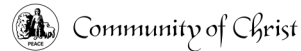


WHAT'S UP... IN THE CWM



Agua Caliente Ribstone School

In a country with shoeless children, relentless empty bellies and sparse medical services, a small light of hope sparked as the January World Accord building crew strapped on their work boots and donned their wide-brimmed hats. The crew was composed of people from across Canada working towards a solitary goal of helping better a community in the small corner of central America called Agua Caliente.

Over the course of a year, the Ribstone Community of Christ congregation collected donations to build an elementary school in Honduras.

The property and foundation in Agua Caliente was supplied by the local community and mayor (similar to one of our MLAs). But it was the funds from the Ribstone congregation, as well as the weeks of hard work by the January/February building crews (both World Accord build attendees and people from the local community), especially those from the Ribstone congregation, that supplied the school from the ground up.

In order to attend school in Honduras, the children not only need to have a school and teachers, but also a uniform. Many children miss out on the opportunity to learn because of a uniform fee. This fee would easily be covered by most Canadian families, but often takes months for the Honduran families to save.

The ground broke in January 2017, with Ribstone congregation members Wendy Belik, Josie Buck and Wayne Skinner working on the build. Doug Middleton from the Senlac congregation (who attends Ribstone over the winter months when Senlac is closed) joined the ranks in February, working on the build until it was in the finishing stages. The Agua Caliente Ribstone School was dedicated in April 2017 with Apostle Carlos Enrique Mejia saying a prayer of blessing over the school and the students.

The small light of hope that sparked in January as the build began, now blazes brightly as the Agua Caliente Ribstone School is filled with eager-to-learn, uniform-garbed students. The education those children will receive will not only better their own lives, but also generations to come, as it will help break the oppression which is rampant in their country.

The school is dedicated to the past and present members of the Ribstone Community of Christ, of which there are many scattered across Canada West Mission.

Ribstone is a small, vibrant congregation in a hamlet of just a handful of homes and we managed to build a school through World Accord. We encourage any congregation in Canada West Mission to contact World Accord and find out what might be a reasonable project for you to take on. Imagine how bright the illumination of hope will be if we join together to change our world!

Submitted by Leila Goheen on behalf of the Ribstone Honduras Team.



What's Up ... In the CWM May 2017

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Abolish Poverty, End Suffering

We fulfill God's ultimate
vision as we...

Help Those Who Hurt

Feed the Hungry

Support Compassionate
Ministries

Respond in Times of
Crisis

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RIOT AND A MIRACLE

RECOGNIZING POWER, CHOICE AND CHRIST

Kit and I were in the line-up for the US border on our way to the Nurturing Spirit Retreat (NSR). We were discussing the biblical scripture of the loaves and fish,

¹⁸ "Bring them here to me," he said. ¹⁹ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ²¹ The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children. Matthew 14:13-21 (NIV).

She commented that there really wasn't much difference between a riot and a miracle. "What do you mean?" I asked. Kit stated that the Vancouver Hockey Riot back in 2011 "never would have happened if someone hadn't thrown the first punch", she said.

Scripture in Real Time – The Youth Spirit Kitchen We have been hosting a Christian-informed meditation retreat in our mission for six years. First held on a daytime basis in Vancouver, BC, NSR has evolved into a weekend format at Samish Island, WA campgrounds. The longer format created the ability to bring in guest ministry and professional yoga instructors. We have a significant part of the weekend dedicated to silence and quiet reflection. As a planning committee we have received continued feedback to increase the silent atmosphere of the retreat.

Very much aware of the ask for "stillness" at Nurturing Spirit, our planning committee discerned a very clear call to have youth (aged 12-18) be a core component of the 2017 traditional adult retreat this spring. A pilot project was envisioned to have 5 youth attend and serve as cooks (with a coach). You wouldn't think mixing a seasoned group of meditation retreat attendees and a dynamic group of youth curious to test their metal in the camp kitchen would be a good idea. Years ago the wisdom of mixing Community of Christ's Enduring Principles and traditional Yoga practice seemed equally suspect. The central concept was to create a welcoming, interactive space for youth to encounter their capacity to make a difference inspired by Matthew 14:13-21. A further hope was that the youth would connect that the difference they make matters within the Community of Christ.

The significance of the Youth Spirit Kitchen was to have a "real time" experience of the sacred. "Real time" in popular culture refers to face to face experiences, as opposed to online, video games, or other screen time experiences that dominate up to 7 hours per day for some youth (CMAH annual study 2016). On our weekend, the youth fed 30+ people for 3 days. They were given choice to participate for each meal or not. And they witnessed what happened when they were present as a full team: My favourite cheer was "Awesome Sauce!" when a smiling sleepy face would show up at 7 am to help with the breakfast. As a team we were able to cook, plate food, serve people in candle light, create centre pieces, and clear plates with a smile. On the evening that we served traditional Indian fare we were even able to have homemade Chai, with a recipe perfected by the youth, from a tea cart in the dining room.



A chance to participate in living scripture makes the bible accessible for today's challenges. Jesus sparked people to work together and share. What does that feel like in real time? How Jesus to turned the 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread into enough food to feed a crowd of 5000 becomes more salient when you are trying to figure out how much pasta will serve 32 yogis! Having a lot of people dependent on you for food makes for a tangible experience of one's efforts, and being supported to meet expectations is a glimpse into how truly great goals are accomplished by communities.



It was vital for the food to enhance the sacred mission of the Nurturing Spirit Retreat. And it was important for the youth to be integrally involved in the discussion of Spirit, Faith, Food - and how these things are related within families, denomination and larger community. Kit was involved in painting special meditation rocks weeks ahead of the retreat that each participant was given at the Saturday evening meal, set by all youth. We spent time in contemplation before the retreat and discussion in the kitchen about Matthew 14:13-21. The idea that Jesus invoked others to share resources rather than inciting violence or indifference was a theme.

Welcoming Spirit Youth Spirit Kitchen is not a cooking program – it is a welcoming spirit program. It could just as easily be a gardening weekend adventure, or service project at an owl nature reserve, or an ongoing program visiting shut-ins.... To nurture youth spirit is about trusting youth to discern moments of power and choice, and provide individuals opportunities to be informed by Christ. It is about providing an opportunity to do something that matters, where by in their absence they see, they are missed, and by their presence youth know they matter.



Lana Cullis
Vancouver

WELCOME BACK STEVE!



Community of Christ

20 April 2017

Greetings Sisters and Brothers of the Canada West Mission Centre,

Here in Independence the leaves on the trees outside my office are gloriously green. It's the week after Easter and it certainly feels like resurrection! I hope you are all feeling the reality, power and hope of the resurrection in your lives!

Yesterday, Steve Thompson joined us via video conference for the regular Canada West Mission Centre staff meeting. It was wonderful to see him doing so well and to hear again of his very successful heart surgery and recovery.

Many are aware that Darrell Belrose has been serving as interim mission centre president during Steve's time of surgery and recovery. Darrell has done a wonderful job, far exceeding any of our expectations (although I guess I'm not really surprised). He has provided staff support and has covered the various administrative and mission related matters that never stop around the mission centre. Darrell, you are AMAZING and on behalf of the whole mission centre and the church I say THANK-YOU! Thanks also to your family for graciously sacrificing time with you as you have generously shared your leadership skills with us.

Darrell and Steve have already begun to transition as Darrell and Mary Jean have prepared for their immanent move to Ontario.

Officially, on 1 May 2017, Steve Thompson will return full time to the role of Mission Centre President and Mission Centre Financial Officer for Canada West Mission Centre. Starting on that date, please return to relating directly with Steve on matters related to these roles.

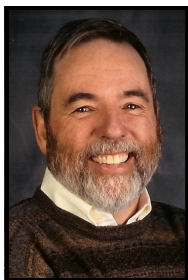
Of course you also have a great staff of gifted servants in Canada West who are also there to support you in mission. Thanks to Debra, Lisa and Parker for all their extra work during this time.

Prayers for Steve as he returns to his roles.

Blessings to all in Canada West Mission Centre,

Art Smith, your field apostle





Darrell Belrose

The older one becomes, the faster life seems to zoom by. Four months have passed since I had the privilege of assisting

Brother Steve by filling in as your Interim Mission Centre President. I would have enjoyed being in each of your congregations to share with you how much I have appreciated you, observing your witness and response through faithful journeying, congregationally and personally as you have walked the path of Christ's mission in your communities. This just wasn't feasible, or of good stewardship to do this in such a short time frame. Mary Jean and I are also on the eve of heading back to Ontario to our grass roots of our genesis years, thus I need to be content to simply say, THANK YOU everyone, as you have inspired us/myself with 13 years of unforgettable memories of a compassionate people in Canada West who have demonstrated their love for their God and who strive to live out the Enduring Principles with dignity and passion.

Being a simple servant of Jesus, I have

no words of wisdom to share with you, but what I wish to share is my ongoing commitment to strive to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. I take the example of my mother who fought cancer for 17 years and whose dying prayer was that despite the pain and agony of the disease, that she would always be faithful to her God until the end. Three days prior to her death she was dictating a letter on a tape recorder to a young man encouraging him to get to know his God and to discover the joy of being part of Jesus Christ's church. She felt that it would always bring him joy, happiness and hope in good and bad times. While our family stayed with Mom during her remaining hours, we reflected upon her great faith and tenacity for expressing her desire to be faithful despite the journey she had been on. Her last words shared with me were, "I'll see you later"! As we have just celebrated the Easter weekend and re-experienced the hope of a living Christ, Easter ... the resurrection ... the hope for all our futures ... the joy in responding to the good news ... I thank God for Mom's faith and how it has brought me to be with you in this chapter of my life, as my treasured friends of CWM.

WHAT'S UP... IN THE CWM

I look forward to the next chapter in CEM, of sharing my witness of a living God who brings us the hope for the future of a world and community that desperately needs the foundation of a God who cares how we live our lives. In the Jan/Feb Herald an article on page 11, President Steve Veazey gave each of us a special calling to, "Awaken to God's Spirit" within us - to study this document and to challenge us to live out our name, Community of Christ. I knew that I needed to internalize what he was hungering for all of us to become and to respond to. It is so easy to read such articles or inspired Doctrine and Covenants passages, but the call for each of us is to study these articles and documents with all our hearts and our last breaths in order to respond to them in ways that God would have us respond. I encourage you to re-read and dwell upon "Awaken the Spirit Within". What will your response be?

Thank you, my precious friends. I leave CWM with joyful memories and with a passion for making a continued response to the call of Christ's mission, as my Mom did. "I'll see you later"!

With Appreciation! Darrell Belrose
Interim Mission Centre President

The Adventure by Rachel Pawliuk Ribstone

In early April, Lisa Neudorf, Joanne Fraser and I attended the Encountering God at Home workshop in Independence. Joanne and Lisa have previously been to the Temple and Auditorium but this was my first trip! Two buildings I have always wanted to see and they were as amazing as I hoped.

On Friday evening we gathered at the Temple when we were asked to get into small groups. I was lucky enough to be with three fantastic ladies, one being Jane Gardner. I shared my oldest daughter was baptized last January. My daughter had been planning her baptismal service for YEARS, she is one of those kids who has a deep passion for the Lord. I wanted to bring both of my daughters with me to experience this but it was too expensive to fly all of us. The Auditorium was closed for the weekend and I would not be able to see it but Jane said "I will take you over to the Auditorium tomorrow."

On Saturday we had a great morning. Katie Harmon-McLaughlin, Monica Bradford and Janné Grover lead fantastic sessions and kept us wanting more! Saturday lunch was at the Stone Church where Joanne and I were able to meet Linda Read and nice conversations were had. Joanne and I got to know Linda more throughout the weekend and realized what a great lady she is!

After lunch we split into breakout sessions. I took "Engaging Scripture at Home" with Monica Bradford. Monica talked about Bible verse boxes and we had the chance to do the story of the Lost Sheep which was really good. Next I took a class with Janné Grover called Holistic Rhythm. We learned about creating your family life rules and sticking with it. When life moves to the next stage be okay with changing some rules or adjusting. Janné talked about the sacred yes and the sacred no. Being able to say no or yes to things depending on what works for your family without the need to explain to others why.

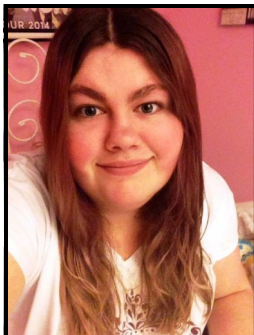
Sunday morning was filled with more enriching moments. What great ideas this team had! Before we knew it, the weekend was over and since we had time before our flight we decided to have Dickies BBQ for lunch. What a great surprise to see Cindy and Dave Glandon (*our weekend greeters who gave us our daily stickers*) and we enjoyed lunch and fellowship with them.

We had a great trip. I learned so much and met some great people. We felt very welcome by everyone. To the organizers hats off to you!!



EDMONTON YOUTH RETREAT FEBRUARY

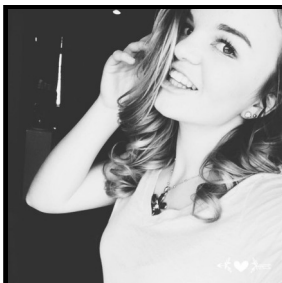
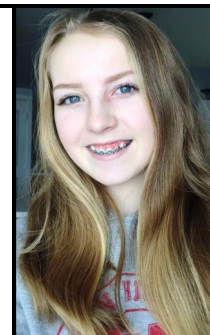
Camper Comments



I had the best time at my youth rally. I loved all the activities we did like going to the WEM water park. I liked the sessions we did with Tracy and I also loved the party night we

had! I met a couple new friends and I also liked seeing old friends that I have not seen in a long, long time. I always have so much fun at these youth rallies I never want them to end. I hope to see all the people who were at the rally at youth camp this summer. ~ *Lauren Levitt*

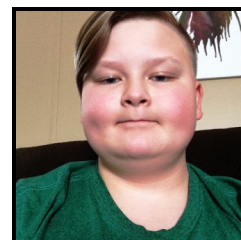
My name is Sarah. I'm from the Saskatoon Community of Christ congregation and I went to the Edmonton youth retreat in February. These retreats are always something I look forward to, and I've been going to them for three years now. Having it in Edmonton I thought was a good decision. It is a beautiful city and has plenty to do. The retreat this year was awesome! I made new friends and reunited with old ones. The leaders were great, and did an awesome job planning the activities, and I really enjoyed Tracy's sessions. The theme for the weekend was "love your selfie" and I thought that was really neat. We learned about mindfulness and loving yourself, and Stephen Robinson from 52 Skills came and he was really interesting. Church was really good too. We talked about turning the other cheek, and we got into some really good conversations. Everyone from the congregation was really nice. My favourite part was the water park, and the Rube Goldberg machine. I had a lot of fun swimming with my friends, and I was ecstatic when the machine actually worked. It was a blast. I always have fun on these retreats, and Lisa does a fantastic job planning them. It was all I would talk about after I got home. Going to these retreats every year is the highlight of my February break, and I can't wait to go back next year! ~ *Sarah McLean*



The youth retreat was one of the best experiences I've had in my life. I was supposed to be going on a trip the weekend of the retreat but I couldn't so we registered last minute. I didn't think I would like it very much but I gave it a shot and had a blast. My favourite part about the weekend was meeting new people and bonding with them. I haven't really ever been great at meeting people but this experience has brought me out of my shell. I feel the weekend has also brought me closer to God which led to me starting to go to church as I never did before. I don't regret coming at all and I will be

coming to it for years to come. I also really enjoyed meeting Steven from 52skills because he was amazing and not many people can say they've met a guy anything like him. All I can really say is that this youth retreat has changed my life in a very positive way and I intend to come for many more years. ~ *Brielle Savage*

The Edmonton youth retreat was a blast! I met new friends and we did lots of activities. My favourite thing we did was going to the WEM World Waterpark but we also had a fun theme class. ~ *Tyler Ell*



HIGH HOPES FOR LITTLE LIBRARIES

I remember the first time I saw a Little Free Library, I was so excited I'm sure my face had the look of a child hearing the ice cream truck music waft through the neighbourhood on a sunny summer day. Now granted, I LOVE books. I have always loved reading and in fact I used to have a library in my home with well over 500 books. Nigel built it for me. There were book shelves filling most of the wall space, a six foot window seat with a thick foam cushion, and an old comfy chair in the middle of the room. The walls were painted a deep burgundy so the room had that dark cozy library feel. It was probably my favourite room in house, but we've lived in 4 homes since then, so when I saw this Little Free Library encouraging me to take a book or leave a book, I was hooked.

If you haven't heard of Free Little Libraries, they are small library boxes set on a post with an access door, and everyone is invited to 'take a book' or 'leave a book'. You can find them in front yards, parks, and many other properties around town. Free Little Libraries come in many different shapes and sizes, are popping up all over North America, and they are the newest project for the congregations in British Columbia. In Community of Christ, we're often trying to figure out ways to reach out to our neighbours, be invitational, and at the same time not

overwhelm them with our excitement for our church and our work in the world. For some of us, it's hard to find the right subject to talk about initially, so I was thrilled when all four of our BC congregations jumped at the



opportunity to provide a slice of literary happiness for their communities, in the form of a Little Free Library.

The project will begin this May with building the Libraries, decorating them, pouring the cement for the post, maybe adding some paving stones in front, and finally filling them with books. I really like this idea because everyone in the congregations will be able to participate. Some can dig a hole or hammer a nail, others will paint flowers or sayings about reading on the

exterior, and even more will simply donate a book. What a great way to get people to stop at the front of your church as they leaf through a language book, or pick up a novel they been wanting to read, and they are all free for the taking.

We'll be registering our Little Free Libraries and to do that each congregation will purchase a charter sign for about \$45. The charter sign is 8 inches x 1 1/2 inches and is placed on the exterior of the library. Then we'll be listed on the Little Free Library World Map! They sell and ship libraries online, but I think they are very expensive, so we're building our own in BC. If you'd like more information about Little Free Libraries, go to littlefreelibrary.org.

I'll admit it, I have High Hopes for these Little Libraries. It's an outreach opportunity that's easy to reach - at about three and a half feet tall - especially for the kids.

Debra Donohue
Congregational
Outreach Specialist



TRAVELLING THIS SUMMER?

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Lethbridge Nancy Panting 403-329-4410

Meadow Ridge Larry LaPorte 604-465-6133

Paddockwood Ray Beckman 306-989-4704

Porcupine Plain Looi Bourgonje 306-278-3056

Prince Albert Linda Klughart 306-922-8056

Regina Dan Esch 306-949-1470

Ribstone Darleene Skinner 780-858-2524

Saskatoon Corleen McLean 306-343-1188

Senlac Becky Middleton 306-228-2949

Vancouver Lanette Vawter 604-435-5344

Victoria John Canty 250-388-4712

Winnipeg Stan Freer 204-667-7374

Peace and Justice: Spirituality in Uncertain Times

Crass world: 10; Spirituality: 0.

This arbitrary score is not meant to suggest spirituality is dead but to indicate the desperate need for deeply-rooted spirituality, especially in uncertain times where populism abounds. Names like Trump or Brexit easily pop up, but it is so much broader, whether Hungary or Venezuela. Does it bring to mind images of confrontation, frustration and crassness?

I like the notion of populism as “a symptom of a democratic system that is ailing” (de Jonge). It removes the pejorative sense, yet signals something of significance. It allows someone in the populist camp to ponder how to raise up the core issues without the divisive and corrosive rhetoric. And for the anti-populists, how to engage without dismissing and deriding. In other words, how to dialogue, how to encounter, how to problem-solve together rather than shout past each other, given that so much pain and suffering could be at stake.

This requires us to dig deep, down to that core layer of spirituality. Here are some of the contours:

1. Know Thyself.

At its best, spirituality is a dynamic orientation that allows God's Spirit of Goodness to seep continually into ourselves such that over time we sense in our bones that we are created in God's image, meant for love, and become anchored in that ensuing dignity and self-worth. This is the layer of inner peace so essential for all else.

The discipline of taking time to be quiet, calm, listening to your breath, heart and so on, seems to have a near-universal positive effect on oneself. It is now even used in some schools.

But within the context of populism, it can also be used to help me get beyond my initial sometimes heated emotional reactions. One can't escape initial reactions, but one needn't stay there. I can try to cut through my web of feelings, pre-conceived thoughts, etc., until I see the other person authentically as an ever-loved child of God, without falling into sloppy sentimentalism.

1-a. Know “Thyself”'s Amazing Range of Other Authentic “Thyselfs”.

Decades ago a priesthood member, after having spent time in various spiritual exercises over time, told me that he had never felt God's Spirit. Yet the person was very alive, loving and caring. So while I told him that his actions indicated he had God's Spirit within him, I also took note of this “way of processing reality that I simply didn't understand”. I came to realize that my sense of “things spiritual” was not as universal as I thought, but sometimes more an indication of people who process reality like me.

This has become a key insight for me, and a key point especially in “uncertain times.” How odd, one might ask, to suggest less certainty in uncertain times.

But I am simply suggesting that we reaffirm **what is truly universal - the need for dignity and self-worth** - while allowing for the possibility that we humans are authentically more diverse even in our processing than is generally acknowledged. That said, the evaluation remains the same - does it nurture or denigrate life?

1-b. Expand Thy World.

If I hadn't met that priesthood member, it might have been years before I gained insight about the possibility of unfathomable-to-me “authentic ways of processing reality.” Expanding our repertoire of ministry involves being open (again, spirituality of some form) and consciously seeking out spheres beyond our comfort zones or silos.

This point hones in on a key reason for our “crass world” and “uncertain times” – we easily caricature those who are not like us. As my previous article indicated we easily surround ourselves with like-mindedness – “bubbles” or “silos”. Spirituality can help us regain some anchoring that all are God's children, that there is always a reason for things, and that we need to engage with others.

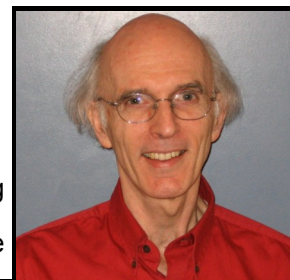
2. Learn and Engage in appropriate non-violent dynamics.

Getting to the point of seeing someone as a child of God is not the end-point, but starting point. It might dissolve differences but usually not in such a complex world. Thus spirituality moves us to action, a topic requiring a separate article.

May we drink ever more deeply from the well-spring of God's Goodness, enabling us to be leaven in these troubling times!

Rod Downing

Peace and Justice



The Vancouver Congregation welcomes the Hashim family to Canada



Langley. After getting them settled in with some food, a full refrigerator, and a brief introduction to their new home, we left them to settle in for the night, only to return the following morning to start the process of

It was a long process getting from the point of congregational approval, to applications and paperwork supported by the MCC (Mennonite Central Committee), but after wading through all the bureaucracy, and a long wait, followed by a mad rush, Ali and Wasan, along with Mustafa (11), Maria (8), Mohammed (7), and Haneen (5) touched down at Vancouver International on November 3, 2016.

They were exhausted from the travel, and there was lots of work ahead, so we loaded them into cars and drove them to their new home in

adjusting to life in Canada. Four months later, and many adventures including the snowiest winter in recent Vancouver history, life is gradually becoming more settled. There have been mountains of paperwork, medical and dental appointments, school visits, English lessons, Mustafa's broken wrist, and Mohammed's collarbone (both sledding accidents). Adjusting to life in a basement suite for 6 has been a struggle, as has Ali working hard to pass the driver's knowledge test to get his driver's license. Ali and Wasan are through level one English lessons and have been working hard every day to

increase English proficiency. Along with all the hard work, there have been some very fun

times as well. Skytrain and the sea bus were highlights of a day trip into Vancouver to see Stanley Park and the Vancouver Aquarium. The whole family attended a birthday party at a bowling alley, and the children had a great time with pizza and bowling. They also came out to the Vancouver Congregation for a potluck and three-month anniversary celebration in early February (with cake and Halal foods).

There is still much work to do for the congregation and the Hashims, but we are well underway to a successful transition to life in Canada. Current



challenge taxes. Welcome to life in Canada!

Many thanks to all who have participated in the process of welcoming and supporting the Hashim's through this challenging time of transition.



Chris Phelps
Vancouver



Encounter World Religions Centre

Space is still available for Discovery Week
in Toronto July 9-15, 2017

<http://www.worldreligions.ca/discovery-week>



Explore 11
religions in
1 fantastic
week...



Greetings from Calgary!

This month, President Veazey asked us an important question (Link to President's Challenge: https://youtu.be/oYL6T_170Uw): *"Are we spiritually awake, informed, and ready to respond?"* I took that question to heart as I prepared the Calgary congregation's video response. As I reflected and prayed about what I might say, I was reminded of the pain and frustration that many have felt – and continue to feel – along the journey of congregational renewal. You see, with revitalization comes a certain sense of loss, perhaps a loss of an old identity, location, culture, or way of doing things. We are creatures of comfort, and we tend to gravitate towards what we know. Believe it or not, as a millennial, I, too, feel this pull to the familiar. I believe it is important to recognize and sit with this loss before making any sudden or drastic changes.

We've now been in our temporary location for eight months, and as a community we've had the time to sit with our loss, but as time has gone on, we've been able to shift our focus from losses to gains. What possibilities await us now that we are freed from the chains of loss?

Link: <https://youtu.be/WyBMQ7GKwac>



In my response to the President's Challenge, I submitted a video on behalf of the Calgary congregation highlighting the innovative approaches to mission and outreach here. What I said was entirely true, we are most definitely pushing the boundaries in practically every area of traditional ministry. Even our current *temporary* location has opened our hearts and minds to new ways of doing church and more importantly, has welcomed new individuals into the fold that we would have otherwise likely never engaged. The intentional

sale of our previous location as a way to promote change and innovation is working, and we are well on our way in the acquisition phase of our building transition. We will soon be working with professional architects and realtors to ensure that our new location is set apart as a sacred space, that our visitors and members immediately feel at home, and that this location will remain relevant for years to come.

All of this is wonderful, and I continue to be positive about the direction of the congregation. I know we will be rejuvenated by our new location and that we will emerge as a stronger congregation because of it. That said, I'm a realist, and I need to acknowledge all the work the Calgary congregation has put in to its congregational renewal plan. I can assure you that countless hours, stress, and likely frustration went into the process. To sell our previous facility was no simple feat, but I believe it had to be done in order to get where we are today.

I often tell folks that community building is not easy. We are a diverse group of individuals making up a beautifully unique community, and that takes time, patience, respect, and a willingness to bend. Calgary continues down the road of congregational renewal at a steady pace that will allow us to grow in a sustainable way, both inside and out.

As always, I invite you to visit the Calgary Community of Christ website (Link: www.cofchristyyc.ca) to read news and updates, stories on the blog, and more. Additionally, [click here to subscribe to our email list](http://eepurl.com/ceHnIb) (<http://eepurl.com/ceHnIb>) and follow us on social media so you can stay up-to-date on our journey:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/cofchristyyc>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/cofchristyyc>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/cofchristyyc>

Blessings,
Parker Johnson
Church Ministry and Young Adult Ministries Specialist
Calgary, AB



ARE YOU PREPARED TO BE DISRUPTED?

I recently attended "Encountering God at Home: Spiritual Formation with Children, Youth and Families" a workshop offered at the Temple in Independence. One of the activities was the opportunity to walk the Labyrinth at the Temple. As I journeyed through Lent, I often looked for ways to center myself and spend time with God. I found myself searching for answers but I did not know what the questions were. I have previously walked the Labyrinth when I have been seeking God's guidance for whatever burdens were currently in my life. I found the experience would provide me with a sense of direction and the peace I was usually seeking.

This time as I approached the Labyrinth, I was not sure if I wanted to walk it. I was feeling pressed for time and didn't want to be rushed or for the shortage of time to disrupt my focus. There are a number of benches around the Labyrinth so I settled myself on one and focused myself with God. After a few minutes, I felt the pull of the practice and stepped forward. I took a few cleansing breaths and began

taking slow deliberate steps along the path. My eyes were cast downward focusing only on the path before me. Every few turns, I would stop, face the center of the Labyrinth, spend a few moments in breath prayer before continuing on. I sunk deeper into my time and space with God. Then I heard the sounds of children approaching the Labyrinth. I looked up and saw five or six young children running up to it and I quickly realized the children did not view the Labyrinth as I did. To them, it was a race track and their goal was to run it as quickly as possible. I was annoyed and tempted to quit but something pushed me on. I refocused myself and continued on in my methodical manner but now I needed to pay attention to the children and step to the side so they could run by. As I made my way closer to the center I continued to stop and pray but was very aware of the noise and my focus was on the children. I realized I had a choice - I could stop because the children were disrupting me or I could accept the disruption and experience the Labyrinth in a different way. I chose

to be disrupted.

Eventually I made my way to the center, the children finished their race and moved on to other activities. My experience in the Labyrinth was not the quiet meditation I was seeking and yet it was restorative. It was liberating to walk the path and to allow myself to be disrupted by the joyful innocence of children.

As I reflected on this experience I was reminded of Apostle Ron Harmon's message that God disrupts us in strange and mysterious ways. Disruption is when something is unable to continue in the normal way. This is not necessarily negative but it does take courage. When we allow ourselves to be disrupted we allow ourselves to change and hopefully grow. Are you prepared to be disrupted? Are you prepared to step outside your comfort zone to discover where God will lead you?

Lisa Neudorf
Camping and Retreat
Specialist



VICTORIA REMEMBERS BETTY GURNEY



The Celebration of Life held for Betty Gurney (91) was full of memories, spiritual stories, and laughter. It was held at our Community of Christ Church in Victoria on April 12th. There was a large group of people gathered to share in the event – around 75 people.

Carl Bolger welcomed everyone and previous Victoria Pastor – Gary McDonald reflected on Betty. He mentioned that when he arrived in

Victoria in the 1990's he wasn't sure his ideas would be seen as positive by such an older congregation. It was Betty Gurney that changed his mind – she led the way in honing his new plans and opened her home to everyone. A short reading took place from Psalm 139. Sally Glasier did the invocation.

Betty Gurney's daughter – Wendy was wonderful in leading the eulogy. She said "the greatest gift is love and that is Betty – good, kind, generous, upbeat and the type of person that treasured family and friends. She was born in Alberta – one of 5 siblings (3 brothers and 1 sister). Her wonderful history includes

- at age 19 joined the Air Force and met soon to be husband --- Maurice
- son Kevin arrived in 1956 and daughter Wendy arrived in 1959
- marriage lasted 62 heartwarming years
- called and accepted Priesthood in

our Church in 1990

Wendy's son – Shawn mentioned that his friends remember her love as she will be missed by all

Kevin spoke about his mother's never ending energy and the closeness his Mom felt for her family

We were now treated to "The Hampton Singers" choir which accompanied a beautiful slide show presentation showing some of Betty's life in pictures. This was a choir that Betty had led for many years. Pam Dickson – a long and cherished friend of Betty – provided lovely music on the piano.



VICTORIA CONTINUED

Shirley Bolger shared that "Betty is a rose in life". Ernie Lyle commented that Betty's life was like a river – flowing endlessly and happily along welcoming everyone in for the time of their life. There were pictures to view in the foyer.

Everyone later went downstairs for food and a chance to talk, reminisce and basically bathe in the glory of a lady we shall not forget. June 8, 1925 - March 22, 2017.

Love you Betty,
Ernie Lyle



PHONE LINE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Hello and greetings. Spring seems to be a little slow here in Saskatoon, Canada. We had a few warm days to give us hope. We usually go south to Missouri this time of year where the Spring season is about three to four weeks sooner. That is why it probably seems longer for Gloria and I this year. She had Cataract surgery done so it will be about six weeks until new eye glasses.

It is, as you already know, amazing what medical technology is capable of in today's world. I do find it frustrating that humanity is not keeping up emotionally, mentally and spiritually. **Somehow we need to find the capability to deal with each other peacefully as fast as technology in almost all fields is advancing.**

As an Evangelist, I have been allowed to have a fairly good "phone line through the Holy Spirit to the upstairs Echelon." Without saying too much, **I have sensed through that source that we as humankind need to quickly put God, the Supreme Creator back into our life "pronto," in order to prevent a major change in a large part of the world.** Remember, Jesus wept over Jerusalem. I also feel that **Jesus is hurting and weeps over our world at this time, hoping we will put God back into our lives.** As you already know, God gave us free agency, but still loves us and **hopes we will strive for peace, reconciliation and justice.** We do this by following the teachings of our blessed redeemer and teacher, Jesus of Nazareth.

If each of us takes some action, by sharing the love of God in our everyday life, in some way with others and not just family and church there will be results. In a way, it will be like "pay it forward." We can get across that God loves and cares for people sometimes just with our actions. Example, **"God did not create any one as junk, so you are a special wonderful creation of the Supreme Creator".**

I have a business type card that I have handed out in the last few years, even in other countries where we have traveled. On

it are the words, "God cares...We care... Do you care? You are loved unconditionally. Go to a church of your choice or visit one of ours to discover your mission in life. **We believe in the worth of all people!**" I also put my email and a phone number on the card.

I think each of us knows deep down in our hearts and minds, what we really need to do. Somehow, some of us need to break loose from the **chain of apathy** that holds us back. Maybe it is like the, "Wizard of Oz" movie where the Lion needed courage, I sometimes need to find courage to share the Christ with others when there is an opportunity. **It is interesting how often an opportunity arises. Sometimes for me it is on an airplane or even waiting in line at a store.**

Prayer power is one of the most powerful resources in the universe. I am willing to bet that most of us have seen the results of prayers sent up to the heavenly realm, petitioning for something you felt was needed for yourself or someone.

We have the prayer of Administration that often we forget to ask for when we need emotional, physical or spiritual assistance beyond our ability. I had a wake-up call years ago. I was ill and had stayed home while the rest of the family went to church. While I was laying on the bed feeling a bit sorry for myself, either through an angel or the Holy Spirit, I heard the words, **"They are Elders ask them to administer to you."** I tell you what, **when you hear something that direct, you listen.** That is exactly what I did and in not many minutes after the prayer of administration was done, I was up and around having dinner with the rest.

God's time and ours of course are different and many times recovery or a blessing is much slower. For me I knew this was a lesson I needed to learn. Do

not hesitate to ask, follow the scripture and ask for the prayer of administration if you have need. **Would you limit the power of the Supreme Creator by not asking for a blessing when you need one?** Sometimes, we may think we are not worthy because we feel unworthy of a blessing.

I had a dear friend that was worried that God would not forgive him for various things he had done amiss throughout his life. I was concerned about how can I help him to know that God can forgive all sins. Well, as an Evangelist I got the answer in the same way I get information for someone I am doing a blessing for. I can't share the name, this is what I got direct from the Spirit of Jesus. **"Do not Insult Me -----, I suffered exquisite pain in order for you to be forgiven,"** as well as others. Gloria and I went to see the Movie, "the Shack." To me it brought out these very strong words about forgiveness, I was given to share with a dying man. I would advise taking a Kleenex or two if you go see the movie.

As God's beloved creations, men, women and children let us keep up our courage, be of good cheer and help each other make this a better world. I, with sincere intent, petition our Supreme Creator for the discernment, wisdom, and perseverance you need at this time in your life and the life of our precious world, known by the expression, "Mother Earth."

May you be truly blessed for all that you need. Thank you again so very much for all that you do, not just for yourself or family but for the church and community. Each of us working together can turn the world around for a better future. Hope, Courage and Peace,



Pastor Support/Evangelist,
Wayne Stanton

What's up....in Ribstone?

The Ribstone congregation has had an active few months thus far in 2017. Our congregation continues to amaze me with their love and commitment.

Our Sunday school classes have been having great fun while learning about Jesus. We are so blessed to have creative and caring Sunday school teachers that lovingly work and play with our youth. We are also blessed to have Darleene who puts hours and hours into preparing classes for our young at heart. We are never too old to learn about the love of God. Pictured here is the youngest group drawing Goliath.



Our various youth groups meet monthly. JAM (Jesus and Me) is for babies to grade 3 age.

EST (Eager Saints Troop) is for Grade 1 through 6 age. Youth Group is for Grades 7 through 12. The leaders of these groups dedicate their time and their love to these groups and they are so appreciated. The big experience for Youth group kids was going to the Winter Youth Retreat in Edmonton in February. Eight youth from our area went to the retreat this year. Plans were made with their new friends to meet at Hills of Peace this summer and



even at SPEC. This is an exciting time for our youth and we are blessed to be part of their lives as they grow in faith.

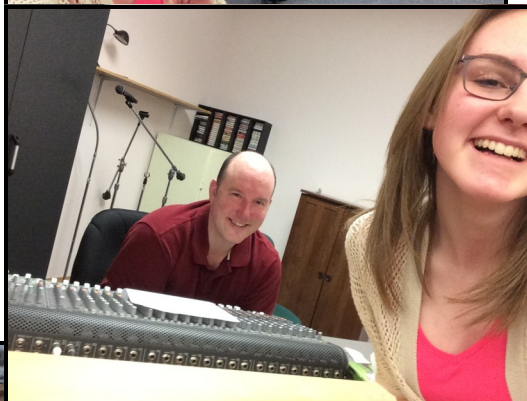
Our worship services continue to be inspiring, enlightening, and wonderful.

Our worship planners and speakers make each service unique. In February we celebrated the 109th Anniversary/ Birthday of



the Ribstone Congregation with cake and singing.

Plans are underway for our 110th celebration which will take place in April of 2018. Please see the "Save the Date" below, and plan to come and join us on this blessed

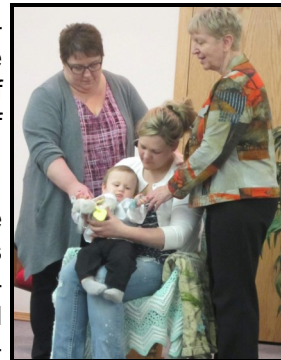


occasion.

In March we took #Ribstone's Biggest Selfie as part of a special worship service led by Darleene.

The first Sunday in April was a double sacrament service in Ribstone. We celebrated the Sacra-

ment of Communion and the Sacrament of Blessing of Young Children. Kylan Roesler, son of Nadine Gould, was blessed by Darleene and Joanne. Kylan's sister

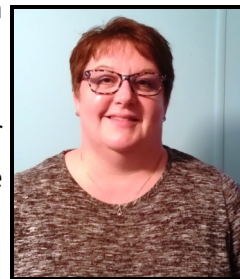


Ashlyn took part in the service and read him their favorite book. After the blessing we were served Communion by Anita and Wayne.



In February a group met for two Saturdays for a Temple School course. Under the wonderful guidance of Al Mogg we shared in the "Introduction to Priesthood Ministries" course. Wayne Skinner, Josie Buck, and Wendy Belik along with Doug Middleton (Senlac) went to Honduras and took part in the building of a school dedicated to the memory of the pioneers of the Ribstone congregation this winter. Please look for a detailed report of their mission on the front page.

Joanne Fraser
Ribstone



GET GOD - F.L.O.W. IN MEADOW RIDGE

GET GOD

**Greatness
Education
Training
Goals
Outreach
Discipleship**

When I was selected for the Get God program I knew I'd be in for a journey. I had a lot going on in my personal life, but I knew that this must be the right time or these doors wouldn't have opened. So I jumped in with both feet. For my project I decided that my congregation of Meadow Ridge needed to have some fun again and something that brought us together both spiritually and in community. What better way to do just that than a FLOW weekend? So after talking to the program coordinator, Debra Donohue, and my mentor, Bonnie Levitt, we decided I'd plan two of these weekends as part of my work in the Get God Program. I was excited as I've always held a special place in my heart for FLOW weekends. I actually got my start in the church about eight years ago because of a simple invitation to a FLOW weekend, and that invitation changed my life in so many ways.

F.L.O.W.

**Fellowship
Leadership
Outreach
Worship**

Both Debra and Bonnie warned me that planning these weekends is a lot of work. Honestly, I thought they may have been exaggerating a bit. I mean, come on...I've been to many of these weekends. It couldn't be that hard, could it? It's just a fun weekend where we have visiting guest ministers hang out with us, do a class or two, go bowling, have dinner...no problem I thought to



myself! I've got this! I realized fairly quickly that Debra and Bonnie were definitely NOT exaggerating. A lot of work may have been an understatement. I soon began to question myself...what on earth did I get myself into? I don't have the knowledge or skills to come up with themes or classes! Could I really pull this off? I have never prayed so much about anything. Then I realized that this was what my fabulous team was there for, to help me, and to teach me how to do this. So after many Skype meetings and emails we came up with guest ministers to invite, a theme, and ideas for classes. I soon began to realize that maybe this wasn't as far out of reach as I initially thought. My first FLOW weekend was held February 17 -19, 2017. Doug MacArthur was our adult guest minister, Dan Woynarski was our children's minister and Sara Peters looked after the Nursery. (We'd never had children's ministers before so that was super exciting!). Bonnie Levitt shared her talents in the kitchen and made sure we had happy tummies all weekend long. Friday night started out with an awesome sing-along. Chris Phelps came out for the evening along with Brian and Nola Gibson, and the guitars

came out and the singing started. The kids were dancing and everyone was having a great time. It was the perfect start to the weekend bringing everyone together. Then we were back at the church nice and early Saturday for our classes. Doug was upstairs with the adults while Dan and Sarah were downstairs

with the kids. The classes both challenged and inspired us. At the end of the day we all travelled to a nearby restaurant for a Chinese food followed by bowling.

We were back early Sunday morning for another class session to tie up the



weekend before heading upstairs for our service planned by Debra. Afterwards we all went to Ed and Audrey Salahub's for an awesome lunch, it was the perfect end to a fabulous weekend.

I went home Sunday and just sat and thought in amazement, wow! It went so well and wow! Maybe I really could pull it off (with lots of help of course!!). So now that I've had a couple months of quiet and rest from planning its back to the drawing board to start the planning process for the second FLOW weekend this September. I know now that it may take longer than a month to have one of these come together. I look forward to seeing how the second FLOW will turn out. I can't help but think that it's like the Mission prayer..."God, where will your Spirit lead today?". I know where it's leading me.



Lisa Wingfield
Get God Participant
Meadow Ridge



NURTURING SPIRIT RETREAT SAMISH ISLAND



God calls us to take care of our spirits so as I look for ways in my life to slow down and just be, The Nurturing Spirit Retreat is quite often the easiest way for me to find that calming, in the moment feeling. The amazing beauty and stillness of the Samish Island setting certainly helps, and this year I feel strongly that we put on our best Nurturing Spirit Retreat ever. That achievement comes with time, practice, trying new things, and being open to change. I think we nailed it.

This year we began our Friday earlier than the usual start time of 7pm for registration, with self guided activities

the Labyrinth, Several different personal practices, Walking Meditation and Adult Coloring. It was wonderful to be able to offer people the time to settle into their bodies in preparation for the weekend.

At least 75% of the group came early for dinner which also added to our experience. Lana Cullis has written an article on page 2 about the Youth Spirit Kitchen, so I won't go into many of the details, but I do need to take the time to honor Lana and the kids for everything they brought to the weekend. Our intention was to do something special for the youth while teaching them about

and personal spiritual time for those who could attend early. The options were Walking

food and our spiritual experience with food, and wouldn't you know it, the youth gave us so much in return. Their willingness to offer the ministry of service touched us all, and the food was amazing.

Our class sessions this year included 'Arrive and Stretch and Be', 'Evening Meditation', 'Gentle Body Prayer and Meditation', 'Healing Path Yoga', 'Listening for the Soul', Yoga Nidra (trust me, we all Nidra this!), more personal meditation time including 'Hatha Yoga with gentle Vinyasa' taught by Barbara Rose-Leigh from the GPNW, and on Saturday night, an evening 'Dark Walk Meditation' with Patti Beer. During our silent lunch we were able to really take the time to taste our food, and to contemplate where it was grown, whose hard working hands had nurtured and coaxed the plants to spring forth their bounty and be grateful for those people and our food.

Although many of our regulars were unable to attend this year, our numbers were greater and we met many new people. At any retreat, and definitely this one, it is not just the organizers who create the event, it's the participants who color and flavour the weekend. So, from all of us on the planning team, Vickie MacArthur, Shannon McAdam, Lanette Vawter, Lana Cullis, Patti Beer and myself, thank you. We want you to know how appreciated each and every one of you are.

There truly is something for everyone at the Nurturing Spirit Retreat and I hope you get the opportunity, or rather *make the time* to join us in the future. There will be a **Nurturing Spirit Retreat** offered at Hills of Peace this summer August 4-7, contact Lisa Neudorf lisa@communityofchrist.ca for more information. New for 2018 will be the **Nurturing Silence Retreat** June 1-3. Details about this will be available early in the new year.



Namaste
Debra Donohue

Canada West Camping and Event Calendar 2017

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 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

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 Singles Reunion Samish Island

August 4-7 Nurturing Spirit Retreat Hills of Peace

August 13-17 Camp Mungai (10-11 yrs) Samish Island

September 1-3 Canada West Mission Conference Vancouver BC

September 22-24 Men's Retreat Hills of Peace

November 3-5 High Priest, Evangelist and Seventy Retreat Edmonton

EDMONTON COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

SUPPORTS YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

On May 15, 2016 members and friends of Community of Christ participated in the 1st annual Fun Walk in support of Youth Empowerment Support Services (Y.E.S.S.) in Edmonton, Alberta. Midway through our walk in the beautiful Mill Creek Ravine, we stopped at the original Y.E.S.S. location, where volunteers took us on a tour of the building. We also learned about the support services and the increasingly 'wrap around' programs offered to at risk youth by Youth Empowerment Support Services at several locations in Edmonton.

After completing the Fun Walk we returned to the Church, to enjoy a well earned lunch and short worship experience.

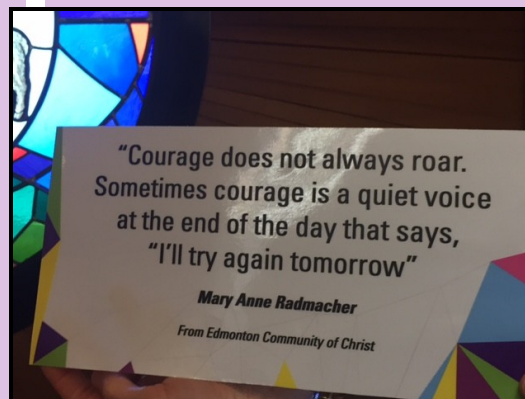
By participating in this fun "taking it to the street" Sunday morning activity, Community of Christ raised \$4,315.00 for Y.E.S.S.'s Nexus emergency shelter program. Nexus gets kids off the street and into a safe bed for the night, often the first step in the transition from feeling discarded and forgotten to becoming strong successful young adults.

The annual cost of supporting 1 Nexus bed for 1 year is \$2,500.00. With a little help from our friends, Community of Christ in Edmonton was able to ensure that a safe bed is available for one young person for 365 days. The remainder of the money raised was also given to Y.E.S.S. to help support the Society's many programs for at risk



youth.

"Y.E.S.S. is a "relentlessly dedicated not for profit organization empowering



youth from difficult realities". (From Y.E.S.S. Mission Statement)

Since 1981, Youth Empowerment Support Services has provided food, clothing, shelter and a safe place to sleep for teens and young adults aged 15-24 years, who often fall through the cracks of provincial Child Welfare programs. Some of these young people have aged out of the Child Welfare System and are no longer eligible for Child Protection Services, even though their needs remain. Many others have been kicked out, or have chosen to leave abusive family situations. Some suffer from mental health and addiction issues. Most have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused.

Beyond the basics, Y.E.S.S. offers counselling, referrals and programming to ensure that the young people who

come through their doors have the opportunity to access medical care, housing, education, and assistance in securing employment.

Edmonton Community of Christ (CofC) has been one of many community supporters of Y.E.S.S. since 2010, when the congregation first decided to provide 'milk money' each year for the shelter. CofC also sponsors a table at the Society's annual 'Champions Breakfast', and some members attend the summer 'Tea Party' and have participated in being 'Homeless For a Night'.

Since Youth Empowerment Services Society must raise 60% of their operating cost from the community, staff and supporters are constantly seeking ways to ensure that adequate funds are available to run programs, and, to make sure that there is food on the table each night. Edmonton Community of Christ is committed to offering our support.

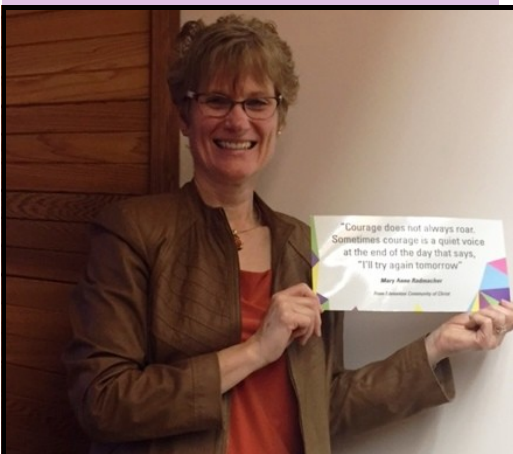
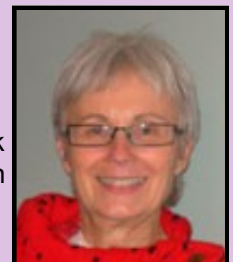
A quote from Mary Anne Radmacher says this. "Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day that says "I will try again tomorrow."

Y.E.S.S. provides an opportunity for at risk youth to try again tomorrow.

The 2017 Community of Christ Fun Walk in support of Youth Empowerment Services is scheduled to take place on May 28, 2017. To participate, sign up with George now, at gjhuybregts@shaw.ca. Our 2017 Fun Walk will include all the best of last year's walk, along with new ideas and activities designed to encourage interaction and inclusion.

This run is open to everyone, so ask your friends to join us in supporting at risk youth and young adults in Edmonton. Thank you.

Deborah Greibrok
Edmonton



Community of Christ
16490 84A Avenue
Surrey, BC
V4N-3G8



Community of Christ

CANADA WEST MISSION CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 1-3, 2017 VANCOUVER, BC

With Guest Ministers

Jan Kraybill Principle Organist at the Temple in Independence

Apostle Art Smith, and President of Seventy John Glaser

David Barth - World Accord, Rod Downing - Peace and Justice, Dar Shepherdson - Bishop of Canada

Join us for an early start on Friday afternoon at 4pm for fun, games, and a light dinner.



Highlights

Saturday night concert with Jan Kraybill

Party in the parking lot with 'The Seabillys'

Awesome class sessions for all ages, and more!



Need a place to stay?

For billeting please contact Marilyn Suddaby thesuddabys@shaw.ca or 604-936-2588

Hotel - Accent Inns 3777 Henning Drive, Burnaby burnaby@accentinns.com

Community of Christ group rate \$149.99 p/night 604-473-5000 group # 5304406

Includes free shuttle to and from the Conference, you should book shuttle times in advance.

Are you a musician or an experienced presider? Make plans to join us Monday September 4th for a special Music in Worship workshop with Jan Kraybill from 10:30am - 2pm

To register for Mission Conference or Jan's workshop
contact debra@communityofchrist.ca or 1-877-411-2632 ext 4