



*An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada*

2023 January 1

Christmas 1



### **Welcome and Inclusion**

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of gender identity, differing abilities, ethnicity, economic circumstances, sexual orientation, or age. Many people's lives continue to be devastated by hatred, prejudice, and inequality, therefore we stand with those who are adversely affected by injustice, alienation and oppression.

# *Welcome to Robertson-Wesley*

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*Please know that in the eyes of God you already belong here and you are welcome to participate in any of the activities of the congregation.*

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground for Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 4, who are of mixed Indigenous & European heritage.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

There is an elevator located inside the building with the glass door entrance. Access ramps can be found: inside leading from the lobby to the sanctuary and outside at the rear of the building, leading from the parking lot.

There are accessible washrooms located in the lobby near the elevator.

Hearing assistance devices are available from the ushers.

Large print worship bulletins, and hymn books are available from the ushers.

Service animals are welcome, except where food is prepared.

We commit to make R-W a comfortable space for people with cognitive impairment. If you require accommodations related to cognitive functioning please contact the office.

## **BABY/ CHILDREN'S AMENITIES**

People can breastfeed anywhere in the building, should you want more privacy there is designated nursing space in the Millson room, located by the grand piano. Baby changing tables are installed in all washrooms. If you wish to use it, a children's activity centre is set up in the Chapel. There are also activity books available for children. Please ask the usher.

## **INFORMATION**

The ushers located at the entrances are here to help should you have any questions. More information about the church and church activities can be found in the pamphlet racks outside Memorial Hall.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please do not leave valuables unattended anywhere in the church.



10209 123 St, Edmonton T5N 1N3 780-482-1587  
mail@rwuc.org www.rwuc.org

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## *Friends in Christ*

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Prelude: *Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light*, by Johann Schop arr.

Larry Shackley

Allan Bevan, piano

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *Turn! Turn! Turn!* by Pete Seeger

Raydene Koch, soloist

Call to Worship:

Peace, mercy, and grace be upon people everywhere.

**Peace be upon those who are displaced, those who are hungry,  
those who are homeless.**

Peace be upon those who seek shelter in stables and in tented camps.

**Peace be upon those living in despair, those who are grieving,  
those who are ill. Peace.**

For even in these shadowed places, the gift of light shines brightly. We have felt it quicken and leap up from the deepest places of our hearts.

We have heard it call to us, daring us to abandon callous indifference and move into action for Love's sake.

**We have heard the call to open our souls to the wondrous places of  
Spirit and song.**

Let us pay attention now, as we await the mystery of all things, the birth of God, who was laid in a manger.<sup>1</sup>

Opening Hymn: *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

*Voices United 58*

**Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle-stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the babe is born for all.  
Christ the babe is born for all!**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true.**

**Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing greet the morrow:  
Christ the babe was born for you.  
Christ the babe was born for you!**

Coming into God's Presence

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<sup>1</sup> Written by Pat Mayberry, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022/2023, p. 34-35.  
Used with permission.

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## God's Holy Word

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### Prayer of Illumination:

Challenging God, your good news is announced in many ways.

We discover it lived out by caring folk. We receive it through the media.

We experience it as we listen to orators. May we encounter it today as we receive the story of scripture, O Gracious God. **Amen.**<sup>2</sup>

### Scriptures:

Arleen Drysdale

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 • For everything there is a season.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. God has made everything suitable for its time; moreover God has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in their toil.

Matthew 25:31-46 • The judgement of the nations.

When the son of God comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Creator, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell

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<sup>2</sup> Written by Linda J. Turnbull, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022/2023, p. 38. Used with permission.

you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they all will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: *Embodying the care and compassion of a child.* Rev. Karen Bridges

Hymn: *Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*

*Voices United 216*

**Sing praise to God, who reigns above,  
the God of all creation,  
the God of power, the God of love,  
the God of our salvation;  
with healing balm my soul is filled,  
and every faithless murmur stilled:  
to God all praise and glory!**

**What God's almighty power hath made,  
God's gracious mercy keepeth:  
by morning glow or evening shade  
God's watchful eye ne'er sleepeth;  
within the shelter of God's might,  
lo! all is just and all is right:  
to God all praise and glory!**

**Our God is never far away,  
but through all grief distressing,  
an ever-present help and stay,  
our peace, and joy, and blessing;  
as with a mother's tender hand,  
God gently leads the chosen band:  
to God all praise and glory!**

**Thus all my gladsome way along,  
I sing aloud thy praises  
that all may hear the grateful song  
my voice unwearied raises.  
Be joyful in your God, my heart!  
Both soul and body take your part:  
to God all praise and glory!**

**Our Creator, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kin-dom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

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### *Grateful Response*

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Offering:

*Your donations today support R-W Church programs and operations, as well as outreach projects and programs in the city and around the world. You can donate by e-transfer to [pay@rwuc.org](mailto:pay@rwuc.org), cheque, debit/credit at the terminal located at the Grocery Card table in Memorial Hall during fellowship after worship, pre-authorized remittance, or PayPal on the website. Tax receipts are issued at the end of the year for donations over \$20 if your name and address are provided.*

Offertory Hymn: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

*Voices United* 55 vs. 4

**What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him - give my heart.**

Prayer of Gratitude:

Abundant and renewing God, guide us in the endeavours of this new year ahead, that we might serve you to bring about the redemption of your world and healing for all your children.

**May these resources enrich the outreach and ministry of this community of faith, as we praise you with our lives, so that all may know that we are your disciples. Amen.<sup>3</sup>**

Closing Hymn: *I Am the Light of the World*

*Voices United* 87

**"I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!"  
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery of  
what you were meant to do and be.**

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<sup>3</sup> Written by Gill Le Fevre, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022/2023, p. 39. Used with permission.

**When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and the shepherds  
have found their way home,  
the work of Christmas is begun:**

**“I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!”  
If you follow and love you’ll learn the mystery of  
what you were meant to do and be.**

**To find the lost and lonely one,  
to heal the broken soul with love,  
to feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,  
to feel the earth below, the sky above!**

**“I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!”  
If you follow and love you’ll learn the mystery of  
what you were meant to do and be.**

**To free the prisoner from all chains,  
to make the powerful care,  
to rebuild the nations  
with strength and good will,  
to see God’s children everywhere!**

**“I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!”  
If you follow and love you’ll learn the mystery of  
what you were meant to do and be.**

**To bring hope to every task you do,  
to dance at a baby’s new birth,  
to make music in an old person’s heart,  
and sing to the colours of the earth.**

**“I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!”  
If you follow and love you’ll learn the mystery of  
what you were meant to do and be.**

Commissioning:

As we leave this place of worship today, may we be blessed in the discovery of new opportunities, new ways to love and live and reach out.

**May God send us from here with love to share and make us open and willing to take comfort in the love of others.**

May God journey with us into this new year, as we are full of hope and ready to embrace all that God offers to fill us up.

**May God grant us the courage to love freely, without judgement, and to be creative in how we serve and reach out to others.**

May God bless those we love and those we don't. And now, may we go out in faith, trusting that God will lead us; may we go in love, believing in God's saving grace; and may we go in peace, recognizing God's precious gift given to each one of us. **Amen.**<sup>4</sup>

Postlude: *Noel Nouvelet*, Trad. French Carol arr. by Raymond Haan Allan Bevan, organ

Question for Reflection: How will you live out your commitment to God?

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## *R-W Report*

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### Next Sunday

Sunday, Jan 8, 2022

### **Epiphany & Baptism of Jesus**

#### **Life Passages**

**Children & Youth:** Children begin in the sanctuary, then go to Kids' Church. Youth meet in the youth room at the beginning of the service.

**Acts 10:34-43** • Gentiles hear the Good News.

**Matthew 3:13-17** • Jesus and John the Baptizer.

**Sermon:** A Change of Course

In the reading from the book of Acts (officially "The Acts of the Apostles"), after a persuasive vision from God, Peter, somewhat surprisingly, speaks in front of an unexpected audience: Romans, who, as Gentiles—those outside the original covenant between God and the people of God. We hear Peter share with them God's "statement of inclusion," that is, the message of Jesus. In the Gospel passage, we witness Jesus at the very beginning of his public ministry. John at first respectfully declines when Jesus asks to be baptized, too, but Jesus convinces John that it is the right thing to do.

Immediately afterwards, God adds a very personal blessing. When have you had to be convinced to re-think deeply held ideas or convictions? What happened as a result?

**Music:** Dr. Allan Bevan, organist; Marilee Stephens, soloist, Robertson-Wesley Choir

### **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

Sun Jan 1	Sunday Worship - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b>	10:30 am
	Fellowship - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	11:45 am
Mon Jan 2	Church closed	
Tues Jan 3	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
	DEAP - <b>Room 11</b>	5:30 pm
Wed Jan 4	Canterbury Worship - <b>Away</b>	10:30 am
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	1:30 pm
	R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>	7:30 pm
Thur Jan 5	Nova Bells - <b>Lower Hall</b>	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - <b>Lower Hall</b>	7:00 pm

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<sup>4</sup> Written by Sharon Winegarden, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022/2023, p. 39. Used with permission.



## ON THE HORIZON

Sun Jan 8	Sunday Worship - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b>	10:30 am
	Kids' Church - <b>Garden Patch and Air Room</b>	10:30 am
	Youth Discussion - <b>Youth Room</b>	10:30 am
	Fellowship - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	11:45 am
Mon Jan 9	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	7:00 pm
Tues Jan 10	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
	Property Committee Meeting - <b>Room 11</b>	1:00 pm
	UCW - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	1:30 pm
	Finance Meeting - <b>Room 11</b>	7:00 pm
Wed Jan 11	Men's Group - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	9:00 am
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	1:30 pm
	Spirited Arts Writing Workshop - <b>Club Room</b>	7:00 pm
	R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>	7:30 pm
Thur Jan 12	Nova Bells - <b>Lower Hall</b>	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - <b>Lower Hall</b>	7:00 pm
Sat Jan 14	Community Dinner - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	5:00 pm

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE IS SEEKING A NEW CHAIR!**

Bob Klakowich will be stepping down after six years as chair of the committee. The Worship Committee typically meets seasonally, about four times a year. Its main purpose is to be a communication link between ministers and congregation, and to provide opportunities for voicing opinions on all aspects of worship. It also oversees activity related to laity involvement, greeting and ushering, and administering of Communion. The committee is also recruiting new members, and especially welcomes youth and young adult representation, and encourages more ushering and communion volunteers. No experience necessary! If you are interested in the opportunity of chairing the Worship Committee, or to have a say in worship by joining the committee, please contact Bob at [rj.klakowich@gmail.com](mailto:rj.klakowich@gmail.com).

### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION POD COORDINATOR**

Role: The role of the SF Pod Coordinator is to gather and engage interested members of the congregation in conversation about how our faith is deepened, developed and expressed within the life of our Church. In keeping with our Mission statement, the SF Pod Coordinator will encourage others to nurture and care for people on their faith journey through development of events, programs, projects, resources, and practices that deepen, inform and express our faith. As needed or requested, the Pod Coordinator will report back to the Official Board. The SF Pod Coordinator will be a two year term. The Coordinator in conjunction with and with the support of the assigned ministry personnel will set up three to four Pod meetings per year. Skills: Facilitation and diplomacy skills, Good listener, Ability to identify skills and resources in the congregation, Communication skills and basic computer skills, Basic budget understanding. If you are interested please speak to Rev. Karen.

## **ROBERTSON-WESLEY RINGERS**

We are continuing our search for two additional ringers to begin in January, 2023! Please speak with Dr. Allan Bevan after service if you are interested. Email [music@rwuc.org](mailto:music@rwuc.org) or call (780) 482-1587 ext. 230

## **FELLOWSHIP TEAM SEEKING NEW MEMBERS**

The Fellowship Team is responsible for our after-service coffee hour. Coffee, tea and juice are prepared and snacks are set out before the church service. The team makes sure things are ready for welcoming everyone to Memorial Hall to enjoy something to eat and drink while chatting together. We miss our wonderful Janet Clark who served on the team for many years. Our team of two now really needs a third or a fourth member to make Fellowship time run smoothly. Talk to Susan Hutson or Sylvia Duffus in the kitchen on Sunday, contact the office or sign-up in Memorial Hall.

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The nominations committee is asking you to help discern who is being called to serve as the incoming Chair of the Board (3 year term) and who is being called for the role of Board Secretary (2 year term) starting in March of 2023. More detailed outlines of the job descriptions can be found on our website ([rwuc.org/volunteer](http://rwuc.org/volunteer)) or through the nominations committee. Please speak with Ron Soans, Garnet Thomas, or John Fleming or contact the church office for more information, or if you know someone that you think might have the skills and passion for these leadership roles.

## **R-W News & Notes**

### **STAFF**

Elyse Munro will be on vacation from **January 2-6**, Christine will be covering the office.

### **FINDING INNER PEACE BOOK STUDY WITH REV. DIRK**

The copies of Finding Inner Peace –Easing Stress and Anxiety Through Prayer by Deacon Eddie Ensley have arrived. If you signed up for this book study please contact Rev. Dirk (email: [dirk.jessen@rwuc.org](mailto:dirk.jessen@rwuc.org)) to pick up your copy of the book. The study will be scheduled in the new year.

### **SPIRITED ARTS WRITING WORKSHOP: WINTER STORIES**

**January 11** at 7:00 pm. What is your winter story? Do you slow down and rest more or are you energized by the cold temperatures and seasonal activities? How has your winter story changed over the past 2 years? In this workshop, we'll play with the comic strip format. No drawing skills are required. Stick figures and abstract scribbles might be all you need to tell your winter story.

## FUNDRAISING MEETING

Sunday, **January 15** at 12:15 pm in Room 11. We invite everyone to come and be part of the fundraising meeting. Anyone who has an idea for an event for the 2023 fundraising year, or is planning a future event is requested to be present at this gathering.

### GROCERY CARD FUNDRAISER

Robertson-Wesley has gift cards in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100 for sale for Safeway/Sobeys/Freshco; Superstore/Loblaws/No Frills/City Market; or SaveOn Foods. Grocery Gift Cards are sold at face value and Robertson-Wesley receives 3% to 6% of the proceeds in support of its expenses and programs. Cards are available for sale after Sunday worship in Memorial Hall. Cash, personal cheques, Electronic Funds Transfer (grocerycards@rwuc.org), or Debit Card are accepted forms of payment.

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### *Worship Notes*

Christmas is a celebration of the long awaited birth of Jesus, our Emmanuel which means “God with us”. The season of Christmas lasts for 12 days ending with the arrival of the wise ones who brought gifts to Jesus, which is known as Epiphany Sunday. This is the season when light is born in human hearts through receiving and sharing the gifts of God. The central symbols of Christmas are “light” and “gifts”. The colour of this season is White/Gold for Jesus said, “I am the light of the world!” Thank you to Raydene Koch for her gift of music this day.

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### *Cover Image*

Cover image from god-works-good-those-who-love-2.jpg (1024×1024)  
(openbible.info)

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Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development: Vacant  
Minister of Congregation and Community Development: Rev. Karen Bridges  
Bridging Minister: Rev. Dirk Jessen  
Music Director: Dr. Allan Bevan  
Office Administrator: Elyse Munro  
Facilities Manager: Brad Campbell  
Financial Manager: Garth van Herwaarden

# Welcome to Robertson-Wesley

If you would like you can fill out this page, tear it off, and place it in the offering plates at the exits. This form is also available to fill out online at [rwuc.org/infocard](http://rwuc.org/infocard)

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender pronouns: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to subscribe to the email newsletter

Yes  No

I am new in the community

I am a visitor

I am interested in speaking with a minister

I am considering making this my church

Please put in the offering plate. Thank you

