

OPEN MINDS. OPEN HEARTS. OPEN DOORS.

## The Welcoming Spirit of the United Church

by Harvey Gibson

As a gay, transgender man who grew up in the Catholic Church, my relationship with organized religion has always been fraught. The Catholic Church has never, in my experience, been a welcoming place for me or people like me—some of whom are the most vulnerable people in the population.

I was hesitant at first when I saw the job posting for communications and office coordinator at Eastside United. I had never heard of an 'Affirming Ministry' before. But, my previous wariness is now completely gone. The community at Eastside United Church and the Living Spirit Center has been so kind and welcoming to me.

Every smile, every time someone comes to introduce themselves to me, every time someone makes

the effort to use my pronouns (he/him/his!), stands out in my head. It is the complete opposite experience that I had with church growing up. I cannot help but feel incredulous. Besides that, the acceptance and kindness I have experienced in my so far short tenure with Eastside United Church has been healing. It has been healing for hurts that I didn't even know were there.

Keep it up, Eastsiders! Keep extending that incredible kindness and welcoming spirit to folks like me, even if you may not understand our lived experiences; whether we use pronouns you have to practice, are protesting an issue you're unfamiliar with, or look and speak differently than you are used to.

The world needs more kindness and welcoming spirit these days.



Harvey started at Eastside United on February 11, 2020. He comes to Eastside with a career background in communications and social media. Harvey is a University of Regina graduate, where he earned his BFA in Film Production. In his spare time, Harvey enjoys cinema, video games, and writing.

# Lenten Reflection

by Russell Mitchell-Walker

*Confession: By the time I graduated from college, I thought I was the white culture whisperer. I was fearless. I thought any future encounters of racism would rear their ugly heads like purple dragons, and I had no doubt in my ability to slay the racist nonsense wherever I found it. I was so wrong. Far from an imposing beast, I found that white supremacy is more like a poison. It seeps in to your mind, drip by drip, until it makes you wonder if your perception of reality is true.*

*-Austin Channing Brown, [I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness](#) pg. 67*



Austin Channing Brown has written a compelling book on her experience as a black woman in the US, including in church circles. It is a story in which she engages in some significant self-reflection along with a critique of racism in America. Through her storytelling she paints a concrete picture to help us understand how racism is lived out and experienced in her day to day life. This will be our next book for our Craft-Study group, and fits with the self-reflection of Lent.

Lent, is a time of self reflection, self examination, of deepening our faith and relationship with God, to ground ourselves in that Essence of God's love and compassion in us. It is 40 days corresponding with the 40 days of fasting that Jesus did in the desert to discern the focus of his ministry. It is a time of being open to God and what God wants for us in our lives. It traditionally is a time of giving up something. It can also be a time of taking on something. It can be a time of learning, reflection and challenge. This year I invite you to take on some actions of learning to deepen your understanding and awareness. There are specifically two opportunities provided for you. The first is a calendar of [40 Actions of Reconciliation](#), (also on page 4) which provides an opportunity to read and listen

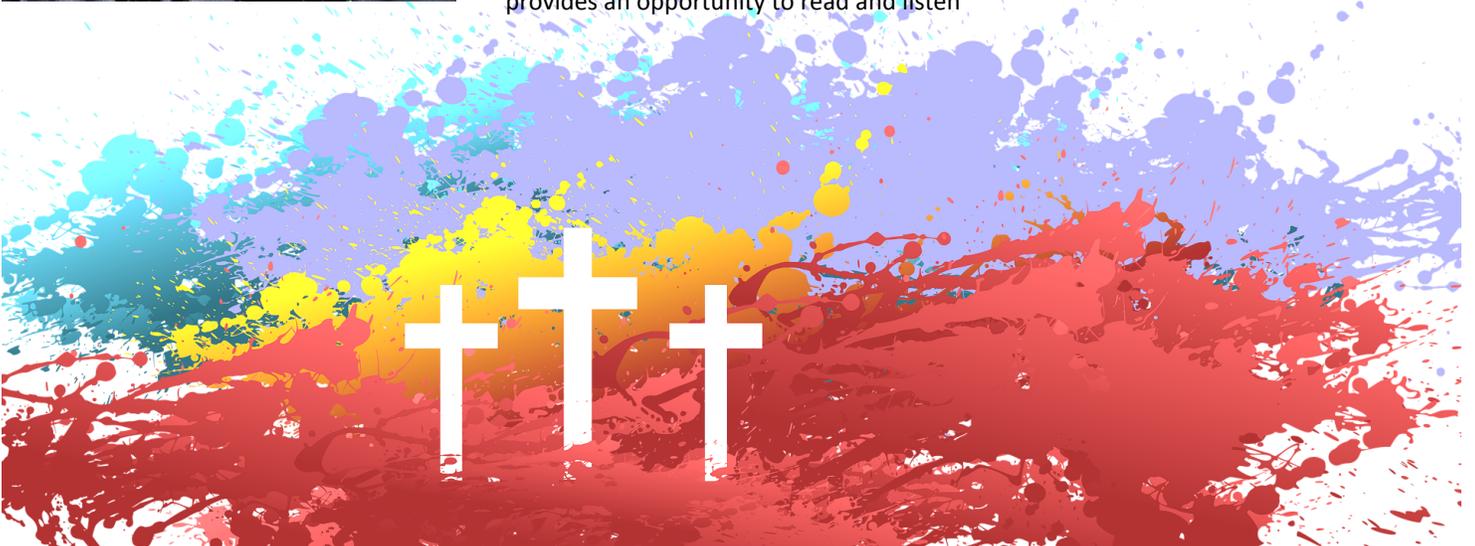
and learn about indigenous issues in our country and what reconciliation means.

The other is a book called [Resipiscence](#), a *Lenten Devotional for dismantling White Supremacy*, that provides readings, poems and reflections from racialized and non-racialized people of faith, for each day of Lent. 'Resipiscence' means a change of mind or heart or a return to a sane, sound, or correct view or position. I commend these two resources to you for Lent and invite you to engage with them and open yourself to some self-reflection and learning with regard to these issues.

I also invite you to take advantage of the opportunity for some quiet reflective, prayerful time on Wednesdays during our Lenten Services. Join us for fellowship during the soup and bun meal beforehand. As we move through this season of Lent may it be for you a fulfilling time of growth in your faith, and self understanding, as we seek to be faithful and build our relationship with God.

Russell Mitchell-Walker

Diaconal Minister



# Leadership Team Update

by Sarah Tkachuk, Chair of the Leadership Team

Spring is just around the corner, and we are excited at the change and transformation happening at Eastside! We are grateful for all of the work of our volunteers and staff over the last few months. Welcome to Harvey, our new Communications and Office Coordinator! Our financial situation is better than it has ever been. If you haven't had a chance to review the 2019 Financial Report, you can do so [HERE](#). We appreciate everyone who contributes time and talent to the vibrant life at Eastside and the Living Spirit Centre. The Leadership Team has some key initiatives that we are working on this spring. This includes:

- We are excited about conversations that are happening in the Cluster of United Churches in Regina! Members of Eastside are participating in conversations with other Regina churches about ways that we can work together. If you are interested in participating in Cluster conversations, or if you have ideas of how we can work with other churches, please let us know!
- We are currently in the process of reviewing programming and making plans for the 2020 year. If you have an idea for programming that you would like to see happen, and you are interested in making that work, please let the leadership team know so that we can review it in time for our programming meeting in May. Some of the awesome programs that are currently happening at Eastside include:
  - Craft Study Group
  - Film and Faith
  - Community Dinner
  - Messy Church – Shared LSC Program
  - Holy Yoga
  - Meditation Group...

Just to name a few!

- The Gratitude team has gathered some excellent feedback by speaking to many

of the members at Eastside. The Leadership team will be meeting over the coming weeks to review the feedback and implement this into our plans for the year ahead. Thank you to everyone that provided comments! If you haven't had a chance to provide feedback to the Gratitude team, please contact a member of the team, or send us an email at [eastsideunited@sasktel.net](mailto:eastsideunited@sasktel.net), and we will make sure you are contacted.

- We have received approval from the Region to start collecting M & S Contributions. If you would like to update your PAR to increase your giving and/or designate a portion of the amount to the M & S Fund, please let Harvey at the office know.
- And speaking of updating your PAR, every year certain costs at Eastside increase (salaries and our common LSC costs are the most notable). If you are in a place to increase your contributions, either through envelope giving or PAR, we would be very grateful. Thank you to all that contribute to our community!

If you have questions about anything that is happening at Eastside, we would invite you to reach out to a member of the leadership team. I can be reached at 306-527-5060 or [stkachuk@kpmg.ca](mailto:stkachuk@kpmg.ca). If you are curious about what is happening, I would invite you to check out the [Church@work](#) section of our webpage. Copies of the minutes of the Leadership Team meetings, as well as information about our goals and plans, are all contained here.

Thank you for helping us to live out our mission of "Open Minds, Open Hearts, Open Doors" at Eastside United Church!

*Generous God, we celebrate the contributions of Eastside United Church to the Mission and Service Fund in Canada.*

*Eastside has a long history of supporting the work of the greater United Church of Canada through the Mission and Service Fund. Each week we hear about the good work that M & S does across Canada and the world. For many of us, M & S is the way that we live out our call for social justice in the world.*

*It is with sorrow that we reflect on the last several years of M & S giving at Eastside. Our financial situation was such that we did not have the cash flow to meet our M & S contributions. Gracious God, we ask forgiveness that we as a community were in a place where we were not able to do what we were called to do.*

*We rejoice today, that when the community was called to act, we have responded. We celebrate that all funds committed to the M & S Fund have been paid, and all current contributions are immediately remitted to M & S so that they can be deployed in doing the work of the M & S Fund. We celebrate that Eastside is able to collect for M & S again. The community at Eastside has responded to our financial need with joy and celebration, with gratitude and love. We have responded by making Eastside United Church a priority in our financial affairs. The current financial situation at Eastside is better than it has ever been.*

*God, we rejoice that we are part of such a gracious and vibrant community. We give thanks for each and every one of us. We give thanks for the lessons that we have learned and the new commitment to immediately paying all M & S Funds. We give thanks for the Gratitude Team, which has worked so hard to communicate, celebrate and inform all of us of the financial need. We give thanks for Russell, who has prayed with us, and guided us in this journey.*

*We thank you God, for this community, these people and this journey we share together at Eastside United Church.*

- written by Sarah Tkachuk

# Lenten Calendar: 40 Actions for Truth and Reconciliation

*You are invited to take time each day to learn about, reflect on and experience the issues of reconciliation in a variety of ways. Lent is about reflection, spiritual practice, discipline, prayer, fasting and giving. Some of these take time and may challenge your understandings. You are invited to take this time as a spiritual discipline and be open to the Spirit to offer new insights and spiritual understandings during this Lenten practice.*

**February 26:** Read the Ally Bill of Responsibilities <http://bit.ly/AllyBill>

**February 27:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' video <http://bit.ly/Dearyoungerme>

**February 28:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' videos Part 1 <http://bit.ly/ReconciliationThunder1>

**February 29:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' videos Part 2 <http://bit.ly/ReconciliationThunder2>

**March 1:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' videos Part 3 <http://bit.ly/ReconciliationThunder3>

**March 2:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' videos Part 4 <http://bit.ly/ReconciliationThunder4>

**March 3:** Watch James Thunder's poem 'Dear Younger Me' videos Part 5 <http://bit.ly/ReconciliationThunder5>

**March 4:** Read this letter of support from the United Church of Canada regarding solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en land defenders. <http://bit.ly/UCCSolidarity>

**March 5:** Read this article about Wet'suwet'en leadership and how they are more united than the media portrays: <http://bit.ly/Wetleaders>

**March 6:** Review this information about Wet'suwet'en solidarity and choose one item to read, watch or do. <http://bit.ly/WetsuSolidarity>

**March 7:** Read the TRC Calls to Action related to the church: #48, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62 [www.bit.ly/TRCCalls](http://www.bit.ly/TRCCalls)

**March 8:** Identify a call to Action that resonates with you and share it on social media or with friends and family and why it is important to you. [www.bit.ly/TRCCalls](http://www.bit.ly/TRCCalls)

**March 9:** Watch video of the UNDRIP <https://vimeo.com/89806557>

**March 10:** MMIW calls to justice Read Introduction <http://bit.ly/MMIWCalls> pg. 167-176

**March 11:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: All Governments: Human and Indigenous Rights and Governmental Obligations pg. 176

**March 12:** Plan to Attend INI Cafe March 20

**March 13:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Culture pg. 179

**March 14:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Health and Wellness pg. 180

**March 15:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Human Security pg. 181

**March 16:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Justice pg. 183

**March 17:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Industries, Institutions, Services, and Partnerships: Calls for Media and Social Influencers pg. 187

**March 18:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Health and Wellness Service Providers pg. 188

**March 19:** Plan to participate in ICF breakfast March 28 or attend Wednesday soup and bannock at ICF

**March 20:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Transportation Service Providers and the Hospitality Industry & Police Services; pg. 190

**March 21:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Attorneys and Law Societies & Educators; pg. 193

**March 22:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Social Workers and Those Implicated in Child Welfare; pg. 194

**March 23:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Extractive and Development Industries & Correctional Services; pg. 196

**March 24:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: All Canadians; pg. 199

**March 25:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Inuit; pg 202, 16.1-16.21

**March 26:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Inuit; pg. 206, 16.22-44

**March 27:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Metis; pg. 210, 17.1-17.14

**March 28:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: Metis; pg. 212, 17.15-17.29

**March 29:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: 2SLGBTQQUIA; pg. 214, 18.1-18.16

**March 30:** MMWI Calls to Justice section: 2SLGBTQQUIA; pg. 216, 18.17-18.32

**March 31:** Sign the amnesty petition I stand with Indigenous Women and Families to End Violence <http://bit.ly/MMWIAmnesty>

**April 1:** Start to read a book on indigenous issues <http://bit.ly/Indigbooks> or MMIW <http://bit.ly/MMWIBooks>

**April 2:** Watch video of #wecare movement for MMIW <http://bit.ly/Wecarevid>

**April 3:** Make a plan to visit the Regina industrial school memorial cemetery 701 Pinkie Rd, Pense, SK <http://bit.ly/Reginaindyschool>

**April 4:** Read some stories of MMIW <https://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/>

**April 5:** Watch Run sister Run <http://bit.ly/MMWlvid>



**LENTEN SERVICES  
2020**

**Soup and Buns, Prayers Around  
the Cross, Holden Services**

LENTEN SERVICE WILL ALTERNATE BETWEEN  
PRAYERS AROUND THE CROSS AND HOLDEN EVENING  
PRAYERS

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO BRING SOUP AND  
BUNS ON MARCH 11TH AND 25TH

SOUP AND BREAD AT 5:30 PM, SERVICE AT 6:30 PM



**Saturday  
MAR 7  
at 4 pm  
at the LSC**

**An Lent-themed  
event for families –  
crafts, celebration,  
and a meal!**



This is a shared ministry program of the Living Spirit Centre!  
3018 Doan Drive, Regina  
INFO & RSVP: 306-761-0556

## Craft Study Group to read *I'm Still Here* in April

Join us as we share in discussion, handiwork and coffee time!

From a powerful new voice on racial justice, an eye-opening account of growing up Black, Christian, and female in middle-class white America.

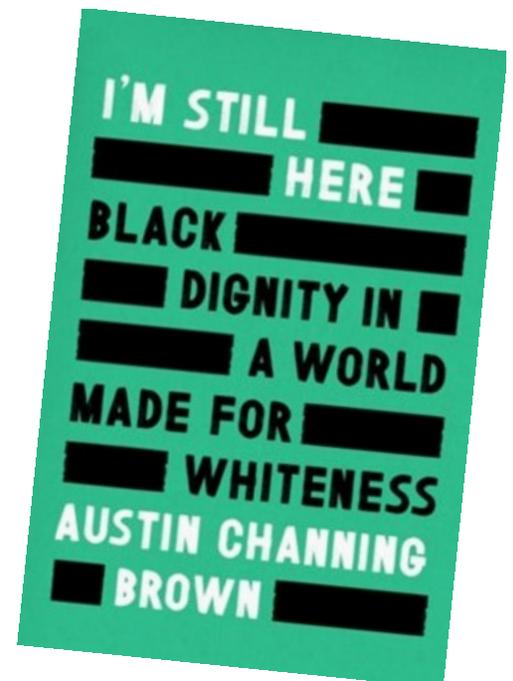
Austin Channing Brown's first encounter with a racialized America came at age 7, when she discovered her parents named her Austin to deceive future employers into thinking she was a white man. Growing up in majority-white schools, organizations, and churches, Austin writes, "I had to learn what it means to love blackness," a journey that led to a lifetime spent navigating America's racial divide as a writer, speaker and expert who helps organizations practice genuine inclusion.

In a time when nearly all institutions (schools, churches, universities, businesses) claim to value "diversity" in their mission

statements, *I'm Still Here* is a powerful account of how and why our actions so often fall short of our words. Austin writes in breathtaking detail about her journey to self-worth and the pitfalls that kill our attempts at racial justice, in stories that bear witness to the complexity of America's social fabric-- from Black Cleveland neighborhoods to private schools in the middle-class suburbs, from prison walls to the boardrooms at majority-white organizations.

If you are interested in joining Craft Study for this book, **please register with the Eastside United office at [eastsideunited@sasktel.net](mailto:eastsideunited@sasktel.net) by March 25th.**

Craft Study will be starting this book on April 16th, 2020.



# Up-Coming Events in March/April

## Messy Church—March 7th and April 4th

Lenten themed Messy Church during March, and Easter themed Messy Church during April!

## Women’s Breakfast—March 14th and April 11th

Join us for the Women’s Breakfast! Come for breakfast and conversation. All women are welcome! Please bring a toonie to help cover the cost. 8 am to 10 am. Have an idea for a speaker? Let Anita Tessier know!

## Community Dinner—March 19th and April 16th

Every third Thursday of the month. Doors open at 5:45 pm.

## INI Café—March 20th

Folks are encouraged to attend the Round Dance at the Circle Project.

Come at 5 pm for the Pipe Ceremony & Feast with the Round Dance to follow at the Mâdawêyatitân Centre, 3355 6th Avenue.



## Potluck—March 22nd and April 26th

Potlucks will be held after service on March 22nd and April 26th.

## Film and Faith—March 27th and April 24th

The last Friday of each month brings us Film and Faith!



**Communion** is held on the first Sunday of every month. The next communion will be on April 5th, during Palm Sunday.

**Open Hearts Jar** happens on the second Sunday of every month. The next Open Hearts Jar will be happening March 8th and April 12th.

**Prayer Candles** happen during the third Sunday of every month. During March and April, Prayer Candles will happen on March 15th and April 19th.

**Reminder that Holy Week 2020** is during the week of April 5th to the 12th! During Maundy Thursday, the service will include the foot-washing rite. If you would like to participate and have your feet washed during service, please contact Russell or Harvey.

## ICF Breakfast—March 28th and April 25th

The fourth Saturday of each month, Eastside volunteers help set up, serve and clean up following breakfast for residents of north-central Regina. Please come help with this awesome, feel-good ministry!

Contact Doug Scheurwater if you would like to volunteer with the ICF Breakfast! [dscheurwater@sasktel.net](mailto:dscheurwater@sasktel.net)



## Faith Exploration/Membership



Are you new to the United Church? Been away for a while? Do you have a youth who would like to affirm their membership? Or would you just like to learn more about who we are and what we believe?

Join us for an information session about Faith Exploration, an opportunity to explore our faith, the United Church, and discern what it means to be a member.

Adults and youth welcome!

On **March 19th at 7 pm** (join us for the Community Dinner beforehand) we will learn about this program, get to know each other and explore dates.

Let Russell know if you are interested at [russell.eastside@sasktel.net](mailto:russell.eastside@sasktel.net) or call the Eastside United Church office at 306-761-0556

## Join Us for Holy Week 2020

**Palm Sunday**

**“A Walk Through Holy Week”**  
April 5th, 11:15 am

**Maundy Thursday**

**Led by Bread of Life**  
**Foot-washing**  
April 9th, 7 pm

**Good Friday**

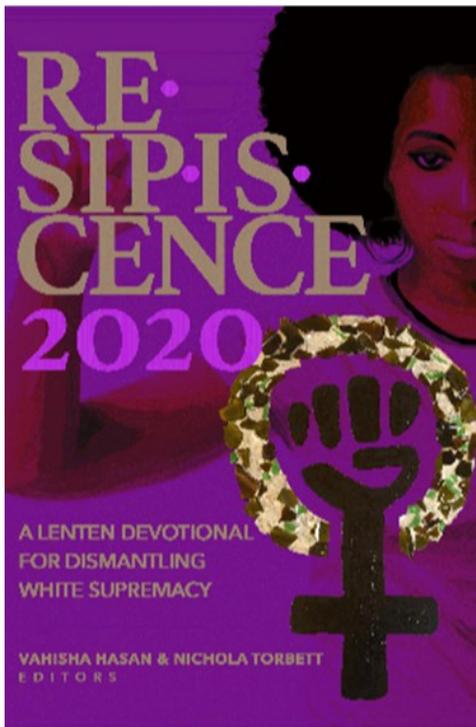
**Joint with Bread of Life**  
April 10th, 11 am

**Easter Worship Service**  
April 12th, 11:15 am

**All are welcome!**

**Info: 306-761-0556**

**[eastsideunited.ca](http://eastsideunited.ca)**



**Resipiscence 2020: A Lenten Devotional for Dismantling White Supremacy:** In *Resipiscence: A Lenten Devotional for Dismantling White Supremacy*, Vahisha Hasan and Nichola Torbett, the editors, curated 40+ contributors of many identities, theologies, and lived experiences across the U.S. who each reflect on Lent in a revolutionary and liberating way.

The book's devotionals are organized by week, and each section contains seven reflections on the scriptures for that coming Sunday. Order a copy (physical copies and ebooks available!) at <http://bit.ly/2PtsXFe>

**KAIROS Regina-Reconciliation Sharing Group** will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at Wesley United Church. The Reconciliation Sharing Group was formed so that people who are working on Truth and Reconciliation projects or on other projects aimed at improving the conditions for Indigenous People have an opportunity to connect, network, encourage and support each other. For further information, contact Sandra Blenkinsop at [sandra.blenkinsop@sasktel.net](mailto:sandra.blenkinsop@sasktel.net).



**CONGREGATIONAL CARE FAITH AND WELLNESS SERIES**

**March 22** - Elaine Carlson will describe how the practice of meditation can calm us and improve our health. She may lead us through a short meditation.

**April 26** - Following the potluck lunch, Munch Café will share about their work including our partnership with Glen Elm School. Munch is providing lunch (freewill offering, \$10) and showcasing some of their lunch menu.

LSC Meditation Group  
Monday evenings at 7:15 pm  
in the East Sanctuary

Join us to quiet  
your mind and  
body.

All are welcome !

*Forever... in Motion*  
Thursday mornings at 10 am! *Forever... in Motion* is a physical activity program for adults 50 and over. And it's FREE! Wear comfortable clothing and running shoes, and bring a water bottle.

For more information, please call Heather at 306-737-4681.

**Horizons: The Newsletter of Eastside United Church**  
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