



## Your gifts brought comfort to Humboldt Thank you!



*Humboldt Broncos statistician Brody Hinz.*

### Community, Grief, and Learning

*On April 6, 2018, the bus of the Humboldt Broncos hockey team collided with a semi truck. Sixteen people died, including team statistician Brody Hinz. CCS graduate Brenda Curtis and Integration Year student Keith Hall conducted Brody's memorial service. Janet Ross spoke to Brenda and Keith about that time. (This interview was edited for space. Full interview at [ccsonline.ca/2018/10/remembering-brody/](http://ccsonline.ca/2018/10/remembering-brody/))*

**Brenda:** We were in the middle of an ecumenical community concert at the Catholic Church when someone showed me their cell phone: "Humboldt Broncos have been in an accident." Soon everyone in the

audience had their phones out. The choir was asked to wrap up quickly, Father Joseph offered a prayer, and everyone was invited to go to the Uniplex to wait for more news. Leaving the concert, I realized Brody wasn't there. Brody doesn't miss a chance to attend church. I had a feeling he was on the bus.

**Keith:** I got to know Brody when Brenda and I took a joint youth group [from Westminster United in Humboldt and St. Martin's United in Saskatoon] to Cuernavaca, Mexico. Brody was a unique soul and the things he noticed were not always the things others noticed.

**Brenda:** Brody had high functioning autism. He was the statistician for

the Broncos and was a very involved member of our community.

**Keith:** I was at home in Saskatoon when the first reports came on the news. The waiting was like eternity. I admit I was begging God that it wasn't Brody.

**Brenda:** In the the middle of the night we received confirmation: Brody was one of the deceased. My heart was breaking, but I was worried for our congregation. They had taken him under their wing since he was young. They helped him go to Mexico, they talked sports with him, they found him jobs. Brody helped with Sunday School. Unless he was away at a hockey game or with special

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**Humboldt** *cont'd from page 1*  
Olympics, Brody did not miss church. Even when he was out very late with the team on the Saturday before Easter, he emailed me to pick him up for the Easter Sunrise Service.

**Keith:** With the request for me to assist in Brody's funeral, I realized how many details Brenda was dealing with and how much grace she was showing others through her own pain.

**Brenda:** After I heard, I was sitting at the kitchen table feeling like I was drowning. I sent an email to some wise members of our community and said, "Can you meet with me? I don't know how to do this; I don't know what to do." They responded quickly. Between the five of us we planned how to get through the weekend, how to help the youth group, how to help the congregation, and we planned for Brody's service. They helped me to think through all the important pieces and they encouraged me to not do it on my own. This is where the conversation about involving Keith happened. I knew I needed help with the youth group. After that, then moderator Jordan Cantwell called and offered to help – and the youth love her, so I said, "Yes, come help me do this."

**Keith:** In the days before Brody's service I didn't want to burden Brenda with my grief. It was really important to me to connect with my CCS community, with my classmates.

I called, requesting prayers. The day of that service I was hyper aware of being held and embraced by CCS. For me this was one of the things that got me through that service.



**Brenda:** On the Saturday morning of Brody's memorial service, Lori Stewart from CCS called and I remember saying to her, "Thank you, thank you, thank you. Because if it hadn't been for what I learned at the Centre – I couldn't have done this." CCS taught me that we are not in ministry alone, we are in ministry together; the wisdom of the community is important.

**Keith:** I remember vividly, standing in the cloak room after the service and Brody's casket had been rolled in there. Brenda and I were changing out of our robes and we talked to

one another, and to Brody. I couldn't have done that with just anyone. This is something CCS teaches – to allow vulnerability with one another.

**Brenda:** I was actually thinking about the three streams of diakonia (education, pastoral care and social justice). The education piece for me centers on the community, how we learn together. This made it possible for me to bring the five elders together. The social justice piece, I realize, is not in the accident, but in Brody's story. Brody is a kid who could have gotten lost in the cracks; he could have been discounted because of economic status and disability. The day his father died, Brody was in church with us. He was 7 years old and dancing to all the music. When he went to Sunday School I told the congregation that Brody's dad had died. You could feel the congregation's heart

breaking and from that moment on, Brody became a child of the community. The education and experience at CCS taught me not only how to get through the tragedy of his death, but how to lay the

groundwork for that relationship with him in the first place.

*Brenda Curtis is a Diaconal Minister at Westminster United Church, Humboldt,*

*Saskatchewan*



*Keith Hall*

*Keith Hall is a Candidate for Diaconal Ministry in team ministry at St. Martin's United Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Both of them studied at the Centre for Christian Studies.*



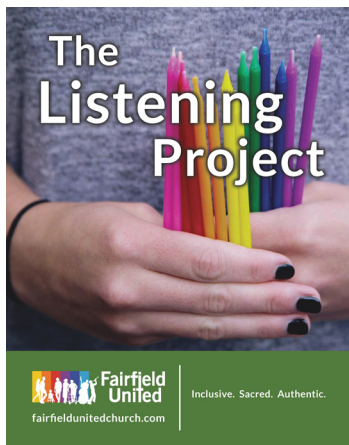


Kimiko Karpoff, David Lappano, Marcie Gibson, Lori Stewart, Michelle Owens, Cheryl Thiessen, Janet Ross, Scott Douglas

## CCS Staff team

This past June Kimiko Karpoff and Marcie Gibson joined the permanent staff team. Marcie joined Janet, David, and Scott on the program team. Kimiko took on the role of communications and recruiting. Lori continues in the development portfolio, Michelle holds the principal's post and Cheryl holds it all together as office administrator.

## You helped Beth connect Bruce to a community that cares



We went to the place where Bruce usually sits. When we arrived, he was sitting hunched over, not making eye contact. My friend called out, "Hi Bruce." Turning his face to one side Bruce seemed upset, his eyes filled with tears. My friend asked, "Bruce, are you okay? You look upset. What is wrong?"

Bruce had gone into the store for his morning coffee. A woman in the store turned around and they bumped into each other. It was an accident, and she wasn't hurt. He said he was sorry but she just kept screaming. Bruce was in tears. We said all of the words that could be said: "We are so sorry you had that experience. That sounds just awful."

Bruce is ashamed of how poor he is, he doesn't like begging. He said life is not worth living. He told me he was sad that he scared the woman. "Next time," he said, "I will keep my distance. No one wants to be close to me."

I wondered how he found himself in this situation. What I heard confirmed some of the issues and the realities of poverty, like how losing your license or ID or not having a permanent address could make it impossible to find and keep work. Listening



Beth Walker

— a human being having a human experience.

The people of Fairfield United Church have launched the LISTENING Project, the first step in identifying how we can best serve the Fairfield

community at large, and the City of Victoria. Through listening to people's stories we will be able to create opportunities to know each other in different ways, and to identify how we can live and work together in creating a healthy, sustainable community.

*Beth Walker is the minister at Fairfield United Church and a graduate of CCS. Your financial support for the school helped her to become a compassionate community leader.*

### IN MEMORIAM

We remember grads (CCS, AWTC and UTCS), friends and Companions who have recently passed away:

**Mary Leard**, UCC 1985  
**Frances Clark**, UCC 1956  
**Donna Hunter**, friend  
**Brad Elliot**, friend  
**Nancy Jenner**, UCC 1958  
**Sharon Davis**, UCC 1970  
**Ruth Robertson**, UCC 1949  
**May Deller**, friend  
**Alice Farquharson**, UCC 1960

# Because of you, this house became our home

**M**oving can be life-changing. For the Centre for Christian Studies, the move from Toronto to Winnipeg in 1998 was both a physical and an emotional change. Not the least of the challenge was the search for a new home. Bob Duncan, Peter Kidd, and Karen Binding volunteered their time to find the perfect place. With very little direction beyond "spend whatever you need to, but as little as possible," they began their search.

They visited many potential locations: the University of Winnipeg, churches such as Westminster, Knox, St. Luke's Rectory, and Augustine, a big old house on Broadway, and an old bank building. Nothing was quite right. Some needed too much work. Some didn't have appropriate space for offices and meetings. The team of volunteers grew weary. It seemed like they were chasing a dream.

J. S. Woodsworth was a Methodist minister who lived and preached the Social Gospel and had worked in economically impoverished areas of Vancouver and Winnipeg. Though he held, for a time, oppressive ideas regarding eugenics and immigration, Woodsworth was willing throughout his life to learn and change his perspectives and behaviour as he engaged with others around him. He lived, and lived out his social and political activities, at 60 Maryland Street in Winnipeg in the early 1900s.

The Woodsworth House Historical Society was struggling to make ends

meet. They got in touch with the search team believing that the Centre for Christian Studies might have similar values and respect the original purpose of the house.

When Bob first arrived at Woodsworth House, he was expecting a 100-year-old building. Instead it was relatively new. Thirteen years earlier the Woodsworth home



*Woodsworth House pre fire and reconstruction.*

had burned and the Historical Society received funding to reconstruct. The front rooms and façade were in the same style as the original. Additional space had been added at the back with the intention of renting to non-profit groups that reflected the social gospel, and of hosting a Woodsworth Museum with collected memorabilia. But at that point the groups were

moving out and the support for the museum had dried up.

"The people from the society were so happy to talk to us," Peter remembers. "In the first five minutes of our meeting they made a proposal, 'You can have the building if you assume the mortgage, pay off our back taxes, and keep the historical sign dedicated to J. S. Woodsworth out front.' Very little money changed hands. They felt giving us the building would fulfill their mandate."

Once Council approved and an agreement was drawn up, volunteers got to work reconfiguring the building. Karen recalls it needed painting, new carpets, energy efficient lighting, and landscaping.

Twenty years later, work for justice and transformation still flows from Woodsworth House in the form of CCS grads and students, and with the support of donors and volunteers. Volunteers and donors like you made it possible and have given this place life. All you have to do is to look around. The building and its contents, the relationships and the continuation of Woodworth's good work are here because of you.

**Thank you!**



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