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**Making Room for Women Project**

**Interview with Ariel Creighton**

**February 28, 2014**

## **Oral History Recording Summary**

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Interviewee: Ariel Creighton (AC)  
Date of Interview: February 28, 2014  
Transcribed by: Katherine Chambers

Interviewed by: Melanie Ihmels (MI)  
Location: VST  
Auditor of Transcription: Ariel Creighton

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<b>Time Log (minutes)</b>	<b>Description of Content</b>
00:30	Beginning of Interview; introduction, information about early life
05:37	Leadership roles: social justice work and ministry
26:05	Education
28:48	Family life
31:12	Turning points
36:17	Gender equality challenges
39:40	Legacy
41:39	Spiritual life
43:28	Message for church
46:00	Leadership experience at Camp Fircom
47:00	Personal challenges and challenges in church
53:10	United Church cornerstones

MI: First thing I'd like to say is thank you very much for participating in this. I will be making sure you receive documents: a copy of the transcript of what we're doing, as well as the documents I didn't hand you today—they'll all be together in a package when I finish transcribing. One of the first questions I'd like to ask is: I'd like to hear about your childhood and how you grew up in or grew into the United Church. 00:30

AC: I grew up in West Vancouver and my mum and dad were both very much involved with the church. Originally my dad was a Methodist, my mum was a Presbyterian and then they came together in the United Church. We attended West Van United every Sunday. They were very much into the outreach aspects—my mum was very involved in UCW—and so I grew up thinking that that is what you did in life: you got involved in church. 01:00

Then we went to Nanaimo when I was in grade six and we attended Brechin United and that's where I was confirmed. There's not much more to say about that except we kept going to church; I was involved in youth group. Eventually we came back to West Vancouver when I went to university.

I joined Kairos in 1965. A friend of mine, a nursing classmate, belonged to Kairos and so she invited me along and before long I got quite involved on the executive in terms of the area of outreach. It was a real milestone in my church life. There were some people involved in Kairos at that time who were very dynamic and very concerned about social action. That's where I met my husband—in Kairos—and we both stayed very involved. It was a wonderful community and until the end of university we stayed involved with Kairos.

MI: So how old were you when you first became involved with it?

C: With Kairos?

MI: Mmm hmm.

AC: Ok, so ... '65 ... so that would be twenty. Nineteen or twenty.

MI: And does it stand for something?

AC: "Kairos" means ... It's not your regular chronological time, it's a significant moment in time. *Now* when you hear the word "Kairos" it's the group gathering of the organizations that are involved with social justice.

MI: Ok ... so it's involving social justice.

AC: And I think [the new Kairos is] not just United Church: I think it's more ecumenical, but I'm not positive about that.

MI: Have you always been interested in the social justice aspect?

AC: Yes. Again, that came right from my parents; that was something they were concerned with. My mum was involved with organizations like Status of Women and my dad was always involved with making sure that the seniors in the community were looked after and that kind of thing.

MI: What made you continue to be involved with the United Church?

AC: Well, we took a break, as many do, just after we were married. That was in '68 and we didn't return to the church until my oldest was turning four, so that would have been '76. We still stayed connected with our Kairos friends and in fact it was friends from Kairos who became our regular community of friends. But in terms of involvement with a particular church, we weren't involved.

MI: What kind of leadership roles have you had with the United Church?

05:37

AC: Well, that was one of them. Starting in terms of when I was executive of the BC Kairos, and then as soon as we went back to church—to Highlands in North Van—because my daughter was in Sunday school, I started teaching Sunday school. Then, before I knew it, I was what they called the Superintendent of Sunday School and therefore sat on Christian Education committees and was on the board and one thing led to another. So I was heavily involved—my children thought that that's what mum did: she went to committee meetings. So that was that time and out of that I became involved with Unit One, Ministry of Children and Families—at the Conference level—and we were involved with putting on workshops and training for Sunday school teachers. Anne Searcy was the Conference staff person for Unit One, and she's one of my mentors for sure.

(Laughter)

AC: Unit One invited Marta Torres who—I don't know if you know that name—but she had been a lawyer in Guatemala fighting for human rights and particularly for families of children. She and her family had to flee Guatemala and came to Canada, first of all to Kamloops, who had sponsored them, and then moved to Vancouver. So we had invited Marta to come and speak to us about what was happening in Guatemala and out of that was another turning point, again, in my life. I became involved with what was called the Christian Task Force in Central America and part of that was supporting some of the women in Guatemala by selling handicrafts—there was a company called Monimbo who collected the crafts which had been made by the women and brought up here to sell, which raised money for them.

Marta's whole attitude was, "You don't expect things are going to change necessarily in your lifetime, but that doesn't stop you from taking steps to social justice." But the importance of "hanging in" because it could be really discouraging if there was no progress. And, as I say, that philosophy just

became so important to me—that you don't stop working—and also the importance of working as a community. This is going back to my childhood, too: the themes that came out of my childhood for my dad was that your survival was in community. My parents had come through the Depression so they'd had to survive a lot. Community was really, really foundational. One of my mum's themes was... she and her grandmother had gone berry picking and her grandmother had told her about berries: "If you dinna share, they will not grow". So the importance of sharing what you had.

MI: It's neat that you even have the accent.

AC: (Laughs) Yeah, yeah.

MI: That's really neat. When I listen to you talk about your family it's very much a legacy.

AC: Yes.

MI: Not that I'm supposed to put words in your mouth.

AC: No, no, it's true. Of course they came from Scotland on my mum's side...

MI: That is neat. And so would you say you brought both of these themes right through...?

AC: Yes. I realize, for me, community is so important. I think I wrote down that one of the most significant parts of my ministry was "Family Friendship Place" at First United and that was really about community. So everybody's included, that there's a place for everybody, no matter how odd or strange you are.

MI: I like that. You were involved with the Christian Task Force and then what happened?

AC: The other significant contact through Unit One was the Parenting for Peace and Justice. I'm trying to think how that started. I think it was at Naramata. Jim and Cathy—I think it's McGinnis, although I may be getting that wrong—came here from St. Paul, Minnesota. They were the founders of Parenting for Peace and Justice. We took the workshop they gave at Naramata and then I became involved with offering workshops on Parenting for Peace and Justice and that was a very neat thing. One of the things that they stressed came out of studies they had done that found that children who saw their parents taking action were far more filled with hope—because at that time the Nuclear War was looming and of course we were all afraid of it.

MI: Do you remember what year that was? Roughly?

AC: Okay, I just have to go by my kids' ages ... maybe around early '80s.

MI: I was eleven in the early '80s and I remember that fear underscoring a lot of things.

AC: Yes, it was just such a threat.

MI: Ronald Reagan with his red phone.

AC: (Laughs). Yes, yes.

MI: Mmm hmm. That's a neat idea: "Children who saw parents taking action were far more filled with hope."

AC: Yeah. That sense you could do something, even though it can look very scary. ... But I think that's true.

MI: I guess. Yeah, I'd agree with that.

AC: We always went to the peace walks they had in Vancouver. I don't know if you remember that, but thousands would go and our kids—we all went. And again, as a part of a community, with a community of friends and with the church banners and everything so there was that sense that they were a part of something.

MI: That's neat.

AC: Yeah.

MI: So what did you do after that? Or how long were you involved with that organization? 14:29

AC: Probably about three or four years—again, it's kind of a blur. In ... have to go back again ... I'm trying to think whether it was '79 or '80—my mother in law who had MS and Parkinson's, and, it turned out, ALS, came to live with us. She was in a wheelchair and quite incapacitated so that was a time in which my focus was mostly with caring for her. Eventually, she went into a care facility and that's when I went to First United and I know that was 1986; that date sticks out in my mind. I went there as the visiting minister—no, I didn't do that; that came later. That was what I applied for, the visiting minister position, but instead they had a job in Programs and Advocacy so I did that and then an opening came in the Visiting Ministries—I did that part time—and also worked in Programs and Advocacy. Following that I became what's called a Community Worker in Programs. I had an amazing colleague—well, actually, two—but Geniene Elliott and I worked closely together in programs—she was full time and I was part time and we were involved with a variety of programs at First United. Along with Pat Dyer—she was a volunteer, do you know her name?

MI: Yes, and I actually have her ... I think it's her that I have to interview, she's on my list.

AC: Well, she died, sadly.

MI: Oops, then she can't be on my list.

AC: No, she's not on your list, but she should be, she was another just extraordinary woman, but she died in the '90s ... I think it was '95. Just went really quickly with cancer. Her husband, Bill Dyer, is a United Church minister.

MI: Maybe that's why the name sounds familiar.

AC: It could be. Anyway, she came to volunteer at First United and she had a background in OT-PT as well—and working with people with mental illness so the three of us—as well as a student working, Roland Legge—who was there on a Challenge grant—and he did some work in the community to find out where there was a gap of services and the big gap seemed to be in programs for people with mental illness. So that's when we gathered people who had mental illness together and asked them what they'd like and that's when Family Friendship—that was the name they wanted—and that's when it was birthed. We met every Wednesday and at the beginning of the day, cooked a meal together, ate and then played together. We also had two or three camping trips to Fircom and again a collection of people—such a raggedy band, all of us. I have some pictures from the camp that just make you laugh—I think everybody that was involved with it ... there were some amazing volunteers ... I don't know, is Mary Al Lay on your list?

MI: That name sounds familiar.

AC: She should be. (Chuckles)

MI: Mary ...

AC: Al Lay. So it's "Al". She's definitely ...

MI: Ok. I will double check.

AC: Yeah ... 'cause she's volunteered at First United for years. She's also done Healing Touch and she still does Healing Touch down there. She's so loyal ...

MI: (Phone interruption)

AC: So anyway, there was the sense that we all came out of there feeling like we'd been ministered to and by each other and it went deep and I know that, when the program ended—it was after I'd left First United—quite a few people were just really sad about that because it was a very safe place. And it's not just like having a soup line or coffee or anything, it was community.

So I was at First United for eight years. One of the programs that we also offered was the Nobody's Perfect Parenting program. Geniene and I both took the leader's training and decided that we would offer it at Ledingham Place, which is one of the First United Church housing developments at Mount Pleasant. This group of women gathered—it was probably six women—and we met every week and we just kept meeting, session after session ... we realized we'd never get to the parenting issues because these women had so many issues themselves. It became a very safe group for them to meet and their children were cared for during that time. That was Monday morning. Again, it was both good times and sad times, sometimes.

But one of the women from that group went on—I think because of the group she was strengthened. She left her husband, who was a cocaine addict, and I think that was a very hard thing for her to do—she was an Italian woman to whom family was very important—and she now works for First United Housing as a Manager Coordinator. She's really done fantastically well—I saw her not very long ago and she looks so great, has done so well. But during that time ... it made a big difference for her, just somebody believing in her, knowing that she could do it ... so that went on, we did several sessions over two years and I loved that.

I left First United because my mum had died and my dad, who was 95, fell apart and moved in with us and I needed to be closer to home so then I went to work at Highlands United starting off in the area of Office Assistance and Hospitality Volunteer Coordinator. As I think, just about every job I've ever had quickly becomes a job where "you do what you do best", just sort of let go of the stuff you don't ... I thought I was pretty good at the computer but then realized I wasn't all that great. (Laughs) But I was really good at ...

MI: People, lots of people.

AC: Hospitality. (Laughs) So I was there ... let's see, for ... I think I was there another eight years. Then went to Wilson Heights for three years and was in Ministry of Outreach and Ministry of Children and Families. I learned a lot from the people there. There's a Tonga community as part of Wilson Heights; they were such great teachers. Then I went back to Highlands—I was going to retire from Wilson Heights, after three years (my husband had retired by that time)—so I left Wilson Heights but started back at Highlands almost right away. The Wilson Heights people commented: "I thought you were going to retire!"

"I did, too!"

Again, went back to working in hospitality and volunteers and coordination, that kind of thing, and I retired from there. So that's kind of the ... that's what you got on the paper, anyway.

MI: That's the brief outline, yes.



AC: Yeah, yeah.

MI: That's a lot! See you've been busy!

(Laughter)

MI: I've been jotting down the questions as ... As I've been looking through this, I see some of these positions are volunteer, some are paid positions.

AC: That's right.

MI: So what was your education towards? 26:05

AC: My education was a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, so I worked in the areas of public health and teaching. I taught pediatrics and worked for a year in a variety of organizations related to people who were deaf: so there was the Vancouver Oral Center and the Children's Diagnostic Centre and Jericho High School. So it was kind of more practical. Then there was Parent Participation Preschool when my kids were little and that was a great training! When I think of it.

MI: I've heard stories of the Parent Participation Preschool.

(Laughter)

AC: It was good. I really ... there was a good group of people and good friends developed through there and yeah, it was good.

MI: Have you done any education with the United Church or in theology? 27:18

AC: I did ... what did I do? ... I've taken a number of courses but I can't remember what they are. There was one on ... Richard Leggett taught it ... it was on grief ... but grief isn't the right word ... what would he teach ... death? No ... Anyway, it was a course. I took some courses like Mary Jo Leddy, Nancy Reeves and ... not formal.

MI: So more topic specific.

AC: Yeah. And a number of Bible Study courses but not your full year thing or anything like that. Kind of learning on the job.

MI: That seems to be the way it goes ... just learn as you go. I'm finding that more and more. So, for paid accountable ministry, did you have to do anything special to be in those positions?

AC: No.

MI: ... You were in the right place ...

AC: Yup, right place, right time, right life experiences, I think.

MI: Just so I have it on tape ... you said you had two girls, right?

28:48

AC: Yes.

MI: And how old are they now?

AC: One is 41 and one is 39.

MI: And you've been married for ...

AC: I was married in '68, so whatever that adds up to.

MI: Well, I'm 42 and I was born in '71 so ... 45 years?

AC: It's more than 45 because we celebrated our forty ... I guess it's 46 years.

MI: Forty six years. My husband and I are working on 25 ... getting there. Catching up!

AC: Hey, that's pretty good if you've got two children with those kinds of challenges and your marriage is holding together ... it's hard work.

MI: It's hard. It's hard work. It's a lot of hard work, yeah. We've spent a lot of time working on our marriage.

AC: Yeah.

MI: Ok, so, we've learned about how ministry ... we've talked about leadership within the church, your education ...

AC: Just going to say one thing— my two daughters have taught me more than anything else. I can't give specifics because that is their story – but I'm so grateful for all they have taught me as they have dealt with their own challenges.

MI: I find that—and it goes back into the legacy of giving and of community that you're showing ...

AC: Yeah. One leads to another.

MI: One leads to another, yeah. Imagining the page in my head ...

AC: (Chuckles). You could always phone me, if you want.

MI: Yeah, I might end up. If I miss anything big I might end up going, "Okay, this is the one question I missed!"

AC: Yeah.

MI: As you were moving through, particularly leadership positions in the church, did you find that there were any particular turning points—you've mentioned a couple—was there anything else that really stands out in your journey? 31:12

AC: Was going to say ... Marta ... There was First United ... just going there was a ... yeah, I think I probably mentioned the ones that really stand out for me. I might come to find as we go along.

MI: You also mentioned Marta Torres—was there any other woman that stood out?

AC: Oh ... Pearl Griffin. Do you know that name at all?

MI: No.

AC: Do you know the name Art Griffin?

MI: Yes.

AC: He's in his nineties and Pearl was his wife.

MI: That name sounds familiar.

AC: And she ... she was Mrs. United Church. She was so appreciated by so many people and gave such extraordinary leadership and would often be pulled in if there was something really big to look at. I was on the board at First United Church Housing and she was on that as well so we worked together and then she got cancer and died quickly. She had ovarian cancer. It really, really impacted the United Church but she had just such wisdom.

I haven't mentioned Healing Touch at all, that was a big turning point. When Pat Dyer got cancer she found that Reiki was helpful, was comforting for her, so a group of us learned how to do Reiki so we could offer it to her. Then Rochelle Graham did a workshop on Healing Touch for First United Church and that was probably about '95 or '96 or something and from then on—so I did the Healing Pathway program and we were actually the first group to graduate from that.

MI: I just interviewed—I think it's Rochelle Graham—who started the Healing Touch.

AC: Yes, she sure did.

MI: Yes, I just finished an interview with her.

AC: Oh, well she really ... well, she worked hard in those years, she just did workshop after workshop and she was, again, so faithful. So, anyway, then there were three—well, Ross White and myself and another person—did leadership around that in Highlands United.

MI: Ross was there?

AC: Oh yeah, he was.

MI: One of my heroes. Which one? First United?

AC: That was at Highlands that we did that. I got really involved with doing Healing Touch for several years and then I just had to back off for a while because it was kind of getting too much—I mean, it was kind of overwhelming. I still do it, but not ... I don't go to the regular practice groups or anything right now, but just do it when there's a request. But, again, that was a huge spiritual journey, during that time. I've been really lucky. (Chuckles)

MI: You have!

AC: Yeah, I have. And other women ... Sue Laverty, I don't know if you remember her or ever heard her name.

MI: That sounds—yes, I think I ...

AC: I'm telling you everybody who's died. She was at Naramata and did Children's Ministry. I learned a lot from her and then from Allison Rennie.

MI: Another name that sounds familiar.

AC: Yup, and she is ... she, Allison Rennie, worked at Naramata for several years in the area of Children's Ministry and she does workshops every once in a while. There's just so many ... I know I'm missing many important people.

MI: Okay, so ... going down my list, mental list ... One of the questions was: In ... 36:17  
so you are white, I'm assuming married to someone who is white, or Caucasian—politically correct. So there's not a lot of challenges regarding your marriage or some of those issues. Did you find challenges when you stepped into leadership roles within the church or within your education?

AC: Not really. The only time I can remember challenges of being a woman would be at places like ... perhaps presbytery, but more BC Conference, and we used to talk about the Old Boys' Club.

MI: I've heard that, too, a few times.

- AC: I think that has shifted quite a bit. You when mentioned it earlier and I was trying to think back. Again, I've been lucky that in all the areas I've been, I've been really supported in the work so I can't think of anybody that was a stumbling block.
- MI: Do you remember any particular incident that stands out, or just more general themes? 37:40
- AC: No, it's just more general. I can remember at BC Conference gritting my teeth. (Laughs). Or, I know, at Conference—it was Conference Executive at that time ... now, why was I on Conference Executive? I can't remember why I was on it ... probably related to Children and Families. I can remember there was really an Old Boys' Club and they used to sit in this area at Conference Executive and they'd be really rude, like they'd be talking and so on and just ignored you. So I made a decision at one point: I was going to get into the midst of them and I sat right in the middle of their group.
- (Laughter)
- MI: Did you do it?
- AC: And I did it! I can't remember a lot about it except I know that they were not pleased.
- (Laughter)
- MI: Good for you!
- AC: The devil.
- MI: Oh, my gosh, that's funny. I can totally see it, too. Yes, unimpressed, their looks. Do you find that it's gotten better as you've gotten older? That there's less of it? 38:59
- AC: I think so. I think so. I have a feeling, because I can't think of anything particular.
- MI: You're not tempted to go sit in the circle of ... men anywhere?
- (Laughs)
- MI: That's neat. That's really neat. Okay, going down the page, flipping it over in my head now ... One of the things that we've talked about is your legacy. When you think about the church, what kind of legacy do you think you've left with the United Church? 39:40
- AC: I don't know that I've left anything, except the one thing is that I'm really open to change and I think because of that I've been accompanying Trinity United on

their journey of moving out of their shared space with an Anglican Church to worshipping in a community centre and now buying a café—the Heartwood Café—and I think by being able to support that and being comfortable with change, I’m actually less comfortable now with the traditional. I’m finding more and more that I’m not drawn... like, Highlands is a very large, active, dynamic church. I love the community, love the people and I actually enjoy the services, but I’m really more drawn to that smaller, little troupe of people who are trying to figure out their mission in life and trying to be faithful to God’s spirit. So, I don’t know if that’s legacy but I think if anything, that’s probably what it is.

MI: We’ve talked a lot about what you do out there, so I’d like to turn and focus a little more on the inner.

AC: Okay.

MI: What has your personal walk with God been like? 41:39

AC: (Chuckles). Erratic.

MI: You know, I think I should just have that on every piece of paper when I ask that question and just hand them out: “Erratic!”

AC: (Laughs)

MI: “Chaos!” “Crazy!”

AC: I’m not a disciplined person, I’ve never had spiritual disciplines I do over and over again except, I would say, the Healing Touch, because in order to do that you have to move into being centered and moving to that still place. And that’s when I think that I really experience the presence of God. A lot of the time I’m just trusting that God is part of this. I have no idea, but I’m just trusting! You know, I’ve done Centering Prayer, I’ve taken courses with Cynthia Bourgeault, I’ve practiced it for a while and then didn’t. Bible Study sometimes, all of those kinds of things, but nothing ... I would say the Healing Touch—when I move into that center that’s my walk with God—for me it’s more ... I recognize it more.

MI: And as you’re—we’ve talked about the kind of legacy that you’ve left, or that you feel that you’ve left, for the church. What kind of message do you want to give them for the next 50 years? 43:28

AC: Not to be afraid ... I mean, it’s all the things that have been talked about. Not try and make it like it was. I don’t know, I’m so unclear of where ... Even the word ‘church’ I think would become a foreign thing, but I think there will be people who are faithful to the spirit, that they know that God is alive and well and they want to nurture that together and with each other. And I’m sure music will be part of it. (Chuckles). But I don’t know ... I don’t know. It is a funny time and I feel sad because it’s been so important to me.

MI: Did I need to bring Kleenex? I've gotta remember that, too.

AC: I've brought my own. (Chuckles)

MI: You're a fascinating woman. I'm very impressed with all of the things you've done in this ... it amazes me to listen to women talk about their story and what they've done and then tell me that it's not important or that ... like you began that with "I don't really think it's my legacy ..." or "It was nothing." That's the word you used, was "nothing".

AC: Yeah.

MI: It amazes me to listen to women's voices and hear them.

AC: Yeah.

MI: Is there anything else you think would be ...?

AC: Hmm ... I just remembered something. 46:00

MI: Go ahead!

AC: I mentioned it on the bio, but I'd forgotten that Camp Fircom was quite a significant turning point and part of my life. And again, because it's community and it's nature and because when I was involved with it, I was a chaplain for a couple of years, a program director for a week for mum's and kid's camps. But again, people kept coming from hard, hard situations but finding a little space and time when they could be supported and happy and ... free. I loved that.

MI: I know a question I forgot to ask! We've talked about all the positive stuff, but we haven't talked about challenges.

AC: Okay.

MI: I knew I was missing something—I could see this block in this piece of paper where this question—Challenges! What kind of challenges have you faced? 47:00

AC: In the church?

MI: Personal.

AC: I think that personal challenges of personality that I often don't feel very articulate and if I get anxious then I'm really not articulate, so that sometimes has been a challenge. I mean, there's always been, you know, probably people there that I can remember. For example, back at Highlands when we were trying to bring children into worship. That was a little bit of a struggle. (Chuckles.)

MI: Ongoing ... never ending ...

AC: They just aren't quiet enough! (Chuckles) Also, for example, we were doing the Wonder Café, so we were bringing things like coffee into church and stuff like that. Sometimes it's hard to respect people and to stay on course a little bit. If you really believe that this is ultimately a positive thing for many people and yet you know that it's interrupting to other people in the church's way of doing things. That kind of thing, I guess, just introducing something new.

MI: What about during the time of the church split?

AC: Okay. That was a challenge, yeah. That was a challenge. I was part of Highlands at that point and Don Robertson was minister there and he used to handle things quite well so we didn't have a major ... I mean, definitely people left, but there were some very—there was a man in the church who was the father of a good friend of mine and he was a pillar of the church and he was really, really upset with the whole issue. Trying to keep relationships were hard sometimes, maintaining relationships when coming from such different view points.

I'm a minimalist sometimes. (Laughs).

MI: Me, too.

AC: That covers that!

MI: That's done! Okay! The church has split and we're on!

AC: (Laughs)

MI: I've heard a lot about that time. I think it would have been interesting to be part of the church at that time, because I've heard so much about it.

AC: Yes, yeah.

MI: And how dividing it was.



AC: Yes. Yeah.

MI: I was a strict atheist at that moment, so...

(Laughter)

MI: Missed it altogether! But it seems like it was quite a big ...

AC: Yeah, it was, and I can remember Deb Bowman, who was part of Highlands at that point—she and a group of us created a document to put forward to the board and that caused quite a bit of upset. There was a lot of upset. Leadership was so important at that time and Don was very good—I mean, he hated conflict but he still somehow managed.

MI: Would you consider the United Church a church of conflict?

51:30

AC: No! Um ... yes.

(Laughter)

MI: And there's the epitome of the United Church!

(Laughter)

AC: No, I'm trying to think ... I think the United Church has often been ahead of its times in terms of things around social justice and I think because of the courage and strength of some of its leaders that they've done some really significant things, both in church and in society in general. But I think there are more people that are conflict avoiders and so I'd say maybe the majority are not ... Like it has been more the minority, I think, that's taken ... And then when the path is made I think the majority kind of follow along.

MI: That makes sense.

AC: Yeah. But I think we're good at birthing those people of courage.

MI: We seem to be. We seem to have some real trail blazers.

AC: Mmm hmm.

MI: So, based on that, what kind of cornerstones would you say the United Church has? Socials justice is—as you’ve mentioned—is definitely one. 53:10

AC: Yeah. It’s interesting because people have said that we’re good at social justice but we’re not good at spirituality and I think perhaps that’s been true at some times; I don’t think that’s true anymore. I think that it’s much more balanced and, if anything, we’ve lost more traction on the social justice.

Cornerstones ... I don’t know. I don’t know the answer to that.

MI: I don’t think there is one answer to it.

AC: Yeah, yeah.

MI: Okay.

AC: I was thinking about the Creed and the Song of Faith—I think it expresses so much of who the United Church is. And I know for many people, of course, Jesus Christ would be the cornerstone, but I think that that cornerstone has many expressions so that—and you’ve heard them all, I know—but for some it would be the personal relationship of Jesus Christ and for others the teachings of Jesus Christ and so on, so I think Jesus Christ is a cornerstone for sure, but seen differently by lots of perspectives.

MI: And what that means.

AC: And I think that’s one of the cornerstones: I think the United Church is able to hold that variation.

MI: (Muttering) Variation ... ok. Are there any other challenges you can think of that stand out?

AC: I’ll think of them later.

MI: I’m sure you will. Then you can email me.

AC: Yeah.

MI: “I remember!”

AC: As I say, I’m not articulate, so I’m just sort of ...

MI: And it would help if I had all the prompters in front of me.

(Chuckling)

MI: I think I've managed to hit most of the questions. If I've missed something I will email it and ask. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

AC: I can't think of anything. Just another United Church woman.

Ruth Kershaw is another person who is quite amazing ... well, there are so many, I could just sit here and list them all.

MI: As long as you put you on the list. Well, thank you very much.

AC: Oh, thank you.

MI: I greatly appreciate it. I very much enjoyed the interview.

AC: I enjoyed the time with you, too.

MI: I will mail—Oh, I will end this formally. It is—not April 28<sup>th</sup>, it is February 28<sup>th</sup>, slightly after two in the afternoon, and I am ending this interview with Ariel Creighton.