

September 6, 2026 - Order of Service
with Guest Worship Leader Richard Auckland, ARWR President

Light the Christ Candle

Welcome & Announcements

Introduction of Guest Worship Leader

Richard Auckland is the President of Antler River Watershed Region of the United Church of Canada. Richard goes by the pronouns he/him, and lives with his wife, Karen, in Talbotville. Richard is a retired educator who still enjoys working with young teachers through Western University, and creating problems (of the mathematical type) for the University of Waterloo's Problem of the Week. He had the good fortune to work with Anne Morrissey during his time at Myrtle Street School in St. Thomas in its final year of service to the community.

His home church is First United in St. Thomas, and he has held and continues to hold many roles at the church. Their church is currently undergoing over 2 million dollars worth of renovations to turn the bottom floor into an 88-space daycare. He served on the former Elgin Presbytery, and on the Regional Council since formation. While retired from education he enjoys volunteering in different capacities in the community.

Three adult children, Jon (and Laura), Geoff, and Katie (and Jacob) still enjoy coming home for game nights or just to hang out.

Whew! Please welcome Richard Auckland.

Acknowledgement As we meet, we are reminded that we are on lands that have been occupied long before the arrival of European immigrants. Our Indigenous neighbours have long been associated with this space we now call Dunwich Pastoral Charge of the United Church of Canada. We recognize the groups within this area: the Anishinabek, the Lenape-Lenapewauk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Chonnoton who used these lands as their traditional gathering, hunting, and congregating place. Let us also recognize our closest neighbours from these nations: The Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, The Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, The Munsee-Delaware Nation, and The Oneida Nation of the Thames.

But we are also reminded that we are but temporary occupants of this land and that we need to be good stewards of the land, of the space, and of the living and non-living things here. Whether you explore the Truth and Reconciliation Report and the Calls to Action, or learn about our Indigenous neighbours, their traditions, and their culture, or if you choose to walk or bike rather than take a vehicle to reduce the number of car trips you take, or that you do your part to lessen your impact on our environment – do something. **May these words, while inadequate, spur us all onto putting reconciliation from these words into our action.**

Call to Worship

L: The Lord works in mysterious ways.

P: We are always in the presence of the Creator even though we may not recognize it.

L: The Lord is with us today, and always. This is the day the Lord has made.

P: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Ministry of Music It is No Secret

Gathering Prayer Let us pray. Where two or three are gathered, you are there. We welcome your presence here this morning, and we recognize that you are with us at all times. Creator, God, we are but your humble servants, seeking to do your will in this challenging world. Give us the tools and the skills to do our best for your world. Amen.

Gathering Hymn Where Two or Three are Gathered, MV # 14

Where two or three are gathered

In my name,

I am there, I am there.

Children's Ministry Your favourite season? And one Last (maybe) Summer Activity
-Richard asked several preset what is your favourite season and why? Then we had fun tossing a beach ball around, so that everyone had a chance to touch it, just like our lives touch each other.

Children's Prayer *This is a repeat after me prayer.*

Dear God, Thank You for each season. Thank you for summer. Thank you for opportunities to gather, to celebrate and to enjoy some down time. Help us to embrace the new season upon us and enjoy it as well.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer of Confession Let us pray. Dear Lord, we often fall short of your expectations; however, we are trying our best. We ask for your guidance in our lives, and trust that our actions will be acceptable in your sight. Amen.

Words of Assurance In this challenging world, there are so many distractions and temptations. The Lord provides a guiding hand. Heed the whisper of God that you hear in the cool evening breeze, the whoosh of the wind prior to a storm, or the stillness of a hot summer day. Hear it and know that you are forgiven, and that you will be blessed as you enter the coming week, and indeed every day moving forward.

Offering Invitation & Prayer Acts 20:35 states, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help others, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' We have been blessed with so many gifts in our lives. As Canadians we are a very well-blessed people. God loves a cheerful giver (and as Reverend Roger Landell used to say, we appreciate the grumpy givers too!). Whether you give time, talent, or treasure to this church community, your gifts will now be received.

Prayer after offering Let us pray. Dear Lord, we are a blessed people. We are thankful for your blessings on us, and for the opportunity to share our bounty with others through our offering. Please bless those here today, those that cannot be whatever their circumstances, and bless those in our wider community. Please accept these gifts as part of our service to you. Amen.

Hymn The Church's One Foundation, VU # 331

The church's one foundation	Called forth from every nation	Though with a scornful wonder	Mid toil and tribulation,	We now on earth have union
Is Jesus Christ out Lord,	Yet one o'er all the earth	The world sees us oppressed,	And tumult of our war,	With God the Three in One,
We are his new creation	One charter of salvation,	By schisms rent asunder,	We wait the consummation	And share through faith communion
By water and the Word.	One Lord, one faith, one birth.	By heresies distressed,	Of peace for evermore,	With those whose rest is won.
From heaven he came and sought us	One holy name professing	Yet saints their watch are keeping,	Till with the vision glorious	Oh, happy ones, and holy!
That we might ever be	And at one table fed,	Their cry goes up, "How long?"	Our longing eyes are blest,	Lord, give us grace that we
His living servant people,	To one hope always pressing,	But soon the night of weeping	And the great church victorious	Like them, the meek and lowly,
By his own death set free.	By Christ's own Spirit led.	Shall be the morn of song.	Shall be the church at rest.	On high may dwell with thee.

Prayer of Illumination Let us pray: Creator God, we admit that sometimes we are set in our ways and unbending despite your nudges. Open our minds, open our hearts, and help us learn through the message we hear today, as well as all the more subtle messages that we receive throughout the coming week. Amen.

Today's Scripture Reading

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

Message *The Changing Seasons*

Lloyd Douglas Auckland September 29, 1923 – May 16, 2016
Phyllis Jeannette (Latimer) Auckland November 10, 1924 – April 22, 2021

The commonality we have with each other is that we are born...

and we die.

How we get from one point to the other is very individual. No two people follow the same path.

How will you spend your dash? -



We all are born. And we all die. How you live your life is your dash.

Lloyd Douglas Auckland (September 29, 1923-May 16, 2016) -born and raised in Talbotville; -St. Thomas Collegiate Institute for high school, Western for University, played football -part of the officer in training program in the mid 40s. -high school teacher; Ontario Association of Mathematics Educators President; Junior Math Contests (University of Waterloo); Vice Principal at Central Elgin Collegiate Institute and Parkside Collegiate Institute; volunteered in retirement at the University of Waterloo for 24 years; loved birdwatching; love of math and sport

Mom -born in Illinois; emigrated to Canada; lost her sister to appendicitis at age 8; attended Payne's Mills School with dad; nursing training at Memorial Hospital in St. Thomas; Baylor University for an operating room procedures course; Hawaii to nurse; came home, thankfully, so that the five of us siblings could be part of the family; supportive domestic engineer; volunteered with UCW and very active at church

Family vacations across Canada and the US (when they were friendlier); birdwatching; love of the Tigers; travel, excursions, Sunday drives, dad drove to Ottawa and return on same day to pick me up from a work term; family meals were integral in our gatherings; hosts for exchange students

In his final hours of life, I asked dad, "Will Detroit win the world series this year, and if so, blink once." Dad opened his eyes wide and refrained from blinking! Even at the end he kept his sense of humour.

During Covid, my eldest sister Sandra and I would go in to Valleyview and help my mother, Phyllis, with her meals and we'd stay and visit for an hour or two. My mother developed dementia toward the end, but she always maintained a very positive demeanour. After visiting mom for several months, she turned to me one day and said, "Your mother must have been a very nice person!" I assured her that my mother was indeed a very nice lady!

Life is so much more than your "dash." To that end, we decided as their kids to print life stories for my parents which attempted to give a better perspective of our love for them and their contributions to society, and our lives. Even that seemed inadequate when you look at the accomplishments of which we were aware. My first cousin, Diane Macpherson, whom I believe is no stranger to you (former minister at St. John's and DUC in Dutton), is our family's resident genealogy expert (with my son, Jonathon) also taking a keen interest in family history. It is interesting when you learn of the lives of those who we may not even have a picture of. My great grandparents came to Canada from the coal mines of Silesia then Hamburg, Germany to Quebec City, overland to Northern Ontario. My grandmother travelled to Naperville, Illinois, for Music School in the early 1900s, met my grandfather and remigrated to Southern Ontario. My mother went to Nursing School at Memorial Hospital in St. Thomas, attended Baylor University in Texas for an operating room course, and then proceeded to Hawaii where she stayed one year until my father convinced her to come home, and they settled there where thankfully, in due course, me and my four older siblings were born and raised.

Our path is one of many choices. If a different path is chosen, life looks different. "What if?" you chose a different path in life? There are those key times in our lives where you decide on further education, a job, where

to live, etc., and we are often plagued with the thought of “What if?”, but regardless, whatever path we choose, God is at our side.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 Seasons of Life – a Time for Everything under heaven. A time to...

- plant, uproot - live, die - war, peace
- Kill, heal - build, tear down
- Weep, laugh, mourn, dance - search, give up
- scatter, gather - keep, throw away
- Silent, speak up - love, hate

Throughout our lifetimes, we experience it all (or most of it).

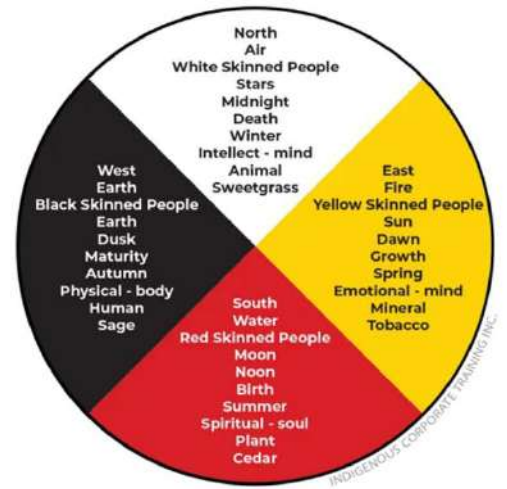
As you get older, you have more of a knowledge and experiential base on which to draw. You are at a higher level of thinking and understanding. Ernie Shelley [Karen Auckland (my wife's) grandfather]

and he wasn't wrong. We need to respect the knowledge of our elders.

The Indigenous Medicine Wheel – 4 seasons through our ages (new life, spring, dawn to the right in yellow; maturity, summer, the prime of life at the bottom in red; nightfall, celebrating, fall, reflecting on your accomplishments and contributing to the next generation in black; and in white at the top is death, being between living and being reborn, winter, preparing for rebirth; 4 parts of the cycle of life



Pathways – Take the road less travelled; squirrel, deer, and surprise deer. You never know what you might come across. My father always liked taking back roads and seeing where they lead. Punkydoodles Corners where Perth, Oxford and Waterloo Regions meet; back road adventures; Christmas 1982 – my father drove us back to Kitchener from St. Thomas on Boxing Day night. As it was a snowstorm, we plowed through, got stuck and had to be rescued by a tow truck operator leaving our car at the side of the road overnight.



Geography – packed snow becomes icy, ice permeates the layers; paths give way to dirt roads, to paved roads, to highways or railways – a more consistent path, I urge you to get off the main path, take the road less travelled, and see what you might discover.

Choices – what you can see vs what you can't – Life is a mystery and take chances. God wants us to be our best and will provide guidance at our side as in Colossians. Our path may be circuitous, but that's okay. God cares for us, regardless of our circumstances. Whatever decision we make, good or bad, God will be there to support us as a faithful parent. God may not be happy with our decisions but still doesn't throw us aside.

If you come to a fork in the road...
take it. Yogi Berra

The Future of the Church -Dunwich United Church has undergone

changes in its lifetime. Amalgamation as you can see did not end the church. Then selling the church building followed and the purchase of your new home which has been masterfully renovated. The people continue on. (Here is the church.) Most recently, Larry Schneider left his ministry with you. In the past, Diane also had moved on. Regardless of those leadership changes, you still have leaders amongst you and some step up at different times, and that's okay. Your expertise or willingness to serve is a gift in itself.

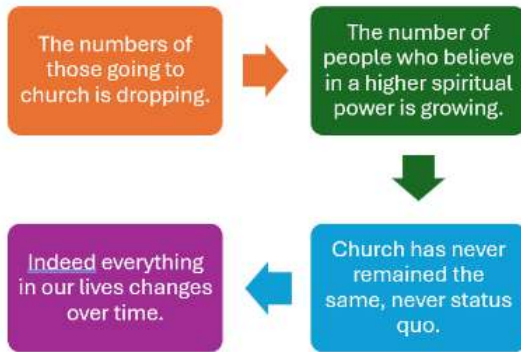
I had the privilege of working at a distance with both Sharon and John Mannering, and I know they come with their own gifts.

Similarly, Anne Morrissey and I worked alongside each other at Myrtle Street School in its final year of existence back in 2008/2009. Jack Page has passed on, yet his influence has helped shape this church. Your

The Future of the United Church of Canada: Toward 2035



congregation helped collect food for the Daffodil Society and you worked with several other area organizations to help the community. Similarly, the future of our denomination relies on the First Third ministry which is the ministry focused on the folks in their first 1/3 of their lives.



The church has undergone many changes (in fact there is no status quo in life; there are constant changes). In 2019, the old church, presbytery, conference, General Council model was changed to church, region, General Council which was to have reduced the bureaucracy in the governance of the United Church. Hopefully, there continues to be a connection with the wider church for you. Many of you do your part in volunteering here locally which is awesome. Volunteering to sit on the Regional Council or as a representative will help with your understanding of the broader church as it has also helped me learn more. As a lay leader (my

background being in elementary school administration), I found myself sitting on the Discipleship C Justice Commission, becoming chair of that group and then putting my name forward as president of the region. Anything is possible!

Whether you give time, talent or treasure to the church or your community, you are giving something of yourself, and thank you for that. Going forward, remember that you will encounter various elements as you progress through the seasons in life; that whatever you do, do it well, and lastly that God is with you and the church wherever life takes you.

Three points to remember:

The events in the four seasons of our lives are to be embraced. They are not always easy. Your pathway may be long and circuitous, but enjoy every moment. Venture off to the road less travelled.



Whatever you do, do it in the name of God (DYB). Live your "dash" to its fullest!





• God will care for us and the church throughout the various seasons. May you feel God's presence in your lives.

Hymn Here I am Lord, VU # 509

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry. All who dwell in deepest sin My hand will save. I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright. Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?	Refrain Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go Lord, If you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.	I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain. I have wept for love of them; They turn away. I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone. I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? Refrain	I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame, I will set a feast for them, My hand will save. Finest bread I will provide Till their hearts be satisfied. I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? Refrain
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Prayers of the People Anyone who you would like remembered in your prayers this morning?
 Let us pray: Almighty God, we praise you for your benevolence on each one of us. Please hear the prayers, both spoken and silently shared, and answer the call for help. We know our prayers are answered, but not always in the ways which we anticipate. Sometimes, you give us what we need but maybe not exactly what we want. Help us to appreciate the gift and use it to our advantage.

Parting Hymn **Go Make A Diff'rence**, MV # 209

Refrain	We are the salt of the	We are the hands of	So let your love shine on,
Go, make a diff'rence	earth.	Christ	Let it shine for all to see.
We can make a diff'rence	Called to let the people	Reaching out to those in	Go make a diff'rence in
Go make a diff'rence in	see	need,	the world.
the world.	The love of God for you	The face of God for all to	And the spirit of Christ
Go, make a diff'rence	and me.	see.	Will be with us as we go.
We can make a diff'rence	We are the light of the	We are the spirit of hope,	Go make a diff'rence in
Go make a diff'rence in	world,	We are the voice of	the world.
the world.	Not to be hidden but be	peace.	Refrain
	seen.	Go make a diff'rence in	
	Go, make a diff'rence in	the world.	
	the world.	Refrain	
	Refrain		

Benediction As we have just heard and been prompted: Go Make a Difference. It is within each one of us to do so. God is by your side and carries you in the most trying of times. So, go forth, use your gifts, your talents, and be blessed in your journey wherever life's road takes you. Amen.

Choral Amen

Extinguish the Christ Candle