



An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada

2023 September 24

Creation 3

**God never gives
up on us...
Let us, like Jacob
persevere
in seeking
God's blessing!**



**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

Please know that in the eyes of God you already belong here and you are welcome to participate in any of the activities of the congregation.

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground for Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 4, who are of mixed Indigenous & European heritage.

ACCESSIBILITY

There is an elevator located inside the building with the glass door entrance. Access ramps can be found: inside leading from the lobby to the sanctuary and outside at the rear of the building, leading from the parking lot.

There are accessible washrooms located in the lobby near the elevator.

Hearing assistance devices are available from the ushers.

Large print worship bulletins, and hymn books are available from the ushers.

Service animals are welcome, except where food is prepared.

We commit to make R-W a comfortable space for people with cognitive impairment. If you require accommodations related to cognitive functioning please contact the office.

BABY/ CHILDREN'S AMENITIES

People can breastfeed anywhere in the building, should you want more privacy there is designated nursing space in the Millson room, located by the grand piano. Baby changing tables are installed in all washrooms. If you wish to use it, a children's activity centre is set up in the Chapel. There are also activity books available for children. Please ask the usher.

INFORMATION

The ushers located at the entrances are here to help should you have any questions. More information about the church and church activities can be found in the pamphlet racks outside Memorial Hall.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please do not leave valuables unattended anywhere in the church.



10209 123 St, Edmonton T5N 1N3 780-482-1587
mail@rwuc.org www.rwuc.org

Friends in Christ

Prelude: *Prelude on "Thaxted"* by Gustav Holst arr. by Charles Callahan
Dr. Allan Bevan, organ

Embracing Our Spirit

Introit: *Sleepy Song*, by Sherryl Sewepagaham Belle Canto

Call to Worship:

Creator God we come before you today

with a spirit of tenacity.

We stand before you, O God

with a spirit of tenacity.

We appreciate and value the gift of each person we meet

with a spirit of tenacity.

We embrace the possibilities and hold onto hope in God's call

with a spirit of tenacity.

We share the abundance of all we receive

with a spirit of tenacity.

We reach out to one another in friendship and respect

with a spirit of tenacity.

We worship God this day!

Amen.

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. 2x

Coming into God's Presence

Rev. Karen Bridges

God's Holy Word

Prayer of Illumination:

Open our spirits to receive the stories of your people, O God. Open our hearts to notice our own story within them. Open our minds that we might be transformed by the act of listening and receiving.

Amen.¹

Scripture:

Arleen Drysdale

Genesis 32:9-13, 22-30 • Jacob Wrestles God

And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' I am not worthy of the least of all the

¹ Written by Tori Mullin **Gathering**, Pentecost 2, 2022, p. 37. Used with permission.

steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. Yet you have said, "I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the seas, which cannot be counted because of their number." The same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a person wrestled with him until daybreak. When the person saw that they did not prevail against Jacob, they struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with them. Then the person said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So the person said to Jacob, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the person said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked them, "Please tell me your name." But the person said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there the person blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved."

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem: *Sing Me to Heaven*, by Daniel Gawthrop

Belle Canto

Sermon: *God of Blessings*

Rev. Karen Bridges

Grateful Response

Hymn: *There Is a Time*

More Voices 165

**There is a time that we must rise
There is a time that we must stand
There is a time that we must come together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love and blessed the promise gathered now.**

**There is a time that we must leave
Go from the place where hatreds breed
and, turning, feel the Spirit breathe us together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love and blessed the promise gathered now.**

**There is a time we know the way
There is a time we watch and pray
In living faith we make our way together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love and blessed the promise gathered now.
Upon the dry a cloud will rise**

**And truth will shine among the lies
And wisdom sing as we arise together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love and blessed the promise gathered now.**

**There is a bow within the rain
And it will come and bend again
And colours shine where we have been together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love and blessed the promise gathered now.**

Pastoral Prayers
Sung Lord's Prayer:

Rev. Dirk Jessen

Voices United p. 959

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever.**

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 by scanning the QR code. Tax receipts are issued at the end of the year for donations over \$20 if your name and address are provided.



Offertory: *Touch the Earth Lightly*

Voices United 307 vs 3&4

**Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.**

**God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently and making us one.**

Prayer of Gratitude:

Gracious God, you give us every good thing we need. Out of all that we have received, we return to you a portion of our blessings. We ask that these gifts, and the givers, be blessed in your presence. Amen.²

Hymn: *O God Beyond All Praising*

Voices United 256

**O God beyond all praising,
we worship you today
and sing the love amazing
that songs cannot repay;
for we can only wonder
at every gift you send,
at blessings without number
and mercies without end:
we lift our hearts before you
and wait upon your word,
we honour and adore you,
our great and mighty Lord.**

**The flower of earthly splendour
in time must surely die,
its fragile bloom surrender
to you our God most high;
but hidden from all nature
the eternal seed is sown -
though small in mortal stature,
to heaven's garden grown:
for Christ, your gift from heaven
from death has set us free,
and we through him are given
the final victory!**

**Then hear, O gracious Savior,
This song of praise we sing.
May we, who know your favour
Our humble service bring;
and whether our tomorrows
be filled with good or ill,
we'll triumph through our sorrows
and rise to bless you still:
to marvel at your beauty
and glory in your ways,
and make a joyful duty
our sacrifice of praise.**

² Written by Wanda Winfield, **Gathering**, Pentecost 2, 2023, p.39. Used with permission.

Commissioning:

And the blessing of God, whose love for us is generous beyond the telling of it but not beyond the knowing; the blessing of Jesus, whose stories lead us on good pathways; and the blessing of the Spirit, who moves within us and around us to turn the world upside down, go with us as we leave this place of worship. Blessings galore be with you.

Thanks be to God! ³

Postlude: *Psalm 19 The Heavens Declare the Glory of God*, by B. Marcello
arr. H. H. Hopson Allan Bevan, organ

Question for Reflection:

What are you wrestling with on your journey of faith?

What important quest are you clinging to?

R-W Report

Next Sunday

Sunday, Oct 1, 2023

Creation 4 World Wide Communion

A Gratitude Minute

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

Exodus 1:8-14; 3:1-15 • God calls Moses to bring release.

Sermon: Face to face with God.

Over and over I hear people ask the question, "Am I worthy of God?" The answer is YES! There are times in each person's life when we transition to a new stage of life or we struggle with a forced change in our life, whether it be a job, a relationship, or housing related. The story of Moses gives us hope. Here was a man who was destined to be killed as an infant, who was raised by the family that enslaved his relatives, who was then chosen by God to stand up against the tyranny of the Pharaoh. Moses didn't feel that this was something he could do. When Moses came face to face with God he came to see things differently. How has your relationship with God changed the course of your life?

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

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun Sept 24	Sunday Worship - Sanctuary & Online	10:30 am
	Youth Discussion - Youth Room	10:30 am
	Kids' Church - Air Room	10:45 am
	Photo Directory Photos - Club Room	11:30 am
	Fellowship - Memorial Hall	11:45 am
	Communion Workshop - Sanctuary	12:00 pm
	Koinonia - Memorial Hall	5:30 pm

³ Written by Bob Root, **Gathering**, Pentecost 2, 2023, p. 39. Used with permission.

Mon Sept 25	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Sept 26	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
Wed Sept 27	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	Gratitude Team Meeting - Club Room	5:30 pm
	R-W Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary/Lower Hall	7:30 pm
Thurs Sept 28	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm
Sat Sept 30	New to You Clothing Sale - Memorial Hall	9:00 am
	Youth Group - Away	7:00 pm

ON THE HORIZON

Sun Oct 1	Sunday Worship - Sanctuary & Online	10:30 am
	Youth Discussion - Youth Room	10:30 am
	Kids' Church - Air Room	10:45 am
	Fellowship - Memorial Hall	11:45 am
Mon Oct 2	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Oct 3	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
	DEAP - Club Room	6:30 pm
Wed Oct 4	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	R-W Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary/Lower Hall	7:30 pm
Thurs Oct 5	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm

Volunteer Opportunities

YOUTH LEADERS

We are putting together a team of leaders to work with the youth of the church (Grade 7-12). Youth Leaders with the support of the ministers gather with the youth on Sunday morning during worship for a discussion time about our faith. Curriculum and discussion topics are provided. The youth also meet twice a month on a Saturday night generally from 7:00 - 9:30 pm for a time of fun and activities. We like to have a team of 4 leaders. If you are interested please contact Rev. Karen at Karen.bridges@rwuc.org

GARDEN PATCH & KIDS' CHURCH LEADERS/ VOLUNTEERS

We are seeking some dedicated volunteers to work with the youngest in our midst. On most Sundays from **Sept – June** there is programming for the children in the basement of the church. The programming includes stories, games, activities, crafts, baking, discussion etc. The curriculum is provided. It is most helpful to have 2 people with each group. The Garden Patch is for children who are out of diapers (3 years old to Kindergarten). Kids' Church is Grade 1-6. We like to have a team of people who lead these groups and we set up a schedule to help spread the work. Please contact Rev. Karen Karen.bridges@rwuc.org if you are interested in leading over the next program year **Sept 2023 – June 2024**.

NOMINATIONS TEAM

The Board of R-W is working on creating a new team of people (3-5) that will form the Nomination Committee. The nomination committee is responsible for seeking people to fill the elected roles on the R-W Board. Each year there are 1-4 roles that need to be filled. The team also updates the job descriptions when necessary. This is a great way to get to know people in the community of faith and the goal is to help people discover where their gifts from God would best be suited. The work of this team happens primarily from November until the Annual Meeting in March. The Board is seeking people who are willing to talk to others and ask questions. It is helpful if you are a good listener that can match skills with roles. If you are interested in learning more about this role please contact Rev. Karen Bridges: karen.bridges@rwuc.org

R-W News & Notes

PHOTO DIRECTORY

It's time to put a name to the face and compile a new photo directory of people who participate at Robertson-Wesley United. It doesn't matter if you have been here for one week or 90 years... please drop by the Club Room starting at 10:00 am or after Sunday service starting at 11:30 am to get your photo taken **Today**.

NEW NAMETAGS

Please take a moment during fellowship to put your name down should you want a nametag, Elyse will then make typed nametags, so please print clearly. Your nametag can be found in the chapel.

A NEW WAY TO SIGN UP AND VOLUNTEER

R-W has signed up for an online sign-up service to make it easier for coordinators, volunteers, and future volunteers to sign-up to get involved at R-W. Visit rwuc.org/volunteer or use the tablet in the outer office or in Memorial Hall during fellowship.

ART SALE DONATIONS NEEDED

We are collecting art for the Art Sale on **October 28**. Art is in the eye of the beholder - we are collecting paintings, pottery, china, etc. Please deliver to the church or if you need the art to be picked up please call Pat or Sheila at 780-481-0056.

CLOTHING SALE FUNDRAISER

On **September 30th** there will be a fundraising event to sell clothing, shoes, jewellery and other accessories for all ages. Donations can be dropped off at the church starting **Today**. Unsold items will be donated to Bissell Centre. Sign up to volunteer at rwuc.org/volunteer

KOINONIA

Koinonia resumes at Robertson-Wesley **Today** at 5:30 pm in Memorial Hall. What is Koinonia you ask? Koinonia is an opportunity for food and fellowship that has been a quiet part of the life of Robertson-Wesley for 50 years. Koinonia is a Greek word the meaning of which embraces such concepts as community, joint participation and sharing. On the last Sunday of every month (except July and August) we gather for a pot-luck supper. The supper is followed by a discussion, a presentation, a time of worship, or some singing, each gathering is unique. It always concludes with a time of prayer lifting up the concerns of those present. We sing grace at 5:30, so bring yourself and a dish or plate of something a bit before that. If you are not in a place where you can contribute food, come anyway and enjoy what is there to be shared. The September Koinonia will include a brief discussion of the year ahead. Hope to see you there. -Larry Wright

GREEN BITES

“What do you mean, I need to have my leg off?” Jim’s doctor had just told him that there was a cancerous growth on his leg and the treatment was amputation. “Are you sure?” Jim said. He was very angry when he left the doctor’s office. Surely the doctor didn’t know what he was talking about. Jim had a nice life and family, and he had just got a promotion. However he remembered a neighbour who had gone to Mexico for special treatment for his cancer. Jim would try to contact him as soon as he got home. Jim was experiencing the first stages of the grief process; Anger and Denial. The next stage, Bargaining, would find Jim wondering if he should get a second opinion, accept the amputation but put it off as long as he could, or try a special diet just for cancer patients. Many of us are going through the stages of grief regarding Climate Change. Since the wildfires of this past summer, most of us have moved beyond Anger and Denial. Unfortunately we are trapped in the Bargaining Stage. How about small nuclear reactors, or perhaps we can pump carbon into the earth, and of course some of us are counting on technology to save us. Undoubtedly many people are in the stage of Depression and are full of despair about some of the changes we must make in our lifestyle. Let’s hope that we get to the Acceptance stage before it is too late. Perhaps we need special church services in which we can mourn the loss of Mother Earth as we knew her. Maybe we can light a candle each night and pray for guidance during this crisis. Let’s remember that our ancestors survived the Great Depression when life didn’t offer much comfort. The stages of grief described are based on Elizabeth Kubler- Ross’s writings. There are other grief specialists and writers who have expanded the stages to include other emotions and reactions. - the Environmental Stewardship Group

In the Community

ORANGE SHIRT DAY/ NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

September 30, Orange Shirt Day/ the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is an important public day for truth telling, and for commitments to challenging ongoing colonization. As part of the United Church's living into the Apologies, (more info here: <https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice/apologies>) let's join with others to help ensure the ongoing history and impacts of the residential schools system are never forgotten- and that together, we bring about real change. Please make plans for these days and for **October 4**, National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). Visit northernspiritrc.ca/honouring-the-national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation-2023 for ideas and resources. Thank you for any prayerful space and public commitments you can offer.

INTERCONNECT FUNDRAISER + ORANGE SHIRT DAY

The Central Alberta Spiritual Circle/Center and Interconnect Foundation (the new Indigenous community of faith being established in the former Beverly United Church in Edmonton) has created orange t-shirts with the new Centre's logo on them. They are \$30 each, and are available to purchase and pick-up from the Regional Office. Please contact Chloe (northernspirit@united-church.ca) in the Regional office to request your orange shirt!

NOT FALLING FOR YOU

Not Falling for You is a free physical activity program for adults 50 and above, aimed at reducing the risk of falling through mobility improving exercises. R-W is partnering with Alberta Health Services to host these classes. Classes: **October 12 – December 14**, Thursdays 10:00 – 11:00 am

KINDRED HEARTS CAMBODIA FOUNDATION

Please join Kindred Hearts Cambodia Foundation at their 9th annual Wine and Cheese and Silent Auction fundraiser on Friday, **October 13**, 2023! The evening entertainment will be musician, Martin Kerr and will be catered by Dutch Delicious Bakery. All proceeds will go toward the KHC programs in remote Cambodia. The event will be at Robertson-Wesley, and tickets are \$20 at eventbrite.ca or text Leanne Foff 780-278-0603.

Worship Notes

We are in the season of creation which lasts for 5 Sundays beginning the Sunday after Labour Day and continuing through Thanksgiving Sunday. This is the season where we create, and honour that which has been created. This season is symbolized by the colour orange. Orange is a warm colour and is associated with enthusiasm, creativity, fruitfulness, endurance and strength.

September 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and we are encouraged to wear an Orange Shirt. Belle Canto, who is offering music today, has chosen to wear Orange shirts this Sunday in recognition of this day. We are grateful to Heather Johnson, director of Belle Canto and the choir for their gift of music today. Onelicense # 606241.

Cover Image

The cover image is *Wooden Figures Stones Overthrow* by Ulrike Mai from Pixabay.

Minister of Faith Development and Intergenerational Ministry: Vacant

Minister of Social Justice and Outreach: 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