

WHAT'S UP... IN THE CWM

Fall 2016

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Camp Kimtah Memories

Shelby Bolger

Kimtah has become one of my favourite traditions. It is a place where youth get to socialize and be themselves without fear of judgment, and can instead know they are encouraged to be who they are and be welcomed as friends.

After anxiously waiting all year, the time is finally upon us. We drive to Samish Island, getting more anxious and excited by the second. Campers file in and hurriedly rush to their cabins, claiming the best bunks. Choose wisely though, you'll be sleeping there all week.

Throughout the first few days everyone warms up to each other. Old friendships are remade, people who'd lost contact reunited. Happiness is plain to see spread over everyone's faces.

By Wednesday it starts dawning on us that we are half way through the week, and the week begins to turn from a week away from home to things that the best of memories are made of.

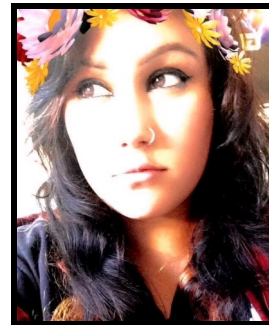
We grow closer over the next few days, closer

than we thought we would. Had we been told at the beginning of the week that we'd leave wishing we could stay forever, we would have denied it. We stay up and watch the stars, sometimes in silence, sometimes in laughter, and sometimes in tears.

On Friday night we all feel it. The end of camp is near. We walk together in silence, knowing what will happen the following day.

On Saturday we all pack our things. Happy to go home, sad that the week is over. As we gather our last time-as a family-, we do so with sorrow. There are tears all around, tears of joy and sadness. It is time to let go.

Getting back in that car, the one I know will take me away from camp, is one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. Saying goodbye to friends, watching camp fade away is a bittersweet feeling.



Camp Kimtah is for youth 15-18 years old and takes place at Samish Island, Washington August 6-12, 2017

Please join us in welcoming John and Sandy Vanderwalker as our new Samish Island Campground Managers starting November 1st.

We wish Don, Sidney, and Chloe Brady all the best in their next adventure.



MISSION CONFERENCE 2016 IN RIBSTONE



Here are some photos from Mission Conference 2016 in Ribstone Alberta. To find out more about Mission Conference 2016 go to the Canada West Mission website under Weekly Wire and scroll down to September 13th.



Guest Minister Jan Kraybill to attend Mission Conference 2017 In Vancouver, BC



We're pleased to announce our special guest minister for Mission Conference September 1-3, 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia will be Jan Kraybill, Principle Organist for Community of Christ. Jan will be sharing her musical ministry with us so it's sure to be an exciting and fun filled conference. Keep watching the Weekly Wire for news and updates about Mission Conference. LOTS of billeting will be available.

Click here to find out more about [Jan Kraybill](#)



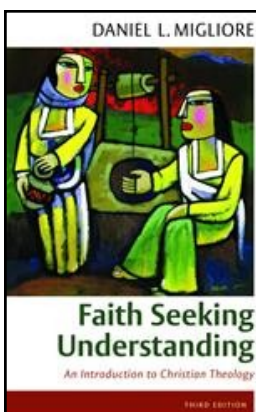
WHO IS JESUS CHRIST FOR US TODAY?

He (Jesus) said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

--Matthew 16:15 NRSV

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all quote Jesus as asking this question of three of his trusted disciples at about the mid-point of his earthly ministry. They had just told him that “the people” were sharing conjectures that he was John the Baptist or Elijah or maybe another of the ancient prophets. These were the answers of people who were excited about Jesus’ ministry of healing and his preaching of love and hope for the future. They perceived that there was something special about Jesus, but they had not quite put their finger on just how special he was. Jesus’ pointed question was directed at his closest friends.

Who do you say that Jesus is? It is a question that challenges us in Western Canada in the 21st century, just as much as it challenged Jesus’ disciples. There are many possible perspectives.



Daniel Migliore, in his book, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, offers many glimpses into contemporary answers which arise from specific cultural contexts of the recent past and today. The realities of life in Latin America resulted in theologies that draw on the dehumanizing poverty and colonial exploitation of the people. Jesus is seen as entering “*into solidarity with the poor*,” and his suffering on the cross “stands as a protest against unjust suffering as well as a promise of God’s companionship with the oppressed.” (Migliore, pp. 208, 210)

Feminist theologies intend to “*expose and struggle against the systemic injustice of patriarchy*.” Feminist theologians reject any notion that the “maleness of Jesus” has anything to do with his work as Savior. Rather, “they contend that ‘Jesus the Christ’s ability to be savior (resides) in his loving, liberating history in the midst of the power of evil and oppression.’” (Migliore, pp. 217-218)

Sallie McFague, in a challenging and compelling article, makes the argument that Jesus can arguably be seen as the savior of our abused and oppressed natural world. “(T)he principle that Jesus’ ministry is focused on God’s oppressed creatures must, in our day, include the deteriorating planet. ... Should we not extend ... the model of loving others as having intrinsic worth and hence deserving of justice and care – to the natural world?” (McFague, pp. 29-45)

These are all intriguing though partial answers to “Who is Jesus Christ for us today?” What do you think? How does Jesus’ ministry make a difference to you today? Does Jesus address your poverty (of resources, of spirit, of hope)? Does Jesus liberate you from whatever might otherwise oppress you, or control you? Does Jesus motivate you to act on behalf of God’s creation to bring justice and care to our natural world?

In a recent inspired challenge to the Community of Christ we heard, “The richness of cultures, the poetry of language, and the breadth of human experience permit the gospel to be seen with new eyes and grasped with freshness of spirit. That gift has been given to you. Do not fail to understand its power.” (D&C 162:4a) In accepting this challenge, we can still respond, like Peter, to Christ’s original question with the enthusiastic response: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!”

References:

McFague, Sallie, “An Ecological Christology: Does Christianity Have It?” in Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, Eds., *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of the Earth and Humans*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000) pp. 29-45

Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014) pp. 208, 210, 217-218



Steve Thompson
Canada West Mission Centre President

Vancouver

Lanette Vawter

Hello from the Vancouver congregation! We are looking forward to a busy fall and Christmas season this year. This will be our 3rd year with our new Sunday morning format which includes morning class time for kids and adults, coffee time with goodies followed by a 45 minute service. The worship service was shortened by eliminating a formal assigned speaker and giving presiders the opportunity to develop more creative worshipful experiences. This has been a successful format for us so far and I am interested to see what other new ideas and worship experiences our congregation will come up with this fall.

Our Soup Sundays on the 1st Sunday of every month continue to be a much appreciated event in the congregation. The church provides soup and buns and invites everyone to stay for lunch following the service. Many members also bring potluck items to round out our lunch.

Joy McAdam is teaching our Adult October Class on "Welcoming Communities" to provide an opportunity for our members to become more knowledgeable on supporting and welcoming people

from the LGBTQ community. Joy has a lot of great information to share with us.

In November, Joy's sister Shannon McAdam will be teaching the Book of Ruth to the adult class. Those of us who had the good fortune to be in Shannon's Introduction to Scripture class are glad for the opportunity to dive into another scripture study with this knowledgeable instructor.

Our congregation continues to rent out the church to a number of different user groups. This keeps our business manager Victor Suddaby quite busy! These rentals have put us in the position of being financially well off enough to provide donations to World Hunger and to put enough money aside to sponsor a refugee family. We are currently awaiting an arrival of a family of 6 that we will be sponsoring.

On October 30th we are looking forward to having our congregational blessing with guest evangelist Dean Wight as well as our own evangelist Brian Gibson. Dean and Brian have been out visiting any interested families over the last nine months to tell them about the upcoming blessing and to hear their thoughts on the direction our congregation is moving in.



As the Christmas season approaches, we have a number of events planned.

At the beginning of December the SeaBilly's will play at the Fishermen Helping Kids With Cancer fundraiser and a number of church members will volunteer at this event in memory of Nicole Eidsvik.

December 4th will be our 1st ever Dickens Christmas Tea!

On December 18th Kat Goheen is organizing a special Christmas music service with performances by the Adult choir and children's choir. This service will be followed by a special Christmas Dinner prepared by Phil Eidsvik and company.

We also prepare special gift bags to donate to the Surrey Women's Centre for Christmas time.

We are also hoping to go carolling at one of the long term care facilities this December.

I hope all of us across Canada West have opportunities to be blessed and to be a blessing as we move into fall and Christmas of 2016!

Lanette Vawter



Travelling this fall or Christmas? The Community of Christ welcome mat is out!

Look for service and Christmas times throughout this newsletter

Vancouver Congregation

3333 Kaslo Street, Vancouver V4B 3H3, 604-435-5344

First Sunday each month	10:15 Gospel Choir, 11:15 Communion Service, 12:30 Free Soup Sunday
All other Sundays	10:15 Adult and Children's classes, 11:15 Worship Service
Sunday December 4th,	12:30 pm - Dickens Christmas Tea
Sunday December 18th	11:15 Christmas Choral Service, 12:30 Annual Christmas Luncheon
Christmas Day	Family time - no service

Email Info-vc@cofcvancouver.ca

[Vancouver Cof C Website](#)

[Vancouver Facebook](#)

Greetings from Calgary!

As I made preparations to write this article, I was immediately flooded with so many positive updates to share with you. The only problem is...how do I condense everything into one article? I'm going to give it my best effort!

On August 14, 2016, the Calgary congregation held its final service at its Ranchlands location. The farewell service celebrated the memories made there over the last 35 years and drew a crowd of about 75 people. Stories were shared, slideshows were displayed, and a wonderful meal followed. Throughout its lifetime, Calgary's Ranchlands location served its members, the surrounding community, the Canada West Mission Centre, and beyond in countless ways. It was only fitting that we pay homage to the critical part it has played in our story thus far. The sale of this building is only the beginning of a new chapter in the life of the Calgary congregation.

Beginning August 28, 2016, we relocated to our temporary home at Lion's Village, a facility built by one of the local Lion's Clubs and operated by the Bethany Care Society. The space is comfortable, quiet, and very centrally located to all Calgarians. We appreciate the accommodation of our needs by the Lions and Bethany people during our transitional phase. Speaking of transitions...now that we are settled into our temporary space, the Leadership Team plans to work closely with the congregation in order to properly assess our community's needs and wants in a new facility. In the meantime, we are ramping up our children's Sunday School program, planning for our upcoming holiday activities, and working on ways to bring new expressions of Christ's mission to our community.

As of September 5, 2016, I have taken on the role of communications coordinator for the Calgary congregation. This includes weekly emails and regular correspondence, social media management, and a new website! I encourage you to follow the links below to our social media accounts and follow us. Additionally, [subscribe to our email list](#) here so you can stay up-to-date on our journey.

[Calgary Facebook](#) , [Calgary Twitter](#) , [Calgary Instagram](#)

As for the website, we are excited to launch this new tool for both internal and external purposes. We believe this will provide Calgary Community of Christ with the necessary technology, clout, and reach that we need to be successful. Please visit our new site, comment on blog entries, review the calendar, and find the latest information on what's happening here. [Calgary website](#)

Just before our final service in the Ranchlands building, John Hamer, Pastor of the Toronto Centre Place congregation, traveled to Calgary and gave a wonderful presentation on the process he and his congregation experienced as they sold their facility and relocated to a new space in the heart of downtown. John's presentation was not only timely, but extremely helpful as we continue to navigate towards our goal of a new permanent space in Calgary.

Last but not least, my role as Young Adult Minister has been a lively, colourful experience since my arrival. I am continually amazed at the amazing gifts and talents that our young people bring to our diverse community. Starting with Calgary, I am working my way through the congregation's membership rolls in order to locate, make contact, and establish relationships with young people. First and foremost, this is a check-in with where they're at in their lives followed by efforts to establish a tight-knit community prior to taking a deeper look into what their needs and wants are for their faith community. So far, this has been a wonderful experience – one I'm proud to play a part in.

Stay tuned for more updates by following us on social media, signing up for our emails, and visiting us on Sunday!

Blessings, Parker Johnson

Church Mission & Young Adult Ministries Specialist, Calgary, AB



Calgary Congregation *Please note our new Location!

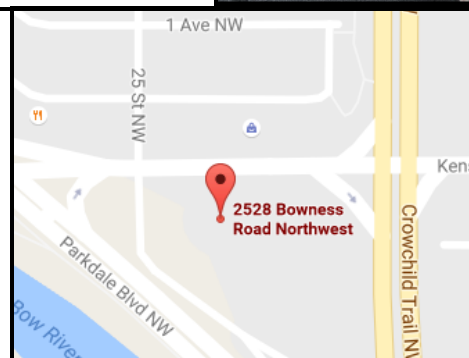
2528 Bowness Road NW, Calgary, AB T2N 3L7

9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation,

10:00 a.m. Church School (offering Adult/Children Programming)

11:00 a.m. Worship

***Please enter at East Door. See the [Location Map](#) and [Parking Suggestions](#)**



Lisa Neudorf**Camping and Retreat Specialist**

I was recently in Chilliwack for the BC Women's Retreat. With Kris Judd we considered what it means to "Draw the Circle Wide". Later in the day, we divided into teams and Shonnet Allen sent us out to carry out missions in the community. The missions included giving pinwheels to children, writing notes of encouragement and placing them in books, hanging posters with words of encouragement for people to take "the encouragement" they needed, writing messages with sidewalk chalk, praying for a stranger and giving away twelve bottles of water. I was teamed with Lana Cullis, Debra Donohue, Kris Judd and Shonnet. Our team was smart ... it was raining outside so we decided to head straight to the mall. On the way, we saw a Tent City where many homeless people live. This Tent City is essentially a small parking lot tucked away by a park with 20 – 25 tents erected around the perimeter of the parking lot. As soon as we saw the Tent City we realized it was the perfect opportunity to give away our bottles of water and quickly pulled in. As we jumped out of the car, we became aware this wasn't merely completing one of our missions but rather we were offering water to a group of people who desperately needed it because they were living in tents without running water or electricity. As our group spread out to hand out the water, we had different encounters. Lana spoke with Stuart about his circumstances and the legal battle many homeless people were



engaged in. I met Jason who after I offered him a bottle of water asked me if I liked cats and gave me a small cat pin. I must admit when Jason asked me if I liked cats it crossed my mind he might try to give me a live cat. Thankfully, he didn't. When we settled back into the car, we stopped to silently pray for the people we had just encountered. As we drove away, we felt it impressed upon us to return with more water and we decided to do so after Sunday church along with food from the weekend and potluck lunch.

After church on Sunday, a number of us prepared food to take to the Tent City. We were thoughtful in what we chose and how we packaged it. Shonnet, my parents (Barry and Betty Williams) and I delivered the food and 36 bottles of water. When we were there, I again encountered Jason and had a moment to speak with him. I thanked him for the pin and we shared a hug. I also met Hayley, a young woman whose emotion from seeing the food and water, caused me to also feel great emotion. I didn't know what to say to Hayley so we simply shared a hug and I offered her words of encouragement. I regret I did not ask her what circumstances placed her in a Tent City.

I have seen media coverage about

the Tent Cities in BC but it was a new experience for me. They are uncommon in Saskatchewan simply due to the weather, but we have homeless people who I encounter when they are panhandling. I do not always give change but I make sure to look at the person and answer with kind words. The Mission prayer has been part of my life for about four and a half years now. When I am fully awake and ready to respond, God has led me to many unexpected situations and He has given me the courage to risk something new. The thing is, although I may have been a blessing of his love and peace to others, I end up being the one who is blessed. The Mission Prayer has made me aware and creates in me the desire to walk with my eyes and heart open, ready to draw the circle wide.

If you have not made the Mission Prayer part of your daily routine or a part of your life, I encourage you to do so. As you are ready, God will guide you to draw the circle wide. Both you and the people you encounter will be blessed.

God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help me be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

**Saskatoon Congregation****701 First Street East, Saskatoon****Sunday Worship 10:45 am****Christmas Eve Service 7pm****Christmas Day - Family Time, no service****Regina Congregation****4710 8th Avenue, Regina****Coffee & Sharing 10:15 am****Intergenerational Praise Time 10:40 am****Worship 11:00 am**

The Other Half

Lana Cullis

I get really excited when I see someone I haven't seen for a while. I can't help myself. Those chance meetings in the *Save on Foods* up in Squamish where I sometimes "pop in" for a last minute item on my way to dinner with friends, and get detained in front of the deli counter for 45 minutes (catching up on each other's news for the past 7 years). Those conversations where you end up grabbing hands or punching each other on the shoulder and smiling ridiculously because...you



both keep repeating "how long has it been?" and you keep thinking, "I have missed you!" and, "We have to get together more often!"

I have that same experience, every summer when we gather at Samish Island for our weeklong camp, aptly called Reunion. Shelby and I have our rituals that build the anticipation. The final few minutes of the drive always culminates with our enthusiastic quacking as we round Duck Corner, and are fully ramped up to see whom has got to camp first. Who has made it this year for the week of reconnection? By Saturday, we are definitely not

ready to go home, because it means saying good bye.

During this past winter, Debra asked if Shelby and I would like to participate in the Congregational Blessing. My first response (before I could think or even be polite) was to blurt out "Well I don't really think of myself as part of the congregation anymore". Debra didn't hesitate. She said "Well you might not think of yourself as part of the congregation, but I do." She said a few other wise and

welcoming things which got me to thinking... why don't I think of myself as a part of the congregation anymore? She took the time to explain the process and a few weeks later Evangelist Brian Gibson and Evangelist Dean Wight came over to visit with Shelby and I. During this visit, Dean asked us about our journey with God, our faith, with community and with this

church. We talked about memories, and very specific moments I hadn't paused to let myself think about in some time. Moments like when I was baptized with Shannon, Jessica and Lauren. And, sacraments when Brian lay his hands upon my head in prayer, and, when Shelby was baptised. We talked about unconventional ministry like my sharing about dogs in Chilliwack on Advent, and, about Kimtah. And about people we miss. It was a blessing indeed, and activation for my spirit.

For some time now, I have been behind the scenes, as the person

who posts incoming prayer requests out on the prayer email chain. I have appreciated the opportunity to pray for people and do something active with church, before getting back into physical attendance full swing. I am thankful for this kind of inclusion in the life of the church. This little job has held meaning for me because despite lacking in attendance (for many years) I do care about my church family. I think this paradox is hard for some people to understand: most especially for those of us who find it painful, to find their way back to church. How do we stay away from something that means so much? Until you come back the answer does indeed seem to stay hidden.

In the end I think finding one's way back to community (church) is actually quite simple. It involves trusting the truth about the "other half". The other half of being excited to see people is that they are genuinely excited to see you. As much as you have missed them, they have missed you. As much as you feel lit up when you see them, they feel the same towards you, no matter how much time has passed. You are missed.

After reunion this summer, I started attending church again, and I have opened myself up to the reciprocal nature of "reunion". As much as others matter to me, I matter to them. When life gets hard (and stays tough for too long), it can be hard to remember this simple little truth, that you are part of the congregation, no matter where you are.

Lana Cullis is a member of the Vancouver Congregation



Encountering God in the Desert

Vickie MacArthur

What does "spiritual formation" mean? About fifty adventurous souls from all over our church in North America (7 from Canada) are in our second year of the "Spiritual Formation Companioning Pilot" training program. Together we are learning what it means to risk being "spiritually formed" ourselves, and how to be companions for others in our ministry in both individual and congregational settings. Through spiritual practice and exploration, we are being asked to take a "long, loving look" at everything: ourselves, our beliefs, our church, our community. It is a journey into the wilderness. It is a journey into and beyond our false selves to discover the Christ beyond boundaries of personality and religion.

In preparation for our latest gathering in Powell Butte, Oregon part of our homework was to read a book called "Immortal Diamond" by Richard Rohr. Father Rohr speaks of a True Self within us and likens it to a diamond, buried deep within us, formed under the intense pressure of our lives, that must be searched for, uncovered, and like Jesus, resurrected. It is a shedding of who we think we are, so we can discover the slumbering Christ who lives and breathes within us.

After our gathering in Powell Butte, there was an optional two day hiking retreat for those of us who wanted to stay longer and explore "Landscapes of the Sacred" in the beautiful desert landscape of Smith Rock. The desert is a powerful metaphor for spiritual exploration and growth. Before beginning his ministry, Christ retreated in to the desert for 40 days of intense spiritual practice. We too need our desert time.

We began this two-day retreat together by gathering in a circle and

listening to a number of readings about nature and desert spirituality.

"The self is a desert that must be stripped and made empty before God can be found at its center."
Belden Lane, *Solace of Fierce Landscapes*

Before we left, we each reached into an envelope and chose a piece of paper with a poem or phrase written on it. I stuck mine into my pocket without reading it.

The majesty of Smith Rock is overwhelming; towering granite rocks formed by an ancient volcano, reaching up into a clear blue sky. You begin the hike by walking down into a beautiful river valley, surrounded by these huge volcanic rock formations. It was a hot day, 95F, a desert day .

As I hiked along by the river, I noticed some steep stairs in the rocks up the side of the mountain. Something about those stairs leading up to these solitary rocks called to me. As I slowly trudged up the stairs I began to realize that this really wasn't part of the hiking trail, but rather steps up to the sheer rock sides that the climbers

use to get up to the base of the rocks in order to scale these mighty rocks using ropes and metal

spikes. Something still called to me. I took a deep breath and continued to climb the steps.

An older man was sitting at the top of the steps enjoying the vast view of the valley below. As I approached him, I made the remark that this probably wasn't part of the hiking trail. He smiled, then sizing me up, he told me that there was a small opening in the rocks that someone small and nimble like me might be able to squeeze through that led to the ridge on the other

side. He started down the steps and as I watched him slowly fade from sight, felt that irrational nudge to keep going.

As I gazed upwards, I saw the opening with a small patch of blue sky beckoning to me. Carefully pulling myself up, I slowly slithered my way through the opening like a snake. Coming out on the other side, I looked down from dizzying heights, catching my breath. Above me were lots of boulders and rocks strewn everywhere. I climbed a bit higher in hopes of finding "the other side of the ridge". Slipping a bit on the gravel, I listened to the sound of rocks and pebbles displaced by my unsure feet. The taste of fear began to rise in me. "I'm alone. Nobody knows I'm here. What if there's an earthquake!"

As I looked at the huge rocks still towering above me, I sat down. I took a long cool drink of water, gazing at the beautiful river winding its way like a snake below. I sat and breathed into that feeling of both fear and heart expanding beauty. As I looked around, I realized that like "Alice Through the Looking Glass", I'm not really sure where the opening is that I came through. How will I find my way back?

I reached into my pocket and found the piece of paper I chose before the hike:

I'm not really sure where the opening is that I came through. How will I find my way back?

"Always in the big woods when you leave familiar ground and step into a new place there will be....a little nagging of dread. It is the ancient fear of the Unknown, and it is your first bond with the wilderness you are going into. What you are doing is exploring. You are undertaking the first experience, not of the place, but of yourself in that place."

Wendell Berry, from "Backpacking with the Saints"

I realize this hike is the perfect metaphor for my life, perhaps for all



As I sit on a rock in this desert place, contemplating the landscape of my life, I have no answers, just a sense of resting in this desert landscape, perhaps even belonging. I can let go of my questions. I can let go of my need to know both the way back and the way forward. I can just be here, enjoying the warm breeze on my face. A small lizard darts out from behind a rock. I can see it's tiny chest moving as it breathes. I feel the movement of my own breath in tune with God's creation.

The fear has left me. I slowly get up and start exploring different paths to find my way back to the river bottom. There are many different openings in the rock. They all look the same. I try a few and finally find one I can fit back through. It's more difficult squeezing myself down than up, but I land on my feet on the other side. I breathe a sigh of relief, and make my way back down to the path by the river, walking slowly, enjoying the firm feeling of solid earth beneath my feet.

We all have our deserts to face, both individually and collectively. The world and our church community is in a state of

unprecedented flux and change. Like the ancient Israelites, we feel like we are in a place of exile, a place of not belonging in a "spiritual but not religious" society, a place in between what has been, and the prophetic imagination of what is yet to come. Whether as a church, or individually in our lives, it's impossible to go back to how things were or how we think things should be. We have to learn to breathe and to let the spirit breathe through our doubts, our fears, our judgments, our uncertainty. Will we stay in the familiar walls of our small church buildings, or will we listen to the still small voice that calls us into the empty, trackless desert of the world. In Celtic spirituality, the desert is seen as a crossing place, a place of transition. It is a sacred space where the invisible world interpenetrates our visible world, where something fresh and new can be born from that which has had to die.

Sounds like resurrection to me!

Vickie MacArthur



of us. I've been going through a bit of a "dark night of the soul", questioning everything in my life, my beliefs about God, what I do, who I am, my place in this church, my place on this planet. I realize that this fear of change, this fear of loss, this not knowing where I am or where I'm going, or whether I can go back, has to be faced. It is a necessary part, indeed the very essence of the spiritual journey. Once we've begun this journey of uncovering our True Self, we can never go back to who we were before.

Travelling this fall or Christmas? The Community of Christ Welcome Mat is out!

Look for service and Christmas times throughout this newsletter

Lethbridge
425 11th Street South
Sundays
10am Worship
11am Social Time
Tuesdays 1pm Meditation

Thursdays Blankets for Canada
Contact Nancy Panting for information 403-330-4061

Victoria
495 Burnside Road E
Victoria

10am Coffee Time
11am Worship Service

Meadow Ridge
19089 Advent Road,
Pitt Meadows

10:15 Social Time
10:45 Good News
11:00 Worship Service

Contact Dale Weiss
604-465-4503

Peace / Justice: What is Truth and Who Cares?

A new word has been bouncing around our culture for the last year or so – “**post-truth**”. Such a dynamic does not deny a basic sense of truth (that is, facts about a statement); rather it ignores facts. What becomes crucial is how one feels about the statements (sometimes called “truthiness”). The classic examples have been found woven in the Brexit debate and now in the US Presidential run-up, especially with Donald Trump.

Such dynamics have always been around but the post-truth label indicates a quantum shift. This is due to a convergence of many factors – from social media and instant global responses; to “big data” mining and its ability to slice up configurations of people, etc.; To enormous amounts of money going into campaigns; and so on.

What has this to do with peace / justice? **Everything!** Here are three examples:

It undercuts the core adage: “The better one’s perception of reality, the better the chance for a decent world”.

Post-truth dynamics aren’t interested in best perceptions but rather reinforcing some constantly repeated script that sounds right. It has no sense of remaining open, and is therefore blind to the reality that “best perceptions” are bound to change over time.

It reduces the ability to dialogue. When people become attached to the feelings of a script there is nothing to counter it – facts have become irrelevant. That said, if people are not completely tied to those feelings, then dialogue is the primary non-violent resource to overcome this stifling of life.

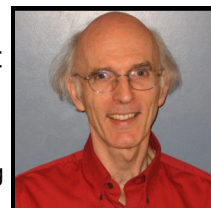
It destroys any robust sense of community and common good as people cluster around and entrench themselves in these scripts.

At its best the church can be life-affirming **leaven** during such times. We are well-grounded by the linkage found in Jesus’ opening statement (from Isa. 61: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me”). The best foundation is spirituality, which seamlessly flows into peace / justice categories “. . . for God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives . . .”). God’s Good Spirit enlivens and then moves people to action with those who suffer.

There are many challenges; I will focus on “community”. While it is a treasured concept to us, the chief concern is that post-truth dynamics easily slip in. Whether in the church or not, it is now so easy to find like-mindedness. That in itself is not wrong. But it easily feeds on itself – we so easily can find like-minded people, read like-minded articles, be fed by like-minded social media. It reinforces our “rightness”, **becoming monologue or a self-contained bubble**. (the “one true church” is an example from a previous generation).

The answer is to recognize the real golden threads that need to be part of our community’s “like-mindedness” – such as openness or the worth of all – and to **dialogue** our way **beyond** our comfort zones. In dialogue we authentically engage with others, so that together we can continue to discover and weave with those golden threads that life-affirming tapestry of shalom for all and to discard material that weakens the fabric.

To be honest, it is hard work and we don’t have many suitable resources to help reshape our time together. But it is not only an invigorating task (since it helps keep us in that life-giving stream that nourishes true life), but is desperately needed and sought in a world being barraged by “truthiness”. Now that is authentic community!



Rod Downing

Encounter World Religions Programs

In the last year, we’ve had two visits in Canada West from Brian Carwana with the Encounter World Religions program. The first in Vancouver with a full weekend program, and the second, two sessions at Mission Conference, one for adults and one for youth. We’re pleased to announce that we have Brian scheduled for two full weekend programs in 2017.

Vancouver January 27-29 Location to be announced, Friday 7pm, Saturday and Sunday 9-5:30

Calgary March 3-5 University of Calgary, Friday 7-9pm, Saturday 9-5:30, Sunday 9:30-5

\$100 for the entire weekend, \$25 for Friday night, \$60 for Saturday or Sunday only

Contact Debra at 1-877-411-2632 ext 4 or debra@communityofchrist.ca for more information

What's Your Message?

Keep it Simple, Keep it Consistent, Keep it Current!

Matthew 5:16 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

As I try to learn how to better communicate our church message, I realise that half the battle is starting with the simple stuff. If you pay attention to these few areas, you're off to an excellent start. So what message are we putting out there to our communities?

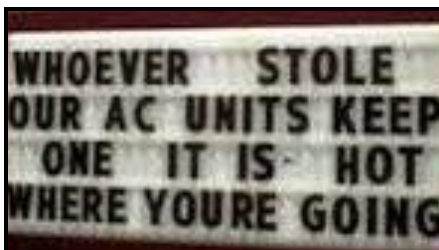
What information is on your message board, and when did you last update it? Could it use refreshing? You can provide the same information and just rephrase it to make it sound new. Here are some samples of messages from other churches. You'll have to gauge the temperature of your neighbourhood, but these may spark some ideas for something a little fun that you can post.



What does the message on your answering machine at church say? How often do you check the messages? (by the way, every Sunday is not enough), and how quickly do you respond to those messages? (you guessed it, every Sunday is not enough). Are we



using insider language? Would your non church going friends know what 'church school' means? The term 'C of C' should only be used in email addresses and church related communications.. We need to always say Community of Christ when talking



about our church or in our promotional materials or people won't have a clue what we're talking about. Years ago, when I worked for Clinque cosmetics, we had a moisturizer called Dramatically Different Moisturizing Lotion. The staff referred to it as DDML. Then one day a woman came in and asked for MMDL. That's when we knew we had to always make a point of saying the full name. If she had forgotten what brand she was shopping for and walked up to the Shiseido counter, she probably would have walked out with one of their products.

Is your website easy to navigate? Is it up to date? And does it accurately portray who we are in Community of Christ? Do you have a website? You probably know someone in your congregation or another, who can help you set up a really simple website. Nothing complicated, a description of who we are, service times, contact info and upcoming events is a great start.

Do you, and hopefully your leadership team, post regularly on facebook? This is so easy to do and you probably have teenagers

who can be on this team. Post your upcoming events, theme for the upcoming Sunday, photos where applicable, and the causes your congregation is supporting.

Do you know your neighbours on the block around the church. How long have we been coming to church in this building and yet are we able to yell across the street "Hi Joe, how are your tomatoes doing this year?" The only way to get to know our neighbours is to make the effort to meet them. You don't have to invite them to church, you can pop over to let them know you've put in a basketball hoop and welcome them to use it during the week. Let them know you'll have a big crowd at church next Sunday and the street may be filled with cars for a few hours. Ask if they'd mind watering the new tree you planted when they water their garden for the next few weeks. Invite them to your next pot luck

**CHURCH SHOPPING?
WE'RE OPEN ON SUNDAYS**

lunch (and don't ask them to bring anything).

So maybe those signs I printed aren't what we'll see on your message board, I hope they at least made you laugh, and maybe sparked some ideas for own church signs.

Remember to keep your message consistent through all mediums, update often, and don't be afraid to talk to your neighbours, regardless of whether or not they ever come to church. Having friends in the neighbourhood is *always* a good thing.

Debra Donohue
Communications and
Outreach



Standing at the Crossroad

*To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under
the heaven.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1

A thousand and one things have happened in the life of the Community of Christ-Winnipeg Congregation since it was established in 1908 (and 1901 in Treherne). It has touched many lives, lead souls to God, loved and given support to countless families, comforted those in need, cried with those in pain and grief and tried to work really hard on the work God has designed us to do. But then just like any organism, the Church too grows old, aside from the building becoming old, weak and faded, nimble knees, too, become feeble. Church steps become harder and harder to climb. The once lively and crowded activity area in the basement has become quiet with few voices heard during church events, now being mostly used by a Day-Care. The sanctuary area which used to be full of kids, young adults, and the elderly singing hymns, listening to the preaching, sharing and just enjoying worship, have now become quiet with a few frail voices trying to sing. The preaching



remains the same but as the years go on, more and more empty chairs can be observed on Sundays.

The Community of Christ Winnipeg has faced and overcome various challenges and diverse changes that happened afterwards. Just like any family of God, we have also been one of action and also sometimes were divided in decision. Despite the differences, the love for each other did not change. Oh how we want things to remain as it was, forever, but it can never be... for change will always be a consistent part of growth.

Right now, in our journey as a church we have reached a crossroad on which a major decision has to be made. Certainly we believe that this is one road we cannot skip but has to be tread on.

Stan and Soni Freer

For it is part of the passage.

With careful feet and fervent prayers we have stepped on the crossroad. Hand in hand we have tried to choose the right way. Together we have sifted through a number of possibilities and options.

It is not an easy task. In fact we took the first step with caution and lots of prayer, with great discussion sedulously guided by Stephen Thompson we have come to a common decision. The process towards accomplishing what we want is still a long way off, but a great thing happened as a congregation of a few, we have rolled up our sleeves and are now beginning to work toward a united decision..

That is the beauty of life, even that of a church, we plan, we dream but God's will, will always prevail.



Senlac

The Senlac Congregation started meeting this year on May 8 and as of Thanksgiving will we have had 10 Sunday services. We have had good attendance with numbers mostly in the 6-10 range but sometimes up to 15. Just once we only had 3. We typically have just one extended service from 10:30 - 12:00 in which we incorporate extra music and we also try to make it interesting for all ages. Our pianist Hazel Cornish has led us in two music focused services which are very popular. We feel blessed to have Hazel. She has

been teaching us new hymns from the Community of Christ Sings and we are finding it very enjoyable. We typically shut down services after thanksgiving and join with the Ribstone congregation for the winter months so that will happen sometime by the end of October.

Many of our group were able to take in at least some of the mission center conference at Ribstone and some of us got to family camp at the Hills of Peace as well. Both were very good and

Becky Middleton

all in all the season has passed very quickly. If anyone is passing through this way, please contact us and join us in a service or for a visit. we would love to see you.

Yours in Christ, Becky Middleton
Pastor



2017 Camping and Retreat Calendar

Jan 27-29	Encounter World Religions Program Vancouver
Feb 17-20	CWM Camp Community - Youth Retreat Edmonton
March 3-5	Nurturing Spirit Weekend Samish Island
March 3-5	Encounter World Religions Program Calgary
Mar 31-Apr 2	Women's Retreat Medicine Hat
April 21-23	Arts Retreat Samish Island
April 24-29	Samish Island Work Week
June 2-4	Camp Genesis (8-9 yrs) Samish Island
June 2-4	Spiritual Retreat Hills of Peace
June 10-16	Adult Reunion Samish Island
July 2-7	CWM Camp Community - Youth Camp Hills of Peace
July 8-13	Family Reunion Hills of Peace
July 15-22	Family Reunion Samish Island
July 15-19	Junior Camp Hills of Peace
July 22-29	Spectacular Graceland University <i>tentative dates</i>
July 23-29	Camp Kluane (girls 12-14 yrs) Samish Island
July 30- Aug 5	Camp Chimacum (boys 12-14 yrs) Samish Island
August 6-12	Camp Kimtah (15-18 yrs) Samish Island
August 4-7	Nurturing Spirit Retreat Hills of Peace
August 13-19	Camp Mungai (10-11 yrs) Samish Island
September 2-4	Canada West Mission Conference – Vancouver BC
Sept 22-24	Men's Retreat Hills of Peace
November 3-5	High Priest and Evangelist Retreat – Edmonton

Coming in 2017!

Men's Retreat BC

All dates are subject to change, please confirm by going to the

[Community Of Christ website](#)

or

[The Weekly Wire.](#)

Please register early!

Chilliwack Congregation

9845 Carleton Street N

Chilliwack

Sundays

Class time – 10 am

Worship – 11 am

Meditation Group - 7:30-9 pm

Wednesdays

Prayer Shawl Knitting - 1-3 pm

Bowling for Men 1:30 pm

December Christmas Specials

10th Christmas Movies

11th Christmas Brunch 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Service 7 pm

Christmas Day Worship 11 am

Edmonton Congregation

6919 83rd Street, Edmonton T6C-2Y1

10:00 am visiting, 10:30 am Worship

December 18-Off Site (Birch Bay Ranch) Christmas Service/party-- Time (TBD)

December 24-Christmas Eve Service (time TBD)

December 25-Family Time - no service

Please contact Marian Thompson at melthompson@shaw.ca or 780-444-4389 for more information closer to the date if you are planning to attend Christmas services.

Winnipeg Congregation

154 Pentland Street

R2Q-1S8

11am Worship Service

Senlac Congregation

Senlac will be closed until spring.

RIBSTONE

Much has happened in our quaint community since our last report from Ribstone, even though it has been our months which are less busy. Normally we send as few photos as possible for each of our submissions to What's Up. But because we are such an active congregation that number is usually still quite high. So it leaves the hard and unfair job of choosing only a handful of those photos (to fit the space available) for each edition in Debra's hands. So to change things up this time, we're mostly "reporting" instead of "photojournalizing." Here are some of our highlights from the past few months:

At the end of May we had Messy Church for the first time at Ribstone. Enjoyed by young and old, it was indeed a lot of fun, and only a little bit messy.

A few building needs had to be attended to at our church over the summer.

Consequently, we now have a new lawnmower, which Kathy Watson, our volunteer property mower, is getting a hang of using. She and her husband, Wayne, take wonderful care of our property's lawn and flowers. Doug Pawsey is the volunteer caretaker of our Peace Memorial Garden. We hope those of you in attendance at the CWM conference were able to spend some time in the garden, as it's a beautiful, comforting experience to spend time there.

Wayne Skinner moved the storage shed in order for him and a small crew of men to lay the cement for under the shed and the newly purchased Sea Can. When the Sea Can arrived, the church hired the company for which Pastor Joanne is the office manager. Benoit Oilfield Construction sent out a machine to manoeuvre the Sea Can onto the cement and push the storage shed

onto its new foundation, with Wayne's assistance. The Sea Can was also purchased through Benoit. Our community truly works together.

We had our final 15/16 school year meetings for our small groups in May and June. We take a break from those and Sunday School for the summer months. The young families group went to a Western Renegade monster truck performance, which included rides for the families in the mini monster truck. The JAM (Jesus and Me) group played in a tent that was set up inside at their June meeting and had a blast. EST (Eager Saints Troop) had an Amazing Race-type meeting in May, which was loads of fun, and then a meeting on the beach at a local Provincial Park where the graduating EST member (Emelia Goheen) received the traditional gift of a bible. We had a picnic after worship on the Sunday after Sunday School ended. It involved a lot of food and fun and games and fabulous weather. The junior/senior high youth group had a whale of a time at a BBQ/outdoor games night at one of their leader's place (Pastor Joanne's house/yard).

For the first time in years, we had VBS at the end of August instead of mid-July. We have new leaders, Courtney McCrea and Kelsie Dallyn, who had taken over the reins from Tarla Olson. Thirty-four kids took in the week of learning about Jesus through lessons, songs, snacks, games and crafts. The Friday night concert was attended by over 115 people.

A fun service we had in the summer was on the night of "Just Desserts." Pastor Darleene Skinner shared about "Give 'Em the Pickle," which included a training video, some small group work and sending everyone home with a pickle and some "Pickle Bucks." During that worship service Al and Pam Mogg had organized a surprise appreciation for Wayne and

Darleene, had a certificate made for them and presented them with a beautiful flower arrangement. There were also arrangements made to have a 50th Anniversary cake made for them, which the couple cut during the Just Desserts time after the service. Also, Pastor Joanne had their grandchildren, Daniel, Emelia, Isabella and Nicole, recite a special poem about grandparents in honour of their Golden Anniversary. And Joanne said a special prayer for Wayne and Darleene.

It was our honour to host the CWM conference over the Labour Day weekend. Lots of fellowship, wonderful classes and good food were enjoyed by all in attendance.

Our 10th Annual Truck Pull landed on September 11th, which was back-to-Sunday-School Sunday. Though the weather was less than stellar, we managed to pull the semi-truck with the flatbed on behind. It all started with Olena Pawliuk, the only person baptized since the last truck pull. She gave it a good tug, but the truck wouldn't move without the help (unity) of the others in the congregation. Benoit Oilfield Construction (the company Pastor Joanne works for) generously provided the truck for us, as they have for a few years now. The large rope we use for the truck pull was donated a number of years ago by the Chauvin Fire Department.

A special treat for our congregation was the visit from Wayne and Gloria Stanton on September 18th. They spoke about the ministry of angels and generously had purchased an angel for all the children in attendance. There were 19 kids who stayed for worship that Sunday and each of them went home with a unique angel.



Blessings to each of you from all of us in Ribstone.

~Leila Goheen, reporting~

Ribstone Congregation
Sunday School 10:00 AM
Worship Service 11:10 AM



Howdy Partners!

I'm coming at you from Ribstone Community of Christ.

When Debra invited kids to write in the What's up in CWM, I thought it was a good opportunity to share with you what I did for my **totally awesome** summer! Here's what I did:

First off, I had two music recitals—piano and violin. After that, I took my baby sister to an activity called the Cow Bus. I auditioned for the new Anne of Green Gables Netflix series. One Sunday we had Messy Church; it was a whole lot of fun and not very messy! I graduated from my youth group Eager Saints Troop (E.S.T.) and received the Graduation Bible. In one of my online subjects, Bible A, I got a 99% course average, which has resulted in a Merit Award from ADLC (Alberta Distance Learning Center). On a more sporty side, I played some baseball with my cousins from around Edmonton and from near Chauvin. I also took a one-day dance workshop of Jazz, Tap and Lyrical. A bit later in the summer I had a chance to meet some family friends from Ontario. It was Grandma and Grandpa's 50th anniversary in July. I went to a day camp at the Bodo Archeological site. I am now an official junior archeologist. I even have my own arrowhead! Then, I had a three-day pottery camp with a fourth day to paint my pieces before they were fired and glazed. My sister, mom, grandma and I traveled up to Lloydminster to visit the petting zoo. We had a blast! My church ordered a sea can and I watched it get put into place. My sister and I also took part in a Summer Library Reading program during the last part of the summer. I attended my last ever week of Vacation Bible School this year. It was sad, but super fun! I have started taking piano lessons with a new teacher this year; it started out as her just helping me prepare over the summer for my Grade 4 piano exam. I received First Class Honours on the exam and the examiner even asked me if I'd move to Ottawa so she could be my instructor. I've been volunteering at church this summer, too. I made table centers out of old hymnals for the 'Back to Sunday School' potluck! I have also been an active volunteer for the toddler's JAM (Jesus and Me) meetings. I have

entered the Canada in a Day video celebration! In September, I cut my hair for the 4th time to give to wigs for cancer patients. My sister even did it with me! It's back to Tae Kwon Do for me. I am now an Adult Green Belt and the top rank in my class. I even get to do the final call, which means I tell people when to bow out.

Well, that's my summer! Hope you enjoyed reading about it!

~Emelia Goheen~



What's Up...In the CWM

Community of Christ

16490 84A Avenue

Surrey, BC, Canada

V4N-3G8



Community of Christ

SASKATOON SUCCESS STORIES

Nicholas Janzen (photo below) is a grade 10 student at Bishop Murray High school in Saskatoon. In June Nicholas was awarded a Kiwanis Club Award for Spirit of School and a \$50.00 Gift Certificate. The Kiwanis Club awarded 28 high school students in Saskatoon for special achievements. He also received two other awards from the school for the student who portrayed the best Christian example in attitude, academics, and helping others.



Austin Janzen is a grade 8 student at Bishop Murray high school. He was

awarded a plaque for the student who made the most progress in his class in academics, character development, Christian example, and being a positive influence to others.

Congratulations Nicholas and Austin!

Want to be a part of something Really Important?

We need mentors to guide and lead our young adults at CWM Youth Camp and Junior Camp.

Do you have what it takes? Our youth need YOU.

lisa@communityofchrist.ca



Community of Christ