



From the minister's desk ...

We are in the midst of turbulent times. Not the least of which is the surge of Christian Nationalism and the stance of our southern neighbour in declaring there are only 2 sexes and the disturbing impact that has had on their military and education system, not to mention athletics. I don't know if all this attention is a distraction from some of the other equally pressing concerns. It is sad to think that people who had made such gains in acceptance in society are now back at least 50 years. It makes me sad and worried about where our society is headed.

I was not able to take part in the Pride Parade in London on July 19th. My contribution, if you were to call it that, was to encourage our United Church brethren to continue the pattern of making the hearts that are attached to cards declaring God's love and labeled as from the "United Churches of London". (I am calling this a pattern as we have done this for two parades now. One more time and it is a tradition!) Oh ... and I did crochet a several hundred or more hearts.

The hearts are really well received along the parade route and in Victoria Park at the conclusion of the parade. Many people have been surprised that this initiative is from a church. They didn't realize that a church would be welcoming of LGBTQ+ persons.



Not all of our United Churches are officially "Affirming". To become an "Affirming" church involves a study and discussion process. Affirming Ministries are communities of faith within the United Church of Canada that publicly declare their commitment to inclusion and justice for all people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Affirming means more than passively accepting gays and lesbians as members. Too many congregations will tolerate gays/lesbians as members – if they give up their “sinful practices.” Instead, affirming means actively opposing the “specific and deliberate rejection and shaming” of LGBTQ+ persons “in places of worship” – which may include other United Church congregations and in our society at large.

Will this new stance bring any new members? How would one know? No one has to declare their sexual identity at the door. Has it lost any members? Perhaps. But, that’s always a risk, when we choose to take a stand. Gender issues can be bitterly divisive. There’s always a temptation to say that it doesn’t affect us; therefore, we don’t need to deal with it. In these turbulent times, we can’t isolate ourselves from what’s going on around us. To many, this may seem like a small issue in a world over whelmed by so many other issues. But think of it this way – the creation of a safe space for all people is a really important thing and an act of the kingdom of God, not fully realized.

Not to take a stand is to take a stand. There is no neutral zone.

Love of neighbour and love of self both require action.

Because love is never passive.

Love is love.

Blessings, Rev. Wendy

Doggie Tales from Ilka ...

I had a couple of adventures this summer in July. The summer is not quite over, so I could have a couple of additional noteworthy tales to tell. But for now, I will share with you about my time at our friend’s cottage on Blind Bay, near Parry Sound. I love going there even if it is a long car ride. That is because at the cottage I can go right into the water! It is right there, waiting for me. And so, I do go right into the water, several times per day. My friend Beau, the standard poodle stands close to shore and watches me. I thought poodles were water dogs! Not this one. But he is a lot of fun to run around and play chase and hunt for the chipmunks. This year our friend’s grandchildren were there as well so I got to go swimming with them and get lots of love and attention as well. What a great holiday!



This is the gate in my back yard. Note that it is closed, as it is supposed to be. I am not supposed to go out the gate without a leash and a responsible adult. Maybe it was remembering all the freedom I had when at the cottage or at our friend Tom's farm but when this gate was left open, I thought I should go exploring. So, off I went. To be last seen in the backyard around 7:00 pm.

I heard that my Mommy was pretty alarmed when I was discovered to be missing and a search party was dispatched. Mommy even posted on the Old South Community Facebook page asking for help in finding me. A lady from that Facebook group did come and help my family look for me. And another lady, who was a friend of the lady visiting in Old South who found me. She picked me up and gave me a car ride and eventually contacted my Mommy so I could be brought back home.

Mommy and this nice lady named Marta exchanged texts and pictures to ensure I was going to the right person. I was identified by my collar that is the MacIntosh tartan. Apparently, Westies tend to look alike.

Mommy had to drive all the way past Lambeth to pick me up. It was a late night and I was really tired after my adventure which also included Marta taking me to PetSmart for dog food and a bath. Mommy was sort of amused by my picture? Actually, I think Mommy was just glad to get me home at.

Doggie kisses, Ilka

PS. The gate now has a new closing thing. It is supposed to keep the gate from blowing open in the wind. I could always dig my way out???



Knit Happens ... and so does crochet!

There were some summer time hats delivered to Victoria Hospital's Family Birthing Centre. They are always much appreciated. If you make baby hats from preemie size to toddler size they are always in demand. The hats can be used by the NICU, the regular nursery and the PCCU. Stop by the Knit Happens Zoom on Tuesday nights and show us what you have been crafting over the summer months. Pictures for the newsletter are always well received.

Knit Happens will be returning Tuesdays at 7:00 pm starting September 2nd over Zoom. If you are a knitter, crocheter, crafter or a conversationalist we would love to hear from you. Email Rev. Wendy for the Zoom link and remember to...

Keep Calm

And

Craft On!



They're watching you!

Report of the Antler River Regional Conference - June 26 – 28, 2026 at the Lamplighter Inn, London

It was my pleasure to represent Rowntree United Church at the Antler River Watershed/Horsehoe Falls Regional Spring meeting in June. The meeting began on Friday June 26 in the afternoon with worship based on the imagery of a potter from Bible verses - shaping and reshaping pottery. As well, imagery about a braided cord was discussed - being changed into something stronger by being together. Richard Auckland, President of ARW chaired much of the conference.

An activity introduced on Friday was the creation of a mosaic - using pieces of glass and stone – all attendees of the meeting were invited to participate during the weekend and a lovely mosaic was displayed on Sunday.

The United Church Moderator, Right Rev. Dr. Kimberley Heath as well as former Moderators Right Rev Carmen Lansdowne and Very Rev. Richard Bott attended the meetings. The Right Rev. Dr. Kimberley Heath spoke three times during the meetings – about the church's Connection Problem, Repair and Renewal. She is an excellent speaker who skillfully uses stories and humour to emphasize her messages of the need for change in our approach. What is critical? What can let go? Let's not put our everything into buildings. How do we make a difference in our world? Go with the wind. Yes and

The Guest Speaker was Rev. Lillian Daniels of the United Church of Christ from Michigan. She spoke about life in the church in our changing world.

Four ministry candidates were celebrated on Saturday afternoon - Jacqui Moraal and Tabitha Carey – Ordained Ministry; Lauri Ladd, Diaconal Ministry and Kathleen Welch, Designated Lay Ministry. Family, friends, Ministry Personnel and congregational representatives attended the worship and celebration service.

There were several groups honoured during the meetings –retirees; years of service (in 5 year increments) including Rev Wendy for 15 years of ordained ministry and those deceased during the past year.

Rev Wendy and I attended an interesting workshop on Friday evening - Faithful Conversations for Amalgamation Discernment led by Rev John Neff. He presented the United Church tool available for use to assist with the amalgamation process.

The Regions split for the business meetings. ARW elected Rev Greg Simpson of St Andrews United Church, Chatham as the next President.

I am most willing to provide more detail about the conference and my learnings. I am grateful to have attended and look forward to the Fall Conference in November (held on line).

Phyllis Brady, ARW Representative, RUC

The United Church's assistance with this summers BC's wildfires

For complete story follow link to UC website <https://united-church.ca/blogs/round-table/devastation-wildfire-community-embraces-hope-together>

... the next emergency alert came around 3:00 a.m. The entire town of Summerland was to evacuate. Shortly thereafter, the phone rang: could a group of evacuees sleep at the church? We then heard acquaintances of ours were sleeping in their car with two cats. Did we have room for them? Of course.

Oasis United Church in Penticton—where I (*Rev. Keri Wehlender is the minister of [Oasis United Church](#)*) serve as minister—has a weekly Food Cupboard program that gives out food, clothing and other essentials. I began to spread the word so evacuees would know to come for what they needed. I invited Rev. Anne Ellis of Summerland United Church and her congregation, who had been evacuated, to join us on Sunday. Members of Oasis volunteered to make lunch so that we could eat together.



.... people kept stepping up. The Sikh temple cooked hot meals and offered them every day. Local Syilx leaders invited us to join in a prayer ceremony. A new message board appeared for people to post what they needed or could offer. Businesses offered meals, vets treated pets, and pet stores offered pet food, all for free. **Naramata Centre, a United Church learning centre**, cancelled their summer programming so evacuees would have a place to stay. A local school became an air-conditioned comfort centre with showers, food, and space for children to play. I even saw a lemonade stand set up by children to benefit evacuees.

Justice Issues in the Middle East

Our United Church's Call is for Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship and Daring Justice. What is happening in Palestine and the West Bank is not just, it is in fact deeply unjust. People in Gaza are experiencing utter destruction, loss of life, and inhumane conditions without access to

necessities for life. Famine is imminent. Children are particularly impacted. In Occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank, Israeli settlers and the Israeli military forcibly displace and dispossess Palestinians of their lands, their homes, and their rights. Canada must not be complicit in genocide, ethnic cleansing, and famine. *(United Church Website – Support Just Peace in Palestine and Israel.*

The United Church is asking its members to act in the face of this injustice. One way is to ask our Federal Government to secure **unhindered humanitarian assistance/relief** — including from The United Church of Canada Mission and Service partners—which urgently and abundantly needs to reach those in need. So Contact your MP and prod them to act in the name of justice.

Your Mission and Service Fund donations at work

At **Camp Kee-Mo-Kee** in Komoka, ON, our Mission and Service gifts help to strengthen something at the heart of every summer camp experience: the people who make camp possible. By supporting an experienced senior staff role, our gifts help equip emerging leaders, support campers, and strengthen the entire camp community.

Many of Camp Kee-Mo-Kee's senior summer staff are still growing into leadership. They are capable and committed, but leadership takes experience, and that experience grows through mentorship and support. This summer, our gifts through Mission and Service helped fill the gap by funding a senior staff position dedicated to supporting the summer team. Link to remainder of this story and other M&S projects <https://unitedchurchfoundation.ca/mission-and-service-story-leaders-making/>

ELUCO (East London United Church Outreach) News

Welcome Wednesday lunch resumes on September 9 th.

ELUCO Food Cupboard

We continue to get new clients with larger families.

As of August 21st we have had 445 families.

In 2025 we had 414 families by the end of August.

Right now we have Harvest Bucks to give out and people look forward to getting them.

They can be used at several different markets to buy fruit and vegetables.

All donations are greatly appreciated.

ELUCO Fall Fund Raiser

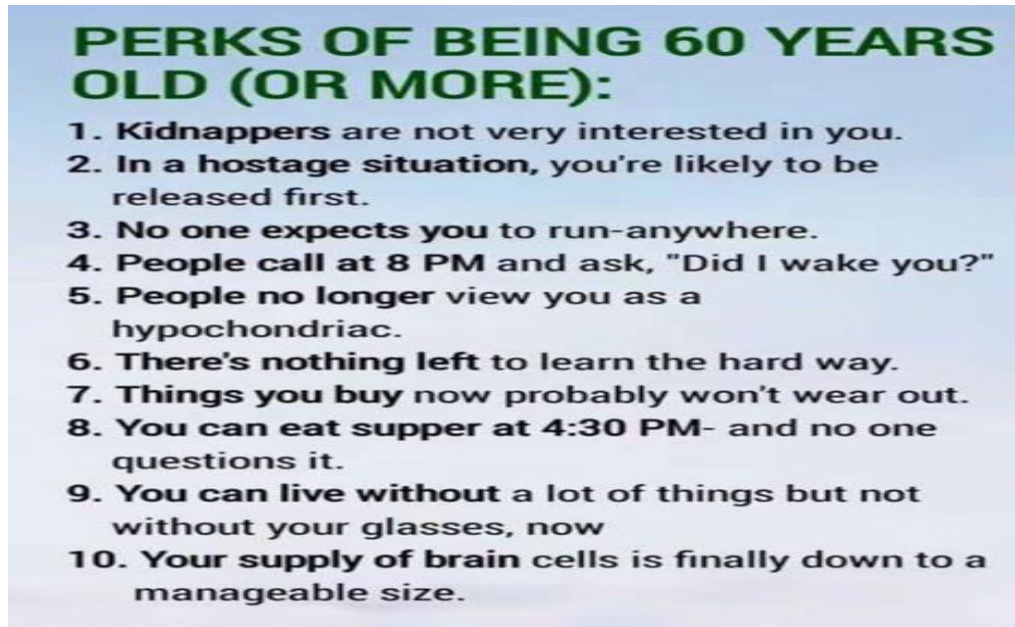
ELUCO's 31 st Annual Walk & Roll for Families takes place at Springbank Park on Sunday September 27 th at 2 pm.

Walk starts at the west end of the parking lot at Storybook Gardens.

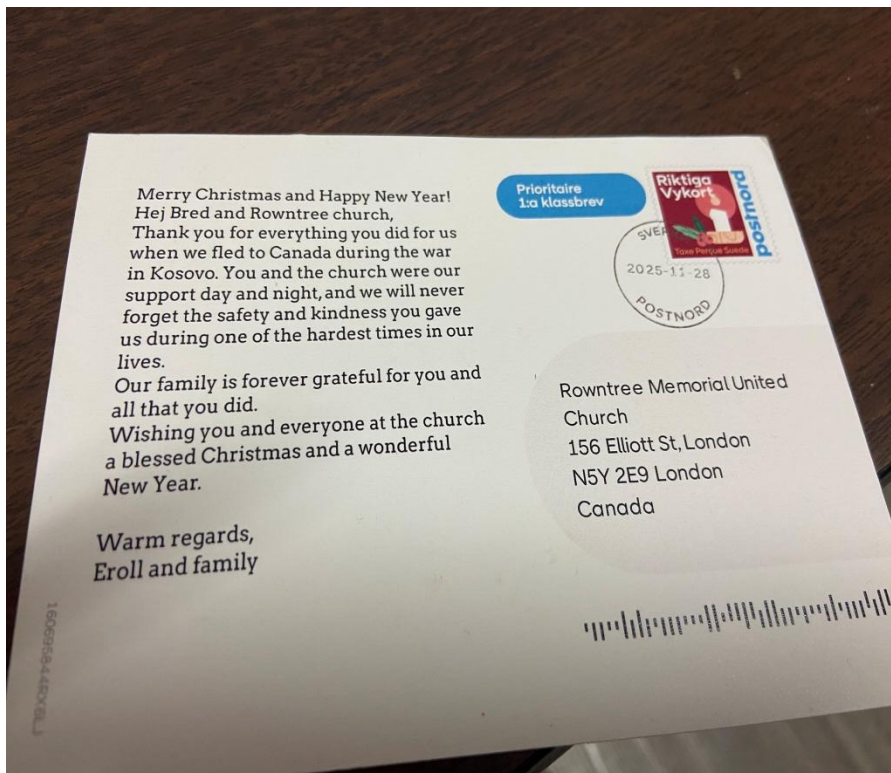
Anyone is welcome to join us and enjoy the fall colours.

Freda Owen and Judy White have sponsor sheets.

Contributed by Judy White



Contributed by Judy White



A Thank-You from almost 30 years ago

In the late 90s Kosovo was in the middle of a civil war. Many church's helped out the incoming refugees including Rowntree: we helped 3 families with medical appointments, furniture etc., the Januzi family was one family -they had 3 young boys, Eroll was one of the boys. The family returned to Kosovo and Eroll has since grown up and now has his own family. He wrote us this thank-you this past Christmas.

Some pictures from our Services over the past months



Mark Richardson at Dundas



Ryan Baxter and Kaitlyn Chambers



Rev Dr. Art Hiley at Dundas St.



Nancy Quinn, soloist, at Dundas St



Rowntree Choir and Music Director Ryan Baxter

Rowntree Fundraising 2026 to Date

Rowntree Fundraising has had some busy times since our last report for the Acorn – Easter Edition.

Spring Concert: On Friday, April 24th, the Forest City Singers invited you to “Be Our Guest: A Disney Celebration”. Eighty-five tickets were sold for the evening’s entertainment. As is customary for the spring performance, net proceeds were shared 60/40 (FCS/RMUC) contributing \$666 to Rowntree Fundraising. As a thank you for our church’s support, the Forest City Singers generously donated their share of the proceeds back to Rowntree. Thank you so much to Michelle Brown, Allison O’Connor and the singers for sharing their time, talents and treasures.

Ham & Strawberry Dinner: On Saturday, June 20th, 80 diners sat down together to share a lovely ham and strawberry dinner. A huge thanks to all who attended and all who pitched in to make for a delicious meal and fantastic evening. Once again, a big round of applause to Val Hodgins for her homemade baked beans, Chris Hodgins for his scalloped potatoes, and all those who sliced, stirred, measured, and served. This event added another \$1,680 to the 2026 Fundraising total.

Jam Sessions: As of August 24th, we have had two jam sessions. Strawberry jam and peach jam (both regular and freezer-style) have been made as well as red currant jelly (thanks for Norm and Edward). Yet to come, red pepper jelly and orange marmalade. Anyone who is interested in helping, please speak to Phyllis Brady.

Fall Fling Indoor Yard & Bake Sale: Is happening on Saturday, September 12th from 9:00 a.m. to Noon in conjunction with the Carling Neighbourhood Yard Sale. Your donations of housewares, home décor items, fashion accessories, book and baking will be gratefully received. The volunteer sign-up sheet has been posted on the Fundraising bulletin board. Please sign your name for time slots from Thursday through to Saturday. Many hands are needed to make this a fun and successful event. Any help you can offer is greatly appreciated. And please tell your friends, family and neighbours.

Submitted by Maryjane Jolliffe, Fundraising Committee

Ham & Strawberry Dinner



*Saturday,
June 20th, 2026*

TICKETS: 80
NET: \$1,680

*Thank you to all - volunteers and guests - for your
generous support. - Rowntree Fundraising Committee*



The Greatest Man

The greatest man in history is Jesus. He had no servants yet they called him Master. He had no degree yet they called him Teacher. He had no medicines yet they called him Healer. He had no army yet kings feared him. He won no military battles yet he conquered the world. He committed no crime yet they crucified Him. He was buried in a tomb yet he lives today.

Dirk van Vrouwerff found this among Laurie's items

Rowntree People, Groups and Events



Lois celebrated a birthday



Phyllis and Brad at this years Block Party

A successful time getting Rowntree out in the neighbourhood



A group photo in May of many of Rowntree's ladies



Rowntree along with many other United Church's participated in the 2026 Pride Parade. We gave out thousands of knitted hearts. It was a great time with lots of music and energy.

Below – some of our Pickle Ball players. Good fun, exercise, social time and they contribute to Rowntree's finances.



The End of a Long Journey



Pause Centre Perform after countless hours of dedication to the pursuit of excellence, Ryan delivered a captivating performance that showcased his technical brilliance at the von Kuster Hall, Western University.

He has now completed his advanced degree of *DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts)* in solo piano performance.

It was an emotional journey, guiding the audience through a spectrum of sounds from comforting classics to edgy innovation. Rowntree has been exceedingly grateful to benefit from his dedication to the music of the church, as he shares his expertise guiding choral music and accompaniment for the congregation. A shortcut - NEVER - Ryan prepares engaging and complex music for every Prelude and Postlude in a service.

In honesty, we couldn't be more proud of you. Congratulations your Rowntree congregation. Article written by Dave Watson

The Acorn is published 3x a year by the Communications Committee of Rowntree Memorial United Church and edited by Brad McMurray. Articles for the next edition are due November 30 2026. Comments or articles can be emailed to wbmcmurray55@hotmail.com or left in the Communications mail slot at Rowntree. Stories are much more effective with pictures, as 'a picture is worth a thousand words. Visit our web site at rowntreechurch.ca to find the main parts of the past 4 Sunday services, more info on who we are, what we do, what we believe in and how you can support us. And look for us on Facebook.

Rowntree Memorial United Church is located at 156 Elliott St, London, 519-432-8075