

Between the Aisles

A Robertson-Wesley United Church Quarterly

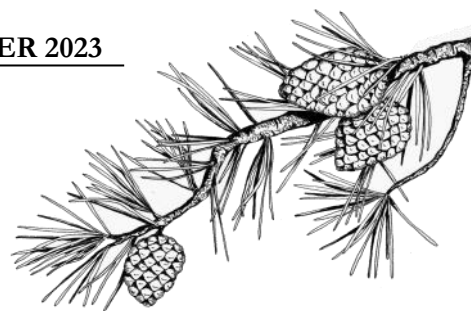
WINTER 2023

For a child has been
born for us, a son given
to us; authority rests
upon his shoulders, and
he is named Wonderful
Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6-7



Editor's Welcome



Greetings!

We, the editors, hope you enjoy this latest issue of *Between the Aisles*. You will find a smattering of everything; personal reflections, poetry, recipes suitable for holiday entertaining, and of course information about past and upcoming activities at Robertson-Wesley.

We hope that this holiday season is full of joy, fellowship, and pleasure for all members of our Robertson-Wesley family. And all the best in 2024!

Marilee Stephens, Lisa Lane, and Nancy Heule

FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS RECIPES

No Bake Cookies

2 cups sugar
 1/2 cup milk
 1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter
 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 3 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
 1 cup smooth peanut butter
 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
 Large pinch kosher salt

Line a baking sheet with wax paper or parchment.

Bring the sugar, milk, butter and cocoa to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, then let boil for 1 minute.

Remove from the heat. Add the oats, peanut butter, vanilla and salt, and stir to combine.

Drop teaspoonfuls of the mixture onto the prepared baking sheet, and let sit at room temperature until cooled and hardened, about 30 minutes. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Recipe provided by Lisa Lane

Red or Green Festive Punch

Red Punch
 2 litres of cranberry ginger ale
 1 container of tropical fruit sorbet
 Mix the above together in a punch bowl, then add ice.

Green Punch
 2 litres of lime pop
 1 container of lime sherbet
 Mix the above together in a punch bowl, then add ice.

Both punches may be with decorated with sliced fruit such as strawberries or limes.

Recipe provided by Clara Dyck



Finding Peace

There have been several times over the years when anxiety was my constant companion.

I didn't know how to move beyond that state other than by ignoring it and going about my day. I didn't know at the time that this wasn't a healthy way of handling anxiety. Someone shared with me that "anxiety" was an energy similar to "spinning one's wheels" where you're expending much energy but getting nowhere. This person talked to me about meditation and its benefits. In my mind, I pictured a yogi sitting cross-legged meditating for hours. I am no yogi but I decided to try meditation.

I went to a meditation class. During the class, I kept thinking about the things I had to do that day and all that I could be doing instead of sitting there. I soon realized that meditating wasn't helpful for me and I left that class still in an anxious state.

Fast forward to when COVID began and the world was asked to pause and reflect. My pausing and reflecting took me outdoors to walk among the trees. After my walk, I would return home feeling calmer and more nourished. I continued with this activity and found that I was not in an anxious state like I used to be. This was a good outdoor activity that was supporting me and I liked how I was feeling.

During COVID, I began colouring. Creating art is my indoor activity that brings me to a calm and peaceful state. I draw, play with paints, and I become more alive. When I make colour charts and move various colours across the page or canvas, I am mesmerized at what develops in front of me.

Writing also helps me to be in a calmer state. I write prose and poetry. I begin each day writing in my journal. This activity helps me to connect deeper to my Spirit and makes me feel grounded before I begin my day. I am also inspired by the writings of others. Recently I read a quote by Rumi:

"Raise your words, not voice
It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder"

I grew up in a large family where we practiced raising our voices to be heard. I used to think that speaking softly was a sign of weakness. It has taken many years for my view to change. I realize now that there is

strength in speaking softly and as Rumi shares, it is rain that grows the flowers not "thunder."

There is a lot of "thunder" happening in the forms of "wars" in our world right now. This "thunder" is destructive on several levels and if I focus on it, I can feel anxiety growing in my body. When I am in an anxious state, it benefits no-one. Instead, I will focus on Rumi's quote and raise my words. I will raise my words and talk about "hope," I will continue to hold on to my faith, and I will continue to play with my paints to make art. I feel deeply in my soul that our God did not make our world to have it destroyed by wars. Keeping my faith and hope alive by walking outdoors among the trees, listening to the sounds of the birds, and making colourful art is how I keep myself in a calm and peaceful state.

Devika Short

I am lost

I am lost

I stumble through the darkness;
searching for that spark of hope.

That little ray of light, that in the finding, will
brighten my soul.

I am lost

I stumble through my brain;
searching for that idea, the all elusive epiphany.

That in the realizing, will teach my soul.

I am lost

I stumble through my emotions;
searching for that soft, loving word.
That in the saying will elevate my soul.

I am lost

I stumble through my relationships;
searching for that person.
That in the loving will free my soul.

Lisa Lane

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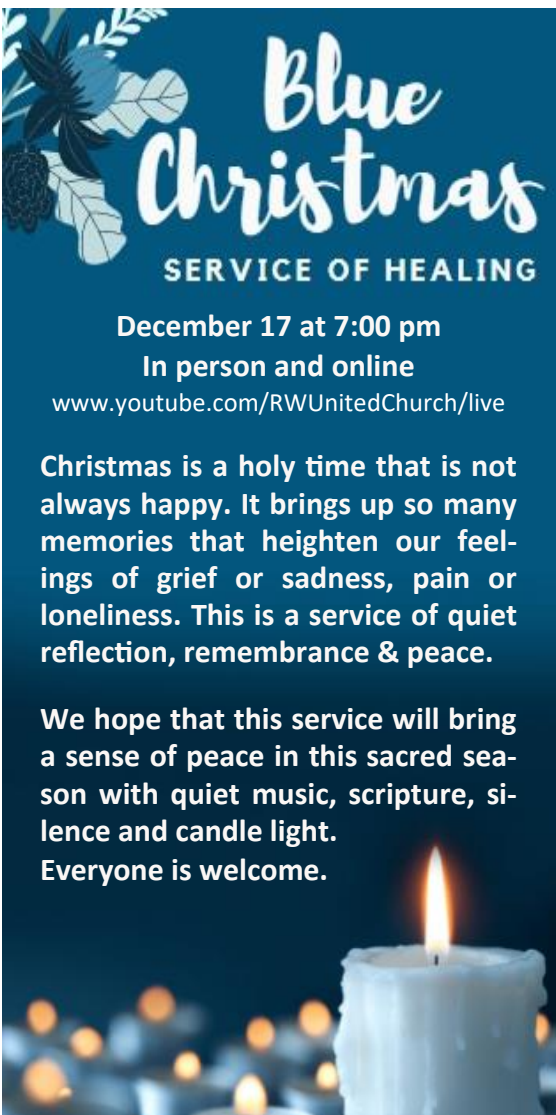
Advent & Christmas



*Journey
through
the
Labyrinth*

Wednesday nights
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
December 6 & 20

Move into the anticipation of Advent in the soft light of an evening walk through the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth will be open each Wednesday evening through Advent in Memorial Hall.





**Blue
Christmas**
SERVICE OF HEALING

December 17 at 7:00 pm
In person and online
www.youtube.com/RWUnitedChurch/live

Christmas is a holy time that is not always happy. It brings up so many memories that heighten our feelings of grief or sadness, pain or loneliness. This is a service of quiet reflection, remembrance & peace.

We hope that this service will bring a sense of peace in this sacred season with quiet music, scripture, silence and candle light. Everyone is welcome.

A SERVICE OF
*Lessons
& Carols*

December 10 at 4:00 pm
in person and online
www.youtube.com/user/RWUnitedChurch/live

This gentle candlelight service is a classic tradition, with a series of scripture readings that take us through the story of God's promise, Israel's longing and waiting, and the fulfilment of the promise in the birth of Christ.

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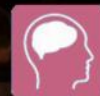
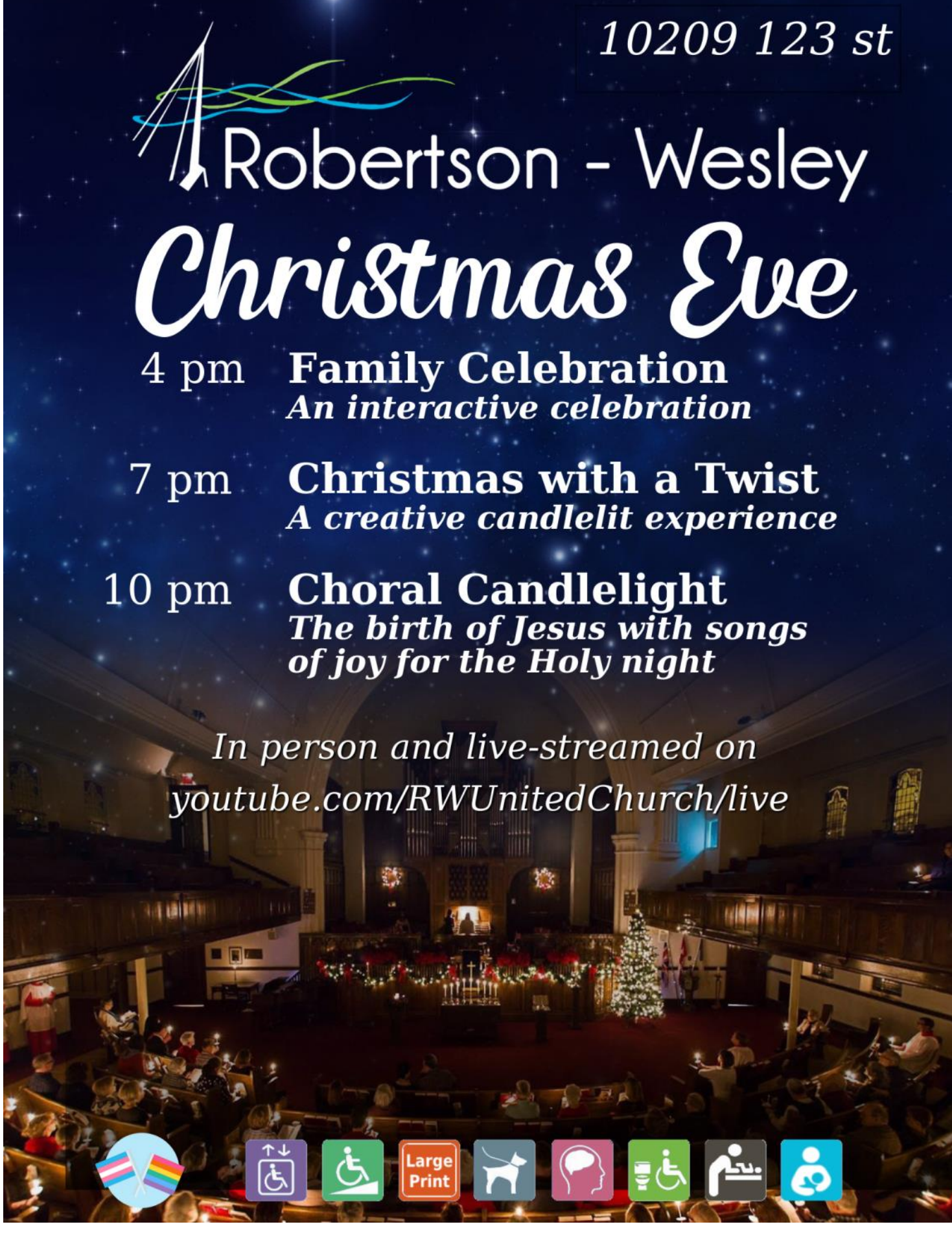
Robertson - Wesley Christmas Eve

4 pm **Family Celebration**
An interactive celebration

7 pm **Christmas with a Twist**
A creative candlelit experience

10 pm **Choral Candlelight**
*The birth of Jesus with songs
of joy for the Holy night*

*In person and live-streamed on
youtube.com/RWUnitedChurch/live*



In May, Robertson-Wesley held a Silent Talent Auction Fundraiser, organized by Tamara Wright and Andrew Hopkyns. We raised over \$4400.00 for the church, but more importantly, we connected people! Dozens of donors and bidders have met over the past months, in the spirit of community, and shared a myriad of diverse and interesting talents.



Distinguished Guests, Please take your seats!

A wonderful evening of opera by Jacqueline Hernandez

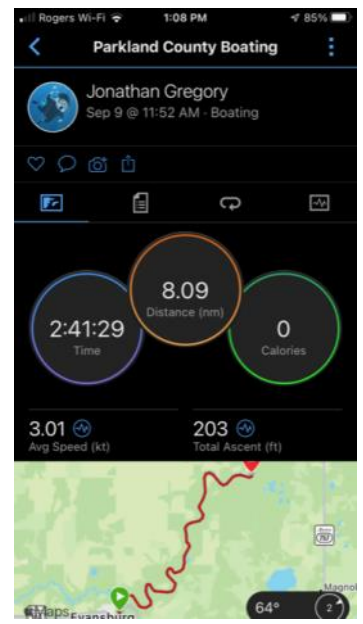
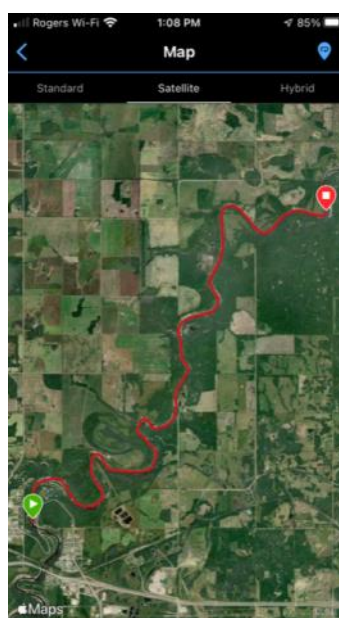
An amazing 45 minute concert was performed in the home of Andrew Hopkyns by Jacqueline Hernandez in late October as part of the Silent Talent Auction item "Distinguished Guests Please Take Your Seats." Jacqueline beautifully performed well-known solos by Puccini, Handel, Schumann, and Strauss. Ten neighbours and friends enjoyed this wonderful concert; many a first time seeing a live performance of opera! Afterwards, appetizers and beverages were enjoyed by the group as they learned more from Jacqueline about the stories of the operatic solos performed. A truly wonderful evening.

Paradise is Just a Paddle Away

Some late summer rain in August and great second Summer weather in September made for perfect conditions for kayaking on the Pembina River. Fierce bidding between Jonathan Gregory and Bill Hodgins resulted in Andrew Hopkyns deciding to offer both families the trip and of course that resulted in more money raised!



The 2 hour and 40-minute journey started at the Pembina River Provincial Park and finished at the Hopkyns property, which has access to a lovely beach. Although the weather was a lovely 23-25C, the water was a bit too chilly for swimming. It wasn't too cold to fish though! Young Daniel Gregory brought his gear and caught a plethora of large carp on a catch and release basis. Everyone enjoyed the late summer sun with celebratory beverages and snacks.





This was Bill Hodgins first adventure in a kayak. After a little explanation, he became a natural at navigating the early rapids and pools of swirling water that we meandered through on our journey.



A late afternoon barbecue was organized at the Hopkyns cabin to round off the day. Andrew's partner, Don Williams, made his signature "Woodward's Potato Salad," as part of the side dishes. As a U of A student, he worked at Woodward's Southgate during the 1970's in their fancy dining room. He has the recipe committed to memory!

A great day was enjoyed by everyone!



A Peek at the Past

Edmonton's Oliver district extends from 109 Street west to 121 Street, south to the valley of the North Saskatchewan River, and north to 104 Avenue. Originally Oliver also included the areas of Glenora, Westmount, and Inglewood.



Because there were several blocks of undeveloped land between Oliver and Edmonton's downtown, one of the lines of the Edmonton Radial Railway was built to

provide transportation to and from Edmonton's West End. Opened in 1908, the ERR functioned until 1951. Once the rail line was opened, Oliver soon became a popular neighbourhood due to both its proximity to the river valley and the beautiful views that the river offered.

Gives me Peace

It's funny how God provides. I used to save all year to get my dogs to the vet. My vet told me about a charity that would give me free vet services A.H.A.S. Of course, I signed up, and in turn, they told me about Elderdog. I had Covid and needed to be in hospital, but refused to go because I had no one to look after my precious fur babies. That's when A.H.A.S told me about Elderdog. I'm not a senior, but I am disabled and one of my dogs was a senior. So I applied, they came out to meet us and we found out how many services they offered. It was quite a miracle, actually.....I joined Elderdog on Oct 9th, 2021. By Nov 24, 2021, I needed them, big time. I slid into a pole on my chair and almost lost my leg. I was in the hospital for 3 weeks....2 surgeries later, my leg was saved. I have been in and of hospital several times since and was so happy that Elderdog had taken such good care of my babies(Patches and Mojo) later, Mojo and Taz. When my Patches passed away in August 2022. I was devastated and unable to function. Elderdog took over, and they arranged with the free vet to cremate my baby girl and bring me her ashes. They have helped take my babies to the groomers and get dog food for them. When my uncle died in December, I inherited his dog Taz. Tammy just added him to the family.

They had people who would walk them for me, especially in the winter, as it's hard to travel through snow on a mobility scooter. We are down to one person walking them twice a week, but at least they are getting a bit of exercise. I am so very grateful for this wonderful charity. If I ever win some money, they get some of it. They also get my babies if anything ever happens to me. I hope that you can find it in your hearts or wallets(lol) to contribute whatever you can, your donation could be time, by way of walking dogs, driving clients and /or pets, as well as fostering the pets while their person is in hospital. They are very much needed by us. Knowing that my most precious ones will be safe and taken care of gives me so much peace.

Submitted by Lisa Lane

Robertson-Wesley United Church

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Salt Dough Ornaments

This salt dough recipe is much like Play-Doh but can be baked to a permanent finish. The dough can be mixed with food coloring before modeling or painted afterward. Great for making Christmas ornaments for the tree!

Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup salt
1 cup cold water

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees F (120 degrees C). Line a baking sheet with parchment or wax paper.
2. Combine flour and salt in a bowl. Add water, a few tablespoons at a time, mixing well after each addition. Knead dough for 10 minutes. Wrap and let rest for 20 minutes.
3. Transfer dough to a floured work surface and knead until soft and pliable. Roll out to a thickness of 1/8 inch; cut desired festive shapes with cookie cutters. Transfer onto the prepared baking sheet; use a toothpick to make a hole in each ornament for hanging.
4. Allow to cool completely, paint and then varnish.

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