



*An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada*

2023 February 26

Sacrament of Communion

Lent 1



Seek God's wisdom  
and make a  
discerning choice.

### Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of sexual orientation, age, gender identity, differing abilities, ethnicity, or economic circumstances. 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](http://www.rwuc.org)

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## *Friends in Christ*

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Prelude: *Lenten Partita on "Forty Days and Forty Nights"*, arr. by Craig Penfield  
Allan Bevan, organ

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *Create in Me*, by Michael Burkhardt  
Choir of Robertson-Wesley; Claire Rolheiser, soloist; Nova Bells

Gathering Prayer:

**God of the Wilderness, God of the Journey,  
soften our hearts and open our ears  
that we might heed Wisdom's call.  
Stir us to vision and action,  
that we may extend your love  
wherever there is need for hope or healing. Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

Hymn: *Jesus Tempted in the Desert*

*Voices United 115*

**Jesus, tempted in the desert,  
lonely, hungry, filled with dread:  
"Use the power," the tempter tells him;  
"turn these barren rocks to bread!"  
"Not alone by bread," he answers,  
"can the human heart be filled.  
Only by the Word that calls us  
is our deepest hunger stilled!"**

**Jesus, tempted at the temple,  
high above its ancient wall:  
"Throw yourself from lofty turret;  
angels wait to break your fall!"  
Jesus shuns such empty marvels,  
Feats that fickle crowds request:  
"God, whose grace protects, preserves us,  
we must never vainly test."**

**Jesus, tempted on the mountain  
by the lure of vast domain:  
"Fall before me! Be my servant!  
Glory, fame you're sure to gain!"  
Jesus sees the dazzling vision,  
turns his eyes another way:  
"God alone deserves our homage!  
God alone will I obey!"**

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<sup>1</sup> From; *Out of the fire: Worship and Liberation Theology*. Copyright Gertrude Leban, Artemis Enterprises. Found in *Coming into God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada*, 2000, United Church Publishing House, p. 152.

**When we face temptation's power,  
lonely, struggling, filled with dread,  
Christ, who knew the tempter's hour,  
come and be our living bread.  
By your grace, protect, preserve us  
Lest we fall, your trust betray.  
Yours, above all other voices,  
be the Word we hear, obey.**

Coming into God's Presence

Rev. Karen Bridges

Prayer of Lament and Thanksgiving:

Psalm 32 • Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven.

*Voices United p. 759*

**Sung Refrain: Be glad in God you righteous.  
Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.**

Blessed are those whose offences are forgiven,  
whose sin has been put away.

**Blessed are those to whom God imputes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

**Sung Refrain: Be glad in God you righteous.  
Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.**

When I kept silence, my body wasted away,  
while I groaned all the day long.

**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;  
my strength dried up as in a summer drought.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, my guilt I did not hide.

**I said: "I will confess my sins to God";  
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Therefore let all the faithful pray to you in time of trouble;

**when great floodwater rises, it shall not come near them.**

You are a hiding place for me, you will preserve me from trouble;  
**you will surround me with shouts of deliverance.**

**Sung Refrain: Be glad in God you righteous.  
Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.**

I will teach you, and guide you in the way you should go.

**I will keep you under my eye and instruct you.**

Be not like a horse or mule, without understanding,

**whose course must be checked with bit and bridle.**

Many pains are in store for the wicked,

**but whoever trusts in God, is surrounded by steadfast love.**

**Sung Refrain: Be glad in God you righteous.  
Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.**

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## God's Holy Word

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### Prayer of Illumination

Anthem: *Lamb of God*, by F. Melius Christiansen

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

### Scriptures:

Charles Sabu

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

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the child of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the child of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'God will command the angels concerning you,' and 'on their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to the devil, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve only God.'" Then the devil left him, suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: *Discerning Choice*

Rev. Karen Bridges

Hymn: *Bread of Life, Broken and Shared*

**More Voices 197**

**Bread of life, feed my soul,  
as the presence of the Spirit  
makes me whole.**

**Bread of life, fill my heart  
with the grace and mercy  
you impart.**

**I have heard your voice calling,  
"Come, my friend, and share  
in the feast that is laid out for you  
to show how much I care."**

**Bread of life, help me live  
a life as pure and true as Jesus did.**

**Bread of life, help me see  
the boundless love of Christ  
for you and me.**

**I have heard your voice calling,  
“Come, my friend, and share  
in the feast that is laid out for you  
to show how much I care.”**

**Bread of life, feed my soul,  
as the presence of the Spirit  
makes me whole.**

**Bread of life, fill my heart  
with the grace and mercy  
you impart.**

Pastoral Prayers

Sung Lord’s Prayer:

**Our Creator, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom 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 them that trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil:  
for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

Rev. Dirk Jessen

*Voices United* p. 960

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### *Grateful Response*

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Minute for Mission

Sylvia Duffus

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.*

Prayer of Gratitude:

Compassionate God, you offer us wisdom and spiritual guidance.  
May we take time in silence to listen to what you offer, so that we in turn may offer all that we are and all that we bring to you...  
*silence*

Gracious God,

**bless and transform all that we offer:**

**our faltering steps, our brokenness, our hope, our risking, our hearts, that your covenant may be written on our hearts and we**

**may be a blessed and transformed covenant people.  
In Jesus' name. Amen.<sup>2</sup>**

Sacrament of Holy Communion:

*All who worship with us today, regardless of age or church membership, are invited and welcome to partake in this sacrament. For people who worship online, please prepare whatever is available in your house, a cracker, bread, and juice, wine, or water. People in the sanctuary will be offered bread and grape juice. There is a gluten free option available.*

In the name of the One who said, "I am the bread of life," we invite you to come and eat. In the name of the One who said, "I am the true vine," we invite you to come and drink. In the name of the One who said, "Love one another, as I have loved, you," we invite you to the table of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

The Spirit of God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Turn to God, the source of life.

**We lift our hearts in prayer.**

Let us give thanks.

**We offer joyful thanks to God.<sup>4</sup>**

Thanks and praise be to you, O God, for you create life out of the dust, and sustain us even in the desert. We thank you that in the face of every temptation and trial, every principality and power, you are present to direct and guide, to renew and revive. We praise you for sending us Jesus, your Suffering Servant, to walk before us the way of the cross, to turn us to you and to one another. Therefore we join your long procession of pilgrims praising you along the way:<sup>5</sup>

Holy, Holy, Holy (*sung*):

**Voices United p. 942**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might;**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.**

**Heav'n and earth are full, full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

**Bless'd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

Remembering Jesus at Table:

As we gather at this table, we remember that on the night before he died, Jesus had supper with his friends. He took a loaf of bread, thanked you as we have thanked you, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Each time you do this, remember me." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, passed it to his friends, saying: "Drink. This cup is the promise of God, made in my blood. Each time you drink from this cup, remember me."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 5R001.

<sup>3</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 14A003.

<sup>4</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 0E019.

<sup>5</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 5O001.

<sup>6</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 14D009.

Remembering your boundless love for us in Jesus Christ, we offer you our praise, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Memorial Acclamation (*sung*):

*Voices United 943*

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Prayer for Transformation:

Holy God, we pray for your Spirit.

**Make us, while many, one. Make us, though broken, whole.**

**Make us, despite death, alive.**

And so we pray:

**Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

**Praise be to God, the source of love!**

**Praise be to Christ, Love incarnate!**

**Praise be to the Spirit, Love's power!**

**Praise be to God!<sup>7</sup>**

Great Amen (*sung*):

*Voices United 943*

**Amen, amen, amen, amen.**

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Meditation: *O Taste and See*, by Carlton Young

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Prayer after Communion:

**For the bread we have eaten, for the wine we have tasted, for the life we have received, we thank you God. Grant that what we have done and have been given here, may so put its mark on us, that it may remain always in our hearts. Grant that we may grow in Christian love and understanding, and that ours may be lives of faithful action, in Christ's name. Amen.<sup>8</sup>**

Hymn: *O Love, How Deep*

*Voices United 348 vv. 1-4*

**O Love, how deep, how broad, how high!**

**It fills the heart with ecstasy,  
that God, in Jesus Christ, should take  
our mortal form for mortals' sake.**

**God sent no angel to our race  
of higher or of lower place,  
but wore the robe of human frame,  
and freely to this lost world came.**

**For us he was baptized, and bore  
a holy fast, and hungered sore;  
for us temptations sharply knew;  
for us the tempter overthrew.**

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<sup>7</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 28Z023.

<sup>8</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 14V006.



**For us he prayed; for us he taught;  
for us great daily works were wrought,  
by words, and signs, and actions, thus  
still seeking not himself, but us.**

Commissioning:

Go from here as God's anointed ones.

**We recognize that challenge means change; temptation calls us to  
resistance; compassionate work is a priority;  
and faith's path is surprising.**

You have been chosen by God to do God's work.

**The Holy One goes with us; we have nothing to fear.<sup>9</sup>**

Postlude: *Fugue in D Minor*, by Johann Pachelbel

Allan Bevan, organ

Questions for Reflection:

How might you be more intentional in making decisions?

How might our inner critic tempt us and distract us from living out our  
call?

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## *R-W Report*

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### Next Sunday

**Sunday, March 5, 2023**

#### **Lent 2**

**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 121** • I lift my eyes up to the hills.

**Genesis 12:1-5a** • God sends Abram and Sarai forth.

**John 3:1-17** • Jesus and Nicodemus.

**Sermon:** *Solvitur ambulando*: It is solved by walking

In the Genesis reading, we hear God speaking to Abram, a childless, Bedouin septuagenarian. God tells Abram that if he and his equally aged wife Sarai leave their current home and everything they know, God will make them into a great nation and a blessing to all families on earth. And they go! In John's Gospel, Nicodemus, a religious leader, secretly comes to Jesus because of signs he has heard Jesus was doing. Nicodemus saw these signs as the beginning of God's coming kin-dom/ kingdom and wants to know how to be part of it. Jesus' answer confuses Nicodemus because it requires him to let go of his preconceptions and walk forward trusting in God. Have you ever been at a point in your life where you took a leap of faith? What convinced you to do so? What did you find?

**Music:** Dr. Allan Bevan, organist; Cantilon Chamber Choir

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<sup>9</sup>Written by David Sparks, **Gathering**, Lent/Easter, 2023, p. 38. Used with permission.

## **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

Sun Feb 26	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 & Bake Sale - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	11:45 am
	Budget Info Session - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
	Prayer Bracelet Workshop – <b>Room 11</b>	1:30 pm
	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	3:00 pm
Mon Feb 27	Koinonia - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	5:30 pm
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	7:00 pm
Tues Feb 28	M&P Meeting - <b>Online</b>	7:00 pm
	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
Wed March 1	R-W Board Meeting - <b>Room 11</b>	7:00 pm
	Canterbury Worship - <b>Away</b>	10:30 am
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	1:30 pm
	Writing Workshop - <b>Club Room</b>	7:00 pm
Thur March 2	R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>	7:30 pm
	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>	7:00 pm

## **ON THE HORIZON**

Sun Mar 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 & Bake Sale - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	11:45 am
	ACM - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
Mon Mar 6	Book Study - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	3:00 pm
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	7:00 pm
Tues Mar 7	Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>	12:00 pm
	DEAP - <b>Club Room</b>	7:00 pm
Wed Mar 8	Spirited Arts Movement Workshop – <b>Room 11</b>	7:00 pm
	Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>	1:30 pm
	R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>	7:30 pm
Thur Mar 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>	7:00 pm
Sat Mar 11	Community Dinner - <b>Memorial Hall</b>	5:00 pm
	Youth Group - <b>Youth Room</b>	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](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 in the following roles: Incoming Chair of the Board (3 year term), Board Secretary (2 year term), Member at Large, and Northern Spirit Regional Representative starting in March of 2023. More detailed job descriptions can be found on our website ([rwuc.org/volunteer](http://rwuc.org/volunteer)) or through the nominations committee. 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**

### **MISSION AND SERVICE OF THE UNITED CHURCH**

Today is Communion Sunday and there will be a collection of our special offerings for Mission and Service. R-W is committed to financially supporting the Mission and Service of The United Church of Canada. On each Sunday when communion is served we highlight some aspect of the work and mission of the National Church. At this time we also take up a special collection designated for Mission and Service. Blue envelopes are provided for this purpose in the bulletin.

### **KOINONIA**

Today 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 pm **tonight**, or just come for the worship at 7:00. All are welcome.

### **BUDGET INFORMATION SESSION**

**Today** after church in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. This will include time to 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.

### **PRAYER BRACELETS**

**Today** 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](mailto:karen.bridges@rwuc.org) to let her know you are planning to participate, so that enough supplies can be purchased.

### **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.

## **GREEN BITES**

The Story of Stuff Project began when Annie Leonard, an American film maker, wrote and narrated a short film that emphasized sustainability. Annie had been concerned about our linear economy for several years when she decided to launch her Story of Stuff. There are several YouTube videos including the original Story of Stuff. Other titles in the project include The Story of Plastics, of Electronics, of Microbeads, etc. Check out the Story of Stuff videos. You will be glad you did. Although the Project is American, much of the information applies to Canada too.

**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.

## **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 learn more about the impact and 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](http://united-church.ca/social-action/act-now/global-emergency-response)

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## *Worship Notes*

As we enter the season of Lent which lasts for 40 days and nights we follow Jesus into the wilderness and into a time of reflection and turning toward God. For this season, we will engage in more silence and reflection, thus we will not be singing after the offering. We will sing the Lord's prayer to hear these words anew. We will refrain from saying Hallelujah, until Palm Sunday. This is a time to explore new ways of prayer and contemplation while renewing our commitment to God and to living out our faith in the world.

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## *Cover Image*

Cover image is taken by Rev. Karen Bridges in Ethiopia March 29, 2019.

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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