Vol. 30

June
2018

Dedicated to Preserving Our Religious Heritage

Journal

Alberta & Northwest Conference
United Church of Canada Historical Society



The lodge at Rundle's Mission

In this edition:

Rundles Mission—The Youth Forum—And More

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the 2018 edition of the Alberta & Northwest Conference Historical Society Journal.

With this issue of the Journal, the board of directors is pleased to introduce our new editor Katy Jones. Katy will introduce herself in more detail, for our part we are delighted to have her guiding the production of the Journal.

This year, The United Church of Canada undertakes significant changes to its administrative structure. The full impact of the changes will be unclear for some time. Reconciliation with our neighbours in the indigenous community, especially those in United Church congregations is a process that is only at the very beginning. Yet we believe there will continue to be a role for this journal to collect and share the stories of the development of the United Church in this part of Canada.

We are grateful to you, the reader of the Journal, for taking the time to read these articles about the United Church of Canada and its founding denominations, in the western prairies and the north.

If you are currently a member and subscriber thank you for your encouragement and support. If you would like to become a member, there is a form in the Journal that will tell you how. If you are interested in history, and writing, we would love to hear from you. Our articles come from many sources, but often from congregational histories or people with a personal interest in an aspect of United Church history. Finally, our administration and editorial management is carried out by a small volunteer, board of directors, for whom this is a labour of love. We are actively seeking new members for our board and would love to talk to you about opportunities to serve.

The Conference Historical Society publishes this journal on a modest budget of about $5,000 per year. In recent years we have initiated an online presence and digitized all our past issues for archive purposes. We have close relationships with the Alberta & Northwest Conference office, and the Alberta Provincial Archives, and we are glad that you are part of our constituency and our network.

Enjoy reading this issue!

Paul DuVal (Board Chair)

Message from the Editor

Hello everyone. My name is Katy Jones and I am the new editor for the Journal. Some of you may recognize me from In Contact, where I am also an editor. This journal has been a learning experience in a lot of different ways and I've been so lucky to be involved.

I graduated from Grant MacEwan University in 2013 with an applied degree in professional writing. I have put my skills to a variety of jobs in the meantime. Currently, I am working for Alberta Health Services which regularly challenges me in the best possible way.

The stories in this edition surround a variety of topics that have been submitted by a wonderful array of contributors. They all did an amazing job celebrating the history of this church. Thank you to everyone involved.

Katy Jones is the editor of the ANWC Historical Society Journal.

The president of the Alberta Northwest Conference, Kathryn Yamashita, was kind of enough to send us a letter of greeting.

Greetings from the Conference

Thank you for your invitation to bring greetings from the conference as you publish this Historical Journal. I have been impressed by the breadth and depth of information presented in each edition that is written and distributed across the conference. This is a valuable resource that is not necessarily available and distributed across the conferences of the United Church. We are so grateful for the conference historical society.

Home missions is a feature of the present edition of the Historical Journal which gives life to the story of how our early church lived out Christian love in their context. I am a member of the Japanese Canadian diaspora, relocated to Alberta during the Second World War. The United Church assigned Home Mission staff to the Japanese who suffered through this difficult time.

May each reader find insight which increases Christian faith in the reading of our church history.

Sincerely,

Many Blessings

Kathryn F. Yamashita

Table of Contents

Introduction of New Editor……5
McDougall Church……..6
Hickman's Obituary……7
Profile of Robert Elliot……...8
Creation of the Youth Forum……13
Rundle's Mission Society…….17
Leaving Christianity…….18
Introducing Angie Friesen…….20
Treasure Hunting……..21
Profile of James Robertson……...23
Profile of James Woodsworth…..25
Profile of Thomas Powell…….27
Profile of C. Dwight Powell……..29
Application for Membership……..31

The AWNC Journal is intended to provide a forum by which the history of the United Church and its antecedents can be told. It is designed to make readers aware of the contributions our church has made to the spiritual life and to the social development of the area encompassed by the Alberta and Northwest Conference. The Journal seeks to encourage individuals, congregations and presbyteries to bring together human and material resources in the preservation of our religious heritage.

The ANWC Journal is published yearly by the Alberta and Northwest Conference Historical Society of the United Church of Canada. The members of the board are:

Chairs: Paul Duval, Don Koots

Secretary: Robert MacDonald

Treasurer: Alex Cooper

Director: Austin Fennell

Director: Gayle Simonson

Director: Michael Dawe

Journal Editor: Katy Jones



From left to right: Paul Duval, Michael Dawe, Gayle Simonson, Alex Cooper, Robert McDonald, Austin Fennell Missing: Katy Jones and Don Koots

Katy Jones

A warm welcome to our new editor Katy Jones. Katy replaces Debbie Marshall who resigned after moving to British Columbia.

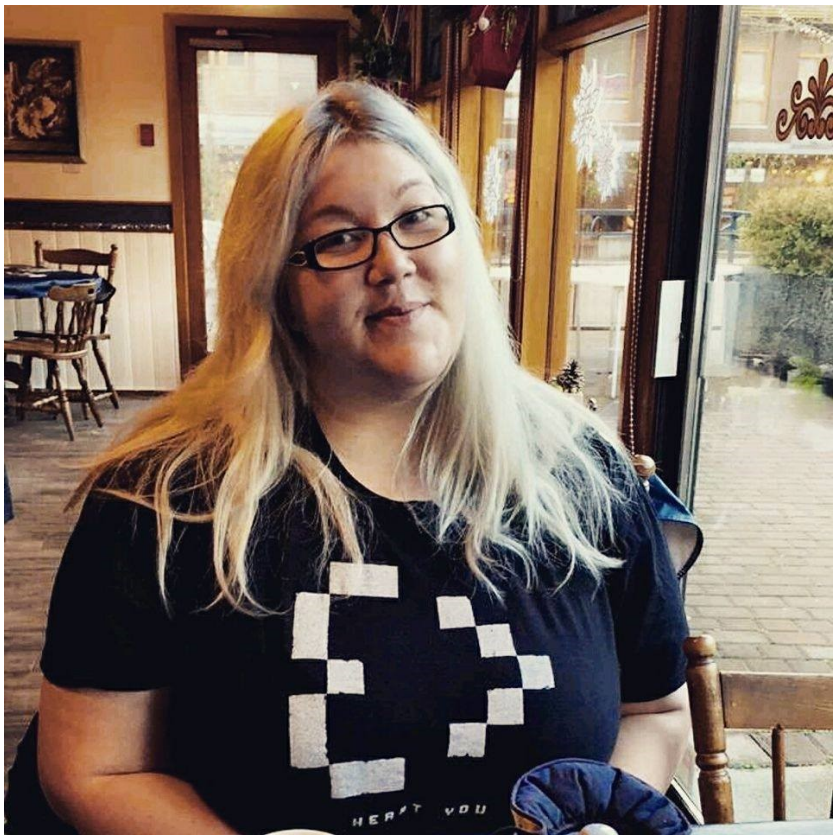
An Edmontonian, Katy attended J.P. Wagner High School, which focuses heavily on science but, as her interests changed, story won out and she is a graduate of MacEwan University's writing program.

Along the way, she has held a variety of positions and worked for five years at Chapters Indigo store in south Edmonton. She currently works as a ward clerk at the University of Alberta Hospital while she builds a writing resume. She is the current editor of "In Contact," the ANWC insert in The United Church Observer. She has volunteered for years with Edmonton's Folk Fest, most recently as volunteer coordinator.

Katy has always loved books and stories on a wide variety of topics. She recalls the first story she composed - a Hallowe'en story she wrote in kindergarten. As a child, she was a voracious reader and this included kids' versions of many of the classics.

Katy also loves to travel and her destinations have included Los Angeles, Austin, and the United Kingdom.

The board is delighted to welcome Katy to our meetings and to entrust her with our journal.



Katy Jones, Journal Editor

McDougall Church

By Robert MacDonald

In May 2017, an early morning fire gutted the McDougall Stoney Memorial Church (built 1875), west of Cochrane on 1A Highway, destroying wall photos and information sheets, plaques, a mural, pianos, pulpit and pews. It appears that it was arson. The site is now surrounded by metal fencing as a protection. The ruins consist largely of the square-timber construction up to near the top of the original gothic -like windows, as well as some of the bell tower with some cladding. The regular June memorial service was held in tents, with three Nakoda Stoney taking part, recalling involvement with the site and its sacredness. The scheduled weddings took place elsewhere. The ruins--the square-timber frame, though charred--were filmed 3-D digitally by a University of Calgary professor. The September memorial service was replaced by an Open House, in which people were given the opportunity to suggest the future of the site. The Board of Directors wrestled with this, a limiting factor being finances. An architect was engaged to determine feasibility of various options. Some grants were available from the province.

At the Annual General Meeting held in late November, a new Board of Directors was chosen. It is smaller but also includes new members. In addition, there was an open-ended discussion as to what people present thought should be done. A set of the past Journals were given to the Society, to replace what might have been lost. Membership had increased.

In February 2018, a meeting was held to discuss the future. Two members from Alberta Historic Resources and an architect were present. As the site is an Alberta Historic Resource, under the provincial Act, there are a number of restrictions as to what can be done. Reference was made to common guidelines approved by provincial, territorial and federal governments. Possibilities included preservation, rehabilitation, rebuilding, and replacement. The ruins could be stabilised, a roof over to protect, or a representation made. Fortunately, some detailed drawings of the church done in the 1980s will enable analysis, as will photos. The provincial representative indicated what could be done and what could not be done under the Act and regulations so some flexibility is allowed. Reference was made to restorations elsewhere and to sites in Alberta such as Leitch Colleries in the Crow's Nest and Lougheed House. The architect spoke of next steps such as clean up and promotion, as he would have to test the extent of the damage to the timber (shielded in part by the cladding) before suggesting possibilities. There was a discussion on the vulnerability of the site and how it could be better protected should it be rebuilt. The future will be determined in consultation with the Nakoda Stoney. A university course dealing with historic sites and conservation will visit the site in May.

The Board has reorganised into five committees for Society members to be involved according to interest, a Board member being part of the committee: tours (docents), historic liaison, planning and booking, security and maintenance, and grant applications.

It should be pointed out that the site includes the remains of the settlement that was part of Morleyville, and the mission of the Society included promotion of the site with self-guided panels, and education about the period (late nineteenth century).

Charles and Ferne Hickman

By Gayle Simonson



Charles and Ferne Hickman

In 2017, ANWC lost two long-time church workers, Ferne Hickman in April and Rev. Charles Hickman in December. They were married in Ontario in 1942 and began their church work in Alberta after Charles' ordination in 1944, first in southern Alberta at Rainier and Rolling Hills, before moves to churches in Leduc (1947), Vegreville (1960) and Drumheller (1968). They moved to Edmonton in 1980 when Charles joined the Conference staff. In charge of Mission Development, his job was to support and coordinate new church development, help develop mission strategies and coordinate block grant funding.

In Edmonton, they soon became an integral and much-loved part of the Southminster-Steinhauer congregation. Following his official retirement in 1986, Charles accepted interim positions at McDougall United Church in Edmonton and at Southminster-Steinhauer. Over the years, he was often asked to conduct services for other congregations when needed, serving communion for the last time in Drayton Valley at age 91. Once, after a rather long sermon, with his gentle self-deprecating sense of humour, he reflected that, "You should never offer a retired minister a microphone!"

Charles and Ferne served on many boards and committees over the years. Both were supporters of the conference historical society and Charles served on the board of the Rundle's Mission Society. Ferne served a number of years on the board of Edmonton's Bissell Centre, an inner-city agency.

While at Drumheller, Charles served on the senate of the University of Calgary and, in 1975, received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from St. Stephen's College in Edmonton. In 1980, he was elected by the Conference to serve as president-elect, his term as president beginning in 1981.

They excelled at the gift of hospitality. For years, their home provided temporary lodging for many out-of-town visitors they met. Ferne worked hard arranging provincial speaking tours for people who had worked in overseas missions for the United Church. For more information on Ferne and the role of a minister's wife, see the 2014 issue of the ANWC Historical Journal, "Two for the Price of One."

As supporters of the arts, they were, until the last few years, regular attendees at presentations of the Edmonton Film Society and the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. Ferne continued to sing in the Silvertones, the seniors' choir at Southminster- Steinhauer, and to participate in the weekly women's study group there.

They are survived by three sons, Bob, Harold and Russ, daughter Jan Thompson, and their partners, as well as nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

They were dearly loved for their zest for life, their humour, their gentle wisdom and their strong commitment to each other and to their faith.

Both Charles and Ferne were memorialized in song!

Charles Song – (tune – MacNamara's Band)

Oh, his name is Charlie Hickman. He's a man of breadth and scope,

And if he were elected, he would make a lovely pope.

They sent him to Alberta in the year he was ordained.

The members of this conference are so glad that he remained.

He's a gentleman with great elan. He's modest, mild and meek,

And when they made him president, we hit a lucky streak.

With courtesy, diversity, he appeals to you and me.

A boon to the United Church is Charles Hickman, D.D.

(Written by Rev. H. Francis Yardley in honour of Charles' retirement)

Ferne's Song --- (tune – Oh, Susanna!)

Chorus:

Oh, dear Fernie! You've friends both far and near.

You've served the church for many years.

To us you're very dear.

She came from eastern Ca-na-da,

A pastor's wife to be.

She sang in choir, and taught the kids,

And poured a lot of tea.

She's been a part of all we do,

She's helped us laugh and sing.

Weekend retreats and lakeside days,

She's part of everything!

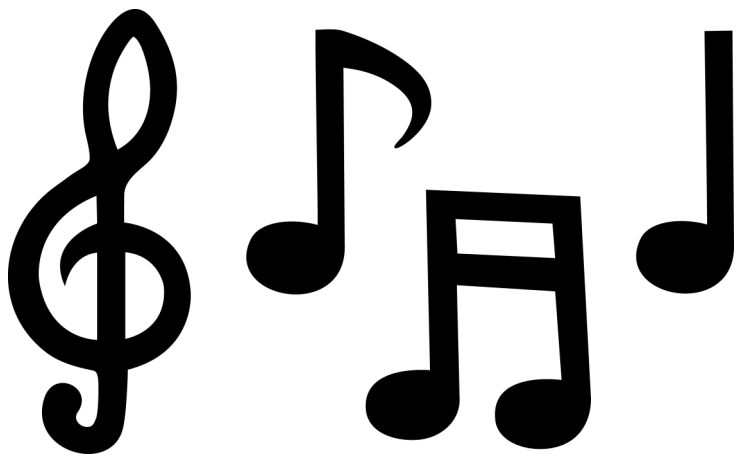
The humour, wisdom you have brought

Have brightened this whole group,

And so we sing and celebrate

With love from the whole troupe!

(Written by Gayle Simonson for a 95th birthday celebration of Ferne's involvement in Tuesday Connection Study Group)



ROBERT (BOB) WILLIAM KENNETH ELLIOTT

By Jim George

The purpose of this article is to describe the work done by Bob Elliott when he was Superintendent of Home Missions from 1949 to 1955 in southern Saskatchewan and southern Alberta. It also provides a brief sketch of his early years in ministry as well as his work following the superintendency. The material is drawn from a book, "Unto the Least of These" written by Jim George, a retired high school principal and superintendent of schools, now living in Lethbridge, Alberta.

A. The early years (1936-1949)

Bob was born on March 12, 1912 in Winnipeg. His father instilled in him a strong belief in Bible truths, a strong work ethic, and an acceptance of people of all races. He earned a B.A. degree and was honored with a D.D. (Doctor of Divinity) at United College, University of Winnipeg. He served as an ordained minister at Bissett and Oak Lake in Manitoba, Estevan and Saskatoon in Saskatchewan.

During those years he developed the following attributes:

- Powerful preaching skills.
- A concern for rural culture.
- A desire to meet every need as he saw them.
- A life long interest in children's welfare.
- A refusal to let awkward and primitive conditions prevent the sacraments of marriages, baptisms, and communion.
- A conviction that the church ought to give its people a sense of a personal relationship to God and that Jesus is a compassionate understanding friend.
- A refusal to let traditions stand in the way of providing funerals for non-church people and weddings for divorced persons and non-Christians.

Bob provided leadership in the opening of Oliver Lodge (the first senior's lodge for men), the start of a Sunday School that developed into St. David's Church, the first Alcoholics Anonymous unit in Saskatchewan, a crusade for wheat for China, and the building of Memorial Hall at his own church – St. Thomas Wesley United, Saskatoon.

B. Superintendent of Home Missions (1949 – 1955)

The area stretched south of a line drawn roughly from Yorkton in Saskatchewan to the Crowsnest Pass in Alberta. His duties included supervising and administering all the home mission work of the United Churches in that vast area. Some examples will illustrate Bob's capacity for work in meeting the needs of the people:

- Conducted 20 one-week-long preaching stands as part of the Crusade for Christ.
- Assisted in the development of new churches in Vauxhall, Del Bonita, and Waterton Lakes.
- Visited each of the thirteen presbyteries twice a year to appraise the state of ministry, recommend salaries, improve and refit church buildings and manses, and to assist in pastoral care.
- Visited each summer thirty-three student ministers to provide supervision, evaluation, and a recommendation to the College.
- Arranged to move an unused church from Kincaid to Gravelbourg.
- Preached at the dedication of the new Coronach Church.
- Assisted with the transformation of a run-down church at Simmie to an attractive place of worship and then preached at the dedication service.
- Helped establish the University Agriculture Extension Rural Life Institute that resulted in a study of the family farm and its relationships to schools, churches, and other institutions.

Even though he was unemployed at the time, the Saskatchewan Conference elected Bob to attend the General Council in Ottawa. While at General Council an old friend asked him if he would consider going to Prince Rupert, B.C. It was described to Bob as follows: "the worst pastoral charge in B.C., the manse was unlivable, the church was in disarray, the area wet and isolated. It is one of the toughest charges in B.C. No one wants to go there. Would you want to try it?" This was the kind of challenge that Bob could not resist so off to Prince Rupert he went.

E. His Finest Hour 1958-1968

In Bob's career to this point, he had developed the strengths that the community of Prince Rupert needed. Here are a few of Bob's successes:

- Rebuilt interest in the church.
- Centred many of his inspiring sermons on the statement, "God sent us to be his Jesus Christ."
- Began a play school which in turn developed into a hostel and then a Friendship House as a shelter for homeless men.
- Started a Thrift Shop.
- Made arrangements for an annual Christmas dinner for homeless men.
- Started a play school for which he drove the school bus delivering children and milk every week day for eight years.
- Encouraged totem pole carving.
- With the University of B.C., started a study group on the ways of mankind.
- Along with the Department of Child Welfare, established a receiving home to house children prior to being placed in foster homes.
- Walked four miles every Sunday to bring Sunday School to Indian children.
- Held a one-week preaching mission in each of three Indian Reserves.
- Taught a two-hour session at the High School every Thursday for five years.
- Participated in a radio program where he spoke for five minutes at a time.
- Helped in the establishment of McCarthy House, a home for native girls.
- Helped find emergency shelter for families from Port Essington whose homes had burned down and arranged meals for these people at the Grand Café.
- With Al Perley's help, the Women's Missionary Society was persuaded to buy the old Convent building and set up a residential school for Indian boys.
- In spite of criticism, conducted a funeral for a Buddhist man,
- Intervened in the proposed demolition of the old Navy building and turned it into a day care centre for young people in the basement and a lounge for alcoholics on the upper floor.

His generosity was legendary often giving away articles of clothing that he was wearing, estimating that he gave over 60% of his income to charity and church.

On most of the above projects, Bob Elliott was the instigator or co-instigator and then he inspired a group of volunteers to carry on. The records show an incredible success story in nearly every case. Late in 1957, Bob received an invitation from Southminster United Church in Lethbridge to be their minister. He began his ministry there on June 15, 1968.

F. Social Activist and Golden Mile Centre, Retirement 1968 – 1996

Bob requested that each member of the Board host discussion groups in their homes to focus on the future of the mission of Southminster church. Among the suggestions was a Drop-in Centre for seniors. The project grew from weekly sessions to daily and finally a formal constitution with by-laws. In two years the centre had outgrown the facilities at the church and they moved into their own quarters at the Fritz Sick building.

- Began a church school and worship services in Imperial School in an isolated corner of north-east Regina. That school blossomed into Zion United Church and within a year had a congregation of 80 and a Sunday School of 125.
- Spent a week in Qu'Appelle Valley at the Round Lake Indian Mission, overcoming nasty discrimination and getting recognition for the first Indian Mission as a full body within the Church.
- Negotiated to reduce the number of presbyteries from 13 to 10.
- Spent one week in each of 20 pastoral charges to strengthen the sense of need and service. Each of these evangelistic missions consisted of seven evening worship services highlighted by Bob's powerful preaching.
- Began negotiations with the congregations of Wascana, St. James and Passmore in northwest Regina to amalgamate to form St. John's Church.
- Served as Padre of the Provincial Council of AOTS Men's Clubs.
- Provided leadership in the Young People's Union, and the Older Boys' Parliament.
- Taught a course on World Religions at the Regina College.
- Played an active role in the Regina Rotary Club.

Space does not permit quoting from the scores of glowing accolades and heartfelt thank you letters that Bob received over the course of his ministry. In his usual self-deprecating manner, Bob felt that they were entirely undeserved. In 1953 the Saskatchewan Conference elected him as their president. In the fall of 1954 Bob was recommended to fill a vacancy on the Division of Home Missions in Toronto. He did not want to go but felt compelled to go because it was the "Church's call".

C. Confined to an Office 1955-1957

As associate secretary of Home Missions, Bob had a wide variety of Canada-wide responsibilities including supervision of fire insurance on all church buildings, and appointment of 256 summer students, then acting as a final referee at the conclusion of their summer work. Statistics and bookkeeping were a large part of his office duties and to break the sedentary pace, he spent 18 weekends at Young People's Camps around Ontario, wrote an adult Sunday School course for students and teachers, and enjoyed a week with Indian people at Norway House, Manitoba.

In 1957, Bob said, "Enough is enough. The church can get a layman to do the work on insurance and property." He accepted a call to Wesley Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

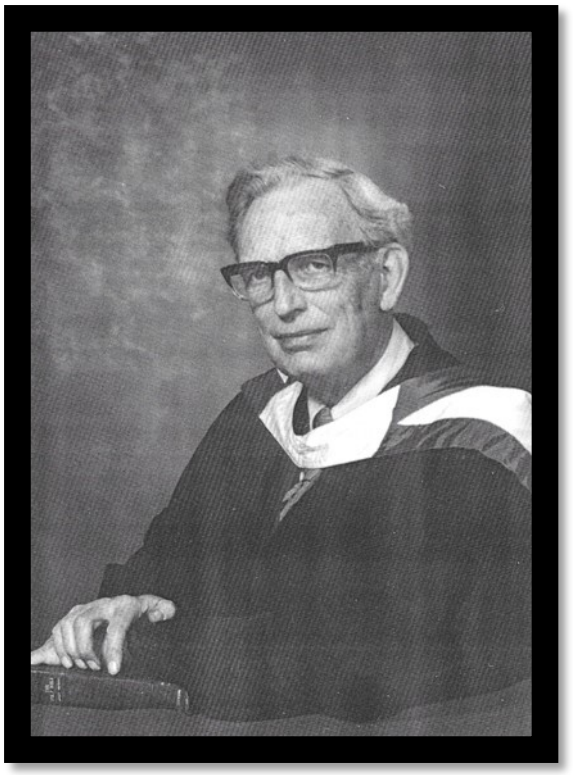
D. Back to an active Pastorate 1957-1958

As usual, he plunged into the work by beginning services in Lac LaRonge, 175 miles north. He persuaded the School Board to re-open a boys' school, the Nisbet Memorial Home, which provided living quarters for the boys. He applied to Home Missions for funding and a Nisbet Memorial Church came into being. In three years that church had grown to 130 families and was planning to build a new church in Prince Albert. He started a twice-weekly radio program that was so successful it was suggested that the church appoint Bob as Missionary at Large to serve the outlying districts. Bob offered himself for that position but the Home Missions Board turned him down and he resigned as minister of Wesley United Church. An excerpt from a letter to Bob from that church states "His legacy to our congregation was his great gift of oratory and his masterful interpretation of the scriptures, which always left us wanting to hear more."

Bob was one of the organizers for a proposed church building in West Lethbridge (which did not materialize), a new church in Waterton (which did), and the Chinook Larger Parish. He conducted a series of lectures at the Public Library, and participated in dozens of other projects as well as serving as an effective pastor to all.

In 1973, his applications to serve as an overseas missionary were all rejected. He resigned from Southminster. He spent the next eight years in Victoria trying vainly to find a challenge in social work. Finally, in 1981, Bob returned to Lethbridge to join the ranks of retired ministers. Here, he remained active, writing many letters to the editor, accepting speaking engagements, and providing unofficial pastoral care.

Bob passed away in June, 1996.



Bob Elliot

In the beginning: Creation of Youth Forum

By Rev. Shelagh Parsons

The 'Youth Forum' of the United Church of Canada had its first meeting in 1977 at St. David's United Church, Calgary, Alberta in tandem with the 27th General Council. It was significantly different from the 'Forum' in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador 2015. This National event has lasted over 40 years and I would think its longevity says something but I don't believe it has ever been assessed according to its original purpose and goals. It is therefore difficult to say whether I write about a success story or not. Many candid and unsolicited reports from those who have attended through the years would say that it was a valuable and important event in their life. The General Council support would indicate that the church has valued this initiative.

In 1975 the Division of Mission in Canada was being birthed and structural changes were in the mix. The "Division" was made up of newly constructed working units that were intended to give autonomy to specific areas of work and provide access for all levels of the church. It was part of a broader mandate of 'church mobilization'. One of the intentions of church mobilization was to reduce hierarchy and increase involvement of church membership. As a part of this reorganization, strategies loosely named 'Consultations' were held. We invited people across the church from congregations, presbyteries and conferences to evaluate, discuss and recommend ideas for the particular areas of work identified in each working unit. The 'Youth Working Unit', to which I, as Youth Coordinator, was responsible, took such information and shaped it into purpose, goals and strategies for the years to follow.

It was from such a consultation in 1976 that the purpose of empowering youth 12-18 and young adults 18-25 within the church and society was developed. A second purpose identified was to integrate youth as part of the whole church. The idea of empowerment gave rise to discussions about regional and national events for youth to encourage their networking and strengthen their participation in the life of the greater church. A strategy to provide funds for the development of such networks of both leaders and youth across the country was initiated. To fulfill in part the second purpose of integration, a books titled ' Youth Ministry Sunday Monday and Everyday' plus a film strip were sent to every congregation in The United Church of Canada to further this endeavor. This was the context from which 'Youth Forum' emerged. The specific idea of 'Youth Forum' arose from two sources. During a General Council executive meeting the Rev. Ivan Cumming, Director of Naramata Centre, and the Rev. Bud Harper of Saskatchewan Conference spoke of having a forum for social and justice groups alongside the General Council. The idea had come from a United Nations conference both had attended in the United States where there were many NGO's (nongovernmental organizations) presenting in a forum alongside the meeting which was focused on human habitat and settlement. I began thinking at the time about the youth either being part of this or having their own forum based on the issues that the General Council was addressing.

The second source was a meeting of what was called JED (Joint Educational Development). This included many denominations in Canada and the US. JED addressed the Christian Education mandate of the many Protestant denominations and sought to work together with one large annual meeting each year and smaller meetings of different segments, i.e. children, youth. At one of these meetings I learned from the Lutheran Church of America that along with their National meeting they had a 'Youth Assembly'. I brought these two concepts to the 'Youth Working Unit' and 'Youth Forum' was born. The purpose was to empower youth and young adults, develop the network and allow the youth to learn about the workings of the General Council and also possibly for the General Council to hear from the 'Youth sector'.

At this time youth participation as commissioners was not part of the concept. Rather, by addressing the issues in their own discussions, inviting commissioners to speak to youth forum regarding the issues and observing the council at work was the limit of involvement.
Implementing the idea was another matter. The Working Unit had drawn up a proposed budget for the event and allocated what it had towards the endeavor. I scanned other working unit budgets, in particular units not age or gender related (women, men, children, etc.) but activity focused; worship, evangelism, leadership development and a couple of others in the Department of Church in Society which was the other complementary half of the Department of Christian Development in the Division of Mission in Canada. I spoke to them and urged each unit to address youth as much as any other sectors. This was moderately successful in revenue generation. We took the proposal to the Department of Christian Development and received some financial support there as well. We took it before the broader Division of Mission in Canada which gave moral support.

On behalf of the 'Youth Working Unit' and under the Division of Mission in Canada, I approached the General Council Executive with the idea. It was here I met with a good deal of opposition. Along with those who had been talking about a different forum, there were challenges to and a general dislike of the idea. They had no problem with an 'Annual Assembly' of youth and would encourage it but not in tandem with General Council. It was Jessie Macleod, the Executive Secretary of the Department of Christian Development, who turned this around. She came to me saying; you have the Division's support and to go ahead as there was nothing to stop us having a 'Youth Forum' at the same time in Calgary. She also told me that there was always spectator space and that we could invite commissioners to the things we were doing. This was all it took and we were off and running. I need to add that the General Secretary of the United Church the Rev. Donald Ray was also supportive. While he couldn't go contrary to the Executive he was able to provide General Council materials to me and negotiated opportunities to connect with Council.

The first 'Youth Forum' invited any youth 14 to 20 to come. They needed to register with the working unit and bring a sleeping bag as they would be sleeping on the floor in a school gymnasium. We promised a travel pool though could not promise how much they would receive back for transportation but if they could get to Calgary there would be space and food. Everyone did pay a small registration fee and contributed to the travel pool. As I recall we had every Conference represented. I remember one fellow started from Newfoundland and he would wait to catch midnight flights with a special youth stand-by fare that was available at the time. You couldn't go if the seats were full and you could be bumped. He took a few days and a number of flights to arrive. He arrived tired but excited. There were others and the stories were equally amazing; some hitchhiked and some came with commissioners. This, after all, was the Woodstock era.

There were over a hundred registered but I believe in the end we had about 85 young people that made it to the 'Youth Forum' in Calgary. There was no selection process and what fascinated me was the diversity. They not only came from churches in all parts of this country but we had young teens, older teens, and young adults from all sectors. I know we had some who were foster children, likely teens of commissioners, and a few group home teens. It was reported to me that one had just been released from Juvenile Detention. There were others who had just heard about it and decided they wanted to see Calgary.

There were teens who were part of youth groups and some who indicated they were considering ministry as a career. It was a very diverse group but in the most miraculous way they all came together and got along. As the Coordinator I don't recall a single problem arising with the teens which for a youth event of more than 80 for nine days this was incredible. I may have forgotten a few over the many years but nothing comes to me now and I know that I was continually amazed at the leadership that the young people themselves provided. We had excellent adult leadership but the youth themselves made it happen.

We contracted with a vegetarian restaurant to provide the food. I wondered how this would fly; but, it was terrific and the food great. The cost was significantly less than if we had been providing meals that had meat. The school close to St. David's United Church in Calgary where the 'Youth Forum ' was held allowed for the youth to sleep in the gym and use showers as well as use one or two other large rooms. All we were charged was for the maintenance staff. I do recall us establishing an all night room for those who wanted to make noise or not sleep. It worked like a dream and all respected those who were sleeping. We did have some tired young people who stayed up many nights but they soon determined that sleep was in their best interest.

I was blessed with leaders who took turns keeping watch. There were many good discussions and lots of music and singing. It was out of this endeavor that a newly created song called 'Peanut Butter and Jelly' came to the fore and was eventually sung in front of the Council during the Division of Mission report. It was a ridiculous song; it had body movements and was about making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It was just plain fun. It lit up the Council with laughter and I believe transformed any questioning attitudes. Just for the record, the inspiration came from snacks of bread and peanut butter as well as anything else youth contributed that were available in the all night room. These snacks designed to assist any who found the meatless diet sparse.



Youth Forum T-shirt

The 'Youth Forum' had great music leadership: Ron and Kris Klusmeier, Jim and Jean Strathdee and John Greenwood. While we were a little idealistic in thinking all could work together as a team, with the help of Jim, they divided up the responsibilities and it worked well. Jim and Jean looked after music in the daily sessions, Ron and Kris did some evening work with the group and John organized a big celebration for an evening to which the Council had been invited. This took place at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium and involved all the musicians including some others who had been asked to perform. It worked marvellously and was well attended by Council and of course Youth Forum. The aspect that didn't prove successful was the invitation to the youth groups and congregations in Calgary; very few from this sector attended the free concert and celebration.

The first 'Youth Forum' was deemed a success. We paid all the bills and were able to provide significant travel monies to those who had come a great distance. My recall may be off but I believe everyone paid about $80 for the nine day event. It was not long after returning to Toronto that requests began coming in for the seed money for local endeavors, news that had been shared with them at the Forum. Conference groups began to take place and the new 'Youth Moderator' had requests to visit.

Unfortunately this was limited by funding but the momentum was carrying on. Discussions began quickly about the next 'Youth Forum' and to my pleasant surprise a General Council representative came to me after an Executive meeting and informed me that they had found it so significant that a motion had been made to include monies in the next budget for 'Youth Forum' at the following General Council.

I was not involved in the subsequent Forums. I do know that it rapidly began to change in design and recruitment. The 'Youth Forum' became a significant part of Council and the young people were selected from across the Church. This expanded the numbers that were possible. It also included an expanded leadership team. They continued to have meetings of the youth together like a youth caucus but also attended more of the General Council sessions and were given corresponding privileges when in the court. They were given the opportunity to lead in worship and participate in other ways as appropriate. Their travel costs were also covered. I do not know when they were housed with other commissioners or if that happened immediately in 1979. Personally I wondered about the diversity and knew that the camaraderie would be different. There is nothing like sleeping on the floor with many others to build community. The integration into to the life of the church was truly successful but I wondered about the empowerment of the youth voice. I know there was no vegetarian diet for all involved and I suspect that not as many pulled all nighters in subsequent Youth Forums. The Youth were able to provide in subsequent years more than a T shirt and a song to the Council. They began to actively participate in Council debates and proceedings.

The longevity and youth involvement continued and I have heard many comments on the significance of 'Youth Forum' to those now in leadership. You will have to have others report who were involved after the first forum as I was not in attendance. However, I know that first 'Youth Forum' was amazing. It most certainly empowered youth and led to a much wider church involvement. It was truly effortless to provide leadership and the spontaneity was mesmerizing. The initiative was, I believe, one in which truly the Spirit was at work and no doubt continued to be so in later years. I am forever grateful for being a part of that initiative.



Rundle's Mission Society

By Gayle Simonson

Methodist missionary Robert Terrill Rundle arrived in the west from England in 1840. After travelling around the area that is now Alberta, in 1847, with the help of Benjamin Sinclair, a Swampy Cree from Norway House, he established a mission at a traditional native meeting place at Pigeon Lake. While Rundle had to return to England the following year, Sinclair maintained the mission for a number of years before more Methodists came to work in the region.

Rev. Gerry Hutchinson and family arrived in 1949 to serve the Telfordville Pastoral Charge. With a simple, but unanswered, question: "Why is it called Mission Beach?" he began a half century of research into the area and into the Methodist missionaries of the west.

With his concern to honour the work of the early missionaries, he was instrumental in establishing the Rundle's Mission Society to maintain the property. Now with a large lodge and several cabins, it is suitable for a variety of events. Upcoming projects include the installation of an elevator in the lodge.

Parks Canada designated the location a national historic site in 1963. In 1965, a large monument was dedicated to honour the area's history. In 1997, the site of the mission was declared a Provincial Historic Site named for Benjamin and Margaret Sinclair.

In 1990, Hutchinson told the history of the site in *The Meeting Place: Rundle's Mission at Pigeon Lake.* His vast amount of research material is located in the holdings of ANWC Archives which are housed at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, a treasure for future historians.

For more information, please contact the society at info@rundlesmission.org.

The following report is reprinted from "The Meeting Place," the 2018 edition of the newsletter of the Rundle's Mission Society.

In Celebration of Indigenous Connections

The Rundle's Mission Board of Directors is focused on connecting the historical significance of the site to indigenous people both before and after Robert Rundle's arrival. Since the 175th anniversary, we have worked toward erecting a permanent Tipi on this site. Although unsuccessful in obtaining the Canada 150 grant this past year, we went ahead and purchased a beautiful Tipi from Pe Sakastew Centre in Maskwacis.

The Tipi has a 16 ft. treated sail canvas cover with poles and pegs all harvested and made at the Centre.

The men at the center were very gracious and came to Rundle's Mission to both install the Tipi in July and take it down in the fall. The project continues in 2018 with plans to hire an artist at the Centre to paint the Rundle's mission logo on the canvas.

In order to protect the Tipi, it is stored in our NEW SEA CAN located behind the cottages. This rodent and rain proof container is such a treat for the staff at Rundle's mission.

On June 21st, 2018 we will be dedicating the Tipi to **Chief Maskipeton and His People** with a feast open to the community.

Book Review:

Brian Clarke and Stuart Macdonald, Leaving Christianity: Changing Allegiances in Canada since 1945. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. xii+291 pp.

By Sandra Beardsal

Do you attend church at least once a month? If so, you are one of a dwindling number of Canadians. Chances are, you were already highly cognizant of that reality. Canada's historically strong Protestant churches have been worrying about shrinking and aging memberships for several decades. Do we need a book to spell it out for us? Well, we certainly need this book. Historians Brian Clarke and Stuart Macdonald, with the assistance of other Canadian researchers, have rigorously collected and mined all the available statistics on religious adherence, membership, and participation in Canada since the 1940s: census data, denominational statistics, surveys, and polls. Their research findings cut through the hand-wringing, myths, and assumptions that have marked discussion about these topics—in both church and scholarly communities—to offer a firm foundation of factual evidence for any future consideration of Canadians' relationship with Christianity.

The authors' intent is not to berate the churches for their losses, but to "map" the disaffiliation of Canadians with organized religion, to improve clarity about the time, pace and scope of the decline, and, as theological educators, to "prepare our students for the sense of loss and pain they will encounter in pastoral ministry" (p. 12). They also want Canadians to consider the historic role of churches in Canadian life, and to understand how the decline of these institutions is reshaping the fabric of Canadian society. In four chapters that are thick with data, charts, and tables, Clarke and Macdonald unfold this narrative, offering insights both predictable and surprising. In the last two chapters, they attempt to understand the implications of the data, for the churches and for Canadian culture.

Questions of membership decline have loomed large in the past few decades and have centred mostly on the five biggest Protestant churches: United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Baptist, who together made up 45% of the Canadian population in 1961. This book gives careful attention to these five, but the authors note that the story is a much larger one. Thus, they also attend to the smaller Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, and the significance of the "Protestant not otherwise specified," the "Christian not included elsewhere," and the "No Religion" census categories. Through complex but thoroughly grounded deductions, they glean more precisely than any researcher to date how the precipitous decline in Christian affiliation has occurred, a decline that has affected all the churches, not just the historically "mainstream" Protestants. Here are some of their main findings:

- The large Protestant churches were strong and growing in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1951, 48% of the Canadian population declared an affiliation with one of these five churches. In 1958, baptisms began to fall off. In the mid-1960s, steep declines in Sunday School enrollments and confirmations began to occur. By the early 1970s, the number of Canadians affiliating with these churches had started to fall. The Lutherans and Baptists experienced revivals in the 1980s, but by the twenty-first century, all five were in decline. In 2011, only 16% of Canadians identified themselves with these denominations. While these statistics may not be news, the authors note that this reversal of fortunes was stunningly unexpected and sudden: even critics of the churches did not foresee the erasure of Protestant Christian culture from Canadian life.

- Other Protestant churches did not benefit from this mass-defection from the larger churches. Although these smaller denominations (such as the Salvation Army, the Christian Reformed, and the Pentecostals), generally more conservative or "evangelical" than their "mainstream" counterparts, grew and have increased their share of the Canadian population from 3.7% in 1961 to about 4.5% in 2011, their gains in no way make up for the losses of the larger churches. Further, all but the Pentecostals have also experienced falling membership in the last two decades, and even the Pentecostals' numbers have ceased to grow in the past decade.
- Attendance numbers for those who claim a Protestant affiliation are low, lower for the mainstream churches—the United Church attendance rate in 2011 was 12.3%—and are evenly spread across the country. As the authors put it, "there is no equivalent to a Bible Belt in Canada" (p. 117).
- Catholics remain Canada's largest religious group, but their share of the Canadian population has fallen from a high of 47% in the 1970s to 39% in 2011. More pertinently, church attendance—a weekly expectation for Catholics—has fallen such that 43% of Catholics in Quebec, and 25% in the rest of Canada, never attend. There are signs that even retaining only a cultural connection to the church (claiming affiliation while rarely or never attending) is starting to wane for Canadian Catholics.
- The "No Religion" Canadians, who at 24% comprise the second largest "religion" group in the census (after the Catholics), tell only part of the story of disaffiliation. The authors have established that nearly 55% of the Canadian population as of 2011 in practice have no religious affiliation. (In 1961 this figure was 0.5%.) Further, this category is increasingly intergenerational, showing no sign of shifting.

In their assessment of the data, Clarke and Macdonald suggest corrections to previous assertions about the churches' dilemma. A conservative Protestant scholar gained attention several years ago for his book on the United Church in the 1960s, in which he blamed the church's decline on its failure to stay true to its "evangelical" heritage in various ways, including in its development of the New Curriculum. The evidence gives no support to this assertion: all the "mainstream" Protestant churches experienced decline at the same time, and the decline began for the United Church (with a decrease in baptisms in 1958) several years before the first books of the New Curriculum were in print. There is no indication that vast numbers of disgruntled United Church members sought refuge in more "evangelical" denominations; in any case, most of those churches are now also in decline. The authors also cast doubt on sociologist Reginald Bibby's assertion that "there is a market for religion," and that the churches just need to get their message out more clearly. The surveys show that significant numbers of Canadians believe "in an afterlife," but there is no indication that they wish to explore their faith with others, or to practice it in any ritual way. Canadians are content "to believe without belonging" (p. 231).

Rather, say the authors, all Canadians, religious or not, must reckon with a society that has been radically reshaped by the social movements of the 1960s and 70s, and by the neoliberal project to reframe social issues and interactions in terms of "market economics." Canadians are "consumers" rather than citizens. Affiliation with service clubs, churches, and other voluntary organizations that helped to create Canadian civil society, is no longer part of the common language.

So, what are the churches to do? Clarke and Macdonald do not offer solutions. They rightly suggest that mainstream churches need to move beyond a "discourse of loss."

They also note that the Canadian religious culture is not like that of the United States, and that turning to American resources for solutions is likely to be disappointing; Australia and New Zealand are in more similar situations. They remind the churches that they can't simply wait for people to come (no matter how warmly they welcome them), when so few Canadians have any experience at all with Christian life.

One thing that jumps out from this study for me is the revelation that Canadian Christians really are all in this together. United Church, Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Alliance, and even Pentecostal: none of us have been left unscathed by the challenges posed by our deeply individualistic consumer culture. As one who works at local, regional, and national levels to encourage dialogue, cooperation, and the sharing of ministry among denominations, it seems to me that now is the time to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ together, to pool our resources and our love of the gospel for the sake of the world. There are places where the churches do work together splendidly, and joyfully, in congregations, in outreach ministries, and in struggles for justice and peace. Perhaps the hard realities that Clarke and Macdonald share with us in this book can help propel more Christians to find their common ministry and mission.



Angie Friesen

Introducing Angie Friesen

By Gayle Simonson

Members of The ANWC Historical Society were saddened to learn that health issues forced conference archivist Jane Bowe McCarthy to leave the position. However, we are pleased to welcome a new conference archivist, Angie Friesen.

Angie grew up in B.C.'s Fraser Valley in Yarrow, a suburb of Chilliwack. From there, she made her way to the State University of New York at Oswego, where she had been recruited to play hockey. She had a number of Canadian teammates and together, they found that, "It was pretty funny to convince Americans that we all had beavers as pets and rode our polar bears to school in an igloo!"

In New York, she earned a Bachelor of English Writing Arts. Always a book lover, she then moved to Edmonton to earn a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies. While doing a practicum at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, she got a taste for archival work. After graduation, she had an opportunity to work as a Special Projects Archivist with the PAA and says, "I fell in love with the work even more!" Following the initial contract, she worked as a reference archivist intern for a year. Now she works part-time in the PAA reference room and part-time for the United Church.

Still a hockey player, she now plays with the NAIT alumni team in the Northern Alberta Female Hockey League, though not a graduate of NAIT. She also enjoys other sports. To relax, she likes to read, watch movies and go camping.

Welcome, Angie! We are delighted to have you working with us.

Treasure Hunting

By David Giuliano

"It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life," said mythologist Joseph Campbell.

In August 2006, at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ont., I was installed as the 39th moderator of The United Church of Canada. It was a grand affair, the pinnacle of my vocation as a minister. For three years I would serve as the spiritual leader of the largest Protestant denomination in Canada. Friends from our church in Marathon joined Pearl and I on the stage. A thousand voices sang, "Everything before us, brought us to this moment, standing on the threshold of a brand new day." It felt as though I was exactly where that One Love called me to be. For me there is no greater joy than that.

After the ceremony, after the hand-shaking and the hugs, after the photographs and a press scrum, Pearl and I walked across the university campus. The McIntyre River whispered below as we crossed the footbridge. The aurora borealis danced green in the dark sky above. We marveled at this remarkable thing happening in our lives.

I was ready. I had earned three Master's degrees, plus certifications as a spiritual director and as an expressive arts therapist. I was theologically liberal, scripturally intelligent and spiritually grounded. I could chair contentious meetings in non-anxious ways. My heart was set on justice. I was an accomplished writer and a damn good preacher — if I say so myself. As the second youngest moderator in the history of our church, I brought vitality and vision for the future. I envisioned myself leading the church into a new reformation. I still had a good head of hair, both eyebrows and not nearly enough humility.

Lying next to Pearl back in the university dorm room where we were billeted, I felt a new lump near my temple: a disappointing but relatively minor nuisance on such fine night. After all, the doctors had been saying it was benign for years, just a dirty little tumour sending out its fungal spores again. No big deal.

Relocated from Marathon to Toronto, I met with a surgeon at Sunnybrook Hospital. He had reviewed the stains from all of my previous biopsies, and the one from the excision he had just performed. "Mr. Giuliano," he informed me, "your tumour has been misdiagnosed for years. It is in fact malignant." He said some other things. His lips moved but the sound of blood storming in my ears drowned out his words. My self-perception and my confidence in God's call were shaken to the core. How could someone sick and weak lead the church? Would cancer treatments incapacitate me?

Against my own instincts, I began to learn how to lead from weakness and vulnerability. I travelled across Canada and around the world, speaking from my fragility rather than strength. Cancer and its treatment knocked me from the saddle of the great white stallion of certainty, youth and vitality. I started to ride a humbler, sometimes comic, donkey, like the one Jesus rode into Jerusalem to face the power and fury of the Roman Empire.

Leonard Cohen sang, "There is a crack in everything / That's how the light gets in." In weakness I came to know the inner light of compassion, wonder, beauty, of the sacredness and miracle of simply being alive. My physical senses intensified. The sound of bees, the slant of sunshine through a window, the weight of a warm blanket, the scent of soil brought tears or laughter or both.

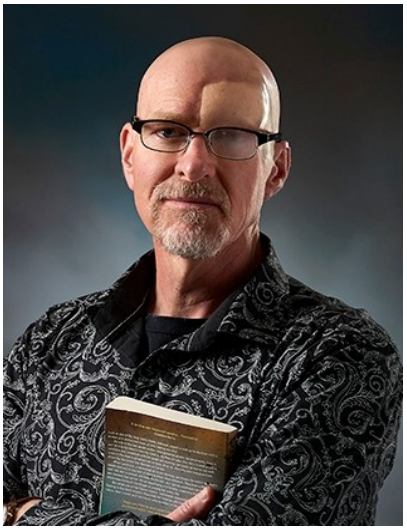
This brush with my mortality felt like a call to spend my transitory life on worthy endeavours and, paradoxically, I found renewed pleasure in mundane daily activities — commuting, cooking, cleaning, small talk — and in the fraternity, the sorority, of waiting rooms. Even the meetings that had previously made me restless and impatient became conduits of the sacred. The cracks caused by cancer let light in.
The Apostle Paul's words recorded in his Second Letter to the Corinthians — "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" — became my touchstone. I came to realize that each of us, as individuals and as communities, has a magnificent divinity within. We carry this treasure around in the fragile clay pots of our bodies, of our congregations. When those pots, those bodies, are cracked, the light not only gets in but also gets out.

Gord Downie, the front man of the band The Tragically Hip, died last year. We knew it was coming. He was told a year and a half ago that he had an untreatable brain tumour. He dedicated his final months to music and to speaking out about the injustices inflicted on the First Peoples of Canada. Many Canadians heard for the first time about the violent truth of our national history because Downie used the platform of his looming death to talk about it. Last words have power because we save our breath for what matters most. Downie lived his final days from a place of inner light and the power of vulnerability.

American author, professor and social worker Brené Brown writes and speaks about the power of vulnerability in her 2012 book, Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead: "Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path."

Following that path demanded that I lead from humility and authenticity rather than achievement, vitality and strength. I came to recognize our church as vulnerable, too, called to live out our relationship with the Creator through the truth of our present losses rather than nostalgia of past victories. Once upon a time we were a powerful and respected institution. We wielded social authority. We had the ear of the prime minister. Our sanctuaries were full. At the dawn of the 21st century however, we were shrinking, losing our place of privilege in society. We were being called to a more humble, vulnerable and unfamiliar way of living out our faith in the world.

I began to plumb my own frailty for wisdom and encouragement that might guide our diminished community. I dug for the treasure within the earthen vessel of our body-politic, watching for the divine light our cracked institution was letting in and letting out. The Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung often famously said that ". . . the shadow is ninety percent pure gold." I was digging for gold in the shadows of this newfound vulnerability, in myself and in our church. During my time as moderator I tried to understand our story as church through the lens of my personal story of vulnerability.



David Giuliano

James Robertson

By Robert MacDonald

When Canada obtained the North West from the Hudson's Bay Company, following the Red River rebellion of 1869-7 and the creation of the province of Manitoba, the Presbyterian Church saw an opportunity to canadianise and anglicise the newly-developing communities, encouraging a British, English-speaking society. This meant raising worship places and providing clergy. That the Church was successful in the rapid development of the west, especially after 1890, was seen in the fact that the Presbyterian Church in Canada was the largest Protestant denomination in the west in 1910. This was in no small measure due to the 'awesome' energy and persuasive personality of the Rev. James Robertson who ensured a simple and direct administration of Home Missions.

The Presbyterians set up the Presbytery of Manitoba and the North West (from Lakehead to the Rockies) as well as the beginning of Manitoba College, leaders of which were among Robertson's supporters. In 1875, when the Presbyterian churches had united, the Presbytery was given Synod powers especially over grants and financial matters along with the task of organising new congregations, pressuring the General Assembly and the Home Missions Committee for more clergy and providing services. The central control from Toronto led to resentment by local congregations. In 1880, a Home Missions report urged more action, money and missionaries, suggesting a field person to take up the task of organising the services. In 1881, the position, Superintendent, was created.

Born in Scotland in 1839 and educated there, James Robertson and his family emigrated in 1855 to the Woodstock area in Canada West (now Ontario). After teaching for two years, he expressed the desire to become a minister. In 1863, he enrolled at the University of Toronto, spending three years in University College, while being a member of the University Corps of the Queen's Own Rifles which saw action against the Fenian raids of 1866. In 1867, he was at Princeton which gave him an opportunity to understand/observe the American extension system. He also spent a year at Union College, New York, studying and doing mission work in the inner city. He was ordained in November 1869. Newly-married after a ten-year courtship, he was inducted in Norwich, in Ontario. After five years, he resigned in order to regain his health.

He was recruited to Winnipeg's Knox congregation but found that a Church of Scotland minister was there, so he volunteered to travel to various missions and provide services to fledgling congregations. In 1875, he began a seven-year stay at Knox, building up the congregation while at the same time helping people get settled. In 1877, he established a railway mission. He was associated with other young 'progressive' Presbyterians such as the Rev. George Bryce and was involved in the establishment of Manitoba College where he lectured in moral philosophy and was on the Board of Regents. In addition, he was involved in the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba. In 1880 he became a member of the Home Missions Committee.

When he was appointed Superintendent, he was responsible for an area from the Lakehead to Edmonton, comprising eight districts. This was later extended to British Columbia and the Yukon. In 1881, in a report, he outlined the strategy, of financial aid and church buildings for the vulnerable communities. He had written about the difficulties of people finding a place to worship as houses with low roofs and small size were inadequate, and alternative places such as granaries (with smells and vermin), station houses (noise of trains) or hotels (clientele) were unsatisfactory. He suggested a successful missionary would be with character and pulpit presence, able to travel, requiring youth and physical endurance and practicality--"knowing less Latin and more horse". He mentioned the example of a green Glasgow recruit. A successful recruit was David McQueen who was involved physically building churches in the Edmonton area. In his recruitment efforts, he worked closely with John Mackay King of Manitoba College, to encourage young men to enter the ministry.

One advantage he had in his work was that though he was responsible to Presbytery and General Assembly, he also had input as a member of the Home Missions Committee.

In keeping with his strategy, he pressed for a Church and Manse Building Fund, based on his reading of the American experience. It was established in 1883 with a capitalisation of $100,000 funded by subscriptions and bequests and provided loans and grants to congregations. The Board, which included Robertson and others, would approve funds from applications submitted by presbytery, loans on the basis of land title and security guaranteed by trustees. To facilitate buildings, Robertson arranged for a standard construction plan and arranged for lumber at below market value. In four years, 75 churches and manses were built, five times that done in the previous eight years. However, depression and overestimated ability to repay led to many defaults or arrears. This Fund plus the Augmentation Fund for salaries enabled many congregations to get their start. Among these was Lacombe.

Robertson spent time travelling, and it was said that his home was in strain stations or on trains, during which time he wrote letters--business such as to the Rev. George Bryce in Winnipeg or the Rev. J.C. Herdman in Calgary (later a Superintendent) or the chair of the Committee. Others included the Rev. Andrew Baird of Edmonton. Topics could range from pulpit supply to proposed loans, to the state of schools and religious division. An item in a Toronto paper in May 1887 indicated scepticism about co-operation with Methodists, with a somewhat disparaging tone. Despite separation from his family--he spent only one Christmas at home in twenty-one years, when he was ill--his letters home retained enthusiasm.

Often, he was involved in participating in services. One such service occurred when Knox Calgary's second building (capable of holding 330 at a cost of $8,000) was dedicated in November 1887.

In addition, he was involved in recruiting men for the west, and promoting the cause, especially in Ontario. Among those inspired were James Buchanan in Lacombe in 1891, Charles Gordon (the novelist Ralph Connor) in Canmore and later Winnipeg, and David McQueen, a student from Northern Ontario who heard a lecture (on conditions in the west) at Knox College and who went to Edmonton after ordination in 1887. He recruited personnel for the Klondike. Furthermore, he travelled to Scotland in 1896, where he received promises of funds and support for forty missionaries.

In 1880, he was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree. and in 1885 elected Moderator. Ralph Connor's novel, the Superintendent, was based on his work while Gordon wrote a laudatory The Life of James Robertson. Alberta Synod named their college.

Illness from diabetes and exhaustion led to his death in early January 1902. During his tenure the Church went from four congregations in 1881 to over 141 congregations and over 1100 preaching places. On his death, the Globe commented "no one knows more about the Canadian Northwest, resources, development, social, moral and religious conditions and necessities." The Home Mission Committee stated he gained the respect and confidence of every class of the population that around farms and ranches, and villages and cities he is venerated.

He was survived by his wife of 32 years, Mary Ann (Cowling) and five children.

James Woodsworth: The Builder

By Robert MacDonald

After 1855, the Methodist Mission to the West was under the Canadian Conference which became part of the Methodist Church of Canada when several groups amalgamated. However, at that time, the Methodist presence was basically with the indigenous populations. As a consequence, in the 1860s and 1870s the Superintendent was the Rev. George McDougall. In 1871, a church was built in Fort Edmonton. Morleyville was established in 1873, in addition to which the Rev. John McDougall gave services in Fort Calgary. With the coming of the NWMP and the railway, and the increased settlement of the available prairie lands, a new population had to be served. The Rev. George Young was appointed to work with the European settlers, as Superintendent of Missions in Manitoba and the Northwest. In 1884, a Methodist congregation was established in Calgary, with help from the Mission Fund. In 1886, General Council decided to establish the position of Superintendent of Missions and appointed the Rev. James Woodsworth to the position which he held until retirement.

Son of Harold Woodsworth (a staunch opponent of the Rebellion of 1837) and Mary Ann (of Loyalist background), James was born in Toronto 3 May 1843. Educated there, he was accepted on trial as a student minister in 1864, and after serving in Innisfil, south of Barrie on Lake Simcoe and Vespra (to the northwest of Barrie), he was ordained in 1868. In April that year, he married Esther Josephine Shaver (a descendant of Palatine Germans) whom he met when he boarded at their house. After Vespra, he served at Nottawasaga (south of Collingwood on Georgian Bay). Subsequently he was in the Waterloo area. A further posting to Bracebridge in the Muskoka region led to his being selected chairman of the Bracebridge District. Influenced in part by the Rev. George Young, the western pull brought him to Portage La Prairie (1872-1875) where he had a house and church built. He was appointed by Toronto Conference (which at the time extended from Belleville to Vancouver Island, with five districts) as chairman of the territorial district. When the position of Superintendent was created and he was selected, he continued for another year in Brandon to fulfill obligations there. For the next twenty years he based his work out of Brandon.

In addition to his work with the settlers, in the early years especially, an important focus was "Indian Work". Indeed, in July and August 1888, he toured the Indian Missions from Lake Winnipeg north. These included the historic Rossville (Norway House). Accompanied by the Rev. John McDougall (as Cree interpreter) and the Rev. Joshua Dyke, he visited Fisher River, Berens River and Poplar River, travelling by steamship, York boat and canoe, as well as camping along the way. People from Island Lake and Oxford House travelled to meet the visitors. Preaching, communion and baptism were part of the experience. In 1893, he and his family returned to these missions in company with the Rev. John Semmens, visiting Berens River, Norway House, Fisher River and St. Peters near Selkirk.

In 1888, in what is now Alberta, he visited the Rev. John Maclean at Macleod, travelling by stage from the train at Medicine Hat, a trip graphically described in his memoirs, including fording a river resulting in a flooded compartment. He went to Morleyville in 1889 (having been there in 1885) and continued to Fort Edmonton, stopping at Red Deer where the Rev. Leonard Gaetz had settled, and Woodsville (Pigeon Lake), along with McDougall, and then to Victoria Mission. He returned to Edmonton and to Calgary, via Red Deer and Morleyville, where he boarded the train to Brandon. In all he travelled 800 miles in a buckboard.

As Superintendent, he also had to appeal to people, especially in Ontario, for support. As a consequence, he went in 1889. There he spoke of the resources of the west, including fruitfulness of the soil, the wintering of cattle (and the excellence pf climate). In addition to gaining financial support, he secured men for work, including C.R. Carscallen, James Endicott, E.J. and W.B. Chegwin, and R.W. Dalgleish. Some he recruited on trips to Nova Scotia, such as in 1890 when he spoke in the University Chapel in Sackville.

Furthermore, he travelled to Britain in 1895 with appropriate letters of recommendation, a trip he repeated in 1911. In recruiting, one of his favourite quotations was from Acts 16:19, "Come to Macedonia and help us".

The key to his work were his western tours, which he described in his memoirs, travelling to Estevan, Weyburn, Dauphin, Swan River (and mosquitoes), Russell, or Yorkton (and horseflies). He repeated the trip to Alberta in 1892, commenting on the sheep near Maple Creek to Swift Current, ultimately to Banff in the winter, stopping at Canmore, before returning to Calgary and Gleichen. Again, his reports stressed the resources and the increasing ease of transport by rail, noting the growth of the missions such as Red Deer or High River.

In 1894, British Columbia was added to his responsibility, and in 1895 he attended Conference there while touring, covering all 3100 miles. In 1898, his report indicated the difficulties (including uncertainties of the mining industry) as well as the promising growth. He praised the work of the missions. The following year he visited the Indian Missions along the coast, by steamer, stopping at Fort Simpson (and Thomas Crosby) where a District meeting was held, and gave services at various places along the way. He was away about six weeks.

During the period of his Superintendency, he dealt with the growing structure of the Methodist Church. For example, in 1904, the General Conference divided Manitoba and Northwest Conference into three: Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. In 1906, adjustments led to his appointment as Superintendent of Missions in Manitoba Conference and representative of the General Board of Missions in Winnipeg.

In his work, he interacted with several congregations. In 1904, he visited Lacombe where Grace was dedicated and celebrated as an independent circuit. The next year, he was at the rededication of Grace in Edmonton. For Clive, he arranged a $600 loan from the Building Fund to move the church, though a few years later the congregation was disappointed when the request for funds for the parsonage were only partially met. The Home Missions Board provided Camrose with money for the parsonage in 1905, provided the congregation raised a certain amount. Other funds were supplied for the salary.

In addition to financial support and recruitment, he was concerned about summer supply. In the past repayable loans from the Educational Society often did not suffice for the expenses of theological studies, and as a consequence many probationers were often obliged to have undesirable jobs in the summer. Many of these were summer supply. In 1906 the Mission Society and the Education Society agreed to pay $5.00 a week (fields paying lodging, horses and railway transport). Supervision of the arrangement fell to the Superintendent. A further concern dealt with the non-British groups for which he had strong views, that filling the west was not enough. A result of this work was the All People's Mission in Winnipeg, on whose Board of Management he sat. He was a strong supporter of Church Union, suggesting the work of the church could be more effectively accomplished by a united body rather than continually against each other.

The work drew him away from his family; however, it appears the relationship was warm. The dedication of his memoir, Thirty Years in the Canadian North West, was "To my Wife and Children who not always journeying with me have ever been my fellow travellers".

On his retirement he continued to be active in social issues. After an illness, he passed away in January 1917 in Winnipeg. He left behind his wife Josephine (who passed away in 1925) and six children, four sons and two daughters. Significantly, two of his sons followed in his ministerial footsteps. James Shaver (1874-1942, ordained 1896) became superintendent of All People's Mission in 1907, and later after he resigned from the Methodist ministry, was elected a Labour MP and was one of the founders of the CCF (forerunner of the NDP). The other, Joseph (1877-1962), became principal of the Indian Industrial School in Red Deer and later the Residential School near Edmonton. The Winnipeg home of both James and J.S. was purchased by the Centre of Christian Studies in 1998, with a commitment to keep the Woodsworth name prominently.

The Powell Legacy in Alberta:

Thos. Powell 1872-1949

By Betty Powell and abridged by Rev. Helen Reid

Thomas was born in England in 1872. In 1874, he immigrated to Canada with his parents and siblings, and settled in Carleton County, Ontario. Since there was no Anglican Sunday School in Pakenham, he and his sister Rose, attended the Presbyterian one. In the early part of 1888, Thomas attended some revival services held in the Methodist Church. Among others, he went forward to the altar one night, and was converted. He found that God could and, in fact, did help those who wanted to be Christians. His conversion affected his whole life. "You ought to give systematically and proportionally," said a friend. "How much?" replied Thomas. "One tenth of your total salary," was the reply. Thomas quickly did the math: $12.00 for room and board, $1.60 to the church, which left $2.40 a month for personal expenses. He began tithing and that was carried out through his entire life. "One tenth is the Lord's" and it was a joy for him to give. Whatever the salary was, one tenth was set aside for God's work. "Anyone who will try that plan of giving will find a real joy in giving," he wrote.

Thomas was nurtured in the church where Dr. S. D. Chown was the minister and became a candidate for ministry. He was ordained by the Methodist Church's Montreal Conference in 1899 and was sent as Junior Minister to a charge in Southeastern Ontario. He wanted to do missionary work and volunteered to go to Japan, but agreed to go to Western Canada. He went to the meeting of conference and learned that he was to report to Olds, N.W.T., for the first Sunday in July [1900].

He and Annie Bray were married in Almonte on June 14th, 1900, and shortly afterward started for their first home, travelling via Toronto and the Great Lakes. Before starting out, they tried to find out something about this place called Olds. Information came by way of the CPR which reported a population of 300, plus a school and churches. On their arrival, they discovered that Olds had a population of 30, a small school but no church and no manse. They obtained rooms over the saddlery shop

In his journal, Thomas wrote, "The place was built of lumber and after the fire went out in [the] harness shop below it was rather a cold spot that winter of 1900. Fortunately, it was a mild winter and we were comfortable even if we did have to put the potatoes in the reservoir of [the] stove on real cold nights to keep them from freezing."

Building on the work of a student who had preceded him in Olds, Thomas collected more money, and with a loan of $500, the church was opened on Nov. 11th, 1900. On this, he wrote: "It was complete, painted outside." He continues: "There was no stove in the building, and on [Saturday] before the opening I said to the men, "We must get a stove." They laughed and said, "Perhaps it will be like today and we will not need one." We had three services on Sunday morning, afternoon and evening with [the] church filled each time and warm enough to be very comfortable without any fire." A new 6-room manse was built the next year and "to us it seemed like a palace compared with the 3 small rooms we had rented for 15 months."

The following is an excerpt from See Olds First, a history of Olds and surrounding areas: "Berrydale School was built and in operation in 1897 and besides serving as school was also the district church and community center. (Laymen took the services) until the arrival of the Rev. Thos. Powell in Olds. He was a man who preached his religion with vehemence and his gestures and actions on the platform of Berrydale filled many a child with awe and wonder and sometimes with a little amusement. If his sermons were forceful, he was equally as emphatic in living up to the standard he set for others."

Since Methodist ministers must move every 4 years, the pastorates in Maple Creek, SK. Lacombe, and Grace, Edmonton followed. Two sons, Baden and Bray, were born in Olds, two daughters in Maple Creek, Helen and Muriel. Sadly, Helen died of pneumonia a year later. In Edmonton, Ruth and Dwight were added to the family. In 1913, Thomas was elected president of the conference on the first ballot.

In 1914, WW1 broke out. Thomas opposed any recruitment in his congregation but observed, "Our churches were cleaned of young men." The next year Alberta went 'dry' but he grieved that people quickly found ways to circumvent or ignore the law.

"One morning about 2 o'clock in the month of April, 1918, the phone rang and it was "The Albertan" calling. "Are you Rev. Thos. Powell of Scarboro Ave. Methodist Church?" I answered, "That is who I am." The caller continued, "The Mission Board meeting in Toronto has just appointed you as Superintendent of Missions for Southern Alberta. What have you to say?" It came as a complete surprise and I could not say much. A wire came in the A.M. telling me what had been done, and would I accept – to do some work in May and start full time July 1st. After much thought and prayer, my wife and I decided that as it was the call of God, I should accept."

The area that he covered stretched from Calgary to the Peace River. In his care were 120 mission fields, including 25 student ones, and the residential schools under the Methodist (after 1925, the United) Church. In 1928, St. Stephen's College in Edmonton conferred on him an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Thomas was re-elected president of conference in 1936, officiating at the ordination of his son Dwight. He made headlines in the Edmonton Journal by inviting the men to remove their jackets for the sessions of conference. A description of his work is contained in the tribute from Stettler Presbytery on his retirement in 1942.

"His deep appreciation of the difficulties encountered by the workers on our Home Mission fields and his intense interest in the Rural Work of the province has endeared him to all who are associated in this service. They have always found him a genuine friend and a willing helper. His understanding of the problems and of the needs of the church in general, has enabled him to give to us, as to the other presbyteries of our Conference, the benefit of his wise judgment in arriving at important decisions; and his genial personality has enriched the fellowship of our gatherings, as it has made him a welcome visitor to our homes."

After his retirement, Thomas and Annie continued to reside in Calgary, where he still did supply preaching and other activities for a while.

At her death in 1947, Annie Powell was cited for her hospitality, painting, service in the Women's Missionary Society and Red Cross. From a tribute by Betty Kemp: "She truly radiated the spirit of Christian love, ever doing her part. God gave her great gifts and she used them generously in his service" In 1949, having lost his wife and on the verge of losing his daughter, Muriel, according to his son, Dwight, Thomas died of a broken heart. Tributes poured in, honouring the contribution Dr Powell had made to his church, family and wider communities. He did not know in this life that his son Dwight would pick up the work of Superintendent of Home Missions that he had done so well.



Annie and Thos. at Gull Lake

The Rev. Dr. C. DWIGHT POWELL, B.A., B.D., D.D. 1912-2005

By Rev. Tom Powell and abridged by Rev. Helen Reid

Charles Dwight Powell was born on January 21, 1912 in Edmonton AB, fifth of six children of the Rev. Dr. Thomas and Annie Powell. Most of Dwight's childhood was spent in Calgary. He was a graduate of the Calgary Normal School, the University of Alberta and St. Stephen's United Church College. The year that Dwight graduated from St. Stephen's College there was one other graduate, Mani Heuer. They had to split the first prize for the highest marks, with Mani receiving the $50.00 and Dwight the gold medal. In later years, Dwight would often tease Mani by showing him the gold medal and asking him where was his $50.00.



The Rev. C. Dwight Powell

President of the Alberta Conference June 1955

Dwight was ordained by Alberta Conference of The United Church of Canada on May 29, 1936 while his father, Thomas Powell, was the President of Conference. St. Stephen's College awarded Dwight an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree in 1964.

Dwight spent his entire ministry in his beloved Alberta, serving the following Pastoral Charges: Mountain Park (Mountain Park, Cadomin & Luscar) 1936 - 1939, Morningside 1939 - 1940, Acme 1940 - 1944, Calgary (St. Paul's) 1944 - 1948, Nanton 1948 - 1957 and 1973 - 1976, and after his retirement, weekend supply at Banff 1976 - 1978. In 1957, Dwight was appointed the Superintendent of Home Missions for Central and Northern Alberta, including the Yukon and Northwest Territories, a position he held until 1973. In those years, the work of the Superintendent included, among many other things, supervising theological students on their summer mission fields and regular visitation of Presbyteries, both of which were highlights for him. Dwight will be remembered by many of his students and others within the church as "one of our wise elders". Concerning Dwight, the Rev. Lynn Maki, Executive Secretary of Alberta and Northwest Conference states: "Dwight was such a giant of a man in terms of his humility and devotion to a life-long ministry that was so richly life-giving to generations in the church. He taught many of us a great many things about what is really important in ministry."

On August 15, 1940, Dwight married Mary Yelland of Cadomin and they were blessed with three children: Marilyn, Tom and Evelyn. The Powell family enjoyed each and every community in which they lived and made many life-long friends along the way.

The Rev. Dr. Phil Cline, former General Secretary of the General Council says: "Dwight was Superintendent of Home Missions during the great expansion years of our church and was thus involved in countless new church development projects as well as the regular oversight of existing missions and of course the Summer Student Mission fields. He did his work conscientiously and always with a pastor's heart. As part of his duties, he attended every Presbytery meeting within his area of responsibility, where he was seen as the authority on church procedure, the Manual, pastoral relations and could also be counted on to play the piano or organ for the Presbytery worship. Before the days of Personnel Officers, he was indeed a pastor to pastors and many a time could be seen during a lull in Presbytery business conversing with some minister or lay person on particular problems of the time.

He took a keen interest in the work of the church at the Presbytery level and listened carefully to everything being said, except occasionally in the fall when, while looking intent and interested in the current proceedings, he was caught more than once listening to the broadcast of the World Series on his transistor radio. While employed by the National Church, Dwight was a loyal Westerner, and was not hesitant to speak up for his home country in the halls of the wider church."

Dr. Cline reminisces further, "On a personal level, I came to value Dwight as a confidant, as a mentor and as a friend. When I was appointed Executive Secretary of what was then Alberta Conference, a job which I among others felt should have gone to Dwight, no one could have been more gracious and supportive than Dwight himself. I sought out Dwight's wisdom and advice on a number of occasions and he never failed to respond with his best."

Again, quoting from Rev. Lynn Maki: "Dwight never stopped 'being a minister' and mentored and offered wise counsel to many who have followed in his steps. He always attended the meetings of his Presbytery and I recall last meeting him during a visit by then Moderator, Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy in the Fall of 2002. He said his goal was to attend every meeting of the Conference until he reached 100. He very nearly reached that goal."

Dwight was a devoted leader in the Church, locally, provincially and nationally, including many terms as Secretary of various Presbyteries, Secretary of Alberta Conference for 9 consecutive terms, President of Alberta Conference, Commissioner to General Council at least 10 times and was the Recording Secretary of the General Council for some of these terms. For over 50 years Dwight was responsible for doing the lettering in old-English style on the various certificates and Bibles presented, usually for retiring ministers and for new ordinands. His son, Tom, has one such Bible. Dwight also holds the distinction of attending at least 60 consecutive meetings of Alberta Conference. He aspired to become the oldest minister in Alberta, and maybe even in Canada, but that is a record which may have eluded him.

Dwight served on the Nanton Town Council for three terms, one as councillor and two as mayor. He was an active member of other community groups often serving as chaplain.

Dwight had a great appreciation for fine music and he loved to sing whether it was in church or around a roaring bonfire. In his retirement, he maintained his interest in astronomy, photography, model railroads and the derivation of many English words. Even as his death drew near, Dwight's mind was sharp and he loved to keep up to date. The day the emergency medical technicians were loading him into the ambulance for that last ride to the hospital in High River he asked several times for his family to be sure to bring the most recent issue of The Nanton News and that day's edition of the Calgary Herald.

The message Dwight always preached, taught and lived was one of joy. He believed that we were on earth to discover the beauty and joy of each new day, each new relationship, each new experience.

Concerning his own death, he always said that he was not afraid of dying. He had complete confidence that God had all of those details well in hand. It was just that he was having too much fun living each day to its fullest and he did not want to say 'good-bye' to those whom he loved.

In conclusion, as the Rev. Lynn Maki said: "Dwight Powell's life was exemplary and one that is richly and abundantly celebrated."

Post script by Helen Reid: I was one of Dwight's students while working for Trinity UC in Calgary in 1961 and serving Ministik Cooking Lake student mission field in 1965. I remember him as a gentle and supportive supervisor, very pastoral to a fledgling in ministry far from home. When my husband and I came to the conference in 1983, I remember Dwight patiently explaining to the court- every year- the rationale for the one transferable ballot for President of Conference and others decisions. His wife, Mary; provided welcome hospitality to me and many others. She and I continued to correspond even after Dwight's death. They were faithful servants of the church of Jesus Christ in this conference.

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