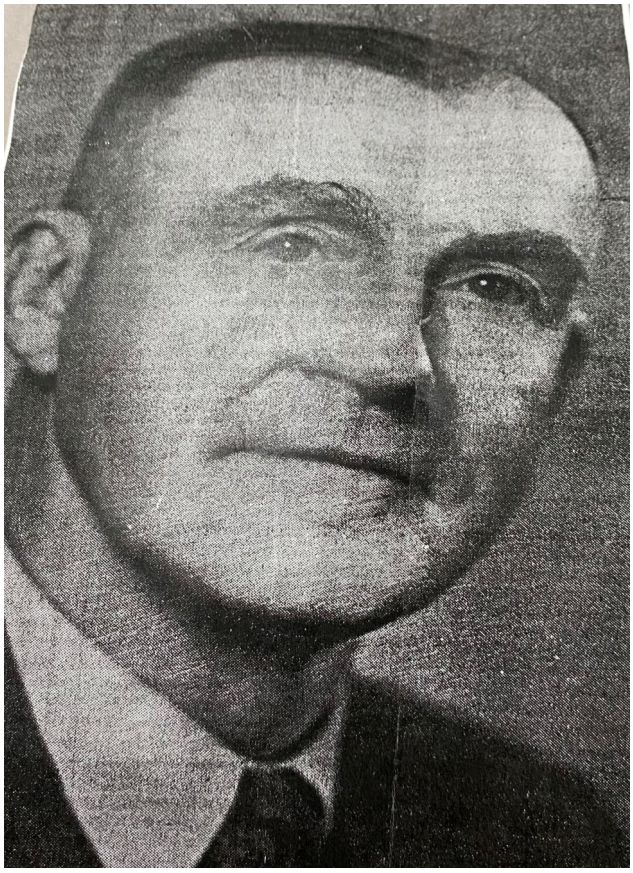
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Dedicated to Preserving Our Religious Heritage

Journal

United Church of Canada Historical Society

August 2021



George Bremner McKillop

In This Edition:

George Bremner McKillop —New Outlook—Waskatenau United Church—
And More

It is with a heart filled with gratitude as I write these words of greeting from Chinook Winds Region to be included in this Historical Journal.

With this publication, we find ourselves, hopefully, near the end of a global pandemic that has severely restricted our abilities to travel and to meet face-to-face with family, friends and colleagues. Over this past year and more, meetings have been done virtually. We have relied heavily on technology to keep us connected. And while email and instant messaging allows us to communicate quickly, I have noticed that it has become more difficult, in recent years, to keep good track of correspondence, records of meetings and supporting resources for our various organizations. No longer does the 'big binder' of minutes and reports get transferred from Chair to Chair of committees or working groups. At best, these documents can be found on someone's computer. At worst, they are lost to the delete button or trash file.

When the documents generated within our beloved communities of faith and wider church groups and organizations are not cataloged and/or sent to the archives, we are at risk of losing our history. We are at risk of losing a sense of how our identity as the United Church of Canada has been shaped and developed.

Because of the dedicated and faithful work of the Historical Society's Board and editor and the various contributors to this Historical Journal, the history of the United Church of Canada, here in Alberta, is being carefully kept. Our Region is blessed to have such a resource available for us to access.

There is a shelf in library of the community of faith that I serve, that holds many of the past volumes of the Historical Journal. As I flip through the pages of different volumes, I find myself in awe of the people and events and societies that have been commemorated in their pages. We truly stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us and built up the church as we know it today. It may not be a perfect history, but it is our story. And it is for us to continue to build upon. Knowing where we came from will help us to shape where we are going.

Much thanks and appreciation to everyone involved in the keeping of our history.

Vicki McPhee

Presiding Officer

Chinook Winds Region

Message from the Chair

"Unprecedented", how often have we heard or read this over the past year? We have been living in the midst of history whether we have wanted to or not. Some history is more recognizable in its making than at other times. Pandemic, unmarked graves at former residential school sites, and a new sense of how far we still have to travel together toward reconciliation after the continued revelation of uncomfortable and startling truths!

Writing down our history so people can receive it and interpret it and try to understand what we have done and possibly our purposes for doing so continues to be important. Within this volume history will be found. How people sought to be faithful and how they found ways to survive and even thrive will be related. In the reading of what is printed here, may you recognize what was "unprecedented" in former times, what has signs of reconciliation, or reflections of persons who found their way through as survivors in their day and age.

-Don Koots

Letter from the Editor

Thank you once again to the collection of articles I have received for this year's journal. 2021 has been...interesting to say the least. From discussions of truth and reconciliation, the pandemic, and economic strife, it can be hard to find any bright spots this year. However, we once again must look to the past to avoid the mistakes that can carry into the future.

The truths of marginalized people can often be uncomfortable, but one I think we all need to listen to.

-Katy Jones

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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:

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Editor: Katy Jones

Over the last couple of years, the Historical Society has had two wonderful members join us. We have asked both Heather Miller and Willie Korendyk to introduce themselves and their experiences with the church.

Heather Miller is pleased to be a new member of the board. Heather has been a member of the United Church of Canada since childhood and her family centred its life around activities at Westminister United in west Edmonton. When Heather was 11 and her sister Eleanor was 15, her father answered a call to serve God and began a lay ministry in Forestburg, dividing his time between attending St. Stephen's College and working a three-point pastoral charge. Rev. Frank G. Andrews was ordained in Lethbridge in 1959, and along with his wife Grace, began 30 years of service to the Alberta Presbytery at several locations through out the province before moving to Summerland BC where he served three years at Naramata United Church before retiring. (Do ministers every really retire?) Heather and her family of three daughters and six grandchildren all live in Edmonton and Heather presently attends St. Andrew's United in Edmonton, where she has been active in the church in several capacities, including filling in for Rev. Dr. Geoff Wilfong-Pritchard by conducting the Sunday morning service when he must be away. Heather retired after a career in journalism and administrative work and is still active in the community. She keeps busy with music-related activities including teaching, performing in retirement homes with her classical guitar and sharing songs from her "Oldie Goldies" songbook with the residents, and participating in the live music scene in Edmonton.

I was born Willemytje (Willie) Korendyk in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

My parents immigrated to Canada in the early 1950's with many other Dutch immigrants to seek a better life. The trip took nearly 15 days by boat and train. We arrived in Edmonton the beginning of February 1952 to an Edmonton winter.

My parents came from strong Dutch Protestant families and that faith helped them through some difficult early years. In 1960, we settled in the Winterburn area west of Edmonton and l have been attending Winterburn United Church since the early 1970's after finishing a nursing program and some early travelling.

At Winterburn, I have taught Sunday School, been involved with the U.C.W and am presently a co-chair of the Church Board. I did think of joining the choir but as I am tone deaf thought better of it!

One of my interests is history. As I love to travel and have had the opportunity to visit countries in both Western and Eastern Europe, I have always been amazed and in awe of the buildings, especially the churches, that have survived throughout the centuries. The church in the small town just northeast of Rotterdam where we lived before, we came to Canada was built in the early 16th century. I was baptized there, and the church is still providing worship services today.

I feel that it is important to learn about the past and keep it alive for future generations so that they know what came before them.

I am pleased to be on the Journal Board and hope to contribute what I can to help keep the past alive.

WASKATENAU UNITED CHURCH

1920 – 2020

By Earla Wagar

In 2020, Waskatenau United Church marked 100 years of service. Celebration was limited by the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, its history is worth noting.

It is difficult to tell the story of Waskatenau United Church without a brief history lesson. The area now known as "Waskatenau"—pronounced "wə-SET-nə" from a Cree word meaning "opening in the bank"—is situated on what was for many years an important overland trading route along the north bank of the North Saskatchewan River, linking Fort Garry (Winnipeg) with Fort Edmonton. In 1862, Methodist missionary Rev. Thomas Woolsey, with the help of John McDougall, established a mission and school. The following year, Rev. George McDougall took over the mission and a year later, the Hudson Bay Company set up its Fort Victoria trading post. In 1900, Methodist medical missionary Rev. Dr Charles Lawford, arrived and set up his medical practice, bringing with him a large heart, a passionate desire to help anyone who needed it, and several copies of the Gospels in Cree.

Around 1904, homesteaders from Europe, the British Isles and Eastern Canada began arriving in the Pine Creek and Clodford areas in search of land and opportunity. Throughout, the Methodist Mission continued to send its missionaries into the newly settled communities to lead worship and conduct weddings, funerals and baptisms whether in local homes, local shops or even on the upper floor of the local pool hall. On special occasions, weather and farm duties permitting, pioneer families would travel to the Methodist church (the original settlement had been renamed Pakan) which is now part of the Victoria Settlement Provincial Historic Site and is still used occasionally for services.

Within a few years, the Methodist congregation had grown to the point that the "Pine Creek Methodist Church" was officially constituted. By August 1920, the young congregation decided it was time for a building of their own in the village of Waskatenau. The basement was to serve as living quarters for its first resident minister, Rev. T Harden. With the exception of a new front entrance, built in 1962, and many interior improvements (including installation of running water and a natural gas furnace) the building remains physically unchanged to this day. The wood stove originally used by Rev. Harden still sits in the basement—although long unused! A manse was built in 1929.

The first service of worship was held there Sunday, 31 October 1920. The first social and fund-raising tradition began the very next evening! A "Fowl Supper" was held in the church basement on All Saints' Day 1920, a tradition that would last for the next eighty years.

The next step after organising worship was to set up a Sunday School for the whole community; all children were welcome. Like services of worship, the Sunday School met in people's homes until the church was built. The two highlights of the Sunday School year were the annual Church Picnic, held on a local farm after spring work was finished; and, of course, the annual "Christmas Concert"—the grand climax of the year! Sunday School was the "footprints in the sand" for many of the community's youth, laying a foundation for life that carried them into adulthood.

The next step after organising worship was to set up a Sunday School for the whole community; all children were welcome. Like services of worship, the Sunday School met in people's homes until the church was built. The two highlights of the Sunday School year were the annual Church Picnic, held on a local farm after spring work was finished; and, of course, the annual "Christmas Concert"—the grand climax of the year!

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The first women's group, the "Ladies Aid," had been established by 1912. During World War I, they formed a Red Cross Society to raise money for the war effort and provide needed care packages for family members serving overseas. They did what they knew best; their major fund-raiser was the creation of the now-famous "Red Cross Quilt". For 25¢, anyone could have their signature embroidered into this quilt. Even in such a small community, three hundred signatures were obtained immediately, to which were added the signatures of twenty-eight family members and friends serving in the Armed Forces. The quilt is now displayed at the Royal Alberta Museum in Edmonton.

In 1962, a UCW group was formed as the successor to the church's long-serving "Woman's Missionary Society" (WMS), a world mission-oriented service and study group that supported active missionaries around the world, and "Woman's Association" (WA), which focussed on work in the local church and community. In the early years, the work of these groups, and of the UCW group that followed them, went largely unrecorded—just doing what needed to be done, spiritually, financially, and socially.

"Doing what needed to be done" is precisely what these women did! They were the church's backbone. They visited the sick, supported those who needed physical or spiritual assistance, and made sure that whatever they did was offered to the community in a spirit of hope, faith and joy. They organised fund-raising functions around food and visiting. The "UCW Easter Tea" was a welcome harbinger of spring, when the community could gather to share tea, tiny sandwiches, fancy deserts and local news. Through the UCW "Flower Fund." anyone in the community who experienced an illness or loss, or who was celebrating a joyful event—whether they were members of the church or not—received a visit with a card, flowers, or an appropriate gift. Over the decades, thousands of such gifts were distributed, providing an outreach to the community far out of proportion to the size of the church.

While they generated funds to maintain their local church, the women's group also had initiatives to support the outreach of the wider Church, sponsoring orphans in Africa and South America and raising money to support the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. It should also be noted that, for several years in the 1950's and 1960's, the *men* of the church—not wanting to be outdone—organised a "Bean Supper" every February. This mid-winter tradition only ended when the church basement became too small for the event.

In the fall of 1921, the first CGIT program was launched with a representative from the Alberta Methodist CGIT performing the Initiation. The CGIT group continued until 1965, when declining numbers forced it to disband. Over the years, the church also served as home to other community groups, including a Boy Scout Troop and the local Masonic Lodge. Members of the congregation were also instrumental in founding the local historical society, "The Victoria Home Guard", and continue to support the activities of the Waskatenau Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion—the latter particularly poignant as we recall a former member of the Sunday School and church who lost his life in Afghanistan.

The Young People's Society was a very strong part of the Waskatenau congregation providing a wonderful platform for developing and challenging minds and lives. The purpose of the organization was "to lead young people into Christian fellowship and active church membership and to help each to know, love and serve God as revealed in Jesus Christ". The group held regular meetings, often with an invited guest speaker, and led social activities which are remembered fondly by former members to this day.

They hosted debates, plays and concerts with groups from Smoky Lake, Warspite and Lamont, and raised money for various local projects, including paying for wiring in the basement in Warspite United Church. The Young People regularly volunteered for spring cleaning duties at local churches.

Music was an important part of any Methodist service of worship, and Waskatenau was no exception. The Choir began its ministry of music on the first day of worship in the new building, and continued to enhance services for the next ninety years—forty of them under the leadership of its first director, Frank Scott. At any point in its history, this little church could number at least two—and often three or four—trained pianists or organists who would happily play for worship.

The inauguration of the United Church of Canada in 1925 had little impact on the congregation of the Waskatenau church. Although there were structural changes in the wider church—and a change of name—the congregation had always been broadly ecumenical (and even, at times, interfaith), and simply continued as it had always had, serving and caring for all members of the rural community.

From 1929 until 1970, the manse was a beehive of activity (and regular church meetings) as the church and community were served by a succession of clergy but times were changing. By 1970, the population of the community had begun to decline, and it became more difficult to afford full-time, resident ministry. Eventually, the manse was sold and the church returned to its Methodist roots of relying on lay preachers. For several years, Sunday Supply was sent out week by week from Edmonton. In March 1982, Earle Sharam, then a student from St Stephen's College, took over weekly worship leadership until June 1989, when he left to begin doctoral studies in theology at Oxford. After a brief period during which Rev. Bob Wallace provided worship leadership (and delightful music), Rev. Cathy Lepard served until 1994. That same autumn, however, like a swallow returning to Capistrano, Earle Sharam—now a "DPhil(Oxon)"—returned and has led worship most Sundays, acquiring the distinction of having been part of the Waskatenau community for a third of the church's life. In 1998, Waskatenau's sister church in Radway closed. However, when Smoky Lake United Church was seeking Sunday supply, Waskatenau's worship schedule was changed to allow Dr Sharam to lead worship in both churches each Sunday morning thus re-uniting two of the faith communities that had been been part of the same Methodist mission almost a century earlier!

The last quarter-century of the life of our church has had its highs and lows. Sunday School has had as many as fifteen children and as few as two. The choir which contributed joyfully to weekly worship for ninety years was gradually reduced to singing at Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, and finally fell silent. Christmas Eve and Easter services have moved from standing room only to half-filled pews. As the congregation ages and the population of the area declines, our little church is experiencing the same dynamics as most rural Alberta communities. However, again like most rural Alberta communities, we are strong at heart and determined to persevere!

After serving many generations of families in the area, Waskatenau United Church is celebrating its one hundredth birthday. Over the past century, the walls of our beautiful little church have embraced the joy of weddings, baptisms and celebrations; and the pain of loss and death. They have held the infectious laughter of children and the sombre reflections of Good Friday. Always they have heard music. Always they have offered a place of warmth and welcome for the whole community. The church stands on the Main Street of a tiny village, a symbol of the large hearts and deep faith of its community present, past and future.

The author would like to acknowledge with thanks the assistance of Sharon Sumner and Earl Sharam in the preparation of this article.

END OF AN ERA, A NEW BEGINNING

By Robert MacDonald

At the end of May 2021, Renfrew United Church disbanded, ending sixty-one years as a congregation serving the community, and a new chapter began. The story of Renfrew was summarised in an article in the 2006 edition of the Journal. Briefly, it was created in April 1955 (a charter service was in September), as a result pf the post-war economic and population growth of Calgary, along with a renewed interest in church activities. Initially meeting in Renfrew Public School, when a lot was available nearby and with construction, the congregation met in the basement (dedicated in the spring of 1957) until an upper portion was completed and dedicated in July 1959. Meanwhile membership, attendance, and involvement in groups such as Sunday School, choir, Women's Association (later United Church Women), cubs, scouts, and Canadian Girls in Training, grew steadily at this time and afterwards. It reached a peak in the late 1970s when the mortgage was burned. By the 1980s, it had plateaued and slowly declined as demographic change in the neighbourhood occurred--as young families moved to the new suburbs, original residents aged or moved away. And there was less interest in society as a whole for church involvement. Finances remained heathy until the early years of the Twenty-first Century, though books were balanced by drawing on reserves.

During the second decade of the century, attendance dropped considerably, and finances worsened, despite various fund-raising efforts. It became more difficult to maintain and repair an older building. The Board began to look at options, including closure, however members were eager to continue despite the odds. By 2017, discussions were being held, initially with a local real estate developer and then through Presbytery Property and Administration Commission, to examine possibilities of redevelopment of the site, combining residences and a space for the church. Redevelopment of properties just north on Sixteenth Avenue suggested potential regrowth. Presbytery supported the idea of redevelopment, assisted by a consultant. Because of limited personal resources to manage a redevelopment, in November 2018, on advice, the Board and then the Trustees agreed to turn the title to the land (and building) to the Alberta Land Trust, an Edmonton-based group of United Church people who had not only a better ability to manage a redevelopment but also to secure funding that a congregation could not. This transfer was completed in 2019. Renfrew's contribution to the project would be the value of the land. In May 2019, after seventeen years leading Renfrew, Pastor Gary Grottenberg ended his service, for a variety of reasons, to seek a change in pastoral relations. For the remainder of 2019 and the first couple of months of 2020, services were led by a rotation of five lay members (following a tradition when the minister was on leave). Church services continued in the building until the end of October 2019, when the congregation was asked to vacate it in the expectation of an impending demolition and redevelopment.

Search for an alternative site for worship was done, with early hopes dashed until an arrangement was made with a local Community Association--with worship space on Sunday and a small storage area for material used in services. In November 2019, the church building was decommissioned. In the meantime. a committee co-ordinated the storing of furniture and such for future use in the anticipated worship space in the new building, some members storing things in garages and in houses, some material to Archives, and files not appropriate for Archives shredded. A sale of excess furniture and kitchen equipment was held in the late summer and in October 2019. Later in 2021 the remaining items were donated to a Charter School, a women's support group, another United Church and Habitat for Humanity's Restore. After decommissioning volunteers continued to spend time in the building, looking after the property including snow removal and the lawn, to demonstrate it had not been abandoned.

It was determined by the Region that to continue, Renfrew needed to call a part-time minister and the Rev. Danah Cox was secured by March 2020, serving to the end of December 2020. Almost immediately the pandemic lockdown occurred, eliminating access to the Community Association building and restricting Rev. Cox's interaction with the congregation, as services were by remote

remote broadcast (after adjustments to the new medium). As well his salary drained reserves, especially as lack of in-person services meant very little income in the form of offerings (a few did contribute). Pandemic loans failed to halt the decline though some of the utility costs were borne by the Land Trust. By the end of 2020, the question remained as to whether the congregation could continue. A survey of those still attending was done, with options: continuing as a congregation which required a robust functioning Board; amalgamation with another congregation which would require trust; or disbanding as a congregation but becoming a Community of Faith under The Manual, with services and some sort of pastoral care or possible caring for each other but no tax receipts for donations as no charity number. Later it was suggested that possible donations might be made through the Region pending such an arrangement.

The latter option was the favoured one, and plans were made for this. Later tentative plans for the new building suggest a smaller space for community use, with priority for the church uses.

Though no longer with a Renfrew congregation, the United Church still will retain a presence and with the redevelopment north of Sixteenth Avenue and that in Renfrew and nearby communities, a congregation could re-emerge. During the remaining time as a congregation and as a Community of Faith, services by the laity continue and are broadcast on Facebook.

The story of Renfrew is one of a legacy of faith, service, and hope.

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The ANWC Historical Society Journal is the only journal of its kind in Canada. Each year, we explore the stories and experiences that have been part of the rich history of the United Church in Alberta. Would you like to contribute to this important work? Then please consider buying a membership and subscription to our journal. Simply fill out the handy form on the other page and send it with a cheque to the address. Thank you very much.

A MAN OF MANY SEASONS: GEORGE BREMNER MCKILLOP

By Rev. Austin Fennell

The material for this biography as been drawn from an article written by his wife (Davina McKillop), the archives of Southminster United Church, and the "Lethbridge Herald."

One of eight children, George Bremner McKillop was born in Lethbridge October 25, 1896. His parents were the Rev. Charles McKillop of Knox Presbyterian Church and his wife, Elizabeth. He attended Central School Central Highschool, Bowman Manual Training School and Hamilton High School. He delivered papers for the *Lethbridge News*, *Lethbridge Herald*, and for a time he was a pressman for the Herald.

He joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force October 25, 1897. After High School, he went to the YMCA as a physical Education Instructor. He and Davina Sang were married in 1925, for 48 years. They had one daughter. Dorothy Boulton.

He enlisted in World War I as a private in May 1918 in the 78th Depot Battery, and when in England was transferred to the 2nd Tank Battalion. Before that he took military courses at the Sarcee military camp. He was discharged In January 1918. Later, in 1921, George was promoted to Lieut. He received the King George V medal in 1935 for his cadet work.



PRESENTATIONS, PERSONAL TRIBUTES TO LEADER

—Staff Photos; Herald Engraving.

High tribute was paid to Mr. and Mrs. George McKillop in Southminster Church Friday evening as members of the congregation, friends and Sunday school children gathered to celebrate "George McKillop Night" in honor of Mr. McKillop, who was retiring after 35 years of service to the church. In the picture at the left can be seen Patricia and Carol McDowell as they presented Mrs. McKillop with two bouquets of red roses, on behalf of the congregation. G. L. "Linc" Coward, chairman of the program, is seen holding the microphone for the young admirers. Partly obscured by the bouquets of roses is Mrs. Edna Holmes, who also paid tribute to Mr. and Mrs. McKillop in a speech. At right can be seen some of the many children as they gathered around Mr. McKillop following the program to wish him well. He is seated in a chair which was presented to him by Chris Farstad on behalf of the congregation.

Article from the Lethbridge Herald

At the end of the war, he worked in Lethbridge for Consumers Hardware. Enlisting again in WWII, he was made Captain in 1944, and Major in 1946.

Back in civilian life, the Lethbridge public-school board appointed "Kiltie" to be supervisor of physical education, a position he held for 42 years. He took students through basketball, and wrestling championships. Annually, he presented scholarships to deserving students. A school on 5th Ave. No, was named after him in 1956. For 10 years, he was an St. John's Ambulance instructor.

Very athletic himself, he was a provincial wrestling champion, and won yearly track meets and curling trophies. He led the Boys' Club in the basement of the Methodist church on Third Avenue, as well as being the youth leader at Knox Presbyterian church. He told Ron Watmough in an interview with the *Lethbridge Herald* in Feb. 1962, "I can remember on the days before the 'Y' when we met as a sort of boys' club in the basement of the Methodist Church."

George was active in the YMCA as a Trail Ranger leader, and a Scoutmaster.

With others he founded the Galt Museum and for 10 years was its curator. An Elder at Southminister United Church, he undertook to be a Sunday School teacher in 1919 and eventually became the Superintendent of the Sunday School, a service he gave for 35 or more years.

George chaired the Board of the Canyon Church Camp in Waterton. In the same interview with Ron Watmough, he said, "I remember when Kootenai Brown was speaker on a night at camp in Waterton Lakes."

He organized church picnics for the Sunday School , as well as Christmas Concerts.

Three play fests were organized by George which involved all the children in the schools. 6000 students were put into athletic demonstrations and displays.

He instructed as many 6500 young men in cadet work for 25 years, winning the Tranweizer Shield for the best Cadet program, and with the Cadets was chosen to join the Calgary parade for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II.

George was an honorary member of the Rotary Club, winning the yearly basket ball tournament for the Collegiate. In 1950, he was crowned King of Recreation .

The Kinsmen at one of their dinners named him in Sportsman of the Year on January 25, 1958.

George chaired the Civic Playground Association, and played an important a part in the development of the Civic Ice Centre.

He was a prime mover for the developing the gym hall at Southminster with its showers, change rooms and washrooms at the west end of the basement, at a time when there were 74 different groups in the church.

Upon his death, George was posthumously named by the Pemmican Club and to the Sports Hall of Fame.

Among his military awards were the Military Cross in 1914, the Military Star. the British War medal, and the Victoria medal

REVEREND GERRIT (JERRY) de VRIES

November 1929 - February 2019

By Neville Smith and The Family of Rev, de Vries

It was in the late 1980's that I first met Jerry. He was the minister of the Ebenezer United Church in Edmonton and I was serving in the Stony Plain Pastoral Charge (Stony Plain and Mewassin congregations.) Both of us were of Dutch background; he from the Netherlands and I from the Netherlands Antilles. We had a few "Exchange Sundays," when we and our Church choirs would visit each other. I came to know Jerry as a sincere, compassionate, joyful person; a Pastor "Par Excellence," and a "down to earth," human being. His musical abilities were evident and his tenor voice was exceptional. His 48 years of Ministry as a United Church of Canada minister inspired numerous people of the church, community, and beyond.



Gerrit de Vries

The following information came from Rita Visser, on behalf of her mom Alison, siblings and the family in general:

" Dad was born in the little town of Niezijl in the Northern part of Holland on November 11, 1929. He grew up on the farm with his parents and had close ties with extended family, telling stories of his grandparents and especially about his cousin Gerrit, who co-incidentally had the same name. That bond remained strong throughout their lives despite distance and hardships. They passed away within four months of each other. Dad eventually left the farm and went to work as a butcher in a mental institution in "Wagenborgen." There he met his wife to be Alison, a nursing student. "He was smitten" and began a love affair that lasted over 70 years. Not long after getting engaged to my mom Alison, he was forced to join the Dutch army to fulfill his military commitment to his country, leaving his fiancée behind, while he served in Indonesia for 2 long years.

In June of 1951, they were married. By October 1951, they had packed all they owned and set sail for a news life in Canada. They arrived in Edmonton to a job and a home. Dad worked on a farm milking the cows and doing general farm labor. Mom spent many hours in the barn between the cows. Dad then worked in various jobs in sales: Canada Dry, delivering bread and freezers, for Sears, among others. Through all this, they maintained their strong ties to the Church, having joined "Ebenezer United Church," led by Rev. Dr. William Vandermeer. Reverend Vandermeer became a special friend and mentor, who was about to change Dad's life forever. He raised the question whether Dad would consider studying for the Ministry. Dad, having had his education in a foreign country, began by upgrading to Canadian college admission standards. Dad liked music and singing. In the 1950's he led four choirs, including one known as "Laudamus." He also led a Brass Band at Beverly.

In the meantime, mom and dad were adding to their family - first Rita, then twins Susan and Gordon, then twins Ronald and Donald. They also began taking in foster babies. David, one of those babies, was adopted.

Dad was highly active in the Ebenezer United Church and with the deteriorating health of Reverend Vandermeer, even stepped into the pulpit

sometimes. Rev. William Vandermeer passed away in the spring of 1962. In that same year, Dad was accepted as a student at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon. He was also a student minister of the six-point charge of "Big Valley."

Reverend Gerrit de Vries was at last ordained into the United Church of Canada ministry in March 1970 with a formal ceremony at the Stettler United Church. Three months later, he and family moved to Rimbey United Church for the next 4 years, raising membership to the level where the congregation was able to "Burn the Mortgage." From there he moved the family back to Edmonton, where he served the Pleasantview United Church. In the winter of 1980, he lost his beloved son David, ten days later he received news that his father had passed away in Holland and an aunt had died the day before. I can still see him sitting in his chair, tears rolling down his face, asking "How much more does God think I can handle!" Those bad days challenged the focus of his ministry, and he began holding "grief seminars" and was frequently asked to handle the "really tough funerals" by the Funeral Directors in the city.

After many years, he returned to Ebenezer United Church, where he served until his "First" retirement at the age of 62. At that Retirement service, I was asked to characterize his ministry. My reply was: "Simple, personal, and loving.": One week after he "retired," he became part-time minister for the five-point Pastoral Charge of Sangudo. Mayerthorpe, Wabamun, Alberta Beach and Onoway for 2 years.

He then became a part-time minister of Winterburn United Church for several years. He retired "again" at the age of 83 after 48 years of dedicated service to the United Church of Canada. His health was deteriorating and so he decided to return to Rimbey in 2016 to be closer to family. Mom and Dad bought a home in Rimbey. One day, he received a very pleasant surprise from his old Alma Mater St. Andrew's Theological College in Saskatoon. Old records had been found, which indicated that his credits from St. Stephen's Theological College had not been factored in his studies. He had earned his master's degree in theological studies. (MTS)

Dad loved nature hunting, fishing, and he involved his entire family in this, including some of his grandsons and even a great grandson - turning all into accomplished butchers and the girls into meat packers, and to make home-made sausages. He also developed a flair for making his own wine.

In his final months, Dad became totally dependent on Mom but never failed to thank and praise her for her efforts. He told everyone who would listen how lucky he was to have had her by his side as his wife for 67 years. Though Dad was for the most part a minister, in the end, his greatest love and source of pride was the family he had created with the greatest love of his life, his wife and sweetheart Alison.

He will be forever loved and missed by his wife and sweetheart of 67 years, Alison; his children: Rita (Mike) Visser, Susan (David) Robinson, Gordon (Karen) de Vries, Ronald (Karen) de Vries, Donald (Fay) de Vries, and Tina (Doug) Wilder; as well as 20 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren (His sister Aly Hoekstra passed away two months after he died). Jerry was predeceased by his son David, his grand-daughter Christine and two sisters."

We give God thanks for the life and ministry of Reverend Gerrit (Jerry) de Vries.

(Neville Smith is a retired United Church minister and a Board member of the United Church Historical Society)

THE LEARNINGS OF MY STUDENT MINISTRY DAYS

By Terry Shillington



Terry Shillington

My journey into ordained ministry within the United Church of Canada, included two "summer mission fields". They would run from early May to the end of August. In my case, I believe they were the summers of 1964 and 1965. (The 1st was at the end of my Bachelor of Arts studies and the 2nd after my first year of theology at St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon.)

I wasn't paid a lot of money, but I thought it was a lot. I was excited to be out in a congregation "being a real minister". I had felt the call to ministry from an early age (before 10 years of age, I am sure). I had grown up in a rural U.C. congregation and thought I knew what a minister should be doing. Both postings were to central Saskatchewan rural communities.

It was exciting and I was delighted to be there. I was 'a farm boy' and thoroughly comfortable with these rural people. The people were generous with my failings and inexperience. They were used to 'teaching' students. If you had asked me what I learned in those two summers, shortly afterwards, I likely would have pointed to preaching and funeral skills learned, work habits and practical learnings. Now as I reminisce almost 60 years later, I can see I learned a whole lot about deep and profound matters. In both cases I had supervising pastors who were good role models and men I liked. And so, I began a learning journey that would last a lifetime.

Lots was going on in the culture around me – in those mid 60s years. The United Church was experiencing some push back over its "new curriculum" and as a student, I received the whole year 1 materials – of the three-year cycle. I didn't know what to do with it but felt very important storing it on my shelves – I t helped immensely in plumping up my meager library. In Saskatchewan at that time, the Prov. NDP government had enacted Medicare. The province was alive with political debate and one of those 2 summers featured a doctor's strike and the resistance movement, KOD (Keep Our Doctors). However, in my world I was preoccupied with trying to figure out my clergy role and mastering the skills I needed to survive each week.

What did I learn from those two summers? To my astonishment, looking back, at least seven areas of insight and learning come to mind.

1) The New Curriculum: I did take some time to explore the armload of books that arrived on this controversial material. I was impressed. I liked the ample helps and materials. No sane person could

use them all in one session, but one was armed with lots of possibilities. I noted how biblical criticism issues were gently but plainly dealt with and it matched my own theological comfort zone. I knew I belonged in this church. I also knew I did not belong with the critics from the biblically more conservative crowd. While I was not a Christian Ed. specialist and would never be, that resource material was helpful in some small ways.

2) Getting over being an introvert: I had grown up in a small, very rural community and never really fit in with the youth of my neighborhood. When we gathered in a small group after church, they talked about cars, engines and machinery. It seemed, most of them had vast knowledge and wisdom on these matters. On the other hand, I listened to this, barely able to suppress my yawns. I was an omnivorous reader. Living 25 Mi. From Moose Jaw, I had read out the entire youth section of the city library before I turned 13. In my two summer mission fields, I grew from being quiet and introspective, to having some confidence at walking into a strange home, introducing myself and making conversation. (Growing up with an older brother who was an enthusiastic farmer and reluctant student, I had already learned not to drop huge, complicated words into an ordinary discussion.)

I found I could enjoy these pastoral visits summer students were expected to make. I enjoyed dropping in at mealtime and engaging in whatever they were discussing. I could handle the odd critical or sceptical parishioner. I found people were fascinating, and all were different. I was moving from being an extreme introvert to dwelling halfway between introvert and extrovert territory I suspect I occupy to this day.

3) Defining myself as worship leader: I did grow in preaching skills, planning worship themes and doing a few funerals. But more profoundly, I was beginning to define what kind of a preacher I was. I had already heard lots of preachers in my home parish assessed by my parents and neighbors – sometimes quite brutally. I knew they liked a worship leader who spoke "plain ordinary English" and who didn't try to impress them with his reading and edified ways. In secular terms I was beginning to distill what my "brand" would be. Theologically, I was beginning to sort out my own call to ministry, what my gifts were, and what kind of a pastor and worship leader I was called to be. It was an exciting time, and a season in which I grew in confidence.

4) My conflict resolution style: I also had my first experience with conflict –as a pastor. It would not be my last. And it was probably the one most poorly handled. Our church school was using a Sunday School teacher whose theology really did not fit the United Church ethos, although the community itself didn't see much wrong with her. I "let her go" part way through the season and experienced the full wrath of her anger. She made sure the whole congregation got the message.

There was so much about that experience that I took with me going forward. One of the elders gave me some constructive criticism. I spent some time pondering how I might have handled it. Eventually the storm died down, and life went on. But this would start me on a journey of reflection about conflict within congregations. I was hungry to learn and reflect more about this, when I returned to theology in the fall.

Looking back from my vantage point, almost 60 years later, I can see this was a lifelong journey of learning. I would take more courses and workshops on conflict resolution. I found in time, it was a strength of my ministry. I was comfortable with conflict – more than many of my colleagues. It was a challenge I enjoyed – bringing peace and reconciliation from conflict and uproar. And as I moved into more complex urban congregations, I came to appreciate that some conflict and polarities were a sign of health. Good leaders managed conflict and polarities, rather than insisting on "solving" them.

This journey of learning began with the mess I made of that first situation with the Sunday school teacher whose theology did not match mine, or the United Church's.

5) Wise old owls: I found in both summer mission fields there were one or two wise older people who were incredibly insightful, knowing and pastoral, and certainly wiser than my limited experience. Of course, you had to be discriminating and wise about who you trusted, but I got excellent advice and insight from a few older people who were lifelong church people, and who often knew far more about healthy church life and Christian theology than those with impressive degrees, including mine.

I found as my ministry went on, personnel committees often had great insight about some matters of strategy and conflict. When I struggled in two different congregations about how long to stay and when to leave, I found there were a few wise old owls who gave good advice on such matters. I just needed to be humble enough to ask, and then to listen carefully. This appreciation of wise old owls began to grow, first in my summer mission fields.

6) Congregations as partners: In my less humble youth I often saw preaching as a place to toss out helpful pearls of theological wisdom and occasionally to hurl out a hand grenade or two to disturb the peace. I have grown to appreciate that congregations are partners with the minister and leader. I have found my theology of this is really expressed by the concept of a circle of ministry in which all of faith stand. We do indeed all stand within a circle of ministry. We share authority, and all church members are accountable to one another, including the minister and others of the leadership team.

I think I first began to discover this in my mission fields. These communities (at that time) regularly, yearly got a student for the summer. They were used to inexperienced, and often cocky, young students. They knew how to manage and train these young folk into leaders and faithful ministers. At least in my case, I learned early to respect the wisdom of many lay people. They had been there longer than I. They knew this community better than I. And, at times to my surprise, they too were Christians and people of faith. I wasn't the only one!!! This journey of learning and mutual respect began or was nurtured in my two mission fields.

7) Speaking the language of the people: I found I had a real advantage in my two mission fields. They were used to young men (male at least in my situations) from urban and eastern Canada. They assumed they would have to 'break the student in' to rural life and realities. They were often delighted that I was from the farm and knew farming issues and realities. I could start off with an intelligent discussion of what was going on, on the farm at that time.

A piece of that is thoroughly respecting people and their experience. I recall arriving at one farm home mid afternoon, just as they were clearly taking a coffee break. About 6 were sitting around the family table. There was a large can of Rogers Golden Corn Syrup in the table center. They had fresh bread and were clearly enjoying the syrup. I suspected this was a regular daily ritual – there were strings of syrup from the syrup can to each setting. (I presume, as they did this daily, the housewife saw little need to clean the table too often.) I noticed my own chair felt sticky – and I hoped I could get unstuck when it was time to leave. Still, I suspect this was a table where good family things happened. I know I enjoyed the conversation and they made me feel at home.

But the insight about using your common experiences as a starting point stayed and grew in me. How helpful it is to have a common starting point in experience with the people with whom you do ministry. Later, my experience with marriage and parenting would be a useful common experience. With others my university experiences

were bonding common realities. In fact, I came to appreciate how little communication can take place if people sense the preacher or pastor does not know the challenges or problems with which they are dealing.

I first experienced the power of the common experience, as I entered those rural Saskatchewan villages, and they discovered 'I was one of them', in a rural sense.

As I declared in the beginning of this writing, those mission fields launched me on a journey of learning. Where I was already mindful of the need to learn, they challenged and demanded that I continue to learn, rather than settle into a certainty that I was the only wise and learned one. I hope that this journey of discovery continues as long as I live. I am thankful for the patient flexible people of my first two summer pastorates. They certainly helped and spurred me on, in becoming a lifelong learner.

MCDOUGALL STONEY MISSION UPDATE

By Robert MacDonald

After the fire of May 2017, the membership decided that the church would be restored, and, as a consequence, grants and donations were obtained to finance the project. Services and programmes continued despite the fire. The remaining timbers (basically the walls) were numbered and removed. The Chalmers Heritage Conservation was engaged to do the restoration. Despite some opposition, reconstruction started in May 2020, with work steadily proceeding throughout the summer, the remaining walls and roof were put in place, and by August work began on the bell tower as well as additional siding. Fall saw new cedar shakes on the roof. In October, with elders who participated in a smudge ceremony, the new 1875 CPR bell, a donation of the Thornsteinsson family, was installed. Painting in green trim and white base was done. Doors and windows were installed. Throughout the late fall and winter work on the interior of the church began as well as aspects of the exterior such as window and door hardware and the spire.

Though the pandemic curtailed the spring and fall services and the weekly presentations and open houses, smaller gatherings with elders, community members and youth continued. This engagement and reconciliation led to development of an Enhanced Interpretive Programme. Federal funding enabled the video-filming of some Stoney Nakoda elders telling their story in the Nakoda language to ensure the Nation's story is told and preserved and thus enabling the youth to learn the story and language. The website will also allow non-Indigenous people to learn of the traditions and stories.

A new interpretive walk is envisaged incorporating both the story of the Morleyville settlement and the Stoney Nakoda people, and a twenty-minute video relating the stories would be available to visitors to view. Panels will display both the Stoney Nakoda interpretation and the perspective of the people of Morleyville. Planning for the rededication and interpretive programme continue, dependant on the nature of the pandemic. On 5 June the annual spring clean-up took place, as winter leaves lots of rubbish around. In the fall, the AGM was held virtually, because of the pandemic restrictions on the size of gatherings. A new Board of Directors was elected at that time.

The Banker and the Blackfoot – A Sampler

"Stories within a story" as told by J. Edward Chamberlin

Sampler notes collected and written by Joyce Sassy

The majority of stories in this book centre around the years 1885-1905 when J. Edward Chamberlin's grandfather, John Cowdry, started a bank in Fort Macleod. "Sorreltop Jack," as they called him, enjoyed having a relationship with Crop Eared Wolf, son of Chief Red Crow.

Then, in the book's final chapters, storyteller J. Edward Chamberlin (writing in 2016) hints at how the context of understandings and intentions have changed from 1905. And, because of reconciliation endeavors, may change again.

Chamberlin's storytelling from 1880s took momentum as people in the old west looked at the best way to get along together. Fort Macleod was then "a community at the crossroads of so many things." Members of the rapidly evolving population tried to work out the differences that mattered – ways that would accommodate both Blackfoot sovereignty and new settlement. Sorreltop Jack, the write says, "always thought of (Macleod) as the centre of a new kind of conversation between the old nations of the territories and the new nations of Canada."

"When there was a disagreement or a showdown between the different attitudes and ambitions in the foothills…of the Blackfoot…of the Banker, the Mounted Police and the Department of Indian Affairs, the politician and the citizen, the war-monger and the peace maker, everyone recognized that they needed to find common ground."

Chamberlin's grandfather maintained Crop Eared Wolf was such a key figure in the story. "He gave Blackfoot imagination new direction and Blackfoot intelligence new meaning with his uncanny gift for knowing what was happening before it happened, and for seeing new possibilities…in the old ways… He was a fighter…he was a peacemaker…and he was proud — a saving grace for the Blackfoot then and now."

Thank goodness Chamberlin made opportunity to research and write about some of the numerous stories for those formative years of 1885 to 1905 (and also included valuable sources and endnotes). After all, local things are at the heart of most storytelling. They give us a glimpse of how people may of saw things at the time. There were the relations that existed between unlikely friends, between settling new comers and unsettled natives, between human, natural, and supernatural happenings." In these stories, he believes it is as if his grandfather and Crop Eared Wolf, each in their own way, "are the presiding spirits of the book."

With the first reading of this book in 2017, I was intrigued to realize the writer's attitude was post-reconciliation. Furthermore, he told new stories about a region where I thought I had some reasonable acquaintance. I thought the book was intriguing but in need of a good edit.

By the time I started the third reading, I was ready to nix of the Google reader reviews. Chamberlin put the format in his own words. "This book is partly about certain kinds of stories and storytelling and gives meaning to and purpose to lives that are losing both and finding both, stories that do not take us away from the reality, but bring us back to it. It is about stories that gives us pleasure, a much misunderstood test of beauty and truth and goodness from time immemorial."

Sorreltop Jack and Crop Eared Wolf believed in keeping promises with the treaty biding Indians and non-Indians. There were thought to be "scared agreements certified and sanctified by spiritual leaders on both sides."

"The Blackfoot and other First Nations kept their promises. Canada did not. We do have miles to go before we sleep."

The storyteller's reminder – "We need to get used to the existence of more than one way of understanding the world, and finding our own way home."

Examples of stories:

Telling the Treaty Seven Story

This writer's telling of the Treaty Seven Story includes the multiple hesitations and cautions from the various Native leaders. The common affirmation that the one whom they trusted was Colonel Macleod. The assembly of those gathered included the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney-Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee), almost all residents of Fort Macleod, many from Fort Calgary, missionaries, traders, police, plains Indians and Metis observers.

The words spoken in covenantal language before this grand gathering were supposedly about peace and partnership.

Even at that time, many expressed cautious optimism. Though Colonel Macleod tried to do what he could enable positive outcomes, later "told my grandfather that he was appalled by the government's failure to keep its promises and furnish foodstuffs for the destitute Indians."

Just Start a Bank

Although Jack Cowdry had neither a trade nor a profession, he had modest funds, was gifted with fine words, and had an eye for watching how fast the town and region expanded. He and his brother declared themselves bankers and advertised that fact through *The Macleod Gazette.* Stories told confirm that not only did had he "relied on a word and a handshake," but that Sorreltop Jack was an enabler who depended on his own instinct.

What About the Missionaries?

In a reply to a letter from a Methodist Committee in Toronto in 1889, John Maclean confessed that he "had not converted a single person but had many friends among the Bloods and Peigans during this time.

Maclean wrote later: "We wish to make them (the natives) white men, but they desire to be better Indians. They believe the native culture is better suited for themselves, and having developed under it, and enjoyed in for so long, they care not to give it up for an untried system. There is a danger of educating them away from their real life."

Chamberlin added in his own words. "Their stories and songs and Sun Dances and medicine bundles confirmed who they were and where they belonged."

Readers might look also at the references made to Dr. Oliver Edwards (Medical Officer on the Blood Reserve from 1902 until his death), and his wife. Few people know that Henrietta Muir Edwards, one of the "Famous Five" Alberta women, lived in Standoff for so many years before dying in 1931 in Fort Macleod.

Reminders of a Few Other Story Leads

-The satirical journalism of *The Outlaw*, a newspaper that lampooned everyone (full run can be found in the United Church of Canada Archives & the Kootenai Brown Museum, Pincher Creek).

-There were those who fondly said "the Indians weren't progressing fast enough" which really meant "they weren't getting on with losing their Blackfoot identity and becoming white Christians."

-Blackfoot turning to farming, the gathering and breeding of horses, and developing irrigation projects

-When it came to "protection offered by the treaties, the federal government was determined to keep Indians on reserves, secure local Indian Agent's permission for sale of agricultural goods, other commercial and civic activities, and regulate rules concerning education and religion."

Home Missions Part 2

By Robert MacDonald

Part 1 (Vol. 32, 2020) discussed the early mission work of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Alberta following Robert Rundle's arrival in 1840. Initially, this was primarily work among indigenous peoples. However, as immigration increased, the churches also established missions to work with settlers including non-English speaking groups from China and eastern Europe.

Part 1 introduced the topic of missionary medical assistance. Robert Rundle in the 1840s and George McDougall's family in the 1860s all tried to offer help. Following the 1862-1863 smallpox epidemic, McDougall organize a hospital at Victoria Mission (Pakan). After his family's departure for Morley, their residence became the first hospital. A hospital was also proposed at Morley shortly before the orphanage was closed.

As missions increased, hospital work was supported by the Home Missions Board while the Woman's Missionary Society helped finance matrons, nurses and support staff.

Many hospitals also owed their origins to the Methodist church. In Bonnyville, the hospital was established through the efforts of Rev. Duclos. In some areas such as Cold Lake, the WMS was very involved. As immigration increased in the Smoky Lake area, Rev. Dr. Charles Lawford settled in Pakan in 1900. He soon considered the hospital in the old McDougall residence inadequate. By 1906 he had petitioned the Home Missions Board for a new hospital. A four-thousand-dollar hospital was approved, opening in December 1907 and dedicated the following February. The McDougall Memorial Hospital was a centre for both medical and religious work. With the coming of the railroad, it was decided to move the Pakan building to Smoky Lake and in 1922 steam engines moved the structure. Dr. Morrish became the superintendent. Reports suggested that, following an addition in 1947, it was comparable to Roman Catholic hospitals on either side of the community, a small distance away. Major surgeries were performed in Edmonton. In 1953, there were over 5,000 outpatients and 503 admissions. A few years later there were almost six hundred admissions. However, in 1957 it was sold to Smoky Lake to be operated by the municipality, though it retained the name of George McDougall Memorial Hospital.

Missionary Dr. Albert Archer arrived in Lamont in 1906. He and his wife treated patients in a tent until, with community fundraising and financial help from Home Missions, a hospital was completed in 1912. By 1917, the building which held fifteen beds and five bassinets was too small and an addition was again partly funded by Home Missions. Three years later a third floor was added and a power plant built, again paid for by the Board. In 1927, a further grant of $20,000 allowed a new stucco wing to provide a basement laundry facility, beds on the first floor and offices and X-ray and dental facilities on subsequent floors. Assistance in the late 1940s, (grants of $50,000 and a loan of $65,000) helped provide a two -storey wing so that, with ninety-five beds, five doctors and fifteen nurses, it was the largest general hospital in Alberta outside Edmonton and Calgary. Until 1972, the hospital included a school of nursing.

Medical care was just one aspect of Methodist support for settlement in the west. The Presbyterian Church too put an emphasis on settlement in the area. Railway expansion facilitated rapid migration to the prairies, people drawn by free or cheap fertile land and heavy government promotion. The spread of branch lines from the transcontinental railways hastened the influx of settlers.

Competition between the Methodists and Presbyterians in overlapping fields did not provide effective Christian witness. The Home Mission Boards of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Methodist Church of Canada appointed Rev. James Robertson (Presbyterian) and Rev. James Woodsworth (Methodist) as Superintendents of Missions for the prairies to work cooperatively. These men and their successors responsible for overseeing the development of new congregations including arranging grants for salaries and travel as well as grants and loans for church buildings.

Other responsibilities included supervision of students on summer missions and meetings with Districts and Presbyteries. When the Methodist Alberta Conference was created, Rev. T.C. Buchanan became Superintendent and subsequently Rev. Thomas Powell.

The denominations were soon looking at church union; indeed some union churches were already operating. Accordingly, in 1911, An Agreement to Co-operate in Home Mission Work was signed, calling for adjustments of overlapping fields and arrangements for religious work in new districts, and involvement among "foreign nationals." A provincial committee was established to oversee the Agreement, receiving reports from districts and ministers and meeting each year until 1921. Silox has noted that one of the members was Rev. W.C. Brown of Red Deer, a persistent opponent of church union, yet for ten years he faithfully attended, seeing the handing over of Presbyterians to Methodists as being "engaged in the alchemist enterprise of turning true blue Presbyterians into Methodists".

A number of congregations were established in this way. Fort Saskatchewan received funding as early as 1886. Springbank near Calgary secured a loan from Home Missions from the Church and Parsonage Fund. Parkdale Methodist in Calgary was supported by Home Missions, while Trinity in Calgary received a loan of $10,000 from the T. Eaton Memorial Church in Toronto. Banff Methodist was aid-receiving and Wetaskiwin remained an aid-receiving charge for many years.

After church union in 1925, Thomas Powell reported in 1932 that there were 100 self-supporting charges and 200 mission fields, 35 of which operated only during the summer with student leaders. Among the congregations receiving aid or loans were Bowden, Nordegg, Red Deer East, Morningside, Millet, Rimbey, and Hobbema. Lethbridge Presbytery included congregations in Barons, Belleview, Blairmore, Milk River, New Dayton, Raymond and Waterton. Edmonton Presbytery, which had responsibility in many newly-settled districts, reported assistance to Telford, Erskine bilingual, Morinville and Busby, while an important recipient of support was All Peoples Mission in Edmonton. In Camrose Presbytery, Hughenden, Strome, Forestburg, Killam, Cadogan and Hardisty were charges reported in the annual reports. By 1942 there were eighty-five Home Mission charges.

The Depression affected church work dramatically as farm income suffered from drought and grasshoppers while urban areas were affected by unemployment. Church Union in 1925 had resulted in a surplus of clergy which eased the work of student supply but the Depression reduced salaries and delayed maintenance of churches and manses so a Western Ministers Relief Fund was established. In 1939, Conference reported 263 charges of which 123 were assisted by Home Missions.

After the Second World War, there were demographic and economic changes in the make-up of the population. Home Mission reports by Superintendents such as R.J. McDonald and R. Elliott noted the mechanisation of farms, better roads and transportation, and shifts of people to towns and cities, with depopulation of rural areas and hence a strain on the smaller congregations. In some cases, amalgamation occurred; in other cases more congregations were included in a pastoral charge served by one minister, meaning services were bi-weekly or even less often. Again, annual reports indicated aid-receiving charges. For example, in 1949, there were five in Calgary Presbytery which included rural areas, five in Drumheller, six in Camrose, five in Lethbridge, three in Medicine Hat, three in Wainwright, but ten in Peace River and twenty-five in Edmonton which also included many rural charges - in all a total of eighty-five including reserves. Amounts ranged from $50 to $600 dollars. By 1954, the total was ninety-two. Four years later there were eighty-eight listed excluding the reserves and All Peoples Mission, with amounts ranging from $160 to $700, many around $500. By 1962, amounts ranged from about $300 to almost $2,000.

Yellowknife had received $1900 that year. Some of these were urban such as Forest Lawn, Renfrew and Montgomery in Calgary and Ritchie, Beverly, Calvin, Forest Heights and Buchanan in Edmonton. In addition, there were new areas opening up, notably Eaglesham, Worsley and Valleyview in the Peace River region and oil communities such as Drayton Valley and even Norman Wells. New missions such as Watson Lake and Fort Nelson resulted from the building of the Alaska Highway and the Mackenzie Highway.

A second feature of the post-war era, again a shortage of ministers, was reflected in the annual reports of superintendents such as Thomas Hart. He reported that in 1926 there had been 230 ordained ministers in Conference with ten vacancies. By 1956 there were 164 ordained while 15 retirees and 29 lay people helped fill the gaps. The solution to the shortage was three-fold. Retired ministers were pressed into service, in 1954 serving in areas such as New Norway, Strome, Granum, McLennan, Sundre and Redcliff, as well as in newly-organised congregations such as Northminster in Calgary, and later Renfrew. In many cases Lay Supply were employed. In 1952 there were 26 clearly listed as Lay Supply, but other congregations were reported only as Supply. Lay leader needed supervision from a nearby ordained person and training was essential. One response was a Special Summer Course or School for Lay Supplies when they might be on holiday from regular work or could be relieved by students. Begun in 1947 and held at Emmanual College in Toronto, the schools included courses in theology, and talks by urban ministers on homiletics and pastoral care. Congregations paid part of the cost, Home Missions paid some salaries and some student costs. However, after a few years, the school ceased operating.

The third solution was to use summer students. This for some would be part of their training, though no doubt conducting the first funeral or counselling, particularly in a new community, might have been nerve-wracking. Rev. Jack Towers related his experiences in Hines Creek-Worsley in the 1950s in vol. 20 of this Journal. In 1957, the Superintendent's report indicated that many were immature and had little idea of what to do. He suggested perhaps a year of study before going. Yet report after report indicated satisfactory work. Many had developed an understanding in their home church. In 1958, in one field the student felt there was little to do and little was accomplished, but the next year another student proved this wrong. Numbers were considerable. In 1947, there were thirty-five students in Alberta compared with forty-two ordained in mission fields. It is no surprise that many would be in northern areas. In 1948, of thirty-eight students, twelve were in Edmonton Presbytery which at that time included many charges north of the city and five were in Peace River Presbytery. In 1950, in northern and central Alberta there were forty students, though three were in effect assistants to ministers in amalgamated charges. Some opened new fields and one reopened at Waterton where there hadn't been a minister since the early part of the century. One was involved in surveys. In 1969, twenty-eight served northern and central parts of the Conference. The superintendent reported they succeeded with impressive enthusiasm including in rural fields. There were challenges of transportation and accommodation as Rev. Towers indicated. In pre-war times a horse or horse and buggy over dirt roads was the norm. Muddy roads, not yet gravelled, proved difficult, especially in spring. In 1958 it was reported one student traveled over a hundred miles round-trip for his preaching points. In 1954, one student had a cabin built, and he encouraged construction of a church—it was built by local labour a couple of years later. Of course, a downside was that many rural and isolated places only had regular services during the four or five months of summer. On the other hand, some students from colleges such as St. Stephen's in Edmonton were able to provide services through the rest of the year for those congregations close to the city though one superintendent suggested that staying in the charges on the weekends, even if it helped financially, interfered with studies.

Congregations raised money through campaigns as they had always done, and in the 1950s there were

tseveral larger campaigns such as the Sector Plan. In Calgary, Renfrew got a Home Mission Council loan of $10,000 as well as a site donated by the Home Missions Board. St. Andrew's in Calgary received a Home Missions Board loan of $6000 at 6% for a building, while the Council had purchased a portable for a temporary office. In 1958, Ogden received a grant of $1500 for the construction of a basement. Trinity became an Institutional Church, and with voluntary help and that of the Home Missions Board it was rehabilitated and provided community service including youth work. Waterton in South Alberta received a loan of $5000 and $500 from the Presbytery Church Extension Council. By 1959, in Conference, over $288,000 had been provided for churches and halls, and $93,000 for manses. More construction was planned for 1960. That year it was reported twenty congregations had loans in central and northern Alberta. Binding the work were the eighteen Home Superintendents appointed by the Board of Home Missions across the church. Each year for seven to ten days they got together for discussion and consultation. In Alberta Conference, for most of the period, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat were supervised by the Superintendent for Southern Saskatchewan and Southern Alberta, while Central and Northern Alberta had a separate Superintendent. These superintendents were representatives of the national church but served as intermediaries between the national body and the Conferences/Presbyteries. According to Rev. Dwight Powell, Superintendent in Central and Northern Alberta, he was expected to attend meetings of Presbyteries, especially when grants were considered, as well as to report on larger developments. He also forwarded requests for Home Missions assistance. Often the work involved meeting with local congregations, especially aid-receiving charges. Furthermore, he could be called to resolve conflicts dealing with pastoral relations when Presbytery could not. Resolutions on clergy pensions also came with the position.

As indicated above, shortage of clergy required Lay and Student Supply and the Superintendent passed on Presbytery requests for such appointments. The Board then selected from a pool of students. To assist these students Powell organised conferences for them. Supervising ministers came from nearby charges as visits to the Supply were necessary. The supervisor would hope to spend a day visiting students but sometimes weather prevented this. In a few cases, notably Hay River and Fort St. John, co-operation with the Anglicans occurred but the agreement worked out by Rev. Thomas Powell ended with the Anglicans preferring to operate separately. Finally, Superintendents attended official dedications of any church helped by Home Missions and often spoke to congregations about the work of Home Missions. Powell mentioned that in 1958 he spoke to thirteen congregations including Norwood and Pleasantview in Edmonton, St. Paul's in Calgary, Stettler, Wainwright, Consort and Hardisty.

All this involved a great deal of travel and many meetings. Rev. Armand Stade in Southern Saskatchewan and Southern Alberta indicated that in one year he had 220 meetings.

An issue facing Home Mission was minimum salaries, which increased throughout the years. After dropping below a thousand dollars during the Depression, salaries rose from $1650 for a married person in 1947, to $2400 by 1951, $2700 in 1953, and $3100 by 1958. Manses were generally furnished.

In 1971, as a result of a decision of General Council, the new Division of Mission in Canada absorbed the work of the Home Missions Board. It was argued the fragmented boards within the United Church tended to hinder the ability of the church to adjust to the changing dynamics of the Canadian population and a new structure would enable the church to adapt more quickly. Consequently Rev. Armand Stade and Rev. Dwight Powell were the last Superintendents in Conference, as the era of Home Missions ended.

Introducing: The United Church of Canada: *The New Outlook*, Vol.1, No.1

By Gayle Simonson

In 1925, when the Canadian parliament passed an act bringing together three denominations of the Protestant church, Methodist, Congregationalist and the majority of Presbyterians, word spread around the globe. Just what did this new entity look like? What process had led to this? How did they see the future?

In the days before TV and internet, the printed word was the paramount source of information. Each denomination had its own printing business to produce news and resources. The Ryerson Press, the Methodist church publishing business, boasted "the most completely equipped printing and binding plant in Canada." Its *Christian Guardian,* first edited by Egerton Ryerson, dated back to 1829. *The Presbyterian Witness*, dating back to 1848, and *The Congregationalist,* dating to 1854, were also well-established.

In 1925, however, everything was changing. The three publications were combined to form *The New Outlook.* In 1938, that was merged with two other United Church publications and renamed the *United Church Observer.* Though still affiliated with the United Church, since 1986 it has been incorporated independently. Thus when the name of the *United Church Observer* was changed to *Broadview* recently, this was not the first change. Despite name changes, it remains the oldest continuously published magazine in North America and the second oldest in the English-speaking world.

Volume l, Number l of *The New Outlook* introduced readers to the United Church of Canada. It provided a brief history of each founding denomination, as well as an extensive overview of this new entity. It also included the full inauguration service which was held in Toronto June 10, 1925. 1925 did indeed bring a "new outlook" to Canadian churches.

That first issue carried a history of the process of union from the perspectives of each former denomination and the contributions of each to church union. Other topics included outreach, the establishment of schools not just for theology students but also for the arts, and the roles of women in church and mission work, including the importance of education for young women. The churches had schools and colleges across the country and the importance of Sunday schools was also emphasized. In Alberta, the Methodists had established Mount Royal College in Calgary and Alberta Colleges North and South in Edmonton. The Presbyterians had Robertson College in Edmonton.

As well, there were greetings from many theological groups around the world, including the Church of Scotland; Congregationalists in England, Wales and South Africa; Methodists of Australasia, Ireland and Great Britain; the ecumenical Shantung Christian University in China; and the Presbyterian churches in England and Korea. President J.T. Barkly of the Primitive Methodist Conference of Great Britain wrote that "the influence of such a great spiritual achievement will be felt throughout the world."

The road to church unity had not always run smoothly, but as the editorial writer noted, "Through long years of earnest and prayerful conference, the dividing lines gradually faded away and the true unity of spirit and of belief stood out as an indubitable reality."

Professor J.W. Falconer, D.D., a Professor of New Testament language and Literature at the Presbyterian College in Halifax wrote "The Streams that are Flowing Together" on the origins of the founding congregations.

Congregationalism "arose as one phase of the reformation." The first congregation was formed in London about 1592 but "so severe was the opposition that they had to fly to the continent." Two of their leaders were hanged for denying the Queen's "ecclesiastical supremacy." They returned by 1616 but some had also travelled on the Mayflower to the New World where they founded Harvard University in 1630 and Yale in 1701.

Methodism resulted from "the deep religious experience and heroic labours" of John Wesley. While at Oxford he organized a small society that included his brother Charles who wrote many of the traditional hymns of the English-speaking churches. In 1738 with assistance from the Moravians, he began to establish societies throughout England and

Wales, holding open-air meetings that attracted huge crowds of mostly working-class people. According to Falconer, the societies offered a liberal reaction to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination and "made personal religion their chief cause."

The Presbyterian Church, originally based in Scotland, traced its roots to the work of John Calvin in the 16th century under the leadership of John Knox.

Falconer points out that in union, the Presbyterians "modified their theological standards in the direction of less extreme Calvinism." The Congregationalists and Presbyterians approached the doctrinal positions of Methodism, while the Congregationalists and Methodists moved to a Presbyterian form of government. He concludes that, "We are inevitably compelled to study everything that makes for the common good … and strive towards the removal of all barriers that stand in the way of complete fellowship."

Methodist Rev. Dr. Samuel Rose wrote that "one is impressed with the significant place of laymen" within the United Church. He noted the Methodist respect for learning and the struggle for public schools open to all, a struggle that Rev. Egerton Ryerson had spearheaded in Upper Canada. Also, Rose wrote that the Methodists "led the fighting forces" working for social reform. Presbyterian Dr. John T. McNeill also noted the importance of education. "Our colleges have been nurseries both of religion and learning." He felt they brought "a knack for conserving the values of the past while moving on in obedience to a new and true vision." Congregationalist Dr. W.H. Warriner stressed spirituality, Christian freedom and Catholicity, an acceptance of all forms of worship as new revelations continue to expand our faith.

Saskatchewan minister Rev. H.D. Ranns discussed the previous widespread formation of union churches across the prairies, calling them "pioneers of the great adventure. He considered them very effective, but noted that, "In most towns there are a few odd families – in some cases very "odd" indeed - who cannot reconcile themselves to the new order of things."

Principal E.H. Oliver of St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon presented "The Place and Work of the United Church in the Life of Canada." He concluded that, "The great harvest fields of wheat will become the granary of God's great empire. From the plains will go forth the Bread of Life for the feasting of the nations."

In describing the home mission enterprise of the UCC, Rev. Dr. D.M. Ramsay placed an emphasis on medicine, education, including work with native settlements, and work with immigrants. Ramsay was a professor at Knox College in Toronto. He had previously been a founder of the Union Mission for Men in Ottawa and had been on the staff of Emmanuel College. He noted that immigrants represented 70 nationalities and a variety of religious beliefs, and he felt the church should work with all.

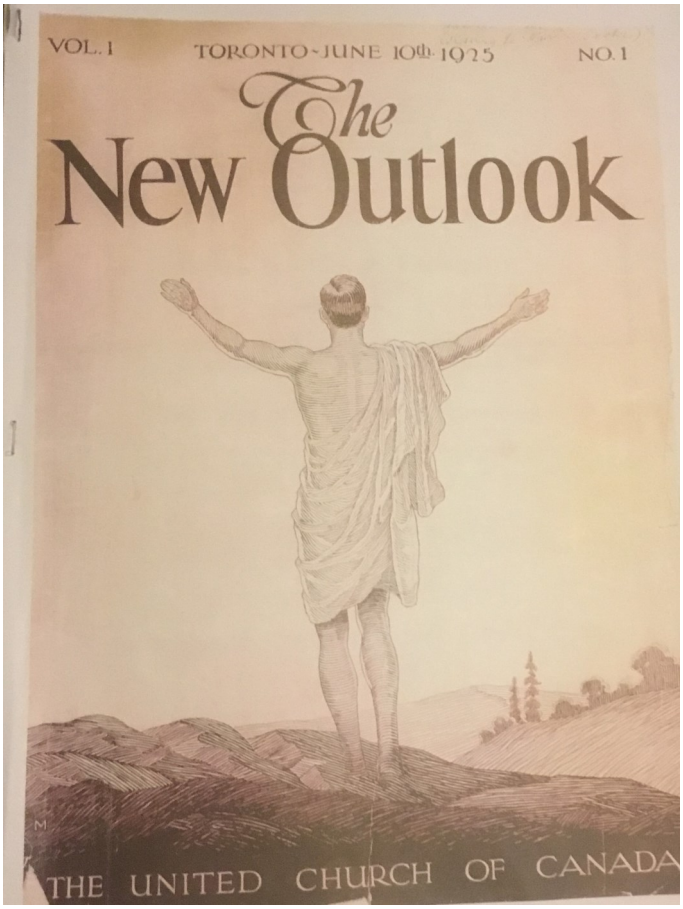
James Endicott, D.D, was particularly well-suited to discuss "The Place and Task of the United Church in the Life of the World." For him, the church was truly a global organization. Endicott had been born to missionary parents in China and had served in WW I. He served as the second moderator of the United Church 1926-1928, then returned to China. Eventually his views on Chinese politics became very controversial and he resigned from ministry. He went on to found and chair the Canadian Peace Congress in 1949 and from 1959-1971 chaired the International Institute for Peace.

Foreign missions of the founding churches were located in China which had three missions, Formosa, Japan, Korea, Trinidad, central and east India, British Guiana and Angola. "A large share of this enterprise" was carried by the Women's Missionary Societies.

Under the title "Work of the Women of the Three Uniting Churches," three women wrote of the work in their own denominations. Margaret E.T. Addison wrote of the "Varied Enterprises of the Methodist Women." Originally a teacher, she had been only the sixth woman to graduate from Victoria University in Cobourg. When Victoria combined with the University of Toronto in 1892, Addison supported efforts to construct a women's residence. When Annesley Hall opened for women in 1903, she became the first Dean of Women, a position required at most Methodist colleges as they were co-educational. There were ups and downs, and at one point she complained of "the autocracy of men in the affairs of women." (For more information on her, see the online *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, www.biographi.ca)

In the Methodist churches, Ladies Aid groups worked closely with the congregations. The Deaconess Aid Society, founded in 1894, offered a training school for missionaries, deaconesses and also some volunteer workers. The Woman's Missionary Society, founded in 1881, worked closely with the Department of Evangelism and Social Service. By 1925, they supplied 148 teachers and missionaries across Canada and in China and Japan. For Addison, "The education of women is one of the most important and difficult problems of the day … they have to adapt themselves to an ever-changing social order."

The cover of The New Outlook



CGIT, founded cooperatively among the denominations began to provide leadership training and a community experience for teenage girls. For Addison, "There is a great future in the United Church for an association of women devoted to the cause of girls' and women's education."

Effie Jamieson, Secretary of the Congregational Women's Board, wrote of "Congregational Women in Mission Work." Their first project in 1886 had been to build two schools in Angola. Many other projects followed, both in Africa and in Canada and Newfoundland, including support for the Grenfell Mission in Labrador. By providing both education and medical care, they believed that the ongoing work by the United Church could "produce a new woman for Africa."

For Presbyterian women, 1925 marked the 100th anniversary of the Female Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, founded in Prince Edward Island. In "Women's Interests in World Missions Under the Presbyterian Church," Janet MacGillivray discussed their work in education, medicine and social services. As president of the Presbyterian Woman's Society from 1920-1925, she had toured western missions and written a book titled *The Story of the Missions,* a book that is still accessible on the internet. From 1926-1930 she was president of the United Church Woman's Missionary Society and in 1929 toured missions in the Orient on their behalf.

There were many more articles in this first issue. Several looked at the church in specific locations across the country – Montreal, Vancouver, Halifax and Winnipeg. On a page entitled "Christianity is Service," the list of activities included evangelism, public welfare campaigns, child welfare, prohibition, social workers and, in broader terms, "the promotion of good citizenship." Work with immigrants was also important. Through their publishing houses, all three denominations had made resources available to congregations and the United Church would continue to do so. This first issue of "The New Outlook" gives us a snapshot of Canada in 1925 and of the concerns and the work of the churches in dealing with social issues. It presents to us a story of vision - the work, the hopes and the ideals of the new United Church of Canada as its people faced the future with optimism and enthusiasm. In the words of the editor of that issue, it will "commemorate (the movement's) achievement, interpret more fully to the whole Church its significance, and preserve a record for the days to come." It has indeed preserved that record.



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