

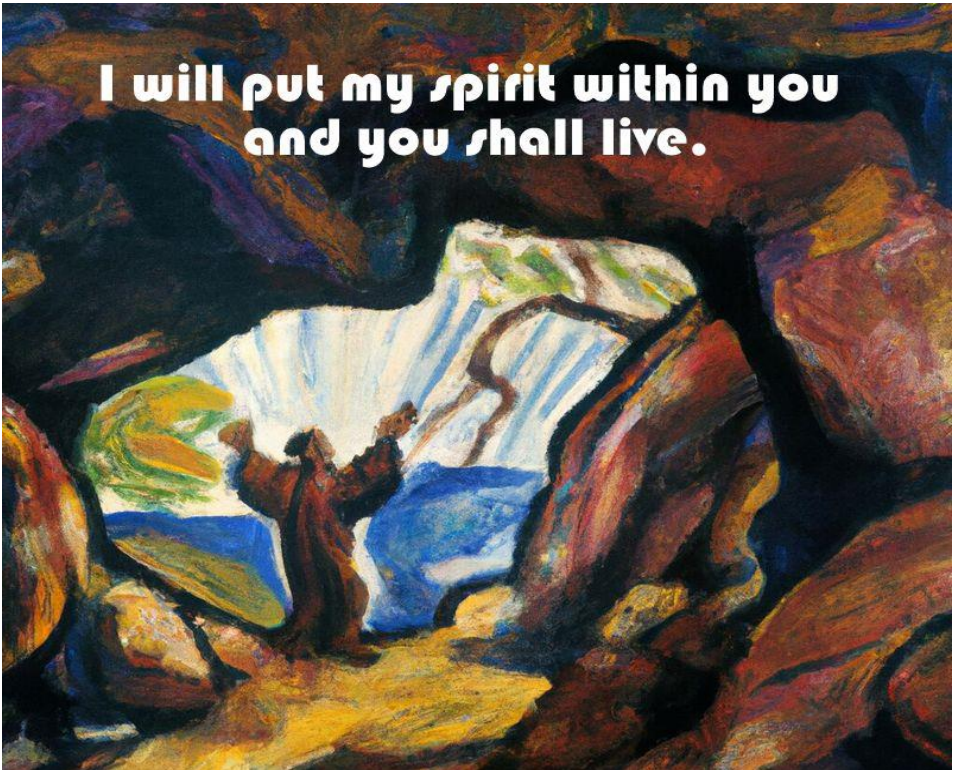


*An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada*

2023 March 26

Life Passages

Lent 5



### **Welcome and Inclusion**

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

# *Welcome to Robertson-Wesley*

*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.

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## **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: *Variations on "Prospect"*, Southern Hymn Tune arr. by John Carter  
Allan Bevan, piano

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *The Call*, by Ralph Vaughan Williams

Marilee Stephens, soloist

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: *Rise Up, Rise Up*

*More Voices* 130

**Rise up, rise up, rise up, O my soul.  
Rise up and sing this blessing to God's name.  
Rise up, rise up, rise up, O my soul.  
Rise up and sing this blessing to God's name.**

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## *Life Passages*

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Sacrament of Baptism:

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.**

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,**

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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.

**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.**

Coming into God's Presence

Kids' Church

Prayer of Lament and Thanksgiving:

Psalm 130 • Up from the Depths I Cry to God *Voices United p. 852*

**Sung Refrain: Out of the depths I cry to you;  
my hope is in your promise true.**

Out of the depths have I called to you. O God, hear my cry!

**Let your ears be attentive to my plea for mercy.**

If you should keep account of what is done amiss,

O God, who could stand?

**But there is forgiveness with you, therefore we will honour you.**

**Sung Refrain: Out of the depths I cry to you;  
my hope is in your promise true.**

I wait for you, God; my soul waits, and in your word is my hope.

**My soul waits for God more than the watchers long for morning,  
more than the watchers long for morning.**

O Israel, wait in hope, for with God there is love unfailing.

**With God is great power to redeem,  
to redeem you, Israel, from all your sins.**

**Sung Refrain: Out of the depths I cry to you;  
my hope is in your promise true.**

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## God's Holy Word

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Prayer of Illumination:

Living Word, your revelations are inspiring, unsettling, and sometimes beyond our comprehension. We give thanks for your word, which continues to be an everlasting source of wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

Anthem: *Geistliches Lied, Op. 30*, by Johannes Brahms

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

*Laß dich nur nichts nicht dauren mit Trauren,  
sei stille, wie Gott es fügt,  
so sei vergnügt mein Wille!*

*Was willst du heute sorgen auf Morgen?*

*Der Eine steht allem für,  
der gibt auch dir das Deine.  
Sei nur in allem Handel ohn Wandel,*

*steh feste, was Gott beschleußt,  
das ist und heißt das Beste.*

*Amen.*

Do not be sorrowful or regretful;  
Be calm, as God has ordained,  
and thus my will shall be content.

What do you want to worry about from day to day?

There is One who stands above all  
who gives you, too, what is yours.

Only be steadfast in all you do,  
stand firm; what God has decided,  
that is and must be the best.

Amen.

Scriptures: John 11:1-45 • The raising of Lazarus

Tiegan Benson

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all

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<sup>2</sup> Written by Roxanne Williams, **Gathering**, Lent/Easter, 2020, p. 37. Used with permission.

right.” Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us get him.” Thomas, who was called the twin, said to his fellow disciples, “let us also go so that we may die with him.” When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The teacher is here and is calling for you.” And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come, and see.” Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, there is already a stench because he has been dead for four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Creator, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him and let him go.” Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

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

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: *Speak your deepest longing*

Rev. Karen Bridges

Hymn: *What Calls Me from Death*

**More Voices 93**

**Tune: Deer Park VU 878**

**What calls me from the death where I have rested?  
Why am I now emerging from my tomb?  
I sense that I am coming to be tested.  
Is this my second birthing from the womb?**

**Now I can hear the voice of Jesus calling,  
but it is not the Saviour's voice alone,  
for others share their words as tears are falling.  
Collectively, they roll away the stone.**

**The remnants of my past I now am shedding;  
the bits of cloth that cling I now discard.  
And in this new direction I am heading,  
I know that I will find my own reward.**

**No matter that my tomb was of long standing,  
that change seemed futile, out of reach for me.  
If I accept the life that God is handing,  
my blessing is a new identity.**

Pastoral Prayers

Rev. Brian Webb

Sung Lord's Prayer:

**Voices United p. 960**

**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.**

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### *Grateful Response*

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Offering:

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

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,

**bles 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>3</sup>**

Hymn: *Come Down, O Love Divine*

*Voices United 367*

**Come down, O love divine,  
seek now this soul of mine,  
and visit it with your own ardour glowing.  
O Comforter, draw near,  
within my heart appear,  
and kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.**

**O let it freely burn,  
till earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
and let your glorious light  
shine ever on my sight,  
and clothe me round, my onward path illuming.**

**And so the yearning strong  
with which the soul will long  
shall far outpass the power of human telling;  
for none can guess its grace,  
till love create the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes its dwelling.**

Commissioning

Postlude: *Fugue*, by Gustav Merkel

Allan Bevan, organ

Questions for Reflection:

What dry bones are represented in your own spiritual lives?

How will the spirit of God bring new life to our midst?

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<sup>3</sup> Celebrating God's Presence, 5R001.



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# R-W Report

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## Next Sunday

**Sunday, April 2, 2023**

### **Palm Sunday**

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

**Matthew 21: 1-11** • Jesus enters Jerusalem

**Sermon:** *The Roar of the Crowd*

According to tradition, Jesus has been a public figure for three years. During this time, he has developed a reputation for being someone who taught with extraordinary authority. His interpretation of the teachings of his Jewish faith endeared him to everyone except the religious authorities. After a number of run-ins with religious leaders in a number of smaller communities in his home region, his journey takes Jesus and his followers to Jerusalem, the center of religious and civil power. When he arrives there, he is met with great fanfare and the expectation that he will lead a rebellion that has been anticipated for generations. Questions: Have you ever been in a large crowd that was filled with anticipation as someone important was about to arrive? What was the feeling of that moment? What happened? Did the arrival itself live up to the hype and build-up?

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

### **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

|             |   |          |
|-------------|---|----------|
| Sun Mar 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 - <b>Memorial Hall</b>                   | 11:45 am |
|             | Membership Class - <b>Club Room</b>                 | 12:30 pm |
|             | Koinonia - <b>Memorial Hall</b>                     | 5:30 pm  |
| Mon Mar 27  | Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>             | 7:00 pm  |
| Tues Mar 28 | Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b> | 12:00 pm |
|             | M&P Meeting - <b>Online</b>                         | 7:00 pm  |
| Wed Mar 29  | Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>             | 1:30 pm  |
|             | R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>       | 7:30 pm  |
| Thur Mar 30 | 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 April 2 | 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 |
|             | Membership Class - <b>Club Room</b>             | 12:30 pm |
| Mon April 3 | Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>         | 7:00 pm  |

|              |   |          |
|--------------|---|----------|
| Tues April 4 | Scripture Reflections - <b>Club Room &amp; Zoom</b>   | 12:00 pm |
|              | Spirited Arts Movement Workshop - <b>Room 11</b>      | 7:00 pm  |
| Wed April 5  | Spirited Art Studio - <b>Art Studio</b>               | 1:30 pm  |
|              | Spirited Art Writing Workshop - <b>Club Room</b>      | 7:00 pm  |
|              | R-W Choir - <b>Lower Hall &amp; Sanctuary</b>         | 7:30 pm  |
| Thur April 6 | Maundy Thursday - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b>       | 7:00 pm  |
| Fri April 7  | Good Friday Service - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b>   | 10:30 am |
| Sat April 8  | Easter Vigil - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b>          | 7:00 pm  |
| Sun April 9  | Easter Sunrise Service - <b>Paul Kane Park</b>        | 7:00 am  |
|              | Easter Sunday Service - <b>Sanctuary &amp; Online</b> | 10:30 am |

## Volunteer Opportunities

### FELLOWSHIP HELPERS

Seeking volunteers to help with prep and clean-up for Sunday fellowship. You can sign up for multiple Sundays or just one! By signing up to help prepare and serve beverages and to clean up after Sunday fellowship, you are contributing to the life of Robertson-Wesley. Plus, it's a great way to get to know other members of the community of faith. See the sign-up sheet in Memorial Hall for more information.

### R-W News & Notes

#### STAFF

Rev. Dirk Jessen is away on holidays from **March 23-27**.

### FROM TRASH TO TREASURE

Robertson-Wesley announces its first mini-rummage sale of the year! The sale will feature kitchen items only, such as gadgets, small appliances, tea towels, cookbooks, sets of carving knives, baking sheets etc. Donations will be accepted at the church beginning on Sunday, April 30. Volunteers are needed on Friday, **May 5** to set up sale items from 9-4, and Saturday, **May 6** to sell items, help customers and greet people from 9-4. A sign-up sheet for volunteers is in Memorial Hall.

### KOINONIA

The theme for the evening is "Dealing with Difficult Days", led by Arleen Drysdale. In our everyday lives we may all expect such days (ongoing issues, and others such as the isolation and uncertainty caused by the recent pandemic), where we wish for comfort and support. Some of this response can be found through talking with others about what could help us through these trials. Discussion in small groups, comforting Bible readings and music will be shared. You are most welcome to join the group for POTLUCK SUPPER at 5:30 pm, and WORSHIP at 7:00 pm, **Today** in Memorial Hall. If you are able, a contribution towards the shared meal will be happily received. All are welcome!

## **GREEN BITES**

This past week the City of Edmonton experienced disturbingly poor air quality. Seniors, small children, and persons with lung and/or cardiac disease were especially affected. Coughing and clearing one's throat were familiar sounds throughout our City. Edmonton has four continuous air quality monitoring stations that measure contaminants in the air. The resulting contaminant number is known as the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI). The AQHI has become part of most weather reports. We can help to minimize pollution by reducing the idling of vehicles, shopping closer to home, using public transportation as much as possible, using rakes or shovels rather than snow or leaf blowers, etc. In fact, David Suzuki once said that if we really wanted to fight climate change we could live more like our grandparents did! - The Environmental Stewardship group.

## **MEMBERSHIP CLASS**

Sundays for 5 weeks from 12:30 - 2:00 pm (**March 26, April 2, 16, 23**) in the Club Room. This is an opportunity to talk about your faith, to learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. It is also an opportunity to learn about the history, polity and faith practice of The United Church of Canada, and how we live out our faith in the world. After the class you will be asked to discern for yourselves whether or not you wish to publicly proclaim your commitment in this dynamic faith organisation. If you wish to participate in the group please contact Rev. Karen at [karen.bridges@rwuc.org](mailto:karen.bridges@rwuc.org) to register.

## **THE ELEMENTS: Spirited Arts Movement Workshop**

**April 4**, 7-9 pm in Room 11. For generations, different cultures have tried to understand the universe by breaking it down to its basic elements: often this means fire, earth, air, and water. This acting workshop will explore how these elements (and others!) can help us in performance or daily life – or in other uses of our imagination. Facilitated by Charlie Peters.

## **RAINBOW AFTER RAIN: Spirited Arts Writing Workshop**

**April 5**, 7-9 pm in the Club Room. The rainbow symbol is one of hope, inclusion, love, and friendship. After the storm when the sky is still full of moisture, the rainbow shines the strongest. In this workshop, we'll explore making rainbow poems: poems which give us hope when we need it and show us how far we've come. Facilitated by Beth Janzen.

## **FOOD BANK**

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

## In the Community

### **WOMEN'S INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM**

**April 26** at 6:30 pm hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association. This annual multi-faith event brings together scholars from the world's religions to speak on a common topic from the point of view of their respective religious traditions. This year's symposium's theme is 'The Empowerment of Women Through their Faith'. Rev. Karen Bridges will speak at this event along with other women from different faith traditions. For more information and tickets visit: [eventbrite.ca/e/interfaith-symposium-empowerment-of-women-through-their-faith-tickets-568964256407](https://eventbrite.ca/e/interfaith-symposium-empowerment-of-women-through-their-faith-tickets-568964256407)

### **YEG FAMILY COUNSELLING: UNRAVELLING**

#### **A 6-week Process Group for Survivors of Religious Trauma**

Religious Trauma is something that impacts our relationships with ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities SO MUCH, but it is so rarely talked about. Join YEG Family Counselling in creating a space to discuss, process, and untangle the threads of Religious Trauma. This is a space to tell your story with support and understanding with the hope that you will come away with new stories of hope and healing. Wednesday Evenings **April 5 - May 10** from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Registration is open to all, regardless of their current connections to religious and/or spiritual communities and/or practices. \$300 for six group therapy sessions (we recognize that there are significant equity factors for those affected by Religious Trauma and will have equity rate spots available) To register visit: <https://forms.gle/f61E2JEKbgfbyALs8>

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### *Worship Notes*

As we continue 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*

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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