



Keeping in Touch

NUCW President's Message - *Where there is Faith, there is Hope*

Friendship, Faith, and Hope at UCW 60th
From the UCW 60th Photo Library 2022



Hymn # 654 VU *All My Hope Is Firmly Grounded*

Prayer # 587 VU ¹ *A Prayer For Hope*

"God, like a bakerwoman,
you bring the leaven
which causes our hopes to rise.
With your strong and gentle hands,
shape our lives.
Warm us with your love.
Take our common lives
and touch them with your grace,
that we may nourish hope among humanity.
We pray trusting in your name,
through Jesus our Christ. *Amen*"

Psalm 23; David talks of his faith that God will lead him in pastures green, and beside quiet waters. His hopes are answered with his faith, he will fear no evil. He will be comforted. In the presence of his enemies, he will be fed and not go thirsty. Love will follow all the days of his life, and he will dwell in the house of the Lord.

Psalm 25; No one whose hope is in God will be put to shame, as we have faith and trust; God will lead us down the right path, to guide and teach us his truth, our hope is in him for the rest of our days.

1 Thessalonians 4:13; Paul told his fellow believers not to grieve hopelessly, but he did not challenge them to forgo grieving. Grief is different for those who have faith. Even in the depths of sorrow, hope breathes.

We may be immune from persecution, but there are those in foreign lands who are not so blessed. We may enjoy our peaceful green pastures, but war, discrimination, and unrest devastate the land of a lot of lambs. Pray with hope, that the world be released from the distractions of power, greed and discrimination, and turn to the faith in our loving shepherd.

As this is my last message as the National UCW President I would like to thank you for your support and allowing me the leadership of a wonderful group of ladies across this magnificent land. With the faith of our Father, I hope for peace, love, and joy.

With Blessings,
Nancy Risto, National UCW President

¹ (Voices United – The Hymn and Worship Book of The United Church of Canada, R. Duck 1992)



AN INVITATION TO PRAYER

We invite all United Church Women to include in your weekly prayers a message of hope and healing for our world and its people.



Banner Art: Winsloe United Church Sunday School, PEI bring Hope to life in this colourful banner: With the UCW 60th Continuing in Hope logo, along with hopes for a bright future carried aloft by butterflies. "Into your hands, I give my worries...I know there's hope, in your hands" Lyric: Alice Finnamore 2022 Photo: K. Gardner

Into your hands, oh God we send prayers: Dear God of HOPE, LOVE, JOY, AND PEACE, guide our prayer for Canada, and encourage and strengthen us as we add our personal prayers.

Canada Is Burning!

We pray for all people across our great country who are affected by the raging wildfires, too many to count, that are threatening their homes and lives. We pray for those who are affected by the smoke, finding it difficult to breathe and go about their daily tasks. We give thanks for the fire fighters and first responders from all the provinces and other countries and those who have volunteered for this dangerous task. May they be held safely in God's arms. Whenever and wherever possible, may we find ways locally to give our resources and support to assist with their efforts. We pray for all of God's beautiful creation and pray with hope that weather conditions change to bring much needed relief. May we do our part by obeying the bans on campfires and other burning and exercise extreme care and caution while vacationing this summer. Amen (Prayer written by P. Edmonds, SWUCW)



A Woman's Blessing – Reflections for our time

Woman is worth far more than rubies. She works with eager hands. She is diligent and proactive and discerning. Her arms are strong for her tasks. She opens her arms to the poor. She is kind. She is humble. She nurtures. She is skilled in the workings of the home and community. She is savvy in business. She is clothed in armor with strength and dignity. She speaks with wisdom. She is devoted to God. She is Joyful. She laughs at the days to come! (Reflection composed by K. Gardner; based on Proverbs 31)

The Sunflower Prayer

Plant me like a sunflower, Lord, deep in the fold of your will. Forge my faith in soil's darkness, sprout hope up as I wait still. **Grow me like a sunflower, Lord**, leaning close toward your light. Extend bright rays of direction, keep me warm in your sight. **Adorn me like a sunflower, Lord**, humbly wearing a righteous crown. Stack petals of mercy and grace, golden forgiveness in Christ I've found. **Use me like a sunflower, Lord**, to offer nourishment and cheer. Harvest the Spirit's fruits within me, encourage others you are drawing near. **Surround me like a sunflower, Lord**, in a field of believers ripe with faith. Bring us together for a troubled world, display your love through our bouquet. **Thank you, Lord**, for creating endearing reminders of your Word. **Looking up, away from the earth's concerns, my gaze meets yours, and joy like a mighty sunflower stirs.** {by Jamie Trunnel ©2020} Poem is one from Jamie's book *A Soul's Anchor*, available on Amazon.



Shared by Maritime UCW – M. Bubar



UCW STATS and REPORTS – ATTENTION REGIONAL EXECUTIVE

STATS FORM COMPLETION and REGIONAL PRESIDENT REPORTS for National UCW.

All Communities of Faith, Areas, and Regions/Districts UCW (President or Secretary) complete statistics summaries each year.

When all data collection is complete, the summarized numbers for the entire organization are reported at the National UCW Annual General Meeting, giving a picture of UCW across the country for that year.

Regional Presidents also prepare their written reports about all that has happened during the course of the past year in each region. These are presented along with the Statistics Report at the NUCW AGM each September. The 2023 Meeting is set to be held September 18th -22nd at Queen of Apostles Retreat Centre in Mississauga, ON.

Organization Chart of United Church Women



COMMUNITY OF FAITH UCWs: Submit their statistics Annually in February/March.

AREA UCW: Submit their statistics Annually in April/May.

***REGIONAL/DISTRICT UCW:** Each Region collects the annual statistics submitted and will summarize the data for the Region, which are then sent on to the National UCW Secretary.

Regional Statistics are due in June each year – Now Due!

INDIVIDUAL UCW Members:

Submit their information and dues annually to their Regional/District or Area UCW



representative. You are important to us, so be sure to reach out to be included! If, as a UCW woman, you are living your purpose in your community of faith, but no longer have access to an active UCW Unit, reach out, sign up, and be counted!

How do you Enroll for Individual Membership? If you do not know the contact for your Region, or in which region you live, ask your minister to connect you to

access the contacts for Region/District UCW. Membership and fees are managed by the Region/District or Area UCW depending on where you live.



Royalty Free Image: Meet Virtually



UCW VIRTUAL!? YES!

Think about forging new paths forward for UCW by creating new spaces and places to meet and connect this year. There are many ways to BE as UCW! Create a virtual meeting place using any of the popular tools out there, and then share your links with us to include in a future issue of *Keeping in Touch*. Remember to also link to your Regional websites, newsletters, and Facebook pages to continue to build your connections in Christian Witness, Study, Fellowship and Service.

nucwkeepintouch2021@gmail.com

Regional Presidents will review this newest idea this Fall:

NUCW AGM September 18-22, 2023.



Draw Your Circle Wide - Celebrate Summer as UCW

Celebrate Summer! Draw your circles wide! We have much to celebrate and much to be grateful for. The forest fires across the country, although still burning, are being managed expertly to keep as many communities out of danger as is possible and people are returning to supportive and caring friends and family in this time of rebuilding. The smoke is clearing and we can keep the doors and windows open to allow the gentle breezes to flow through and cheer us, and to allow us the time to share our prayers of thankfulness and hopefulness for those here in our own country, in Ukraine, and in many other places around the world where care and prayer can do so much to help. God's handiwork really is marvelous!

There seems to be much going on, in, and around our UCW circles as is evident by the articles submitted to *Keeping in Touch* this month. UCW and other church women are busy with their gardens, flowers are a-blooming and vegetables are a-growing to produce a good harvest this year. Women are reaching out and keeping in touch with phone calls and messages and cards to ensure no-one must be lonely this summer. We are not required this year to isolate!

Let's plan to gather together as women of faith, for fellowship, for faith and for fun and then do it again, now that we can. Let's build and rebuild in the coming year, so that all feel welcome. Let's not put an age limit on it! Let's make it about moms, daughters, aunties and grands and greats! Let's come as we are! Let's come with a friend! Yes, we as UCW, do have a great history. That amazing tribe of women who came before us all have created an outstanding organization that is worthy of our continued support; for now, perhaps, in a new way of being UCW. So, let's gather! Let's draw our circle wide! Let's expand our ideas of what we can do together to support our families, our communities, our churches, our planet!

So, we will gather, and sure, why not share the UCW heritage recipe along with that walk in the forest, nature trail or city park? Do a craft – sing some camp songs and favorite hymns – arrange for a garden tour – a speaker – create a banner- host a movie night - cheer on the local team – or “hurry hard” at a curling bonspiel – make it fun as you practice your faith and your fellowship, and, o.k., perhaps a little fundraising too. And, you might just be surprised at what this positivity attracts, and the growth you see as you make that invitation sincerely and authentically to other women in your spaces and places, to the women that don't always show up for the event; but you find out later, just needed to be asked. What does your gathering look like to you - is it in-person, on-line, a hybrid, is it flexible? Do it! Then share your stories with *Keeping in Touch*! Shared in love as Sisters in Christ,

Barbara Davison, NUCW President-Elect / Karen Gardner, NUCW Secretary

Enjoy UCW's 60th Anniversary again in photo and story!

Visit the photo library, information pages and a unique YouTubeVideo to celebrate and reflect on the inspiring experiences from our UCW 60th Anniversary: Use the links to travel back to July 2022, Sydney, Nova Scotia where United Church Women from Canada and Bermuda celebrated in faith and fellowship. Access [photo library](#) and [Maritime – 60th UCW](#) web page.

View video: <https://youtu.be/38XoJcg6nTc>



60th Anniversary Pins are still available! \$6 includes postage

To order contact: Debbie Hawkins EMAIL: macdebbie.hawkins@gmail.com. OR send an order request via Canada Post with payment to: *Debbie Hawkins 128 Woodbine Lane, Upper Kingsclear, NB E3E 1S3.*



Philanthropy and Giving



United Church Women across the whole church can be very proud! We

have always found creative ways to fund important initiatives in our communities and to support global human need. Thank you! Through these donations, lives are transformed. The church has been able to inspire meaning and purpose for communities, and is continuing to deepen discipleship as we all work to build a better world.

In a recent letter, signed jointly by The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator and Sarah Charters, Executive Officer, Philanthropy, we have this news to share:



The United Church Women across the whole church are recognized for giving \$475,061 in donations in 2022 for Mission and Service

United Church Women 5 Year Special Project – THE HEALING FUND



NATIONAL UCW Support Indigenous Women, Children, and Families

New for 2023, United Church Women (UCW) are making donations to support the programming designed by our *Healing Fund* partners for Indigenous women and children. The primary focus is healing the family through culture and language while meeting individual supports within the program. Through *The Healing Fund* application process, for the next five years, this priority group has been added, designed to specifically support women and children. *The Healing Fund* acknowledges the UCW for their generous blessing and donations to ensure Indigenous women and children receive adequate support and encouragement. For further inquiries and information on this priority group, please reach out to our *Healing Fund* Coordinator at healing@united-church.ca.

The Healing Fund is a grant program which supports healing initiatives in Indigenous communities to address the ongoing impacts of the residential school system. Many survivors name a need for mending, restoring, and celebrating — acknowledging a sense of loss, along with



hope for rebuilding identity. Programs that have been supported throughout the years include healing and sharing circles, reunions and commemorations, traditional and cultural programs, language revitalization, workshops for residential school survivors and families, spiritual gatherings, creating digital resources, and more: [Healing Fund projects and criteria](#)

Photo Credits: Healing Fund (left to right) 1. Learning culture through drumming and songs. 2. Nokomis harvesting porcupine for traditional craft making. 3. Creating children-focused art and crafts to learn culture and language.





How do you support UCW's 5 Year Special Project – The Healing Fund?



Send all donations for this UCW Special Project to:

The United Church of Canada
3250 Bloor St. W. Suite 200
Toronto ON. M8X 2Y4

**Important: On cheque memo line, clearly write
NUCW -The Healing Fund**

Printed for sharing is the letter sent May 19, 2023 to
NUCW Executive from
Joni Shawana, Healing Program Coordinator



It is my pleasure to share wonderful news with the National United Church Women of the first Healing Fund project supported by the NUCW community.

As of April 19, 2023, the total amount of gifts received to the Healing Fund from UCW members was \$5,077.60. Throughout the Spring 2023 Healing Fund review, our Healing Fund Working Group focused on our agreement that allows these gifts to support Indigenous Women, Children and Family programming that focuses on the healing of intergenerational trauma affected by Indian Residential Schools.

After carefully reviewing our applicants, our HPWG has selected **Regina Native Outreach Ministries** as the project supported by UCW for their “**Mother & Baby Welcome Bag**” program.

Below is a brief description of their program:

Regina Native Outreach Ministry's Mother & Baby Welcome Bags were created to address the ongoing impacts of intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools. Indigenous mothers giving birth at Regina General Hospital are subjected to racism, discrimination, and violation of rights. Birth alerts, where hospital staff identify a mother as being unable care for her baby, are a continuing practice based on stereotypical and racist assumptions of Indigenous women as incompetent, promiscuous, and bad, which were the same messages inflicted on Indigenous girls through residential schools.

RNOM gifts Indigenous mothers giving birth at Regina General Hospital with a large, reusable bag containing essential items for their newborn baby and themselves. For the newborns there are diapers, baby wipes, diaper rash cream, baby soap, burp clothes, sleeper, onesies, and a handmade blanket (knit, crochet or quilted). For the mothers, there are personal care products like sanitary napkins, breast pads and a small gift such as socks, lip balm and a candle. Also included in the bag is a traditional medicine pouch containing the four traditional medicines of sage, sweetgrass, tobacco and cedar that has been blessed by RNOM's ordained minister with a smudge and a prayer. These welcome bags also include a greeting card with a message of love, respect and caring to let the new mother know she is not alone on her journey and an explanation of how the new mother may use the medicine pouch to connect with her ancestors. In addition, the welcome bags contain an information card with contacts for spiritual support and access to elders. A full description of their program, goals, and objectives [is available*].

We invite you to share this news with NUCW congregations so that members will learn more of the RNOM program and will be able to support future Indigenous Healing programs alike. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach me. In Spirit & Unity,

Joni Shawana, Healing Program Coordinator
Indigenous Ministries & Justice - United Church of Canada
Tel. 416-231-5931 OR Toll Free 1-800 268-3781 Ext. 4485



Image Credit: Mother and Baby
Welcome Bag Program RNOM

***The full handout Mother & Baby Welcome Bags – Spring 2023 Healing Fund Project will be available to download in PDF from the UCW Web Page at <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/being-community/united-church-women-ucw>**

NUCW ALUMNAE

We appreciate your help to honour United Church Women across the country



Alumnae Coordinators past and present
Patricia Whitton(L) Patricia Edmonds (R)

A gentle reminder from National UCW Alumnae to contact the NUCW Alumnae Coordinator, Patricia Edmonds, with any modified contact information for our Alumnae mailing lists.
patriciaedmonds11@gmail.com



Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada
Conseil œcuménique des chrétiennes du Canada

47 Queen's Park Crescent East
Toronto, ON M5S 2C3

TEL: 416-929-5184

WHAT WE DO

- World Day of Prayer
- Fellowship of the Least Coin

ABOUT US

- Who We Are
- Mission and Vision

STAY CONNECTED:

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram

We-Connect

Summer 2023 Edition

This month, in WICC's *We-Connect* Newsletter, you will meet Crystal Porter, in the article, "Reconciliation is Community." To learn about WICC, and the engaging programs and materials available to women of faith, check out these web site links at www.wicc.org and <https://wicc.org/contact>

Blessings from *Win Ozum*, UCW rep to WICC board

THE UCW LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD

Congratulating Joan Wilkinson, Pacific Mountain Region UCW/ **First Met UCW Victoria BC**
Thank you to Chair, Marie McKee, First Met UCW for submitting the announcement



In recognition of a UCW member's service to United Church Women, a UCW group may choose to recognize that service by presenting a member with a Life Membership. A Life Membership is registered with the national office and confirmed through the presentation of a Life Membership Pin and Certificate. It is an honour to receive, and never given lightly.

UCW – Life Membership Pins The United Church of Canada Church in Mission Unit 3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200 Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4 E-mail: w@united-church.ca UCW Support Staff at General Council Office:

1-800-268-3781 Pin and Certificate--\$60.00 –Deceased Members Transfer*--\$40.00 • Lost Pin--\$15.00

• Lost or damaged certificate--\$5.00 by Cheque Payable to: The United Church of Canada

No charge for broken pin if old one sent in – [Full Information See PP 21-23 UCW Handbook\(September 2021\)*](#)



COAST to COAST to COAST



REGIONAL AND LOCAL NEWS

Canada North and West

Pacific Mountain Region UCW – *Don't Worry – Be Happy*

United Church Women in the Pacific Mountain Region gather and celebrate in spite of the distances, both land and sea, that separate them. All women of Pacific Mountain Region UCW joined in, in spirit, when reading about Fraser Area UCWs in-person gathering last fall. At this joyous tea party one heritage teacup & saucer which travelled all the way from Maritime Region UCW and the UCW 60th Anniversary, was gifted to an honoured guest, Betty Dunham-Gledhill. Betty served for thirty-eight years on Fraser Presbyterial/Area Executive! Thank you, Betty, for your gifts, skills, and devotion to UCW!



Betty Dunham-Gledhill



Members Line Dance and "Be Happy" at PM AGM this Spring.



For the AGM this April 2023, in Squamish, BC, Pacific Mountain United Church Women chose the lighter theme, "*Don't Worry, Be Happy*", in light of so many crises in the world today. The Agenda covered all the business items, with Winnie Kowalewich returned as President. Joyful hymns, devotionals, songs from the UCW parodies songbook, line-dancing, laughter, book exchange, hats and gloves modelling, and delicious food rounded out the meeting. Keynote Speaker Rev. Debra Bowman, spoke on knowing the difference between joy and happiness. It was a day filled with faith and fun.

The UCW of Peninsula United Church in Surrey, BC made an incredible discovery during a post flood cleanup in December 2022, receiving a number of boxes of paper records, undamaged by the flood, dating back to 1950! Handwritten minutes of the Women's Association were part of the treasure! This June all items were transferred to the Regional Archives. This event raised the question, "What is happening to this valuable history for churches that are closing and/or sold?" It will be a great shame for our UCW history to be forgotten.

Submitted by: Winnie Kowalewich, President PM



Note: If your church has items of history to be preserved, the UCW Handbook (download from the UCW webpage [here](#)) has information regarding archive guidelines in **Appendix 11**.

Also navigate to the main UCC website at <https://www.unitedchurcharchives.ca/>

Women of the United Church (WOUC) Chinook Winds and Northern Spirit – *We are One*

The 2023/24 *We are One Directory* is a comprehensive contact list produced for the region (no easy task!) Contact the Regional President for more information. *We Are One Gathering News*: We enthusiastically joined in to reconnect at our first in-person AGM in three years (April 27-29, 2023) Venue: FCJ Christian Life Centre, Calgary.



Elder Cheryle Grey Eyes



Honoured Guests: Elder Cheryle Greyeyes: Cheryle is a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, Treaty 6, Saskatchewan and is a member of the University of Calgary community. She shared stories of her people in word and song and spoke of her time of marching for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. She introduced us to the Medicine Wheel, which is a teaching tool, to learn the importance of the four sacred medicines: sage, cedar, sweetgrass, tobacco and the four elements: air, fire, earth, and water.

Adele Halliday – Anti- Racism and Equity Lead, United Church of Canada General Council Office. Adele led and challenged us to consider and understand "Respect"; "Mattering"; "Marginality"; to understand "the "other" point of view. We discussed what we can do to dismantle unjust



Adele Halliday

power, to move toward a 'place for all'.

Rev. Pamela Scott: Led us in our closing worship and communion in the beautiful Chapel.

The Strummers: Entertained with the favorite "old" songs to match our ages!

On a personal note, I have just returned from a two-week, "trip of a lifetime" to Ireland. Such a beautiful country. My bus tour began and ended in Limerick. Journeying along Ireland's coast, it was an exceptional opportunity to gather knowledge of the history, culture, and language of this beautiful country. I returned home enriched!

Rev. Pamela Scott



Submitted by: Eleanore Tribe, President, WOUC, Chinook Winds & Northern Spirit

Saskatchewan United Church of Canada Women (SUCCW) Living Skies Region

Discerning a Good Path Together United Church Women, part of SUCCW network, used their gifts and skills this past May, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, securing an information display table at the Living Skies Regional Council meeting. Pamphlets from many of the local and regional women's groups, copies of the NUCW published newsletter - *Keeping in Touch Newsletter for UCW*, information from Women's Inter-church Council of Canada (WICC), and Saskatchewan UCW Bursary Fund brochures were distributed.



Beautiful Stained-Glass Window
Living Skies Region

The highlight of the annual meeting was an invitation to take part in the PowWow that was hosted by the local indigenous community for all ages, featuring traditional dancing, singing and story telling. Elder Bunny Ermine extended a welcome that started the meeting in a good way, sharing his story and offering a prayer. On Friday Chief Cadmus Delorme offered deep wisdom and insight on the Indigenous World view. Saturday morning, Elder Liz Settee shared her story and thoughts on what Reconciliation looks like, and Charlene and Russ Burns offered teachings and leadership around Remit 3, regarding the autonomy of the Indigenous Church. On Sunday morning an Elder offered smudging in front of the Calvary United Church entrance, to all who attended worship. The Sermon by Rev. Michele Rowe of Maple Creek gave insight into our future as a church and as humans living in harmony on Mother Earth. She said, "if we are to choose to walk together into the future as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, newcomers and long-timers, rural and urban dwellers, ministry personnel and lay leaders, young and old, we would do well to follow those who walk softly and humbly, those at home with land and sky and the Creator who made them...for healing to happen, for progress to be made, we must undertake the longest journey of them all, the one between our heads and our hearts". The complete sermon may be read on the Living Skies website under Women's Network.

As we all work to discover a good path together, women in Saskatchewan remind us of an important message from Jesus as written in Matthew 28: "Do not be afraid...I will be with you always, to the end of



the age.” It is hard to “not be afraid” these days. To not be afraid for our youth, our communities, our churches; but we must also believe that “God is with us”; and that “we are not alone” on our journey.

Submitted by Mary Mohn, SUCCLSR UCW

Canada Central

Prairie to Pine (P2P) Region UCW- Zoom, Faith, and Fellowship

United Church Women in the far-flung corners of Prairie to Pine Region UCW don't allow distance to keep them from gathering. “Zoom” is the medium and Faith and Fellowship are the messages shared along with the coffee; and not only in Regional Executive meetings. The invitation has gone out to join in to a regularly scheduled Monthly Tuesday On-Line Coffee Chat. Contact igpokotylo@gmail.com for the link. Also to note that P2P UCW who have lost their church or unit may (as can any member across Canada and in Bermuda) sign up for Individual UCW membership (See Page 3). Technology is a channel to keep faith and spirit strong, information flowing, energy high and friends connected. P2P Region members were able to join in virtually to the Ontario based WOW-UCWs Zoom launch broadcast supporting *The Healing Fund* with Joni Shawana in February this year. These women are making UCW work in new ways.

By: Gaye Pokotylo, Past President with KGardner KiT.



Canadian Shield UCW- Artist honours the Lord and Landscape in a New

Banner: Canadian Shield UCW has a new

general banner thanks to Carol Webb of Port Loring, Ontario. Carol's lovely banner represents the loving hands of God with a background of our rock formations of the Canadian Shield and the Northern Lights. This Banner will preside over all CS UCW events and will hang in the home church of the President of Canadian Shield UCW.

Submitted by: Dawn Monroe, President CSUCW



Designer and Fibre Artist Carol Webb with new Canadian Shield UCW Banner

Canada South



Antler River Watershed Region (ARWR) UCW – Reimagine Familiar Patterns and Look to Modern Horizons

Past-President Marjorie MacMillan encouraged units to contribute their stories for this issue of *Keeping in Touch*. The focus this year in ARWR is to organize to “familiar patterns yet look forward to modern horizons.” Women are

realizing that they are returning to life after Covid restrictions with more knowledge, skills, resilience, and strength to be able to benefit others and support their own mission and vision.

St. Andrew's UCW, Chatham celebrated summer with sundaes!

Women of the region are truly living their purpose as UCW.

May 1st **First St. Andrew's U.C.** led by Laurel Kenney and Nancy Quinn, welcomed Brandon Doxtator, Environment Consultation Coordinator for Oneida Nation of The Thames to speak on the “*Water Issues Facing the Oneida*” project; a huge endeavor, requiring community and others to participate if it is to be



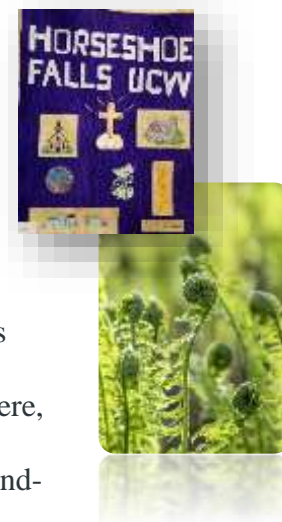


successful. The women are inspired to endorse this project and other local issues as a result of the NUCW selection of *The Healing Fund* as its special five-year project running until 2027. June 3rd, **Mount Brydges**: First bake sale since Covid closures; June 12th **Camp Kee-Mo-Kee** welcomed a UCW group of twenty-two women for an orientation day before the summer camp launches for kids. Attendees shared a day in camp life, meeting staff with Jill Hodgins, greeting favorite books with Mary Dillon in the Resource Centre, showing acting skills with drama coach Nancy Urquhart, singing with Neila Lawson, excelling at trivia led by June Gwalchmai and not to be forgotten, a classic bag lunch before closing with worship and communion with Rev. Mary Dillon. June 14th, **St. Andrew's UCW, Chatham** celebrated summer and reflected on life's miracles at their Annual Meeting. Eighteen members enjoyed the "Make Your Own Ice Cream Sundae Bar"- all the flavours, all the toppings including the classics – whipped cream and maraschino cherries! AGMs in **Middlesex UCW, Oxford UCW, and Sarnia/Lambton UCW** were a joyful success, and **ARWR UCW is the sponsor for Summer Event 2023, on Saturday, July 15, 8:45am to 3pm, Siloam United Church, 1240 Fanshawe Park Road E., London, ON.** Keynote Speaker: Mona Wutenburg of Karen's Place, London. Music with Dunwich Highland Ringers, a Book Room and Lunch are on the program. Circle your Calendar and grab a friend. Email: M. MacMillan (mgrh.macmillan@sympatico.ca) for information on how to take part.

Horseshoe Falls Region UCW – *Spring Means Renewal*

In April, sixty-two women met at Five Oaks Retreat Centre for the AGM and a day of renewal. We were blessed to have Keynote Speaker, Rev. Alison Mock, who began worship by reading Psalm 30 – "Joy Comes in the Morning". The psalmist wrote about the effort to rebuild the temple; that the people were in the 'pit', at the very bottom, in a place of hopelessness. How can you sing when you are in a place of hopelessness? Rev. Alison gave a modern context to her presentation by sharing the story line of the movie "*Inside Out*", a film presenting all the emotions as members of a team, inside a child's head. *Joy* is in charge, but is challenged by *Sadness*. The story evolves as *Joy* struggles with, "what to do about *Sadness*?" How can *Joy* break through? Rev. Alison reminded the group that it is here, in the depths of grief, that help comes. As God shares some of our burdens, we are brought back to a place to experience Joy. It was a wonderful day that included round-table discussions, lunch and a craft, and time to be together as Sisters in Christ.

Submitted by Marilyn Johnston, President HFRUCW



Western Ontario Waterways (WOW) UCW

Love of Creation: Putting Faith into Action for Climate Justice

WOW United Church Women have been using technology (Zoom gatherings) for the past few years as a means to engage and communicate throughout their region and out to the wider church. This new way of supporting each other and sharing new ideas of "being" as UCW is working well. First engaged to support Steering Committee meetings, it evolved to be an important support as Covid shut Canada down. WOW UCW will continue to meet as executive for planning and brainstorming. Advantages to using Zoom over face-to-face? Meetings are focused and efficient and it helps us to lower our carbon footprint by not driving to meetings. Zoom isn't without its challenges, as some attendees must connect by phone. The mood remains collaborative in spite of this, occasionally evolving into a meal-sharing meeting, or simply into an on-line chat.



In February, 2023, approximately 80 women met by zoom to hear guest speaker, Joni Shawana, UCC Co-ordinator of The Healing Fund kick off our NUCW Special Five-Year Project. Women from New Brunswick to British Columbia as well as from more centrally located regions attended on Zoom. This video is posted on our WOW Regional website on the UCW page and is available if anyone wishes to watch it at <https://youtu.Sorbe/3OCR5go8fh4>. Joni is introduced at approximately 9 minutes, 40 seconds, and her presentation goes on until about 48 minutes in to the event. [Preview YouTube video UCW Launches Healing Fund Support with Joni Shawana](#)



Forest Hill United Church in Kitchener was the backdrop for this year's Annual General Meeting, held on Earth Day 2023, Saturday April 22nd. We experimented with an in-person/live YouTube AGM. Instead of having a catered meal, approximately 45 women brought their own brown-bag lunches. Tea and coffee were available as well as some treats from the hosting UCW. At 1 pm, the in-person meeting was live-streamed via YouTube. We were supported by women from other regions as well. Our guest speaker, Lori Neale of General Council's Church in Mission Unit, led us in a combined presentation and worship on the theme, "For the Love of Creation." Lori shared what individual congregations within the UCC are doing to cut their environmental footprint across Canada. A YouTube version of this service is posted on the WOW Regional Council website, and it has logged a good number of views since posting. The meeting is available for viewing at the following link: [WOW UCW Regional April AGM](#)

We have been very fortunate to have the support of Michelle Pettick, a shared staff member of the WOW/Antler River Waterways/and Horseshoe Falls Regional Councils, who has uploaded our presentations for us on the regional website.

If you are interested in exploring some of the potential for hybrid meetings, it is relatively simple if you have a local church with the technology to live-stream their church services on YouTube. We are not computer gurus. But we have found that there are Communities of Faith with the technology and the technicians to help us turn our dreams and ideas into a format that enables more of our members to attend and be involved, and that allows us to worship and support one another even though distances, weather, and our membership make travel more difficult. Please reach out to me if you have further questions at dareuber@rogers.com
Submitted by Anne Reuber, WOW President



Shining Waters Region UCW: *Moving Forward- Staying Strong*

Shining Waters Region UCW held their Annual Meeting and Dinner in person for the first time since the beginning of the COVID pandemic on May 2nd, 2023, at Burton Ave. United Church in Barrie.

With careful planning, the agenda covered all business and 2024 budget approval, and provided an uplifting time of faith, fellowship, and refreshments in a one-day program. The joy on the members' faces as they greeted friends face-to-face after such a long time was evident. Many members had not seen the beautiful banner (shown with D. Aikman and J. Blanchette), stitched by Barbara



Shining Waters Regional UCW Executive for the coming year will be led by new President, June Blanchette (centre)



Hendren, that went with us to the 60th Anniversary in Sydney last July. In addition to the Shining Waters Region UCW logo being featured on our banner, Rik Aikman made us a stunning stained-glass version to be displayed at all our meetings. The President, Diane Aikman, led the singing with her guitar and all 60 of us enjoyed singing our praises to God. Rev. Kirsty Hunter, inspired by our meeting theme, encouraged us to remember our past accomplishments and build on them in new and exciting ways. Time was spent in small group discussions to share what we had learned from the COVID experience and what plans we have for the future. Members donated worship and program books for the Book Exchange, filling book bags with free “new-to-you” resources. The new Shining Waters Region Executive, with President June Blanchette at the helm, was installed by Joyce MacKinnon, a past National UCW President. Andrea Wheaton DLM, pastor at Burton Ave. UC and Nancy Umphrey, ordinand 2023, conducted the communion service. Diane Aikman led the Vesper Service and we were all able to head for home right after dinner.

Shared by Patricia Edmonds, SW UCW

RIBBON SKIRTS



Creations From the Spirit of Giving

Kente Area UCWs brought ribbon to our recent Annual...for use in teaching the skills of making traditional ribbon skirts. A community leader working with teachers, Indigenous students and the homeless put the ribbon to use and here are some of the results! The blue ribbon on the dreamcatcher print skirt (in photo with family pet trying to steal the show) come from a UCW collection. One of the skirts includes the medicine wheel with colours reflected in the United Church crest.

Bay of Quinte ECOR UCW – *Catching the Spirit*



At our April Annual Meeting, we poured coloured stones into a vase to recognize both the different presbyterial Areas that form our Regional UCW and to create a rainbow symbolic of our being an Affirming Ministry. In May, Bay of Quinte UCW ECOR received a new rainbow flag at the ECORC General Meeting. Our facebook page - unitedchurchwomen ECOR – shows photos of our AGM where a Mohawk Traditional Healer shared the Thanksgiving Address in gratitude for our interconnection with all creation. Also posted: notices about a September. Quin-Mo-Lac Weekend, “Moved by the Spirit,” with the Kairos Blanket Exercise, workshops, and lakeside devotions; a fall Workshop on the new United Church digital music resource “Then Let Us Sing;” and our fall online book club on “What Comes from Spirit” by Richard Wagamese.

Whether by Zoom or in person, something wonderful happens when our UCW communities come together! Take for

example, Kente Area UCW; members collected and contributed ribbon supplies for use by a community leader teaching Indigenous students the skills of making ribbon skirts and shirts. One of the creations shows the traditional medicine wheel with the colours reflected in the United Church Crest.

Shared by Cheryl Mound, Bay of Quinte, UCW



Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region (EOOR) UCW – *Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

For the women of EOOR UCW their vote to become an affirming UCW region is a joyful forward step in their journey toward living out their purpose as United Church Women. Embracing the concepts of Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship and Daring Justice may come slowly at first, but women of the region are encouraging and supporting a new way to be as UCW, and as members of United Church of Canada, as we vision for the future.

EOOR UCW's 81st Summer Event 2023 is scheduled for July 14 & 15, 2023. The Theme: "Steady As A Rock" will offer participants reflections and activities to answer the question, "How is your Body, Mind and Spirit?" With guidance from Workshop Leaders, attendees are expected to come away with a toolkit of positive tips to uplift the spirit, direct hope, and support faith. The MacIntosh Inn and Conference Centre, located in beautiful Morrisburg, Ontario is the venue. Lakeshore Drive United Church, in Morrisburg, will host Sunday Worship July 16th to include event guests. Not many know that this lovely church is also the home of the [Lakeshore Labyrinth Walk](#), which overlooks the St. Lawrence River and is available to all wishing to experience it. To join the service on Sunday, please contact Carolle Dallas-Arbuckle at cdallas@ripnet.com for details. The church will print extra bulletins based on expected attendance.



Canada East



Nakonhaka:ka: Quebec Regional UCW – *People of the East - Hope and Possibility*

The word Nakonhaka:ka is a Mohawk word, a reference to "the people of the east, the people of the rising sun," and there are no Mohawk communities in Canada further east than Quebec. The Nakonhaka:ka logo illustrates the people of the land celebrating the rising sun of a new day in the Eastern sky. The image also represents hope and possibility, rooted in the age-old blessing of the land and the community, supporting

each other. Quebec women duplicated this logo on their banner for the UCW 60th Anniversary in Sydney, NS, shown here.



Fundy St. Lawrence - Dawning Waters - Region 15/Bermuda: Maritime UCW – *Tuning into Purpose* *As we silence our hearts, our minds and ourselves, may we find a way to "unclutter" our thoughts for just a short time and "Tune In" to the Spirit. Amen*



At a two-day gathering in Moncton, NB, women from across the Maritime UCW were invited to "Tune in to Purpose." In the aftermath of "Covid Time" gathering in person is special, and unique, but so many folks have now backed away from getting involved, from volunteering, and from attending Sunday Service. Where and how do we find the answers, and the desire to "be part of" again? Tending to daily obligations seems to wear so many of us out far more than before, even with all the technology helps that exist; but technology that kept us all connected to congregations and communities and our lives, has, for some, become a time stealer. We have been unable to 'tune-in' as before! The mind can be compared to listening to a radio, or even, perhaps, to a sunflower? Remember the old antennas attached to radios and televisions? Unless these were turned the right way the reception was poor with static. The mind is the same; when not turned the right way, not tuned in, you experience fade-out, clutter, and poor reception.



Sunflowers, those little seeds when planted in good soil, that get water and sun, will mature to a beautiful bright bloom, and produce useful seeds. A sure thing for the sunflower, is the fact that it always “follows the sun” or “tunes in” as it grows, turning like a radio antenna, to get the best “reception,” and to find its real purpose...producing beautiful yellow flowers to give us joy and food.

So, “tuning in to purpose,” for us as people; might we find the same theory can work for us? What if we stay “turned to the Son,” and keep looking up, and work on clearing the “clutter” from our minds, so we can be open to and “tuned in to our purpose.” It is in these quiet moments, with clear minds, that we become open to the voice of God showing us our purpose. Shared by Marilyn Bubar, Co-President MUCW

A One-Cent Hog Penny from
Bermuda Story by Mary Sumpter,
Bermuda UCW



Bermuda Synod UCW/UCC: Not many members of our congregations know that Region 15 – part of Maritime UCW, includes the island of Bermuda, home of Bermuda Synod United Church of Canada. Pictured on the left is a one-cent Bermudian coin, also known as a “hog penny”. Original coins were called hog money, minted as 12pence/12p (shilling) coins to the smallest 2p (tuppence), named after the wild boar that roamed the island. At the UCW

60th Anniversary in Sydney last summer, then President of Bermuda UCW, Margaret Ingham, brought with her a stash of 300 personally polished hog pennies and the famous story written by Mary Sumpter, to share with us all. Bermuda wild hogs are reported to have been one of the meats salt-preserved by sea going merchant ships to keep their crews supplied, and are also likely to have been an imported food ration that saved settlers in Virginia from starvation in 1610 following a hard winter of famine and disease. Bermuda, as an island, has one continuous ocean coastline, adding this fourth coast to our coastal story for UCW this month. The two UCW units in Bermuda are small (Hamilton Wesley Methodist and Emmanuel), but members gather for faith and fellowship as they are able. As is true here in Canada, members are aging, and holding meetings has become more challenging. The hog penny and its famous story is only one of the many wonders that Bermuda has shared with our UCW network and we look ahead to hearing more from them in a future issue of *Keeping in Touch* as they celebrate “being UCW”, well into the future.

By: Debbie Hawkins, Co-President MUCW /Mary Sumpter, Margaret Ingham Bermuda UCW



Margaret Ingham, Bermuda UCW President (L) waves joyously during UCW's 60th Anniversary banner parade.

Pres. Debra Sparkes-Mercer (East District) with
Pres. Myra Spence (West District) carry the Region's
Banner during UCW 60th Anniversary



First Dawn Eastern Edge Newfoundland & Labrador East/West Districts UCW - “Put Your Apron On!” to Celebrate Service and Dedication and Fun

The UCW of West District NL, with President Debra Sparkes Mercer from East District NL gathered for a Retreat Week-End at Max Simm's Camp in Central Newfoundland, this June. The theme of the Gathering was “Put Your Apron On!” to focus on the apron as an iconic symbol for the service and dedication of our United Church Women over the years. A parade of classic aprons, including patchwork creations, were showcased, each with its individual, beautiful story, presented by the owner. It was a wonderful weekend of Worship, Fellowship, Sharing and Fun, with thirty-six dedicated members present.

Each person left the Retreat inspired, looking forward to resuming meetings in September. Since our last in-person meeting in 2019, we are sad to report that many UCW Units have closed; but reports from open Units are positive and that they are getting back on track. May God go with all of us.

Submitted by: Juanita Andrews, 1st Vice President UCW West District, NL



SOCIAL MEDIA – WEBLINKS – RESOURCES

find us on the web at <https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/being-community/united-church-women-ucw> and on Facebook



ucrdstore.ca New from UCRD United Church Bookstore

This summer explore faith, how it is expressed and what it communicates, in *Undivided Love* by Janet Gear. Offering readers, a sympathetic way to interpret the belief-inspired actions of those around them, *Undivided Love* empowers us to navigate the terrain of theological diversity, and to ultimately address the deeper question: What are we called to do?

Summer Blessings, Kim Allin (she/her) Sales and Ecommerce Associate



Grand River Book Store: Open at Five Oaks Retreat Centre, Paris, Ontario -- contact the store at 1-519-442-3366 or 1-888-668-0871 Email: sales@grandriverbooks.com and

on the website at www.grandriverbooks.ca Planning the book table for your next gathering? Call us!



What is happening in your Region, your Area, and your local UCW Unit?

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United Church Women Celebrating 60 – Visioning for the Future

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord...to give you a future with Hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11:NRSV