

**We celebrate these lives and their ministries:**

**MEMORIALS**

Members of the Northern Spirit Regional Council who have passed away,  
and whose names have been made known to the Regional Council Office  
in the time since the last Regional Council Annual Meeting.

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| The Rev. Robert Lang                    | May 23, 2021       |
| Ms. Beverly Green                       | June 11, 2021      |
| The Rev. Robert Wright                  | August 21, 2021    |
| Ms. Jean A. Mosher, DM                  | September 9, 2021  |
| The Rev. Dr. George H. Rodgers          | September 18, 2021 |
| The Rev. John Coe                       | October 13, 2021   |
| The Rev. Thomas Forgrave                | October 18, 2021   |
| Ms. Linda Steffan                       | October 26, 2021   |
| The Rev. Bob Seal                       | January 15, 2022   |
| The Rev. Lorne Heffelfinger             | January 21, 2022   |
| Ms. Margaret Wallace                    | February 6, 2022   |
| The Very Rev. Dr. William (Bill) Phipps | March 4, 2022      |
| The Rev. Hugh Bayne                     | April 5, 2022      |

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Reverend Robert Howard Lang** **1929 - 2021**

Bob died peacefully at home in his 92<sup>nd</sup> year.

He was born December 5, 1929, in Hamilton, Ontario, the son of Harold and Caroline Lang.

Bob is remembered as a man with strong faith, as a kind, caring friend, and with much love by his wife of 51 years, Barbara, and his sons and their families.

A Celebration of Bob's life was held on May 31, 2021.

## **IN MEMORIAM: LAY PERSON**

### **Beverly Dale Green (Walker)**

**1937 - 2021**

On June 18, 2021, Beverley Dale Green passed away in the Vermilion Health Centre at the age of 84 years. She was loved and is remembered by her Daughters, Carolyn, Cheryl and Coreen, and their families.

Beverley Green was a long-time and faithful United Church member. She was active in her home congregation of First United Church, Vermilion. She served for many years as the former St. Paul Presbytery Secretary, and worked with Camp Whitney.

Beverley will be remembered by many for her work in many facets of the former Alberta and Northwest Conference, and for her dedication as a member of the United Church Women, serving in the Alberta and Northwest Conference UCW, including a term as its President. She was also active in the national UCW, serving for a time as the President of the National United Church Women.

A funeral service for Beverley Green was held on July 2, 2021.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Reverend Robert Russell Wright** **1932 - 2021**

Robert Wright was born on April 18, 1932, in Kerrobert, Saskatchewan. to Edna and Wilbur Wright, a one-room schoolteacher and a farmer.

Robert will be remembered by his five children, and their families.

A studious boy, and an even brighter teenager and adult, Robert attended the University of Alberta before enrolling in Union Seminary in New York State, where he earned his master's degree in theology in 1956. He was also the holder of an honorary doctorate from McGill University. Robert was ordained

His early years of ministry were spent in New York City's Spanish Harlem, before arriving in Welland, Ontario, in the early 1960s, where he served as the Minister of All People's United Church for 25 years. His life of community service stemmed further than he could reach from the pulpit.

Robert was a man of change who sought to make the world better for everyone through social activism, faith, and leadership: he stood for election in the 1968, 1972, 1974 and 1979 federal elections, as a New Democrat.

Robert returned to western Canada, where he served as the Alberta and Northwest Conference Home Missions/Global Justice Minister, from 1985 to 1990. In 1997, he embraced the opportunity to work shoulder-to-shoulder with the residents of the Whitefish and Saddle Lake First Nations, serving as minister, social worker, and friend to many. This was his crowning achievement, and a position he held until three weeks prior to his death on August 21, 2021.

A prayer service was held on August 28, 2021, in the Goodfish Lake Community Hall. The funeral service was held on August 29, 2021, at Goodfish Lake United Church.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **Jean Ariel Mosher, Diaconal Minister** **1923 - 2021**

Jean was born in Montreal, Quebec, and passed away in Leduc, Alberta, after living in 6 provinces and for several years in France.

She was the daughter of Roland Larrabee and Allene Wells. Jean is remembered by her daughters, Margaret Hakey, Donna LaBlond and Sharon Vogrinetz, and their families.

Jean graduated from the Centre for Christian Studies, Toronto, in 1983. She served as a Diaconal Minister in Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, before her retirement in 1989.

A family memorial will be held in the summer of 2022.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Rev. Dr. George Harrison Rodgers** **1938 - 2021**

The Rev. Dr. George H. Rodgers, a long-time and well-loved minister of the United Church of Canada, died on Saturday, September 18, 2021 at the age of 83.

He is lovingly remembered by his wife of 48 years, Heather, his daughter Kyla (Sean Gillis), and his son Mark, as well as other family members.

George loved his family, his church, the Saskatchewan Roughriders, the St. Louis Cardinals, the Edmonton Oilers and Johnny Cash. He enjoyed singing tenor in the church choir and the Josephburg Men's Choir, hosting radio shows on CJSR with his son, Mark, playing bridge, writing, reading, live theatre, travelling, and doing the daily crossword and Sudoku.

He was a devoted and loving husband and father. He loved spending summer vacations at Naramata Centre with Heather, Kyla and Mark, and enjoyed visits with family in Regina, British Columbia, Calgary and Cape Breton. In later years, he and Heather looked forward to trips to Mexico each winter, and were fortunate to travel and to cruise to many beautiful destinations.

George grew up in Regina. He attended the University of Saskatchewan, earning a Bachelor of Arts; St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, earning a Bachelor of Divinity; Chicago Theological Seminary, earning a Master of Theology; and St. Stephen's College, Edmonton, earning a Doctor of Ministry.

George was ordained in 1962, and served in pastoral ministry in Pelly and Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and in Calgary, Sherwood Park, and Edmonton, Alberta. He also served on staff at the Prairie Christian Training Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle and at St. Stephen's College in Edmonton. George's last position before retirement in 2002, was as Executive Secretary of Alberta and Northwest Conference of the United Church.

In his 60 years of service as an ordained minister, George was involved in many different aspects of church life. He was a commissioner to General Councils, and a member of the General Council Executive, as well as being elected President of Alberta Conference. George chaired, and was a member of, a wide range of Presbytery, Conference and General Council committees. He also served as Interim President for St. Stephen's and St. Andrew's Colleges, and was Minister Emeritus at Sherwood Park United Church. He taught courses at St. Stephen's College and at the department of Extension at the University of Alberta.

A dynamic speaker, he was a lifelong learner, was well read, and kept up with the best thinkers and contemporary theologians of the day. He lived with integrity, was a strong churchman, an excellent teacher, and a caring and compassionate minister.

We are grateful for the gifts and graces George shared through his years of ministry, for his gentle presence, for his ability to listen and respond with thoughtful guidance, and for his sense of humour. His presence among us will be missed.

A Celebration of George's life was held on April 9, 2022, at Sherwood Park United Church.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Rev. Thomas Forgrave** **1938 - 2021**

The Rev. Tom Forgrave, of Edmonton, Alberta, passed away October 18, 2021, from cancer, at the age of 80 years. Tom grew up in Georgetown, Ontario. While earning his Theology Degree from the University of Toronto, he headed to Thorsby, Alberta, for a summer internship. It was there that he met his wife of 56 years, Margaret (Andrews).

After Tom became an ordained minister in 1966, they moved to Mayerthorpe, Alberta, where he took on a large regional pastoral charge with The United Church of Canada.

In 1970, Tom switched career paths, joining the City of Edmonton. He held several positions with the city, his last position being Intergovernmental Affairs Officer. The last stage of his public service career was with the Province of Alberta. He retired in 1995 in the role of Assistant Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs. In 2003 he received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from St. Stephens College, and retired from ministry in the United Church. Throughout his professional career and into retirement, Tom was an active volunteer with various organizations.

Tom is survived by his wife Margaret; and his sons, Rob and Dan, and their families.

A Memorial service was held at Grace United Church, Edmonton on October 30, 2021, where Tom and Marg were active members for over 40 years.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Rev. Robert (Bob) Seal** **1938 - 2022**

Bob Seal passed away at the age of 90, in Edmonton, during a brief hospital stay with his family by his side.

He is lovingly remembered by his brother-in-law, Oliver Seward, his sons, Robert, Ken and Doug, and their families. He always had a special place in his heart for his nieces and nephews. Bob was predeceased by his parents, his brother, Jim, his sister, Carol, and his wife of 52 years, Margaret.

The positive impact Bob had on the life of others is vast. Foremost as an involved, loving and supportive husband, father, grandfather and grandfather, but also through his work and engagement with his community. Following a brief period teaching in a one-room schoolhouse, Bob returned to the University of Alberta for a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Divinity, graduating with the Dean's Gold Medal. He then served as a United Church Minister in Forestburg, Edmonton, Vegreville and Goodfish/Saddle Lake. Broader community service included roles that supported those with addictions, the mentally handicapped, Scouts, Rotary and acting as the Legion Chaplain. Bob was a champion of social justice and diversity, with a firm belief that everyone is one of God's children, regardless of religion, race, country or creed.

Bob was a talented hockey and baseball player, and loved gardening, camping and hiking. Favourite destinations included Marble Canyon in Kootenay National Park, Osoyoos and Tofino. He had a brilliant mind, often sharing stories, puns and quotes, and kept his family and friends entertained with his great sense of humour.

A memorial service was held on January 29, 2022 at Southminster-Steinhauer United Church, Edmonton.

## **IN MEMORIAM: LAY PERSON**

### **Margaret Wallace**

**1942 - 2022**

Margaret Wallace of Camrose, Alberta, passed away on February 6, 2022, at the age of 79 years.

Left to cherish her memory are her children, Paul and Karl, and their families, and her siblings Alan and Barbara. Margaret was predeceased by her husband, the Rev. Gerald Wallace.

Margaret's son Paul included these words in A Tribute to [his] Mum:

“Hello Dear! How ya doing? Hello Lovey! Hi, it’s nice to meet you. Sorry, I’m a Hugger ...”  
Huuuuuuuuug. This is a memory we all hold of my Mum. That glint of joy in her eyes, and an audible chuckle, as she stepped towards you. Whether you were ready or not. Her arms exploding. Outstretching as she prepared to envelope you with love, warmth and shared happiness. She always told me that she hated shaking people’s hands. “They either squeeze too hard, or it’s all floppy, like holding a dead fish. Either way ... BLECH!”

Margaret is remembered by many in the church, and in her daily life, for her honesty, her singing, and her constant movement. She always got “right into” whatever she was doing. Gardening was a passion for Margaret, and harvest time was a family activity, which included tasting the vegetables, and the extra flavour and texture of some dirt.

Growing up as a working-class British child, dedication was a given for everything in her life. She met Gerry at a dance, where they danced all night. She decided that night that “that one is mine!” Margaret lived her life through acts of service, and was honest and truthful in all she did.

Members of the former Alberta and Northwest Conference will remember Margaret for her work in the Division of Communication, and, in particular, her work on *In Contact*, the Conference supplement to the Observer Magazine.

A service of celebration for Margaret's life was held in Camrose on April 9, 2022.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Very Reverend Dr. (William) Bill Phipps** **1942 - 2022**

The United Church of Canada has been grieving the death of the Very Rev. Dr. William Phipps, the denominations 36<sup>th</sup> Moderator, who faithfully served in this role from 1997 to 2000. Bill died on March 4, 2022. A fierce champion for economic, ecological and Indigenous justice, he was originally trained as a lawyer before becoming an ordained minister.

During his time as Moderator, Bill hosted a consultation on Faith and the Economy, traveling across Canada, listening to people from all walks of life. In October 1998, speaking on behalf of the whole church, he apologized for the denominations role in Indian Residential Schools, saying in part, “we pray that you will hear the sincerity of our words today and that you will witness the living out of our apology in our actions in the future.”

Prior to his tenure as Moderator, Bill Phipps was the Executive Secretary of the former Alberta and Northwest Conference, where his passion for justice was keenly felt throughout the Conference, and he is also remembered for his pastoral care for its members.

After his term as Moderator, Bill served in ministry leadership, retiring in June 2007 from Scarboro United Church, Calgary. He continued as a strong advocate for Indigenous rights, peace, justice and ecological integrity, with many commitments including Faith and the Common Good and the Parkland Institute.

The church across the country extends deepest condolences to Bill’s partner, Carolyn, his family, his friends, and those who he affected throughout his ministries in The United Church of Canada and beyond.

An online funeral service was hosted by Hillhurst United Church, Calgary, on March 8, 2022.

## **IN MEMORIAM: ORDER OF MINISTRY**

### **The Rev. Hugh Bayne** **1928 - 2022**

The Rev. Hugh Bayne, at the age of 94 years, passed away on April 5, 2022.

He is remembered by his wife of 69 years, Celestina; his son, William and daughter-in-law Anna; his daughter, Janet and son-in-law, Chay; his grandson, Morgan (Diane); granddaughters, Alisha (Doug), Megan and Vanessa; and his great-grandchildren, Autumn and Hunter.

Hugh packed many experiences into his long life. Wherever he stopped to live for a time, he gained a wealth of knowledge and skills from every facet of life and every relationship he built. He was known for his sense of humour.

He worked hard, but still found time to curl, golf, dance, play cards, and he loved to sing. He was employed in a wide variety of ways until he was called by God and was ordained in 1968 as a minister in The United Church of Canada. Prior to his retirement in 1991, Hugh served Pastoral Charges in Canora, Saskatchewan; Trail, British Columbia; and Drayton Valley, Wetaskiwin, Rimbey and Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Hugh's life was celebrated on Thursday, April 19, 2022, in St. Albert.