

Are you interested in being a WUC "Covid neighbour"?

We have made door hangers here at the church with the following inscription:

"We are here for you... If you need help during this time of isolation with anything; getting groceries or prescriptions, or other tasks, please feel free to phone me. At Westminster United Church we take "love thy neighbour" to heart.

As we focus for the next number of weeks on the theme of "Love", we are inviting those of you who are able and willing to pick up some door hangers and hang them on the doors of neighbours in your area. Members are encouraged to put their name and phone number on these hangers. If you plan on picking up any, please phone the church first so we know you are coming.

Over the next 6 weeks Rev. Lynn will be posting a short video on Facebook each week teaching a body prayer. Each week another part will be added, and by the end of the 6 weeks the entire prayer will be complete. You will then be able to use the body prayer in its entirety over the course of Lent. Movements are slow and easy and should be within all physical capabilities.

Don't forget to upload "what is love" pictures to our Facebook page, Twitter and/or Instagram accounts over the next 6 weeks leading up to Valentine's Day. Think of where you see love in your life: family, pets, chocolate (lol)
Let's fill our social media with love!

On Sunday January 17th, Reverend Lynn will be posting an online Communion Service.

Minutes for Mission:

Residential School Survivor Answer the Call to Ministry

“It took eight years to get where God had been calling me.”



Deb Anderson-Pratt is presented with the eagle feather at her ordination ceremony.

Credit: Kent Stewart

Growing up, Deb Anderson-Pratt would never have imagined that she would become a minister. A Cree/Saulteaux residential school survivor, Deb disliked the church for many years.

“I grew up living on the George Gordon First Nation reserve. Religious leaders visited us all the time to try to convert us. One of them told my great-grandmother,

MaryJane Anderson, that we were all going to hell because of the Native teachings she was giving us.”

Deb has vivid memories of the day a group of ministers were at her great-grandmother’s home for a meal. An argument broke out about whose theology she should pass along to Deb and the other children: “We used to have a tent down the hill from our house. My grandmother told them to go to the tent and discuss whose teaching was right, and if they could agree, she would teach her children that. Needless to say, no one came back.”

Deb’s great-grandmother struggled to maintain her belief in both the traditional Indigenous teachings and the biblical ones, turmoil that was instilled in her at residential school. “She was taken to residential school when she was just four and was forbidden to mention, much less live out, traditional teachings. She shared them with me kind of in secret. She had to be subtle about it because if she got caught, she could go to jail,” says Deb.

How did Deb [become a minister](#)? In the late 1980s she took a job as a secretary in a Lutheran church, and the minister encouraged her to answer God’s call. She began studying but at that point wasn’t ready to become a minister. Still, she continued to be involved in the United Church’s All Native Circle Conference and eventually, in 2012, began to feel the Spirit pull her toward ministry again.

The exact time she responded to God’s call is etched in Deb’s heart. It was September 14, 2012. Deb had quit her job to look after her ill sister, whose bed she was changing. “I sat down and I said, ‘Sister, I have this strong call. God is calling me to train [for ministry] again.’ My sister had tears in her eyes and said, ‘I think you need to answer the call.’” Deb contacted the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre to re-enroll.

The following October, Deb’s sister died. “I found I wasn’t angry at God for taking her. I knew God had used her for a channel to get me where I needed to be,” she says.

In fall 2020, Deb was one of six Indigenous ministers ordained or commissioned in the United Church. “I cried when I was ordained. It took eight years to get where God had been calling me.”

Since 2016, Deb has worked for the Regina Native Outreach Ministry. Today, she is working hard to help purchase a building. “Our people will not go to a mainstream church. We have very many lost people in the community, especially in the core area, and we want a place where they can come and feel safe. That’s our dream.” Your [Mission & Service](#) gifts help train ministry leaders whose work transforms their community.

Your generosity through Mission & Service supports the Sandy-Saulteaux Centre in Manitoba, where both Indigenous and Christian spiritual beliefs are respected, shared,

and understood—where Indigenous leaders like Deb answer God’s call to a ministry of healing and hope.

Thank you.

https://united-church.ca/stories/residential-school-survivor-answers-call-ministry?mc_cid=a75ab58e66&mc_eid=eec9ad346b