



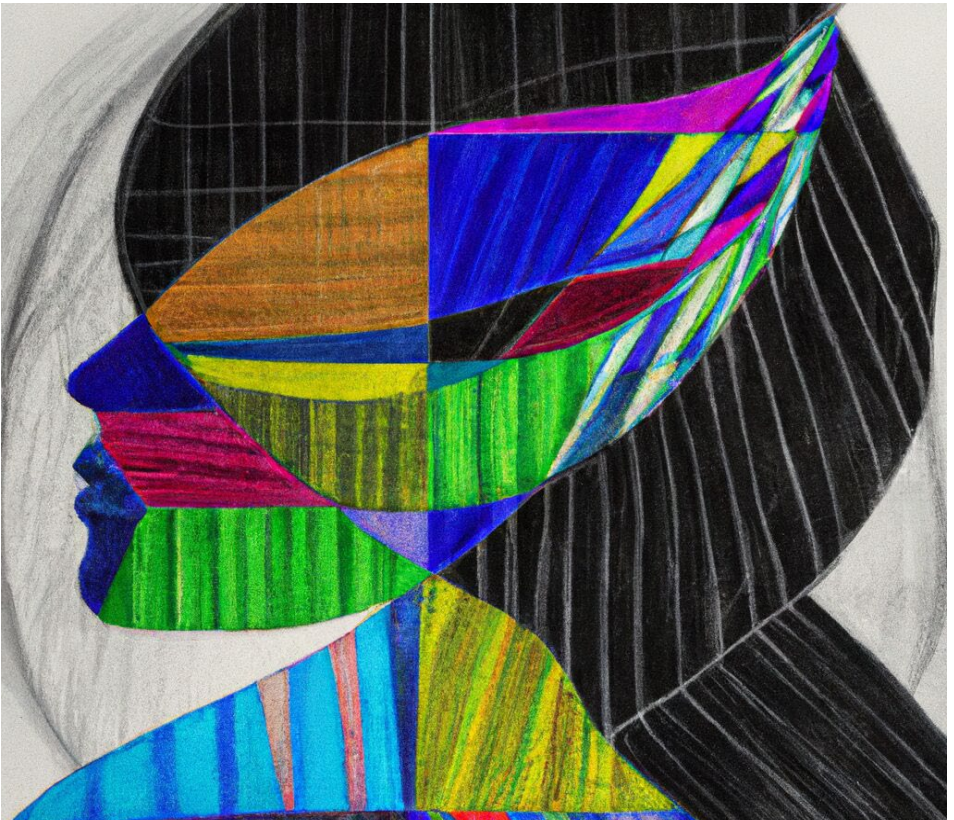
Robertson - Wesley

UNITED CHURCH *Spirited*

An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada

2023 January 8

Epiphany Sunday



Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of age, gender identity, differing abilities, ethnicity, economic circumstances, or sexual orientation. 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

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

Friends in Christ

Prelude: *Prelude in E Flat*, by Charles Stanford

Allan Bevan, organ

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized* Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Call to Worship:

The voice of God is heard in the roar of the storm;

The divine voice is heard by God's gathered people.

The voice of God is heard in the crying of a baby;

The divine voice is heard by God's gathered people.

The divine voice of God is heard in gentle words of compassion;

The divine voice is heard by God's gathered people.

The voice of God is heard as Jesus speaks;

And we, God's gathered people rejoice and respond.¹

Hymn: *Will You Come and See the Light*

Voices United 96

Will you come and see the light from the stable door?

It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.

**It will be your guiding star, it will show you who you are;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?**

Will you step into the light that can free the slave?

It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.

**By the pyramids of greed there's a longing to be freed.
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?**

Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?

Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.

**When the truth is cut and bruised, and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?**

Will you join the hope, a-light in the young girl's eyes,

of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?

**When the lowest and the least are the foremost at the feast,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?**

Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?

**In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about is too dim to put it out,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?**

Coming into God's Presence

Rev. Dirk Jessen

¹ Written by **David Sparks**. *Worship for all Seasons II*, page 67. Used with permission.

Prayer of Approach:

Loving God, we are created in your image, yet too often in this world we do not reflect your light. Instead of being beacons in the night, sometimes we pose the danger of snuffing out what light is left.

Loving God, free us from the shadows that lie in our hearts, so we can reveal to the world the light that is your love and together renew this world. Amen.²

Sung Prayer of Assurance: *How Deep the Peace*

More Voices 95

**How deep the peace, the confidence,
of those whose wrongs are forgiven.
How deep the peace, the confidence,
of those whose hearts are healed.**

God's Holy Word

Prayer of Illumination:

In ancient words, we find truth for today. Songs of long ago give voice to our feelings. Phrases of ancestors-in-faith express our own experiences. Thank you, Loving God, for the gift of scripture. Bless your Word to us today. Thanks be!³

Solo: *Behold That Star!* Trad. Spiritual arr. by Mark Hayes

Marilee Stephens, soloist

Scriptures:

Garnet Thomas

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

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the

² Written by Sandy Ferguson, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2019-2020, p. 44. Used with permission.

³ Written by Susan Lukey, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2019-2020, p. 51. Used with permission.

people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

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

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

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

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: *A Change of Course.*

Rev. Dirk Jessen

Hymn: *When Jesus Comes to Be Baptized*

Voices United 100

**When Jesus comes to be baptized,
he leaves the hidden years behind,
the years of safety and of peace,
to bear the sins of humankind.**

**The Spirit of the Lord comes down,
anoints the Christ to suffering,
to preach the word, to free the bound,
and to the mourner, comfort bring.**

**He will not quench the dying flame,
and what is bruised he will not break,
but heal the wound in justice dealt,
and out of death his triumph make.**

**O Spirit help us be like Christ:
to live in love and charity,
to walk in truth and justice now,
and grow in Christian dignity.**

**We praise you, God, source of all life,
we praise you, Christ, eternal Word,
we praise you, Spirit, gracious gift;
your triune presence fills our world.**

Pastoral Prayers

Rev. Karen Bridges

Lord's Prayer:

Voices United p. 921

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.**

Grateful Response

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, 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.

Hymn: *Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands* **Voices United 537**

**Your work, O God, needs many hands
to help you everywhere,
and some there are who cannot serve
unless our gifts we share.**

**Because we love you and your work,
our offering now we make:
be pleased to use it as your own,
we ask for Jesus' sake.**

Prayer of Gratitude:

God, you give to life its goodness. We praise and thank you with these gifts, a sign of our commitment to your way of care and concern. Instill in us a willingness to treat one another, and all creation, with tenderness. May we be generous in our giving and our loving, in the name of the gentle, generous Christ. Amen⁴

Hymn: *A Light Is Gleaming* **Voices United 82**

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms

⁴Written by Laura J. Turnbull, *Worship for all Seasons II*, page 71. Used with permission.

throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

When light comes pouring into the darkest place,
it hurts our eyes to see the glow.
Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,
our memories and tears.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

When night is round us and every shadow grows,
a star is there to light our way.
It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:
"God's light will ever stay."

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

And Jesus showed us a brighter path to walk.
He showed us things we hadn't seen.
Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign:

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

So let us live in the brightness God has giv'n,
and let us rise to see the dawn.
We trust that God is here a sparkle and a blaze,
warming all our days.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

Commissioning:

May we shine as beacons in the world as Christ's light blesses us in our stewardship of the Gospel. Like Jesus rising from baptismal waters, may we be open to God's descending Spirit, and to the words, "You are my beloved children. In you I am well pleased. Amen."⁵

Postlude: *Voluntary in E minor*, Op. 6 #9 by John Stanley Allan Bevan, organ

Questions for Reflection: As we discern God's path for us into the coming years, what might need to change? What might these changes require of us?

R-W Report

Next Sunday

Sunday, Jan 15, 2023

Epiphany 2 Communion

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

Psalms 40 • I waited patiently for God.

John 1:29-42 • Simon and Andrew become disciples.

Sermon: Fears released.

Fear, uncertainty, and worry can hold us back from all that God offers. Imagine what could happen if we found a way to release our fears. Imagine what could happen when we trust in God as the psalmist does in Psalm 40. God does not withhold anything from us. God offers love unconditionally. God offers forgiveness unconditionally. God offers us a path to follow. All we must do is trust in God. Like the disciples who were called by Jesus to follow, we too are being called to follow the teachings and ways of Jesus. What new song will we sing? What will be discovered as our fears are released? How can we help each other release our fears?

Music: Dr. Allan Bevan, organist; Robertson-Wesley Choir

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun Jan 8	Sunday Worship - Sanctuary & Online	10:30 am
	Kids' Church - Garden Patch and Air Room	10:30 am
	Youth Discussion - Youth Room	10:30 am
	Fellowship - Memorial Hall	11:45 am
Mon Jan 9	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Jan 10	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
	Property Committee Meeting - Room 11	1:00 pm

⁵ Written by Robert Morton, *Worship for all Seasons II*, page 74. Used with permission.

	UCW - Memorial Hall	1:30 pm
	Finance Meeting - Room 11	7:00 pm
Wed Jan 11	Men's Group - Memorial Hall	9:00 am
	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	Spirited Arts Writing Workshop - Club Room	7:00 pm
	R-W Choir - Lower Hall & Sanctuary	7:30 pm
Thur Jan 12	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	7:00 pm
Sat Jan 14	Community Dinner - Memorial Hall	5:00 pm

ON THE HORIZON

Sun Jan 15	Sunday Worship - Sanctuary & Online	10:30 am
	Kids' Church - Garden Patch and Air Room	10:30 am
	Youth Discussion - Youth Room	10:30 am
	Fellowship - Memorial Hall	11:45 am
	Fundraiser Meeting - Room 11	12:15 pm
Mon Jan 16	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Jan 17	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
	R-W Board Meeting - Room 11 & Zoom	7:00 pm
Wed Jan 18	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	R-W Choir - Lower Hall & Sanctuary	7:30 pm
Thur Jan 19	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	4:30 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	4:30 pm

Volunteer Opportunities

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 or call (780) 482-1587 ext. 230

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.

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.

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), who is being called to for role of Board Secretary (2 year term), and who is being called for the role of Member at Large starting in March of 2023. More detailed outlines of the job descriptions can be found on our website (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 roles.

R-W News & Notes

R-W MEN'S GROUP

The Robertson Wesley Men's Group is intending to have its first meeting of 2023 in Memorial Hall, on Wednesday, **January 11**: from 9:00 am to 10:30 am. The agenda will consist of discussions as to activities that may be undertaken by the group over the coming year. All are welcome, but due to the fact that a large number of attending individuals are seniors, those in attendance are asked to have had their COVID vaccinations. Any questions call Jim Triscott at 780-991-8837.

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.

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) 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.

GREEN BITES

Well it's resolution time again. Here are some suggestions for those who forgot to make them:

1. Try to purchase more locally grown food.
 2. Resolve not to use single-use straws.
 3. Reduce but don't eliminate meat consumption, because animal manure is very healthy for soil.
 4. If possible, walk or take public transit rather than using an automobile.
 5. Reduce the time used to shower.
 6. Water plants with leftover tea or water from drinking glasses rather than pouring it down the drain.
 7. Eat fresh fruits or vegetables only when they are in season, but freeze or preserve for future use.
 8. Wash and re-use plastic bags or use mesh reusable bags for storage.
 9. When in need of clothing, check out second-hand stores for suitable goods, and try to purchase items that are made of natural fabrics such as wool or linen.
 10. Try to live within a circular, rather than a linear economy.
- provided by Nancy Heule

Worship Notes

The season of Epiphany is a time of revelation, light and new understandings. The word "Epiphany" comes from a Greek term meaning "manifestation" or "showing forth." This is the season where we begin to learn about Jesus' ministry, when Jesus calls people to follow him and spread the Good News. Jesus, the word made flesh, shows God's love to all people. How will we, like Jesus, embody God's love? How will this love be found within and be shared with others in the world? We will do it with respect. Disciples are called to live, teach, speak, and treat others with kindness, respect and love.

Cover Image

Cover image from Romans 12:2 (openbible.info/labs/ai-bible-art/)

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