

Hello everyone,

I cannot believe it is already September! Happy Fall!

It has been a long time since I sent out the update on July 10 telling you "My bags are almost packed." I am sorry to tell you that later that same evening, I got an email saying that our flight to Montreal from Winnipeg was cancelled. After much scrambling, three of us who were registered decided to stay home because the only flights the airline offered arrived in Sydney very early on Wednesday morning when the gathering was already half over!

I wonder how your UCW is coping more than two years into the pandemic. Please email me so that I can let other UCWs know what you are doing or are planning to do. My email address is [igpokotylo@gmail.com](mailto:igpokotylo@gmail.com)

Today's newsletter is rather lengthy. It contains a message from Nancy Risto, National UCW President and also reports for the 60<sup>th</sup> celebrations in Sydney NS, from Dauphin First UCW. It also contains links to the Women for Change Zambia Zoom meeting that I told you about in July, and to the Keeping In Touch newsletter that National UCW publishes.

Karen Corbett, Sheron Miller, and Linda Buchanan were able to attend the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary gathering of UCW. Thanks Linda, Sheron and Karen for your report! It is attached to this email. I hope that you all enjoy reading their report as much as I did.

Judy Henuset, president of Dauphin First UCW, sent an interesting report to Shirley May, the treasurer of Prairie to Pine UCW. It is also attached. Thanks Judy!

The **Women for Change** Zoom meeting held on the Saturday after the Sydney gathering was recorded and the video is now posted on the United Church of Canada YouTube Channel. Click this link below to view the recording.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-UTz1lTudg&t=1486s>

*A recording of the July 2022 More than Books and Bursaries: Increasing Access to Education for Women and Girls presentation by Lumba Siyanga and Shadrack Chembe from Women for Change – Zambia. In this 45 minute session, they share the fruits of the three year partnership with United Church Women.*

Shirley May, Karen Corbett, Roberta Popoff and I attended the worship service for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UCW at North Kildonan United Church that was led by Sheron Miller and other members of the UCW. My UCW, at Harrow United Church, has not yet celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UCW. Has yours?

There were four worship services written for the UCW 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Each is listed at the bottom of the page found by following the link below:

<https://ucceast.ca/fsldw-and-region-15-ucw/ucws-60th-anniversary-news>

Feel free to use any of the services.

### **Message from Nancy Risto, NUCW President**

#### **Standing with God in Hope**

My friend Carol wondered what triggered me to choose this topic of 'hope'. She said, "Should hope be part of a Christian's vocabulary?" Faith, trust, love, service--yes! But hope? She thought that was a rather weak word. We can only hope. Non-Christians use that all the time.

But wait, Hope is the first candle of Advent. We are reminded to hope.

From *Jeremiah 29:11*, we read, "...for I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". The word hope means to have an optimistic or positive state of mind; to believe that something good will happen. There are many promises in the bible that say we can hope in God. Hope, the faith that God does have plans for us, and that they are good indeed. To have hope you need to have faith and to have faith you will have hope. For any single story in the bible, hope is an important component of the journey.

Blessings, Nancy

Nancy Risto, National UCW President

**World Day of Prayer 2023**, Written by the WDP committee of Taiwan. Theme "I Have Heard About Your Faith" based on Ephesians 1: 15-19. Look for information on WICC web site starting in November. Once again, WICC will produce a full-length service video. \$60,000 in grants distributed in 2021. **WICC is looking for Field Reps in Manitoba, Quebec and Atlantic Canada**

Both Nancy's message and the World Day of Prayer message are found in the June 2022

#### ***Keeping in Touch*** Newsletter

The UCW's *Keeping in Touch* newsletter, previously received through Infopac, is now published by National UCW in PDF format for circulation electronically or to be printed or mailing and sharing.

To obtain a copy or to get information about the newsletter:

1. [Download](#) the PDF files from this webpage.
2. Make a request through the NUCW Secretary at this e-mail link: [gardnernucwsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:gardnernucwsecretary@gmail.com)(opens in a new tab).
3. Make a request at *Keeping in Touch* at this e-mail link: [nucwkeepintouch2021@gmail.com](mailto:nucwkeepintouch2021@gmail.com)(opens in a new tab).

### **Reports**

#### **Dauphin United Church Women "Celebrating Ourselves" meeting** June 22, 2022

Twenty-seven members and auxiliary members of the Dauphin United Church UCW gathered in the Auditorium of the now - Dauphin Renewal Corporation - building for a catered lunch and time of catching up and sharing with each other. After lunch we moved to the Church sanctuary for the business portion of the meeting and our guest speaker. Guests were given time to peruse the display of UCW memorabilia at the back of the sanctuary. Pictures of members, of teas given in the past and fall suppers catered to plus any many decorations made over the years by members for the various themed teas were on display. As well several of the prayer shawls, lap blankets and prayer squares were set out for show and sharing, if anyone knew of someone who needed one. The Prayer Ministry was started by two deceased former members, and continues to this day.

We begin our meeting with the reading of the Vision, Mission and Purpose of the UCW. During the business meeting we have a time of devotion, share the number of visits in

person or on the phone we have completed and any cards/flowers that have been given out to members. Correspondence is dealt with and a financial report is given.

At this Celebration meeting we read the Memoriam for Our Friends of the UCW while a memory candle was lit. The members who did this are two of our oldest members, being in their 90's. Several UCW members reminisced.

All those who attend our meetings follow the rules set by the Church regarding Covid restrictions.

Our guest speaker was Kit Daley who is a manager of the Dauphin and District Community Foundation (DDCF). She explained how it began and how it works. A Dauphin First United Church (DFUC) couple started a Dauphin United Church Fund in conjunction with DDCF many years ago - with interest from this fund being returned to DFUC each year. As Kit said this fund can be supported through DDCF in memory of someone or an event ; in celebration of an accomplishment or special occasion, the 'sky is the limit.'. It has grown in abundance. Some of the groups or individual scholarships supported were listed. This was a very interesting talk as many of us wondered how it worked.

Our Church had a Celebration Service for the UCW on June 26. Many of our members took part in the service - reading, singing a special song "Women of the Church" with the Choir, and ushering. We also lit the Memory candle for those who have gone before us. Once again memories were shared by those attending - with many smiles and laughter accompanying the stories. A former "Life Member" travelled from Brandon to share and hear the stories.

The congregation enjoyed checking out the memorabilia and also the "Celebration" sandwich and cake luncheon put on by the UCW after church.

This truly was a UCW week to remember!

### **Report from National Gathering in Sydney, NS**

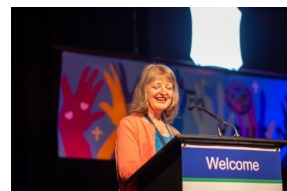
This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Church Women in Canada. The theme for this anniversary celebration was "Continuing in Hope" and was held in Sydney Nova Scotia. Hebrews 6:19 says "we have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure" so we know that God is in control of the hope we hold.

The women of the UCW have had to adapt to many challenges and changes over the past 60 years, finding new ways to witness to others and provide service where needed while remaining true to one goal - to be united in mission, study, fellowship and service.

On the beautiful grounds of Heritage Park and in the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre in Sydney, Linda Buchanan, Karen Corbett and Sheron Miller, as representatives of Prairie to Pine Region, gathered with over 230 women from across Canada, Bermuda and Zambia to celebrate this anniversary of the UCW. The hotel, convention centre and the event itself was very well organized. This report will feature information about our speakers, tours and entertainment.

Each day began with music and a devotional time with Rev. Alice Finnamore sharing her lovely voice and musical talent to this event. Theme song was "Into your hands" with special words written by Alice.

*Into your hands we give our worries, into your hands we give our sorrows, family, neighbours and planet. Along with this*



theme song, we sang old hymns, newer hymns, choruses and spiritual songs. After each guest and in thanks we sang the blessing song "May the blessing of God be upon you."

Regions were invited to prepare banners which were displayed all around the main room of the convention centre providing a colourful background to the event. The Prairie to Pine Region banner was a beautiful depiction of both Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario designed by Shirley May, and sewn by friends of UCW, Susan Ketchen and Em Poettcker.



Regions were also asked to bring sand indicative of their region. The sand was then poured into a large vase and topped with a candle and situated on the mainstage. The sand, whether coarse or fine, varied in colour and texture, represented the UCW, how, as we work together we become one in continued hope for our community of faith, our regions, our families and our world. Sand representing Prairie to Pine region was collected by Shirley May from Victoria Beach in Manitoba and Armstrong Lake, Redditt, Ontario.

Evenings were filled with special entertainment featuring drummers and dancers of the MicMaq nation, a very funny comedian Patrick Ledwell, an evening of traditional Cape Breton fiddling and a wonderful musical presentation by The Men of the Deeps, a long standing choir whose members are miners.

The speaker list for this UCW anniversary in Sydney was second to none. It was an exciting time right from the first evening when we were greeted by the Chief of Membertou, Terrance Paul. He spoke of the mandate of the community to be as inclusive as possible, that in order to have true reconciliation we had to be in the same space together and learn to walk in each other's shoes. The drumming group talked of the teachings of the drum, of the medicine wheel, of sweetgrass – all of which can also be found in the Bible.

Sally Armstrong, a Canadian journalist born in New Brunswick, was our first guest speaker. Sally is a journalist, documentary filmmaker, human rights activist and officer of the Order of Canada. Sally has worked in zones of conflict all over the world but particularly in Afghanistan. She focuses on the challenges of women and girls in the world, and is hopeful their story is changing as women everywhere start to find their voice. Men cannot make powerful decisions or have their way with women as in the past. This is evident as the MeToo movement gains strength and women's voices are getting louder with such political decisions as the overthrowing of Roe vs Wade on abortion.



Our next speaker was Rev. JD Kennedy, husband to Ruth Kennedy, coordinator of this UCW event. JD graduated from university as a lawyer, eventually leaving the legal profession for the ministry as he felt the pain of the people in conflict and he wanted to work in a profession of healing. JD's talk centered on his book 'How to C.O.M.F.O.R.T. A Dying Friend'. He was an amazing



speaker who was able to make such a serious subject easy to listen to with his stories. He took us through each letter of the word 'comfort.'

C = confront your own fears. You will be useless if you are afraid to talk of death.

O = offer your physical presence. Just be there.

M = minister with practical assistance. Do what needs to be done such as getting groceries, mail, walking the dog.

F = fortify them with emotional support. Hold their hand, listen to their pain, their regrets, give a hug if that can be done.

O = open up their lives with questions. Ask them about their life story. We are only relevant if we can tell our stories.

R = remember the family has needs too. Provide an opportunity to give a family member time away. Listen to their story.

T = turn them to Jesus. Take their hand and offer a prayer before you leave. Tell them Jesus loves them (or however they see God) as often as you can.

Our next speakers were Lumba Siyanga and Shadrack Chembe from the Women for Change Zambia delegation. (Photo credit: Michael Blair)

It was hard to listen to the stories of young women and girls in that country. Because there is so much poverty, there is little chance for girls to get an education. Girls were often married before the age of 14 and they knew no other life than having babies and scrounging out an existence for their families. The Women for Change group tries to make a difference by providing funding for education – costs \$3000 a year per girl. With 64% of the population living on less than \$1.25 a day, Zambia is one of the poorest countries in the world. Unfortunately, this leads to serious repercussions for the Zambian youth. In rural areas, 27 percent of females have no education, primarily due to poverty, pregnancy and early marriages.



To celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a UCW in 2022, in September, 2018, the National United Church Women Executive adopted a global project implemented by United Church global partner

Women for Change, Zambia . Women for Change (WFC) is a Non-Governmental

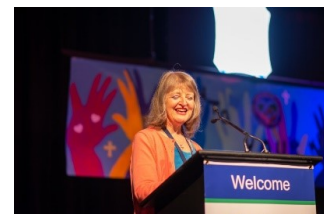


Organization (NGO) that works in rural communities in Zambia, focusing on social and economic changes that empower women and children. Established in 1992, WFC has grown into one of the most influential indigenous NGOs in Zambia. Women for Change has been a partner of The United Church of Canada since 1992.

It was wonderful when the National UCW treasurer, Carolle Dallas-Arbuckle, was able to present the delegates with a cheque for \$104,000 so the WFC group could continue their

work.

Rev. Alice Finnamore, our next presenter, was also our choral leader at this event. She had come to ministry after a lengthy career in psychology and social work. Alice felt her calling was to ministry and made the career choice later in life



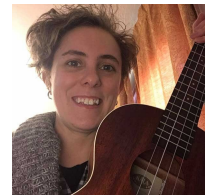


because, “it all fit together – my writing, my love of people, and my love of the Lord.’ And we could just feel that love with her ready smile and words of encouragement. Her presentation was on ‘Self Care: Hope in Action.’ Alice gave us some very practical ideas about self-care noting that we need to look after ourselves in order to serve others well. Here are some of the ideas she gave: read a book, go for a walk, meditate, sleep in on the weekend, watch the clouds, do yoga, and unplug from social media for a period of time. Alice talked of her own self-care project to lose weight and with determination achieved this goal.



Alice’s gift of music surely needs to be acknowledged. She actually persuaded the closing worship choir to learn a hymn in Gaelic. The music was easier – Isle of Skye song – for any Outlander fans!

Rev. Catherine Stuart, our next presenter, got us singing and moving around. She is an ordained minister who hails from Glace Bay serving as regional minister for children, youth and young adults in Riverview NB. We could just feel her passion for dance, ukulele and singing. She has collaborated with Rev. Linnea Good online with ukulele church.



Our closing speaker was the Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary of the United Church of Canada. He spoke of the opportunities of the church as the logistics change from buildings to ministry. He talked about our need to re-imagine how our property can become a connection point in our communities, a place to build relationships. Too many of our congregations have become disconnected from the communities where they live. When churches are calling new clergy, the question needs to be asked: “Who is in our neighbourhood, and are we looking at candidates who look like that neighbourhood?”



Rev. Blair also felt the national church has to help folks in the pews articulate the story of their faith. These folks often have as amazing stories of God’s work in their lives as any ordained minister could express. When people are excited about their faith and their church, they can’t help but tell other people about it. However, he did recognize that the church definitely faces challenges, as does the UCW itself, with declining numbers. Rev. Blair’s message suggested we continue in hope to spread the word of God as God has been working in our own lives.

Along with inspiring speakers, lovely music and wonderful fellowship, delegates had an opportunity to journey on three bus tours in and around Sydney, Nova Scotia. Departing from the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre, were tours to Highland Village, Iona, Cabot Trail, Ingonish and Smokey and Louisbourg. Here are the highlights of those tours.

### **Highland Village – Iona**

Baile nan Gàidheal - Highland Village is an outdoor living history museum and Gaelic folklife centre that illustrates the story, culture and identity of Nova Scotia Gaels. It is located on a 43-acre property overlooking Bras d’Or Lake in Iona, Nova Scotia. The 11 historic buildings on the museum property depict life in Cape Breton from 1770 to the 1920’s.

The buildings and grounds are staffed by costumed animators who are passionate about sharing Gaelic culture from that time period. Food is being prepared for children who are attending day camps at the museum, wool is being felted by museum guests and animators, and wooden shingles are being made and given out as souvenirs. The signage at the museum is in both English and Gaelic. While traveling on the bus, the tour group leader provided a recent history of Cape Breton Island. After the mines closed, the area looked to diversify the economy with tourism, technology, and promoting the local university to foreign students. She noted that her children had more opportunities to stay in Cape Breton for employment than previous generations.

The tour guide also told the group that the Membertou First Nations community, where the trade and convention center are located, is one of the most efficient and economically flourishing Indigenous communities in the country. Terrance Paul who is the Chief and CEO of Membertou is credited with tripling the land base for the Membertou community and increasing the employment rate within Membertou to 80%. In 2021, Chief Paul led the single largest investment made by an Indigenous group in Canada, with the 50% acquisition of Clearwater Seafoods. Chief Paul was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2017.

After spending the morning at Highland Village, the tour group had lunch at a local restaurant. Following lunch, the tour returned to Sydney with a stop for a group picture at the Big Fiddle in Sydney Harbour.

#### **Cabot Trail, Ingonish and Cape Smokey**

The Cabot Trail tour group drove along the scenic North Shore of Cape Breton Island to the town of Ingonish, stopping at some lookout points. At Ingonish, we were invited to ride on the Atlantic Gondola, the first gondola ride in the Maritimes. The Atlantic Gondola took riders to the summit of Cape Smokey, where they found expansive views of Cape Breton Highland National Park, Atlantic Ocean and Ingonish.

Returning from the gondola ride, the tour group were treated to lunch and then returned to Sydney with a stop for a group picture at the Big Fiddle in Sydney Harbour.

#### **Louisbourg**

The Fortress of Louisbourg is a National Historic Site. Visitors to Louisbourg learned about life within an 18<sup>th</sup> century fortified French Town. Louisbourg was a major trade and military hub twice besieged by the British. Visitors learned from costumed animators what life was like 300 years ago. After spending time at the Fortress, the tour group had lunch at a local restaurant. Following lunch, the tour returned to Sydney with a stop for a group picture at the Big Fiddle in Sydney Harbour.

Touring delegates all agreed that this was a wonderful opportunity to learn the history of this area and to view and explore this beautiful part of Canada.

Delegates remaining at the convention centre were invited to a discussion time with Betty Radford Turcotte about her recent book and her writing processes.

This anniversary event prompted many discussions relating to the past, present and future of the UCW. It was wonderful to hear of activities some groups undertake and to share what our UCWs have done. In many ways it demonstrated that the women of the church are dedicated, talented and determined. Determined to play an important role in maintaining

the continuation of the UCW. Participation in events such as this anniversary celebration is our calling. To maintain our groups, foster new members, and to continue in witness, study, fellowship and service is our mandate, this is our hope.

May God continue to show us direction, calling us to respond, to rejoice and risk, working side by side because we are one, living our tapestry of love, celebrating spirit and continuing in hope.

Linda Buchanan (centre)  
Karen Corbett (left)  
Sharon Miller (right)



Well that's it for September's newsletter. Please be in touch with me if you have ideas to share, information you want (I can try to help you find out). Please also let me know what your UCW is doing!

Be safe and well!

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