

# Connections



## *Where Do We Go from Here?*

There's a *lot* in the air these days:  
unrest, instability, uncertainty, alarm.

In moments like this,  
*where* do we instinctively go?  
What places do we move to,  
emotionally and spiritually?

And where might we  
*intentionally* go instead?

For six weeks, starting May 1<sup>st</sup>,  
let's explore some of the  
*places we typically go*  
when life is overwhelming and confusing—  
and, using the **Psalms** as an ancient inner road-map,  
let's also uncover some *alternative* directions.

Where do we go from here?  
And where might we go—*after that*?

Let's learn and journey together!

# Connections

## Mid-Week Worship

Come and find the quiet centre.

Come catch your breath and pause.

Come be reminded of God's presence.

**Come and join us for Mid-Week Worship:**

a short contemplative service

of song, Scripture, silence, and prayer

**every Wednesday morning,**

**from 10:00-10:30AM**

in the Okotoks United Church Sanctuary.

We hope to see you there!



## Help Wanted/Needed!

If you are able to help on Friday, May 20th we need 1 more cashier and 1 more helper. Also, on Saturday, May 21st we need 1 cashier and 3 helpers for clean-up. There is a sign up sheet in the foyer for hopefully many volunteers to sign up. We desperately need 2 volunteers with trucks are needed to help dispose of items not sold and to take them to the Salvage Centre and the Mission Thrift Shop. If you have any questions please contact Gisela Dyck 403-938-2506.



## Prayers

- ♦ Waterton Park United Church
- ♦ St. Andrew's United Church - Lacombe
- ♦ Blackie-Gladys United Church

# Connections

## Okotoks De Winton Pastoral Charge Ministry and Personnel (M&P) Committee – what, how and who?

**What:** The M&P Committee acts under the guidelines of *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada which requires that every pastoral charge establish its own M&P Committee. The committee functions around three roles, which are:

### The consultative and supportive role

The M&P Committee consults with ministry personnel, lay employees, and the community of faith on matters concerning their welfare and interests, and oversees the relationships of the ministry personnel and lay employees with the members of the congregation. The M&P Committee's role is to continually monitor and review the effectiveness of staff in relation to the community of faith's mission.

### The healthy relationships role

The M&P Committee is responsible for overseeing the relationship of the pastoral charge staff to each other and to people in the congregation. The M&P Committee helps to ensure a climate where constructive feedback can be offered and received in a positive way, allowing for direct discussion, explanation, improvement, or change.

### The supervisory role

The M&P Committee is responsible for regularly reviewing the working conditions, responsibilities, and compensation of all pastoral charge staff, and making any recommendations needed as a result of these reviews to the Board.

We provide resources and support for the staff and the community of faith with respect to any issue affecting staff of our church, including ministry personnel, lay employees and contractors. The committee works to build positive and trusting relationships between staff and members and adherents of our community of faith.

**How:** Okotoks and De Winton United Churches are blessed with staff who are committed to their work and we are thankful for this work in our community of faith. If members of the community of faith have praise or concerns about staff, both ministry personnel and lay employees, these can be shared in signed correspondence with the committee. The issues will be considered confidentially by the M&P Committee, who will recommend action.

**Who:** Presently serving on the committee are Sally Salter, Jack Parsons, Stewart Thomas and Wayne Stordahl. Please feel free to contact any member of the committee with your questions, your praise for our team or your concerns. We value your input and your privacy.

## Singing the Lord's Prayer

For many years we have been singing The Lord's Prayer from our Voices United hymn book, #959. It has been a favourite of many and meaningful as we sang it together. Recently several people have asked, as we return to in-person worship, whether we can return to singing The Lord's Prayer.

After much discussion, deliberation and discernment, Matthew and Julia have decided not to include *this* version of The Lord's Prayer in worship services.

In the past few years, several allegations of spiritual and sexual abuse have been brought to light by women who have worked with David Haas, the composer of the musical setting we have been using for The Lord's Prayer. The allegations have been deemed credible by many organizations including Catholic Dioceses in the United States along with several publishing companies. His music has been removed from catalogues and is no longer sung in many congregations, including several United Churches in Canada.

While most in our congregations may not have any idea of the background of the composer, knowing what we know, it became difficult in all good conscience to keep singing something that may cause triggers or create trauma for anyone who might know the circumstances. Music engages us emotionally and viscerally and engages our hearts as well as our memories. Many women today are re-traumatized by singing Mr. Haas's music. We want to avoid this possibility.

As we all know, claims of this nature—by so many—must be heard and taken seriously. Many people are traumatized by the actions of those who engage in behaviours such as those for which Mr. Haas has been accused. The United Church of Canada seeks to promote justice and reconciliation and to date we are not aware that such resolution has happened in this case, one still very much in process.

If you wish to know more detail about this situation, we direct you to the following articles.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/08/12/dioceses-restrict-david-haas-hymns-and-concerts-after-abuse-accusations?>

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/accountability/new-report-details-44-accounts-alleged-abuse-david-haas>

If you have questions or want to talk more about this situation, please feel free to speak to Julia or Matthew.

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## **NEWS FROM ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH**

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***Written by P. Marie Wedderburn***



As I sat down to write this on Tuesday morning (May 3<sup>rd</sup>), our field at the farm has been planted and we are praying for some much needed rain. And so I ask "What are your prayers and concerns for God's Creation at this time?"

Easter Sunday (April 17<sup>th</sup>) saw people gather from the three communities of faith at the Okotoks Erratic for the sunrise service. The sun broke through the clouds as we were leaving. Later sixteen people joined Julia for the service at St. Andrew's. Speaking from John 20:1-18, Julia enabled us to see through a new lens as we heard Jesus speak Mary's name at the empty tomb. For when Jesus called Mary by her name this one whom Mary had first thought was the gardener was revealed to her through new eyes that he was indeed the risen Jesus. Now Mary, seeing through a new lens, could sing the hallelujahs of resurrection.

Then on the Second Sunday of Easter (April 24<sup>th</sup>) fourteen people joined with Karen Pryznyk as she spoke of the Trinity using the letter written to the Ephesians (3:14-19a) as the scripture. She asked how do we describe and understand the Trinity and why does it matter? She then said that however we do describe and understand the Trinity, the Trinity is all about relationship and love for that is how God is revealed. One of the ways Karen showed the Trinity was having Shirle play three notes on the piano together producing one sound and is that not how we experience the Trinity for God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Spirit the Sustainer who show the one essence of the divine.

Unfortunately Matthew was not able to join us on the Third Sunday of Easter (May 1<sup>st</sup>). Thus, as seventeen of us gathered for worship, I led the service using material that Matthew and Julia had written and recorded for The United Church of Canada's *Together We Worship* for just such an occasion. I read what Julia had written in the message which spoke of Wisdom. Based on Proverbs 1:20-33, Julia wrote that there are two types of wisdom. The world's wisdom is "described as jealous, self-seeking, ambitious, arrogant, and deceitful which leads to disharmony and hypocrisy." God's Wisdom, on the other hand, is "humble, pure, kind, considerate, and full of compassion." Thus, God's Wisdom "works for peace, and shows itself by doing good, which bears fruit in holiness." In the message that I read, Julia then asked "Which wisdom am I practicing?" How do we answer this question in our daily lives?

#### ***Forthcoming events to remember:***

***St. Andrew's United Garage Sale next Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> as part of the DeWinton Garage Sale held at the DeWinton Community Hall.***

***If you ordered plants from the St. Andrew's United Plant Sale, they can be picked up at Okotoks United Church on Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at a time to be announced that day.***

***St. Andrew's United Strawberry Tea will be held on Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Okotoks United Church.***



# Connections

## Introducing our new Congregational Care Liaison

Although she needs no introduction, we want to introduce you to Gail Lafond and a new position in our Community of Faith. Over the last two years of enforced isolation we have come to recognize that we could do more to care for the pastoral and relational needs of our congregation. In the budget passed at our AGM in March, we allocated some money to contract with someone for 15 hours a month for the purpose of reaching out and creating connections within our community. This will include phone and in-home visits with the possibility of growing this ministry to include opportunities to connect as community through a coffee time or some other form of gathering together.

Enter Gail Lafond. Gail seemed like the perfect fit for this position. Gail has been with our congregation for 15 years. Her husband Gilbert and three children Sydney, Dan and Ben have been active in the church for many years, participating in a number of ministries including trips to the Dominican Republic, Kid's Pageants, music, worship and the Congregational Care Team. Her kids have grown up at Okotoks United and have become lovely young adults.



Gail has a fun and bubbly personality and a passion for working with seniors. Her smile and laugh are genuine and infectious. She loves to listen and hear people's stories. She has a gentle and compassionate heart. She also loves the water and teaches swimming lessons from parent and to adults at the Recreation Centre part-time as a certified lifeguard and swim instructor.

Gail believes in the power of prayer and the value of community. She has been intimately involved in ministry at other United Churches throughout her life. So, if Gail calls or comes knocking, please give her a warm welcome. She is a great addition to our ministry team.

Gail can be reached via email at [okcongregationalcare@telus.net](mailto:okcongregationalcare@telus.net).

# Connections

## De Winton Strawberry Tea

**When:** Saturday, June 11th 1:00 - 2:30

**Where:** Okotoks United Church foyer

**Tickets:** \$15.00



**Come join us for a Strawberry Tea on Saturday, June 11th from 1:00 - 2:30. You'll enjoy strawberry shortcake and tea. There will also be a bake sale and plant sale. For more information or to purchase tickets please contact Bonnie Campbell at 587-226-3839 or the office at 403-938-4357.**



## HEALING PATHWAY

The Healing Ministry is ready and available for Healing Sessions. Healing sessions are offered on the first Monday of every month except for stat holidays. To book a healing session please contact Gisela Dyck at 403-938-2506.

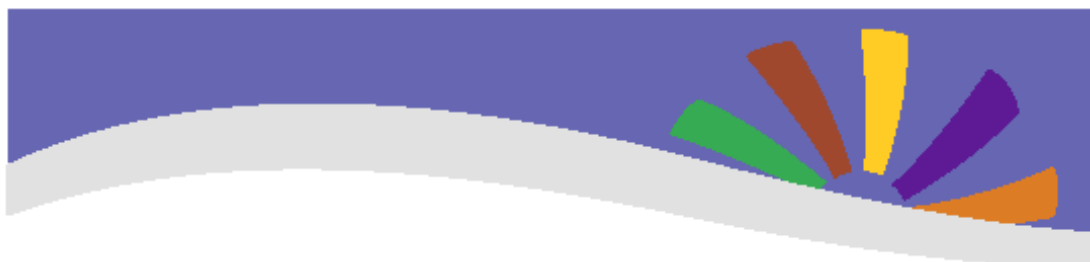
We also like to welcome Cindy Imler to our team. Cindy has completed the Naramata Healing Pathway as well as the Healing Touch International Certification Program.

If anyone is interested in taking a Healing Pathway Workshop please contact Gisela Dyck.

## Office Desk Needed:

Do you have a small office desk with drawers that you don't need anymore? We have a need for one in the Minister's office in Turner Valley. Please get in touch with Julia or Matthew if you can help out. Thanks!

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## Outreach and Justice Group

What inequities people experience?

Who doesn't have access to basic human necessities?

What is the cause of injustice and what can we do?

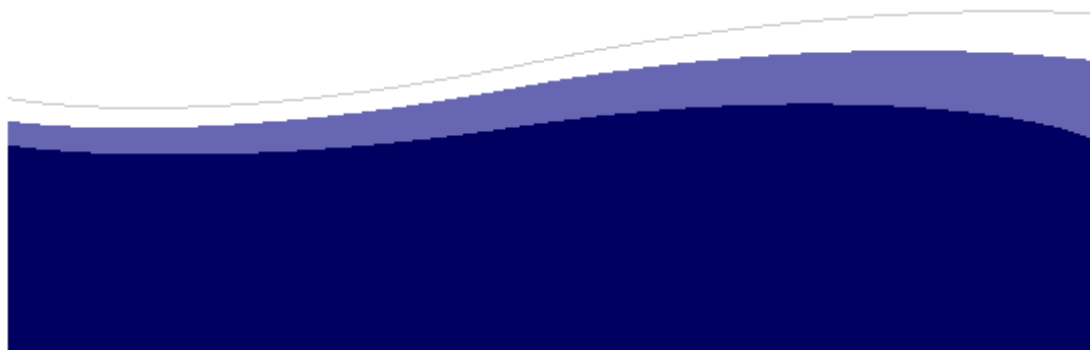
All good questions. Let's talk about them.

**May 24th, 2022, 6 to 8 p.m.**

**Pot Luck Dinner and Discussion**

Okotoks United Church  
43 Riverside Dr. Okotoks

Please sign-up on sheet provided or  
RSVP to [okjulia@telus.net](mailto:okjulia@telus.net) if you plan to attend





# Connections



If you have an urgent  
pastoral care need please call  
403-807-9432. This will lead you  
to the 24/7 on-call minister,  
Matthew or Julia.

## Okotoks United Church Office

To contact **Julia** email her at [okjulia@telus.net](mailto:okjulia@telus.net). To contact **Matthew** email him at [matthew.heesing@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.heesing@gmail.com). Both can be reached at the church office phone number listed below during their regular hours.

**Congregational Care Team** invites you to reach out for confidential spiritual and compassionate care by email at: [okcongregationalcare@telus.net](mailto:okcongregationalcare@telus.net)

**The office is open Monday to Thursday 9:00 - 2:00, Friday 9:00 - 12:00.**  
Please contact Diane at [okunited@telus.net](mailto:okunited@telus.net) or 403-938-4357.