



**United Church Women  
Western Ontario Waterways  
Newsletter  
October 2025**

**Save the Dates**

Winter Regional Gathering  
On-line  
Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Annual General Meeting  
Hybrid  
Monday, April 20, 2026

**From the President:**

Psalms 137 is a lamentation. It was probably written after the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem and the taking into captivity in Babylon many Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem. As I skim through the news each morning, I relate to the first four verses:

By the rivers of Babylon -  
There we sat down and there we wept  
When we remembered Zion.  
On the willows there  
We hung up our harps.  
For there our captors  
Asked us for songs,  
And our tormentors asked for  
Mirth, saying,  
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How could we sing the Lord's song  
In a foreign land?

There are times when I ask that same question, though not as beautifully phrased as the psalmist's words.

How can we sing a new song in this world that seems so full of doom and tragedy? Yet, we know that Israel, on a good day, knew that God was still with them. There was still a call to be faithful. To "Sing the Lord's song in a foreign land."

God, help me to remember that I am not alone. That I am called to be faithful, to be the church in a world that aches for love and healing. I am not alone, for you are with me, even when I doubt and am scared for the future. Help me look for the little moments that need my presence and love so that others may see your love for them. Amen

**Regional UCW News and Resources**

**Report of the October 20, 2025  
UCW Regional Fall Gathering**

Seventy women registered and 15 more joined on line to attend the Western Ontario Waterways Region UCW on October 20, 2025. The event was hosted by Drayton UCC. Our theme was "Now Let Us Sing!"

A three-generational delegation of members from Pine River United Church, led by their minister, Rev. Wonder, went on a study tour to Zimbabwe in August. Four of them came and told us about their trip. One of the teens on the trip said he learned church could be “very loud and very active”. They attended a Gathering of 13,000 Women of the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe. There the women wanted to take selfies with the Canadians. Our speakers brought official greetings from the women to us in Drayton.

The speakers talked of how life-changing this trip was for them. Rev. Wonder hopes that there might be a reciprocal trip from some of the people in Zimbabwe, and that we in our regional UCW might find ways to continue to support and learn from these women of the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe.

Rachel Eby, Janice Curtise, Karen Dobson, Rev. Wonder Chimvinaga



We were moved to tears by some of the songs. Our hearts danced with joy as we sang a Spanish song.

Our offering of \$522.65 went to the NUCW project of *Healing with Horses: Healing Grief and Families Impacted by Substance Abuse*.

We also recognized the work of Rev. Kathy Douglas, Faith Formation Minister for Western Ontario Waterways, Antler River Watershed, and Horseshoe Falls who has supported our Regional UCW since 2018. She is retiring from the position as of December 31. We shall miss her faithful presence at our meetings.

It was a wonderful day of faith, community, learning, and singing great music

In the afternoon, Dan Van Winden, Music Director of Avondale UCC, Stratford, led us in singing hymns from the new hymnal supplement, “Then Let Us Sing!” We learned that one of the criteria for choosing hymns was to include songs that spoke to those who could not find themselves, their stories, and music in our other hymn books. There are many beautiful new words, some set to music new to us, and some set to familiar tunes. There are even some songs with no English words.



Dan Van Winden



Kathy Douglas, Joyce Osborne

## Report from the National UCW Executive Meeting in September 2025

More than 40 UCW representatives from the 16 regions of the United Church met for 5 days in Mississauga in September. We had long, rich days as we approved our financial reports for 2024 and our budget for 2025.

We also were connected with the wider United Church of Canada. We have had much to celebrate over the past 100 years, but we were also invited to look realistically at some of the realities and dreams for the next 10 years.

Rev Michael Blair, Executive Secretary of the UCC pointed out that in 1992, there were 767,055 members in the UCC. In 2023, that number was 321,954. The projected number for 2035 is 111,000 members.

These are sobering figures, but there is hope. We are reaching out to new communities. For example, there are Farsi communities; a Spanish-speaking Community of Faith; a straight Ghanaian UCC Minister with LGBTQ2+ communities from African countries.

The new Moderator, Rev. Kimberley Heath, mentioned that people now tend to step into church more for activities. For example, a large number of youth gathered to support a Peace March for Gaza. She also said, **“Our task is not to save the church, the world, the people. Our task is to be the church, to be the faithful.”**

And there are youth in our church. There were Youth at General Council in Calgary at Youth Forum. On the last day, they reported to the General Council, and took the church to task for not taking youth seriously. **“You want us in the church, but you do not want to listen to us.”**

We are being challenged to find ways to think of what it means to be the church; to sing “the Lord’s song in a foreign land.”

### National UCW’s 5 Year Project Healing Fund

Three years ago, the National UCW chose to support the Healing Fund of the UCC: Bursary to support Women, Children and Families.

To date, we have supported 3 projects: the Regina Native Ministry Welcome Baby Bag project, the Fort McKay Metis *Healing in the Kitchen* Initiative, and over this past summer, the *Healing with Horses: Healing Grief and Families impacted by Substance Abuse*.

To watch a Minute for Mission video about this last project, click [HERE](#)

We continue to raise more money for another Indigenous-organized project to be chosen soon.

To donate:

Write a **cheque** payable to  
The United Church of Canada”  
with “Healing Fund–NUCW” in the memo line.

Mail to:

The United Church of Canada  
ATTN Healing Fund  
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 200  
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

or

Online:

<https://united-church.ca/donate/healing-fund>

in the Additional Information section,  
enter Healing Fund – NUCW

or

by phone using your Visa or MasterCard:

Toll-free: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2738. Direct funds  
to “Healing fund – NUCW”

United Church Women have traditionally been generous in their givings to Mission & Service. In 2024, **women in Western Ontario Region donated \$63, 396.** Your donations continue to transform lives.

### In Memoriam

“National UCW Past President, Beulah Hayley died peacefully, with all her loved ones around her, on Wednesday morning, October 22, 2025.

“Beulah was a force of joy and light, as many of you know. A woman of deep faith and spirit, Beulah will be long remembered by all who had the blessing to meet her.

“Beulah did not wish any of us to be sad, but to celebrate the life that we have been blessed to live and share with our loved ones and our communities. In this spirit, She asked that her family throw a party, rather than plan a funeral.”

Written by Karen Gardner (former  
Secretary of NUCW Executive)

Some of you may remember meeting Beulah at our Inaugural WOW Region UCW Fall Gathering in 2018.

### Join us to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of United Church Women

**When:** July 19-23, 2027

**Where:** Hilton Garden Inn  
Ottawa Airport

**Theme:** Hear Our Voice

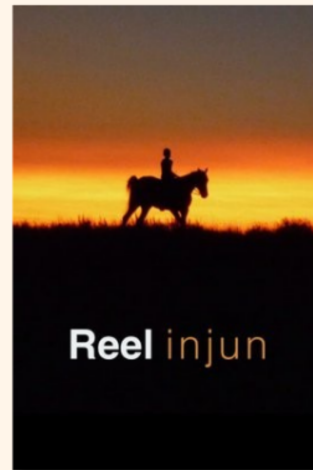
**What:** Worship, singing, speakers,  
entertainment, friendships

Please know that each woman who plans to attend can apply for a \$300 grant from funds of the National UCW towards her expenses.

### Upcoming Event: Islington UCC

## NOVEMBER 14 - 7 PM FILM SCREENING

Film night featuring the National Film Board of Canada documentary



#### REEL INJUN

CREE-CANADIAN  
FILMMAKER NEIL  
DIAMOND TAKES AN  
ENTERTAINING AND  
INSIGHTFUL LOOK AT  
THE PORTRAYAL AND  
STEREOTYPING OF  
NORTH AMERICAN  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE  
THROUGH EXCERPTS  
FROM CLASSIC AND  
CONTEMPORARY  
MOVIES.

#### MODERATED BY JESSE WENTE

FORMER COLUMNIST FOR  
CBC RADIO METRO MORNING

NATIONAL BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

CHAIRPERSON OF  
CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS



CO-SPONSORED BY  
THE RIGHT  
RELATIONS CIRCLE  
AND ANTI-RACISM  
WORKING GROUP

No tickets or registration  
required. Your freewill  
offering will be  
gratefully accepted.



**Location**  
Islington United Church  
25 Burnhamthorpe Road  
Toronto, ON M9A 1G9

Submitted by Kim Posno

**For more information ontact  
[ucw.wow@gmail.com](mailto:ucw.wow@gmail.com) or  
any executive member below:**

Anne Reuber (President), Eleanor Firth (Secretary),  
Joyce Osborne (Treasurer), Edith Coyle Nancy  
Lennox, Barbara Seaton, Mary Hawthorne, Diane  
Bender, Margot White, Eileen Townsend, Laura  
Forbes  
Kathy Douglas (WOW Regional Faith Formation  
Minister)