



**United Church Women  
Western Ontario Waterways  
Newsletter  
December 2023**

## **Save the Dates**

### **Winter Gathering**

Virtual Only  
Saturday, February 10, 2024

### **Annual General Meeting**

*Location to be Announced*  
Saturday, April 20, 2024

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## **Greetings from Anne**

Luke's story of the angels, shepherds and the birth of a baby in his second chapter is really a very simple story.

Landless shepherds were out in the hills watching their sheep in the dark. They were cold and trying to stay awake when something happened. An angel appeared to them. (Angels in the Bible are always Messengers of God).

The shepherds were terrified. The angel's news was that a baby was born in Bethlehem, and they should go and see him. Then a chorus of them sang of peace on earth, and good will to all.

They went to Bethlehem, found a tiny baby, told his parents what they had been told and left to go back to their sheep.

Not much of a story. Nothing had changed. They were still shepherds. They were still poor, cold, and out with the sheep in the dark of night.

And yet, everything had changed! They returned "praising God for all they had heard and seen". Praising him for what? Another baby born into poverty and a hard life? A vision of a world that could come alive in peace and justice, perhaps through this baby as he grew up?

Maybe this is our story too. There are moments when we catch a glimpse of hope for ourselves, for our world. It may be as we celebrate the birth of a grand-baby with a whole life to live in front of her. It may come in the holy darkness just before we fall asleep.

Perhaps it comes in the person of an elder who shows us how to live with an enthusiasm for life even as her body wears out. Perhaps we catch a glimpse of what life could be in the kindness someone shows us or others unexpectedly.

This is an old story that we celebrate every year. Yet, it is also a wondrous story of how, for a few moments, some sheep herders stopped and wondered to see a newborn baby.

May you celebrate this hope that appears so unexpectedly when we least expect it. May you find time to wonder, to live so that your small bit of world is better than its worst moments because you are in it.

Anne Reuber

## **NUCW Special Project to the Healing Fund:**

As of mid-November, United Church Women across Canada had **donated \$22,927** to our special 5-year project. This project is currently supporting the Regina Native Ministries Welcome Bag Project.



## Regina Native Outreach Ministry Mother & Baby Welcome Bags for Indigenous New Moms

Regina Native Outreach Ministry collects donations and assembles Mother & Baby Welcome Bags for Indigenous new moms at Regina General Hospital. Many of the new mothers do not have these essential items to care for their newborn and themselves. RNOM believes the Welcome bags provide a tangible and loving start to breaking the cycles of shame passed down from residential schools. All donations of money or any of the items listed are gratefully received.

Regina Native Outreach Ministry  
115 Aspen Pl, Regina, SK, S4X 3B4  
reginativeoutreachministry@gmail.com  
306-510-7666 (RNOM)

### Items included in Welcome Bags

Diapers - Size 1  
Diaper cream  
Handknit Baby blanket  
Onesies - Size 0-3 months  
Sleepers - Size 0-3 months  
Burp clothes  
Bibs  
Baby soap  
Baby shampoo  
Baby wipes  
Nursing pads  
Menstrual pads (Heavy flow)  
Small gift for Mom  
(Such as hand lotion,  
lip balm, candle)

## Where are our youth and what are they doing?

If you have not already done so, check out the link to our November Gathering with a panel of young people in our WOW Region who are passionate about our environment. They are Connor Russell, Jackson Rukundo, Kyla Mills and Sifa Kanyamuneza. **Click here:** [United Church Women - Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council](#)

## What Are Our Local Units Doing?

As we, Avondale U.C.W. (Stratford), emerged from the pandemic, we realized that age and energy levels had caught up with us. We were without a president. Changes were needed.

We decided to focus on worship and fellowship. We now meet monthly for a bring-your-own lunch. A team of three, formed by drawing names, is in charge of the meeting. The duties include grace, conducting a short business, and leading worship. A program, speaker, video, contests, etc., are optional.

We don't do fund raising, but still cater to funeral lunches when asked. We have a secretary, co-treasurers and a contact person. The new format appears to be successful. The attendance has increased.

*Submitted by Mary Helen Clifford*

*What is happening in your UCW? We can learn from each other.*

**Feel free to send in brief summaries of what your UCW unit is trying:**

**[ucw.wow@gmail.com](mailto:ucw.wow@gmail.com) .**

## In Memoriam:

Ruth Kaufman has recently died. Many of you will know her from her involvement in the former Waterloo-Presbyterial. She was the first woman in our region to take out an Individual Membership after her church UCW unit closed. She attended the 60th UCW Anniversary Celebration in Nova Scotia in 2022. She was a member of the Initial WOW Regional UCW steering Committee. Her sense of humour, her faith, and her deep commitment to and love for UCW influenced many of us. Click here for more on Ruth: <https://www.guelphtoday.com/obituaries/kaufman-ruth-grant-nee-robertson-7912900>

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us: Anne Reuber, Eleanor Firth, Joyce Osborne, Mary Hawthorne, Edith Coyle, Nancy Lennox, Jacquie Diverty, Margot White, Eileen Townsend, Joan Whyte, Barbara Seaton, Diane Bender

WOW Regional Faith Formation Minister Kathy Douglas