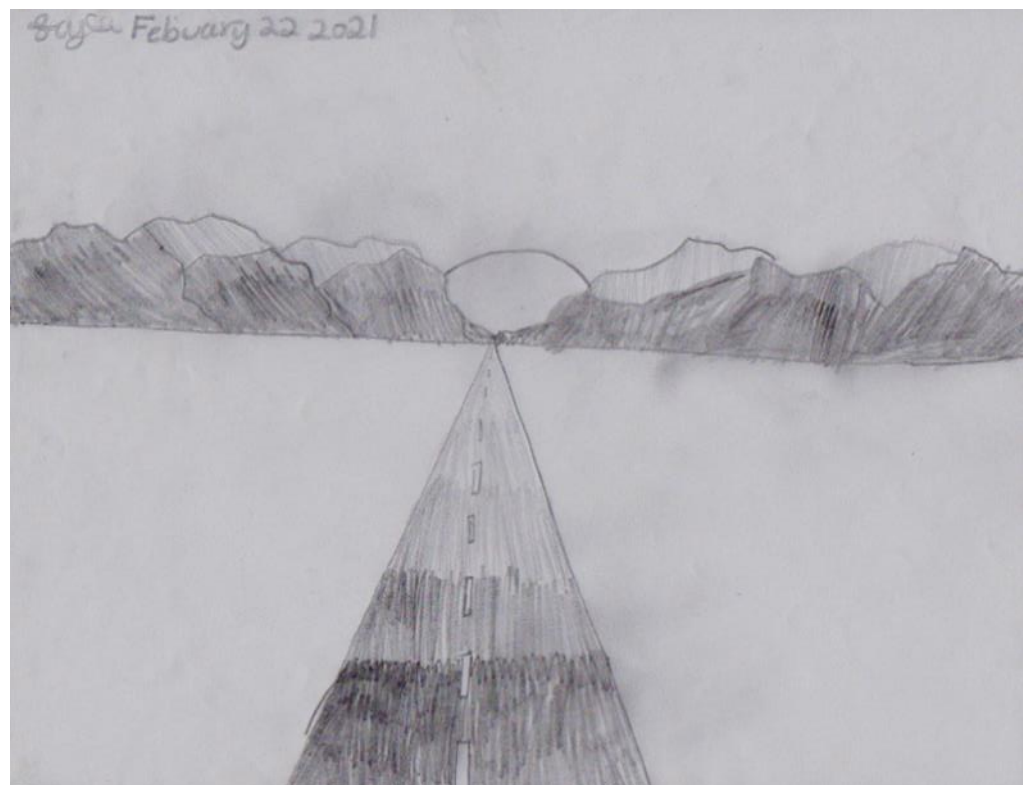
Submitted by Nancy Heule and Janet M Clark

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## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the history, spirituality and culture of the Treaty 6 people, and the Metis people of Alberta region 4, and affirm our responsibility to Treaty members. May we live with respect on this land in peace and friendship with its people.

Courtesy of United Church Women



## Rebecca Moen *Between The Aisles*

From small town rural community to the exciting sites of Downtown, I reached out to Robertson-Wesley's Instagram page in January of 2021. I had needed some support to deal with a tough situation and just like that, I got a reply with Sally Boyle's email. Meeting Sally was special to me as she supported me and right then and there drew me into the community by allowing me to join the Food Bank. Every Wednesday, the volunteers of R-W and other churches, would gather and set up tables and help the people amongst us in our community feed themselves and their families.

I was then curious about the Robertson-Wesley Church Services, as I came from a United Church many years ago in Millet, I decided to see what it was like. It is very similar to how I remember, with the same red Voices United Hymn book and the programs still outlined in the same structure. I felt like I had found a home away from my family and away from isolation amid COVID times. When Church service was shut down during the pandemic, I found my interest in the Wednesday morning Adult Bible study group. The ladies (and sometimes men) in that group have such a vast knowledge of the scripture and decoding it, I learned so much from each person's perspective. I was inspired to keep coming back to share my intake and take-in the candor from the group.

It is very true that Sally drew me in to the Church community but it's the music on Sundays that got me to stay. Our pianist and Interim Music Director Erin, really spoke to me through her voice in a time when we couldn't sing but hum along.

Much love to everyone at Robertson-Wesley, I enjoy our shared moments and learning new things about all of you. I am looking forward to the possible Church events coming this year.

-Rebecca Moen



## Progress?

James Baldwin asked how much time?

I wonder too

Will it be better in my lifetime?

Will I give my child this cruel world with a shrug

Not *my* problem anymore.

We dance the same dance

We hope

We pray

Hopes and prayers but no progress.

A virus starts across the world, we stop eating Chinese food

Pretend it's not prejudice.

We find the graves, we mourn the family struck down by racism, racism in a truck.

And we forget, move on

We say: that was so long ago, ancient history

Ancient wounds that scarred DNA

Passed down trauma like a family heirloom.

We tell ourselves we didn't know better

We tell ourselves we know better now

*Are* better now

So why is it not better

NOW

How much longer?

Submitted by Elyse Munro

# Board Bubbings

We want to share what has been happening with the Board since our Annual Congregational Meeting.

But first, why “Board Bubbings”? Imagine a flute of Prosecco; bubbles breaking the surface, dynamic movement in an otherwise visually static glass of liquid. Fresh, effervescent, FUN! A lot of activity has been bubbling since February – far more than six monthly Board meetings.

## Music Director:

The Selection Committee has finished its work and the Board accepted the Committee’s recommendation during our August meeting. I let the candidate know that Robertson-Wesley will be making an offer of employment. Our preferred candidate is excited about the opportunity and can be available in October.

Music at R-W, safe to say, will take on a whole other level. This person is an award-winning Canadian composer, organist and conductor of choral music and bell choirs. We are VERY fortunate.

The Board would like to acknowledge the exceptional work of the Search Committee to bring us a recommendation in two months. Chair: Marilee Stephens, Members: Robert Klakowich, Heather Warkentin, Margery Wright, Arlene Drysdale; Board Liaison: Brian Webb.

## Board Planning Session:

We had a Board Planning Session on May 15. Tory Bachmann facilitated the session and two other people joined Board members: Rev. Blaine Gregg (Northern Spirit Region) and Robert Mah (DEAP Pod). We focused on bonding as a team and gaining a greater understanding of the Board’s role and responsibilities to our Community of Faith, within the context of the broader United Church of Canada.

## Moving Change Forward - Next Steps:

In our planning session, we identified the following goals for the year ahead:

- Developing a Community Profile and selecting a new Minister
- Recruiting members for the Ministry and Personnel Committee
- Establishing regular communication and reporting with the vast number of Committees and Programs that make R-W such rich and vibrant place.

Stay tuned for an in-person Congregational meeting in September!

## Getting Back Together:

Several people have expressed how hard it is to overcome

the inertia of staying home, the safety and convenience of attending services through Zoom, and how hollow virtual participation can feel. These are common feelings well beyond our place of worship.

I have been fortunate to attend Sundays when we were at 15 to 20 people. I am an eternal optimist and a people person. Being able to reconnect with and evolve new friendships at the Church has and continues to be rewarding. The past 16 months have been busy and quiet, less distracting, with more space to enjoy friendships that have maintained themselves.

Over the summer, our attendance has grown and new people have joined our worship services. Plans are being made for fellowship, the Art and Book sale, Community Dinner, a Board Covenanting ceremony and a Welcome Back BBQ on September 19.

This past Sunday, I experienced a most wonderful realization. The hymn books are back in the pews. What a delight to finally touch, open and follow the notes, even though I was sitting on a yellow square, with a mask on! The bud of the flower is opening. There is a bubbling of vital life energy!

Sincerely

Douglas Sollows, FRAIC

Chair, Board of Robertson-Wesley United Church 2021-22

## Meet the Board of R-W

### BOARD SECRETARY - Ainsley Brown



At the beginning of 2021, when I was elected as secretary of the Robertson-Wesley United Church board, it was my first involvement with the board. Since 2005, I have very much appreciated and enjoyed being part of the congregation at R-W and I am glad to find a way to contribute in an ongoing

way. In the past I have served as Spiritual Formation Pod Coordinator and volunteered in other ways including handing out bagged lunches.

My family is made up of myself and my three kids, Madeleine (13), Elliot (11), and Beatrice (9). Church has been, and continues to be, a positive aspect of our lives. The kids have benefitted from the children’s programming at church, and they are developing their own relationship with God and space within the church. Involving my kids in a few volunteer activities within the church has been a learning experience for them.

I most value the peace and joy of worship at Robertson-Wesley. The hymns and sermons are steady and encourage me to reflect and grow.

#### **MEMBER AT LARGE - Tamara Wright**



I have been a full member of Robertson-Wesley United Church for approximately ten years. I was baptized in the United Church in Glendon, Alberta when I was a teenager, but after getting married, I started attending the Catholic Church. After leaving the

Catholic Church years later, I started looking for a United Church to return to. When I attended a service at R-W, I knew that this was the church I wanted to be a member of; it felt like home, and everyone was welcoming. I reconfirmed shortly after joining.

I volunteered for two years as a Regional Representative for R-W, and I was the Visiting Coordinator for two years before sitting on the Board as a Member at Large. As a Member at Large, I will attend and participate in all board meetings to properly represent the membership of the church, complete assignments from the board chair that address church goals, follow the R-W Leadership manual and the Holy Manners Manual, and use my previous volunteer knowledge and personal work experience for the best interest of the church and its members. Most importantly, I will build and develop relationships with the congregation.

I have lived in Edmonton since 1986, hold a Certificate in Secretarial Studies, a Diploma in Computer Programming, and a Certificate in Health Care Aide. I have been in administrative and clerical positions for approximately 29 years and, I was a Nursing Attendant for four years. I am married and have one daughter from my previous marriage, and she attends university. I enjoy gardening and canning, walks in the country, going to movies, fostering cats for Second Chance Animal Rescue, and learning the Spanish language.

#### **BOARD CHAIR - Douglas Sollows, FRAIC**



I came to Robertson-Wesley four years ago. I needed to get back to Church after leaving McDougall UC for six years. There was and still is a need to connect with the Community and to be in a place of quiet reflection for two hours a week.

My time, especially since joining the Board has allowed for a deeper understanding and appreciation of why I felt

comfortable with becoming more involved; Simply, the People. When asked to join the Board; I could contribute knowledge and expertise in Strategic & Operational Planning; working with people to conceptualize around a vision and the development of pathways forward.

This past year and half; being an eternal optimist, according to my wife, Diane of 44 years, it has been good to be surrounded by people who share passion for others. As we say in Rotary "service above self". As a result we have cared and supported each other in any variety of ways and mediums.

Through this collaboration, I have been fortunate to make friends, meet neighbours, be invited golfing, wash dishes, cook food, see people enjoy a meal; come to realize all the little things that happen at R-W to create a healthy community; and generally be enriched by alternative perspectives that have helped me in my everyday life.

My true "happy place" is sailing with my family in BC's Gulf Islands. I enjoy reading and being in our backyard in summer.

#### **CHAIR OF M&P - Lisa Fairweather**



I grew up attending Gibson United Church in Fredericton, NB and have lived across Canada - Ottawa, Yellowknife, Whitehorse and now Edmonton. When looking for a church home in Sept 2011, Sophia chose Rev. Karen, kids church and fellowship at Robertson-Wesley. I am very happy

with her decision 😊. I love the service-orientation and social consciousness of the congregation, and how welcoming and beautiful the people, space and music are! R-W has become my chosen home and the people my chosen family, which is why I transferred my membership to Robertson-Wesley in 2014. At the 2015 ACM, I was elected as chair of Ministry & Personnel, a role which I will continue to fill until the 2022 ACM. During the work-week, I work for the Alberta Government as the director of Land Conservation, Reclamation & Remediation. If you don't see me at church, most likely I have run away camping.

#### **NORTHERN SPIRIT REGION COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE - Colleen Graves**



RWUC Northern Spirit Region Council Representative (2019-2021). This two year position is one of four positions given to RWUC by the Northern Spirit Region. As one of the Northern Spirit Region Council Representative for RWUC I attended the Northern Spirit

Regional Conference which took place on “Zoom” in October 2020 and May of 2021. At these meetings I had an opportunity to learn and vote on proposals to bring to the General Council. There was also an “affirming presentation” which was beautifully done and very informative. We voted to elect our twelve Commissioners to attend the General Council and represent our Northern Spirit Region. As a Northern Spirit Region Council Representative, I attend the R-W Board meetings. I enjoy staying current with the activities of Robertson-Wesley. I have been on the Board for several years starting in 2017 as Incoming Board Chair. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve RWUC, on the Board and as a hand bell ringer for Nova Bells. In both of these I have learned so much and built meaningful relationships with other members. During the school year I work as an Education Assistant for Edmonton Public Schools. My family includes my husband, Patrick Binns, two daughters, one son in law, and a new grandson!

#### PAST CHAIR - John Fleming



Shortly before COVID 19 forced us to scale back the congregation’s activities at the church, a member of our congregation asked me if I was new to the church. I found this quite surprising. As many of you know, I joined R-W back when the world was young, the grass was green, and wild goats played on the steps of the legislature. I first came to R-W with my parents when I was a young boy. That was before my father became a weekend farmer, and I drifted away from the church. I returned to the church and became an active member when I was in my late teens.

Eventually I joined the choir. Most Sundays, when the choir is in the choir loft, I can be found in the bass section. That is, I am one of those bearded guys with a deep voice who can (usually) get the low notes. A few years ago, I joined the church board, first as incoming chair, then as chair, and now as immediate past chair. Recently, I’ve also been active with the art studio. Outside of church, I work as a data analyst in the health care sector. I am active in Toastmasters where I have earned my Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) designation.

#### INCOMING CHAIR - Brian Webb



Brian graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Drama) with distinction and from the California Institute of the Arts with a Master of Fine Art (Choreography and Interdisciplinary Performance).

He moved to New York where he danced with the companies of Erick Hawkins and Carol Conway. His first choreographic works premiered there and toured the United States. He founded the Brian Webb Dance Company 42 years ago in Edmonton. His works have toured across Canada and in the US. His artistic practice is based on collaboration which he defines as the democratic exchange of ideas to make something new.

Brian chaired the Dance Program at MacEwan University for 10 years. He then became the Artistic Director of the Canada Dance Festival at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa for 11 years. Brian has served on committees across Canada. In Edmonton, he has chaired the Edmonton Arts Council, the Edmonton Professional Arts Council, Latitude 53 and others. He was, for seven years, a founding board member of the Compassion House Foundation. He served on the UofA Institute for Sexual Minority Studies for six years. He co-chaired the Edmonton Arts Plan for Mayor S. Mandel.

Brian has received the Queens Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals for volunteerism. He received the Alberta Centennial Medal, the University of Alberta Alumni Award and has been inducted into the Edmonton Cultural Hall of Fame.

Brian’s spiritual practice includes weekly attendance in church and working with a spiritual director for the last six years. He was raised in the United Church, and left his church practice for many years due to his sexuality. Having returned to the church, he knows that his relationship with God is based upon prayer and walking as best he can with Jesus.

#### CHAIR OF PROPERTY - Jack Waters



I grew up in the United Church in Saskatchewan and came to Edmonton to attend the UofA. I met Connie here and we were married in R-W in 1973. That was the start of a lifetime relationship with Robertson-Wesley. Our family attended regularly through Contemporary

Worship later called Koinonia.

Every major church milestone (8 - baptisms, 4 - marriages, and 4 - funerals) have occurred at Robertson-Wesley and I hope there will be many more. During this time, we have made dozens of very close friends. Many have been friends since we joined the church and every year, we make new friends who come to Robertson-Wesley. The strength of R-W is in its members and multitude of gifts they bring.

I believe that Robertson-Wesley is my family. So, I treat it that way. I treat the members and the church like my own. I give them all the love and support I can and have been known to give my opinion whether it is wanted or not. I have served my church over the years rostering communion on the Worship Committee, Chair of M&P, Vice and Board Chair and now Chair of the Property Committee. I have been involved in all the major projects of the church for the last 30 years. I consider it an honor to be involved with Robertson-Wesley and I will continue in some form until I can't anymore.

#### **TREASURER - Troy Murray**



Hi! My name is Troy Murray. I'm your treasurer, and for those of you that know the previous treasurer, Tory, it's just a slight keyboard shift to get to my name - lol, and no, we did not plan this!

My spouse, Alison Dunwoody and I moved to Edmonton 16 years ago. We've attended a number of churches in Edmonton before beginning regular attendance at RWUC in February 2020. Attending RWUC since near the beginning of the pandemic, means that we've not had the opportunity to meet many of you face to face! I am so looking forward to meeting many of you for the first time as we return to the church in person.

Yes, I'm an accountant, but have you ever gone skydiving with an accountant? Yes, you read that right, for nearly 25 years I've been throwing myself, and many other people out of airplanes! Alison and I even met skydiving. While skydiving has been a big part of our lives in the past, today we spend a lot of time on our motorcycles, and we are even planning a cross-country road trip to NB next summer. The other passion we have is travel. We've been to 85 countries, and I have been fortunate to work on international projects which have allowed us to spend many months in Australia over several years.

As we open, and as we see each other in Church, let's get acquainted! The only caveat I have is if we talk about finances, we have to spend equal time connecting personally. ; -)

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#### ***Conversations on Truth & Reconciliation***

On **September 15** at 7pm in Memorial Hall, the Mission and Outreach Pod will be hosting another dialogue about how R-W can continue work on Truth and Reconciliation. All are welcome to attend (no registration necessary).

Joni Soans  
Mission & Outreach Pod Coordinator

## **Financial Update Sept 2021**

Hello folks, who else can't believe the summer is nearly over? It reminds me of a Peanuts cartoon clip where Chuck is sharing his thoughts on summer's end. Chuck is expressing how fast summer went and Linus replies: "summers always fly, winters walk". Lol. Well, with summer nearing its end, it's time to provide an update on the financial picture of the Church.

While we find ourselves in the fourth wave of a pandemic, things are going quite well financially year to date. Since the time of our last update, we have gratefully received (and been notified of) several bequests. We have also received additional government assistance as benefits continue to be extended during the pandemic. In addition, as COVID restrictions ease, rental revenues are starting to recover as more events are being held. Accordingly, the forecasted 2021 shortfall is now ~ \$30,000, which would be a very good result. Had we not received the above mentioned bequests and additional government assistance and rental increases, we would be nearly on budget with a projected shortfall of ~ \$100,000. Fortunately, our investments are doing very well and have now surpassed pre-pandemic values, and it has not been necessary to make any draws from these reserve funds.

In forecasting the \$30,000 shortfall for 2021, a number of assumptions have been made. As we near the final quarter of the year it is time to update these assumptions, not only to provide a clearer financial picture for 2021, but to also begin the 2022 budgeting process. Some of the uncertainties and questions that we try to address are unknowns, such as: will there be additional government assistance available; will all known bequests come in at the end of 2021 (while we know we will receive a bequest we don't always know when); will donations keep pace with prior years for the remainder of 2021 and into 2022; will rental revenues continue to recover, what fundraising activities are being planned, etc.

As we begin the 2022 budgeting process, one way you can help with these uncertainties is to enroll in PAR (monthly pre-authorized remittance). Thank you to all you PAR people! I know this is a challenging time for everyone, with lots of uncertainty, but if you are able, please don't forget about Robertson-Wesley. If you are not signed up for PAR or wish to contribute a bit extra, there are options: e-transfer, PayPal, cheque, or good old-fashioned snail mail. If you are wondering how you can support, please reach out we can answer any questions.

Thanks, everyone!  
Troy Murray, Treasurer

# Streaming Now

## AFFIRMING COFFEE HOUR

Affirming Ministries invites you to bring your coffee and join Shylo for his online Affirming Coffee Hour! On Zoom every **Wednesday** from 11:00 am - Noon. This is a chance for connection of LGBTQIA2S+ folks and allies who want to learn more, ask questions, engage in thoughtful discussions, and socialize! Email: [affirming.ministries@rwuc.org](mailto:affirming.ministries@rwuc.org) for the link!

## SPIRITED ART STUDIO

The Spirited Art studio is a place for people to explore art and connect with each other in an informal creative environment. Tune in any time and try out different art-making processes, facilitated by Laura David Foster. We are planning **Mondays** from 7:00–8:30 pm in person, and **Wednesdays** from 1:30-3:00 pm on Zoom. We will resume the program in the first week of October. For more info please email [spiritedartstudio@rwuc.org](mailto:spiritedartstudio@rwuc.org)

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Join Rev. Karen Bridges by visiting [rwuc.org/live](http://rwuc.org/live) or on Facebook. **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 journal, or simply yourself! Tune in when you can.

## Annual Art & Book Sale

**October 16** is the Annual Art & Book Sale, with 100% of the funds going to RWUC. We need art - paintings, drawings, pottery, glassware, crafts - anything you think will be of interest.

We are also requesting book donations (no encyclopedias or textbooks). To help our volunteers, please put your books in boxes with the spines facing up. You can arrange to drop off your art and books at the church. For art, we can also pick it up at your home, just call Pat Stewart or Sheila Carr-Stewart at 780-481-0056.



## #BLESSED

On Sunday **September 19**, find Rev. Karen on the lawn after service for a before school blessing of backpacks, pets, things, and people.

Rev. Karen will be outside on the lawn of the church with some blessed water between the hours of 12 - 1 pm to bless whatever you want blessed; pets, backpacks, briefcases, or you and your family. Stop by to get blessed so you can feel and know that the love of God is with you!

## New Beginnings BBQ!

On **September 19** after worship, meet on the lawn for a Welcome Back BBQ, along with blessings, friendship and fun. Let's create a festive atmosphere as we celebrate the beginning of the church program year. We hope to see you there!

## Kid's Church and Youth Group

As the COVID numbers continue to rise, we acknowledge that for many families the idea of participating at the church in person may not be something you are comfortable with, and for others, you may be longing to do this.

Registration for children and youth programming will be held on Sunday Sept 12, and Sept 19th will be a Whole Family Worship service with a BBQ afterwards. If you are able to provide Rev. Karen with your intentions about how your family would like to participate in the next few months that would be very helpful for planning.



## A History: Karen Hansen

When I was seven years old, my family came to Alberta and settled in Bonnyville. At that time Bonnyville was a French-speaking Roman Catholic village. The only Protestant church was at the United Church Home Mission at Duclos, one mile outside of the village. So began my journey of faith in the United Church of Canada.

When my family moved to Edmonton, we settled in Boyle Street and the closest church was All Peoples' Mission, the precursor of the Bissell Centre. There I met members of the Japanese-Canadian congregation, one of whom is my oldest Edmonton friend.

A year later we moved to Riverdale and once again the nearest church was a United Church, Rundle United where my lifelong involvement as a volunteer began with CGIT and Vacation Bible School.

During my high school years, my family moved, and I had to find another spiritual home. Robertson United was known for its excellent choir under Mr. Milson. I soon became involved in both the choir and in its dynamic young peoples' group.

High school was followed by university studies. After my Masters' Degree, I was ready for a new kind of adventure. I was assigned to Yamanashi Eiwa Girls' Junior and Senior High School in Kofus, Japan. This school was founded in 1889 by Canadian Methodist Women at a time when education for girls in Japan ended at grade six.

My three years in Japan were a life-changing experience. I met some of the most remarkable people. In Canada, it is easy to be a Christian and to express one's views and beliefs. But among my colleagues at school and members of the church community in Kofu, there were many who had risked arrest and incarceration during the time of military rule by speaking out about their Christian beliefs and voicing their opposition to the war.

At home in Edmonton once again my connection to this congregation resumed and so did my involvement, over the years, in every committee of this church as well as the UCW, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, Operation Friendship, and the Organ Selection Committee. Five decades ago a group of us wanted a more interactive style of service and so Koinonia was begun. We still meet once a month, beginning with a pot-luck meal followed by lay-led worship.

In his later years, my father didn't attend church but he was content knowing that when he died, his memorial service would be held in our chapel. The beautiful service, conducted by Rev. Aubrey Edworthy was so comforting for my mother that she asked that the same service be held for her when her time came. And so it was, but not for some years. When I lost both brothers and my mother within a period of seventeen months, the support of members of this congregation helped me through that very difficult time. In more recent years I have tried to repay that debt by visiting other elderly members in care centres.

My current committee involvement is with the Property Committee; we are very serious about our work but our meetings are full of laughter. Highly recommended.

My hopes for Robertson-Wesley's future are as follows:

- 1) That we are always guided by Jesus's ministry of peace through justice;
- 2) That following the legacy of Janet Hughes, George and Lois Ford, and countless others, Outreach continues to be one of our main priorities;
- 3) That we prayerfully seek our role in Reconciliation; and
- 4) That we continue in-depth educational programs to give members of our congregation the opportunity to grow in our Christian faith.

Blessings,  
Karen Hansen



Canadian Tiger Swallowtail

A member of the Proud Boys was travelling in his Ford F 150 on Highway 2 between Calgary and Edmonton during a winter snowstorm. The road conditions had been declared hazardous but the Proud Boy thought that his older pickup truck would be able to make the trip.

Unfortunately, his truck hit an icy patch between Calgary and Red Deer and landed upside down in the ditch. Not having worn his seat belt, he was thrown through the windshield of the truck and lay unconscious in the snow.

The first vehicle to pass this scene was driven by a provincial politician who was travelling back to his home constituency after several weeks of legislative sessions. Being tired and anxious to get home and knowing that this was a dead cell area, he continued on his way believing that the RCMP would be patrolling the highway and respond to the situation.

The next vehicle to pass the scene was a young social media blogger on her way to a photo fashion shoot in Calgary the later that day. Thinking that this would be an opportunity to increase her number of followers, she stopped to take digital photos on her smart phone, which she planned to post as soon as possible. But felt that she should not get involved as she did not know First Aid.

Within a few minutes a Suburban SUV driven by a Two Spirited Indigenous person came upon the scene. Realizing that a person was in need, the driver stopped to assess the situation and realized that help was needed immediately. The Proud Boy had gained consciousness and was shouting for help. The Two Spirited Indigenous person helped the Proud Boy into his vehicle and drove to the closest community, Bowden. As there is not a hospital in Bowden, he continued on to the Wild Rose Medical Centre in Olds, Alberta.

Once at the emergency in the Olds hospital, the Two Spirited Indigenous person stayed with the Proud Boy and assisted with facilitating the administrative process for admission. Once the Two Spirited Indigenous person was confident that proper medical attention was being provided, they contacted the RCMP to alert them of the incident and location of the damaged vehicle.

Later that day photos of the upturned vehicle was posted on social media. In the next session of the provincial legislature the politician sent a memo to the Minister of Infrastructure requesting additional road clearing on provincial highways.

Submitted by: Sandi Darrell

## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

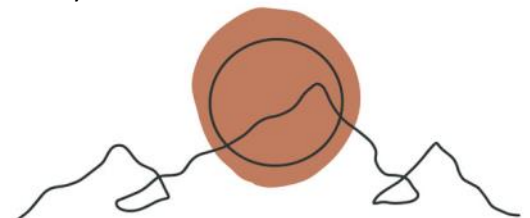
During many of the years of the feminist movement women would constantly remind one another that the personal is political i.e. if one woman is feeling the pressure of the glass ceiling then there is a good chance that many women are feeling that pressure. If one woman is silently living in an abusive relationship then there is a good chance many are, etc. And if that is a common **experience** of many then it becomes a political question...Who is being harmed? Who gains? Who pays the price? How does change happen?

The 21st Century has awakened in many of us the truth of the common **experience** of indigenous people in Canada in the 19th and 20th Centuries. There is no place for debate when speaking of experiences. There is only room for compassion, attentiveness, deep listening, and abundant soul searching. It is time again to ask the above questions. The questions must be discernment questions. If we ask questions in order to assign blame or exonerate one group of people we are asking inappropriate questions.

We have a rich history in the United Church upon which we might lean. There have been discernments, directions, suggestions, and actions since the 1980s which might guide our deliberations. We also have a richness of experience within our own community to bring to bear on our decision-making.

Because we are human we may want to choose to listen only to the experiences which reflect our own bias, our own choices, our own stories. I challenge us to a deeper, richer, and more inclusive understanding of the experiences of those around us. It is a simple fact that the words "truth" and "reconciliation" provide us with all the direction we need. I invite us into a time of deep listening as others share the **truth** of their life. I invite us into deep honesty as we share the **truth** of our life. And as we journey in the richness of stories I believe that the path of **reconciliation** will reveal itself.

Blessings, Rev. Sally



Richard Lewontin, American evolutionary biologist and geneticist, died in July 2021 at the age of 92. He believed, and demonstrated, that there is much greater genetic diversity within all races than between them. This finding and belief of his was bitterly opposed by many of his colleagues who firmly supported a theory of racial superiority.

Until Lewontin made his claim, much of the world was still convinced that some races were smarter and more adaptable than were others. In fact, such a belief, which stemmed from Charles Darwin's book *The Origin of Species*, as well as Francis Galton's book *Hereditary Genius*, which advocated Eugenics, were in vogue during the mid-nineteenth century. Did both these science writers, Darwin and Galton, help to plant the idea of residential schools? I wonder. Hmm. Food for thought.

Submitted by Nancy Heule

## The Charles Camsell Hospital; an Expanding Perspective

The following is a letter which I received in early 1992. It was written by a member of the congregation, retired nurse Elva Taylor, who worked as the Director of Nursing at the Camsell for many years. In fact, Elva was awarded the Order of Canada for the outstanding nursing care provided for northern and western Canadians at the Camsell. Elva was prompted to write to me in response to my questions about the care of indigenous patients at that hospital.

Nancy Heule

Dear Nancy,

.....) It was impossible to return some of the bodies to the home areas during the years from 1946 to 1966 owing to transportation, communications, and the nomadic lifestyle of relatives. At the burial site at the Edmonton Residential School, near St. Albert, the wooden markers were destroyed by a grass fire.

Four of us, former Charles Camsell Hospital staff members, were fortunate to come into possession of an accurate and complete list of names of all those buried at the Edmonton Residential School (originally a United Church school for Indian students). The property and the cemetery site was turned over to the City of St. Albert by the Government of Alberta when the City of St. Albert obtained the adjacent land for their city cemetery, in 1979.

The landscape planner for the City of St. Albert did a wonderful job in beautifying the area. That City is

charged with care of the area in perpetuity. The landscape planner, the city clerk and our committee worked together on the cairn\*. The Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, the City of St. Albert, and the Department of Health, Government of the NWT provided the funding.

Sincerely, Elva

\*A short video featuring the cairn is available on [www.ghostsofcamsell.ca](http://www.ghostsofcamsell.ca). The cairn displays the names of persons who were buried at the Edmonton Residential School, but whose grave markers were destroyed by fire.

## A Northern Adventure

In 2007, Margaret Anne (Reid) May wrote a fascinating story of "(Her) MEMORIES OF LIVING IN NORWAY HOUSE AND TEACHING AT THE NORWAY HOUSE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL" between August 1957 and June 1959. She concludes her memoir with the following account:

It (June) was also time to make the rounds of the community to say farewell to so many good friends. I was moving on. I had decided to return to my roots in S.W. Ontario.

My time at Norway House had been an experience of a lifetime. I had learned so much about our native brothers and sisters in this northern, isolated community—their lifestyles, their challenges, their hurts, their amazing sense of community, their care and concern for each other. It was a sad farewell. I had many opportunities to share this experience and what I had learned when I went to London. In my Grade 5, class I taught about our aboriginal sisters and brothers even though it was not part of the curriculum. I took them to visit the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford. Over the next few years, I received and accepted many invitations to share my story and show my slides to church and community groups in London and the surrounding area.

In 1978, I returned to Edmonton and once again have had opportunities to be involved in the aboriginal community and the many struggles they encounter.

I am grateful for those people in the United Church and other groups who choose to walk beside them.

You may wish to "walk" with Marg May through her memoirs. Find her complete A NORTHERN ADVENTURE in our RWUC library and in the United Church of Canada Archives. You could also Google it!

# WRITE FOR BTA

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 publication requirements, see [www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles](http://www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles).

Deadline for the  
Fall Edition submissions:  
**November 14, 2021**  
Release date: **November 28, 2021.**

## Climate Change

There is no doubt that Climate Change is upon us, and we won't escape its impact if we don't change our behaviour. Please add to your prayer list each day the people in power; those running for office, either federal or municipal, and those who are in positions of influence in our world.

Nancy Heule

## ICPM luncheon

On Sunday May 16 R-W together with St Albert United provided lunch bags for 200 hungry people at the Bissell Centre. This is our annual contribution to the Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM) Their church service and lunch usually happens every week but of course was not happening because of COVID so lunch bags (purchased and assembled by Brad Warkentin and family) were handed out at the door by Bissell staff.

The Sandwiches in the bags were produced by the "sandwich group" and other Outreach Committee members also helped - Rhonda Black purchased fruit and cheese, Lois Field and Garnet Thomas delivered the lunches. Apparently the recipients really enjoyed the sandwiches and socialized for some time outside afterward.

Thanks to everyone who helped.

Lois Field



Canadian Tiger Swallowtail

Photo credit: Jim Triscott

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