

# CONTACT



MAY THE TRUE SPIRIT OF  
CHRISTMAS SHINE IN YOUR  
HEART AND LIGHT YOUR PATH.

Photo credit: Carolina Castro

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# Principal's Musings

By Dea. Richard Manley-Tannis, PhD

*<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and our strength, who from of old has helped us in our distress. <sup>2</sup> Therefore we fear nothing— even if the earth should open up in front of us and mountains plunge into the depths of the sea, <sup>3</sup> even if the earth's waters rage and foam and the mountains tumble with its heaving.*

*Psalm 46:1-3: The Inclusive Bible*

As I write this autumn update to the community, I am acutely aware that we are living through historical times. We are witnessing behaviours and actions reminiscent of those that, in the past, have led to worldwide conflict and war's devastating consequences. It is fair to say that Psalm 46's long tradition of providing comfort during moments of chaos, fear, and strife remains as vital today as it has throughout our millennia-old faith journey.

I also find inspiration in St. Andrew's response to these recurring cycles of violence. Though the philosopher and historian Hannah Arendt reminds us that violence creates its own irrational logic, we adhere to a logic system articulated through Love. In the early decades, St. Andrew's was guided through World Wars by students and academics who did not let fear dictate their actions. During those turbulent years both at home and on the battlefield, Dr. Edmund Oliver, the College's first Principal, ensured theological education reached students across the ocean. His dedication inspires my own new role as a Canadian Forces Chaplain, a component of my service to The United Church of Canada. This role serves as a stark reminder that we may once again ask young people in this country to undertake very dangerous missions.

Our faith fortifies us, and amid today's war drums and sabre-rattling, the College takes pride in its history of addressing global suffering with compassion and innovation. As St. Andrew's collaborates closely with the Saskatoon Theological Union, supported by the Union's Common Faculty, our new curriculum has attracted one of the largest classes in recent memory. Welcoming students from around the world, I am struck by the diversity of those drawn to our denomination's expansive theology. The STU classroom, an ecumenical space, brings together the unique blessings of our three denominations, enriching learning and preparing students to share the Good News in these challenging times.

Not only is our Academic Pathway thriving, but our Lifelong Learning Pathway is also vibrant. As we continue to meet our enrolment goals, we are delighted to welcome Messy Church Canada as a new partner. Supporting their revitalisation post-pandemic, this partnership promises to equip individuals with skills and practices to model compassionate integrity. Finally, approaching the 100th anniversary of our denomination, I am excited to announce the planned establishment of the Oliver-Gruchy Learning Centre to mark this historic milestone. I look forward to sharing more about this initiative as we enter the new year, with the Creator's rainbow covenant shining above the gathering storm clouds.

In Christ.



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## A Padre in the House

On September 10 of 2024 at the Sgt Hugh Cairns VC Armoury in Saskatoon, Deacon Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis, Principal of St. Andrew's College, was formally enrolled as a Chaplain at the rank of Captain. Richard is the first Diaconal Minister and non-ordained United Church of Canada Chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces. (Congratulations Principal Richard!)

We sat down with Padre Manley-Tannis to ask him a few questions about this new work in his life:

Q: Can you describe a bit of what you will be doing as a Padre? A: As a Padre, my primary role will

*be to provide spiritual support and guidance to military personnel and their families. This includes conducting religious services, offering pastoral care, and being available for pastoral companion and support during times of need. I will also be involved in various ceremonial duties and work closely with other members*



of the military to ensure the well-being of those with whom I serve.

Q: How does this new role relate to your work here at the College? A: My role as a Padre complements my work as the Principal of a theological school by allowing me to put into practice the principles and teachings that I advocate in an academic setting. It provides a unique opportunity to engage with individuals on a personal level, offering spiritual guidance and support in real-world situations. This experience will enrich my understanding and enhance my ability to lead and educate future religious leaders.

Q: What made you pursue this particular calling to chaplaincy within the Canadian military? A: My calling to chaplaincy within the Canadian military stems from a deep desire to serve those who serve our country. My initial experience was when I joined the Reserves in 1988. The unique challenges and demands faced by military personnel require dedicated support, and I feel a strong sense of Call to provide that. Additionally, my background in theological education and pastoral care has equipped me with the skills and

compassion, I believe, which are needed to effectively support and guide military members and their families through their journeys.

In this new venture of faith, Captain Manley-Tannis follows the footsteps of St. Andrew's first Principal, Dr. Edmond H. Oliver. At the outbreak of the First World War, Principal Oliver enlisted as a military chaplain and served on the frontlines in France. He brought home his extensive pastoral experience and his convictions about the urgent need for theological education and faith formation and put those things to robust purpose at St. Andrew's College.

While we hope and pray that Principal Richard will not be asked to embark on an active tour of duty, we also honour his own convictions and calling to "serve those who serve our country". This too is part of the Spirit's work in a broken world on the verge of turmoil and chaos. Let us all do our part to work and pray for God's deep and everlasting peace, even in the stormiest of times. Thank you, Padre Richard, for your leadership.

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## From the Chair of the Board

By Diane Dwarka

As the new chair of the Board of Regents at St. Andrew's College, it is with eager anticipation and some trepidation that I pen my first contribution to the college's fall newsletter, *Contact*. Our past chair, Doug Neufeld, chair for six years has now passed this role or the torch on to me. I trust that I will be able to live up to whatever comes along the way. I have served on the board for one year as Vice Chair. During that year I attended and participated in meetings. I have read the strategic plan, bylaws, and other documents to get a better understanding of the college's role and its work. It has been a learning process to understand how the board works, how they make decisions, and how they contribute to the well-being of the college.

This past week, I had the opportunity to personally meet all the current members of the board as I participated in a board retreat at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, a place that exudes peace and quiet. It was well chosen for the purpose as we were able to fully focus on the task at hand without any interruptions. Under the leadership of Principal Richard Manley-Tannis we



reviewed the strategic plan, looked at the TrustCentric Leadership model, and worked on what our priorities are at this time.

The formalization of the Saskatoon Theological Union with our partners, the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad and the Lutheran Theological Seminary, has strengthened our dedication to strive for academic excellence. We will continue to nurture minds and foster intellectual growth. We are grateful to our support staff, our faculty and staff and our principal, Richard Manley-Tannis whose unwavering dedication and collaborative efforts will continue to ensure excellence and academic excellence.

The board orientation and education session planned by the Nomination and Board Education Committee was also very helpful for grounding the board for its work.

I am now looking forward to planning an event in February 2025 when Principal Richard Manley-Tannis will be in Winnipeg for a College Sunday. It will be a simple but meaningful get-together to give friends and supporters of St. Andrew's an opportunity to highlight the college and support its work and purpose.

As we move forward, I will work with all the members of the board, faculty and staff to make St. Andrew's College a place where all will be welcome, and where we will continue to work on the path to reconciliation.

# Introducing our Board of Regents

## Ernie Barber

Ernie Barber comes to St. Andrew's College with career experience as a university professor and academic leader with the University of Saskatchewan. He and his family are active participants in the McClure United Church community of faith in Saskatoon. He is a registered professional engineer and professional agrologist and brings with him a strong focus in systems thinking, collaborative problem solving, and service to others.



Ernie served a first term as a member of the St. Andrew's College Academic Committee in the 1980s and was appointed by the college in the 1990s as a representative of the college for reflection and planning with the STU partners about a more formalized partnership for theological education. He rejoined the Academic Committee in 2019 and has served as chair of that committee and a member of the Board of Regents since 2020. Most recently he was appointed co-chair of the Saskatoon Theological Union.

## Peter Chynoweth

I was a student representative on the Board of Regents back in the late 80s. I wanted to be an advocate for students, and I thought that some exposure to governance might be helpful for my time in ministry.



I served on the board after graduation for a few more years. After a couple of decades away, I'm back!

I enjoy the connection with theological education, and the important role it plays in formation for ministry and in personal spiritual formation, and I appreciate the connection that being a member of the board provides and the insights I gain into the dynamic and justice-seeking ways of St. Andrew's.

## Jen Dresser

I am a Diaconal minister in ministry with St. Andrew's, Yorkton. When I started on the board, I knew very little about the college other than it trains people for ministry. I knew even less



about the structure and governance. I have learned that the scope of work St. Andrew's is involved in is much broader than just theological education. The partnerships continue to expand. During my time on the board, I have seen a positive shift in the energy and focus of St. Andrew's College. I love being able to use my creative energy to support a sustainable and thriving future for St. Andrew's College. This time of transition is an exciting time to be a part of the St. Andrew's community.

## Diane Dwarka

Diane Dwarka is a retired librarian and passionate community volunteer whose activities cover social, educational, legal, human rights, and religious issues. She has served on many local, provincial and national organizations and has been president of many organizations including the Trinidad and Tobago Society of Winnipeg, the Council of Caribbean Organizations of Manitoba, Community Legal Education Association, Canada Council for Multicultural Education, the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, Chair of Red River College Alumni. In the United Church she has been chair of her local church, the Winnipeg Presbytery, the Prairie to Pine Region, and Diane is currently the Chair of the Board at St Andrew's College.



For her contribution and service to the community she has received many awards, including a Public Legal Education Award, the YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Award, the Red River Distinguished Alumnus Award, the Premier's Award for Volunteerism, the B'nai Brith Human Rights Award, and the Community Champion Award from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and Diane was humbled to receive an eagle feather from the Aboriginal Teachers Circle. She's put in over 1800 volunteer hours at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Diane brings with her a love for church and community, a passion for justice and a belief in equality of all human beings.

## Marc Grenon

Marc Grenon is a dedicated member of the Board of Regents at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon, where he plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience and governance of the



institution. His commitment to fostering a nurturing and challenging environment for students reflects his belief in the transformative power of education.

With a background in leadership and community service, Marc serves to ensure that the college upholds its values, promotes academic excellence, and prepares students for a future of responsible citizenship. He is passionate about the college’s mission to provide a holistic education that not only focuses on academic achievement but also emphasizes character development and moral integrity.

Marc’s involvement on the board is driven by a desire to give back to the community and empower the next generation of leaders. His vision for St. Andrew’s College is one of inclusivity, innovation, and excellence, ensuring that it remains a beacon of quality education in Saskatoon. Through his service, Marc aims to uphold the legacy of the college while adapting to the ever-evolving educational landscape.

**Luke Haisa**

Luke is a Minister at Central United Church in Calgary whose passion lies in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, outreach, prayer and community engagement. He is always working to build bridges and promote unity in diversity. His commitment to service extends beyond the church walls and includes a vision to create an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels valued and cared for.



Luke’s ability to inspire and motivate others can help guide St. Andrew’s towards achieving its mission. He can help the college develop innovative programs and strategies that address the needs of a diverse student body, and makes an excellent mentor for students, especially those from outside Canada, offering them guidance, support, and encouragement.

**Carolyn Woodall**

Carolyn grew up in Ontario, training for ministry at Queen’s. Settled by the UCC in Alberta, she has lived and worked there and in Saskatchewan for 35 years. Carolyn has been an Educational Supervisor, and now serves the church as an Intentional Interim Minister.



St. Andrew’s College is grounded in a special place, where vast prairie and broad river meet an endless sky. It has a unique voice and perspective to share within and beyond the church. With its new global reach, learners from everywhere may engage in the theological exploration and spiritual discernment that open up the fulness and depth of life’s meaning.

**Daryl Woods**

I have been serving on the Board of Regents for the past year and have also served two terms with the Finance Committee of St. Andrew’s College. I grew up in The United Church and entered ministry in 1981 as a lay supply minister serving Cutarm Larger Parish in team ministry. In 1986 I enrolled in St. Andrew’s College in the Bachelor of Theology program. I have served in all courts of the church in a variety of capacities.



I currently serve as the Chair of the Personnel Policy Committee. I serve St. Andrew’s because I am grateful. Grateful to St. Andrew’s for the excellent theological education I received which sustained me through 41 years of ministry. Grateful that we continue to be blessed with wonderful faculty and staff who continue to be the bedrock for students who are seeking to further their education and to develop their skills for ministry, in whatever form that takes, in order to answer the call of God in their own lives.

Are you looking to upgrade your style with some new swag? Do you fancy a good bow tie? St. Andrew’s College is grateful to announce a collaboration with Justin Ming Cheung of the House of TYTAN to custom design self-tied and pre-tied bow ties. The House of Tytan is a family-owned Canadian business whose home is in Toronto. If you’re interested in joining this exciting initiative, please reach out to Principal Richard at [principal.sac@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:principal.sac@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca). We will have a better understanding of the pricing once we confirm the number of orders. Please express your interest to Richard by January 15th as we prepare to place the order.

**ST. ANDREW’S COLLEGE**  
BOW TIE MOCK UP

# Board Retreat

A lovely supper and conversation with some of the Saskatoon Theological Union staff and faculty began the St. Andrew's College Board of Regents Orientation Retreat held November 5–7. Our two days of reflection and priority discernment were undertaken at Wanuskewin Heritage Park just outside Saskatoon. This ancient centre held us in a tradition of wisdom through the gifts of time and listening. We often meet over Zoom, so being together physically was a great experience. We identified that broad communication across multiple constituencies will help us tell the very good news stories about the energy and direction arising now at the college. Care for one another was named as a foundational value going forward. Thank you to Melanie Schwanbeck for the arrangements and keeping us on track, to Kristi Baxter and Bernon Lee for the perspectives they brought to help us focus, and to Richard Manley-Tannis for his open and invitational leadership.



(L to R) George Thurlow, Ernie Barber, Kristi Baxter, Daryl Woods, Marc Grenon, Richard Manley-Tannis, Peter Chynoweth, Carolyn Woodall, Luke Haisa, Bernon Lee, Jen Dresser, Diane Dwarka

## Farewell to Shawn Sanford Beck

This October, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Rev. Shawn Sanford Beck, whose presence has been invaluable. In 2020, Rev. Sanford Beck joined us with a significant appreciation and care for the Saskatoon Theological Union partners: The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon, and St. Andrew's College. As the first Recruitment Ambassador of St. Andrew's, he has played a pivotal role during the challenging times of the pandemic and was instrumental in the development of our Lifelong Learning Pathway. His unwavering dedication to ecumenism, education, and community building has left an indelible mark on our institution.

Rev. Sanford Beck's contributions have been numerous and impactful, reflecting his passion for fostering inclusive and expansive theological education. Beyond his administrative gifts, his empathetic and supportive approach has been a blessing for students, staff and faculty. Although his departure to return to pastoral ministry within The United Church of Canada fills us with a sense of loss, we are also filled with gratitude for his exemplary service and contributions and know that his new faith community will be well served by the many gifts he will bring to that new relationship.

We wish Shawn all the best in his continued journey, confident that he will bring the same level of commitment and excellence to his future endeavours as he has demonstrated with us. His presence will be greatly missed—he has certainly left his mark upon our community.

Having recently been approved as a Candidate for the Order of Ministry in The United Church of Canada, Rev. Shawn will be undertaking SME (Supervised Ministry Education) within the newly created GreenSpirit Chaplaincy. This is a hybrid outreach ministry focussing on ecological spirituality and creation-centred faith formation. For more information about GreenSpirit Chaplaincy, feel free to reach out to Shawn at [greenpriest@hotmail.ca](mailto:greenpriest@hotmail.ca) or 306-441-6367. Shawn will also continue his work at St. Andrew's College as a spiritual exploration guide within the Lifelong Learning Pathway.



# The 6th An Intercultural Adventure Seminar held at St. Andrew's College

**By Minhyuk Hwang and Don Schweitzer**

From Monday, October 21 to Wednesday, October 23, approximately thirty members of the Korean community in The United Church of Canada and a few others gathered at St. Andrew's College for the 6th An Intercultural Adventure seminar and a meeting of the Korean Network. With support from St. Andrew's College and the General Council of the United Church, this ministry for intercultural engagement within the United Church has been growing since 2014. This seminar was especially meaningful, as it marked the first time that An Intercultural Adventure and the Korean Network met together. Hopefully this can continue in the future.

The seminar's theme was Bold Discipleship. The meeting began with supper, then worship and community building, followed by the first lecture. Several people participated online. Don Schweitzer and Ohwang Kwon

led three hour-long lecture sessions on this. EunJoo Park led a workshop on collaborative ministries. Taylor Croissant led one on building God's beloved community. St. Andrew's faculty and alumni SunDo Hyun participated in a panel discussion. As always, sessions were interspersed with rousing singing. Participants enjoyed Korean food prepared by a local restaurant. Several commented on how well the St. Andrew's facilities worked for the seminar.

The next step will be to prepare a small book from the lecture materials and to publish this in Korean and English versions. As is often the case, this kind of clustering, where members of the Korean community from across the country meet, generated energy, enthusiasm and new ideas. The plan for the next seminar has not yet been decided, but it is anticipated to take place in a few years in collaboration with the Korean Network. Together these two groups are helping build a vibrant Korean presence in the United Church.



# Welcome to the STU-pot!

This is a new feature that all three Saskatoon Theological Union (STU) schools will be using to highlight developments and stories as they arise in the STU.

Like a good hearty pot of stew, we hope this regular feature—whose ingredients change and modify as time goes on—will nourish you with the news of our flourishing, shared life together.



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## Introducing Kayko Driedger Hesslein

The Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein (she/her) is the William Hordern Professor of Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, where she teaches systematic and constructive theology. Professor Driedger Hesslein earned her M. Div. from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary) and was ordained in the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in 2002. She earned her PhD in Systematic Theology with an Allied Field in History and a Certificate in Women's Studies from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA in 2013.

Professor Driedger Hesslein is a Lutheran theologian, professor, and pastor. As a scholar, she has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals as well as contributed to ELCIC Study guides. She has written on the intersections of Lutheran theology and various topics including clergy abuse, medical assistance in dying, Christology, queer studies, and disability theology. Her first monograph, *Dual Citizenship: Two-Natures Christology and the Jewish Jesus*, engaged in a systematic review of historical and contemporary christologies through the lens of multicultural studies and nonsupersessionism. In her upcoming sabbatical, she will be working on a new book, *Relying on the Stranger in an Age of Collapse*, which will develop the idea of Jesus as a Stranger whom we are called to depend on in this time of polycrises.

As a professor, Dr. Driedger Hesslein teaches the required theology courses at the STU, including *God and Suffering; Christ, Redemption, and Liberation;* and *The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Community*. She also occasionally teaches an upper elective on Queer Theologies that is very popular with pastors engaging in continuing education. She finds great joy and meaning in helping students to understand complex and important theological concepts that impact their faith lives. She strives to form students who can help those they lead find ways to authentic relationships with the Triune God. Professor Driedger Hesslein is one of LTS's "distributed faculty," which means she lives on and teaches from outside of Saskatoon, in Treaty 7 territory. She very much enjoys the advantages of online teaching that allows students from across Canada (and internationally) to join in a learning community that engages a variety of contexts and that provides greater access to theological learning.

Before beginning full-time with LTS as the Hordern Professor of Theology, Professor Driedger Hesslein served as an intentional interim pastor where she helped congregations navigate closure and histories of clergy abuse. She continues to preach regularly in the ELCIC and credits her years in congregational ministry as bringing depth and relevance to her work as a theologian. She also serves as the moderator of and North American representative to the Theological Education and Formation Steering Committee for the Lutheran World Formation, which has led to her presenting internationally on teaching theology online.

In addition to her professional work, Professor Driedger Hesslein is a committed ally-activist to and with the trans community, and has spoken about this work to church communities, including during St. Andrew's Year of Intention, and seeks ways to bring genuine diversity and inclusivity to all her work.



# About the STU Library

Did you know that we are open to the public and that anybody, anywhere in Canada, can become a patron, free of charge? Yes, indeed!

For local patrons, the borrowing period is 3 weeks and items can be renewed if there are no hold requests on them. You can also take advantage of our curbside pick-up/drop-off service as well. Just give us a call when you arrive, and a library staff will be right out to help you.

Live outside of Saskatoon? No problem! With our library book mail service through Canada Post, we will send you the books you need by mail with free return postage included! To account for shipping time, distance patrons get a 5-week borrowing period and can also renew books if there are no hold requests on them.

Visit the STU Library's Online Catalog to learn more: <https://saskatoon.mlasolutions.com/union.aspx>

As always, please email [library@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:library@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca) or call 639-398-5561 with your library needs and we will be happy to assist you!

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## Saskatoon Theological Union appoints first CFO and Registrar

It is with joy and anticipation that the Saskatoon Theological Union (STU) welcomes Kristi Baxter into her new role as STU Chief Financial Officer, and Colleen Walker into her new role as STU Registrar. In their own words, Kristi and Colleen share this celebration as they offer their gifts to the wider ecumenical community of the STU.

### From our CFO, Kristi Baxter

I am enjoying my work as the CFO for the three schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union. I joined St. Andrew's College in May 2022 as their Chief Administrative Officer. In April 2023, I added the Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon Finance Manager portfolio to my work here and in January 2024 I began supporting the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad. With my expanding support of the three colleges, it made sense to centralize the financial work of the STU into one position.



It has been enjoyable to work with—and to get to know—my colleagues across the three colleges. There is a real sense of cooperation and collaboration here, which is both encouraging and exciting. While my role is certainly a busy one, it is also manageable due to the support from the schools, and due to the fact that we have been working toward shared systems of administra-

tion for a while now.

As the STU integrates more closely in the months and years to come, I look forward to playing my part in shaping this effective and faithful community of theological education.

### From our Registrar, Colleen Walker

I am excited to enter this new role of STU Registrar as it holds possibilities for more collaborative work across the three colleges of the STU. I look forward to continued development of common administrative practices and processes to guide the work in the Registrar's office. I am pleased that I will have



the opportunity to work closely with the faculty and staff of each college, increasing my knowledge base of the denominations, their traditions and ways of being.

The highlight for me this past year has been working alongside the college Registrars, Colleen Rickard and Lisa McInnis. I am thankful and grateful for their contributions to the development of this new role. Their commitment and care to the life of the STU and to their respective colleges is to be commended.

I believe this new phase in my work with the STU will bring excitement, challenges and rewards. I am glad to be on this journey together.

# Faculty Updates

## Lynn Caldwell

A recent highlight in my work was the opportunity to join my colleagues Becca and Bernon, along with alum SunDo Hyun for a panel organized and moderated by Don Schweitzer as part of An Intercultural Adventure, held at St. Andrew's College in late October. The panel was also streamed as one of the live sessions for the 40 Days of Engagement in Anti-Racism, in The United Church of Canada. As well as the panel itself and the discussion about discipleship through an intercultural and anti-racist lens, the event drew several former students and other colleagues to the college, and it was so good to have time with them here.

In my own contribution to the panel, I presented on ethical considerations related to the importance of solidarity over individualism especially in efforts to end apartheid, occupation, and genocide. The invitation to present in the panel provided an opportunity for me to reflect critically on how individualism is sometimes evoked in relationship to discipleship in my experience, even though there are long, long theological traditions and methods that reveal the inseparability of discipleship from the collective and communal. Preparation for and involvement in the panel has renewed my attention to some critical themes in my ongoing studies and teaching in relation to settler colonialism in Canada and globally. These are themes I intend to pursue further as part of an upcoming sabbatical in the next academic year.

Related to that critical work, another key engagement for me right now in the life of the church and in my own scholarship and educational commitments in theological ethics, is with a Justice for Palestine Network affiliated with the United Church, through which I am engaging more actively with my own learning and responsibilities for solidarity. One developing aspect of this is working with a colleague toward a potential roundtable meeting in 2025; this is in the very early stages, but I hope to report on this in my next update to this newsletter. The roundtable would bring together interested theological scholars and educators on the topic of empire and genocides, in part engaging with a recent statement released after "Global Consultation on Empire and Geno-



cides" gathered under the auspices of the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN), the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), the Council for World Mission (CWM) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). I include this Roundtable plan in my report to the St. Andrew's community prior to its confirmation as an event in part to generate interest, and also because the efforts to coordinate it as a possibility are a small part of many efforts among educators, church leaders, and students to collectively grapple with these crises. I recognize the critical importance of all such efforts.

Work in other projects includes moving forward in the editing work for a textbook in feminist research methods, continuing my role as Assistant Editor for the Engaged Scholar Journal, completing some book reviews for publication, and looking forward to assisting in the hosting of a Saskatoon book launch for former St. Andrew's faculty Don Schweitzer and HyeRan Kim-Cragg's new publication on sermons in The United Church of Canada (book launch will be 24 March 2025).

## Bernon Lee

The cooling days of October 2024 find me preparing to co-teach FND103 (Introduction to Biblical Literature with Adam Wright of the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad) and SAC 101 (The United Church of Canada: Context and Praxis with Becca Whitla and Lynn Caldwell). This is the second time around with these courses since the inauguration of the new STU

curriculum. Golly, round two already?!

As Educational Coordinator of the Lifelong Learning Pathway, I am excited to welcome three new Learners into our program this autumn. Two will pursue learning through the Leadership in the Faith Community Certificate program; one through the Spiritual Exploration Certificate program. As we grow in numbers, I am exploring the creation, also, of in-house resources for learning. First up are two podcast series—one on recovering cultural and religious traditions marginalized in the North American cultural landscape, and another on alternative brands of spirituality. Stay tuned as we move ever so steadily towards making our first recordings.

In scholarship, my work towards a book manuscript on nineteenth-century biblical interpretation in the context of imperialism continues. Through work in Summer 2024, I am close to finishing up a chapter on the biblical musings of Louis-François Jacolliot (1837-1890)—an eccentric administrator for French holdings in British India bent on recovering strains of Vedic (Hindu) tradition in the Bible! I look forward to penning the introduction to the volume in the new year.

Do stop by Room 332 (at the college) if the Hebrew Scriptures, nineteenth-century biblical interpretation, or lifelong learning are of interest; or if hazelnut-flavored coffee is your thing.

## Becca Whitla

Once again, it is a busy term of teaching! Bernon, Lynn and I have shared the teaching of SAC 101 – The United Church of Canada: Context and Praxis. As I write this update, I'm preparing for our last class. We have 12 students in the class from across the country and around the world. Everyone is engaged in a robust conversation. What a delight! I'm also teaching a Doctor of Ministry Course: Emerging Perspectives in Practical Theology, and am looking forward to teaching Public Practical Ministry AIP230, the second level of Preaching and Worship.

I continue to coordinate STU Chapel services. This year we have a full chapel team with Alexa Wallace co-directing with me and two student chapel assistants (Ana Gheysen and Luke Haisa). Services occur every Thursday, and sometimes on Tuesday. As I mentioned in my last update, we now have a big screen in the chapel so all in person services are hybrid. You are always warmly welcome to join us in person or online.

We're all working on the college's governance structures. The Faculty Council, which I chair, is

working hard to develop a proposal for academic governance. We had a faculty retreat in early October to dig into it. Now Ernie Barber (Chair of Academic Committee) and I are taking that work and shaping it into a proposal for review by the Faculty Council and then the Academic Committee. This work is being done in tandem with all the other governance changes that are happening at St. Andrew's and at the STU. Because these processes and proposals are interwoven, it takes some time. I also chair the Justice Advisory Committee. We have worked on revisions of the college's justice policy. We also hosted another successful anti-racism workshop the justice committee hosted at the STU with Adele Halliday, Anti-racism and Equity Lead for the UCC. I am grateful as always to the committee of three (myself, Rachel Kotei from the library and Heyrim Park, our student rep).

Last summer, I was privileged to attend the Hymn Society's conference in Atlanta, Georgia, which focused on Black church music and then to be a keynote speaker for *Stones Cry Out: Praying with the Land*, the worship conference of the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Canada was held in Regina.

On the research front, I'm working on a chapter for a book on constructive theology, a co-edited book on singing and decolonizing, and the book co-edited with Néstor Medina will come out sometime next year with McGill Queen's: *Being and Doing Church Otherwise: (De)Coloniality, Identity, Faith, and Culture in Canada*.

Looking forward, I'm delighted to share that I was awarded a Calvin Vital Worship and Preaching grant to host a seminar called "Sacred Threads: A Mosaic of Congregational Song in Canada" in February of 2024. The gathered group will represent Canada's denominational and geographic diversity, and we will focus on current issues in congregational song. The goal of the project is ultimately to produce an edited collection. You can read more about it elsewhere in *Contact*.

I am also thrilled to announce that the International Academy of Public Theology will be held in Saskatoon June 13–16, 2025. Keynote speakers include Elder Maria Campbell and Joseph Naytowhow, along with two keynote panels on imagining home otherwise. The theme of the conference is: "(Be) Coming Home and (Re)Building Community in the Face of Displacement." This is a tremendous honour and opportunity for us at St. Andrew's to work with our STU partners and St. Thomas More College to host this prestigious gathering. Also, it will dovetail with the annual four colleges conference.

# Friends We Shall Miss

**Rev. Brenda Fawkes** of Vancouver, BC, passed away suddenly on September 20. Brenda served as the Vocational Minister for the Pacific Mountain and Chinook Winds Regions of The United Church of Canada and worked with several students during their candidacy pathway.

**Rev. Sharon Ferguson-Hood (MDiv 1995)** died on November 16, 2024, at the age of 70, peacefully provided with Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) in her home. Sharon was ordained in 1995 and was settled in the Kelvington/Lintlaw Pastoral Charge; from there she went to Haida Gwaii for seven years. The next twelve years were spent doing Interim Ministry, work for which she had a strong dedication. During her years of ministry she traveled ten times to hike the Himalayas, and many times led study groups on these hikes.

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## Sacred Threads: A Mosaic of Congregational Song in Canada

**Professor of Practical Ministry at St. Andrew's College, Dr. Becca Whitla, receives Calvin Vital Worship Teacher-Scholar Grant**

St. Andrew's College Professor of Practical Ministry, Becca Whitla, is drawing together scholars and practitioners from across the country in a new project on Canadian congregational singing, which has been awarded a grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. A collaboration co-led by Anneli Loepp Thiessen, a doctoral candidate at the University of Ottawa, the project seeks to engage with the wide range of issues facing the Canadian church music scene. The gathered group will represent Canada's denominational and geographic diversity, including people who are Indigenous, racialized, represent migrant communities, and are at many life and career stages. The conversation will focus on current issues including congregational song in rural and urban contexts; in migrant and diasporic communities; in the face of church decline and the diminishment of resources; and in relation to Indigenous reconciliation, interculturality, and anti-racism.



The goal of the project is ultimately to produce an edited collection that will provide context, tools, and background on topics that are important to church music practitioners and scholars in Canada. Since a conversation of this scope has not happened in a specifically Canadian context, the project will also resource practitioners to be ambassadors for ongoing conversation, connection, and resource sharing.

This program is made possible through a Vital Worship, Vital Preaching Grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, with funds provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

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## Upcoming Course Offerings

For more information please visit the St. Andrew's website at <https://standrews.ca/academics/course-listings/current-course-offerings/> or contact the Registrar at [colleen.walker@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca](mailto:colleen.walker@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca).

# Recent Building Renovations



Over the last year, the college has undertaken several renovation projects, including refreshing the men's shower room and men's bathroom in the residence, replacing lighting and refinishing the walls in Room 203, and replacing windows on the third floor of the old wing.

## Messy Church Canada Partnership

Messy Church Canada is beginning a new partnership with St. Andrew's College!

On November 13, 2024, a partnership agreement was inked between St. Andrew's College and Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) of the UK by which the college becomes the host for Messy Church Canada (MCCan). MCCan's leadership will be spearheaded by Rev. Carol Fletcher. Carol is recently retired from Transcona Memorial United Church in Winnipeg, where she has been involved with Messy Church since 2010.

Messy Church is a creative program (usually meeting monthly) that helps congregations reach into their communities to provide a non-Sunday-morning gathering. Messy Church welcomes all ages and engages faith stories creatively and collaboratively in hospitality, hands-on activities and a celebration.

Messy Church Canada supports congregations in launching or growing Messy Church programs with regular "Cross-Canada Zooms". The new partnership with the college will bring more opportunities! Stay tuned!



# One Bell for Three Colleges

By Jake Buhler

The 450-pound bell in front of St Andrew's College has had an unlikely if not strange journey! We know from the C. S. Bell Company's website that Charles Singleton Bell began to cast steel bells in 1875 in Hillsboro, Ohio. From 1894 to 1950, his foundry cast bells with the inscription "The C. S. Bell Co. Hillsboro O." The bell that once hung in the tower of Rugby Chapel beginning in 1911 had this inscription and was cast sometime after 1894 but before 1911 in the bell foundry in Ohio. The archives say nothing about why this bell was removed from the Rugby Chapel bell tower. Was the bell too heavy for the structure?



Emmanuel College was founded in 1879 in Prince Albert. It moved to Saskatoon in 1909. Rugby Chapel was built in 1911 from money raised in England by staff and students of Rugby School. The bell was purchased from the C.S. Bell Company at that time. The records say nothing about when the bell was removed from the tower, nor how long it sat in storage. In 1964 Emmanuel College had amalgamated with Chad's College in Regina to become The College of Emmanuel & St Chad (ESC). The bell was moved to The Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) on the USask. Campus where it was rung regularly. When LTS and ESC left the LTS buildings in 2020, the bell was moved to its current location at St. Andrew's College.

It is fitting that The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, St. Andrew's College (est. 1913), and The Lutheran Theological Seminary (est. 1913) are joined together under the Saskatoon Theological Union. It is also fitting that a single large bell has lived at each of the three colleges, ringing out a single tone of unity.

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**We thank you for your valuable work and wish you all the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of this Advent season.**

**Best wishes to all and may you have a safe, healthy, and joyous festive season.**

**Please carry on with all your great work and know we wish you all the best in the new year.**

## Contact

This publication is free of charge. If you would like to add someone's name to the mailing list, please contact us.

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Saskatoon, Sask.  
Publications Mailing  
Agreement # 40022272  
Return undeliverable  
Canadian addresses to:  
St. Andrew's College  
1121 College Drive  
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## Saskatoon Theological Union Convocation 2025

Friday, May 30th, 7:00 pm

Christ Church Anglican, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

St. Andrew's College Convocation will take place next spring as part of a larger event of the Saskatoon Theological Union, as we join with our partners the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad (Anglican) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Please watch our social media channels for an announcement regarding honorary degree recipients.



St. Andrew's online class, "The United Church of Canada: Context and Praxis" celebrates the last day of class.

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