

Between the Aisles

A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly

SUMMER

*Live
in the
sunshine.
Swim in
the sea.
Drink in
the wild air.*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of *Between the Aisles*. It's time to try and get outside and enjoy all that Edmonton has to offer in the next few months. It's funny... I was looking over the last edition of BTA that I edited, which was last summer's edition, and I came across the following sentence in my Welcome message from that edition.

"With the onset of summer, we seem to be finally turning a corner and getting back to a... somewhat normal existence. With a bit of luck, in the next few months, we will have a chance to finally get to see more friends and family members in person."

Well... I don't think I'm any sort of prognosticator (because I am not!), but we have had a chance to start attending services together, having the choir sing together, having fellowship again in Memorial Hall... So while maybe we're not quite out the woods yet, we do seem to be seeing some light at the end of the tunnel (and I promise, no more mixing of clichéd metaphors!)

In this issue, we have reports about the finances of the church, and of how the fundraising for RWUC Refugee Project is going (and check out the very interesting sounding fundraising event mentioned in that report that will be coming up in June... Sounds like a lot of fun).

We also have a Remembrance for Rev. Dr. Donald Liang, who was a minister here at Robertson-Wesley from 1984 to 1996, and who passed away in March. I never had the opportunity to meet Rev. Liang, but for those of you who knew him, I'm sure you have fond memories to share.

We have included a write up about the hard work put in by some of our members to help out with the Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM) service. Also, Devika Short has written a lovely poem about welcoming spring, which I'm sure we can all appreciate.

Thanks again to all the hard work the various members of the church staff and congregation have put in for the past year. Getting fully open again was always going to take awhile, but I think for the most part, things have been going well.

Last, I have to say, the past few months have had their highs and lows for me. My mom turned 90!!! (I know... Just think how old I am feeling now!!!) But the month before that, my aunt (her younger sister) died. So just to give out a shout-out to both of them, I'm including in this edition a recipe that they both would make on occasion, that's pretty simple and a nice addition to any summer/fall cook-out or barbeque.



I also had a chance to take my first trip outside the country since the pandemic started. A friend of mine invited me for a week down to her place in Arizona... I thought I'd leave you with a picture from there (it's actually from an old ghost town located outside Phoenix that you can visit).

Yes, that's me beside that cactus (and people think I'm tall!?!)

Have a great summer everyone.

Marilee J. Stephens (editor)

Welcome Spring

The overhead sun beckons me
Come outside, come outside
Don't stand at the window
Come outside, it is warm

I look over at the trees
Their leaves are not moving
Their branches are not swaying
The temperature could be rising

I quickly go outside
I walk across the footbridge to
Hawrelak Park
The wind dances around my ears
I am running after my hat

Wait, wait for me, I shout
The sun peers down at me
The wind stirs the green leaves
My hat is floating down the North Sas-
katchewan River

Submitted by Devika Short, 2022



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 guidelines and publication requirements, see www.rwuc.org/between-the-aisles.

**Deadline for the Fall Edition submissions: Aug 21
Published: Sept 4**

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.

In Remembrance: Rev. Dr. Donald Liang

It is with sadness that we have found out that Rev. Dr. Don Liang, who served at Robertson-Wesley United Church from 1984 to 1996, passed away on March 29th of this year. Rev. Liang will be fondly remembered by several members of our church, and hopefully those of you who knew him can share your memories of him with each other and those of us who never had a chance to know him.

The following obituary was obtained from the website for the Ridley Funeral Home (Etobicoke, Ontario).



Rev. Dr. Donald William Laing passed away gently in Toronto on March 29, 2022 at the age of 88.

He was predeceased by his parents, his first wife of 51 years, Margaret (née Sloan) and his sister Gaynor Nelson. Don is survived by his loving wife Judith

Jones and their children: Robert Laing (Rev. Joan Rennie-Laing) of Moose Jaw, SK, Rev. Deborah Laing (Joseph Anglin) of Vancouver, BC, Catherine Drader (Austin Drader) of Saskatoon, SK, Robert Jones of Toronto, Kathryn Jones-Mollod (Daniel Mollod) of Boston, MA, Matthew Jones (Tara McPartland) of Eden Mills, ON, Timothy Jones (Gael Melville) of North Vancouver, BC, Susannah Jones of Lund, BC, and Beth Jones (Adam Drury) of Toronto; there are eighteen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren in the blended family and many brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Don was born and raised in Weston, Ontario, where he attended primary and high schools, then completed his B.A. degree at the University of Toronto.

Moving to Saskatchewan, where he married Margaret Sloan of Hazlet in 1956, he graduated from St. Andrew's College in 1958, and was ordained a United Church minister that year; he received his M.Div. degree there in 1960. Later he received an S.T.M. degree from Vancouver School of Theology, BC, then his Ph.D. degree from the University of St. Andrews (Scotland). Don served Saskatchewan United Churches in Leask, Cabri, Regina (Rosemont), Saskatoon (Bethel), and Moose Jaw (St. Andrew's), and served Robertson-Wesley United Church in Edmonton, AB. for twelve years.

Two years after his retirement, Don was made Minister Emeritus of St. Andrew's Church, Moose Jaw, and remained in that position until his move to Toronto. Don held many church positions including President of Saskatchewan Conference, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of St. Andrew's College for fifteen years and, in retirement, a six-month term as Interim President of St. Andrew's College (Saskatoon). From the age of eight, Don was an active youth member of all sections of Scouts Canada, and as an adult he was a Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Rover Advisor, the Provincial Commissioner of Saskatchewan (1962-69), Vice-President of National Council (1971-74), and the Provincial Chaplain of Alberta (1984-96).

He was the author of three interdenominational worship and Christian education books for use in Scouts Canada. In his first and second marriage, the Laings travelled regularly and extensively in Europe, to Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba and all over North America. In lieu of flowers, friends so wishing may make memorial donations to the United Church of Canada, St. James United Church in Etobicoke or the Canadian Cancer Society.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Can you believe it is nearly the end of May already!? With the warmer weather, I'm sure your thoughts, like mine, begin to extend beyond the four walls of winter spent inside!

Yesterday, Alison sent me this picture of some baby Canada Geese that were walking around the U of A campus, and it warmed my heart to realise that for some of God's creatures, spring has been here for a while!



The very first thing in this update is an overdue shout out of recognition and a sincere thanks to both Connie Waters and Sharon Damery, for their long years of service on the Finance Committee. Both Connie and Sharon have been valued contributors to the committee for not just years but well over a decade! Thank you both for all that you've done and continue to do for our community of faith - your service has enriched my life, so thank you so very much from the bottom of my heart!

And of course with two awesome folks leaving the Finance Committee, there is opportunity for a couple of other folks to join the committee. You do not need an accounting background (but it is OK if you do), and I say this because while I'm an accountant, there are numerous studies that show a diverse group of people will almost always produce a better product than a group of homogeneous team members. All you need is an inquisitive mind and a willingness to offer up your thoughts and ideas around the future of our Church from a financial perspective. The time commitment is only one meeting (usually just over an hour in duration) a month, with maybe an hour to prepare for the monthly meeting. So if you would like to join a great group

of passionate folks, please consider reaching out to me and we can discuss more about the opportunity.

So where are we today for revenue and expenses? At a macro level we are close to budget with donations, and most expenses are where we expected. The exception is utilities, which are tracking nearly double the budget - equating to an additional \$28,000 in unanticipated costs - which is primarily a result of carbon taxes coupled with higher rates. We are looking into ways to contain the utility expenses - such as LED lighting and fixed rate contracts.

What about our investments? Our investments at the end of March were performing very well. However, as some of you may be aware, there has been a lot of volatility in the market in this last month that will certainly affect our fund values. However, this is not an issue this year as we have already withdrawn the funds needed to achieve budgeted results. Totals for Missions and Service as at the end of April were \$10,017.

So in summary - revenues are essentially on budget, but some expenses are higher and some are lower at this point in the cycle, which is resulting in a forecasted shortfall of ~\$95,000. While the ~\$95,000 was planned for in the budget, we also know that it is by faith that we as a congregation approved the shortfall in the budget. Let's not leave it all to the Lord, please continue to pray for direction and guidance as to what the Lord would have us individually do with respect to our donations.

Finally, please stay tuned for an upcoming Legacy Planning Session that will be hosted by the Finance Committee. Legacy planning allows individuals to thoughtfully consider how they would like to support their faith community, and other causes, after their death. More information will be announced as we plan further.

Thanks for reading - enjoy the summer and please reach out by phone, text, or email, if you have any questions or concerns, or if you want to explore a volunteer opportunity with the Finance Committee!

Troy Murray
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Marilee's Mom's Modified Waldorf Salad



So, since summer is upon us, I'd thought I'd include a salad that my Mom passed on to me that has become one of my go-to dishes for barbecues and get-togethers over the summer and fall months.

It's a pretty simple salad, that's been slightly modified from the classic Waldorf Salad, and it gives a nice bit of colour and zing to any gathering with food. This recipe will cover up to 10 people, but you can always double it if you need more:

Need:

- 6-7 apples - Diced (You can use any type, but I tend to do a mix-and-match, including Gala's, Fuji's, Ambrosia's, Honeycrisp's etc., and always at least 1 Granny Smith, to give the extra bit of colour to the salad)
- 1 cup chopped Walnuts
- 1 cup Raisins (classic salad uses grapes, so one of the modifications)
- 1 cup Mayonnaise.
- ¼ cup Sugar
- ¼ cup mix of Lemon and Pineapple Juice (this seems to be another of the modifications that my Mom has passed on from wherever she found it... The pineapple juice just gives a touch more sweetness).

Optional: 1 or 2 celery sticks – Diced (this will add crunch, but some people don't like the celery, so I don't always include it)

Preparation:

Combine the Lemon and Pineapple Juice. This will be used to help keep the apples from going brown during the preparation and serving of the salad.

Dice the apples (leaving skin on, just wash well... The skin gives colour to the salad). As you dice the, add apples to large bowl and toss with some of the lemon-pineapple juice mixture.

After apples diced and tossed with juice, add in raisins, walnuts (and celery if including). Toss well.

Combine Mayonnaise and Sugar to make dressing. Toss well with the rest of the salad, such that everything is covered by dressing. Chill until ready to service.

For Serving – Can either do family style, or if you want to do a more formal presentation, can lay a bed of lettuce on plate and put a large spoonful of salad on top, garnishing with a few more chopped walnuts.

Food and Friendship

R-W partnered with St. Albert United to provide 200 after-church lunch bags, packed with sandwiches, fruit, chips and juice boxes. on Sunday May 15 for the congregation attending the ICPM (Inner City Pastoral Ministry) service, which happens every Sunday morning at the Bissell Centre.

It is an interesting and enriching experience to attend the service, which we hopefully will be able to do again next year to serve the lunch. Thanks to Garnet Thomas, Lorna Berlinguette, Arlene Klassen, Norma Johnston, Trisha McOrmond with daughters Izzy and Robin, Sylvia Duffus, Arleen Drysdale, Judy Hayman, Brenda Sheppard, Janice Robertson and Lois Sorgen for their help with this project.

Submitted by Lois Field

RWUC Refugee Project



The Refugee Project Team has been hard at work since January with the goal of co-sponsoring a refugee couple. Jael and Bolot Tshoba are the sister and brother-in-law of Charles Sabu, who has been a member of Robertson-Wesley United Church for many years. Although Jael and Bolot are both originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), they were forced to flee their home country and are living as refugees in South Africa. However, with the crime, harassment and xenophobic attacks they face there, their situation is very difficult.

In order to proceed with the refugee sponsorship application, we need to have funds to cover the one-time start-up costs plus monthly income support for 12 months. Our budget for this, based on Government of Canada guidelines, is \$26,000.

Our first fundraiser, selling Epicure seasoning blend packages, was a success which raised more than \$800. We're hosting our next fundraiser on Saturday, June 25, 2022, at **Delton Community Hall (12325 88 St)**. It's a play called **"Every Brilliant Thing"**, starting at **7 pm**. Entry is by donation, and includes a non-alcoholic drink and dessert. The play was an off-Broadway hit; it's a one-actor show with an element of audience involvement. Starting the list of brilliant things as a child when his mother who battles chronic depression attempts suicide, the list grows as the play's narrator matures. Although it deals with heavy material, the play is touching, funny and life affirming.

Thanks to a grant from the Helena Mack Outreach Fund, the RWUC refugee sponsorship account and members' generous donations, we've already raised about 75% of what we need for the sponsorship. Let's keep the momentum going! Please consider making a donation if you haven't already. You can donate via E-transfer to pay@rwuc.org or by cheque made out to Robertson Wesley United Church, indicating "Refugee Local Sponsorship" for either method of payment.



Bolot



Jael

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