



*An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada*

2023 January 29

Epiphany 4



### Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of ethnicity, economic circumstances, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, or differing abilities. 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: *The Lord Is My Shepherd*, by Franz Schubert

Allan Bevan, piano

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *Breathe on Me Breath of God*, by Robert Jackson

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Call to Worship:

**For those who are tired, may this sacred space be a place of rest.  
For those who are hurting, may this holy place be a place of  
healing. For those who are seeking answers to difficult questions,  
may this be a place where questions are accepted and wise,  
caring words are spoken. We come for different reasons; we  
come from different places. Here we are all embraced by the  
same Spirit. In this Spirit, let us worship God.<sup>1</sup>**

Hymn: *Holy Spirit, Come Into Our Lives*

*More Voices 6*

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.**

**Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Give us a spirit of wisdom, an understanding heart.**

**Give us a spirit of knowledge, and lead us to the truth.**

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.**

**Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Give us a spirit of courage, and judgement that is wise.**

**Give us a spirit of reverence, of wonder and of awe.**

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.**

**Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Spirit of love and compassion, give hope to all the poor.**

**Spirit of justice and mercy, come open ev'ry door.**

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.**

**Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Spirit of all consolation, O lift our hearts this day.**

**Spirit of all understanding, O help us know your way.**

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.**

**Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Spirit of light and of wisdom, O lift us from our sorrow.**

**Spirit of peace and forgiveness, O help us face tomorrow.**

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<sup>1</sup> Written by Louise Hart, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2019/2020 p. 48.  
Used with permission.

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.  
Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

**Spirit of strength and of healing, bend stubborn hearts and will.  
Spirit of trust and of caring, O melt us, warm our chill.**

**Holy Spirit, come into our lives.  
Holy Spirit, make us truly wise.**

Coming into God's Presence

Rev. Dirk Jessen

Prayer of Commitment:

**Over and over again, O God, you ask us only this: that we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Yet, too often, we are only interested in doing justice if it costs us nothing. Too often, we fail to love kindness and prefer instead to love that which feeds our ego. Too often, we forget you all together. Or we expect you to approve our plans rather than walk humbly with you. Forgive us, God. Let us hear you speak to us in kindness so that we can do likewise to others. Amen.<sup>2</sup>**

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.**

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### *God's Holy Word*

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Prayer of Illumination:

**Sometimes the scriptures befuddle us, God. Sometimes we aren't sure we understand. Sometimes we are sure that we don't! Help us to see them, help us to see you, help us to see the world, help us to see ourselves, through Jesus' lens of love. Because then, even if we don't fully understand, we'll still be living your call. Amen.<sup>3</sup>**

Anthem: *Rejoice and Be Glad*, by Glenn Pickett

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

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<sup>2</sup> Written by Catherine Tovell, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2016/2017, p. 44. Used with permission.

<sup>3</sup> Written by Richard Bott, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2016-2017, p. 46. Used with permission.

Scriptures:

Jericho Ferguson

1 Corinthians 1:18, 22-31 • God's Wisdom.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block, to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, siblings: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. God is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Matthew 5:1-12 • God's surprising blessings.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then Jesus began to speak, and taught them saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

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

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: *Living as if...*

Rev. Dirk Jessen

**Lord, you give the great commission:  
"Heal the sick and preach the word."  
Lest the church neglect its mission,  
and the gospel go unheard,  
help us witness to your purpose  
with renewed integrity:  
with the Spirit's gifts empow'r us  
for the work of ministry.**

**Lord, you show us love's true measure:  
"Father, what they do, forgive."  
Yet we hoard as private treasure  
all that you so freely give.  
May your care and mercy lead us  
to a just society:  
with the Spirit's gifts empow'r us  
for the work of ministry.**

**Lord, you bless with words assuring:  
"I am with you to the end."  
Faith and hope and love restoring,  
may we serve as you intend,  
and, amid the cares that claim us,  
hold in mind eternity:  
with the Spirit's gifts empow'r us  
for the work of ministry .**

Pastoral Prayers

Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

Brian Webb

*Voices United* p. 921

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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, 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:

**Caring God, scripture says: blessed are the poor in spirit  
blessed are the meek. May we make our offerings this morning  
in humility and modesty, trusting that your blessing is upon us  
all. Amen.<sup>4</sup>**

Hymn: *God of Grace and God of Glory*

*Voices United 686*

**God of grace and God of glory,  
on your people pour your power;  
now fulfil your church's story;  
bring its bud to glorious flower.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the facing of this hour.**

**Lo, the hosts of evil round us  
scorn your Christ, assail your ways;  
fears and doubts too long have bound us;  
free our hearts to work and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the living of these days.**

**Cure your children's warring madness,  
bend our pride to your control;**

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<sup>4</sup> Written by Kate Gregory, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022-2023, p. 49.  
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**shame our wanton selfish gladness,  
rich in goods and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.**

**Set our feet on lofty places,  
gird our lives that they may be  
armoured with all Christ-like graces,  
pledged to set all captives free.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
that we fail not them nor thee.**

Commissioning:

As members of a congregation in this place,  
**we go out to serve our neighbourhood  
in the way of Jesus Christ.**

As members of the family of Jesus Christ in this nation,  
**we go out to speak out compassionately and work for justice.**

As members of the worldwide Christian fellowship,  
**we go to bring closer the Realm of God, where no one goes  
hungry and every person is treated with respect.**

Go in peace. Go with God's love. **Amen.**<sup>5</sup>

Postlude: *Abbot's Leigh* by Cyril Taylor arr. Robert Powell      Allan Bevan, organ

Questions for Reflection:

What has someone else done for you or someone else that helped  
you understand the world that God intends for all?

What is one thing you can do today to live "as if"?

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## *R-W Report*

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**Next Sunday**  
**Sunday, Feb 5, 2023**  
**Epiphany 5**

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

**Isaiah 58: 1-9** • True Worship

**Matthew 5:13-20** • Salt, Light, God's Purpose Fulfilled

**Sermon:** Fulfilling

Isaiah restates one of the central messages of the prophets: God is not impressed by spiritual practices and rituals if they are only performative and not sincere. Personal, penitential acts intended to bring a person closer to God are meaningless and even counterproductive if not done

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<sup>5</sup> Written by David Sparks, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2020-2021, p. 52.  
Used with permission.



with sincere, God-seeking in mind. Truly seeking God will result not in self-aggrandizement, but in making people's lives better. God knows the difference! Jesus' teaching recalls and reinforces this message of acting in ways that truly represent God. As in the past, the living out of God's message is left in the hands of people who choose to live in God-honouring ways. It is in how followers live, that God's new world will be reflected and furthered. Jesus and his followers were—and *are*—called and challenged to live their everyday lives with God's big picture in mind. What role do you have to play in this biggest of all stories?

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

### WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun Jan 29	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
	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	2:30 pm
	Koinonia - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	5:30 pm
Mon Jan 30	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	7:00 pm
Tues Jan 31	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
Wed Feb 1	Canterbury Worship - <b>Offsite</b>	10:30 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 Feb 2	Nova Bells - <b>Lower Hall</b>	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - <b>Lower Hall</b>	6:45 pm
	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	6:30 pm

### ON THE HORIZON

Sun Feb 5	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
	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	2:30 pm
Mon Feb 6	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	7:00 pm
Tues Feb 7	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
	DEAP - <b>Club Room</b>	5:30 pm
Wed Feb 8	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 Feb 9	Men's Group - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	9:00 am
	Nova Bells - <b>Lower Hall</b>	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - <b>Lower Hall</b>	6:45 pm
	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	6:30 pm

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **ROBERTSON-WESLEY RINGERS**

We are continuing our search for two additional ringers who can read music to begin ringing this winter. 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.

### **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), who is being called for the role of Member at Large, and who is being called for Northern Spirit Regional Representative 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 roles.

### R-W News & Notes

#### **KOINONIA**

Welcome to Koinonia's first potluck and service of 2023. **Today** we will meet in the Memorial Hall for a potluck dinner followed by a video presentation by Sandi Bouchard, a successful broadcaster and writer who speaks of ways to eliminate systemic racism. She is an indigenous woman who has lived for many years in Thunderbay, whom some consider to be the center of racism against indigenous people. Bring a salad, main course, or dessert to share if you can. The meal starts at 5:30 pm in the Memorial Hall followed by a service at 6:45 pm. Please come early and help set up and stay till the last dish is washed!

#### **STAFF**

Rev. Karen is away on holidays from **January 29 - February 5**.

#### **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, E-transfer ([grocerycards@rwuc.org](mailto:grocerycards@rwuc.org)), or Debit Card are accepted forms of payment.

## **SPIRITED ARTS WRITING WORKSHOP: RHYME VALENTINE**

**February 1** from 7:00-9:00 pm in the Club Room. This writing workshop with Beth Janzen will celebrate rhyme with a playful approach. Whether in poems or songs, rhyming sounds create harmony and satisfaction. Is there someone or something in your life that needs a love song or poem? We'll explore creative ways to spark ideas and create writing to make your heart sing.

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

The deadline for reports from the committees, pods and groups of the church is **February 5**. Send your information to [mail@rwuc.org](mailto:mail@rwuc.org) with "2022 Annual Report Submission" in the subject line.

## **WILD CHURCH**

This February, Wild Church is shining bright! We will gather around a fire at 1:00 pm on **Feb 19** at Emily Murphy Park (meet at the parking lot) to worship with the theme, "Light: Everything Else Follows". You are welcome to linger for a hot drink and conversation after worship (please bring a cup). Wild Church meets outdoors on the third Sunday afternoon each month and welcomes non-human and human creatures of all ages. Cancelled below -15°C with windchill. Contact [wildchurch@rwuc.org](mailto:wildchurch@rwuc.org) to arrange transportation.

## **FOOD BANK**

Quite often we are asked by Food Bank clients if we have toilet paper or menstrual supplies, while these items are available by request from the Food Bank, people don't always remember to request them in advance. We also need donations of plastic or reusable bags. If you can help with donations of menstrual products, toilet paper, or bags you can drop them off anytime during office hours 8:30-4:30 Monday to Friday or on Sundays. Thanks so much.

## **GREEN BITES**

Well, it happened on the morning of January 24. The hands of the Doomsday Clock that had been fixed at one hundred seconds to midnight since 2020, moved forward by ten seconds. The hands now sit at ninety seconds to midnight, the closest it has ever been to 12 o'clock. With the war in Ukraine, the increased risk of nuclear annihilation, climate change and the unstable political situations in various parts of the world, the clock stands as a metaphor for danger that is present in our global world. With the help of each one of us, the hands can turn back. The challenge lies ahead so let's go for it!! – The Environmental Stewardship Group

## BETWEEN THE AISLES

The theme for the next edition of *Between the Aisles* is Winter. Do you have a favourite memory about winter? We're looking for memories, stories, poems, and pictures about Winter. Please send your submissions to news@rwuc.org, the deadline for submissions is **February 12**.

### In the Community

#### **BISELL CENTRE: COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR**

On **February 25** Edmontonians will brave the February cold, joining thousands in 150+ locations across Canada and the US for a 2 or 5 km winter walk to support people facing poverty and houselessness in their cities. Funds raised will support Bissell's Community Space, which gives folks a place to come in out of the cold, access basic needs and connect with life-changing supports to help empower them to move from poverty to prosperity. The Bissell Centres goal for CNOY 2023 is to raise \$120,000 with the support of 60+ teams and 400+ walkers. If you're interested, head to the Edmonton Downtown event page here: <https://cnoy.org/edmontondowntown>. Click on "register to walk + fundraise", come up with a fun team name, and recruit some friends to join you!

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### *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 shared with others in the world? We will do it with respect. Disciples are called to live and teach, speak and treat others with kindness, respect, and love.

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### *Cover Image*

Cover image is Bergpredict [Sermon On The Mount] by artist Emma Schlangenhäusen (1882 - 1947). This woodcut on paper resides in the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and was presented by Elizabeth Talbot Rice in accordance with the wishes of her parents, Professor and Mrs Talbot Rice, 1995.

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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