



An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada

2023 February 19

Life Passages

Transfiguration 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: *Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult*, arr. by Robert Farrell Allan Bevan, organ

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *When Morning Gilds the Skies*, by Joseph Barnby

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Call to Worship:

Through Epiphany, we have been walking in the light of Christ.

**We are children of God and followers of Jesus,
the Light of the World.**

Next week, the light of our faith will guide us into the gathering shadows of Lent.

In thankfulness for the light and love of God, let us worship now!

Let us pray together:

Wonderful God, your brilliance is not only seen on mountaintops in Bible stories. Your brilliance shines wherever your people show love and compassion in your name. May our worship together inspire us to go out from here overflowing with your grace, ready to shine your love and peace everywhere, in the name of Jesus. Amen.¹

Hymn: *Jesus Bids Us Shine*

Voices United 585

**Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clean light,
like a little candle burning in the night.
In this world of darkness, so let us shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine, first of all for him;
well he sees and knows it if our light grows dim:
Jesus walks beside us to help us shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine, then, for all around,
many kinds of darkness in this world are found:
sin, and want and sorrow; so we must shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

Life Passages

Sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation:

Prayer for the Holy Spirit (*in unison*)

Eternal God, whose Son the Servant-Lord Jesus Christ has commissioned us to make disciples of people of all nations baptizing them in your name. May your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

¹ Written by Susan Ivany, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2016/17, p. 50. Used with permission.

Congregation's Promise (*standing*)

**We will continue to support you, walk with you, and grow with you.
With God's help we will live out our baptism as a loving community
in Jesus Christ: nurturing one another in faith, upholding one
another in prayer, encouraging one another in God's work.**

Recommitment: *A New Creed*

Voices United 918

Please note that the last line of the creed (omitted in some of the hymn books) is:

**We are not alone.
We live in God's world.
We believe in God who has created and is creating,
Who has come in Jesus the word made flesh,
To reconcile and make new.
Who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the church;
To celebrate God's presence
To live with respect in creation
To love and serve others
To seek justice and resist evil
To proclaim Jesus crucified and risen
Our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death
God is with us,
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

Blessing: (*sung*)

Voices United 454

**May God who creates you give you light;
May God who sustains you make you wise;
May God who protects you give you joy;
May God who surrounds you give you peace.**

Prayer of Commitment:

**God of us all, we know that it is not your way to keep count of our
trespasses, or to make a record of our failings and faults. Yet we
have a need to bring this brokenness before you, laying it at your
feet, in order to let it go. Hear the silent confession of each of us now
as we surrender what is past into the mystery of your eternal now...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.**

² Written by Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, *The Undivided Soul: Helping Congregations Connect Body and Soul*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), p. 129-130.

God's Holy Word

Prayer of Illumination:

God of mountains, God of valleys, and God of the in-between and the everyday – we come together today to hear your word for our lives. We open our minds and our whole selves as we embrace your unending love and compassion. Amen.³

Anthem: *Beati Quorum Via*, by Charles Stanford

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

*Beati quorum via integra est,
Qui ambulant in lege Domini.*

Blessed are the undefiled,
Who walk in the law of the Lord. Psalm 119:1

Scriptures:

Ann Thomas

Psalm 99 • God delights in justice.

Voices United p. 819

**Sung Refrain: You rule with justice and in delight,
and faithfulness maintain.**

You reign, O God, and the peoples tremble, you sit
enthroned upon the cherubim, and the earth is quaking.

**You, O God, are great in Zion, you are exalted
over all the nations.**

Let them praise your great and awesome name:
holy are you and mighty, a ruler who delights in justice.

**You have determined what is fair, you have done
in Jacob what is just and right.**

**Sung Refrain: You rule with justice and in delight,
and faithfulness maintain.**

Moses and Aaron were among your priests,
“Miriam among those who called on your name;
they called to you, God, and you answered.

**In the pillar of cloud you spoke to them,
they kept your teachings and the law that you gave them.**

O God, our God, you answered them;
**to them you were a forgiving God,
though you punished their offences.**

Proclaim the greatness of God and worship on God's holy hill;
for God, our God, is the Holy One.

**Sung Refrain: You rule with justice and in delight,
and faithfulness maintain.**

³ Written by Kate Gregory, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2017/18, p. 50. Used with permission.

Matthew 17:1-9 • The transfiguration.

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after Jesus has been raised from the dead."

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

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: *Transcendence*

Rev. Dirk Jessen

Hymn: *O Christ, the Word Incarnate*

Voices United 499

**O Christ, the Word incarnate,
O wisdom from on high,
O truth unchanged, unchanging,
O light of our dark sky:
we praise you for the radiance
that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps,
shines on from age to age.**

**Your people hold this treasure
from you, its source divine,
a light that to all ages
throughout the earth will shine;
it is the chart and compass
that all life's voyage through,
mid mists and rocks and tempest,
still guides, O Christ, to you.**

**O make your church, dear Saviour,
a lamp of purest gold,
to bear before the nations
your true light as of old;
O teach your wandering pilgrims
by this their path to trace,
till, cloud and darkness ended,
they see you face to face.**

**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:

You take us to the holy place, O God. Your inspired presence lifts us up and gives us new life. You bring us down to earth, O God. Through your eyes, we see what needs to be done and find the strength to begin. Bless these gifts, O God, through which the ordinary shines with holiness. Amen.⁴

⁴ Written by David Sparks, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2014/15, p. 48. Used with permission.

**We have come at Christ's own bidding
to this high and holy place,
where we wait with hope and longing
for some token of God's grace.
Here we pray for new assurance
that our faith is not in vain,
searching like those first disciples
for a sign both clear and plain.**

**Light breaks upon our darkness;
splendour bathes the flesh-joined Word;
Moses and Elijah marvel
as the heavenly voice is heard.
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder
how the law and prophets meet:
Christ, with garments drenched in brightness,
stands transfigured and complete.**

**Strengthened by this glimpse of glory,
fearful lest our faith decline,
we like Peter find it tempting
to remain and build a shrine.
But true worship gives us courage
to proclaim what we profess,
that our daily lives may prove us
people of the God we bless.**

Commissioning:

We are strengthened by the glimpse of glory. Our worship gives us strength to proclaim God's love. Now may the God of transformation give us power so that our lives prove us to be God's people. We go with joy to live out holy love.⁵

Postlude: *Let It Shine Medley*, arr. by Sharon Wilson

Allan Bevan, Raydene Koch, piano

Questions for Reflection:

Have you ever had an experience that you can call transcendent?
How might a transcendent moment affect how you live?

⁵ Written by Robin Wardlaw, **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2014/15, p. 48. Used with permission.

R-W Report

Next Sunday

Sunday, Feb 26, 2023

Lent 1

Communion Sunday & Minute for Mission

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 32 • Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven.

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 • The tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Matthew 4:1-11 • Jesus tempted in the desert.

Sermon: Discerning choice.

The story of Jesus being tempted in the desert is one that inspires us, and challenges us. Can we be as strong as Jesus when faced with a choice that either trusts in God or leads to satisfying our human desires? The wilderness and the garden of Eden are places of struggle. Temptation, as defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is "to entice or to do wrong by promise of pleasure or gain." Adam and Eve were enticed by the serpent, and Jesus was enticed by the devil. How does the practice of wisdom, and the practice of discernment help us make choices that lead us to God rather than away? How will we seek to resist evil and live in love and justice?

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

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun Feb 19	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
	Wild Church - Emily Murphy Park	1:00 pm
	Book Study - Club Room & Zoom	3:00 pm
Mon Feb 20	Church Closed	
Tues Feb 21	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
Wed Feb 22	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	Ash Wednesday - Sanctuary	7:00 pm
	R-W Choir - Lower Hall & Sanctuary	7:30 pm
Thur Feb 23	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm
	Book Study - Club Room & Zoom	7:00 pm

ON THE HORIZON

Sun Feb 26	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 & Bake Sale - Memorial Hall	11:45 am
	Budget Info Session - Sanctuary & Zoom	12:00 pm
	Prayer Bracelet Workshop - Room 11	1:30 pm
	Book Study - Club Room & Zoom	3:00 pm
	Koinonia - Memorial Hall	5:00 pm

Mon Feb 27	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
	M&P Meeting - Online	7:00 pm
Tues Feb 28	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
	R-W Board Meeting - Room 11	7:00 pm
Wed March 1	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	Writing Workshop - Club Room	7:00 pm
	R-W Choir - Lower Hall & Sanctuary	7:30 pm
Thur March 2	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm
	Book Study - Club Room & Zoom	7:00 pm

Volunteer Opportunities

ROBERTSON-WESLEY RINGERS

Do you read music and would like to try your hand at bells (sorry for the pun!). The R. W. Ringers has room for a new member. Do you know that ringing is good for both the brain and the soul! Consider bringing your talents to our group. Please speak with Dr. Allan Bevan after service if you are interested. Email 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) 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 for these roles.

R-W News & Notes

CHURCH CLOSED

The Church will be closed on **February 20** in observance of Family Day.

INCOME TAX RECEIPTS

Income tax receipts for 2022 are ready. Pick them up in Memorial Hall after worship. Statements not picked up will be mailed **February 24**.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, **February 22** at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary and online. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Please join us for a time of reflection, worship and ritual. During the service we will be burning the palm branches from Palm Sunday last year, turning them into ashes inviting the congregation to receive the sign of the cross with ashes on their hand or forehead. It is a reflective and meaningful service. Everyone is welcome.

KOINONIA

Sunday, **February 26** is the first Sunday of Lent. Koinonia worship will be led by Larry Wright, and will look at the practice of fasting. What has happened to fasting in the United Church? What are alternatives to fasting? Come for a potluck supper at 5:30 p.m., or just come for the worship at 7:00. All are welcome.

WILD CHURCH

This February, Wild Church is shining bright! We will gather around a fire at 1:00 pm **today** 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 (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 to arrange transportation.

PRAYER BRACELETS

On Sunday **February 26** from 1:30 - 3:30 pm in Room 11, you are invited to join Rev. Karen in making a prayer bracelet and learning about this prayer practice. The season of lent is a time for us to commit to new practices of connecting with God and deepening our faith and relationship with each other. Please contact Rev. Karen at karen.bridges@rwuc.org to let her know you are planning to participate, so that enough supplies can be purchased.

SPIRITED ARTS WRITING WORKSHOP: The Lion & The Lamb
March 1, 7-9 pm in the Club Room. Some people say if March's weather comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb. This is just one way that animals inhabit our imaginations as powerful symbols. In this writing workshop, we'll take a look at our ideas about animals and play around with some poetic language and creative storytelling. We'll also honour the powerful presence of animals in our daily lives. Facilitated by Beth Janzen.

BUDGET INFORMATION SESSION

Sunday, **February 26** after church in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. Look at the proposed budget for 2023 and ask questions about the 2022 finances. Printed copies of the Annual Report will be available. To join the Zoom visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82257836768> on the meeting date after 11:45 am.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, **March 5** after church. The Annual Congregational Meeting of R-W will take place in the Sanctuary and on Zoom after the service. To join the Zoom visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89903114499> on the meeting date after 11:45 am.

FOOD BANK

The Food Bank is in need of donations of plastic or reusable bags. If you can help with a donation of bags you can drop them off anytime during office hours 8:30-4:30 Monday to Friday or on Sundays. Thank you to everyone who donated toilet paper and menstrual products! We are well stocked now.

GREEN BITES

Worried about climate change and what to do about it? Well, here are some suggestions: Write to your city councillor, MLA, and MP to encourage them to do what is best for Mother Earth. When in the market for new clothing, select apparel made from natural fibres that don't require vast amounts of water to produce, or purchase clothing from second-hand stores. After buying boxed items at a retail outlet, leave the packaging behind so that the retailers take some responsibility for package reduction. Try to purchase food items that are locally grown in order to reduce the distance between the grower and the buyer. – The Environmental Stewardship Group

In the Community

EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

On Monday, February 6, a massive earthquake hit southern Turkey and neighbouring Syria. The United Church is in contact with partners in the region to understand how best to offer our support. Please include the people of Turkey, Syria, and other countries affected in your prayers, and consider making a donation to the emergency relief fund by visiting: united-church.ca/social-action/act-now/global-emergency-response

BISSELL 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. To support the R-W team visit:

<https://secure.e2rm.com/registant/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=995940>

Worship Notes

Thank you to the Choir of Robertson-Wesley and, Raydene Koch for their gift of music today.

Cover Image

Cover image is from the Encyclopædia Britannica. *The Transfiguration*, a mosaic icon with a mandorla enclosing the figure of Christ, early 13th century; it resides in the Louvre, Paris.

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