

the front pew



Vol. 15 No. 7 RIVERBEND UNITED CHURCH 14907-45 Ave., Edmonton, AB September 2017

Greetings From the Board Chair

I have often joked that at the United Church of Canada you get to take the summers off. In my first summer ever as Official Board Chair I can safely say that while the Board has not met, a lot has been done!

First, we gave much heartfelt thanks to Tom Sawyer for his service to God and our Church community for his six months acting as our temporary Minister. What was hoped to be a part-time role, “keeping the seat warm”, as we waited for our new Minister, turned into one of our Church’s most challenging times in recent memory. How we would have handled this without a caring, grace-filled, veteran Minister is beyond me.

Next, we welcomed our new Minister Valerie Oden! Valerie started in August purposely for “soft start”, to better enable her to settle from her move from the United States back to Canada, begin getting to know our congregation and establish support and leadership with our staff. I encourage everyone to stop by and personally welcome Valerie over the next few months, and hope everyone

can wear their name tags to lend her a hand in learning faces and names. If you don’t have a name tag, drop a note to Jackie at the office, and one will be made up.

I can safely say that A.W.E in August (Awesome Wednesday Evenings) were spectacular. Every Wednesday we had in excess of 20-30 people come out to meet our new Minister and enjoy a variety of activities including a campfire, photo-scavenger hunt, and board games. What was great was attendance represented the complete age-range of our congregation, and over 75 different members.

Over the past few years, changing demographics and staffing resulted in a happenstance reduction in our children’s ministry. I am pleased to announce that the Spiritual Formation team has decided to extend its on-demand worship service nursery to include 3-5 year-olds! In keeping with our demographics the program will be staffed every Sunday by volunteers in the family room adjacent to our sanctuary. The programming will be age-specific but will not follow the common lectionary. Parents are free to either keep their young children with them during the service or let them receive early Christian education

through activities like crafts and godly play. Parents can also accompany their children to the family room and still see and hear the worship service.

Next, a financial update (your eyes can glaze over now if you want). This year we passed a budget that called for a shocking \$40,000 cash deficit. Thanks to two extremely generous donations early in the year our revenue is slightly over budget, while expenses have come in under budget with the net result of year to June that we are trending on a break-even cash budget!

Which brings up the second finance point. When the Board, Treasury and Finance presented the 2016-2017 \$40,000 deficit budget we knew it was unsustainable. Something significant had to be done if we wanted to take action on increased Ministry and services as detailed in our 2016 JNAC (Joint Needs Assessment for hiring a new Minister). Clearly the desire to recruit a second, part-time Minister isn’t viable when coupled with aggressively paying down our mortgage. In these situations, the solution is almost always a combination of “increase revenues and decreases expenses”. A key expense is

Continued on page 2

RUC Shares Corn at *Art in our Park*

Join us on Saturday September 16, 12-5pm at James Ramsey Park - Riverbend Road and 43 Avenue

Our community is diverse and creative and **Art in Our Park** is an opportunity to celebrate it in a way that is inclusive and expressive. Join in this grand celebration of community!

Riverbend Community Leagues are hosting the eighth annual Art in our Park festival to help celebrate Edmonton's city-wide Community League Day. The event features an Art Market with over 40 artists, interactive and multidisciplinary workshops and activities, live music performances on two stages, stilt walkers, face painting and sidewalk chalk art.

Riverbend United church will join in the fun for our fifth year in a row sharing hospitality in our "backyard" along with a fresh cob of corn. The turkey team has enjoyed this opportunity to connect with our neighbours at this event and we would love to have you join us! 500 cobs of corn will need husking on Saturday Sept 16th at 9:30am and then others can assist with the corn distribution throughout the afternoon. You can even learn the secrets of our special "cooler corn". Let me know if you'd like to help! (Call Christine at [780.435.0302](tel:780.435.0302))



Continued from page 1

the mortgage we undertook to complete our expansion. With rising interest rates and our open, floating rate mortgage with TD due for renewal, the Finance committee recommended getting a locked in mortgage rate with an extended amortization period. Despite great leadership from the team, TD was unable to extend our mortgage term from the remaining 7 years to something longer. But with that great leadership they were able to secure a new 13-year, fixed rate mortgage with Servus Credit Union who has a mandate to support the community. This change was unanimously supported by the Board. By the time you read this, we will have transferred our \$560,000 mortgage from TD to Servus at a fixed 4.35% rate for five years. The downsides are that we incurred some transactions costs, will pay more interest over the life of the mortgage, and have reduced flexibility at making principal reduction to 20% anniversary payments. On the upside Servus' interest rate of was better

than what TD could offer, has lower account management fees, and most importantly substantially frees up our cash flow to redirect to other Ministry priorities. We know paying off our mortgage is important to the congregation and must be balanced with spending within our means and Christ's mission for us in this world.

Finally, I would like to again thank departing Official Board Members. I have some large feet, but the shoes Christine Ens left for me to fill as Board Chair are massive. Her leadership over the past two years is greatly appreciated. Leslie Berezowsky has served as Secretary for a number of years and her attention to detail will be missed. With that, we have two openings on the Official Board, for a Secretary and the much-coveted position of Chair-Elect. If you are interested please let us know!

Matthew Schoehardt, Board Chair

September Health Corner

Welcome back, “Healthy” readers. I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and is ready to get back into the rhythm of fall. September shapes up to be a very busy month and is filled with health promotion weeks and days. First up, September is home to Arthritis Awareness Month. While most people are aware of arthritis, many do not know of the disabling and life-changing effects it has. Some Arthritis facts are:

- There are over 100 types of arthritis in all (rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, osteoarthritis, gout, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, etc.).
- Arthritis affects 350 million individuals worldwide, including 4.6 million Canadians.
- 1 in 6 Canadian adults is living with arthritis right now.
- This number is expected to grow to 1 in 5 by 2036, in which an estimated 7.5 million Canadian adults will have arthritis.
- 56% of arthritics are affected before they are 65 years of age.
- Arthritis is the most common chronic condition in women and the third most in men.
- Children too are affected by arthritis.
- Arthritis represents one in every 10 doctor visits and one in every 16 hospitalizations.
- Arthritis is the most expensive condition for the Canadian economy, yet receives only 3% of the available research dollars in Canada. More information regarding Arthritis can be found at www.arthritis.ca.

September seems to be saturated with different types of cancers having their focus this month. September is **Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, Men's Cancer Health Awareness Month, Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, and Blood Cancer Awareness Month**. Doesn't sound very uplifting does it? I'll share some information on cancers that affect both women and men individually.

Ovarian cancer is a malignant tumour that starts in cells of the ovary. Malignant means that it can spread, or metastasize, to other parts of the body. The ovaries are part of a woman's reproductive system. They are 2 small, oval-shaped organs. They are on either side of the uterus, or womb, close to the end of the Fallopian tubes. The ovaries make and release eggs. They also make the female hormones estrogen and progesterone. The ovaries are made up of different types of cells. Epithelial cells make up the outer layer of the ovary, which is called the epithelium. Stromal cells make up the connective tissue that holds an

ovary together. Germ cells are reproductive cells. In women, they are egg cells. Cells in an ovary sometimes change and no longer grow or behave normally. This may lead to ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer may not cause any signs or symptoms in its early stages. Symptoms appear once the tumour grows into surrounding tissues and organs. The signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer can also be caused by other health conditions. It is important to have any unusual symptoms checked by a doctor. Signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer include:

- abnormal vaginal bleeding;
- a lump that can be felt (palpable) in the pelvic or abdominal area;
- need to urinate often (frequency);
- intense need to urinate (urgency);
- constipation;
- changes to digestion (such as difficulty eating, feeling full after a small meal, heartburn, gas, indigestion or nausea);
- feeling of pressure in the pelvic or abdominal area;
- fatigue;
- pain in the legs, lower back, pelvis or abdomen;
- bloating (swelling of the abdomen);
- painful intercourse.

Prostate cancer is a malignant tumour that starts in cells of the prostate. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian men. It usually grows slowly and can often be completely removed or managed successfully. The prostate is part of a man's reproductive system. It is a walnut-sized gland just below the bladder and in front of the rectum. It surrounds part of the urethra, which is the tube that carries urine and semen through the penis. The prostate makes a liquid called seminal fluid, which mixes with sperm from the testicles to make semen. Cells in the prostate sometimes change and no longer grow or behave normally. In some cases, changes to prostate cells can cause prostate cancer. Most often, prostate cancer starts in glandular cells of the prostate. These cells make a part of the seminal fluid. This type of cancer is called adenocarcinoma of the prostate. Rare types of prostate cancer can also develop. These include transitional cell carcinoma and sarcoma. Prostate cancer may not cause any signs or symptoms in its early stages because it is generally a slow-growing cancer. Symptoms appear once the tumour enlarges or grows into surrounding tissues and organs. The signs and symptoms of prostate cancer can also be caused by other health conditions. It is important to have any unusual symptoms checked by a doctor. Signs and

Continued from page 3

symptoms of prostate cancer are:

- changes in bladder habits;
- need to urinate often (frequency), especially at night;
- intense need to urinate (urgency);
- difficulty in starting or stopping the urine flow;
- inability to urinate;
- weak or decreased urine stream;
- interrupted urine stream;
- a sense of incompletely emptying the bladder;
- burning or pain during urination;
- blood in the urine or semen;
- painful ejaculation.

No matter what type of cancer is involved, prognosis and survival depend on many factors. Only a doctor familiar with a person's medical history, type of cancer, stage, characteristics of the cancer, treatments chosen, and response to treatment can put all of this information together with survival statistics to arrive at a prognosis. The Canadian Cancer Society has a great website with lots of information regarding most cancer types, diagnosis, and treatment. Please visit www.cancer.ca for a lot more information.

A list of health related days in September are:

- National Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD) Awareness Day: September 4;
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day: September 9;
- World Suicide Prevention Day: September 10;
- Terry Fox Run: September 17;
- World Alzheimer's Day: September 21;
- World Rabies Day: September 28.

While many of the health issues spotlighted this month are sinister in nature, there is still hope. Cancer research in Canada and around the world continues to move us closer to the day when most cancers will be curable and others will be managed as chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma. Today, more than 60% of Canadians diagnosed with cancer will survive at least 5 years after their diagnosis. This is a great improvement over the 1940s when the 5 - year survival was about 25%. As knowledge grows, so does the progress against cancer. Keep the faith!

The Terry Fox Run seems to hold a special place in the heart of all Canadians. As most of us know, Terry Fox was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and raised in Port Coquitlam,

British Columbia. An active teenager involved in many sports, Terry was only 18 years old when he was diagnosed with osteogenic sarcoma (bone cancer) and forced to have his right leg amputated 15 cm above the knee in 1977. While in hospital, Terry was so overcome by the suffering of other cancer patients, many of them young children that he decided to run across Canada to raise money for cancer research. He would call his journey the Marathon of Hope. It was a journey that Canadians never forgot. After 18 months and running over 5,000 km to prepare, Terry started his run in St. John's, Newfoundland on April 12, 1980 with little fanfare. Although it was difficult to garner attention in the beginning, enthusiasm soon grew, and the money collected along his route began to mount. He ran close to 42 km a day through Canada's Atlantic Provinces, Quebec and Ontario. However, on September 1st, after 143 days and 5373 km, Terry was forced to stop running outside of Thunder Bay, Ontario because cancer had appeared in his lungs. Terry passed away on June 28, 1981 at the age 22. The heroic Canadian was gone, but his legacy was just beginning. To date, over \$650 million has been raised worldwide for cancer research in Terry's name through the annual Terry Fox Run. Currently, the Terry Fox Runs take place in over 9000 communities across Canada every year and are accessible to anyone with no entry fee, no minimum pledge and a non-competitive atmosphere. In Edmonton this year, the Terry Fox Run will take place in Kinsmen Park. The route length is 2.5 km, 5km, or 9 km. This event is also bicycle, rollerblade, and wheelchair friendly. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the run starts at 11:00 a.m. There will also be live music and a free barbecue!

As the leaves of the trees begin to fall, and the children return to their classrooms, I hope you take a little time for yourself to ponder this month's highlighted health topics.

Blessings, Dawn Power

Minister's Book Study

An Altar in the World

By Barbara Brown Taylor

Held on 6 Wednesday evenings **October 11** – Nov 15, 7:00 – 8:15 pm in the Chapel.

All are welcome. Books are available on Kindle or at Indigo/Chapters. We will discuss the first 2 chapters on Oct. 11 so please read ahead!

Children's Ministry

Sunday School begins on Sunday September 10, 2017. We welcome all children from K-6 on Sundays at 10:30am for fun, faith and friendship. Together, we grow and learn with one another by exploring Bible stories through activities, games, crafts and music. This year, we will be following the curriculum entitled "A Joyful Path".

Registration takes place following the 10:30am service, on September 10. Should you miss this date, please email emily.severson1@gmail.com to retrieve a registration form for your children.

The youngest members of our congregation are welcome to go to the Family Room during the 10:30am service where there will be adult supervision. Age-appropriate programming for preschoolers will be provided. Parents that wish to stay with their children in the Family Room are able to view and hear the service from there.

Looking forward to another wonderful year.

Happy September!

Emily Severson
Children's Ministry Coordinator

Another Evening of Marvelous Music

After the success of last year's Marvelous fundraising concert, we decided to do it again, so mark your calendars for Saturday October 21 for Another Evening of Marvelous Music featuring the Severson family and friends. We will be playing a number of hits from the 60s and 70s, and a few from the 80s, (and maybe even a song from the 21st century) by bands like the Beatles, Chicago, Stevie Wonder, The Police, Carole King, James Brown and many more.

Again, tickets are free, but of course donations are encouraged and will go towards paying down the Ann Mazur loan that was used to purchase our sound and projection system.

Hope to see you there!

Marv



Valerie's Reveries

"To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. (Ecclesiastes 3: 1)

As the mornings begin to grow crisp, we are reminded that the seasons always change-- in our lives as in nature. Riverbend U.C. has seen a year of changes and enters now a new season. As with any seasonal change, there is sorrow at the loss, grasping at what has been, uncertainty at what will come, and eventually, engagement of what will be.

I am grateful to be entering this new season in the life of Riverbend UC with you good folks. In these short 3 weeks, I have found a community of committed, willing servants seeking to make the world better a little at a time. I have seen you giving in so many ways to the good of the whole:

- to the property upkeep and beautification;

- to the music ministries and to the Garage Sale;
- to Sunday morning coffee and selling grocery cards;
- to fellowship and silliness at the August Wednesday Evenings (AWE);
- to volunteering in the office with its array of projects;
- to taking good fiscal care of the church's resources;
- to caring for the children during worship;
- to diligently preparing slides and managing the AV on Sunday mornings;
- to planning Fall activities and changing the big letters on the sign out front
- to caring for the life of the church and this community in so many other ways and every way I'm not naming.

And that is just in 3 weeks. We are in for a rich time together I believe. Let's engage this new season together and see where it takes us.

Peace,
Valerie

A Special Event

The standing committee of Intercultural Ministry (IM), Alberta and Northwest Conference (ANWC), is planning to have two special speakers at Riverbend UC the evenings of October 4th and 5th. All in the congregation are warmly invited to attend one or both evenings.

Wednesday, October 4, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Main speaker: Dr. Anthony Reddie

Professor Reddie is a Learning and Development Officer for the Methodist Church in Britain. He is also affiliated with the University of South Africa. He studied History and Christian Education with Theology at the University of Birmingham. He has written over 70 essays and articles on Christian Education and Theology. He was founding editor of Black Theology: an International Journal, the only academic periodical of its kind in the world.

Thursday, October 5, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Speaker: Moderator of the United Church of Canada
Rt. Reverend Jordan Cantwell - from
Saskatchewan

The theme of this symposium - "An Awkward Conversation in the Church" - affirms and continues our journey towards an intercultural church. It seeks to discuss the contemporary issues of race and discrimination as it affects black people and, in light of the Mission of the Church, to consider ways that we might respond to these issues.

Please come and help welcome our visitors attending from Presbytery, Conference and National. Refreshments will be served.

For further information, kindly contact: Kay Quon, Past IM Chair. Email: quonline@shaw.ca

11th Annual Seniors' Housing Forum

It is our pleasure to bring the eleventh annual Seniors' Housing Forum to your attention. This informative, **FREE** event is being held on Saturday, September 23, 2017 at the Central Lions Seniors Recreation Centre at 11113 113 Street. Its aim is to provide seniors and their caregivers with an excellent opportunity to learn more about housing and related resources that support older adults in the Greater Edmonton area.

The Seniors' Housing Forum Planning Committee kindly asks your assistance in bringing this critical event to the attention of staff and seniors in your organization and community. We have included a poster that highlights the focal aspects of the event, and ask that you display this prominently within your organization. Additional information about the quality session topics and registration process is available online at <http://www.mysage.ca/events/seniors-housing-forum> or call [780.809.8604](tel:780.809.8604).

Do not hesitate to get in touch should you require more details regarding the Forum. Please direct inquiries to Carlina MacInnis, by phone at [780.701.9007](tel:780.701.9007) or by email to cmacinnis@mysage.ca on behalf of the Planning Committee.

We very much appreciate your help in bringing the Seniors' Housing Forum to seniors' attention. This free event provides critical information from a variety of reputable sources that directly impacts wellness and quality of life for older adults.

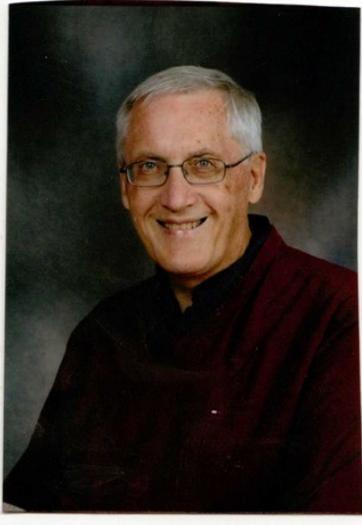
Sincerely,

Carlina MacInnis | Communications and Project Coordinator

Direct Line | [780-701-9007](tel:780-701-9007)

Email | cmacinnis@mysage.ca

A View From the Rear Pew by Brent Skinner



Parenting is a demanding activity. Challenges include teaching your kid to ride a bicycle, keeping enough food in the house during the teenage years and helping your offspring get a post secondary education and find their way into the work world. However, probably the most difficult task comes at the very beginning of your parenting journey - choosing your child's name. Several babies

have been born into my extended family this year and so I feel compelled to provide all new parents-to- be with my baby naming wisdom.

First of all , ignore those 10,000 baby name books and go with your naming instinct, subject only to some logical naming rules:

- Keep, the name short (2 or 3 syllables) and ensure that it is easy to spell and easy to pronounce. This will save your child from countless hours of leaning over reception desks trying to get some clerk to type in their name correctly. It will also make it more likely to get called for job interviews, as the potential employer won't be embarrassed by mispronouncing your child's name.
- Choose a name with some measure of gravitas so that it will suit them when they become president of a large public traded company, or Prime Minister. For example, names such as Bambi, Ecstasy, Nevaeh (heaven spelled backward), Mort or Gus are to be avoided.
- Don't commit your child to a name billing that may not support the future reality of your offspring. What if "Wolf Steel " turns out to be a 90 lb. wimp or "Butterfly Dancer " weighs 300 lbs.?
- Ensure that your child's name begins with a middle letter of the alphabet somewhere between 'G' and 'M'. A name at the beginning of the alphabet may be

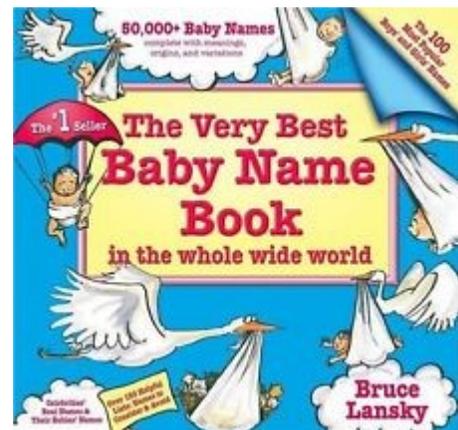
a problem when the terrorists seize an Airbus and begin executing hostages in alphabetical order (poor old Aaron will be the first to go). A name at the end of the alphabet can be equally bad. For example, kids called Zander or Xerxes will never get to drink from the elementary school water fountain before it is time to go back to class.

- Never mix up first and middle names. For example, there is the sad story of a man named Harold Brent who was called by his middle name all his life, and spent many hours in various waiting rooms, feeling frustrated that some guy named Harold refused to show up at the front desk when called and was holding up the whole show.

Middle names are not that important. After all they are only used on your university diploma (sometimes in Latin), or when your mother is very, very angry, or in public safety bulletins when you escape from a federal penitentiary. Middle names can be used to gain the favour of rich older relatives who are in ill health and worrying about their estate planning.

I sometimes think that our indigenous peoples had it right. Babies were given temporary holding names (e.g. Little Porcupine) until they reached their teens and then were renamed after memorable achievements (e.g. Pawnee Horse Raider) or special characteristics (e.g. Morning Star Beauty). The only problem is that modern society expects today's children to grow up slowly, and so you might end up with names like " Family Car Crasher ", " Pouts a Lot" or " Cell Phone Addict".

So there you have it - my short course on naming your new baby. If you don't find this extremely useful, my name is not Hannibal Smedley Picklehaub.



Calendar of Events:

September 8 & 9th		Church Garage Sale
Sunday, September 10th	10:30 am Following 10:30 am Service	Sunday School Starts Sundae Sunday—Welcome & Registration
Tuesday, September 12th	1:00 pm 7:00 pm	WUC Board Meeting
Saturday, September 16th	Noon—5:00 pm	Art in the Park—RUC Shares Corn
Sunday, September 17th	2:00 pm	Grandview Service
Friday, September 22th		FRONT PEW DEADLINE
Sunday, September 24th	Following 10:30 am Service	Muffin Sunday and RUC in Action
Thursday, September 28th	10:30 am	Devonshire Worship
Wednesday, October 4th	7:00 pm—8:30 pm	IM—ANWC Speaker: Dr. Anthony Reddie
Thursday, October 5th	7:00 pm—8:30 pm	IM—ANWC Speaker: Moderation, United Church of Canada, Rt Reverend Jordan Cantwell
Wednesday, October 11th	7:00 pm—8:15 pm	Minister’s Book Study (every Wednesday until November 15th
Saturday, October 21st		Marvelous Music Concert

Weekly Events

- Mondays 7:00 pm—
Handbell Rehearsal
- Wednesdays 9:00
am—Walking Group
- Thursdays 7:30 pm—
Choir Rehearsal; new
singers welcome!
- Weekly Sunday
Worship-9:00 am and
10:30 am (Sunday
School and Youth
Discussion Group)



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October deadline: Friday, September 22, 2017

