



CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Imagine Church Differently

2025

Year Book

Centre for Christian Studies
60 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 1K7
204-783-4490
www.ccsonline.ca





Our Mission

“Educating leaders for justice, compassion and transformation.”

Our Core Values

1. Acting in faith.

- Approaching theology from a position of inquiry and struggle, striving to extend our boundaries outward in dialogue with other denominations, religious traditions, and spiritual expressions;
- Nurtured by the Anglican and United Church traditions;
- Centred in an understanding of the God of grace, love and reconciliation, for us and all of creation, as set out in Scripture;
- Finding liberation and life in Jesus' ministry of justice and healing; Empowered by the Spirit of the risen Christ and guided by Wisdom.

2. Living a theology of justice.

- Inspired by Jesus' reversal of power, his example of service in washing the feet of his disciples, and his rejection of the values of empire;
- Believing that justice includes economic, social, and ecological concerns;
- Founding our work and relationships in values of mutuality, equality, and respect;
- Acknowledging our churches' culpability in unjust practices and seeking to redress them;
- Responding to the prophetic and gospel call to share resources, to restore what was taken, to reconcile what was divided, to embrace those who have been excluded.

3. Educating through action/reflection, integration, transformation.

- Believing that education is most effective when it engages the whole person, when we are co-learners and co-teachers, and when it is relevant and collaborative;
- Valuing education that is self-directed and relational, affirming and evaluative;
- Dedicated to forming learning communities as the foundation to our approach to education.

4. Grounding ourselves in sacred community.

- Fostering community-building that challenges individualism and egotism;
- Intentional about creating life-giving communities of learning as a context for growth, shared wisdom, hospitality, support, and accountability;
- Seeking to create communities that are inclusive, respectful, and diverse.

5. Living out of a spirit of abundance and gratitude.

- Our beginning was made possible by gifts from major donors who believed in the founding vision of our school;
- Our present and future is made possible by donations from graduates and Friends, and by grants from institutional supporters;
- We rely for our governance and program on a company of volunteers who give and give back to CCS as members of our Central Council, Committees, and working groups; as learning facilitators, mentors, and supporters for our students.

6. Participating in a larger story.

- Nurtured by a worldwide, ecumenical network of deacons and diaconal ministers from many traditions; Sharing values and vision of faith, justice, education, service and community with many movements, institutions, and communities;
- Learning through active involvement in movements for justice;
- Fostering partnerships of solidarity for common cause.

Left: CCS staff, summer 2025
- Alcris, Marcie, Scott, Janet,
Gwen, Robyn

Below: CCS staff, December
2025 - Marlene, Janet,
Robyn, Marcie, Scott,
(missing: Alcris)



CCS Staff

Principal	-	Marlene Britton
Finance/Admin Coordinator	-	Robyn Cruz
Program Staff (Interim Principal to Nov '25)	-	Marcie Gibson
Program Staff	-	Janet Ross
Program Staff	-	Alcris Limongi
Program Coordinator	-	Scott Douglas
Development Coordinator (to Nov '25)	-	Gwen McAllister
Office Administrator (to July '25)	-	Cheryl Thiessen



Finding the right people

Thanks to the search team – Lisa Byer-de Wever, Marcie Gibson, Karlene Kimber, Gwen McAllister, and Jean Storey – who spent the first half of 2025 reading resumés, conducting interviews, and discerning gifts to put together the new staff complement.

Central Council

- Co-Chair - Karlene Kimber
- Co-Chair - Ian McLean
- Treasurer - Stacy Stanley-Young
- Secretary - Janet Nield
- Student Reps - Ally Phillips / Vanessa Benoit
- Member-at-Large - Megumi Matsuo Saunders
- Member-at-Large - Kathy Douglas
- Member-at-Large - Charmain Bailey
- Member-at-Large - Linda Ervin
- Member-at-Large - Dawn Leger
- Principal (non-voting) - Marlene Britton
- Staff rep (non-voting) - rotating
- ACC Theo. Ed. (ex officio) - Nancy Ford
- UCC Theo. Ed. (ex officio) - Jennifer Janzen-Ball



Above: Central Council co-chairs Karlene Kimber and Ian McLean at Annual Service of Celebration



Spring 2025 combined session with Central Council, Integrating Year learning circle, Worship learning circle, and Companion of the Centre

Students

Diaconal Ministries Program

Active in 2024-2025

Allison Abuloc
 Carling Barry (NEW!)
 Vanessa Benoit (NEW!)
 Letitia Berger
 Lisa Byer-de Wever
 Jennifer Carter-Morgan
 Lynda Dickson
 Siobhan Flynn (NEW!)
 Angela Glasel (NEW!)
 Kim Inglis
 Blue Kennedy (NEW!)
 Jenni Krall (NEW!)
 Lauri Ladd
 Seann Laforet (NEW!)
 Lisa Leffler
 Heather MacKinnon
 Jamie Miller
 Hyerim Park
 Ally Philips
 Kristie Pilling
 Ross Shearer (NEW!)
 Caitlin Smithers
 Sarah Williams

Active in 2025-2026

Allison Abuloc
 Carling Barry
 Vanessa Benoit
 Jennifer Carter-Morgan
 Tamara Connors (NEW!)
 Siobhan Flynn
 Meghan Gilholm
 Angela Glasel
 Kim Inglis
 Blue Kennedy
 Jenni Krall
 Lauri Ladd
 Shaun Loney (NEW!)
 Seann Laforet
 Heather MacKinnon
 Jamie Miller
 Nikki Nel (NEW!)
 Ally Philips
 Kristie Pilling
 Drake Schupsky (NEW!)
 Ross Shearer
 Sarah Williams
 Rachel Young (NEW!)

Certificate

Programs

Active in 2025

Anglican Certificate in Diaconal

Ministry:

Cassandra Golondrina

Certificate in Social Justice:

Andy Pitter

2025-2026

Integration year
students:

Jenni Krall
Lauri Ladd

Continuing Studies

Active in 2025

Keith Hall (Alumni)
Peter Harvey
Amy Haynes
Sohail Kamran
Twila MacNair
Kelley Molloy
Michelle Owens (Alumni)
Corey Paul
Jennifer Prince (Alumni)
Dora White
Kathleen Whyte
Annika Young

*Right: Learning on Purpose at the
Human Rights Museum*

*Below: 2025 grads Lisa BDW, Lisa L,
Lynda, Letitia, Hyerim*

2025 Graduates

Letitia Berger
Lisa Byer-de Wever
Lynda Dickson
Lisa Leffler
Hyerim Park



Courses and Circles 2025



Praxis 24-25

Sept 2024 – May 2025
Enrollment – 25



Field 24-25

Sept 2024 – May 2025
Enrollment – 11



Ministry as Community-building

Jan 7 – Feb 13, 2025 (online)
Enrollment – 7



Integration 3 (final circle)

Mar 24 – 29, 2025
Enrollment – 5



Worship

Mar 26 – Apr 1, 2025
Enrollment – 7



Grief & Loss

Apr 3 – 9, 2025
Enrollment – 11



Ministry as Listening

May 7 – 14, 2025 (online)
Enrollment – 5



Learning on Purpose

Jun 16 – 27, 2025, Winnipeg, MB
Enrollment – 9



Praxis 25-26

Sept 2025 – May 2026
Enrollment – 22



Field 25-26

Sept 2025 – May 2026
Enrollment – 15



Integration 1

Sept 17 – 20, 2025
Regina, SK
Enrollment - 1



Integration 2

Oct 2025 – Apr 2026(online)
Enrollment - 2



Power & Privilege

Oct 15 – 21, 2025
Enrollment - 6



Health, Pain, & Trauma

Oct 23 – 29, 2025
Enrollment - 11

Intercultural Leadership for Education Ministry
(a collaborative online course with Emmanuel College, St. Andrew's College, and CCS)
Jan – Apr, 2025
CCS student enrollment – 7

2025 in Pictures



Left: Bringing all the colours,
Right: Ministry as Community-building 2025 circle



Left: Worship 2025 learning circle,
Right: Collaborative art



Left: Mending can make things stronger,
Right: Grief & Loss 2025 circle



Left: 2025 diaconal grads with CCS program staff,
Right: Celebrating Cheryl at the CCS banquet



Left: When your computer camera isn't working, become an otter,
Right: Ministry as Listening online circle



Left: Learning on Purpose 2025 in Winnipeg, Right: At the Human Rights Museum



Left: DUCCs at the DIAKONIA World Federation in Tanzania. Right: Visiting a coffee plantation



Left: Global Perspectives in Tanzania. Right: An Integration circle of one



Left: Power and Privilege 2025 circle with "you soup", Right: Ross in a diaconal timeline



Left: "Protectors" in the brain respond to threat, Right: Health, Pain, & Trauma 2025 circle



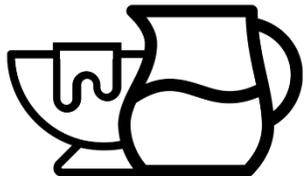
Left: Thanking Marcie for her time as interim Principal,
Right: Marlene arrives as new Principal of CCS

Field Placements

Case United, Mount Hope
Central Okanagan United, Kelowna
Cloverdale United, Surrey
Courageous Community, Port Alberni
First United, Dryden
First United, Kitimat
First United, Ottawa
Grace United, Edmonton
Grace United, Napanee
Guthrie Presbyterian, Alvinston
Hub Community Network, Kitchener
Kilworth United, London
Merging Waters United, Ste Anne de Bellevue
McMaster Chaplaincy Centre, Hamilton
Newo Yotina Friendship Centre, Regina
Oneida Pastoral Charge, Southwold
St Andrew's United, Sioux Lookout
St. Margaret's Anglican, Winnipeg
The Thrift Shop, Dalhousie
Watrous Manitou Beach Heritage Centre

Learning Facilitators

Shelley Adamson
Alice Bloomfield
Lisa Byer-de Wever
Adam Cresswell
Andy Crowell
Bonnie Dowling
Matthew Emery
Joan Golden
Julie Graham
Jackie Harper
Teresa Innis
Gail Lesvesque
Teri Meyer
Kanana Muketha
Mae Piggott
Lillian Robinson
Murray Rounding
Neil Rosychuk
Dick Eric Van Dorsten



Diaconal Mentors

Patricia Baker
Liz Bowyer
Christina Crawford
Brenda Curtis
Denise Davis-Taylor
Betty Anne Dempsey
Caryn Douglas
Jen Dresser
Linda Ervin
Catherine Gutjahr

Keith Hall
Barbara Hansen
Kimiko Karpoff
Elaine Kellogg
Deb Kigar
Karlene Kimber
Deb Laforet
Mark Laird
Lorrie Lowes
Karen Lumley
Marion Martin
Elizabeth McAdam

Ian McLean
Kim McNaughton
Russell Mitchell Walker
Ann Naylor
Michelle Owens
Rebecca Pike
Irene Rainey
Kim Shantz
Keith Simmonds
Bri-anne Swan
Karen Tjaden

CCS Fridays (and other events)

Our series of free online workshops and discussions.

- February – From History to Future (with Thérèse Samuel)
- February – God and Money (with Sheryl Johnson)
- May – Decolonizing Diakonia (with Hyuk Cho)
- September – Introduction to the Spiral (with CCS staff)
- September – Pastoral Nutrition and Our Daily Bread (with Naomi Miller)
- October – CCS Town Hall Meetings
- October – Punching Up and Punching Down (with Lara Rae)
- November – Unbounded Stories from Palestine (with Izzeddin Hawamda)
- December – Microaggressions (with Samantha Taylor)



- CCS Friday guests:
- Thérèse Samuel,
 - Hyuk Cho,
 - Sheryl Johnson,
 - Samantha Taylor,
 - Lara Rae,
 - Izzeddin Hawamda,
 - Naomi Miller

Ann Naylor

2025 Companion of the Centre

Ann Naylor was presented with the Companion of the Centre award at the Annual Service of Celebration on March 29, 2025.

Introduction from the 2025 ASC:

(delivered by Interim Development Coordinator and former student of Ann's, Gwen McAllister)

It is my great joy to be sharing with you the citation for Ann Naylor, the 2025 Companion of the Centre for Christian Studies. The Companion of the Centre award is given by the CCS community to our own and to allies who have offered life-giving leadership and service to the school or in the wider world, and for which we want to express our gratitude and celebrate the blessings of being in relationship with them.

I have here what I think is a key image in Ann's life: Mud. Hear me out. Playing as children, cultivating the wonder of mud and earth. As she was growing up, Ann worked on the family farm and loved it – a love that moved her to begin post-secondary research at one point into using draft horses for small-scale farming; a close relationship with the ground.

But there was also the muck of the world, the injustice and suffering.

During a volunteer experience in housing construction and community development in the Northwest Territories, Ann faced this muck full on. Together with the team she dove on into that work with people marginalized into extreme poverty and lack of water. But she dove also into the inner conflict of seeing first-hand what colonization in Canada had done, the church's involvement in that, her own complicity as a non-Indigenous Canadian who grew up in the church; and it changed her.

Ann could not whitewash injustice, hold at arms-length the filth and the rot in our world. It made her really question the church and not want any part in it; but at the same time it drove her deeper into examining all this, into the Centre for Christian Studies program in fact, into the muck of what all the harm and complicity means, not how to smooth it over, but how to face it in honesty. And she came to understand all this as ministry.

Going to Nicaragua during the civil war, into war, was ministry that Ann did. Mud, dirt, water, muck, soil, feet on the ground. One of Ann's symbols for diaconal work is a pair of muddy boots.

As much as Ann has been driven by the refusal to let injustice continue unchallenged, her refusal to stay clean of the muck of the world, she continues to be driven by that deep core love of mud and earth; of that creative foundation; of rivers and herons, dogs and other people, community and solidarity and movements and connections. Her relationship to Scripture is shaped by this: the stories give her vision, hope, rootedness. Her groundedness is one of the



things that has made Ann's contributions to the church and the world and specifically the Centre for Christian Studies so transformative.

The naked honesty with which she dwells both in the muck of the world and the loving earth makes room for those around Ann to also become honest, to face hard truths, to learn where the life and reconciliation and growth are, to be changed and to seek wholeness.

It may or may not surprise you to know that Ann was so shy as a young person as to be silent during class discussion. But at one point her connection with a friend from the Philippines led her to the conviction that when people the world over are putting their lives on the line to address injustice, she could not let her discomfort with speaking to others get in the way of what needed to be done. Ann says this clarity that came to her in the context of that solidarity is something that is with her almost every day.

We are honouring her important accomplishments today, but I think it's apparent that Ann's really not here for the glory. Quite the contrary. It would be an injustice to her whole way of living and being and working to hold up her achievement as some kind of individual superiority.

She is accomplished as society counts it: education in sociology, music, Christian education, and theology from McMaster, CCS, and Toronto School of Theology; she developed curricula, policies, newsletters, study guides, manuals, and conference leadership on everything from women in the church, ending violence, Apartheid in South Africa, and education for children and youth. It was Ann who developed and wrote the UCC's first policy on Sexual Abuse and Child Abuse in 1993.

Her influence in the 1980s on the UCC, the huge amount of work she put into redoing the CCS program for in-community learning, the many students she helped form, receiving the Davidson Trust award for excellence in theological education... to frame all this as Ann's exceptional and outstanding achievement as an isolated individual, with that empire value of placing people in a hierarchy of merit, a class above, would be to miss the preciousness of what Ann has worked for all her life. Because the Spirit of Christ embodied in her life has been known in working together, being part of movements and communities together, walking with the generations that have come before. Honouring Ann is not to set her above but to rejoice in her light shining in the midst of us, as one of us, right in the mud of earth with us.

So this is how I name Ann's accomplishments: as her full sharing of the gifts that were given to her, as bringing her full self to church and to education. Here are 5 ways she has done it:

1. Fierceness toward injustice permeates her being: She was asked during a candidacy interview once, "Just how radical are you?" And answered, "Not nearly as radical as I think I should be." Because her model is Jesus.
2. Getting to the roots of things. She has not been content to just say or believe something because that's what she's been told. She combines uncompromising critical analysis together with practical hard work and commitment to vision.
3. Community is family; community is the primary unit. For every achievement listed earlier, Ann talks about how diverse or visionary or creative or strong or smart the people she was working with were, how collaboration brought out more in her as well.
4. Finding and making her own path. Ann was initially resistant to the idea of ministry. Once she had opened herself and completed the requirements, the church did "not know what to do with her." Ann has found ways. She helped make a path for the church and for women and LGBTQ and other people made marginal toward each other. She helped CCS students find their own diaconal path, even when rocky, muddy, or uphill. One student said: "Ann never sought to provide answers, but instead to provoke thought and reflection, encouraging me to explore my own calling with integrity and passion."

5. Integration of commitment. "We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes," but also "Come and find the quiet centre." Act, but also listen, observe, and be led along the river by a Great Blue Heron, to respect and learn from all beings.

These accomplishments of Ann's life (thus far) we honour and learn from this day.

We might say we don't have Ann's personality or fierceness or her communication skills or her courage to disturb and question. But we can all be encouraged, by being in this CCS community together with you, Ann, to share more fully the gifts we have and who we are. We can all learn from the mud, hear its invitation, its faithful path.

Ursula le Guin gave a convocation address called "I do not wish you success", well worth the read, and I end with her (abridged) words:

Our roots are in the dark; the earth is our country. Why did we look up for blessing — instead of around, and down? What hope we have lies there. Not in the sky full of orbiting spy-eyes and weaponry, but in the earth we have looked down upon. Not from above, but from below. Not in the light that dazzles, but in the dark that nourishes, where human beings grow human souls."

We give thanks this day, with a full heart and hopefully muddy hands and feet, for having Ann in her full self as company, a companion on the way.



Gwen McAllister introducing Ann, with a handful of mud

In Memoriam

Grads, donors, and other friends of CCS who died in 2025:

Elizabeth Bustard	(UCC grad 1961)
Heather Dau	(UCC grad 1960)
Janette Ledworth	(former co-chair)
Betty Lou McNabb	(UCC grad 2007)
Marion Pope	(UCC grad 1955)
Bill Shore	(Friend of CCS)
Janelle Towle	(UCC grad 1998)
Nancy Whitla	(ACC grad 1989)
Alison Yoshioka	(UCC grad 1948)

