

# ***Westminster United Church***

## ***Fall 2016 Newsletter***

***Welcome to the Fall Newsletter!  
Fall is such a wonderful season:  
the beautiful colours, the  
crispness in the air! But like  
every season here in Medicine  
Hat, it can be a bit unpredictable.  
As I write this, the weather is  
warming up after a very cool  
spell and a bit of a snowstorm.  
As a matter of fact, this  
Thanksgiving seemed more like  
Christmas! It appears the snow  
won't last and I sincerely hope  
there are many beautiful days of  
fall yet to come before that  
season called 'winter'!***

***I hope you enjoy this edition of  
our newsletter and I want to  
thank everyone who sent in  
submissions. I really appreciate  
each and everyone of you!!***

***.....Anna Marie Hancock***

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### **A Message from Chelsea**

#### **MHART Update:**

The Syrian family sponsored by the Medicine Hat Area Refugee Team is settling into life here. They are currently living in Ross Glen. The 6 school-aged children are in school, 2 are at home and the parents are both learning English. Since Jan has been on leave, Chelsea has been sitting on the MHART committee. As of October 11, Sandra Oancia of Mission and Outreach and the WUC Board will be taking on this important role. Thank you, Sandra! And thank you, Westminster, for your generosity in supporting the ministry of the Medicine Hat Area Refugee Team!

#### **Advent/Christmas Special Events:**

Additional Advent Communion  
Services in Seniors' Residences:

**November 29 at 10am:** Valleyview  
**November 29 at 1:30pm:** Chinook  
**December 6 at 10am:** Meadowlands

On Wednesday, Oct. 5th, representatives from the Music and Worship committees of Peace, GMUC, FAM and WUC met with Rev. Dave and Rev. Chelsea to discuss collaborating on worship in the Advent/Christmas season. Out of the discussion we decided on the following services:

Wednesday, December 21 at 7pm: Blue Christmas at WUC with all 4 UCC's participating

Saturday, December 24 United Church services:

4pm: Peace United (Rev. Dave)

6pm: Westminster United family-friendly communion service (Rev. Chelsea)

6pm: FAM United family-friendly communion service (Rev. Dave)

8pm: Gordon Memorial United (Rev. Chelsea)

8pm: FAM contemplative communion service (Rev. Dave)

Sunday, December 25: 10 a.m. joint Christmas morning service at FAM with Rev. Chelsea presiding.

Sunday, January 1: 10:25 a.m. joint New Year's morning service at WUC with Rev. Dave presiding.

This joint worship committee meeting was an encouraging meeting and we are looking forward to meeting again on January 25th to debrief

Christmas and plan future collaborative worship services.

Barnabas' Corner:

Thank you to all those who have provided worship leadership over the last few months, thereby helping support our clergy and allowing us to fulfill our commitment to working with GMUC and Peace, and continue our monthly services at Teeoda and Masterpiece! Many thanks to Chris White, Clint Houston, Lisa Waites, Anna Marie Hancock, Marg McCulley, Dave Pollard, Jane Clarke, Helen Reid, Sheila McLeod, and our Teeoda/Masterpiece musicians Jean Miller and Don Reid! And thank you to everyone else who has increased your volunteer commitment in many other areas of the congregation. The Spirit is alive and well in the team spirit of this congregation.

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For anyone following the issue of the Rev. Gretta Vosper, the atheist United Church minister who is currently under review for her suitability for ministry because of her beliefs, you may know that at least a couple of times in the last year, she has referenced the United Church group "Cruxifusion." She described it as "on the extreme right wing" in one post, and in another claims the members are more

conservative than one of the organizations that originally founded it, the Community of Concern.

Some of you will also know that I am part of this group and have attended two Cruxifusion conferences using my continuing education allowance (thank you!). I have also never in my entire life considered myself right wing, nor would many people who have had anything longer than a 5 minute conversation with me, or spent ANY time at all on my Facebook page!

This article is not written against Vosper, but I do want to clarify that while Cruxifusion arose out of some groups that I would have considered too conservative to be part of (case in point: Community of Concern, among other things, was opposed to ordaining LGBTQ folks and marrying them), it is a whole 'nother creation. Some people in it are quite theologically conservative. Others, like myself, are quite theologically liberal/progressive. There are straight people, gay people, people of different races and ages. A number of members refer to God in traditional ways and as "He." Some of us call God "She" or "He" or simply, God.

Why are we all together in this one group? We are all people within the United Church who consider ourselves "Christ-centred." I believe this might even mean different things to different people in the group! To me, it means

that there is something inside of me that is captivated by the story of God taking human form in Jesus, loving the world so much and in such a terrifyingly authentic, anti-establishment and counter-cultural way that the world killed Jesus on the cross. And then, somehow, somehow, Jesus the Christ walked among his followers after he died, and I love that it was women who saw him first. Christ was alive again, somehow, somehow, in spirit and in truth and in experience. This part of the story does not make sense in my brain. But it captures my heart, and opens it, and lives in it, and makes me feel connected to the Holy Spirit and the world and gives me hope that good will always triumph over evil.

And yet life today is still messed up, and still glorious, and as a mentor of mine once said in all seriousness in a funeral sermon about a particularly devastating death, sometimes without a reason "shit happens." We live in a hurting world that paradoxically has been healed through the cross, and is still healing and yet to be healed. Time bends in on itself, and something that happened 2000 years is still happening, and still yet to happen. And it happens every time we feed the hungry, care for the vulnerable among us, serve those in need, and show and receive love in spite of ourselves.

Because somehow, somehow, this Christ - this saviour, messiah - showed

us how to live, broke something in how death worked and healed life in the process.

*Chelsea initially posted a slightly different version of this on Facebook, realized the congregation might also be interested in learning more about Cruxifusion, and adapted it for our newsletter.*

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*“Nothing is ever lost by courtesy. It is the cheapest of pleasures, costs nothing, and conveys much.”*

*— Erastus Wiman*

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### **Called to be the Church – Salt and Light - A United Church Giving Program**

In our worship we regularly say what it is we believe. It is in our New Creed. In it we are called to follow in the way of Jesus as individuals, families, congregations, and a denomination. I respond to this call and give to the ministry of Westminster United Church because, my grandparents and parents were examples of stewardship through their support of the church and through volunteering not only in the church but with other community organizations. My parents began attending Westminster after they retired here and found it to be very welcoming so when

my family moved here from Calgary over thirty years ago it was an easy decision.

Over the coming weeks we are going to be reaching out to the congregation to focus on the ways we give to the church and why. The theme for this giving campaign is rooted in Matthew 5:13–16a: Salt and Light. These powerful verses encourage us to “Keep open house; be generous with [our] lives”. This is a resource that has been compiled by the United Church to help congregations learn what stewardship is and the many different aspects of it.

We will share our stories about why we give; how our generosity makes a difference here at Westminster United Church; how we affect the community around us; and how, through the Mission & Service of the United Church, we respond to this call nationally and globally. Salt and Light will be the theme of our worship with learning opportunities for all ages. It will be the focus of our worship services, Sunday school and outreach during the last of October and into November. Also we will invite you to join us in giving to this ministry where you feel you are able.

It is going to be an inspiring experience. Listen for your own call, and respond with generosity!

Respectfully Submitted By  
Pat Connell, Board Treasurer

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*“Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else’s help.”*

———*Heather French Henry*

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### **Learn To Cook On A Budget**

Community Food Connections is offering “Learn to Cook on a Budget” classes at Westminster Church. They will be held on the last Monday of the month from 10:00 a.m. —1:00 p.m. in the Westminster Church kitchen. Participants will learn cooking skills and prepare a main dish to take home. Everything is supplied and the class is free of charge. If you are interested or know of someone who may be please pre-register with Jane McKinnon at [myurbanworms@gmail.com](mailto:myurbanworms@gmail.com) or Alison Van Dyke at 403-502-6096 or [communityfoodconnections@gmail.com](mailto:communityfoodconnections@gmail.com) Registration is limited.

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*“Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”*

———*Mother Teresa*

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### **In Memoriam**

Louella "Lue" Averill passed away on September 8th at the age of 99 years. She was a long time member of Westminster United Church and dedicated member of Square Circle UCW. She was also a member of Retired Teachers Association, Murray Chapter #58, Order of Eastern Star.

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*“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”*

———*Sir Winston Churchill*

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### **Sunday School Update**

Sunday School is up and running for another year. We are excited to see our returning children and to get to know all our new children better.

We are continuing with our ‘rotation’ themes. The children enjoy learning stories through different ways such as cooking, art, science, music and drama. We will be working on “Jonah and the Whale” this fall and then we will be

doing the “Salt and Light” liturgy that everyone upstairs will be following.

We plan to be extra busy with group activities like cookie decorating and games day, play rehearsals and Kettle bell ringing.

Last year we made a beautiful quilt thanks to the help of Mrs. Arlea Harper. We’d like to give her a Big THANK YOU for all the work and love that she put into that activity!

If you have any talent or experience that you would like to share with us, we would love to include you in our program. Please talk to Lynnette Burry about it.

Thank you for your support and prayers for Sunday School.

Sincerely,  
Lynnette Burry

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*“Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle.”*

—————*Christian D. Larson*

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## **Words of Wisdom**

Fast from criticism, and feast on praise;  
Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy;  
Fast from anger, and feast on peace;  
Fast from jealousy, and feast on love;  
Fast from pride, and feast on humility;  
Fast from selfishness, and feast on service;  
Fast from fear, and feast on faith.

*Submitted by,  
Juliette Jensen*

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Why do we have to say goodbye and  
not know if it’s forever?  
Couldn’t we keep our loved ones close  
to us,  
and share each moment forever?  
Why?

Why do we have to have death Lord,  
and pain, sorrow, and sadness?  
Couldn’t we all live together,  
and forever share gladness?  
Why?

Thank you for the hope some day,  
of a place of laughter and peace.  
Where questions are answered and  
loved ones united,  
and all fighting will eternally cease.  
Thank you!

*Submitted by,  
Juliette Jensen*

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## Smile for You

Smiling is infectious; you catch it like  
the flu,  
When someone smiled at us today, we  
started smiling too.  
We passed around a corner and  
someone saw us grin,  
When we smiled we realized we'd  
passed it on to him.  
We thought about that smile then we  
realized its worth,  
A single smile, just like ours could  
travel round the earth.  
So if you feel a smile begin, don't  
leave it undetected,  
Let's start an epidemic and get the  
world infected.

Remember, most smiles are started by  
a smile.  
Keep this smile going by sending it on  
to a friend.

EVERYBODY NEEDS A SMILE!

*Submitted by, Lorine Liebelt*

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*"There is no greater gift you can give  
or receive than to honour your calling.  
It's why you were born. And how you  
become most truly alive."*

———*Oprah Winfrey*

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## The Season of Advent

The season of Advent will soon be upon us. Advent begins on Sunday, November 27th. The theme for this year will be "The Magnificat", and we will be exploring ways in which to magnify the Lord in our lives.

The Magnificat, taken from Luke's Gospel (1: 46-55), is the Blessed Virgin Mary's hymn of praise to the Lord. Although the Magnificat has had numerous musical settings from such composers as Palestrina, Bach and Mozart, it can be recited as well as sung. Its name comes from the first line of its text in Latin ("Magnificat anima mea Dominum") translated in the first line below. Mary proclaims the Lord's greatness with characteristic humility and grace here:

***My soul magnifies the Lord  
And my spirit rejoices in God my  
Saviour;***

***Because He has regarded the  
lowliness of His handmaid;  
For behold, henceforth all  
generations shall call me blessed;  
Because He who is mighty has done  
great things for me, and holy is His  
name;***

***And His mercy is from generation to  
generation on those who fear Him.  
He has shown might with His arm,  
He has scattered the proud in the  
conceit of their heart.***

*He has put down the mighty from  
their thrones,  
and has exalted the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good  
things,  
And the rich He has sent away empty.  
He has given help to Israel, his  
servant, mindful of His mercy,  
Even as He spoke to our fathers, to  
Abraham and to his posterity forever.*

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*“A generous heart, kind speech, and a  
life of service and compassion are the  
things which renew humanity.”*

*—————Buddha*

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Front Row: L-R Ben Irvine, Alex Irvine, Braylon Baumann, Sarah Burry, Michael Burry, Makenna Finnie, Brett Gawletz, Katelynn Gawletz.  
Back Row: L-R Angie Irvine, Hayley McKim, Cheryl Finnie, Lynnette Burry, Chelsea Masterman, Arlea Harper, Anna Marie Hancock.

### **The “LOVE IS” Quilt**

This quilt was created by the Sunday School in the spring of 2016 and was based on the Sunday School unit, “Love Is”. Each child used fabric paint on white fabric to illustrate their concept of what love looks like. Arlea Harper assembled and made the quilt. Thank you Arlea!!

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*“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”*  
———Sir Winston Churchill

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