

# WESTMINSTER UNITED CHURCH SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER

## We made it!!

It's finally spring , both on the calendar, and, in fact, in reality! Winter is just a distant memory (and hopefully I haven't jinxed it.....if we have a spring snowstorm, will it be my fault ??).

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter!! I would like to thank everyone who took the time to send me so many wonderful articles, and the like, with which I have created this edition of our church newsletter. The response was fabulous , and I am very grateful for all the contributions.

We continue to plug along without a minister and , as you know, we've been without Cheryl in the office for several months. A huge thank you to Jennifer Johnson for filling the vacancy.....you're doing a great job and we would be lost without you!!

We all continue to hope and pray that the Search committee will find a new minister for us.....hang in there.....it will happen!!

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the newsletter. There are lots of wonderful articles to peruse, and, although it's a bit longer than usual, it's really worth the extra read.

Best wishes to all of you, for a happy, healthy Spring!

.....Anna Marie Hancock

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“Certain things catch your eye, but pursue only those that capture the heart.”

.....Ancient Indian Proverb

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## From the Manse Window by David McLaughlan

I like to collect old books. Not old enough to be expensive, just old enough to have a different perspective on the world.

One essayist, in 1942, wrote of splashing in puddles in the springtime, kissing in the dance hall, the laughter of babies, and picnics in the woods as an antidote to the 'temporary dinginess of the world'.

An author, writing just after the war, talked about watching a girl playing in a field in the summer. She came over to the gate he was leaning on to show him the treasures she had discovered.

'There was only one of these.' She held out a bomb fragment, not knowing what it was. 'But there were hundreds of these.' In her other hand was a bouquet of wildflowers.'

The point is that while there is always ugliness in the world, there is far more beauty. And what we see often depends on what we look for.

I used to cycle a lot. There was one steep hill on the home straight. It was

generally smooth, wide, and quiet and I loved free-wheeling down it. Then, one day, my front wheel bumped through a hole in the tarmac. The next half dozen times I went down that hill I hit the hole, despite it only being maybe six inches wide.

Because I knew it was there, I focused on it, and unconsciously, went straight to it. It was the equivalent of walking through that field ignoring all the flowers, just to get to the scrap of metal because it had once been part of something destructive.

It's an instinctive thing. We think we need to focus on the negative for our self-preservation. If we spent all our time watching for hazards and avoiding them, it might lead to a longer life. But what about quality of life? How many miracles of creation, how many wildflowers would we walk past because we were looking for something else?

The news will tell us the world is in a dreadful state. But how are you? How is your neighbour? How is that beautiful baby that has just been born?

It's no bad thing to be aware of what's happening in the world, but we

should devote at least as much of our attention to what is happening in our own street as we do to what's happening in Syria.

There's no point in knowing the name of the President of the Philippines when we don't know the names of the family four doors down.

Focus on the flowers that grow around our feet. Look for the kind and the beautiful. And if your situation isn't the prettiest one, then the words of Saint John of the Cross might be worth considering.

'Where there is no love', he wrote, 'put love .. and you will find love'.

Let's switch the news off more often and look around at the world we actually live in. Be the wildflowers, be the kissing in the dance hall, be the smile in passing, or the neighbourly visit. If there is no love ... let's be the love.

.....Submitted by Patty McFarlane

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**“We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.”**

.....**Ronald Reagan**

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**DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?**  
*In the words of Pope Francis*

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

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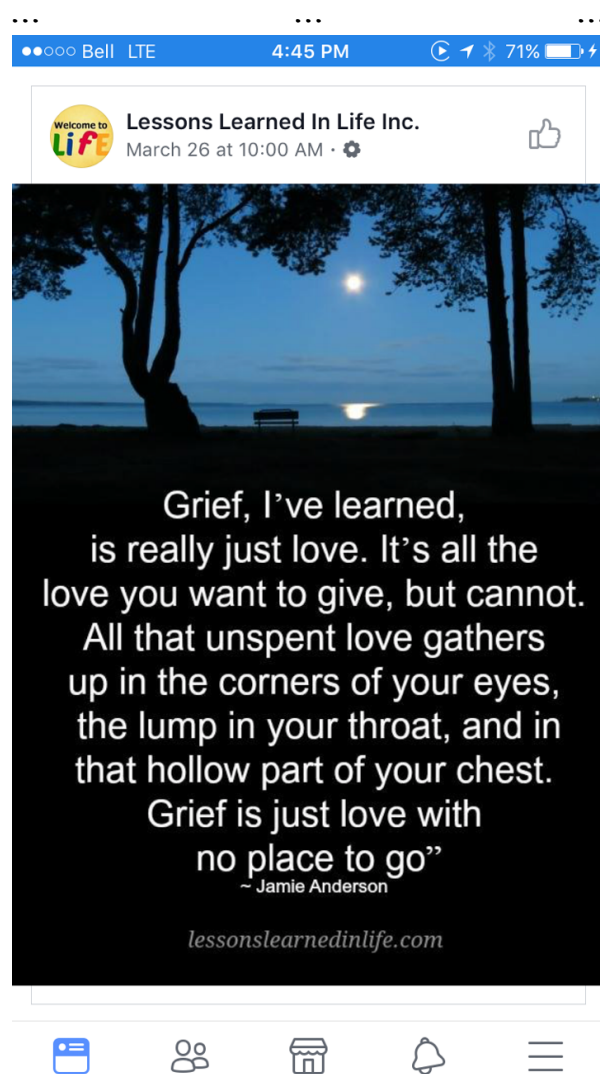
.....Submitted by Velma Pearson

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“Change your thoughts and you change your world.”

.....Norman Vincent Peale

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.....Submitted by Velma Pearson

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## UCW Update

Our Westminster UCW has been decreasing in members, the same as the church has been. There have been many changes since it's inception almost 40 years ago. We no longer have a Presbyterian in Southern Alberta. Through the use of e-mail we are kept in touch with other UCW's. We get word from the National UCW regarding issues and programs.

The purpose of the UCW is “To unite women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and to provide a medium through which they may express their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship, and service.”

Our Christian witness and service is evident in the donations to other charities, the church, and the Mission and Service. Our fellowship and study happens at our UCW meetings.

In the past we have donated funds to other charities that we could not handle on our own. They are:

Westminster UCW Allocations for 2017

Leprosy Mission Canada

\$110

Champion Centre

\$100

Westminster Benevolent Fund

\$185

Westminster Christian Dev & Education

\$200

St. Stephens College

\$300

St. Andrews College

\$300

Alma Reynolds Bursary

\$200

Clara Thompson Bursary

\$150

Campus Ministry

\$200

Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society

\$100

The Campus Ministry cheque is sent twice a year to help students with food at exam time. The colleges are Theology colleges for prospective ministers and the Bursaries were sent to the Presbytery

Treasurer, one for ministry students and one for a Northern UCW.

Our largest expenditure is \$3500 for M & S.

In the year 2018 we met our M & S quota. None of the other charities with exception of the Leprosy Mission received anything. We have passed a motion that we will send the M & S fund \$1000 in two instalments.

The Leprosy Mission was sent money early in the year because what ever we gave would be doubled for the organization.

Our largest income came from the two teas we used to have. The teas have been reduced to the Poinsettia Tea before Christmas and a Bakeless Bake Sale in May.

The bottom line is we need help if we are to continue as an active UCW. We need more members and an increase in finances.

Perhaps there are individuals out there that would give us some ideas. We would love to hear from you.

.....Grace Roth

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**“If you look at what you have in life, you’ll always have more. If you look at what you don’t have in life, you’ll never have enough.”**

.....Oprah Winfrey

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**THOUGHTS ON HOW TO BE THE  
CHURCH IN AN AGE OF TERROR  
AND TRAGEDY**

By Carey Nieuwhof

Like me, you hope and pray that tragedies like the ones we witness far too frequently these days would just stop and go away... forever.

Our hearts break far too often these days because of the senseless rage of a lone gunman or because of the seemingly endless assault of terror.

You wish you could wake up in a world in which children could go to school, friends could go to movies, athletes could run marathons, music lovers could go to

concerts and people could go to nightclubs and churches without the fear of violence.

Sadly, that doesn’t appear to be ready to happen anytime soon. Hurricanes and earthquakes—devastating as they are—are one thing. But the evil that we inflict on one another, that’s a whole other sickness.

In an era of randomized terror and angry, isolated men, it’s extremely difficult to protect ourselves from acts of violence in shopping malls, schools, churches or movie theatres...it is infecting and affecting our ordinary, everyday life.

Which is exactly what it’s designed to do. And hence, it’s terror.

In many ways, terror and evil have been part of the fabric of human life forever. My father was born into a world in which Nazi soldiers regularly marched feet away from his living room window while his older brothers hid in the hayloft. Terror is no stranger to previous generations or present generations in many parts of the

world. Even the Old Testament tells the story of terrorizing armies and nations.

But living in this emerging reality in the world is new to many of us in the West. And we are left, emotions swinging and raging, wondering how to respond. Wishing it would go away. Even when in all likelihood, it won't. Day after day we wake up to new sadness, new despair.

Just when we think our hearts couldn't break anymore, they do.

And so we pray, even when we are not sure what to pray or how to pray and often when our prayers consist more of tears, fear, and desperation than they do of words.

In between the bouts of sadness and fear, anger and outrage surge, but something inside of us knows that those will never cure a problem so deep.

How do we respond as Christians? Or as church leaders, pastors, neighbors, parents and citizens?

Clearly, there is no single response that can adequately address the complexity or dark depth of what's happening. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Nor is there any election result that can fix this once and for all.

But there are some reflections which I hope and pray can be helpful for Christians and church leaders. What you do is important. And how you respond, in the small and the large things, matters so much.

Here are a few things that have been circulating through my heart and mind as tragedy after tragedy keeps happening.

Just when we think our hearts couldn't break anymore, they do.

## 1. WHAT THE CHURCH IS DOING IS MORE IMPORTANT, NOT LESS IMPORTANT

Given the rise of terror and violence in the West, the days of playing church or simply going to church are drawing to a close.

This is the time to be the church, because what Christians have to offer is a radically different ethic and alternative to hatred and violence. The Gospel is a needed ethic in our culture, and it's being lost in the noise.

You can debate parts of the scripture all you want, but one thing that is undeniable is that Jesus said his followers would be known by their love.

This, more than anything, is what Christians need to be known for.

Families need this love. Victims need this love. Perpetrators need this love. Children need this love.

The Gospel moves us to love when all that is left is hate.

Preach the love of Christ like you were changing the world. Because you are.

## 2. CONFESSION AND HUMILITY ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

The opposite of confession is blame...and that's an instinctive reaction most of us have. Lack of humility pushes people (and

nations) into stand-offs that deepen the divide and escalate the ruin.

The truth is, other religions aren't the only religions that have spoken hate. Christians have spoken hate as well. We need to repent.

We are perfectly capable of hating and killing each other without intervention from foreign groups that hate the West. And sometimes, we do.

We need to pray, and repent, and carry deep inside of us the knowledge that we too are broken. We too need a Saviour, grace and forgiveness.

## 3. FAITH IS A DIVIDING LINE THAT ULTIMATELY CAN BECOME A UNITING LINE

The reality, of course, is that if you're a Christian, there's no 'us' and 'them.' There is only an 'us' and 'us.'

Christianity, which man sees as divisive, is ultimately unifying because it ultimately unites radically different people groups



under the love of God that is in Jesus Christ.

#### 4. THE ONLY ETHIC THAT WILL EVER WORK IS THE ETHIC OF LOVE

A generation ago, Martin Luther King Jr. faced a situation that had some parallels. The civil rights movement was hardly yet a movement as the young black preacher began his ministry. The controversy over busing had just begun in Alabama.

One night when King was preaching, someone threw a bomb inside the house where his wife and infant daughter were. His family was unharmed, but his front window had been blown out and there was a huge hole in his porch.

As he rushed home, a crowd of several hundred blacks had gathered as had the mayor and the police.

King stood up on his porch and told the crowd "Don't do anything panicky...He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword."

Then, as he got everyone's attention, King spoke these words:

"We must love our white brothers, no matter what they do to us. We must make them know that we love them. Jesus still cries out in word that echo across the centuries: 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them that despitefully use you.'...We must meet hate with love."

This was a turning point for the civil rights movement. People put down their fists and their weapons. When hate became instead, an embrace, it became a very difficult force to stop.

The only ethic that will ultimately work against hate is love. And no one should be more loving than those forgiven in Christ.

#### 5. CHRISTIANS LAY DOWN THEIR LIVES IN THE FACE OF EVIL

Should Christians take life?

I would assume that only a few of us who read this are actual legislators, and that none of us who read this have ever sat in the Oval Office or at 24 Sussex Drive to receive a briefing as the leader of a nation. We cannot understand the

complexities of leadership or government from the seats in which we sit.

Here's what I know.

That when Jesus himself was hated enough to be unjustly tortured and killed, he willingly gave his life. He didn't fight back. He didn't even enter a defense at his trial.

In fact, he did something more profound than defending himself, he forgave his torturers.

The ultimate Christian response to hatred is not to take someone's life for hating you, it's to lay down your life for their sake.

You can kill the body. But you cannot kill love. You cannot kill forgiveness. You cannot kill grace.

It is to those things we must cling in these days.

6. EXTERNAL REGULATIONS CANNOT TRUMP INTERNAL VALUES

Can you legislate away terror? Not really.

I'm all in favor of better laws, smarter laws, and doing all we can to make sure evil does not win.

But laws alone cannot defeat evil. Laws, in fact, can barely contain it.

Ultimately the problems we are facing are not issues of law, they are issues of the heart.

What changes hearts? The Gospel. Love. Christ.

When a heart is transformed, its value system is transformed. Forgiveness dissolves anger. Love dissolves hate.

The most radical thing you can do today is to extend love in the face of hate.

SO GO BE THE CHURCH...

So go be the church...the real church. The authentic church. The church Jesus had in mind.

Repent. Confess. Humble yourself. Forgive. Love. Hope. Trust.

Turn to Christ for the strength you don't have. He has it.

Church...we may actually have the things that can change the world.

.....Submitted by Don Reid

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**“Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.”**

.....**Albert Einstein**

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## **Excuse me, Are you Jesus?'**

This is really powerful and makes one think!!!!

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago . They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush, with tickets and briefcases, one of these salesmen inadvertently kicked over a table which held a display of apples. Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane

in time for their nearly missed boarding...

A LL BUT ONE !!! He paused, took a deep breath, and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned.. He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain his taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the terminal floor. He was glad he did.

The 16 year old girl was totally blind! She was softly crying, tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her, no one stopping and no one to care for her plight.

The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them back on the table and helped organize her display. As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket.

When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, 'Here, please take this \$40 for the damage we did. Are you okay?' She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, 'I hope we didn't spoil your day too badly.'

As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, 'Mister.....' He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued, 'Are you Jesus?' He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with that question burning and bouncing about in his soul: 'Are you Jesus?' Do people mistake you for Jesus?

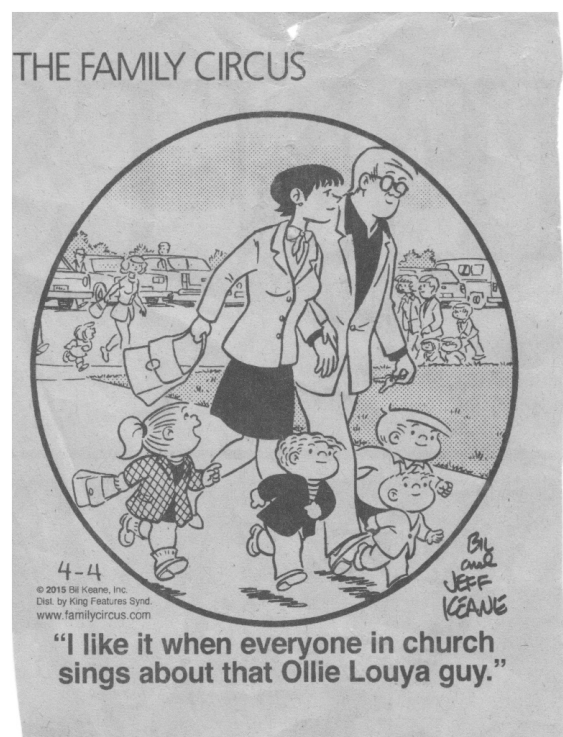
That's our Destiny, is it not? To be so much like Jesus that people cannot tell the difference as we live and interact with a world that is blind to His love, life and grace. If we claim to know Him, we should live, walk and act as He would. Knowing Him is more than simply quoting Scripture and going to church. It's actually living the Word as life unfolds day to day. You are the apple of His eye even though we, too, have been bruised by a fall. He stopped

what He was doing and picked you and me up on a hill called Calvary and paid in full for our damaged fruit.

Please share this... Sometimes we just take things for granted, when we really need to be sharing what we know....Thanks

GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.  
TOO MANY CHRISTIANS ARE NO LONGER FISHERS OF MEN BUT KEEPERS OF THE AQUARIUM.

.....Submitted by Boyd Alcock



**“I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.”**

.....**Jimmy Dean**

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### **God's Wife**

An eye witness account from New York City on a cold day in December, some years ago: A little boy, about 10 years old, was standing before a shoe store on the roadway, barefooted, peering through the window, and shivering with cold. A lady approached the young boy and said, 'My, but you're in such deep thought staring in that window!' "I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes", was the boy's reply. The lady took him by the hand, went into the store, and asked the clerk to get half a dozen pairs of socks for the boy. She then asked if he could give her a basin of water and a towel. He quickly brought them to her. She took the little fellow to the back part of the store and, removing her gloves, knelt down, washed his little feet, and dried them with

the towel. By this time, the clerk had returned with the socks ... placing a pair upon the boy's feet, she purchased him a pair of shoes. She tied up the remaining pairs of socks and gave them to him ... She patted him on the head and said, 'No doubt, you will be more comfortable now.' As she turned to go, the astonished kid caught her by the hand, and looking up into her face, with tears in his eyes, asked her, "Are you God's wife?"

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Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge, the purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child.

The winner was :

A four year old child whose next door neighbour was an elderly gentleman who had just lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbour the little boy just said, 'Nothing, I just helped him cry'.

Teacher Debbie Moon's first graders were discussing a picture of a family. One little boy in the picture had a different hair colour than the other members. One of her students suggested that he was adopted. A little girl said, 'I know all about "Adoption". I was adopted.' What does it mean to be adopted? asked another child. 'It means', said the girl, 'that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy!'

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### ~ Lost Words from our childhood ~

**Mergatroyd!** Do you remember that word? Would you believe the spell-checker did not recognize the word Mergatroyd? Heavens to Mergatroyd!

The other day a not so elderly (I say 75) lady said something to her son about driving a **Jalopy**; and he looked at her quizzically and said, "What the heck is a Jalopy?" He had never heard of the word jalopy! She knew she was old ... But not that old.

Well, I hope you are **Hunky Dory** after you read this and chuckle.

About a month ago, I illuminated some old expressions that have become obsolete because of the inexorable march of technology. These phrases included: **Don't touch that dial, Carbon copy, You sound like a broken record, and Hung out to dry.**

Back in the olden days we had a lot of **moxie**. We'd put on **our best bib and tucker**, to **straighten up and fly right**.

**Heavens to Betsy! Gee whillikers! Jumping Jehoshaphat! Holy Moley!**

We were in like Flynn and **living the life of Riley**; and even a regular guy couldn't accuse us of being a **knucklehead, a nincompoop or a pill. Not for all the tea in China!**

Back in the olden days, life used to be **swell**, but when's the last time anything was swell? **Swell has gone the way of beehives, pageboys and the D.A.; of spats, knickers, fedoras, poodle skirts, saddle shoes, and pedal pushers.**

**Oh, my aching back! Kilroy was here,** but he isn't anymore.

We wake up from what surely has been just a short nap, and before we can

say, "Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle!" Or "This is a fine kettle of fish!" We discover that the words we grew up with, the words that seemed omnipresent, as oxygen, have vanished with scarcely a notice from our tongues and our pens and our keyboards.

Poof, go the words of our youth, the words we've left behind. We blink, and they're gone. Where have all those great phrases gone

Long gone: Pshaw The milkman did it. Hey! It's your nickel. Don't forget to pull the chain. Knee high to a grasshopper Well, Fiddlesticks! Going like sixty. I'll see you in the funny papers Don't take any wooden nickels. Wake up and smell the roses.

It turns out that there are more of these lost words like Carter has liver pills. This can be disturbing stuff (Carter's Little Liver Pills are gone too!)

We of a certain age have been blessed to live in changeable times. For a child each new word is like a shiny toy, a toy that has no age. We at the other end of the chronological arc have the advantage of remembering there are words that once

did not exist and there were words that once strutted their hour upon the earthly stage and now are heard no more, except in our collective memory. It's one of the greatest advantages of aging!

Leaves us to wonder where Superman will find a phone booth...

See ya later, alligator! Okidoki.

You'll notice they left out "Monkey Business"!!!

WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE FABULOUS 50'S ... NO ONE WILL EVER HAVE THAT OPPORTUNITY AGAIN ... WE WERE GIVEN ONE OF OUR MOST PRECIOUS GIFTS: LIVING IN THE PEACEFUL AND COMFORTABLE TIMES, CREATED FOR US BY THE "GREATEST GENERATION!"

.....Submitted by Patty McFarlane

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**"We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light."**

.....Plato

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## United Church Observer—Name Change

Starting in May, The United Church Observer will be named **Broadview**. The new name, the fourth in the publication's history, is more relevant to today's audiences and signals the open-mindedness and inclusivity that defines today's United Church. **Broadview** was the overwhelming choice among the 2000+ people who answered our survey last spring.

Our vision is more than just a name change. We want to create a magazine and digital platforms that serve a niche audience of progressive Christians, as well as those who share progressive Christianity's core values. We understand this means being both introspective and outward-looking. It requires us to examine our beliefs and values, and to live and act accordingly. It calls us to engage deeply with the justice issues of our day

— and to believe that hope lies in caring profoundly for one another and for our planet.

As a magazine, **Broadview** will retain the very best of The United Church Observer. Readers will still get United Church news and perspectives in every issue, along with the award-winning quality of journalism that they've come to expect. **Broadview** will continue to bring a progressive Christian lens to spirituality, ethical living and social justice issues through stories that provide hope and inspiration amid challenging times.

*If you are interested in a subscription to this publication, please contact Jody Davison at 403-526-2253 (home) or 403-548-1838 (cell).*

.....Submitted by Jody Davison

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**“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”**

.....**Anne Frank**

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## **Tortellini Soup**

1 tbsp Vegetable oil  
1 Onion, chopped  
1 Clove garlic, minced  
2 cups Chopped carrots  
3/4 cup sliced celery  
4 cups Chicken Stock  
1 tbsp Lemon juice  
1/2 tsp Dried basil  
1/2 tsp Dried thyme  
2 cups Cheese tortellini  
1/2 cup Frozen peas  
1/4 cup Freshly grated Parmesan cheese  
(approx)  
1/4 cup Sliced green onion tops or  
chopped fresh parsley

In heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion, garlic, carrots and

celery, stirring often, for 5 minutes or until slightly softened. Add stock, lemon juice, basil and thyme; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, for about 15 minutes or until carrots are tender.

Add tortellini; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, for 5 minutes. Stir in peas and 1/4 Parmesan; heat through. Ladle into bowls; sprinkle with green onion, and extra Parmesan cheese (if desired). Makes 4 servings.

...*Recipe courtesy of Grace Lemon*

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**“Remember, no one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”**

.....**Eleanor Roosevelt**

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# Enola Gay

by Rev. Santoshan S. Dharampaul

O beautiful land of the rising sun!  
Little Boy shall dash thee into pieces!  
My heart aches, and my tears have  
begun  
She shall deliver misery and blazes!

Raise the white flag to spare thy cries!  
In an instant, thy morning shall be turned to  
night!  
And black rain shall fall from thy skies!  
Bodies and babes are now ravaged by blight!

Though I am not yet conceived  
Today, I go back in time and feel thy pain  
I plead with thee; do not be bereaved!  
Enola Gay shall not refrain!  
Above thy city, the toxic mushroom soars!  
Invisible rays deform flesh and frame!  
Thy blood flows and skin drops to the floors!

Greetings to the Emperor mockingly maim!

O strong men of the Indianapolis!  
Thou hast struck without forbearance!  
Engraving shadows of a vaporized nemesis!  
And avenging with playful dalliance!

Wide Island, we have thee in remembrance  
I ponder thy many sufferings and dismay  
Thou hast learned, and stand in  
remonstrance  
That Enola Gay should not replay!

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“Whatever the mind of man can  
conceive and believe, it can achieve.”

.....Napoleon Hill

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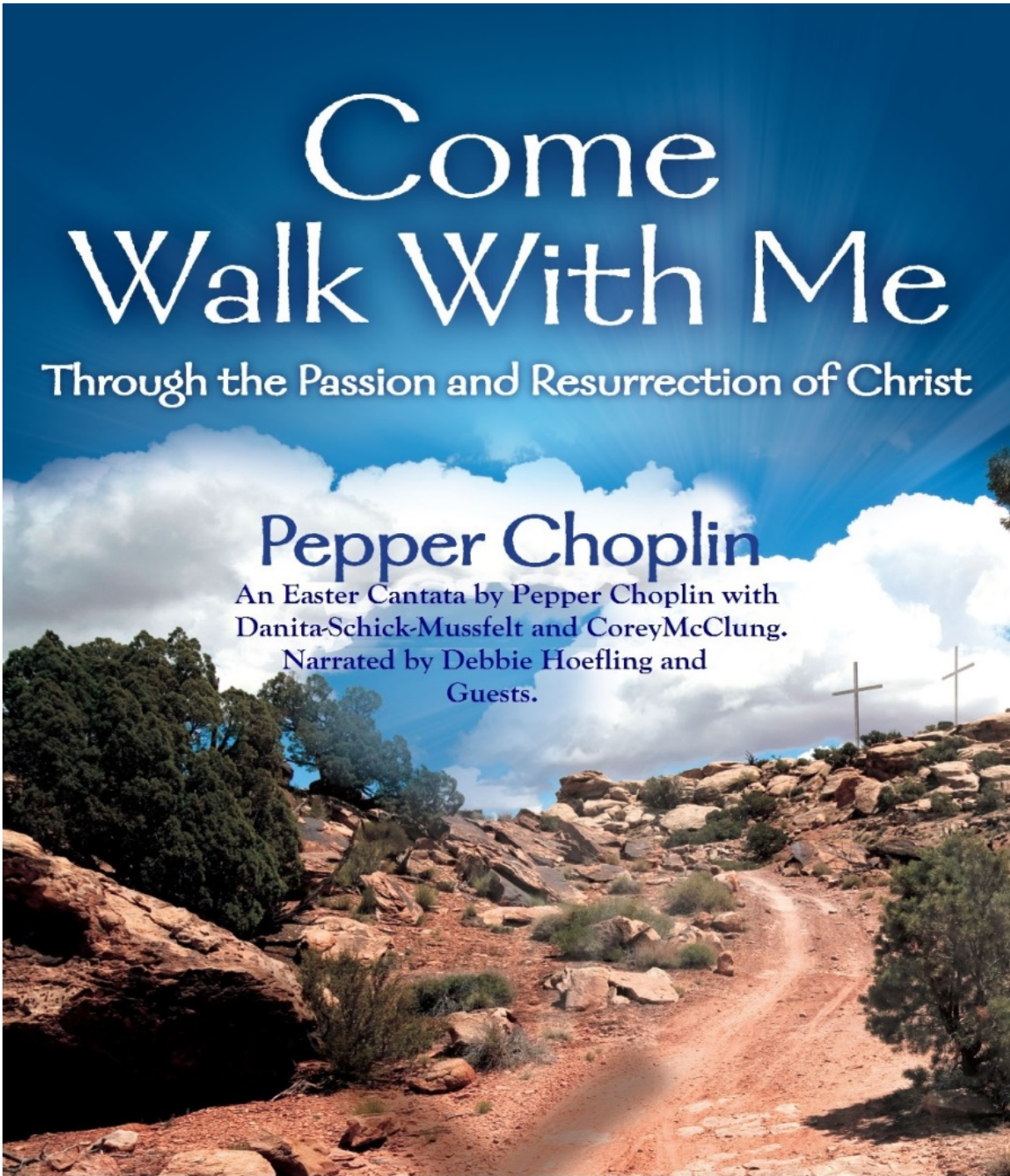
# Come Walk With Me

Through the Passion and Resurrection of Christ

## Pepper Choplin

An Easter Cantata by Pepper Choplin with  
Danita-Schick-Mussfelt and Corey McClung.

Narrated by Debbie Hoefling and  
Guests.



Presented By: Westminster United Church Choir  
Directed By: Chris White  
Sunday April 14th @ 10:30 am &  
Monday April 15th @ 7pm  
Westminster United Church Sanctuary  
101 6th Street SE, Medicine Hat, AB (403) 526 - 5247

