

CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER —

August 2024

What's On?

**LOOKING TOWARDS
FALL, SMALL GROUPS,
CHOIR AND MORE!**

**SUMMER
FUN
GIVE
LAUGHTER**

**Send in your photos
and news for the
upcoming editions of
our Newsletter.**



Central Okanagan United Church

AUGUST 2024

WELCOME

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship together on Sundays at
10am - 721 Bernard Ave, Kelowna
Zoom and Facebook Live options
available.

CONTACT ADMIN

Delaine / E-Letter & Newsletter Submissions
delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

Saibun / Room Rentals, Bookings & Buildings
saibunh@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com



 (250)762- 3311

 MAIL TO: PO BOX 24042, KELOWNA BC, V1Y 9H2

 CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM

Church News

What's Happening this month.

THIS MONTH AT A GLANCE

- Jazz Vespers Aug 4th at 5:15pm
- Camp Spirit VBA Aug 6th - 9th
Contact Cheryl for details!
- Michelle Jia Yun Xu Benefit Concert
- We Welcome Ally Phillips as
Intergenerational Minister Aug 12th
- Delaine is away: Aug 19th - 30th



Welcome Ally Phillips - Intergenerational Minister!

Ally (he/him) is in his third year of seminary at the Center for Christian Studies in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Ally grew up in St Catharines, Ontario attending St Paul Street and Mountainview United Churches as a child and adolescent. Ally has been an active member at Silver Spire United Church, participating fully in congregational life since 2018. His participation included being Co-Chair of Council for two terms, a founding member of the Affirm Team, Youth Group Leader and Co-Coordinator of Queer Kid Bible Camp, among other things. In his spare time, Ally enjoys cooking delicious gluten free food, spending time with the gaggle of kids who call him "Uncle Ally" and being trans in public. Ally is excited to see what life is like at COUC and on the West Coast!



 (250)762- 3311

 MAIL TO: PO BOX 24042, KELOWNA BC, V1Y 9H2

 CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM

Change is Good! Isn't it?

Submitted by: Keith Simmonds

Living on the cusp of change defines us as we enter into August. We have a newly reconstituted board and are learning our way forward without the full time benefit of the co-chairs (Terry and Gary) who guided us so well through amalgamation. Fortunately Mike and Jayne and Michel and other experienced board members, new and ongoing, continue to guide us well. We said farewell to Ivy, who led us so ably in worship and grounded us through the amalgamation.

We added a fond goodbye to Tanya, who expertly coned the administration of our office and coordination of our volunteers while sharing her wisdom and insight as we navigated communal and personal challenges. We are so fortunate to have Delaine take on some of those roles, bringing her social media, design, creativity and organizational gifts to the mix, while Saibun adds to his own duties with a blend of experience, tenacity and willingness to show up and get to work that is an example to all.

As Ivy leaves for grandchildren in Alberta and Tanya heads to children in Victoria, we welcome Ally's special blend of experience, enthusiasm and energy to our Intergenerational Ministry. Travelling across the country from St. Catherines to Kelowna, Ally is a long sought after and welcome addition to our team. He will bring a new perspective and a grounded, thoughtful presence to our ministry together.

We await a Worship Minister as our call goes out into the world and those that know us 'tap shoulders'. In the meantime Cheryl, Keith, Ally and Phillip (our returning student minister) will rely upon the gifts and wisdom of Board and Congregation members as we all learn to sing harmoniously. Helped by the steady assurance and careful attendance of Frances, Sylvia and Jessica who add their own notes of joy and blessing to all we do.

Mahmut, of course, keeps our building intact, shows up every day and takes personal care and charge of our facility. He and we wonder what the future holds, as we continue on the path of building relationship, housing and gathering space with the Metis Community Services Society in Rutland.

All this against a backdrop of Climate Disruption, economic dislocation, waves of trauma affecting our neighbours, unprecedented poverty, astronomical costs of living and political environments that seem to grow further and further away from helping people, well, help people. Perhaps we are all in the midst of social, economic and environmental change. Doing our best to be there for one another as we navigate rapidly rising waters.

It is good to remember that, whatever the seas around us, whatever the crew we sail with, Jesus continues to call us into love and shelter. We continue to respond as we are able.

Community Ministry

The numbers of people seeking help with groceries continue to fluctuate from week to week, although the average seems to be in the high 70s, corresponding well to the numbers coming to share a Tuesday morning meal. We continue to struggle with our budget as grocery prices are beyond belief (no news to anyone reading this, I'm sure) and our shoppers weave from discount to discount, trying to get the best bang for our buck. So far they are more successful than the bulk buying ability of local foodbanks, but it takes a lot of time and effort on their part. Many, many thanks to them! We are keeping up.

Thrift Shop volunteers can also testify to the numbers helped with clothing and other items through our low cost items and voucher programs. Our homeless prevention program, in partnership with other community providers, is part of the solution for folk facing eviction and a life on the streets.

Some have asked about our place in the support network. Are we doing enough to help people cope with high prices and finding alternate sources of food? Can we do something about budgeting and meal planning and food preparation techniques? In a word, yes, we can and yes, in a way, we are.

We are in loose partnership with St. Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army, both of whom have intake processes working with people around budgeting, available resources and programs they might not be aware of. We are in a limited partnership with Adult Integrated Mental Health Services who are providing a food supplement program for some of our folk who are in very difficult circumstances. We provide space for another 'start-up' – a meal planning, prep and take-home meal project run by a Canadian Mental Health employee who saw the need and looked for a way to address it. We have also secured funding from Women's World Day of Prayer to put on courses that might be of use to folk we serve and folk who serve. So far a foodsafe and first aid program are on the calendar, with other interesting topics on the list. Auto mechanics, anyone?

It is so very good to be part of a community that asks itself not only how to provide 'fish' but how to teach folk to fish in the current climate. While we seem helpless in the face of a disrupted natural environment, incredibly high housing prices and almost obscene food costs, we can and do, in our communal ways, offer at least a hand in system navigation. As I was reminded when I arrived at Central Okanagan United Church, we do not have to do everything, nor do we want to do things others are already doing. We fill our niche, do our piece and try to help weave a net of compassionate, care-filled relationship. Thank you for all you do to respond to Christ's call to love our neighbour as ourself. We are blessed!

Keith Simmonds

Community Minister



The long, lazy days of summer are here and we all take a breath and relax just a bit more for a couple of months. Perhaps your meetings or other activities have ended for the summer so your schedule is less cluttered and allows for more leisure time and activities. Perhaps you have some travel planned to visit friends or family or exciting places, or maybe family and friends are coming to visit you. Maybe your summer will be spent with your children, grand-children or great grand-children. No matter what you are doing this summer, the long hot days of July and August will no doubt make you smile and feel more alive as you enjoy the warm weather, sunshine, fresh air, beauty of nature, and the great produce that our valley produces.

Vicki Nelson, Community of Faith Stewardship Support Person for the Pacific Mountain Region (and other regions) had some interesting thoughts on sharing life's lessons of generosity with children this summer, and the article felt very appropriate for our summer newsletter. Link is below:

[Spice Up Summer With Kindness And Generosity](#)

Over the summer, as you have no doubt noted in this newsletter, many of the programs and activities of COUC will continue. Certainly our weekly worship services, pastoral care visits, Tuesday morning grocery and meal program, and other programs will be running throughout July and August. The work of the church may be a bit more relaxed in the summer but it continues all the same.

Some ways for you to support the work of the church throughout the summer include:

- Attending worship services in person or on Zoom
- Checking in on other congregational members and friends to ensure they are doing okay
- Dropping off donations for the food pantry or the meal program
- Spreading the word about upcoming events at COUC
- Supporting Camp Spirit for our young people
- And of course, continuing to make your financial contributions to the church so we can support the ongoing programs of COUC

Enjoy your summer!!!

Kites, Drumming, Song and Watermelon...

All in Solidarity with Palestine

On Friday, July 19 we co-hosted a Kite Festival with CJPME:Okanagan (Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East: Okanagan) in solidarity with the people of Burin in the West Bank of Palestine.

Here are some of the photos submitted by Debbie Hubbard





Our Congregation's PAR Program

How to Participate

1. Prayerfully decide what you will give each year, and divide that amount by 12.
2. Fill out the authorization form, and attach a cheque marked "VOID."
3. Give this to our designated PAR contact person, or leave at the church office.
4. The amount will be transferred from your account to our congregation's account on the 20th of each month. You can modify or cancel your donation, change how it is designated, or change your information at any time.

Why Participate?

If you have automatic withdrawals from your bank account to pay your bills, taxes, or mortgage, then you already understand the PAR principle.

Besides being convenient, using PAR for your offering ensures regular monthly givings to help our church's ministry even when you are away. You will be providing our congregation a dependable flow of contributions, which increases our overall financial stability.

Your regular giving supports the ministry of Central Okanagan United Church (COUC) and the many programs that are offered, from worship services in church on Sunday to worship in Senior Care Homes throughout the week; from Sunday School and other children and youth programs to SongShine, book studies, and Walk and Talk for the young at heart; from the morning grocery and meal program for members of our local community to programs of education and support for Reconciliation, Inclusion, and Justice for all.

Your giving also supports the Mission and Service fund of the United Church of Canada and its work at home and abroad through its many vibrant and vital ministries for the healing of the world. COUC currently gives \$33,000 annually to UCC Mission and Service.



Please contact Marg Brooks: contributions@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

Stewardship

The Stewardship Team asks you to financially support the Central Okanagan United Church through one of the methods outlined below.

With God's help and the generosity of your contributions of financial resources, time, talent and energy we will fulfill our church's mission.

Need more information? Contact the office or Marg Brooks.



Scan QR Code
to Donate

or Read on for
How to Give

Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)



Specify the amount of monthly donation to be deducted from your chequing account. Contact the office to join PAR or make changes to your current PAR contributions.

**Please contact Marg Brooks:
contributions@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com**

Cheques & E-Transfers

Please make out cheques to Central Okanagan United Church, and place in one of the offering offertory boxes in the sanctuary, drop off at 721 Bernard, or mail to:

Central Okanagan
United Church
PO Box 24042
Kelowna, BC
V1Y 9H2



E-transfer your donation to
finance@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

Donation of Shares

Contact Marg Brooks for information.



Bequests or Memorial Gifts

Include Central Okanagan United Church in your will or make a gift in memory of an individual.

Thank you for your generous and continued support!

A scenic sunset over a lake with rocks in the foreground. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that reflects on the water. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a lighter orange near the horizon. In the foreground, several dark, smooth rocks are scattered on a sandy beach. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

Hello Summer

Events and happenings at COUC



**FAREWELL
SUNDAY
FOR IVY
AND
TANYA!**



August Worship

SUNDAY 4TH

- 8AM SHARING CIRCLE - ROOM 14
- 10AM WORSHIP
- 5:15PM JAZZ VESPERS

SUNDAY 11TH

- 8AM SHARING CIRCLE - ROOM 14
- 10AM WORSHIP

SUNDAY 18TH

- 8AM SHARING CIRCLE - ROOM 14
- 10AM WORSHIP

SUNDAY 25TH

- 8AM SHARING CIRCLE - ROOM 14
- 10AM WORSHIP

CARE HOME SERVICES

- AUG. 4 HAWTHORN PARK COMMUNION 2PM
- AUG. 13 LAKEVIEW LODGE 2PM
- AUG. 14 BROOKHAVEN 2PM

REMINDER

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH IS WELCOME SUNDAY! GROUPS, CHOIRS AND SIGN UPS IN THE HALL FOLLOWING WORSHIP

- KEITH WILL BE ON HOLIDAY:
AUG 9 - SEPT 2ND
- DELAINE WILL BE HOLIDAY:
AUG 19 - SEPT 2ND

A Little Kindness and Generosity Goes a Long Way ... and Keeps on Giving

How many of you have been at the church when the sound of a beautiful voice or a piano or other instrument is heard coming from the sanctuary? I have noticed it several times and it always makes me smile. The individuals involved are practicing in the sanctuary and generally they are allowed to do so for free. I don't know who started this practice but it has been going on for years and I think it is fantastic that we can support the arts and talented musicians in this way.

One such musician was from Vancouver and vacationing in Kelowna when she asked to use the grand piano in the sanctuary to practice while she was in town. That was a few years ago and the pianist was Michelle Jia Yun Xu, who never forgot the generosity of the church. Now she is coming to Kelowna to do a benefit concert to help support our Outreach programs. So, a little generosity on our part is now returning full circle to help those in our local community who are suffering from food insecurity.

We hope you will join us on Friday, August 9th for a piano concert featuring the music of Bach, Beethoven, Schumann and Debussy. Doors will open at 6:30 and the concert will start at 7:00 PM. Admission is by donation with a \$20 minimum expected and with all proceeds going to the COUC Tuesday morning program. There will be a reception following the concert and you are invited to stay for that and meet this talented young artist. For those who do not know Michelle and her talents, the following link is a writeup from a concert performance in Vancouver in 2022: <https://www.vwms.ca/june-15-recital>

And for those who would like a preview of Michelle playing the piano, the following YouTube link has several wonderful selections to enjoy: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSuAsYNCP IMIM QoC52LNA/videos>

More recently, Michelle has completed her Bachelor of Music with a minor in French studies, and this September she will settle in Paris for her Master's studies at the Conservatoire Nationale Supérieure de Musique et de Danse de Paris, as one of only four students admitted from around the world.

We hope you will join us on Friday, August 9th to hear this wonderful young musician!

Jayne Brooks

Community Ministry

PS – I am looking for several individuals to be door greeters and hosts, a few kitchen helpers to set up for the reception, and some bakers to contribute goodies for the reception. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact me for more information (email k.jaynebrooks@gmail.com or phone 250-762-9606). Thank you!

Central Okanagan United
Church Presents

MICHELLE JIA YUN XU, PIANO



**ENTRY BY
DONATION
\$20 MINIMUM**

Join us for a special night of music by Bach,
Beethoven, Schumann and Debussy
in benefit of the church's
outreach programs.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9TH

**6:30pm Doors
7:00pm Start**

721 BERNARD AVE, KELOWNA

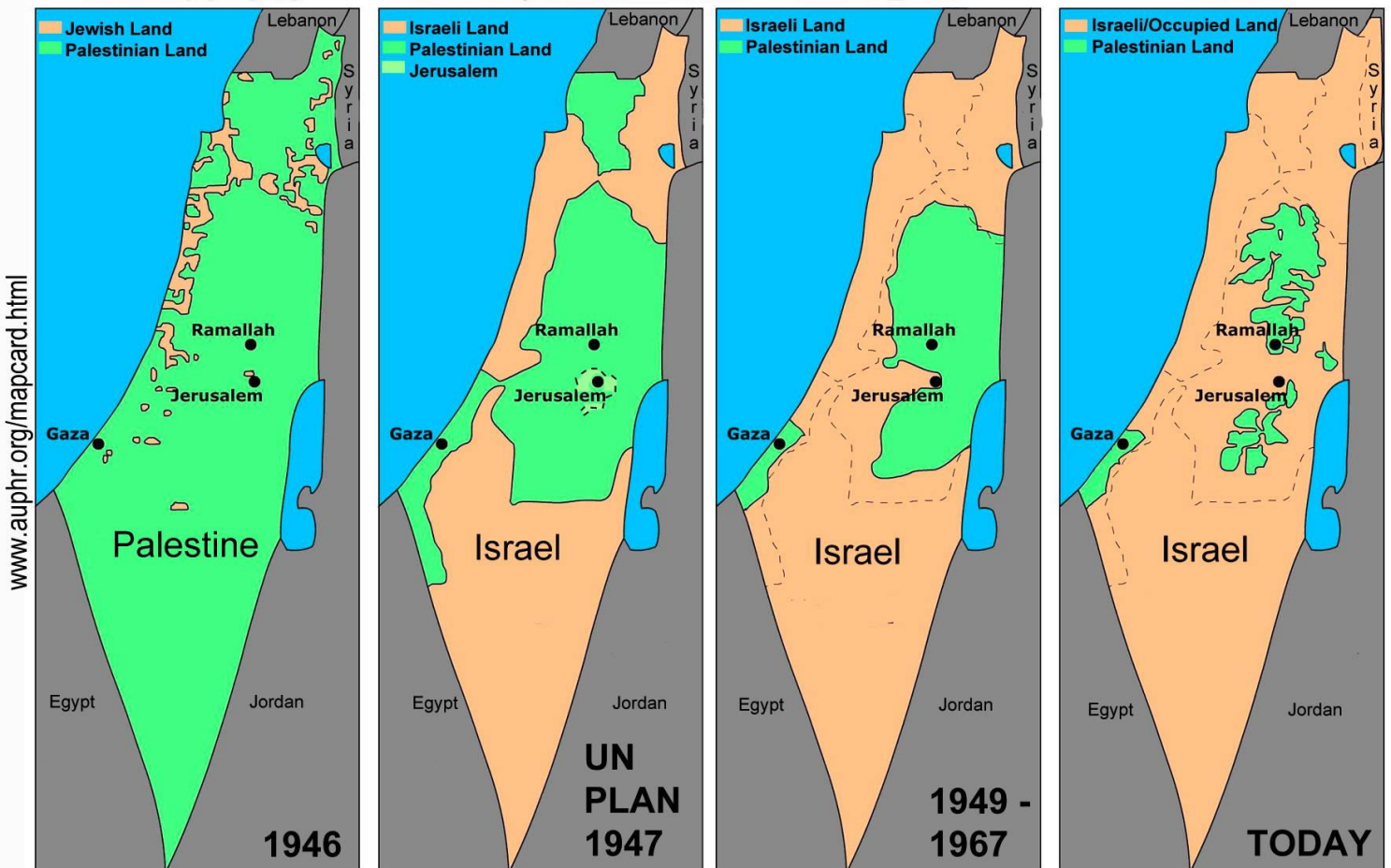
Save the Date!

What do keffiyehs, keys, kites watermelon, a wall, settlements, etc. have to do with Palestine? What role did Canada play in the partition of historical Palestine in 1948? What are churches in Palestine asking of Western churches? Bring your questions and join us in a conversation circle hosted by Debbie Hubbard, Dean Reidt and Keith Simmonds.

Sunday, September 15 – 11:30 am
Room 14 – Central Okanagan United Church

Pre-registration isn't required but will help us plan for snacks and seating. Click on [this link](#) if you would like to let us know you are coming. Questions or need more information? Contact Debbie at 250-469-4468 or sowingseedsofpossibilities@gmail.com

PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND 1946 TO PRESENT





Welcome Sunday

SEPTEMBER 8TH

A KICK OFF TO THE NEW CHURCH
SEASON WITH GROUP SIGN UPS
CHOIRS AND MORE!

IN THE HALL AFTER WORSHIP

THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING,
HELPING AT THE TECH DESK OR
READING SCRIPTURE ON A SUNDAY?
COME ALONG AND FIND OUT MORE!

More information : delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com




SAVE
the
DATE

OCTOBER 19TH 2024

WOMEN'S RETREAT

**THE WOMEN'S RETREAT WILL BE HELD
AGAIN AT THE SORRENTO CENTRE ON
THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 19.**



**IT IS ONE WEEK EARLIER THIS YEAR SO
PUT IT IN YOUR CALENDAR'S NOW.
WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION IN
THE COMING MONTHS.**

*“Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead
Find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed
Clear the chaos and the clutter.
Clear our eyes that we can see all the things that really matter
Be at peace and simply be.”*

~ Shirley Erena Murray



Walking the Labyrinth

It can help us calm our thoughts; focus on what's important; offer clarity of thinking; provide a method of reflecting on our life journey; guide us into next steps; and draw us closer to an intimate relationship with The Holy.

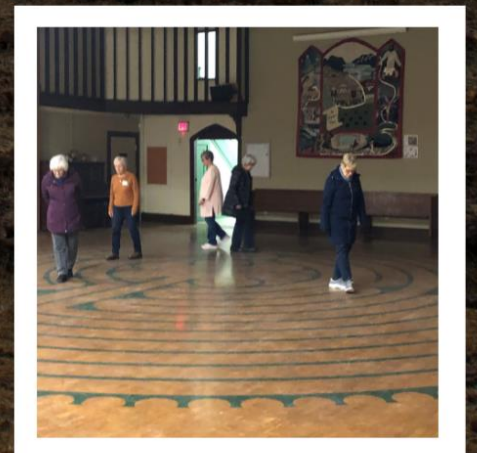
Some move slowly, some rush, some dance and others simply follow the path using our eyes. How ever we choose to journey through the path, we are sure to be gifted with a holy experience.



*Wednesday Mornings, our labyrinth will be
open for quiet contemplation on a weekly
basis. Come and find the quiet center.*

7:30-8:30am

All Welcome!



**SCRABBLE GROUP -
TUESDAYS AT BERNARD.**

J O I N I N
S C R A B B L E

ALL PLAYER LEVELS WELCOME!

T U E S D A Y S

1 : 3 0 P M



CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH IS
PROUDLY A CHRISTIAN PLACE OF BELONGING
FOR EVERY PERSON, WHERE DIVERSE FAMILY
STRUCTURE, GENDERS, CULTURES, FAITHS AND
SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS ARE
CELEBRATED AND TREASURED!



**Keep up to date, watch worship videos and more.
Find us online! Like and Follow us on Facebook &
Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!**

Website

<https://centralokanaganunitedchurch.com>

Facebook Page SUNDAY LIVESTREAM SHOWN HERE

<https://www.facebook.com/Centralokanaganunitedchurchkelownabc>

Facebook Group (Our Private Church Group)

(A Private Group for members & friends of COUC to share church news or discussion)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/319967703235745>

United Church of Canada Private Group –

Join in for all UCC chat & news!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnitedChurchCda/permalink/10167795547890401/>

YouTube Channel (Worship videos posted weekly):

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJRqGV1Zra36gbm1jSlks1w>





THANK YOU
FOR
READING!