

This month:

What's still open?

Rec centres and libraries in Mill Woods and the Meadows are closed, but many services are still available.

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Underestimated

Crisanta Sampang says she has underestimated the impact the COVID-19 virus would have on our lives.

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In his latest column, Ron Kuban talks about resurrection, reincarnation and rejuvenation.

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Immigration News



Immigration lawyer Allison Pudon writes about the impact the COVID-19 health crisis has on travel and immigration.

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The unsung heroes

During this challenging time of the COVID-19 health crisis, the "frontline workers" in our healthcare system are the true heroes: not only the nurses and doctors, the paramedics and other medical staff but also the support staff, like all the janitors, who keep the hospitals and other healthcare facilities in our city clean and disinfected.

Photo: Mill Woods Mosaic

PM announces additional support for small businesses

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and are vital for our families and communities across the country. They are facing economic hardship and uncertainty during the COVID-19 pandemic. That is why the Government of Canada is working around the clock to give these businesses the support they need so they can continue to make our country strong at this critical time.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, on April 16 announced new measures to support Canadian businesses so they can keep their doors open and their employees on the job.

The Government of Canada is:

- Expanding the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) to businesses that paid between \$20,000 and \$1.5 million in total payroll in 2019. This new range will replace the previous one of between \$50,000 and \$1 million, and will help address the challenges faced by small businesses to cover non-deferrable operating costs. Since the launch of the CEBA on April 9, 2020, more than 195,000 loans have been approved by financial institutions, extending more than \$7.5 billion in credit to small businesses.

- Announcing its intent to introduce the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses. The program will seek to provide loans, including forgivable loans, to commercial property owners who in turn will lower or forgo the rent of small businesses for the months of April (retroactive), May, and June. Implementation of the program will require a partnership

between the federal government and provincial and territorial governments, which are responsible for property owner-tenant relationships. We are working with the provinces and territories to increase rent support for businesses that are most impacted by the pandemic and we will have more details to share soon.

These measures are part of the Government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, which has committed more than \$107 billion in support to Canadians and businesses facing hardship as a result of the pandemic. The government will continue to monitor and respond to the wide-ranging impacts of COVID-19, and take additional actions as needed to protect the health and safety of Canadians and stabilize the economy.

"We are committed to helping Canadians through this difficult period"

"We will always be there to support our Canadian businesses," said Trudeau. "That is why we are working closely with the business community to make sure that our emergency measures are as effective and inclusive as possible. Expanding the

Canada Emergency Business Account and making sure businesses can afford their rent is the smart thing to do. Small businesses are the backbone of our communities, and will keep our economy strong in this uncertain time."

"We are committed to helping Canadians through this difficult period," said Bill Morneau, Canada's federal Minister of Finance. "By making the Canada Emergency Business Account more accessible and introducing new measures to support businesses, we are positioning them to be ready for the recovery that will come. We will continue to do whatever it takes to ensure that Canadians are supported through the outbreak, and that our economy remains resilient during these challenging times."

For more information about the Government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan and expanded access to Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and support for essential workers, visit the website of the Government of Canada at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>



The Mill Woods Mosaic is now also on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/Mill-Woods-Mosaic>

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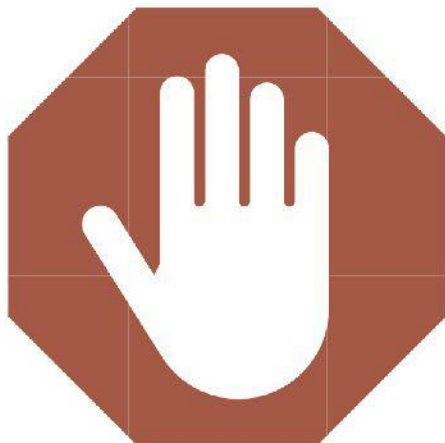
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Travel Alert

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Do you have fever and / or cough, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath? **If yes, STOP.**



Please:

1. Clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub
2. Put on a mask
3. Clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub again
4. Report to the nurse or front desk immediately

Original date: MARCH-2020

For more information, visit: www.ahs.ca/covid

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Our lives have changed

Who would have thought a month ago that our daily lives would change so much? My wife and I haven't left our home for several weeks, and I was not able to distribute the March 15 issue of the *Mill Woods Mosaic*, because many local businesses, restaurants, schools and places of worship are closed for the time being, and health officials are asking all citizens to stay at home as much as they can to help "flatten the curve", so the coronavirus will not spread more.

We are lucky to have a nice home where we are safe, and this is where I have my office, so my life hasn't changed very much, but I miss roaming around in our community and meeting with people.

This health crisis has hit many small businesses in Mill Woods very hard. Many restaurants are closed, because it is not safe for customers and staff, grocery stores are still open and trying hard to keep their shelves full, all schools are closed until further notice, and most places of worship have cancelled their services, because health officials have said that there should be no gatherings of more than 15 people.

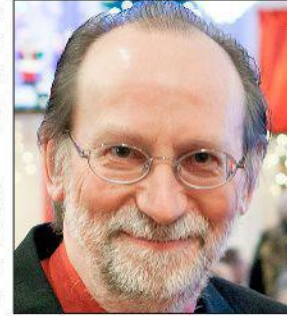
"Physical distancing with social connection" is the new motto of the

day, as Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Deena Hinshaw has said in one of her daily news conferences. Hinshaw has emerged as a strong leader in this difficult period of time with her calm attitude, updating Albertans every day and encouraging us to hang in there.

This crisis maybe the biggest challenge for Canada since the Second World War, but I think we can trust our elected officials to do their very best for Canadians. For example, the new Canada Emergency Response Benefit really helps many Canadians who have lost their jobs or self-employment income.

But we should not forget that the situation for people in many countries around the world is much worse. Italy and Spain were hit very hard by the virus, and the numbers of infected people and deaths in the USA is very alarming.

But there is light at the end of the tunnel. Self-isolation works, so let's be patient and stay at home as much as we can, so hopefully our lives will be able to go back to normal soon.



Armin Jozep

EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

SPEAK OUT WE NEED YOUR HELP

REPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: **911**

What's closed in Mill Woods and what's still open?

By Arnim Joop

The COVID-19 health crisis has hit many businesses in Mill Woods and the Meadows very hard, like in many communities in Alberta, across Canada and around the world. A recent survey in Edmonton has shown that half of local businesses expect not to survive this crisis.

But there are many essential services in our community which are still available, thanks to the brave men and women who keep on working in grocery stores, police, firefighters, paramedics and all the nurses and doctors and other staff at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital.

What's closed?

Here is a list - which is far from complete - of places in Mill Woods and the Meadows which are closed until further notice:

- Mill Woods Recreation Centre
- Meadows Community Recreation Centre
- Mill Woods Public Library
- Meadows Public Library
- Mill Woods Seniors Activity Centre

Since March 15, all public and Catholic schools are closed and students were asked to stay home, and teachers are trying their best to do their job online and keep students motivated.

Most places of worship have cancelled services and gatherings but are offering services online.

What's open?

Most grocery stores, including Sobeys, Superstore, Safeway, Save-on-Foods and North Central Co-op, are open but have reduced their hours. Customers can order groceries online and have them delivered to their homes or pick them up safely from the store. Some grocery stores have special hours of operation for senior citi-



The COVID-19 health crises has a big impact on Mill Woods and the Meadows, like many other communities in Alberta and across Canada.

zens and disabled persons. Check your favourite grocery store for details.

Pharmacies are open, but pharmacists are urging people not to go there if it is not urgent, and they give advice by phone. People with symptoms of the COVID-19 virus should not go to the hospital or walk-in clinics but phone the Health Link of Alberta Health Services at 811 and follow instructions.

Many restaurants in the area are closed but offer delivery service.

At Mill Woods Town Centre, only essential services remain open. For information regarding essential services and updates regarding non-essential retail and services, please check millwoodstowncentre.com.

The Alberta Support Office of the Government of Alberta, which is located at Mill Woods Town Centre and offers many services for local residents, is temporarily closed. If you are currently receiving benefits or services, please call your worker or local office directly.

SFSC: 780-415-4900

BFE: 780-638-2951

AISH: 780-415-6300

For all other inquiries, please call:

Alberta Supports Contact Centre
780-644-9992

or online: alberta.ca/alberta-supports
Some bank branches are closed, and most banks are encouraging customers to do their banking online.

Canada Post is maintaining its services, accepting mail at local post offices which are located in Shoppers Drug Mart and delivering mail to residents.

Although the Grey Nuns Community Hospital is quite busy these days, people should not hesitate to phone 911 if they have an emergency, like a heart attack or a stroke or an accident, and paramedics will respond, but in cases of non-emergency, they should phone 780-423-4567.

The Southeast Division police station of the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) at 104 Youville Drive in Mill Woods is open for residents who want to report an accident or crime or file a complaint, but it is requested that only the person reporting attends (so not to bring their family/friends). Physical distancing and hand sanitizing are in place once they come in. If it is an online reportable incident, people should look at that option first before

attending the front counter. Crimes can be reported online at the EPS website: www.edmontonpolice.ca/ContactEPS/OnlineCrimeReporting

Mill Woods Golf Course will remain closed until further notice.

Jackie Parker Park is still open to the public, but dogs in the off-leash area now have to be on-leash. This action addresses crowding issues and promotes better physical distancing, which helps to manage the spread of COVID-19.

The office of the Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Mill Woods, Tim Uppal, is open but closed to walk-ins and in-person meetings, and staff is available to help by phone or e-mail. And the constituency offices of the three Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Alberta for southeast Edmonton, Christina Gray (Edmonton-Mill Woods), Jasvir Deol (Edmonton-Meadows and Rod Loyola (Edmonton-Ellerslie) are also open but closed to walk-ins and in-person meetings. Constituents can reach them by phone or e-mail. The offices of the two Edmonton City Councillors for southeast Edmonton, Mohinder Banga and Mike Nickel, are closed, but staff can be reached by phone or e-mail if local residents have any concerns or complaints.

Events in Mill Woods

The annual Nagar Kirtan Sikh Parade which always attracts thousands of people was scheduled for May 17 but has been cancelled.

The website of the Mill Woods Presidents' Council says that the 30th Mill Woods Celebration of Canada Day on July 1 is a go, but this will probably depend on the development of the COVID-19 crisis, because this popular annual event usually attracts a crowd of 50,000 or more people, and if the crisis continues into the summer, it will be difficult to practise social distancing at Mill Woods. For updates, visit the website at seedmonton.ca.

For other updates, visit the city's website at edmonton.ca/COVID-19.

Student visa fraud affecting prospective students abroad

In 2019, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) received 17 reports of Immigration Scams, and 16 of those victims reported an overall loss of \$730,250.31 CAD.

Hadil lives in Palestine and wanted to study at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. To do this, Hadil had to research the process of applying for a Canadian study permit. During her research online, she was contacted via social media by someone who knew an immigration attorney. The attorney, "Renaud", connected with Hadil and identified himself as an immigration attorney with CANADIM, and even sent her their website to confirm the legitimacy. Renaud was listed on their website as the Founder and Managing Partner of the law firm, so Hadil continued to communicate with him and begin the process of obtaining her study permit.

Renaud advised Hadil that the cost would be \$2990 USD (\$3846 CAD) to be sent to his assistant; Hadil agreed and paid from her account with the

Bank of Palestine. Hadil's mother voiced her concerns about the transaction, so she contacted Hadil's brother-in-law, Mohammed, who lives in Edmonton to ask him to take over the visa arrangements and Hadil's schooling. Mohammed requested an invoice for the initial payment, and Renaud also detailed the application process, and how Hadil's student visa was dependent on the verification that she was registered in a Canadian school, including a list of courses she was registered in. Renaud continued and said for Hadil to register for school, she'd have to pay \$6095 USD (\$8059 CAD), and it would have to be paid to the Dean of International Students.

This new contact for payment was a red flag for Mohammed, so he contacted CANADIM using the phone number that was listed on their website, which was different than the one they were originally given. This phone call confirmed Mohammed's suspicions, as CANADIM confirmed the receipt he was given was not from their organiza-

tion. Mohammed and Hadil ceased all contact and reported this fraud to police. Thankfully, Hadil was able to recover \$2700 USD of the \$3000 USD sent. Mohammed continues to be contacted by the scammers, trying to get the \$6095 USD from him.

Investigations into this fraud uncovered the following details:

- The scammer was using a phone number from Nova Scotia.

- The number being used over WhatsApp was from Abilene, Texas.

- CANADIM does have an attorney by the name of Renaud, so the scammer was pretending to be him.

- The money Hadil had sent actually went to another fraud victim in British Columbia. This victim is a minor who had been cat-phished by an online predator earlier in 2019. This victim's bank account had been compromised and all money was taken. Because of this, the victim was unaware that Hadil's money was put into their account until their bank advised them.

"Like Hadil's incident, most frauds

are intertwined as a way to launder the money and keep the fraudsters' identities and financial information a secret," Detective Linda Herczeg with EPS' Economic Crimes explained. "Sadly, it revictimizes citizens who feel trapped in their original scam, which typically involves extortion."

Many victims of immigration fraud are convinced of the fraudulent claims simply out of fear. They have come to Canada to build a positive life for themselves and their families, and they don't want to lose what they have. If you're contacted by someone who claims to be from a foreign embassy, border guard, immigration attorney, Canadian Immigration office, or simply anyone who is contacting you with a quick fix for any claims against you, verify the contact and business information before acting on it. Please don't be afraid to come forward and find the organization's legitimate contact details to ask what is real.

Please see the EPS webpage for more information: edmontonpolice.ca.

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The Mill Woods Mosaic publishes a variety of opinions.
Unsigned editorials express the view of the publisher.
Signed pieces express the views of the writers only.

Our Opinion

There is always hope

Last month, we wrote in this space that there is no reason to panic in this time of the COVID-19 health crisis, but this is easier said than done, because some of the news we have received from other countries in the last few weeks is scary. Some countries, like Italy and Spain, have been hit quite hard by this pandemic, and the USA are now the country with the most cases of infected people and deaths.

This is a difficult time for many Canadians, because many workers are losing their jobs and small business owners their incomes, and it is a challenge for many people to stay home, especially families with children, disabled people and seniors who are more vulnerable.

But there is light at the end of the tunnel and reason for hope. The fact that many Canadians are staying home to slow down the spread of the virus seems to be working, and there is already some talk about going back to normal in the near future. But it will be very important to move very slowly, because if it happens too fast, there is the danger of a second wave of the virus which could be worse than the first one.

Maybe the popular Canada Day celebration in Mill Woods will have to be cancelled, but it is better to be safe than sorry for all of us. Stay safe and healthy!



Health officials are encouraging people to wear protective masks when they are in public to protect themselves and others from the coronavirus. Many businesses in Mill Woods and the Meadows are closed now or have reduced their hours of operation, and grocery stores and other essential services are working hard to serve their customers and clients and keep their staff safe and healthy.

Cartoon by Susan Moshynski (www.bythebay.squarespace.com)

Underestimating COVID-19

In my column dated February 15th, 2020, I wondered why so much publicity gets spent on a disease that had, at that point, only killed about 427, and why people everywhere were scrambling for cover.

I even enumerated what I believed were a few of the more pressing problems that we should worry about instead; big things like wars, political violence and instability currently happening in the Middle East, Africa, South America and Asia, resulting in the death and displacement of millions of people, and suffering of countless children. I threw in global warming, and the slow-but-sure extinction of plants and animals along with it.

I had honestly believed at that point that the COVID-19, variously called the coronavirus, would come and take a few lives and then slowly die its own natural death. Science and medicine have reached a point where epidemics like SARS, Ebola, and AIDS in the 80s, and diseases like typhus, malaria, and cholera had been contained through research and medication after a reasonable period of time. Or so I thought.

I was wrong about the coronavirus. I underestimated its ability to stay viable and contagious and its speed in spreading from person to person. Looking at the TrackCorona, a website that tracks the spread of the Covid-19 around the world and posts data as

soon as it comes in from reliable sources, gives me an idea how far off the mark I had been.

By the time I was writing this column, according to TrackCorona, there are 2,000,340 COVID-19 cases from

Crisanta Sampang

**On
Second
Thought**



183 countries; 126,699 have died; and 493,541 have recovered. The site was created and is maintained by undergraduates from Stanford, University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech, and is funded by public donors.

These numbers, however, don't tell the personal stories close to home, about families being gutted by the disease; the offices, stores and factories closing down and creating armies of unemployed people; of doctors, nurses, medical personnel and caregivers being infected and dying on the job. Economies are failing and governments are scrambling to cope, with no

immediate end in sight.

The newspapers are full of coronavirus-related news every day. And in case Canadians are wondering, the government of Canada says, "we have not approved any product to prevent, treat or cure COVID-19. Selling unauthorized health products or making false or misleading claims to prevent, treat or cure COVID-19 is illegal in Canada".

According to Global News, Canada has now reported 27,046 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 903 deaths.

As of Tuesday evening, April 14, British Columbia is on lockdown. According to Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, there are 503 active cases of COVID-19 in B.C., and 369 are recovering at home. Nine hundred and forty two people have recovered so far and there have been 72 deaths. The British Columbians are mostly staying at home.

As of April 14, according to Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, there are 1,870 cases, 48 deaths, and 914 recovered in Alberta. As well, all Albertans are asked to practice physical distancing to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

As of April 14th, according to Al Jazeera, "the number of people dying from coronavirus in the US rose by at least 2,228 - the highest in a single day

- on Tuesday to exceed 28,300. The country also has more than 600,000 reported cases, three times more than any other country."

The stories from all over the world are similar, if differing in numbers and intensity of infection.

I worry about the Philippines, most of all. Members of my family still live in the country that's now under strict lockdown. People are required to stay home, and only one member of each family is issued a permit to go out to do essential errands. There's a lot of confusion, according to one of my relatives, about the government-promised financial aid. For instance, a village that has a population of 900 expects to receive the same number of cheques to come in, but only 160 people received something. A lot of day workers are going broke and hungry. Most of the assistance comes from non-profit groups and concerned private citizens.

The number of reported COVID-19 cases in the Philippines is low, but testing is limited due to the lack of test kits available, according to independent media. One suspects that the real numbers are still out there.

So yes, I'm very worried about the coronavirus. My wrong take on it two months ago wouldn't have changed anything.

Crisanta Sampang is a Filipino-Canadian author and filmmaker who is living in Vancouver, B.C.

Resurrection, reincarnation and rejuvenation - The story of Spring

The last gasps of winter and the early rays of spring have long induced in humans a sense of magic, anticipation and excitement. In fact, since pre-historic times, humans have established many celebrations that occur around the vernal (or spring) equinox, which marks the day that is equally divided between daylight and darkness. Over time, these celebrations and their respective rituals were adopted by numerous religions, resulting in diverse holidays and celebrations: Easter, Passover, Ramadan, Nowruz (Persian), Holi (India), Vaisakhi (Sikh), Songkran Water Festival (Thailand), and many more.

Conceived to reflect nature's transformation, these special events speak to many common concepts, key of which are resurrection, reincarnation and rejuvenation. The fact that these concepts are so universal or prevalent across most religions is reflective of their common origin and descriptive of the human spirit.

The belief in the resurrection of the dead, or from the dead, may be found in Greek mythology and numerous religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, to name but a few. Its long history may be traced to pagan times and the Canaanite legend of the death and resurrection of the god Baal. This was followed by many other similar legends.

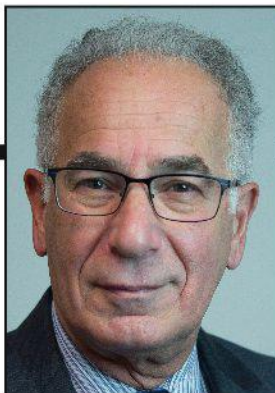
For example, historical artifacts from Egypt's 5th Dynasty (2494-2345 BC) recount the death and resurrection of Osiris the Hyksos god. Osiris was believed to be the lord of death and rebirth, and was also the god of fertility, agriculture and afterlife. Note that even then, a connection was made between fertility and agriculture on the

one hand, and death and the afterlife on the other!

Nature's transformation at the start of each spring helped pre-historic

Ron Kuban

Time Passages



humans frame the notion of resurrection. Plants that were dormant or seemingly 'dead' during the winter period suddenly started to stir, sprout and come alive. These humans understood death, but craved their gods to live on through physical resurrection, hence the many legends of deities coming back to life. Over time, physical resurrection transformed into human spiritual resurrection, and the notion of the rebirth of the soul took root to become nearly universal. Today, our desire to return from the dead and live for an eternity is couched in different terms, such as our wish to leave a legacy and be remembered by future generations.

Reincarnation is somewhat similar to resurrection. It is a philosophical or religious concept, where a living entity experiences a biological death and starts a new life in a different body, shape, style or form. It refers to rebirth, which is a central theme to many Indian religions, such as Jainism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Bud-

dhism, Spiritualism, and some sects of orthodox Judaism.

We may not recognize it, but each one of us has been reincarnated time and again throughout life. As proof, consider our inherent and ongoing effort to learn, discover, invent and adapt. It is part of the growth, which humans have been experiencing since the beginning of time, and continue to do so in many subtle ways. It results in a part of us - like an idea, a belief, or a practice - being discarded and replaced by another. We are thus remade - emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and sometimes even physically - never to return to our old self. As such, reincarnation is both inevitable and necessary. It allows humans to evolve, grow and mature. The same may be said about the notion of rejuvenation.

Early humans recognized that their daily toil required a period of rest and physical rejuvenation. In time, they integrated a cycle of work and rest into their religious rituals and established the Sabbath as a day of physical rest and spiritual rejuvenation. Being agrarian and close to nature, they also recognized that nature's resurrection in spring was enabled by its dormant or rest period during the winter season. They understood that the land, like its people, needed a break from its toil. Hence, the Old Testament dictate in

Exodus 23:12 for people to leave their land fallow for a year after working it for six.

Thus, we return to the celebrations during this time of year. Their themes of resurrection, reincarnation and rejuvenation highlight for us the often-missed truth that we are all connected to each other, and to our common ancestors, in an invisible web of beliefs and rituals. The seasonal celebrations provide us some key lessons. The concept of resurrection informs us that amidst all calamities there is the hope of a return to life and a better time. Reincarnation reminds us that change is part of growth and that if we are to truly grow, we must shed a part of our self to allow another more-desirable part to replace it. As Mahatma Gandhi said: "Each night, when I go to sleep, I die. And the next morning, when I wake up, I am reborn." Finally, the concept of rejuvenation teaches us the value of ensuring periodic rest, recuperation and reflection amidst our hectic life of toil.

Whatever holiday you celebrate at this time of year, may it find you healthy and hopeful for the future.

This article was first published in the *Alberta Freemason* which is the official publication of the Grand Lodge of Alberta A.F. & A.M.

Dr. Ron Kuban is a long-term community volunteer and activist.

Let us focus on kindness and compassion

Edmonton Catholic Schools Trustee Laura Thibert

During these unprecedented times, our world has changed as never before. March 16, 2020 marked the day that all Kindergarten to Grade 12 classes were cancelled indefinitely throughout the province of Alberta. Edmonton Recreation Centres were closed March 14th and in the days that followed we have seen Churches numerous businesses and many other facilities close.

Social distancing and quarantine have become the new normal in our lives that have left many isolated and alone. During this Easter season, let us focus on kindness and compassion as we navigate a new way to show charity and care towards others.

Now more than ever we have embraced technology to create educational classrooms in our homes. As an entire community, we have come together to begin a journey of remote learning for all students. Edmonton Catholic Schools quickly introduced virtual classrooms, created information links and designed valuable resources to support students, staff and families, all with the central focus of excellent student learning. Remote learning has given us the opportunity to build on the foundation of our Faith online and students are continuing their Christ-

centred learning experience from home. Our parish communities and Division Chaplains have compiled excellent prayers, webcast liturgies and messages that are featured on our website.

We continue to work with all partner organizations to ensure the best outcomes during these difficult times for families. Although we do not know when classes will resume, we will update you as soon as there are any changes. Please continue to check your school website often and visit www.ecsd.net for any updates.

I hope that you and your family enjoyed an Easter filled with joy. Even during this time of uncertainty, may we let the world know more than ever that Christ is risen! Together we will flatten the curve of this pandemic! Please continue to stay at home and follow all the recommended guidelines from Alberta Health Services to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

I encourage open communication and welcome your input on educational matters.

You can reach me at 780-231-6312 or laura.thibert@ecsd.net. You can also connect with me on Facebook and Twitter (@Laura Thibert).



Trustee Laura Thibert



253 Woodvale Road W
Edmonton AB T6L 1E5
Pastor: Norm Bleick

**We have suspended services due to COVID-19
but are live streaming Sunday Morning
Services at 10:30 am. Please visit: <http://hillviewchurch.ca>**

Contact: Phone (780) 461-5393 or email office@hillviewchurch.ca
Website: www.hillviewchurch.ca

Letters to the editor are welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications.

Send to: Mill Woods Mosaic, P.O. Box 92087, Meadowbrook RPO, Edmonton, AB, T6T 1N1; fax 780-465-3140 or e-mail to mwmosaic@telus.net.

Stressed? Meditation may help

By Alicia Johnson & Shelly Decker
Covenant Health

Deborah Kirkpatrick comforts patients, family members and staff as part of her role as a chaplain at the Misericordia Community Hospital.

She is with people on their worst days, supporting them through their grief as they face life changes and loss and helping them with life stresses. And these days, much of that stress revolves around COVID-19.

"There are so many little things that people have to face. There's a lot we know to do. But there are a lot of basic unknowns," she says.

"For example, you walk towards someone, and you're wondering if they're a carrier. That unknown affects all of us."

And, like many, this spiritual care provider has the added stress of concern for a loved one who's at high risk for COVID-19. While she spends her time in Edmonton helping others, Deborah worries about the health of her 87-year-old mother, Sonja, who lives in a Calgary long-term care facility.

"It is stressful," she says.

And she sees that worry all around her. Left unchecked, that stress can cause us problems.

A high level of worry can flood our nervous system, leaving us anxious, overwhelmed and unable to think as clearly as we may need to. Those feelings can become our focus, leaving us unable to relax or without room for happy moments, which can have a negative impact on our mental health. We need to be able to acknowledge the stress of real life and to use tools such as meditation to help us achieve an emotionally calmer state, Deborah says.

"When we're so stressed, we can't experience anything that is joyful, nourishing or supportive for our system, and our system really needs to have that resourcing so we can manage the things we need to do," she says.

And not only are we worried about what's happening around us, but also we are flooded with negative messages and fears about the possibility of a bleak future once the pandemic ends.

An overloaded system means we may not be able to deal with what's happening, leaving us unable to meet life challenges.

"We have only so much capacity to manage all of these things," explains Deborah. "When our plate gets full or the cup gets full, we can't put in any more, and so we have to find ways to empty that so we have room for what's coming next."



Photo: www.unsplash.com

"It's a dance that doesn't stop."

Being present through the practice of meditation or other methods helps us slow down and recharge.

The first step is to listen to your body and be aware of its signals.

"All of a sudden, you notice that you've got a tight gut or you're clenching your jaw, and those are all signs that are saying, 'Hmm, I need to give my system a little bit of a break so that I can keep going.' It's a back and forth dance."

There are numerous ways you can nurture yourself to refill your cup. What's key is to find things that allow you to relax and keep you in the present moment. And if you are aware you are stressed or filled with worry, it's important that you respond with compassion and kindness to yourself.

Deborah shares a number of options to help us cope with the added stress in our lives.

Breathing — If you are busy, such as being on the front lines in health care, you may not be able to pause even for a minute. "Acknowledge that you can't stop. Show self-compassion. You might say to yourself, 'This is a difficult time. This is a hard time. Just keep breathing.' That's nurturing yourself."

If the busy period continues, Deborah says, it may be possible to find even a few seconds when you can stop, notice your feet solid on the ground and take three slow, deep breaths, making sure to exhale slowly each time as well. "It

helps your body recalibrate and find that relaxation response."

Meditation — Even if you only have a minute, you can have a temporary pause in your day until you have more time to do a proper check-in with yourself. Meditation offers a way to check in to see what's happening and an opportunity for your body to reset itself.

Short recharge snippets, such as three deep breaths or a oneminute meditation, are not enough to fully recharge, says Deborah. We need to make sure we're doing more fulsome self-care when we can work in the time, such as after work or before we go to bed.

"The quick stuff is to settle the body that's in high alert towards a more relaxed state or to get it more stable. It's not the deeper work."

Prayer — Religion provides comfort to many, and a prayer can be short or long, which makes it accessible if you just have a moment in the midst of a stressful time.

Looking at beauty — This might be a family photo, a piece of art or something that you see as beautiful. It is different for each person.

Listening to music — The sound of music is uplifting to many. Choose songs or sounds that are nurturing and fill you with joy. This can help you reset and feel better.

Enjoying nature — If you can't go for a walk in the woods and you don't have a natural setting visible from a

window, then go online and find nature scenes or videos. There are many online videos that feature sounds and visuals — such as the roar of the ocean or birds singing in the woods — that make you feel as if you're watching the real thing.

Creative expression — People often find painting, writing or drawing relaxing. You don't need to create works of art to experience the benefits of creative expressions.

Watch some short meditation videos on YouTube (produced by Covenant Health):

Three-minute meditation
<https://youtu.be/WANnuLAXWYY>

One-minute meditation
https://youtu.be/4p0fpl-M_ow

Five-minute meditation
https://youtu.be/Y3O7NPPoM_o

Singing bowl meditation
<https://youtu.be/QCRlxUDZDhs>

Alicia Johnson works as a Videographer at Covenant Health, and Shelly Decker, is the Storytelling and Social Media Manager at Covenant Health.

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.

Letters to the editor welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications. Send to: The Editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic, P.O. Box 92087, Meadowbrook RPO, Edmonton, Alberta, T6T 1N1; fax (780) 465-3140 or e-mail to mwmosaic@telus.net.

Silent Spring - Easter service at Mill Woods United Church

Mill Woods is a very diverse community with many different places of worship, including mosques for Muslims, gurdwaras for Sikhs, and temples for Hindus and Buddhists, but there are also many churches for Christians, and for them Easter Sunday was an important date to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But this year, most churches did not have Easter services, due to the current coronavirus health crisis. At Mill Woods United Church, Reverend Ian Kellogg, gave his Easter sermon in an empty church, but the service was broadcast live on Facebook. Here is the complete text:

**By Reverend Ian Kellogg
Mill Woods United Church**

Easter is the quietest moment in the church calendar I think; although I would not be surprised if your experience has been otherwise.

Thinking back to previous Easters, you might remember large family meals; breathless Easter egg hunts; The Hallelujah Chorus sung by huge choirs; and colourful parades down Manhattan's Fifth Avenue.

This year will be different. Choirs have fallen silent. Fifth Avenue is deserted. Families are meeting by Zoom or Skype with each little shard of the family preparing its own Easter supper.

I am sad that this most joyous church festival has been silenced by the pandemic crisis. Bryan and I enjoyed singing "Hey Now, Singing Hallelujah" a few minutes ago but we are no match for the spirit and volume of a full sanctuary. I hope that everyone has family and friends with whom you can connect electronically this holiday weekend. But this is not the same as an extended family all gathered around one big dining room table.

Like so much of social and economic life this spring, Easter 2020 seems to have been cancelled as part of the effort to stop the transmission of the new coronavirus.

But today I uphold a viewpoint from which Easter joy still illuminates this year's quiet holiday.

Virtually all the events in Jesus' life are big and noisy affairs. His birth in Bethlehem is accompanied by choirs



Reverend Ian Kellogg (right) and Music Director Bryan LeGrow during the recording of the Easter service at Mill Woods United Church on April 12.

Photo: Brian Sampson

of angels. His baptism happens among the crowds who throng to the Jordan River. His teaching draws thousands. His entry into Jerusalem is accompanied by loud Hosannas. His execution on Good Friday is before a jeering mob. But when Jesus is raised to new life on Easter Sunday, no one is there to witness it. Later, when a group of women come to his tomb at dawn on the first day of the week and find it empty, they run from the tomb in terror and tell no one.

Everything in Jesus' life and ministry seems to happen in public except for the most important moment – his resurrection to new life!

Most stages of our spiritual development are noisy. From our bawling cry to our tumultuous lives as lovers, parents, and workmates, we follow our desires and avoid our fears with sturm und drang every step of the way. This is the necessary and messy work of life and love, of study and work, and of stress and relaxation. This is the life we cherish despite its ups and downs, its joys and pains, and its loves and losses.

But then, at one point or another, we run into trouble so grievous it can seem like we are dying. For most individuals and communities crises like this occur many times. They are moments of disillusionment so painful they can feel like death. They are crises like the one that led Paul to write that he had been crucified with Christ. These are the hard moments that we marked on Good Friday.

But then comes an inevitable next step. With Grace, we sometimes accept our humiliations and rise to a new life. It was such a moment that led Paul to write that Christ now lives in him (Galatians 2:19-20)

No one knows what happened after the empty tomb. Matthew, Luke, and John add some fanciful stories to Mark's account. But Mark's Gospel

contains not one word after the passage Bryan read this morning.

Happily, Paul has experienced the next step. Paul exclaims that the Risen Christ now lives in him. Paul has accepted the Grace to move beyond an ego-based life to an eternal one in Christ.

Mark doesn't tell us what happens after the tomb is found empty. But Paul lives into the joy of what comes next. The Risen Christ arises in his heart, in mine, and in yours.

Paul's realization, which is an Easter one, is so joyous that it deserves a thousand performances of the Hallelujah Chorus and as big and noisy an Easter Parade as one can imagine.

Nevertheless, the appearance of the Risen Christ – within Paul, or in me, or in you, and whether at Easter or at any moment – is a silent moment. It is the simple, inevitable, and gracious result of everything that preceded it – the tumult of life, the dysfunctions and wonders of our families, and the pain of humiliations that led us to grief. Once we have shed tears for our Good Friday losses, new life can slip into our hearts as silently and as beautifully as a crocus breaking through newly thawed soil in spring.

This year, we have extra losses and humiliations to absorb. The coronavirus pandemic is exposing the ills of our societies – homelessness, inadequate healthcare, narcissistic leaders. This year, we may be lonely or sick; we may have loved ones who are sick; and all of us are grieved by the toll of death around the world. As rivers run clean and air pollution disappears, the depredations of the world's economic system are exposed. As hundreds of millions are threatened with destitution in the face of economic collapse, humanity's need to find new ways to create and distribute wealth becomes more acute.

But no matter how challenged we are

this year the light of Easter morning has come. After grief, the Risen Christ arises within us like dawn entering a silent tomb. This leads us to a Love that is infinitely bigger than the fears and desires of our egos. This resurrected life is available in any moment of crisis, as it is at the end of life.

The first Easter was silent, and this Easter may be the quietest one we can remember. But this year is no less filled with Grace, with Light, and with Love than when Paul first noticed the Risen Christ in his heart and when the tomb was first found empty on the first day of a new week that followed the most painful days Jesus' friends had ever known.

This morning, may we let peace envelop us. In the midst of a silent spring, may we experience God's Love and its promise of new life, both now and always.

Christ is Risen! Risen indeed!
Hallelujah!

Reverend Ian Kellogg is the Minister of the Mill Woods United Church. He delivered this sermon on Easter Sunday in an empty church. It was only him, Music Director Bryan LeGrow, and videographer Brian Sampson who recorded the service for live streaming on Facebook. For more sermons, please visit www.millwoodsunited.org.

Keeping Quiet

by Pablo Neruda

Now we will count to twelve and we will all keep still.

For once on the face of the earth let's not speak in any language, let's stop for one second, and not move our arms so much.

It would be an exotic moment without rush, without engines, we would all be together in a sudden strangeness.

Fishermen in the cold sea would not harm whales

and the man gathering salt would look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars, wars with gas, wars with fire, victory with no survivors, would put on clean clothes

and walk about with their brothers in the shade, doing nothing.

What I want should not be confused with total inactivity.

Life is what it is about; I want no truck with death.

If we were not so single-minded about keeping our lives moving,

and for once could do nothing, perhaps a huge silence

might interrupt this sadness of never understanding ourselves

and of threatening ourselves with death.

Perhaps the earth can teach us as when everything seems dead and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve and you keep quiet and I will go.

Thank you to Reverend Ian Kellogg and the Mill Woods United Church for giving permission to publish this sermon.

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any story ideas**

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Covid-19 Travel and Immigration Considerations

There have been a lot of changes across the world in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Governments have enacted various measures to slow the spread of Covid-19, and travel and immigration considerations have understandably been a key focal point. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced certain travel restrictions into Canada on March 16, 2020, and Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has instituted various alternative measures for processing immigration applications at this time. This article offers a summary of some of these changes, as of April 14, 2020. As this situation is constantly evolving, please visit www.canada.ca for the most up-to-date information.

Air Travel Restrictions

Subject to certain exemptions, only the following individuals can enter Canada by air:

- Canadian citizens;
- Canadian permanent residents;
- persons registered under Canada's *Indian Act*;
- protected persons; and
- foreign nationals (i.e. individuals who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents) who are travelling from the United States, have been in the United States (or a combination of the United States and Canada) for the past 14 days without any symptoms, and are travelling to Canada for an essential reason (such as work, study, critical infrastructure support, economic services and supply chains, shopping for essential goods like medication, health, immediate medical care, safety, and security).

Exemptions have been introduced to allow other individuals to also enter Canada by air. You can enter Canada by air if you are:

- a temporary foreign worker;
- an international student with a valid study permit (or were approved for a study permit before March 18, 2020);
- a foreign national who was approved for permanent residence on or before March 18, 2020 but had not yet travelled to Canada to be landed.

Foreign nationals holding a valid visitor visa or electronic travel authorization (eTA) are generally not able to enter Canada by air at this time, unless they fall under one of the exemptions.

Immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents are also allowed to enter Canada by air if their travel is for essential reasons, and not optional or discretionary reasons (such as tourism or recreation). Immediate family members include spouses and common-law partners, dependent children of Canadian citizens/permanent residents or their spouses/common-law partners, dependent children of those dependent children, parents or step-parents of Canadian citizens/permanent residents or their spouses/common-law partners, and guardians or tutors of Canadian citizens/permanent residents. You will need to show proof of your immediate family member's Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status (such as a copy of their Canadian passport, citizenship certificate or card, permanent resident card, or provincial or territorial birth certificate) and proof of your relationship to that person (such as a

copy of your marriage certificate, birth certificate, spousal sponsorship application in progress, or confirmation of permanent residence for the family class).

Immediate family members hoping to reunite with foreign nationals living in

**Allison
Purdon**

**Immigration
Lawyer
in
Edmonton**



Canada must first contact the Government of Canada to get permission. See www.canada.ca for more details about how to apply for permission to enter Canada.

If you fall under one of the above categories and are attempting to enter Canada by air, you will have to undergo a health check conducted by the airline before you are able to board your flight. Symptoms that will be canvassed include fever, cough, and breathing difficulties. Once landed in Canada, you will have to undergo another health check before leaving the port of entry. **All travelers are required to quarantine for 14 days after arriving in Canada (even if not showing any symptoms).**

Land Travel Restrictions

As of March 21, 2020, Canada and the United States entered into an agreement temporarily restricting all foreign nationals from travelling across the land border for non-essential reasons. Examples of essential travel reasons that are most likely to apply to the typical traveler are work, study, health, immediate medical care, and safety and security. Such travelers will only be allowed to enter Canada if they have not been outside the United States or Canada in the previous 14 days and are not showing any symptoms.

Canadian citizens, permanent residents, people registered under the *Indian Act*, and protected persons can enter Canada by land, rail, or sea, even if showing symptoms consistent with Covid-19.

All individuals entering Canada must quarantine for 14 days after arriving in Canada (even if not showing any symptoms). Only people who are providing essential services will be exempt from the 14-day quarantine requirement – for instance, truck drivers who regularly cross the border to ensure the supply of goods.

Immigration Applications

IRCC has communicated that it is still accepting and processing immigration applications, but delays may be experienced due to service disruptions and Covid-19 restrictions. Further details about the length of time of expected delays, or specific applica-

tions affected, have not been released.

Temporary residents (visitors, workers, students) currently in Canada can apply to extend their status by submitting applications **online**; do not travel to a port of entry to apply in-person as this is not considered essential travel and such services will not be provided to you. Remember that you must submit such applications **before your status expires** to maintain implied status, allowing you to remain in Canada while your application is being processed.

IRCC has confirmed that applications in progress will not be refused due to inability to comply with application timelines (such as giving biometric information or completing medical examinations).

For the time being, IRCC has also cancelled citizenship ceremonies, tests and re-tests, and in-person permanent resident landing appointments and refugee claimant appointments. IRCC has indicated that it is looking into alternative means of conducting permanent resident landing appointments, possibly by telephone. Eligible clients will be contacted directly to reschedule.

The Immigration and Refugee Board

of Canada (IRB) (which is responsible for refugee hearings and appeals, inadmissibility hearings, and immigration appeals) has also closed its front offices, temporarily extended timelines relating to Basis of Claim Forms and appeals, and suspended in-person hearings and mediations (other than detention reviews). Please see www.irb-cisr.gc.ca for further updates from the IRB.

Canada's Official Global Travel Advisory recommends avoiding non-essential travel outside of Canada at this time, and in particular advises avoiding all travel on cruise ships. If you do need to travel, or if you have an immigration application in process, be sure to stay up-to-date on the latest news. As always, if you have submitted an immigration application and your contact information has changed, advise IRCC or the IRB, as the case may be, as soon as possible.

Especially in these difficult and unpredictable times, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.

Allison Purdon is an associate at McCuaig Desrochers LLP, a general practice law firm with Edmonton's largest group of immigration lawyers (www.mccuaig.com). This article is intended to provide general information only and should not be relied on as legal advice or opinion.

COVID-19 Updates

Edmonton City Councillor Mohinder Banga

Over the last month, the ways that we all work, shop, come together, and interact with one another have all changed dramatically, and many of us are still adjusting to this new normal. I'd like to use today's column to discuss the challenges we're facing with the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the City's efforts to keep Edmontonians safe and healthy.

By now, we're all likely aware that COVID-19 is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing or coming into direct contact with someone who is sick. As time goes on, we're also seeing the devastating impact this virus can have on people of all ages, and we're learning more about how those who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic contribute to spreading this illness. This is why physical distancing protocols have been developed, and why it's so important to maintain two metres, or six feet, between yourself and anyone outside of your close personal relations.

As part of the City's efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, we've temporarily suspended E-Park curbside and lot payments as well as ETS fares. We've also worked to ensure physical distancing in our outdoor areas by closing some off-leash dog parks and mandating that all dogs must be leashed, even in off-leash areas, for the foreseeable future. We know this is also presenting financial challenges for many Edmontonians, so to help alleviate this stress we've deferred the property tax payment deadline until August 31,

although we strongly encourage those who can pay to still do so on time at the end of June.

Now that we're almost a month into this crisis, the impact of physical distancing is growing more apparent. It's not easy to be cooped up for this long, and for many in our community, loneliness and mental

health issues like anxiety and depression might be made worse by these conditions. Right now, it's more important than ever to check in on those around you. In particular, I encourage you to check in on the seniors in your life, as they may be facing additional challenges due to reductions in community programming and restrictions on visitation at many residences.

Remember, we are all in this together. Even though we're not at City Hall right now, my team and I are still here for you – follow me on Twitter (@MoeBangaWard12) or reach out via email at mohinder.banga@edmonton.ca with any questions, comments, or concerns. For now, stay home, stay healthy and stay safe!



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The Page Advantage

High School in the Time of COVID-19

When the Provincial Government announced that Alberta schools were closing in mid-March, to aid in containing the spread of the Covid-19 virus and essentially "flattening the curve" and easing the burden on our health system, a lot of questions were left hanging in the air. How would students carry on with classes? Would Grade 12s still be graduating? Would there still be final exams? Thankfully, it didn't take long for the staff at J. Percy Page and Alberta Education to come up with a game plan and when Spring Break wrapped up, a new style of distance learning became the norm. I managed to conduct a few virtual interviews with some staff members to get their thoughts on this new style of learning.

Can you share your thoughts on how school has been progressing during this uncertain time?

Darryl Sutherland, Principal: The Government's cancellation of all classes across the province on such short notice truly caught us off guard. Paralleled with that news, came the immediate uncertainty for all (students, parents and teachers) as to how long it would last; weeks, months or even longer? The way our J. Percy Page school community pulled together was truly remarkable.

Our teachers have strong collaborative networks set up in our school and within our school Division. Each of our subject area departments immediately shifted from a focus on the traditional in-person approach to a focus of remote online instruction. The most impressive part of this shift was how our technology advanced teachers immediately took on the mentoring approach with their colleagues who were less comfortable with technology. At PAGE our staff always pull together to ensure that our students are well prepared for what lies ahead.

As grim as things appear in this long period of isolation, we have discovered some positives in using this new online approach to instruction. At the top of that list is how the vast majority of our students are well prepared for the future and working in a digital world. Of course, we have contingency plans for those students who don't have access to technology at this time using hard copy curriculum packages. In general though, our students have shown that they are more than ready for anything that lies ahead.

What are some ways that you are continuing to deliver content and assignments to students?

Carla Bate, Art Teacher: I started by posting low-stress, high-success prompts for students in week 1. Students could use any material they had at home to complete a large selection of choices. My hope was to just provide students with something to



Office staff at J. Percy Page High School practicing social distancing

Photos: J. Percy Page High School

help relieve anxiety in the first week, something to have when they needed a break. Now that we are in week 2, I have started asking them more specific questions, but still leaving all options open for completion. My first concern was that students were not going to have the materials they needed at home. But students have been innovative, where necessary. I'm also thankful that they have been asking me questions. We are trying very hard to keep in touch, but it hasn't been possible for all students, all the time. We are all just trying our best.

Scott Shpeley, Drama/Graphic Arts Teacher: The Drama students are meeting regularly (when they can) to stretch, check-in, and do drama exercises on a Google Meet. The Graphic Arts students can use Adobe Suite at home now, and we are meeting weekly on a Google Meet, and communicating with a Google classroom. Lot's of Google!

How do students seem to be coping with this major change in their education?

Anna Burn, English Teacher: I think this experience has allowed students to examine their strengths and weaknesses as learners and find opportunities to advocate for what they need. Just because students don't have to show up for school, doesn't mean they don't have to show up for themselves. I'm very proud of my students for taking ownership in identifying what they need in these unprecedented times.

Rachelle Williams, Sports Performance Teacher: I am using google classroom to connect with and deliver content to students. Sports performance is a blend of fitness training as

well as knowledge around training principles, nutrition, sport psychology, etc., so the content varies weekly. Our class is now a combination of a variety of at home workouts from various platforms, video lessons I create and assignments or reflections. No More Excuses Fitness graciously gave us free access to their online fitness studio, so we are making use of that as well. I create weekly check in videos for each class to give them instructions and hopefully some inspiration! My current focus is on connecting with each student and ensuring that the curricular content is supporting their health and well being.

A lot of my students are doing well with their assignments and they are excited to continue their fitness training, but they are consistently expressing that they miss traditional schooling. They miss the daily face to face interaction and camaraderie with their peers and the staff. They miss their extracurricular activities. One of my students reflected that they had been taking school for granted in the past. However, students seem to understand the importance of physical distancing right now. They are showing incredible amounts of maturity in expressing themselves and resiliency in handling the changes.



Principal Darryl Sutherland adapting to virtual education

J. PERCY PAGE HIGH SCHOOL
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Thank you to essential service workers in Edmonton-Mill Woods

These past few weeks have confirmed the world is now a different place. The coronavirus pandemic has changed the day-to-day routine for residents in Edmonton Mill Woods and for all Canadians.

I would like to take this opportunity to first thank the extraordinary doctors, nurses and other health care providers in our riding, as well as emergency services personnel who are doing exceptional work to keep us all healthy and safe. I would also like to recognize the work of our grocery store clerks, pharmacy and drug store staff, truck drivers, and other essential services who are doing extremely important work in these times of uncertainty.

Residents here in Edmonton Mill Woods have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. People are worrying about our essential service workers, the stability of our healthcare system, our jobs and the economy – not to mention, the health and safety of our friends, family, and vulnerable members of our community.

It has been a long few weeks, but now is not the time to be complacent. We have to remain vigilant in physical distancing to keep our most vulnerable citizens safe. That means no visits with extended family, no playdates, and no social gatherings. Please stay home, except for essential grocery store or pharmacy runs. Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly for 20 seconds. Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth. And finally, keep home surfaces like counters, door knobs and electronics clean.

I would like to remind residents to visit canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan for the most up-to-date information on COVID-19,

as well as the federal government's response to the crisis. With questions or concerns on this information, please contact my office at 780-497-3524 or tim.uppal@parl.gc.ca. If you have any fears about your health or feel you have symptoms of COVID-19, contact

Since the beginning of this crisis, our entire Conservative Caucus has been working hard to help all Canadians get the support they need as quickly as possible. We put forward a number of constructive solutions to improve the Liberals' initial response to the pandemic, and we look forward to the government starting to implement our suggestions.

But the only reason we've achieved this result is because the last two emergency sittings of Parliament allowed for regular Opposition oversight. We were able to debate, discuss, question and ultimately improve the government's legislation.

Members of Parliament proved we can meet in-person, in a responsible manner, as well as heed public health advice. These types of sessions must continue so that we can get the best results for Canadians.

The House of Commons must continue to hold in-person Parliamentary sit-

tings so that Opposition parties can ask the tough questions on behalf of our constituents and hold the government accountable.

We're in this together, and together we'll get through.

**Honourable
Tim S. Uppal**

**Member of
Parliament for
Edmonton-
Mill Woods**



your family physician or your local health unit. You may also contact your provincial COVID-19 hotline at 811.

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Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
and closed for lunch 12 - 1 pm
Closed on statutory and government holidays

Tim Uppal is the Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Mill Woods and Shadow Minister for the Treasury Board of the Official Opposition in the House of Commons..



MP Tim Uppal and Kelly McCauley, Member of Parliament for Edmonton West, pose at an event together.

Photo: Office of Tim Uppal, MP for Edmonton-Mill Woods

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Grey Nuns physician brings training and new technology to Pakistan

By Brenton Driedger

In a hospital in Karachi, a Pakistani medical resident examines a patient who has pain in his side. The resident and her instructor scan the man with a hand-held device about the size of an electric razor and discover he has a backup of fluid in his kidney. The patient's history and further tests confirm their diagnosis.

The instructor is Dr. Aisha Mirza, an emergency physician at Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Edmonton. And the hand-held device is the latest in point-of-care ultrasound technology, the Butterfly IQ. Aisha joined a medical mission to Pakistan in November with MedGlobal, a Chicago-based organization that aims to alleviate disparity in health care around the world.

In Pakistan, many doctors are working in rural areas where they don't have access to X-rays. The new hand-held ultrasound device is expected to make a big difference, from assessing broken bones to examining causes of swelling to checking a patient's heart for fluid.

"The poverty level in Pakistan is staggering, so these physicians are really relying on history and physical exams," says Aisha, who is also an associate clinical professor in emergency medicine and family medicine at the University of Alberta. "The device helped us to really narrow down and focus on what this was."

Aisha uses ultrasound, which she describes as a sort of stethoscope that works with sound waves, in the emergency department at the Grey Nuns every day. She's using a larger device called a Sonosite, which is about the size of a large laptop that is wheeled to and from the bedside. The Butterfly IQ is smaller and more portable because of its new proprietary chip technology. Once the device is approved in Canada, Aisha expects it to improve access to ultrasound here, too.

"Typically, ultrasound was very bulky and large, and now I can literally hold it in the palm of my hand."

New research is showing the benefits of using ultrasound. For example, when looking for a blood clot in the leg, radiologists typically perform a long and complicated scan from the groin to the knee.

"But there's really good literature suggesting that, for some patients, a point-of-care ultrasound focused on certain aspects of the leg can be done in under three and a half minutes and can be just as accurate with high sensitivity and specificity to rule that out. So that's huge."

Aisha started taking courses on point-of-care ultrasound after finishing her residency 12 years ago, when ultrasound was still used primarily in radiology. Eight years ago, she created an ultrasound workshop for medical students. Recently, the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians included a recommendation in its guidelines that all emergency doctors should know how to use point-of-care ultrasound in several key areas, from trauma to cardiac to first trimester pregnancies.

Many physicians who attended the week-long course in Karachi came from rural areas, travelling up to three



Dr. Aisha Mirza, who works as an emergency physician at Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Mill Woods, at a hospital in Karachi, Pakistan.

Photo: Covenant Health

days by train. The MedGlobal team raised money to buy 10 Butterfly IQ devices to leave with the physicians after their week of training. Each device plugs into a phone or tablet, and the scanned images can be uploaded to a cloud, so Aisha continues to provide feedback to her trainees.

"This is not a one-and-done thing. As a physician, you develop this skill, and you get better with time."

Aisha, a master instructor with the Canadian Point of Care Ultrasound Society, helped create the course provided on the recent mission as part of the point-of-care ultrasound pilot program, and she plans to return to Pakistan with MedGlobal.

"It leaves you with such a good feeling that these are the pebbles, the steps that are going to be taken forward. This is going to have a sustainable outreach in this country. So it felt really rewarding to go and volunteer for something like this. I felt really privileged to be part of the mission."

Aisha, who speaks Urdu, was born in Pakistan and moved to Canada with her family when she was two. She has gone back to Pakistan to visit and also returned in 2005 to help with earthquake relief. The memory of seeing the extreme poverty and challenging conditions inspires her to share her expertise with local doctors who can make an ongoing difference for their patients.

"Our goal is that, eventually, we won't need to go back and train more physicians — they'll be able to train themselves," says Aisha. "It's the whole process of teaching a man to fish instead of giving a man a fish."

Brenton Driedger works as a Social Media and Storytelling Advisor for Covenant Health.

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.

Checks and Balances

Edmonton City Councillor Mike Nickel

A constituent sent a picture to my office last week asking why his street was bladed. The picture showed a skiff of snow pushed off to the side of the otherwise completely bare pavement. He wanted to know why his taxes were paying for the blading of half an inch of snow, who came to check and see if this

was necessary, and where the managers were. We are heading into a time of enormous economic upheaval. Businesses are closing by the dozen. Citizens are out of work and uncertain when or if they will be heading back. Taxes and bills are being deferred, but deferred is not forgiven, and eventually the time of deferrals will be over.

As a businessman, I see the businesses in this city struggle and take our citizens' economic welfare seriously. I see the City going ahead with project plans, and I question the wisdom of the spending. I ask for metrics, targets, and outcomes — an opportunity for Administration to tell us they know where we are, where we are going, how we are going to get there, and what our final product will look like — and their answers are unsatisfactory. This will not sustain us. We need to fix this.

The fix will not be fast, and it will not be easy. So, we will have to be smart. Administration will have to step up, and take a really hard look, so we do not tax our citizens into bankruptcy. We need to

ask if projects are wants or needs. Do we want our streets plowed? Yes. Should we pay to plow an inch of snow on a warm day? No. I do not know why we paid for that service, but if the drivers blindly do what they are told without being able to assess the need, we have a problem. If we are blindly following

The Plan we made on Day 1, we have a problem. If contractors are blindly paid without checks or balances, we have a problem. This is assessing value for taxes. We need look at how we manage our contracts, assess our decision-making processes from the front line to the top manager, and figure out what our economics will look like over the next few years, or our recovery will be as painful as the situation that put us here.



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Edmontonians of Asian origin are not responsible for COVID-19

By David Kilgour and Michael Davidson

Throughout history, pandemics have spread with devastating consequences. However, because the first case of COVID-19 was detected in Wuhan, there's been an unwarranted outbreak of discrimination towards Asians in Canada and elsewhere. It is unCanadian to denigrate this community, especially in our multicultural nation with two official languages, 66 Indigenous languages and 128 immigrant languages.

Canadians take pride in diversity and working together to overcome difficulties. However, in this unprecedentedly difficult period some jump to false conclusions by stereotyping Asians and blaming them for things they haven't done.

In late January, Dr. Theresa Tam, our Hong Kong-born and respected Chief Public Health Officer, tweeted "(I'm) concerned about the growing number of reports of #racism and stigmatizing comments on social media directed to people of Chinese and Asian descent related to #2019nCOV. These actions create a divide of 'us versus them'. Canada is ... built on the deep-rooted values of respect, diversity and inclusion." The response to Dr. Tam's plea for tolerance? Many negative comments directed at her.

In support, Dr. Eileen de Villa, Toronto's Chief Medical Health Officer, noted: "Discrimination (isn't) acceptable....and spreading misinfor-

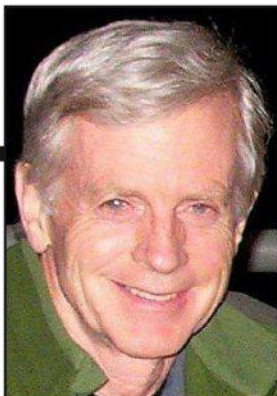
mation (doesn't) offer anyone protection."

Quebec Human Rights Commission vice-president Myrlande Pierre also sounded the alarm over attacks aimed at the province's cultural minorities, especially those of Asian origin.

The Chinese Canadian National

David Kilgour

A Canadian View on World Events



Council for Social Justice is documenting experiences of the community in relation to COVID-19. Members handed out "Stop the Spread of Racism" hand sanitizers in Toronto to raise awareness. Their Facebook page gives an example of someone posting photos of Asian women wearing face masks in public and then falsely declaring them as presumptive cases.

It's more than just dirty looks, microaggressions and prejudiced remarks. People have declined sitting beside Asians on public transportation. Uber drivers have refused to pick them up or have cancelled their rides. There are Facebook posts labelling Asians as "dirty" or "disease-ridden."

A woman who'd lived in Canada for

ten years was told by a stranger to 'go back to China' while shopping at a Vancouver grocery store. She was wearing a face mask to protect herself and her unborn child from the virus. Such discriminatory words and actions are unjustifiable and unacceptable. COVID-19 doesn't discriminate based on race; xenophobia won't protect anyone from the virus.

Asian-Canadians bear no responsibility for the Communist Party of China (CCP) mis-governance. Canadians, waiting under self-isolation and stay-at-home orders, read how the police state's concealment for weeks of the initial outbreak of the coronavirus in Wuhan and inaccurate messages on transmission enabled the global spread of it and ended--hopefully only temporarily-- many Canadian jobs.

These days with antisemitism, Islamophobia, and White Nationalism, discrimination and abuse against Asians is the last thing we need.

There is much to criticize in the actions of the CCP; the Xinjiang internment camps holding more than a million Uyghurs and the horror of involuntary organ harvesting from elsewhere in China for starters. But such criticism is directed specifically at the CCP. Chinese citizens face arrest and imprisonment if they criticize their unelected government. Wuhan residents have often been heroic in opposing the irresponsibility of the party-state in concealing C-19.

By stigmatizing Asians-Canadians who have nothing to do with the pan-

demic, we tarnish our own society's values and give support to the Beijing narrative alleging Western racism. We criticize the regime for its repression of freedom for its own citizens and of truth; we do not criticize its diaspora here.

In Montreal, religious statues were smashed at Buddhist temples and a cultural centre. Lion statues at the entrance to Montreal's Chinatown were splashed with paint. A Korean man was stabbed in mid-March, leaving local Asian-Canadians concerned and frightened. It's grossly unfair to blame them for C-19.

The way to reduce the impact of China's authoritarian regime is not through victimizing innocent people because of their origins. They should not feel alone or fearful living in Canada. We must let them know that we have their backs.

David Kilgour, a lawyer by profession, served in Canada's House of Commons for almost 27 years, representing southeast Edmonton. He was Secretary of State for Africa and Latin America and Asia-Pacific. He is the author of several books and co-author with David Matas of Bloody Harvest: The Killing of Falun Gong for Their Organs.

Michael Davidson is a former public servant, now retired, with an interest in Canadian and international human rights issues.

This article was first published by the *Epoch Times*.

You have news for the *Mill Woods Mosaic*?

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What immigrants need to know about driving and vehicles in Alberta

Driving and vehicles

Many Albertans drive and own vehicles. You can get from place to place in most Alberta cities using public transit, so you do not need to own a car to travel within your community. But even if you do not plan to own a car, it is wise to get an Alberta driver's licence.

Getting an Alberta driver's licence

An Alberta driver's licence is important to have for the following reasons:

- It is a widely accepted piece of photo identification (ID).

- You may need to drive for work.

- If you have a licence from another country or Canadian province or territory, it may only be valid for a limited time. If you are

- an immigrant with legal presence in Canada or a Canadian citizen residing in Alberta, you must obtain an Alberta driver's licence within 90 days of arriving in the province, regardless of whether you travel outside Alberta during those 90 days.

- a Canadian citizen or permanent resident working in Alberta but have your residence outside the province, you may continue to use the valid licence from your home province or territory. However, if you have a vehicle in Alberta for longer than 183 days, you must register that vehicle in Alberta.

- staying in Alberta as a full-time student or you are working here as part of a co-op program of study, you may use your valid driver's licence from your home country or province or territory.

To get a driver's licence, you will need to visit an Alberta registry agent. To find an Alberta registry agent, go to servicealberta.ca. Click on the Registry services tab and then click on agents.

You must bring at least two pieces of ID with you to the registry agent, at least one of which must be photo ID. You must also show proof that you are entitled to live in Canada and that you are an Alberta resident. All identification documents must be originals - photocopies are not accepted. Examples of acceptable ID include

- photo ID, such as a valid driver's licence from another jurisdiction, a passport, a Nexus card or a permanent resident card

- non-photo ID, such as a birth certificate, a utility bill or a government assistance document (for example, an Income Support document). This ID must contain at least two of the following: your full name, physical address, date of birth or signature.

- proof of Canadian legal presence, such as a work visa, a Canadian birth

Welcome to Alberta

Important information for immigrants and other newcomers

certificate, a Nexus card or a permanent resident card

- proof of Alberta residency, such as gas, electricity or cable utility bills showing your name and physical address; a signed third-party lease or rental agreement; or a letter from an Alberta-based employer stating that you are an employee and an Alberta resident

For more information about driver's licence ID, go to servicealberta.ca. Click on the Drivers/Vehicles tab and then click on Residency and ID Requirements.

Replacing your driver's licence with an Alberta driver's licence

If you have

- a valid driver's licence from another Canadian jurisdiction, you can exchange it for an Alberta driver's licence of equal class

- a Class 5 or higher driver's licence from Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Isle of Man, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland) or the United States, you can exchange it for a Class 5 Alberta licence

- a valid motorcycle (Class 6) licence from Australia, the Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Switzerland or the United States, you can exchange it for a Class 6 Alberta licence.

If your licence is not from a country listed above and can prove that you have two years of driving experience

- bring your licence (officially translated, if not in English) that is equivalent to or higher than an Alberta Class 5 licence to a registry office

- complete a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) exemption application to have your licence and driving experience validated

- pass a written test about the rules of driving and a driving test (Advanced Road Test)

Once you meet all of the above requirements, you will be issued a Class 5 Alberta licence. A Class 5 Alberta licence permits you to drive

- a two-axle passenger vehicle (car, pickup truck, sport utility vehicle), excluding a motorcycle

- a two-axle passenger vehicle towing a trailer, if the trailer is not equipped with air brakes

- a two-axle recreational vehicle, excluding those equipped with air brakes

- a moped

Getting a driver's licence if you do not have one

Alberta has a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program to ensure new drivers gain the experience and skills needed for safe driving. It will take at least three years to complete the two stages (learner and GDL probationary) of the program and obtain a Class 5 licence.

To begin the program and obtain a learner's licence, you must

- bring a minimum of two pieces of ID (including one piece of photo ID and your work permit or other proof of Alberta residency and Canadian legal presence) to a registry agent

- pass a vision test

- pass a written test about the rules of driving. Written driving tests are offered in Arabic, Chinese (traditional), English, Farsi, French, Hindi Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog (Philippines) and Vietnamese.

Other options for completing the dri-

ving test include writing the test in English using a dictionary to translate, taking an oral assisted test in English or taking an oral assisted test with an approved translator. To find a registry agent near you, go to servicealberta.ca. Click on the Registries Services tab and then click on Find Registry Agents.

If you pass the vision and written tests, you will be given a Class 7 learner's licence. When you drive with this licence, a fully licensed (non-GDL) driver who is at least 18 years of age must be in the vehicle with you. There are also other conditions on this licence as part of Alberta's GDL program. To learn more about these conditions and the next (GDL probationary) stage of the GDL program, go to servicealberta.ca. Click on the Driving & Vehicles tab and then click on Get a driver's licence.

In the next issue of the *Mill Woods Mosaic*, we will provide information about buying or leasing a motor vehicle, insuring a vehicle and registering a vehicle.

Reprinted with permission from *Welcome to Alberta: Information for Newcomers*, produced by Alberta Employment and Immigration. Visit the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at alis.alberta.ca/publications to view or order your copy (free to Albertans).

Resources for Temporary Foreign Workers

ALBERTA

Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan

www.health.alberta.ca

Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program

www.albertacanada.com

Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline

Call: (780) 644-9955 (Edmonton local calling area) or 1-877-944-9955 from anywhere in North America

Employment Standards

Call: (780) 427-3731 (toll-free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000 first)

Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office

North Location
2nd Floor, 10242 - 105 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5J 3L5

South Location
5th Floor, Century Park Place
855 - 8th Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB
T2P 3P1

E-mail: tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca

To contact an advisor, call the Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline.

WCB Alberta

Call: Toll-free in Alberta
1-866-WCB-WCB-1
(1-866-922-9221)
Outside of Alberta 1-800-661-9608

E-mail: contactcentre@wcb.ab.ca

www.wcb.ab.ca

Occupational Health and Safety

Call: 1-866-415-8690

<http://employment.alberta.ca>

CANADA

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Call: 1-800-242-2100

www.cic.gc.ca

Service Canada

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/workplace_skills/foreign_workers/index.shtml

Important addresses for immigrants and other newcomers

If you are new to Edmonton and don't know anybody, it can be tough to find a place to stay, a job, the right school for your children or good health care services, but there is plenty of help available.

Here are some of the main agencies specializing in helping immigrants and other newcomers in the Edmonton area:

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

11713 - 82 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 2V9
Tel. (780) 424-7709
Website: www.emcn.ab.ca

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers offers a wide variety of programs for newcomers and helps immigrants to find a place to live, a job and English classes.

Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods

Suite 200, Tower II, Millbourne Mall
7609 - 38 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6K 3L6
Tel. (780) 462-6924
Website: www.mwci-edmonton.net

The Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods offers many programs and services for immigrants, including settlement assistance, language and educational counseling, employment assistance, citizenship classes, English classes, computer classes, public speaking classes, and youth programs.

Changing Together Centre for Immigrant Women

3rd Floor, 9538 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 421-0175
Website: www.changingtogether.com

Founded in 1984, Changing Together is a non-profit, charitable organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women. Its mission is to help Edmonton and area immigrant women and their families overcome personal and systemic barriers that keep them from participating fully in Canadian Society.

Catholic Social Services

8212 - 118 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 0S3
Tel. (780) 424-3545
Website: www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca

For more than 50 years, Catholic Social Services has welcomed immigrants and refugees to Alberta. The services are free and offered in both official languages and more than 50 other languages. In the Meadows, CSS runs a drop-in group for women of all ages and backgrounds. Participants connect through diverse activities like speaking English, sharing cultural experiences, learning to use computers and connecting with useful resources. The program, called Tea Connections, runs every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon, in the room of The Meadows Community League on the 2nd floor of the Meadows Community Recreation Centre, 2704 - 17 Street. For more information, contact Raminder Dhindsa at raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca or 780-391-3204.

Family Futures Resource Network

5704 - 19 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 1L8
Tel. 413-4521
Website: www.familyfutures.ca

The Family Futures Resource Network (FFRN) is a non-profit organization providing support to families and parents in the areas of early childhood education, child and youth, family and adult support and parent education. The FFRN has three separate

locations in Mill Woods: Millhurst Site (5704 - 19 A Avenue), Knottwood Site (1733 Mill Woods Road) and Millbourne Community Site (3756 - 78 Street).

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative

9538 -107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 423-1973
Website: www.mchb.org

The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a registered worker's co-operative with members from immigrant and refugee communities, providing culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, post-natal outreach, parenting support, family liaison and community development support to immigrant and refugee families.

Indo-Canadian Women's Association

9324 - 34 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5X8
Tel. (780) 490-0477

The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is a not-for-profit organization for enthusiastic volunteers committed to full participation of immigrant and visible minority women and men in economic, social and political life in Canada.

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (formerly Multicultural Women & Seniors Services Association)

329 Woodvale Road West
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 3Z7
Tel. (780) 465-2992

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (SCSW) is a non-profit, organization. The focus is to provide service and programs for immigrant women and senior men and women. Program goal is to promote and enhance the well-being and self-reliance of seniors and women especially those at risk and isolated before a crisis situation occurs. SCSW provides social support, information sessions, and skill building classes, home and hospital visits, as well as translation, and referrals to other service providers. It also offers family support and crisis intervention. For youth, there are Urdu and math classes and homework help, and there is also an Urdu library with more than 2000 books. The SCSW is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.

Youth Empowerment and Support Services

9310 - Whyte Avenue (82 Ave.)
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Z6
Tel. (780) 468-7070
Website: www.yess.org

The Youth Emergency Shelter Society is a not-for-profit organization serving young people between the ages of 15-18 who are in crisis, at risk or homeless.

Alberta Employment Standards

Edmonton Office - Main Floor Sterling Place
9940 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2N2
Tel. (780) 427-3731
Website: www.employment.alberta.ca

Alberta Employment Standards is a provincial agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of employment standards in Alberta. AES has publications available for temporary for-

eign workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under Alberta's employment standards and workplace health and safety legislation. These publications are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Spanish.

NorQuest College

10215 - 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 1L6
Tel. (780) 422-2020
Website: www.norquest.ab.ca

NorQuest College is a public college offering many programs, including English as a Second Language classes and employment programs for immigrants.

Alberta Health and Wellness

Edmonton Office
Telus Tower North, Main Floor
10025 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
Tel. (780) 427-1432
Website: www.health.alberta.ca

Alberta Health and Wellness answers any questions about health care and health care insurance coverage in Alberta.

Immigrant Access Fund Canada

45, 9912 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 4M9
Tel. (Toll Free) 1-855-423-2262
Website: www.iafcandada.org

The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to internationally trained immigrant professionals, trades people and skilled workers so they may obtain the Canadian licensing and/or training that will allow them to obtain employment in their field.

Other important phone numbers:

Edmonton Police Service

Emergency calls only 9-1-1
Police - Fire - Ambulance
Life & death, injury accident, crime in progress

Non-emergency calls
(Dispatch) 780-423-4567
Report of suspicious activity, calls for assistance, advice, etc.

Poison Centre 1-800-332-1414

Hazardous Material Spills 9-1-1

Utility Trouble Calls Only:

Power Emergency 780-412-4500
Within Edmonton

Gas Emergency 780-420-5585
Edmonton & Area

Drainage Trouble 780-496-1717

Sewer Trouble 780-496-1717

Wastewater (odour hotline) 780-469-8176

Water Emergency Service 780-412-6800

The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on May 15, 2020. The deadline for advertising and editorial is Friday, May 8, 2020.

How has COVID-19 impacted EPS?

Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Sherry Adams

On March 15 word came from the provincial government that students would no longer be meeting in our classrooms. Following spring break, classes "resumed" online with the same curriculum that would prepare students for the next grade level. The "new normal" became a reality for families, teachers, students and supporting staff. The adjustment to this global pandemic has been enormous for all of society, including our school division.

In a very short period, life as we have known it, came to an abrupt halt. Self-isolation, health concerns, dramatic changes to family life, financial instability, the closing of playgrounds and daycares with peer distancing meaning no social play with other kids, new challenges and uncertainties for everyday life, parents working from home ... all have produced stress as we are all learning to adjust to our new lifestyle. School as we have known it is not possible right now.

The term that best describes our new learning situation is "Emergency Remote Learning." Teaching online is very different and poses many challenges, especially for our children requiring specialized supports. Teachers are adjusting to these changes and have stepped up to the challenge. Check on SchoolZone or contact your principal if you have not received the two-page document, Supports for Students Working at Home, with links to Division and Alberta Education resources available free to parents. As long as children are unable to attend our schools, teachers will continue to make virtual connection as meaningful as possible and your support as parents/caregivers is invaluable!

The Education Continuity Plan from the

province recently announced means a 14 percent reduction in the Base Instruction Grants to all school divisions for May and June. What that means for Edmonton Public Schools is a reduction of \$13.78 million from the Base Instruction Grant and \$3.76 million from transportation for the months of May and June. These funds will be redirected to support the province's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Human Resources has assembled a number of supports to help our valued staff deal with job loss at this time. Our division is committed to seeing every single member of our staff through these hard times and will continue to support their tireless contributions to ensuring our students are successful, whether in the classroom or through online interaction.

As our Superintendent Darrel Robertson has said, "We will get through this one step at a time united by our values and our unwavering commitment to children. This is the most challenging time we have ever faced as a Division, but our ability to remain resilient and stay together will carry us through."

Parents/Caregivers, we know that you have much to adjust to and cope with in this COVID-19 pandemic. We are doing everything we can as a Board to advocate on your behalf and to help provide the support you need through this time! I sincerely want you know that if you have any questions or concerns regarding your children's education, or if you need extra support, please reach out. We may be isolated, but we're not alone! As always, it is a privilege serving you as your trustee for Ward I.

You may contact me at sherry.adams@epsb.ca or 780-429-8087.



Trustee Sherry Adams

What's up?

Community events in Mill Woods

Most events in Mill Woods and the Meadows have been cancelled, due to the current COVID-19 health crisis. Many stores and restaurants are closed for the time being, all schools are closed until further notice, and most places of worship have cancelled their services.

April 18 - The Annual General Meeting of the Meadows Community League has been CANCELLED.
www.themeadowscommunity.ca

April 18 - The Leefield Spring Gift & Craft Sale, which was planned by the Leefield Community League, has been CANCELLED.
www.leefield.ca

May 17 - The annual Nagar Kirtan Sikh Parade, a colorful community event which is always attended by thousands of people, has been CANCELLED.

May - The Annual General Meeting of the Indo-Canadian Women's Association has been CANCELLED.
www.icwaedmonton.org

July 1 - The 30th annual Canada Day celebration at Mill Woods Park is still a go but expected to be CANCELLED.
For updates, visit www.seedmonton.ca

August - The 39th annual Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival has been CANCELLED.

Please stay tuned for further developments. Visit the new website of the Mill Woods Mosaic at www.mwmosaic.ca or our profile on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Mill-Woods-Mosaic.

Do you have a community event in Mill Woods to announce? Please send us the information, and we will include it in this community calendar in the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic.

Tel. (780) 465-7526 or e-mail to: mwmosaic@telus.net

The next deadline is Friday, May 8, 2020.

Do you have any story ideas for the Mill Woods Mosaic? Give us a call at 780-465-7526 or e-mail to mwmosaic@telus.net

Mill Woods Mosaic

Serving our Communities of Old Strathcona & Surrounding Area Since 1960

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Our Team: Edén Tourangeau ♦ Kristie Tourangeau ♦ Janelle Caouette

Easter, Jesus, and The Walking Dead

With all of our worlds so recently turned upside down, terms like virus and pandemic have a greater relevance and impact than in our known lifetimes. However, the possibility of the entire human race being infected with a common plague has been a theme of popular culture for nearly a century. It was given a boost in 1968 with the release of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* and recently reached its stride with season ten of *The Walking Dead* TV series.

One of the classic lines of this immensely popular show was uttered in Season 2 as a lead character admits "We're all infected ... whatever it is, we all carry it." This profound statement clearly reminds us that one can hardly look at relevant societal themes like zombies and *The Walking Dead* and not overwhelmingly be reminded of important subjects of our faith such as sin and the resurrection.

Not only do these societal themes remind us of gospel truths, but especially at a time like Easter, they can also provide an incredible bridge for us to have faith conversations with unchurched relatives, friends, neigh-

bours or work associates, especially those with a fascination for the zombie genre.

Our post-Christian culture with its focus on materialism and rejection of faith can't help but feed the fatalistic and nihilistic world the zombies occupy. Hope is rarely seen and survival is often entirely void of love, compassion and sacrifice for others. Like a beautiful oasis in a post-apocalyptic desert, Christ's true resurrection from the dead, as celebrated at Easter, provides the ultimate expression of hope for all of mankind, the complete and one and only cure from sin - the disease of the human soul that has plagued us all since creation. That is why it's more important than ever to try and build bridges, try and engage a broken world with the truth of the Gospel, the good news that we can share. Our loved ones are drowning in a society without answers, without hope. Materialism, Marxism, Nihilism, Evolution and other Godless philosophies offer no answers for the brokenness and infection of the human soul. Only Jesus Christ, who defeated death, offers everyone true hope.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:17-20 (MSG) is paraphrased this way:

16-20 If corpses can't be raised, then Christ wasn't, because he was indeed dead. And if Christ weren't raised, then all you're doing is wandering about in the dark, as lost as ever. It's even worse for those who died hoping in Christ and resurrection, because they're already in their graves. If all we get out of Christ is a little inspiration for a few short years, we're a pretty sorry lot. But the truth is that Christ has been raised up, the first in a long legacy of those who are going to leave the cemeteries.

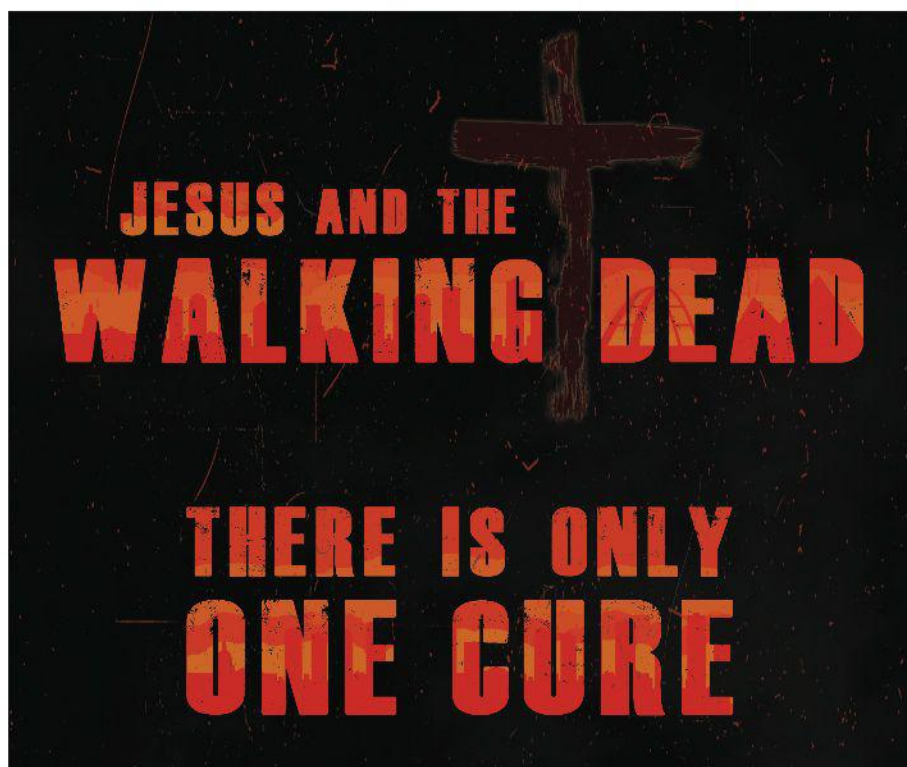
Easter is a time where we celebrate resurrection and new life! Jesus Christ has led the way and is "...first in a long legacy of those who are going to leave the cemeteries". Unlike the zombie culture of today, it will be a resurrection to life, a resurrection of the walking living, those who are redeemed both spiritually and physically and not a resurrection of the walking dead, those without hope.

Contemporary culture has always presented amazing opportunities to engage the world around us and present Jesus Christ as the one true answer. Easter and *The Walking Dead* are fantastic examples of this. Charles Spurgeon declared that "The Gospel is like a caged lion". It does not need to be defended, it just needs to be let out of its cage." While many of us have experienced the reluctance of an unchurched friend to discuss "religion", many would gladly engage in a discussion about contemporary cul-

ture. Let us learn how we can build bridges through these discussions and then ultimately through love, hope and relationship "help release the lion".



Pastor Doug Zieber has had a huge variety of life experience having spent many years in construction, advertising, IT, education, politics and ministry. He is currently the Pastor of Church Ministries at Calvary Community Church and Executive Director of Mill Woods Christian School in Edmonton. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Theology (Cum Laude) and his Project Management Professional (PMP) designation. He's been (mostly) happily married for 32 years, has 3 children and 1.5 grandchildren. Most importantly he is passionate about reaching the unchurched with the good news of the Gospel by making it relevant to culture and everyday life.





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