



Keeping in Touch

NUCW President's Message – *“Lead not only by word, but by action”*

Hymns: How Firm a Foundation - VU 660 Let us Build a House - MV 1

Scriptures: Nehemiah Ch 2 part of verse 20:

The God of Heaven will help us succeed. We, his servants, will start rebuilding this wall.

1 Corinthians Ch 12 verses 12 – 27: *The body is made up of many parts etc.*

Prayer: *Dear Lord, we ask your blessing and your guidance as we continue our journey to rebuild our firm foundation before it can wear away. Help us, as we take some unexpected journeys in the continuance of your plan for all our hardworking, faithful members of our United Church Women. AMEN.*

I know thanksgiving is over but there is always time for thanks, and I want to thank all the individual units that have sent me cards and all the different areas across the country who have prayed and sent me good wishes I thank you very much. Please continue with your prayers, they really help me by filling my heart with joy. I went online and showed respect for Rev. Brenda Fawkes. It was a beautiful service of remembrance.

Remember to distribute the UCW Centennial Worship Service to all your churches. I have started thinking about next year's annual meeting and if you have any particular person you would like to speak with us please forward the information.

Blessings till next time.

Barbara Davison: National UCW President



Highlights from the National UCW Annual Meeting, September 16 to 20, 2024

On Monday, September 16, 2024, UCW women from across Canada arrived at Queen of the Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga, Ontario, for the National UCW (NUCW) meeting. Each Regional UCW was represented by two women. We were about to embark on a busy time of learning, discussion, worship, and fellowship. President Barbara Davison's theme is **“LEAD NOT ONLY BY WORD, BUT BY ACTION”**; SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah Ch 2:20 in part and 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27; HYMNS: “How Firm a



Foundation” VU #660 and “Let us Build a House” MV #1. Unfortunately, President Barbara was not able to attend the meeting. Many thanks to Past President Nancy Risto for stepping in to chair the meetings during the week.

We had morning worship and vespers each day, led by women from different regions. Each day included business meetings, guest speakers, and time with our friends from across the country.

NUCW Business

Reports were received from our President, Regional Presidents, and others. Win Czum, our representative on the Women’s Interchurch Council, reminded us about the 2025 World Day of Prayer service, written by Christian women on Cooke Island and where to find resources. Pat Edmond, our Alumnae representative has been inviting alumnae members to share their memories from years they spent on the National UCW and will share these memories in future issues of Keeping in Touch. Angie Musonza, Church in Mission, gave an update on the move to share office space (United, Anglican, and Presbyterian churches) which is anticipated for 2026, ‘Then Let Us Sing’ release, Climate Motivators, Partner Council of the United Church of Canada, and the African Consultation on Human Sexuality and Gender Diversification.



On Thursday, Carolle presented the budget for the coming year, which was passed with a few amendments.

On Thursday, Barbara DeJeet President-Elect nominee introduced herself, told us about her experiences with UCW. She is also a licensed lay workshop leader and a sacramental elder and has planned various events. Barbara DeJeet was elected as the President-Elect.

Phyllis Robinson was elected as Communications Chair as a non-voting member.

Committees were created on Friday morning including Finance, Grant, Communications and Affirming.

Guest Speakers

The Moderator, The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne was our first guest speaker of the week. She spoke about the 100th Anniversary in 2025. The Centennial service will take place in St. John’s NFLD. 45th General Conference is next summer in Calgary and will be a hybrid format. Theme - Visions and Dreams. Knox UC in Calgary will be hosting the installation of the moderator on August 11th, 2025. Rev. Carmen then discussed what is happening in Israel and Palestine. She asked what do you need from the church to feel confident to say something and to say it strongly. Discussion followed and participants provided input to Rev. Carmen. Rev. Carmen will write a letter to send to the PM. She will also send it to Angie to send out to NUCW and suggested you write a handwritten note to go with it to say that you agree.



Honourary Life Membership A UCW Honourary Life Membership was presented to the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne.

Amy Crawford, Team Lead Identity and Mission led us in a bible study “We are Christ’s body acting in the world” If you were a body part in the church, what would you be and why? 1st Corinthians 12: 12-31 was discussed with questions from Amy. A parting question to think about: “What is your part – what actions do you need to take to help your UCW, your church or the UCC nationally and globally?”

Sarah Charters, Executive Minister, Philanthropy/ President UCC Foundation, Jenna Yango Leonard, Foundation Coordinator, and Harry Li, Executive Officer, Finance UCC reviewed NUCW funds. Jenna gave a summary of the NUCW funds held in the UCC Foundation. Each year a portion of the UCW Endowment funds are removed to disbursement income which is 4.25% of the funds average balance of the previous 8 quarters. Harry gave a summary of the NUCW funds held in the UCC. Carolle asked for quarterly statements. Carolle asked if the anniversary we hold every five years could be considered a special project and some funds from the Life Membership Fund could be used for the anniversary. Harry will do some research into this for us. Sarah reminded us that the funds that the foundation holds are externally restricted and have designations by those who set them up, but UCW approves where the funds go, within those designations.

Ruth Sandeu, French Ministries Ruth gave an update on French Ministries. French Ministry Staff – There are five on staff of French Ministries. Churches and Ministries – There are about 22 churches and about 4 other ministries. Communities of faith – There are many communities of faith in New Brunswick, Quebec, Winnipeg (with First Nations). They are in conversations with other provinces and regions and communities. They are working toward creating a new institute of theological study. Activities of faith – AGA 2024; they have activities in February around Black History month. They have a volleyball team and a soccer team. They run retreats, meetings, and pastoral visits. She covered some upcoming events. For more information their website is egliseunie.ca

Ruth Noble, Executive Director, Affirm United Ruth Noble talked about what it means to be affirming. All are welcome, inclusion, being safe, and meeting needs such as gender-neutral bathrooms. There are 20 ministries affirming this fall, 180 in the process and 320 that are affirmed. Affirm United works for full inclusion of people, membership is open to those who support this work. Affirm United is a partner with the UCC, but they are independent and are also working with other denominations and a mosque to become affirming. The Affirm program started in 1995 and the first affirming ministry was Augustine UC in Winnipeg. The goal of an Affirming process is a public, intentional, explicit welcome for diverse gender identities and sexual orientation. Elements to the affirming process: encountering the need, embark on a time of education and discernment, (watch documentary 1946), embark on your decision around voting and decide together and move towards the vote of affirming.

Rev. Jennifer Henry, Executive Minister Organizational Development and Strategy (Planning, Communication, Growth) led a workshop called “Deep, Bold and Daring: Living the Denomination's new Call” Jennifer talked about the denomination’s new call. “Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice”
Deep Spirituality - Where is Christ showing up and inviting you –compelling you—to go deep?
Bold Discipleship – Where have you seen bold discipleship? Who has inspired you by their bold discipleship? Daring justice: Where are we right now – as this United Church – pressed to daring justice? And alongside whom?



Jennifer reviewed the GCO Strategic Plan: Common Good – indigenous Pathways – Leadership – Climate – Justice – Growth (Renew, Create, Invite). Strategic Objectives are to embolden justice, invigorate leadership, nurture common good, deepen integrity, walk indigenous pathways, strengthen invitation.

Goals are to renew existing communities of faith, create new ones, emerging communities and invite people to the UC of Canada. Showed a video (30 seconds) which was shown during stars on ice (3 times in a show) and at Pearson airport over the summer. 100unitedyears.ca

Checkout on website Our Call and Our Vision – see how are doing on their strategic objectives.

What Can you do? Be Ambassadors of the Call and Vision; Help Share the Good News; Plan and Support Centennial Events; Promote Centennial Newsletter.

Joni Shawana, Healing Program Coordinator, Indigenous Ministries & Justice, UCC spoke on the Healing Fund via Zoom Joni gave a background on the Healing Fund and some of the projects that have been funded in the past. She talked about the ‘Mother & Baby’ Welcome Bag Project which the UCW helped fund through the Healing Fund in 2023. In 2024 the UCW funds toward the Healing Project are for the Fort McKay Metis Nation Association “Healing in the kitchen” (Fort McMurray, Alberta). Their primary goal is to create a culturally affirming and supportive space for healing, reconciliation and holistic well-being. More information to come on this project.

Kim Baird 65th Anniversary Update Chair of the 65th Anniversary Planning Committee, from EOR, Kim announced that there are 1,036 sleeps until the 65th! EOR is excited to host the 65th Anniversary. The planning committee consists of Chair Kim Baird, Carolle Dallas-Arbuckle, Cheryl Sullivan, Charlotte Hoy, Nancy Desjardins, Linda Stronski and Denise Wood.

The 65th Anniversary Celebration will be held on July 19th – 23rd, 2027 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Ottawa Airport. Theme: Hear Our Voice. Scripture: Proverbs 8; The logo will be revealed soon.

The Hilton Garden Inn has guaranteed the room cost at \$195 plus taxes per night. Breakfast is on your own. There is a hotel shuttle, and arrangements will be made if you are coming in by train.

Registration forms will be available in the fall of 2026 and payment will be possible by e-transfer. Kim thanked the NUCW for the \$25,000 seed money.

Tours will be on Wed. There will also be a craft session and a bible study for those who do not want to go on a tour.

Thank you to ECOR and Quebec who offered to help however possible. Very much appreciated.

Can reach the committee at ucw65anniversary@united-church.ca

Theme Hymn of the 65th Anniversary “Draw the Circle Wide” (MV) was sung.

Entertainment and Worship

On Thursday evening, entertainment was provided by some of the regions through skits, readings and music. The evening was enjoyed by all.

On Friday, we closed with a communion service led by Rev. Jennifer Henry, Executive Minister Organizational Development and Strategy (Planning, Communication, Growth). This service was available by Zoom.

Next annual meeting of the NUCW will be September 15-19, 2025, at Queen of Apostles.



Workshop UCW Centennial Worship Service for the 100th

During the week the group worked on different parts of a UCW Worship Service for the Centennial of the UCC. Groups worked on order of service and prayers, hymns, reflection, children's story, agape meal, and a bulletin cover. The date chosen for the UCW Service is March 2nd, 2025, if it works for your Community of Faith. It can be used on another date as well.

Working groups on the Centennial Service!



Submitted by *Cheryl Sullivan*, NUCW
Secretary



Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada (WICC) www.wicc.org

Mission” Empowering Christians to pursue justice, peace and reconciliation by standing together in Prayer and Action”

World Day of Prayer:

WDP 2025 Theme “I Made You Wonderful” based on Psalm 139 :14 Worship Service by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Cook Island. Artwork, by mother, daughter duo Tarani and Tevairangi Napa.

- **Resources available,**
- Create a Coordinators login account (You do not have to be a coordinator to create an account) to access many free resources
 - Ideas for a creative WDP event planning guide
 - Promoting WDP
 - Video of a recorded WDP service available to download from Feb 1st, 2025 (Free)
OR purchase a USB memory stick packet (\$25.00) that includes the service video as well as Music, a Devotional message, Power Point service that allows you to ‘personalise’ the service, A Power point about Cook Islands that could be shown during your WDP gatherings. If you have questions about WDP check the web site for the Field Rep In your area.
- **Festival Day, January 2025, Date TBA, by Zoom, Register Online**
- **Donations to WDP** help to provide grant funding for grass roots programs that support and empower women and children both in Canada and overseas. Donations can be sent electronically or by mails to WICC, 47 Queen St. West, Toronto ON. M5S 2C3
- Lots more information available on the web site
- **Fellowship Of the Least Coin.** A worldwide ecumenical movement of prayer for peace and reconciliation. Christian women around the world pray with each other. Through this, they are reminded to live a forgiving life with others. ”Least Coins” are given with each prayer, yet the movement is focused on prayer and reconciliation rather than money. Anyone who wishes to join in prayer makes a commitment to uphold, in prayer, those who are victims of Hatred, Violence, and Injustices.
- **Ending Violence against women and girls.** ‘Thursdays in Black’ pins (20 for \$20.00) and other resources are available on the WICC web site
- **We-Connect** Newsletter, subscribe on website (free)



Check out the web site for more information about any of the above, plus more, www.wicc.org

Blessings: *Win Oyam* (NUCW rep to WICC)



National UCW Support Thursdays In Black



65th Anniversary of National UCW

HEAR OUR VOICE

Have you marked your calendars? July 19 - 23, 2027

As of November 1, 2024, in 990 sleeps, Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region UCW look forward to seeing many of our UCW Sisters from across Canada and Bermuda gather in Ottawa to celebrate sixty-five years of United Church Women.

Food for Thought - check out the host hotel and venue - Hilton Garden Inn Ottawa Airport, 2400 Alert Road www.ottawaairport.hgi.com

Questions or comments? Email them to ucw65anniversary@united-church.ca

Blessings, *Kim Baird*, Chair



NUCW Alumnae

Many of our Alumnae members are still very active in their regions/districts and even the NUCW!

In Maritime Region a plaque was hung at the “UCW Cookie Cottage” at Berwick United Church camp on UCW Day 2024. It commemorates and acknowledges going forward the UCW ladies who have contributed in a special way to the life of Berwick Camp and especially the on-going success of the Cookie Cottage for all these years. The first name to be added to the plaque is Reta Manuel, NUCW President 2004-06.



This photo is of Barbara Refuse who served as NUCW President 1998-2000 and Letha Mowatt who celebrated her 89th birthday in July. These alumnae members from Nova Scotia remain staunch supporters of UCW and remain faithful attendees of the UCW events at Berwick Camp.



Joyce MacKinnon, former NUCW President, remains an active member of Shining Waters Region UCW Executive. She is shown here, front row second from the right, with the executive members at the annual Togetherness Day held on October 2, 2024.

Some of our alumnae members also allow themselves to be recycled! They return to the NUCW Executive bringing their experience and wisdom to mentor new executive members from their regions or accept a position on the executive. This September we welcomed back to the NUCW table Betty Radford-Turcott, Amy Hill, Edith Coyle, Shirley May, Margery Wright, Nancy Risto, Win Czum and Pat Edmonds, all former NUCW members.

Please continue to send stories and photos of alumnae members and advise me when members change addresses or are no longer with us.

Blessings, *Pat Edmonds*, Alumnae Rep.
patriciaedmonds11@gmail.com



Celebrating 100 Years

From Antler River Watershed UCW

Antler River Watershed Annual Gathering

The Annual Gathering was held on Saturday, April 27, 2024, at Dunwich United Church in Dutton. Our guest speaker was Rev. Jen Prince, and the worship leader was Rev. Larry Schneider who also led us in communion as well. The theme was “Where there is Faith, There’s Hope.” We had greetings from Barbara Davison who wished us well. Mary Dillon, from Fairmont United Church in London, brought us a lovely book display. We had the local Dunwich Ukulele Group entertain us after lunch before our guest speaker spoke. We were fortunate to also get a nomination for a first Vice President, Mary Dillon. We had Kathy Douglas to the installation of the officers before we finished. It was truly a wonderful gathering.

Camp Kee Mo Kee Day

This is Middlesex UCW Annual Camp Day at Camp Kee Mo Kee in Komoka held on Monday, June 10. There were not a lot of ladies in attendance but the ones that came enjoyed themselves. We are asked to bring a cold potluck lunch to share with our dishes and lawn chair. It is also when we bring some of the Camp’s wish list items as well. We also had a book display from Fairmount Centre with Mary Dillon who also shared with us what she had brought.

The day starts off with a sing song lead by Neila Lawson. We were then introduced to the camp staff. We then had two workshops. The first was skits with Nancy Urquhart where we all participated. Next, we had a quiz where we were divided into two groups and this year we had to guess various spices. That was really fun to do. We then had lunch which we shared with the camp staff. In the afternoon, we had a song workshop with Neila Lawson and the craft which was planting seeds. We left the remaining seeds for the camp to plant. We then closed the day with worship and communion. It was a very cool day so most of it was spend indoors.

We have already booked the event for next June.

Summer Event

This is an annual event put on by Antler River Watershed UCW that happens at Siloam United Church on July 20, 2024 with the theme: “Go Make A Difference” and this was clearly reflected in our guest speakers and special entertainment. They are truly making a difference in the lives of people in our community.

We ask each area to participate in this event by welcoming participants, doing worship, saying grace, thanking our speaker, thanking the afternoon entertainment and lastly one area doing the courtesies.

We started the day with coffee and muffins served in the atrium at Siloam. The start of the day in the sanctuary with the Land Acknowledgement. We had greetings from Siloam United Church, Kathy Douglas welcomed us on behalf of Antler River Watershed Region, and Marilyn Mitchell welcomed us on behalf of Antler River Watershed UCW.

We then had a sing song with Neila Lawson leading us in various songs and she also helped with songs during worship and communion.

We then had Mona Wuytenberg from Karen’s Place give us a brief update on what is happening at Karen’s Place and the success they’ve experience. Karen’s Place provides housing and supports for



women 50-plus who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. The home, located at the corner of Colborne and Central Streets in London, can accommodate 5 women as well as a “house mother.”

Our guest speaker, Jordan Boyd from Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) was introduced by Marilyn Mitchell. Jordan shared with us some of the statistics about youth homelessness and addiction, as well as telling us about the various programs Y.O.U. offers, and the difference they are making in the lives of those with whom they interact. Jordan was thanked by Elgin, and then Essex offered the meal grace.

The folks at Siloam always do a wonderful job of feeding us at Summer Event. The buffet was laden with a variety of salads (including the ever-popular popcorn salad), cold meats and buns, with cake topped with berries for dessert.

In the afternoon, Neila led us in a sing song and then Laurel Kenney gave us an update on the National UCW Project. The Healing Fund was chosen as our special five-year project (running from 2023 until the UCW 65th Anniversary in 2027). The Healing Fund provides a bursary to ensure Indigenous women and children receive adequate support and encouragement through culture and language programming. Laurel also shared information about the ongoing situation at the Oneida Nation of the Thames. Despite money being committed by the government for the Lake Huron Water Pipeline, progress has been very slow and people are continuing to buy bottled water.

The afternoon entertainment was provided by a 5-piece string ensemble for “El Sistema South London,” led by Steve Wooley. They were introduced and thanked by Maureen Tipping. El Sistema provides music instruction as well as instruments to youth who may not otherwise have access. What a wonderful opportunity for the youth in our community! El Sistema was started in Venezuela in 1995 and now exists in several other countries around the world.

Mary Dillon, Dean, closed the day with a benediction, using the words of Swiss philosopher Henri Frederic Amiel: “Life is short. And we have so little time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love. And make haste to be kind. Amen.”

From the evaluation forms we were fortunate to recruit two more people and have several suggestions for theme speaker and musical entertainment. The Planning Committee will begin making plans this Fall for our next Summer Event which will be held on July 19, 2025.

Respectfully submitted, *Linda Britton* - Treasurer Antler River Watershed UC



Pacific Mountain UCW

Although the Pacific Mountain Gathering/AGM was held six months ago (April 26- 27, 2024) the memory of the event lingers on. We were fortunate to have two prominent and amazing women as the Presenters

- Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne and National UCW and President, Barbara Davison. Both speakers were encouraging and inspirational.

We are now busy planning the Fraser Area UCW AGM to be held on October 23, 2024 at the United Churches of Langley. The theme is "Celebrating Togetherness" - togetherness in the UCC as we celebrate the 100th Anniversary, togetherness in the United Church Women and togetherness with the Indigenous. On previous evaluations of the AGMs, it was often noted that the event was too sedentary....too much sitting. We took the suggestion to "Let's Move It" and will be having Chair Yoga. To have a practice run, the Unit at Peninsula United agreed to try it. It was successful although there was probably more laughter than exercise.



Submitted by *Winnie Kowalewicz*

News from the Maritime UCW



Much Excitement at Berwick United Church Camp UCW Day July 31, 2024 Berwick United Church Camp is situated in the beautiful Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia. Each year during the 10-day Church Camp, women gather for a special time of celebrating UCW. This year approximately 70 plus ladies spent a wonderful afternoon “under the hemlocks” in the open pavilion on an extremely warm day, but this did not deter the enthusiasm as we had much to celebrate. The highlight of our afternoon was our time with the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne. She spoke to us under the sweltering heat giving us a powerful message of encouragement, positivity and gratefulness. She mentioned not only the work and dedication of the United Church Women, but also, she gave us encouragement to move forward in whatever way works for us. Yes, we see changes, but with change can come advancement and hope.





A decision made by the Maritime UCW executive to have ongoing recognition of departed UCW members who had contributed much to the ongoing success of the Berwick Camp UCW Cookie Cottage throughout their life, was marked by the dedication of a perpetual plaque which will be hung, during the camp each year, on the outside of the *Cookie Cottage*. The first name added is that of Reta Manuel who passed away in fall of 2023. Reta was National President from 2004-06 and also served as Maritime UCW president.

We were also excited to welcome the new president of MUCW, Betty Ann Watts, Vice President, Ann Piper, Michele Ashby (Social Secretary) on their first visit at Berwick Camp UCW Day. Other executive members in attendance were Leanne Boulet, Joan Fraser, newly elected Jocelyn Langille (Christian Life & Growth) and Phyllis Munroe (Treasurer), who provided the music for the program.

Past Co-Presidents, Debbie Hawkins and Marilyn Bubar followed the theme Berwick United Church Camp had chosen and delivered a program entitled *Rooted in the Tree of Life*.

The afternoon ended with a delightful time of refreshments ``near the cookie cottage`` as folks visited and just enjoyed the time together with one another, ``women of like minds``, UCW!

That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers." Psalm 1:3 (NIV)





East Central Ontario Region UCW

Grateful for our Gatherings

At the September **UCW Weekend at Camp Quin-Mo-Lac**, the group included 22 first-timers as we enjoyed 3 days of music, workshops, speakers, lakeside worship, Grand River Books & a Fair Trade display. From Polar Dippers to Prayer Circle friends, we celebrated our theme -- "United and Strengthened." Two UCW Areas, Hills and Shores and Kawartha Highlands, co-hosted a spirit-raising weekend with offerings of over \$2000 for the Camp.

Photo Right: Here we all are on the Dining Hall deck.



Leadership Workshop

"One More Step: Deep – Bold – Daring"

Our October 9th Leadership Workshop was held at Frankford United Church. Designed to provide ideas for UCW members celebrating The United Church of Canada 100th birthday, the day included a timeline of milestone events and Moderators over the years, hymns from the 'old blue Hymnbook', a Healing Fund display and memorabilia table. June Drain led worship on the smooth and rocky roads we travel. Rev Warren Volmer reminded us that while other denominations have emerged from groups dividing over differences in theology or practice, The United Church of Canada is the only church formed by UNITING people from different denominations; and we continue to welcome new groups and all people as we build our future.

Participants left with resources including an Anniversary Year Word-Find and enthusiasm for celebrating our 100th birthday. The NUCW's 100th Anniversary Worship Service was announced and distributed after the workshop.



Photo Above: East Central Ontario UCW Program Chair Nancy Sutherland dons her wedding hat as she leads discussion of United Church milestones at our Annual Leadership Workshop

Special Thanks to our regional UCW Leadership Chair, Nancy Sutherland, and to our Program Chair, Mary Hobbs, for organizing this event. And Much Appreciation for the NUCW Leadership Grant, so that costs for the day were affordable.

Submitted by *Cheryl Mound*, President, East Central Ontario Region UCW



Eastern Ontario Outaouais Region UCW



Summer Event

Submitted by *Carolle Dallas-Arbuckle*

First Dawn Eastern Edge West District UCW Report

Many of our UCW Units had been busy for the winter and spring. Most units closed in June for the summer.

West District planned a UCW Retreat and AGM in Central NL for June but had to postpone until September. Our AGM was then held virtually mid May with election of officers being held.

We were privileged to have our National UCW President Barbara Davison visit NL in late May, visiting both East & West Districts.

UCW Grand Falls-Windsor hosted an elegant afternoon tea at their church hall with many UCW women attending and we were honoured to have President Barbara as our guest speaker. A wonderful evening was had by all. President Barbara finished her tour with the UCW on the West Coast.

West District began their fall activities with a retreat at Lion Max Simms Camp Central NL with 50 women attending. The theme for this event was “Flamazing Women” and it sure was a flamazing weekend with lots of fancy T-Shirts and Flamingos everywhere. The Hat Contest was fabulous!

After a weekend of worship, learning, fellowship and fun we returned home feeling inspired and rejuvenated; ready to pass on encouragement and excitement to our local units.

Eileen Butt Vice President and I attended the National UCW Executive Annual meeting in Mississauga. It was great to see friends from last year as well as make new friends. We returned home with information to share with West District Units.

We continue to do the work of the UCW and living out our purpose by being the hands and feet of Christ.

Juanita Andrews, President West District UCW



First Dawn Eastern Edge District UCW

First Dawn Eastern Edge East District United Church Women held their Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 25, 2024, at Shoal Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador. Our special guest this year was our National President, Barbara Davison. She arrived on Wednesday, May 22 and on Thursday, we had a luncheon with UCW members in the St. John's area. After that we did some site seeing around the area ending with delicious fish and chips at a local restaurant. Fortunately, the weather cooperated by giving us a cold but sunny day!! On Friday, we journeyed to Clarenville to attend the AGM on Saturday. The ladies were delighted to meet Barbara, and we all felt as though she had been with us for years. There were 60 women at our meeting which is the most we have had since before Covid when we were getting 90 plus. After the meeting I drove Barbara, with a stop to see Beulah Hayley, to Gander where Marion Stratton, West District, took over the visit. We (East and West Districts) were so blessed to be able to have her meet United Church Women from St. John's to Corner Brook.



Submitted by *Debra Sparkes-Mercer*

Saskatchewan UCW in Living Skies Region

Sask. UCCW executive met by zoom on Friday, October 18. The entire executive and guest Carolle Dallas Arbuckle were in attendance.

Eleanor Bowie was installed as second Vice so all positions on the executive are now filled for the year.

There was much discussion on hosting a Women's Gathering in the coming year and including the AGM as part of it. The date has been set for April 26, 2025, in Saskatoon.

There will also be a Women's Event in Abbey on June 10, 2025.

We continue to post on the Living Skies website under Women's Network, e-mail and mail out a monthly newsletter with information from the Region as well as National UCW and WICC.

Mary Mohu, Sask. UCCW Newsletter Editor

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Report

The 104th Annual National Convention was held in Saskatoon on August 11 – 14, 2024. When National UCW president Barbara Davison broke her arm and was unable to travel she phoned and asked me if I would attend on her behalf. I immediately said yes. Little did I know that the theme of this year's convention was from Isaiah 6:8 Here I am Lord, send me. I felt I was living their theme. The convention was packed with activities as well as inspirational



speakers and their annual meeting. The activities began the day before the convention with the opening banquet. St. Patrick's Church has a large Filipino congregation, and they hosted the evening sharing cultural food and entertainment. From that time on each day was filled. Sunday and Thursday mornings began with special events pertinent to Saskatoon. A trip to Wanuskewin Heritage Centre on Sunday for lunch and to the Berry Barn for breakfast on Thursday. Sunday evening the Convention officially started with Mass at the Cathedral of Holy Family. Each day started with a Eucharistic Celebration. Guests who were not Catholic could chose to receive a personal blessing. This was a reminder of one of the differences in our Churches, with the United Church of Canada believing in the open table communion service.

Special guests were seated together. I had the opportunity to meet and spend the week with Cathy Reid, Board President of Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada (WICC) and President of Women's Missionary Society Canada (WMS), her colleague Janet Brewer Executive Member of WMS, and Mary Nordick, the CWL representative to WICC and former CWL National President. I was welcomed by these wise and active women. Mary was able to guide us with the ins and outs of the Convention. Being used to UCW meetings it was a surprising feeling to have a strong male presence at the meetings. There were 4 Archbishops, 10-12 bishops and priests in attendance at most of the sessions. Plus on Tuesday a Monsignor was one of the invited guests. Any proposals that were made during the convention have to go for approval by the Most Rev. Wayne Lobsinger, Auxiliary Bishop of Hamilton, the CWL National Spiritual Advisor and then to the regional Archbishops and/or Bishops.

The concerns of the CWL mirror many of the UCW concerns, declining membership, and how to continue the work



and service to our communities of faith. There was a mutual understanding and acceptance that we all, UCW, WICC, WMS and CWL are serving God in our own ways.

I shared this thought as part of the UCW greeting "As women of faith the CWL and UCW have played and continue to play important roles in their churches, their communities, in their provinces and territories, and in our country. As you participate in your Convention may you deepen your faith and be inspired to

continue your endeavors while you follow the theme of your convention "Here I am Lord, send me." I believe that this holds true for all of us.

Back Row l. to r. : Jane Brewer, Phyllis Robinson

Seated l. to r.: Cathy Reid, Mary Nordick

The theme prayer by Bishop Wayne Lobsinger:

Heavenly Father,

Through the ages, you have called many to serve you.

Abraham, Sarah and Samuel, Martha, Mary and Elizabeth.

As well as countless men and women throughout the ages.

All were different, and each brought different gifts to your service.

Now today, we too hear your call to come and follow, to bring our gifts to your service. Help us, O Lord to make our reply,

"Here I am Lord, Send me" with full and generous hearts,

In order that we may be your instruments in the building of your Kingdom. We ask that you hear and answer our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen

Report by *Phyllis Robinson*, Treasurer SK UCCW



Coming Soon: *Then Let Us Sing!*

TLUS The release of *Then Let Us Sing!* — the United Church’s new digital music resource—is getting closer. Final selection of the new hymns and songs has been made, final layout and design is in process, and the digital platform in process.

Then Let Us SING! will be The United Church of Canada’s most current—and future-focused—source of music for congregational singing and worship planning. It will be released in January 2024 as part of the United Church’s centennial celebrations.

The project’s Material Curation group has been very busy over these last four years:

- receiving over 1,500 submissions from composers and text writers from across Canada and internationally, along with 1,000+ songs and hymns from published sources
- creating a Sampler of about 25 pieces for review by 200 communities of faith (including some UCW groups) in the fall of 2023 and reviewing the feedback

selecting the 150+ hymns and songs for the final collection

What to Expect

- New hymns and songs that
 - use fresh language for God and accessible musical styles.
 - lift up racialized, Indigenous, francophone, and LGBTQQITTPA+ and Two Spirit people, as well as people with disabilities, and people of diverse linguistic comm.
- Digitization will provide great versatility for communities of faith. A subscription to *Then Let Us SING!* will include *all permissions* for legally copying, printing, projecting and streaming the music.
- There will be no need to buy a new hymn book; and in the future, new music can easily be added. For those who prefer to have a book, however, a hard copy booklet of the new hymns is planned for later in 2025.

And There’s More

- A team coordinated by Rev. Phil Wilson has interpreted nearly twenty hymns into American Sign Language (ASL) and five into langue des signes québécoise (LSQ). These videos will be available online as part of our witness to the wider church.

Workshops and training sessions are planned in the new year to introduce *Then Let Us SING!* across the country. Keep an eye open for news about events in your area.

For more information, visit www.thenletussing.ca and subscribe to the newsletter for updates. And don’t forget to visit (and like!) our Facebook page



More pictures from the NUCW Meeting of groups working on the Centennial Service!



Working groups photos courtesy of *Debbie Hawkins*

Deadline for submission for our January ‘Keeping in Touch’ issue is January 15, 2025



What is happening in your Region, your Area, and your local UCW Unit?
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Send photos (jpg), articles (500 words max), and letters of interest to the
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