MARCH 2025 CENTRAL OKANAGAN **UNITED CHURCH** NEWSLETTER



HELLO MARCH



SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS AND **NEWS FOR UPCOMING EDITIONS OF THE NEWSLETTER!**

Central Okanagan United Church

VELCOME

SUNDAY WORSHIP

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

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, First Sunday of each month @5:15pm - March 2nd

Shrove Tuesday March 4th @5 -7pm Ash Wednesday March 5th

100th Anniversary Historic Organ Recital with Sandra Fletcher: March 9th at 2:30pm.

Potluck Sunday March 30th





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 ⓓ CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM

The Season of Lent

The season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. To mark this season, worship services will be just a little different. They will include a somewhat simplified order of worship and time for quiet reflection. This will be a special season in which we can pause, center and wait. This is a family friendly season and children's noises are always welcome!

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CARNIVAL COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

COME ONE, COME ALL! LET'S CELEBRATE! PANCAKE SUPPER & REFRESHMENTS IN THE HALL. BRING A CASH DONATION OR ITEMS FOR OUR FOOD SHELF IF YOU ARE ABLE.

AND AFTER THE CELEBRATION, WE WILL WORSHIP AND SHARE THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES, AS WE MOVE INTO THE SEASON OF LENT.

721 BERNARD @5:00-7:00PM

A Woke Church Is A Compassionate & Inclusive One

These days, the term "woke" is being used by the "far right" political movement to justify the dismantling of any organization that supports diversity, inclusivity, and equality. Groups and organizations tarred with the word "woke" are now being used as scapegoats to pin the blame on for the perceived ills members of the white ethnocentric masculine-dominant world seem to be feeling.

The Original Meaning Of the Term "Woke"

The word "woke" originated in the early twentieth century by members of the African American community to raise awareness of the socio-political pressures affecting black Americans at that time. Woke was not a movement in the traditional sense of the word; it was more a call to be more aware of the potential dangers members of the Black community faced in Alabama at that time (and still do in our time).

Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech at the National Cathedral on March 31, 1968, provided a clear and powerful message about the importance of staying awake and vigilant in the face of injustice and racism. In this speech, King addressed the realities of racism and inequality in the United States and urged his audience to remain alert and engaged in the struggle for freedom and justice.

How the Meaning Of "Woke" Changed Over Time

In the late 1990's and early 2000's, members of the LGBTQ community began using the term "woke" in a positive way, suggesting that as their broader community found greater acceptance through political action, individuals were "waking up" with new hope for the potential of their future lives.

By the time the Black Lives Matter movement arrived, the word "woke" was being used as a designation for the new ideology that prioritizes the achievement of social, racial and sexual justice through persecution, and as a kind of "positive discrimination" of the majority in the name of the rights of oppressed minorities.

The term "woke" in previous decades was used to highlight the need for members of a discriminated minority to be aware and alert to the potential physical and socioeconomic risks they faced. This word has now been hijacked, and I no longer feel comfortable using it in casual conversation for fear the wrong meaning will be taken from it.

Maybe we should stake a claim to the phrase "alert, aware, and compassionate" instead.

Kendra Berg



Central Okanagan United Church We Are Firing

Assistant Office Administrator

 Expected Hours: 7 Hours per week based on workload and church season (Expected office time Fridays 9am – 2pm on site in office) as well as Vacation & Sick Day coverage for Office Administrator including 3 weeks in August (Aug 11-25).

Role and Responsibilities: This is a professional, welcoming, self motivated and socially empathetic individual who thrives in a changing workplace and can adapt to varying daily tasks.

- The Assistant Office Administrator would be responsible for ongoing office work each Friday. The
 work varies and touches every facet of COUC church life. From the comings and goings of
 congregants and visitors to working on congregational church emails, invitations and
 advertisements. This position requires a good working knowledge of MS365 programs (mainly
 Word, Outlook and Excel) a good working knowledge of mass email clients such as Constant
 Contact and online design tools (Canva). The successful applicant will have excellent written
 and verbal communication skills.
- Applicants should be confident in uploading and downloading videos from sites such as YouTube and DropBox, renaming, saving and organizing these files. You will have an affinity for organization and digital file keeping in a shared MS365 working area as well as keeping all staff informed and updated on any important information.
- You will have an understanding and empathetic nature, being able to listen to people in order to correctly direct their needs while always respecting privacy. You will handle any incoming people or calls calmy and professionally and direct them to the correct avenues of assistance when required as well as knowing who to contact for booking enquiries and general building questions. Work collaboratively with the staff and with the Office Volunteers who help in the office each day 9am -12noon at the main church desk.

Skills:

Working knowledge of:

- Microsoft programs:
- Word, Outlook, Excel and MS365 Communication Sites.
- Online design and communication tools:
- Canva Pro
- Constant Contact (or similar mass mailing tool)
- Facebook Ads / Meta Business Suite
- DropBox
- YouTube
- Excellent people skills, organization and file keeping skills.
- Ability to adhere to file structures and naming conventions.
- Self starter and creative problem solver



Salary negotiable based on experience Anticipated Start Date April 22nd

^{ver} Send your cv to: admin@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

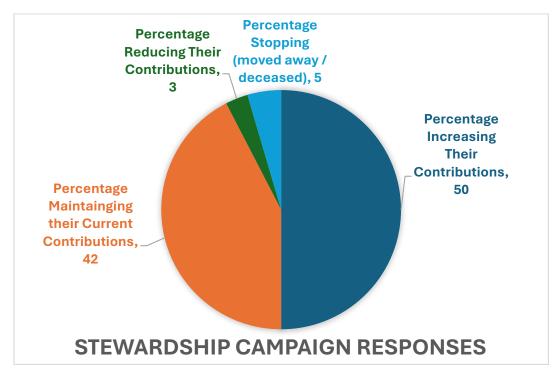




<u>Stewardship</u>

At the Finance Committee meeting in February, someone questioned whether we had shared the results of the Stewardship Campaign held at the end of 2024, and we realized that we were remiss in not doing so. So, this month's Stewardship message is all about you.

While we cannot share individual details, we can tell you that of the responses received from the Stewardship Campaign, 50% of the respondents increased their contributions, 42% maintained their current level of giving, 3% decreased their contributions and 5% stopped their contributions due to moves or deaths.



In the tight economic times which we currently facing, and with many of our congregation members living on a fixed income, we were very pleased to see that 92% of the respondents either maintained or increased their contributions to the church. We believe this reflects a strong belief that COUC is on the right track and doing exactly what it should be doing in God's world.

On another positive note, someone commented on how nice it was to see new people in the congregation each Sunday. Our programs are reaching out to more people and they are accepting the invitation to attend.

And with the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada this year, we are looking forward to some wonderful events and celebrations in the coming months. If you would like to be involved in reaching out to former members of the four congregations which comprise Central Okanagan United Church, or with helping to organize any events to celebrate our 100th anniversary, please contact Cheryl Perry or the office.

Stewardship is discipleship and discipleship includes everything we do at COUC – prayer, worship, study, service, sharing, and generosity. Thank you for your discipleship at COUC.

Outreach Updates:

Tax Season & Super Clinics

It is tax season again and COUC will once again offer free tax preparation services for low-income individuals. Our five incredible volunteers are trained and authorized by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to assist individuals in getting their income taxes prepared and filed in order to receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.

Our volunteers of Barbara Duffy, Henriette Faber, Jagdish Goel, Patricia Pauls and Suzan Sutton are a dedicated group. To prove the point, Patricia has been involved with the tax program at COUC for over 20 years, and Suzan does not just volunteer in March and April but continues offering the services every Thursday throughout the year! We are so blessed to have these individuals available to help our community members with their taxes.

Our free clinics running each week in March and April are being held:

- Mondays 9 AM to 12 PM at the Rutland Senior Centre with Henriette, Jag and Suzan attending
- Thursdays 9 AM to 12 PM at COUC (Bernard site) with all five volunteers present

Also, on the third Thursday of each month at COUC, representatives from CRA, Services Canada and the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction will be in attendance to answer any questions individuals have with regard to Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Canada Pension Plan Disability, Employment Insurance (EI), Old Age Security (OAS), Social Insurance Number (SIN), social assistance, housing, etc. These "super clinics" have been very popular with community members.

We are looking for hosts/greeters for the Thursday sessions at COUC so if you are interested please contact the office or Jayne Brooks.

Intercultural / Interfaith position

We are currently recruiting for a part-time Intercultural / Interfaith position to help coordinate Tuesday morning Outreach and to strengthen ties with other local organizations working in the same sector. If you know of anyone who might be interested in this position, please have them contact the office or Tanya Burke for more details.

Tuesday Morning Outreach

We continue to offer this service each week serving meals and distributing groceries to over 100 individuals. Your donations help to make this ministry possible so thank you!

Volunteers Needed

- Shoppers to buy groceries once a month we provide a detailed list of what to buy and where
- Sandwich makers to make sandwiches one Tuesday a month
- Hosts/Greeters for Thursday morning Tax Clinics in March and April

Contact the Office or Jayne Brooks if interested in getting involved.



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

If you would like to submit a piece of news / information or photos for our weekly E-Letter or the Newsletter, please follow these guidelines. Unfortunatley, we cannot take on outside promotions unless expressly approved or linked to COUC. Email submissions to: delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

Please Note: Placement order is determined by the season or theme of the publication. Seasonal church articles will always place first in order.

Please edit, spell check and double check your written articles before submitting. We unfortunatley do not have the capacity to do this for every article we receive.

Article length:

E-Letter: Keep these to one short paragraph or 100-200 words. Newsletter: 350 -400 Words = One Page MAX. Due to the many articles we receive, please adhere to these limits.

Photos:

If your article has a photo to accompany it, please include brief info / people's names etc. For photo collections, a short sentence of explanation of the set is fine.

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02

03

Deadlines: Weekly E-Letter:

Submit by Thursday 10am, for Friday

Newsletter:

Submit by the 21st of the month

for the following month's issue. ie: submit by March 21st for the April issue



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

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!

We STILL Need Your Help!

Receipts for Charitable Donations

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules state that donations made in January and February of 2025 can be used for either the 2024 tax year or the 2025 tax year, and the choice is yours.

Central Okanagan United Church (COUC) just issued your January 1 to December 31, 2024 official donation receipts in February. **Near the end of March we will be issuing your January 1 to February 28, 2025 official donation receipts**.

When you file your tax return for 2024, you must each decide whether you are including the January & February 2025 donations on your 2024 return or keeping them for your 2025 return.

In February 2026, we will issue your March 1 to December 31, 2025 official donation receipts. For most of you, that will mean that you need to include the amount from both receipts (January and February 2025 plus March to December 2025) when you file your 2025 tax return. And that means that you must put the receipt issued in March 2025 in a safe place where you will find it in the spring of 2026, when you are filing your 2025 tax return.

All of this means that COUC is issuing twice as many receipts as in previous years, and with the increase in postage rates, that means we will be paying way more to get the receipts to you.

To keep our costs down we want to start sending the official donation receipts by email instead of by post. To do that, we need you to provide or confirm the email address to which your receipt is to be emailed.

Please contact either:

- the church office by phone (250-762-3311) or in person
- the Contributions Steward at <u>contributions@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com</u>

And I can just hear some of you saying that we already have my email address – and that may be true. However, some of you may have changed your email address since it was entered in our system, and for some of you we have several email addresses on your file (husband's, wife's, work emails, kids' email, etc.) and we need to know exactly which email address should be used for your official donation receipt.

If you are not able to receive emails, please stop by the church office or phone 250-762-3311 to let us know that, and we will find an alternate way to get your official donation receipt to you.

Thank you.

Jayne Brooks

Treasurer Home Phone: 250-762-9606



SHROVE TUESDAY TUES. MARCH 4TH

CARNIVAL COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

COME ONE, COME ALL! LET'S CELEBRATE! PANCAKE SUPPER & REFRESHMENTS IN THE HALL. BRING A CASH DONATION OR ITEMS FOR OUR FOOD SHELF IF YOU ARE ABLE.

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721 BERNARD @5:00-7:00PM

Echoes of a Centur





SUNDAY, MARCH 9TH 2:30PM

> CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH 721 BERNARD AVE, KELOWNA et of the

ENTRY BY DONATION \$20 SUGGESTED PER ADULT

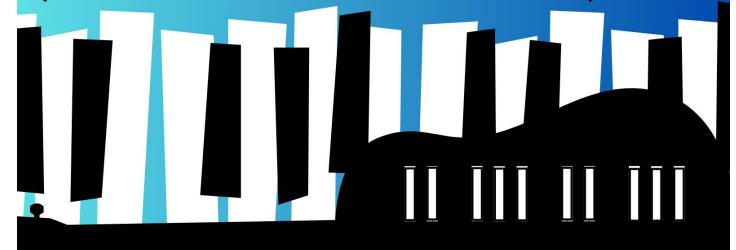




MUSICAL PERFORMANCE BY LOCAL JAZZ MUSICIANS ALL WELCOME! ENTRY BY DONATION

FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

GENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH 721 Bernard Ave, Kelowna (Parking Lot Behind Church off Richter)



scussion Grou **Held on Zoom**

Next Zoom Meeting 🚫 March 12th, 2025

roadvi

Moment

Everything Changed

07.00 PM - 08.00 PM

2nd Wed of each month

Join Zoom Meeting March 12th, April 9th, May 14th

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85808933223? pwd=Q5UQyBclidbbJRQP0fOsZP4mMQX5i1.1

Meeting ID: 858 0893 3223 Passcode: 319167

Broadview is a Canadian magazine focused on national and international issues of spirituality, justice and ethical living as well as United Church of Canada news and perspectives.

Whether you have a subscription or not, if you are interested in learning more about the United Church of Canada or if you simply enjoy reading and discussion, this is a great small group to join in 2025! Head on over to <u>https://broadview.org</u> and have a look. Brew a cup of something warm and join us on Zoom on the second Wednesday of each month.





Need Help With Your Taxes?

Free Tax Preparation at two locations.

Two Locations 占

Central Okanagan United Church 721 Bernard Ave Kelowna, BC (Entry from parking lot)

Thursday mornings 9 AM to 12 PM (March & April)

Rutland Senior Centre 765 Dodd Rd. Kelowna, BC

Monday mornings 9 AM to 12 PM in March & April (except March 31st)

First Come First Serve No Appointment Needed.

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- For Canadian residents who have low to modest income and simple returns - as outlined by the Government of Canada.
- You will need your social insurance number and government issued photo ID such as BC Drivers License, BC ID card, Status Card.
- For preparation of current tax year returns & e-fileable returns for prior years.
- Hindi and Punjabi languages available.
- Other non-English speakers please bring a translator.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Signal 250 762 3311



admin@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

soothe your soul ... in ecumenical retreat this Lent!

A one-day mini-retreat of rest, spiritual nourishment, contemporary art and reflection awaits! This 7-hour retreat follows the sacred pattern which Jesus modelled for us:

éed your spirit,

Leaning In • Going to the Cross • Resting in God • Finding New Life

You are warmly invited to **Patterns of the Cross; A Stations of the Cross Retreat**, created and ably led by internationally commissioned liturgical fabric artist and licensed lay minister, **Karen Brodie Archibald** which includes the sharing of Karen's powerful and original *Stations of the Cross* designs.

Jesus took time away to rest, pray, and re-align himself as God's beloved. Allow yourself the time to do the same.



Join us Online: Monday, April 7th 8am - 3pm PST via Zoom

Visit **thestationsofthecross.ca** for more information and to register with a donation



Join us In Person: Saturday, April 12th 9am - 4pm PST Kelowna, BC

Visit **thestationsofthecross.ca** for more information and to register with a donation

Donations for this retreat support the 'Bring the Stations of the Cross to Life' campaign, transforming 14 illustrations into fabric art for exhibition. Learn more: **thestationsofthecross.ca**

Questions? Email Karen at karen@brodiedesigns.com or call **250-344-7815**



Attention All Chocolate Lovers! Are you looking for some Easter treats? Community Ministry is taking orders for Easter Chocolate. They are 12 assorted squares of Easter-themed imagery and animals. Price: \$6.25 each. All proceeds support Mission and Service and Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem. For more information or to place your order, contact Debbie Hubbard at 250-469-4468 or at

<u>sowingseedsofpossibilities@gmail.com</u>. Orders need to be in by March 15 to ensure delivery in time for Easter.



Thursday Breathing Class with sylvia clerke

Thursdays at 11am Please have a non rolling chair and a glass of water

ZOOM LINK AVAILABLE IN FRIDAY E-LETTER

"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



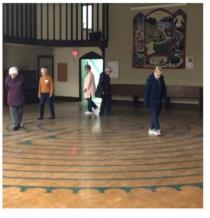
Walking the Labyrinth

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!







Strengthening Voices. Inspiring Possibility. WHERE VOICES COME TO LIFE

Welcome to *SongShine*, vocal music and creative drama-based classes designed for those who have communication issues due to Parkinson's, stroke, other neurological challenges, or aging. Our goal is to help you communicate more easily and clearly. *SongShine* harnesses the power of brain, breath, and emotion to reclaim voices. It creates community, camaraderie, and confidence ...**AND IT'S FUN!**

Meet: Mondays at 1pm, at Bernard Church, in Room 14

Hosted by Choir Director Sylvia Clerke

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

United Church of Canada Private Group – Join in for all UCC chat & news! <u>https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnitedChurchCda/permalink/10167795547890401/</u>

YouTube Channel (Worship videos posted weekly): <u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJRqGV1Zra36gbm1jSlks1w</u>



