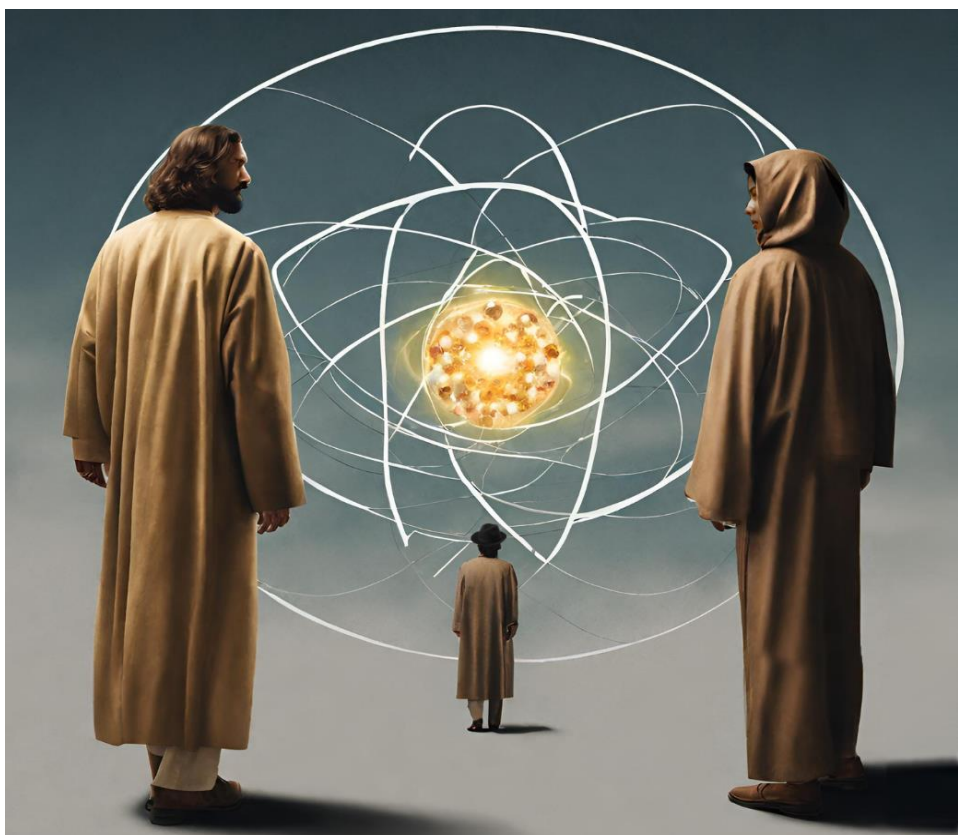




An Affirming Congregation of The United Church of Canada

2024 February 4

Epiphany 5



Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of differing abilities, ethnicity, economic circumstances, sexual orientation, age, or gender identity. 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 on each floor located near the elevator.



For hearing assistance download the Listen Everywhere app on your cell phone and connect to the R-W network by scanning this QR code. Please bring your own headphones to listen on. Classic hearing assists headsets are still 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

Announcements at 10:15 AM

Prelude: *Preludium*, by Christian Heinrich Rinck

Dr. Allan Bevan, organ

Embracing Our Spirit

Call to Worship:

“Come with me.”

We receive the Jesus words in times of great joy.

“Come with me.”

We receive the Jesus words in times of stress and difficulty.

“Come with me.”

We receive the Jesus words when they are the last words we want to welcome.

“Come with me.”

We receive the Jesus words addressed to our church.

“Come with me.”

We receive the Jesus words. We take them to heart, and we faithfully go to work¹

Hymn: *Sent Out in Jesus' Name*

More Voices 212

**Sent out in Jesus' name,
our hands are ready now
to make the world the place
in which the kingdom comes.**

**Sent out in Jesus' name,
our hands are ready now
to make the world the place
in which the kingdom comes.**

**The angels cannot change
a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love,
of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do,
to set it really free,
O, help us to obey,
and carry out your will.**

**The angels cannot change
a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love,
of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do,
to set it really free,
O, help us to obey,
and carry out your will.**

¹ Written by **David Sparks**, Summerland, B.C., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2023/24 p. 42. Used with permission.

Prayer for Renewal:

Loving God, you've called us and we've come.

It is good to be together in this place.

We come bearing the marks and scars of our living, and offer them to your healing presence.

Bless us as we gather—each one of us— that we may know your Spirit moving among us as we share our calling of discipleship.

Bless us and bless our time together, so that we might be a blessing in your world.²

Through this time together, through the love of Christ,

may the world be changed, and may all be made whole. Amen.³

Coming into God's Presence

Rev. Dirk Jessen

God's Holy Word

Prayer of Illumination:

You come to us, O God, along paths of stubborn resistance and dutiful persistence, calling us into lives unexpected and grace undeserved. Startle us once again through your Word, we pray, that our hearts may leap toward you, following faithfully the One in whom your fullness dwells, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. **Amen.⁴**

Scripture:

Gloria Kazywiski

Mark 6:1-13 • Rejection of Jesus and the Mission of the Twelve.

Jesus left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And Jesus could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. Jesus called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them" So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

² Written by **Bob Root**, Peterborough, Ont., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2023/24, p. 43. Used with permission.

³ Written by **Richard Bott**, Grace U.C., Burlington, Ont., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2023/24, p.43. Used with permission.

⁴ Written by **Matt Emery**, Cloverdale U.C., Surrey, B. C., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2023/24, p. 47. Used with permission.

May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem: *Winter Carol*, by Austin Lovelace

Choir of Robertson-Wesley

Sermon: *Cosmic Forces*

Rev. Dirk Jessen

Hymn: *Jesus, Your Boundless Love to Me*

Voices United 631

**Jesus, your boundless love to me
no thought can reach, no tongue declare.**

**O let my heart your dwelling be;
come, reign without a rival there.**

**Yours fully, yours alone I am;
O let your love my heart inflame.**

**O grant that nothing in my soul
may dwell, but your pure love alone;**

**O may that love possess me whole,
my joy, my treasure, and my crown.**

**All coldness from my heart remove;
my every act, word, thought, be love.**

**O love, how gracious is your way;
all fear before your presence flies.**

**Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away
where'er your healing beams arise.**

**O Jesus, nothing may I do,
but seek my joy in serving you.**

**In suffering, be your love my peace;
in weakness, be your love my power;
and when the storms of life shall cease,**

**O Jesus, in that final hour,
for me be rod and staff and guide,
and draw me safely to your side.**

Grateful Response

Pastoral Prayers

Rev. Karen Bridges

Lord's Prayer:

Voices United p. 921

**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 that trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kin-dom and the power and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

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 by speaking to an usher, 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: *Song of Thankfulness and Praise*

Voices United 101 v. 4

**Grant us grace to see you, Lord, mirrored in your holy Word;
with your grace our lives endow, grace to imitate you now,
that we like to you may be at your great epiphany,
anthems be to you addressed, God in flesh made manifest.**

Prayer of Gratitude:

We offer into your mission, living Christ, these gifts.

**Sometimes we become weary in the giving,
so bless us with your joy.**

Sometimes we are challenged by the enormity of the need,
so bless us with your generosity.

**Sometimes we wonder if they make a difference,
so bless us with your vision.**

In faith, we are inspired by your call,

So bless our gifts as you bless us in our giving in Jesus' name. Amen.⁵

Hymn: *Live Into Hope*

Voices United 699

**Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!**

**Live into hope the blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.**

**Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.**

**Live into hope of captives freed
from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
to faith and hope and joy and peace.**

⁵ Written by **Gord Dunbar**, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2022/23, page 50. Used with permission.

Commissioning:

As we go out into the world, may we remember all the wisdom and power that God, the Creator, and Jesus, the Christ have taught us. May we use those teachings daily as we interact with others. May we, by the Spirit, spread kindness and love everywhere we go. **Amen.**⁶

Postlude: *Fugue in A Minor*, by Gustav Merkel

Dr. Allan Bevan, organ

Questions for Reflection:

How do you imagine cosmic forces? How do they look? How do they sound? How do they feel? Are these forces bring things together or do they destroy? Who should be allowed to explore these forces? Who should be able to use them?

R-W Report

Next Sunday
Sunday, February 11, 2024
Transfiguration Sunday
Whole Family Worship

Children & Youth: Children and youth are invited to worship with their families.

Scripture: Mark 8:27-9:8 • Peter’s confession, and the Transfiguration.

Sermon: Who do you say that I am?

Best Picture Nominated Movie: Barbie

Continuing a Robertson-Wesley tradition, on Sunday, February 11, the sermon will look at the scripture reading of the day with an Oscar-nominated movie in mind. The scripture passage today explores questions of identity. Who is Jesus? Who are we? Who does Jesus say that he is? Who does Jesus say that we are? The Barbie movie explores this theme as well, as Barbie has an existential crisis. Barbie asks the question whether her life has meaning, purpose or value. Jesus calls the disciples to reflect on the role of Jesus and their purpose in God’s kin-dom. What will the story of Transfiguration reveal about Jesus? What will Barbie’s journey into the real world reveal about who she is and her existence?

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

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun Feb 4	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
	Spiritual Formation Conversation - Club Room	12:00 pm
Mon Feb 5	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Feb 6	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm

⁶ Written by **Stephen Ernst**, First South U.C., First South N.S., **Gathering**, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, 2022/23, page 50. Used with permission.

	DEAP - Club Room	5:30 pm
Wed Feb 7	Canterbury Service - Canterbury Court	10:30 am
	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	R-W Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary/Lower Hall	7:30 pm
Thurs Feb 8	Not Falling for You - Memorial Hall	10:00 am
	Men's Group - TBC	10:00 am
	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm
Sat Feb 10	Community Dinner - Memorial Hall	5:00 pm

ON THE HORIZON

Sun Feb 11	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 Feb 12	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	7:00 pm
Tues Feb 13	Scripture Reflections - Club Room & Zoom	12:00 pm
	UCW - Memorial Hall	1:30 pm
	Finance Committee - Club Room & Zoom	7:00 pm
Wed Feb 14	Spirited Art Studio - Art Studio	1:30 pm
	Ash Wednesday - Sanctuary	7:00 pm
Thurs Feb 15	Not Falling for You - Memorial Hall	10:00 am
	Nova Bells - Lower Hall	5:15 pm
	R-W Ringers - Lower Hall	6:45 pm

Volunteer Opportunities

LEADERSHIP SEARCH

We are seeking to fill several positions on the R-W Board as people have finished their two year terms. It is up to the Community of Faith to help discern who amongst us is being called by God to lead R-W in the next few years. In Memorial Hall (and on the website at rwuc.org/leadership-search) there are job descriptions posted, along with a booklet that explains the process for filling these roles. We encourage everyone to prayerfully consider if you are called or if you know of someone who would be great in these positions. We are seeking: Incoming Chair of the Board, Treasurer, Chair of Ministry and Personnel and Northern Spirit Regional Representative. If you are interested, we ask that you fill out an expression of interest found in the Yellow booklet near the poster. If you have any questions feel free to talk to the people who are presently in the role or the staff of R-W.

COMMUNION SERVER VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, **February 18**, we will celebrate communion, sharing Jesus' meal. All people, all ages, are welcome to serve Communion. If this is your first time, know that someone will assist you in learning how to serve Communion. You only need to come a little earlier (10:00 am). If you are able to serve, sign up on the tablet in the outer office, or visit rwuc.org/volunteer.

COMMUNITY DINNER KEY LEADERSHIP VOLUNTEERS

R-W's Community Dinners are hugely successful. It's a fulfilling act of service and connection. We welcome one time volunteers and regulars with open arms on a sign up basis. At this time what we require are 2-3 people able to commit to join our leadership group. Attending the dinner once per month for approximately 5 hours and occasional email communication. Tasks include kitchen work, volunteer liaison and supporting tasks needed on the day of the dinner. If you are interested please contact Rhonda at Rljblack@shaw.ca.

R-W News & Notes

SPIRITUAL FORMATION POD

Today, at 12:00 pm after church, the Spiritual Formation Pod will meet in the Club Room. We will discuss guest packages. Why should we have one? What should go into one? And who should build it.

ANNUAL REPORT

The deadline for reports from the committees, pods and groups of the church is **Today**. Send your information to mail@rwuc.org with "2023 Annual Report Submission" in the subject line.

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 collaborating with Alberta Health Services to host these classes. **Thursdays** 10:00 – 11:15 am, until April 18.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, **February 14** at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary and Live Streamed. 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 and then the congregation will be invited to receive the sign of the cross with ashes on their hand or forehead. It is a very reflective and meaningful service. Everyone is welcome.

BISELL CENTRE: COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

On **February 24** 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 homelessness 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. The Bissell Centres goal for CNOY 2024 is to raise \$200,000 with the support of 60+ teams and 400+ walkers. If you're interested, head to the Edmonton Downtown event page here and join the Robertson-Wesley United Team: <https://cnoy.org/edmontondowntown>. Click on "register to walk + fundraise"

GREEN BITES

The Experience of Joy in the Midst of the Climate Crisis

1. Look up at the sky in early daylight, and then again in the evening before the sun goes down. Be sure to take a deep breath of gratitude.
2. Observe a bird's flight pattern and see how it navigates and looks for its food. Watch how it searches the ground or approaches a tree for berries.
3. Hold the hand of a small child and think how fortunate you are to do so.
4. When preparing a meal, cast a thought to your ancestors, who, in most cases, grew their own food and raised their own animals. Sigh as you sense the warmth of a barn. -The Environmental Stewardship Group.

SPIRITED ART WORKSHOP

Finding Light in the Shadows: Integrated Self

February 24, 1 - 4 pm. In her book "The Dark Side of the Light Chasers", Debbie Ford says that the path to wholeness and healing is through loving embrace of both our light and shadow selves. By creating self-portraits with dry media, we will explore how all form is modelled with light and shadow and reflect on how we may use this as a metaphor for self-awareness, acceptance and healing. Portraits can be realistic or abstracted/expressive! No previous experience required, just an openness to try something new. All supplies included. Please register on rwuc.org/workshops

LEARN THE SIGNS OF A SCAM

Phone and internet scams have been making the rounds again. Many scams and frauds attempt to imitate businesses or government services in order to gain access to your personal and financial information. It may be a scam if someone is:

- Demanding immediate payment
- Requesting payment with cryptocurrency like bitcoin or gift cards
- Using threatening language
- Sending you a link to click on
- Asking for personal or financial information

How to protect yourself

- Don't be afraid to say no
- Don't be intimidated by high-pressure tactics
- Watch out for urgent pleas that play on your emotions
- Do your research
- Don't give out personal information
- Beware of unsolicited calls where the caller asks you for personal information, such as: Your name, Your address, Your birthdate, Your Social Insurance Number (SIN), Your credit card or banking information

Recognize spoofing

Spoofing is used by fraudsters to mislead victims and convince them that they are communicating with legitimate people, companies, or organizations.

Caller ID spoofing: Fraudsters have the ability to manipulate the phone number appearing on call display either by call or text message. They can display legitimate phone numbers for law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, government agencies or service providers.

Email spoofing: Fraudsters can manipulate the sender's email address to make you believe that the email you're receiving is from a legitimate source.

Website spoofing: Fraudsters will create fraudulent websites that look legitimate. In many cases, fraudsters will use a similar domain/website URL to the legitimate company or organization with a minor spelling difference.

Protect yourself from spoofing by

- Never assume phone numbers appearing on your call display are accurate
- Hang up and make an outgoing call when someone claims to be contacting you from your financial institution, service provider, law enforcement or government agency. Call the company or agency in question directly. Make sure you research their contact information and don't use the information provided in the first message or call.
- Verify any calls with your bank or credit card company by calling the phone number on the back of your bank or credit card.
- If you've received a call or other contact from a family member in trouble, talk to other family members to confirm the situation.
- Never click on links received via text message or email
- When visiting a website, always verify the URL and domain to make sure you are on the official website

These tips are from <https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca>

In the Community

JESUS LOVES 2SLGBTQ+ PEOPLE (AND HERE'S WHY)

What does the Bible actually say - and not say - about gay relationships and equal marriage? Rev. Michael Coren will outline Christian arguments for love and equality as well as provide a critique of the hypocrisy and inconsistency of conservative Christianity and its homophobia as part of Queer Horizons: A Speaker Series Exploring 2SLGBTQ+ Research and Community Work. The Queer Horizons speaker series, presented by the MacEwan Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity, profiles research and community work focused on 2SLGBTQ+ identities, issues, and topics. All events are free and open to everyone in the community. Monday, **February 12** from 5:00-6:00 pm, 5-142 CN Conference Theatre, at Grant MacEwan.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

Friday, **March 1** at 1:30 pm, Spirit Of Hope United Church (7909 – 82 Ave Nw; Edmonton) The plight of the people of the middle east is in the news and on people's minds. Everyone is welcome to enjoy this special service of story, song and prayer which has been created by the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada and was written by Women of Palestine. There will be a chance for visiting and refreshments afterwards.

AMIGO'S BLUE GUITAR

Walterdale Theatre is presenting *Amigo's Blue Guitar* by Canadian playwright Joan MacLeod, and directed by R-W member Bob Klakowich. It is a sensitive play about a family living off the BC coast that sponsors a refugee from El Salvador. Set in 1990, while a devastating civil war raged in that country, this award winning play explores what it means and feels like to relate to someone of a different culture who has endured intense personal grief. The story is told with warmth and humour, and invites us to consider how we ourselves would react. The Sunday matinee on **February 11** at 2 pm will feature an audience talk back following the performance moderated by David Goa, a U of A professor and expert on immigration and new Canadians. For further information, and ticket purchase, go to the Walterdale website at <https://walterdaletheatre.square.site>. Tickets can also be purchased at the door pending availability.

Worship Notes

The building in which we worship and serve the world was first a Presbyterian church that came into union with The United Church of Canada in 1925. Back in 1912, plans were under way to build a new church for the growing Robertson congregation, with the purchase of the land upon which the building sits today. Construction was to begin in 1913, but all was not well in Edmonton. The real estate market was in a steep decline and money markets all over the world had collapsed, making the borrowing of money very difficult. The congregation had no choice but to look for a less grand building design and chose the First Baptist Church in Calgary as a model. The opening service was held on January 24, 1914 and people came each evening during that week. R-W was declared a Historic Heritage building in 1989. The 100-foot steeple of the church is a landmark and an important symbol of the community of faith. Combined with stylized wind representing the Spirit, it was incorporated into a new church logo in 2008.

Cover Image

The cover image was created by AI using Canva by Elyse Munro.

Minister of Faith Development and Intergenerational Ministry: Vacant

Minister of Social Justice and Outreach: Vacant

Lead 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