

# CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025



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





# Central Okanagan United Church

MAY 2025

# WELCOME

## 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](mailto:delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)

Saibun / Room Rentals, Bookings & Buildings  
[saibunh@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](mailto:saibunh@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)



☎ (250) 762- 3311

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

🌐 [CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM](http://CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM)





# Church News

## What's Happening This Month

### THIS MONTH AT A GLANCE

Jazz Vespers, First Sunday of each month @5:15pm - May 4th

Congregational Meeting  
May 4<sup>th</sup> following worship

Phillip's Final Worship Service at COUC May 25<sup>th</sup> 10am

Anniversary High Tea 3pm - 5pm,  
May 24<sup>th</sup>. Tickets Available! \$25



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## ORDER OF “THE UNITED CHURCH OF” CANADA HONOURS



Recognizing some of our many hard working  
teams and people who have given  
tremendous time and energy to COUC!





**EASTER MEMORIES****LASAGNA DINNER FUN-DRAISER NIGHT!**

Delicious food and fun at the auction for our annual Lasagna Dinner night!

**INTERNATIONAL PIPE ORGAN DAY AT COUC  
APRIL 26TH**

RCCO (Royal Canadian College of Organists) Victoria members Andrew Fraser and Sandra Fletcher were warmly welcomed by the staff and members of Central Okanagan United Church in Kelowna, BC. This year they are celebrating the 100th anniversary of their Casavant organ (opus 1096), as well as the centenary of the inauguration of the United Church of Canada. About 50 people attended the event on Saturday afternoon, with 20 people playing the organ.

Among the visitors were children who were extremely excited about playing the organ, piano students, the grandson of an organ technician who had worked for the Casavant Freres company, pianists, former organists and organ students. The Kelowna Historical Society also set up a display in the church hall to talk about the history of the churches in Kelowna. Andrew Fraser took time to explain how the organ functions and had several pipes on hand to show to the participants.





celebrating

100

YEARS OF THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA



**LET'S CELEBRATE!**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR WITH THESE DATES AND WATCH  
FOR MORE DETAILS OF THESE EVENTS TO CELEBRATE  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY**

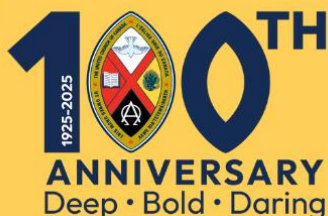
★ MAY 24<sup>TH</sup> - ANNIVERSARY HIGH TEA AT BERNARD.  
3PM - 5PM

★ JUNE 1 - HYMNINSPIRATION WORSHIP WITH GUEST  
HYMNWRITERS AND COMPOSERS, 10AM

★ JUNE 8 - "REGATHERING" SUNDAY WORSHIP, 10AM

★ JUNE 10 - NATIONAL 100TH  
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WORSHIP SERVICE, 6PM PST  
(LIVESTREAMED AT BERNARD SITE)

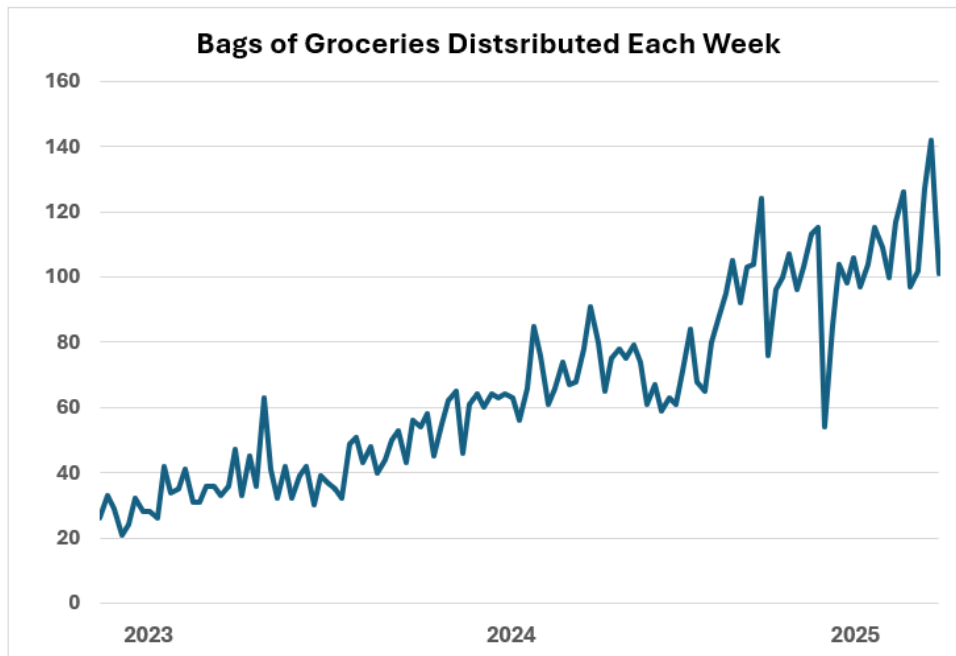
★ JUNE 29 - ANNIVERSARY PICNIC





## Outreach Updates:

We all know that the numbers do not tell the whole story but they do explain a lot, especially when people who previously volunteered on Tuesday mornings are trying to understand what is currently happening on Tuesday mornings with regard to the number of people we are serving.



In January 2023 we distributed an average of 27 bags of groceries each week but by year end we were averaging 60. By the end of 2024 it was 96, and the number continues to increase with 142 bags distributed on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

The numbers fluctuate weekly and the only real exception was the big drop on Christmas Eve 2024. We debated whether to open that day as we

expected most people would not come, and our numbers did drop by about 50%, but the 50+ people who showed up really appreciated being able to get their groceries before the holidays.

How does this compare to what other groups are experiencing? Well, the Central Okanagan Food Bank reported a 43% increase in clients during 2024, and our increase in grocery bags distributed in 2024 is about 60%, with new immigrants being a major part of our increase.

The need is great and the need is growing, but so far we are managing to keep up with the demand and that is thanks to all of you who support the Tuesday morning grocery program with donations of money or groceries or even just a word of encouragement. And of course, our Food Pantry volunteers are an incredibly dedicated and hard-working group of individuals.

Our meal program continues to grow at the same rate as the grocery distribution. So far this year we have averaged 111 meals per week, with numbers fluctuating from 96 to 133. Our cooks, sandwich makers and incredible kitchen volunteers do a remarkable job of feeding the crowd each week. A special thank you goes to the Friday Evening Women's Group who at their February gathering made enough meatloaf to feed over 100 people!

Thank you everyone for your support of the Tuesday morning Outreach program!!!



## Stewardship

Spring has arrived with its early sunrises and longer days, and very quickly blossomed into beautiful summer weather. With this change comes the desire to be outside enjoying the warmth of the sun and ending our winter hibernation. It feels like life has begun again – and doesn't that sound like the Easter story that we just celebrated. Resurrection, new life, new beginnings, and a wondrous hope for what is yet to come.

In 2025 we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Church of Canada and our church in Kelowna. 100 years of loving and serving those in need in our local communities and around the world with the compassion and caring that Jesus modelled and taught his disciples.

What will the next season or 100 years bring for our church? As part of our church family, what do you dream of and wish for from your church in the coming years? Where do you see us growing and thriving and serving others? How do you see yourself involved and supporting your church?

While Easter is behind us for this year, the Easter resurrection story goes on. These excerpts from a United Church of Canada Stewardship blog called Graceful Generosity, are most appropriate as we look forward to the next 100 years of this United Church of ours.

*Today we are invited to live into this same Easter generosity as an act of faith rooted in resurrection hope. Giving is more than a line in a church financial budget. Giving is a communal act of holy participation in God's unfolding story of healing, justice, and renewal.*

*To give is to participate. To give is to proclaim that we are not alone. To give is to sing that we are connected to all our relations. To give is to state that we believe in life beyond death, in love beyond limits.*

*It is about responding to Christ's invitation to love our neighbours, walk with global partners, and share in resurrection hope that defies despair. Every gift becomes a witness to our belief that love can transform lives.*

*Let our giving rise not from duty, but from the desire to share Christ's resurrection hope with the world. Let our planning create space for acts of beauty and grace. Let our offering — whether of money, resources, time, prayer, or presence — become a sign of love to the people around us.*

*Because we are an Easter people, and generosity is our joyful response to the God who makes all things new.*

— Rev. Melody Duncanson Hales offers stewardship support in the Canadian Shield and Shining Waters Regions of the United Church of Canada

***Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7***





## DEVELOPING THE FUTURE



## VERBAL REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT AT RUTLAND & BERNARD SITES

As the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada approaches on June 10, 2025 we have much to celebrate as a denomination and as a congregation! We are looking forward to an exciting future that involves building and property redevelopment at our two sites in downtown Kelowna and Rutland.

**This verbal report was presented at the Congregation's Annual Meeting, April 06, 2025 by the Redevelopment Committee**

Members of the current Central Okanagan United Church congregation, who were formerly members of the First United congregation, will remember the FirstUp process. Many members of the congregation were involved as well as consultants. A concept for the Bernard site was presented to the congregation in December of 2019 and was very well received.

The process was unfortunately interrupted by COVID and then the amalgamation of the four churches followed. A benefit of the FirstUp process is significant background information on the challenges that the Bernard site presents. However, the cost estimates are out of date and the concept needs to be updated to reflect the needs of the amalgamated congregation.

Fortunately we have had a very committed Property Team working to ensure that necessary maintenance and repairs to the Bernard and Rutland sites are being undertaken. There is a report from this committee in the Annual Report package.

A new committee has begun working to develop a strategy for both the Rutland and Bernard sites. The "do nothing" option cannot be considered any longer.

Meetings have been held with representatives of the Pacific Mountain Region to determine the region's position on any proposals that might be developed. The Region's position does not support the sale of church property.

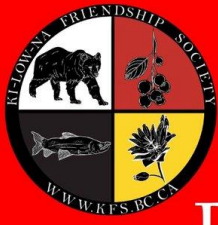
The future of the Metis housing proposal for a portion of Rutland site is not known as the current agreements have expired.

The committee recently met and determined that a better understanding is needed of the financial resources available for any major redevelopment and/or renovations. This is being investigated, will be key in determining our options, and includes potential revenue from either the sale or lease of the Rutland site.

Given the current situation, it is important that the congregation be aware of the following:

- **Any new redevelopment/renovation proposals will take time to plan, approve and implement.**
- **The Bernard site (being most urgent) will be the focus.**
- **Any proposals will have to reflect the broader needs of the COUC amalgamated congregation.**
- **Depending on the details of a final solution to moving forward, we can expect the Bernard site to be unavailable for an extended period of time. Alternative off site space may be required for (worship and) church programs.**





KI-LOW-NA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

# RED DRESS DAY WALK FOR MMIWG2S

**MARCH/  
WALK**  
10:30am  
to the  
courthouse  
and back

PLEASE  
**WEAR RED**  
IN  
SUPPORT!

**LUNCH**  
12 NOON  
soup &  
bannock  
speakers/open  
mic



MAY 5, 10:30 AM, 442 LEON AVENUE

contact Kailyn.Y@kfs.bc.ca for all inquiries





# 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. Unfortunately, we cannot take on outside promotions unless expressly approved or linked to COUC. Email submissions to: [delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](mailto: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.

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

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**02** **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.

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**03** **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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**04** **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

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## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 vibrant spring-themed background featuring a clear blue sky with soft, wispy white clouds. In the foreground, there is a lush field of flowers, including a prominent bright pink cosmos flower in sharp focus. Other flowers in shades of pink, purple, and yellow are visible in the background, some slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth. The overall atmosphere is bright and cheerful, typical of a spring day.

Spring

**What's on at COUC  
Groups  
Events  
and More!**



*Seniors*

# WALK & TALK GROUP

Walk and Talk is a program, developed by Dr Charlotte Jones, of UBCO, to meet the identified needs of seniors for socialization, physical fitness and health education. The program consists of three parts: a half hour walk in historic downtown Kelowna, a half hour of exercises developed by the University of Otaga in New Zealand, designed specifically to strengthen the muscles that are most useful in improving balance and preventing falls; and a time for socialization. Everyone walks at their own pace with whatever mobility aids they are most comfortable using. This program is designed for seniors of all physical abilities. Please consider joining us.



**ALL WELCOME!**



**FRIDAYS - 8 WEEKS**  
-----  
**APRIL 11 - JUNE 6**



**MEET IN CHURCH  
PARKING LOT**  
**Start 9:30am**  
**End 11am**



**721 BERNARD AVE, KELOWNA**



# Parent and Tot WALK & TALK GROUP

Walk and Talk for parents and tots will meet Friday mornings in the Central Okanagan United Church parking lot beginning on April 11th. We'll enjoy a walk around the block and return to the church for a time of coffee and conversation while our children play in the toy room.  
(or nap in their strollers!)



ALL WELCOME!



FRIDAYS  
APRIL 11TH START



MEET IN CHURCH  
PARKING LOT  
9:30am



721 BERNARD AVE, KELOWNA







*You are invited!*

# 100TH ANNIVERSARY

## *High Tea*

Saturday, May 24th

3-5PM

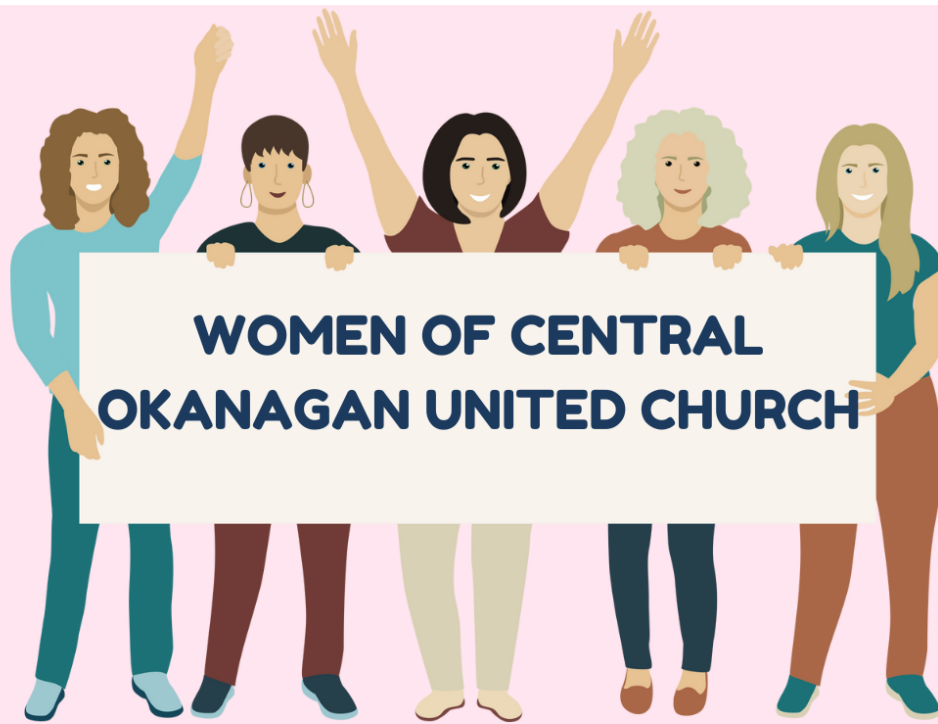
Central Okanagan United Church

*A fine High Tea to celebrate 100  
years of UCC!*

**TICKETS \$25**

Please E-Transfer  
[finance@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](mailto:finance@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)  
with High Tea in the subject line  
or Purchase tickets after Worship





## **TEA, COFFEE AND CONVERSATION**

How long have you lived in Kelowna. How long were you involved in the life of one of the amalgamating churches of Central Okanagan United Church. These and many more are some of the topics of conversation that the **"Wise Women" of COUC discuss the second Tuesday of the month in Room 14 at 2 p.m.**

Why are we called the Wise Women? Well, it is very simple most of us who come to this event each month are of a "certain golden age". We have been involved in the church for a long time, we have lived in Kelowna a long time and we have interesting stories to tell each other. Life stories are also told as well.

**All in all it is a very interesting, and fun time. Come and join us on the Second Tuesday of the month in Room 14 for coffee/tea, conversation.  
There is usually cake or cookies too!!**



Beryl Itani





The background of the top section features two overlapping covers of Broadview magazine. The left cover is red and titled 'The Moment Everything Changed' with a subtitle 'When life took a sudden turn, these storytellers found courage and strength'. It features an illustration of a person in a landscape. The right cover is black and features a photo of a smiling man, with headlines like 'HOW HEDDIE KUNN BECAME THE VOICE AND THE SOUL OF THE TORONTO RAPTORS' and 'CANADA'S MOST FAMOUS CHAPLAIN'.

# Broadview Discussion Group

## Held on Zoom

Next Zoom Meeting 

**May 14th,  
2025**

07.00 PM – 08.00 PM

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.

Join Zoom Meeting  
May 14th

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85808933223?pwd=Q5UQyBclidbbJRQP0fOsZP4mMQX5il.1>

Meeting ID: 858 0893 3223  
Passcode: 319167

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! Head on over to <https://broadview.org> and have a look. Brew a cup of something warm and join us on Zoom.



# JAZZ VESPERS

*MUSIC THAT MOVES THE SOUL*

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

**FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH**

**@5:15pm**

**CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH  
721 BERNARD AVE, KELOWNA  
(PARKING LOT BEHIND CHURCH OFF RICHTER)**





### **Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and 2 Spirit People**


This May, continue to raise your voices and speak out against colonization, racism, and the injustice of Murdered and Missing Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S).

Monday, May 5 is Red Dress Day, the National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S. Thursday, May 15 is Moosehide Campaign Day – a time to take action.

What can you do?

- Take time in worship to pray for action to end this epidemic of violence
- Hang a red dress outside your church and home as an act of public witness
- Participate in Red Dress activities in your community
- Wear a [moosehide pin](#), and participate in [this year's activities](#), which include a livestream, walks to end violence, and a fast
- Support the [Healing Fund](#)

[Image credit: The United Church of Canada]

A large, abstract watercolor splash in various shades of teal and green, with irregular, torn edges, serves as the background for the top half of the poster.

# 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.

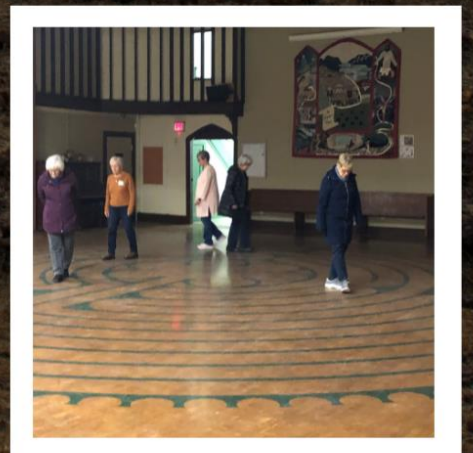
Some move slowly, some rush, some dance and others simply follow the path using our eyes. How ever we choose to journey through the path, we are sure to be gifted with a holy experience.



*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)

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

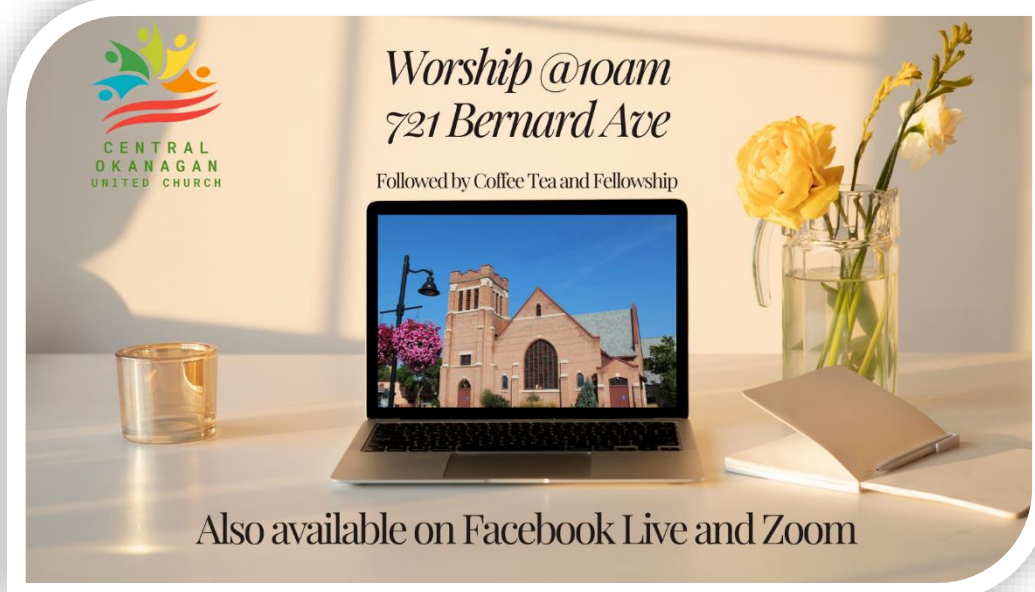
**United Church of Canada Private Group –**

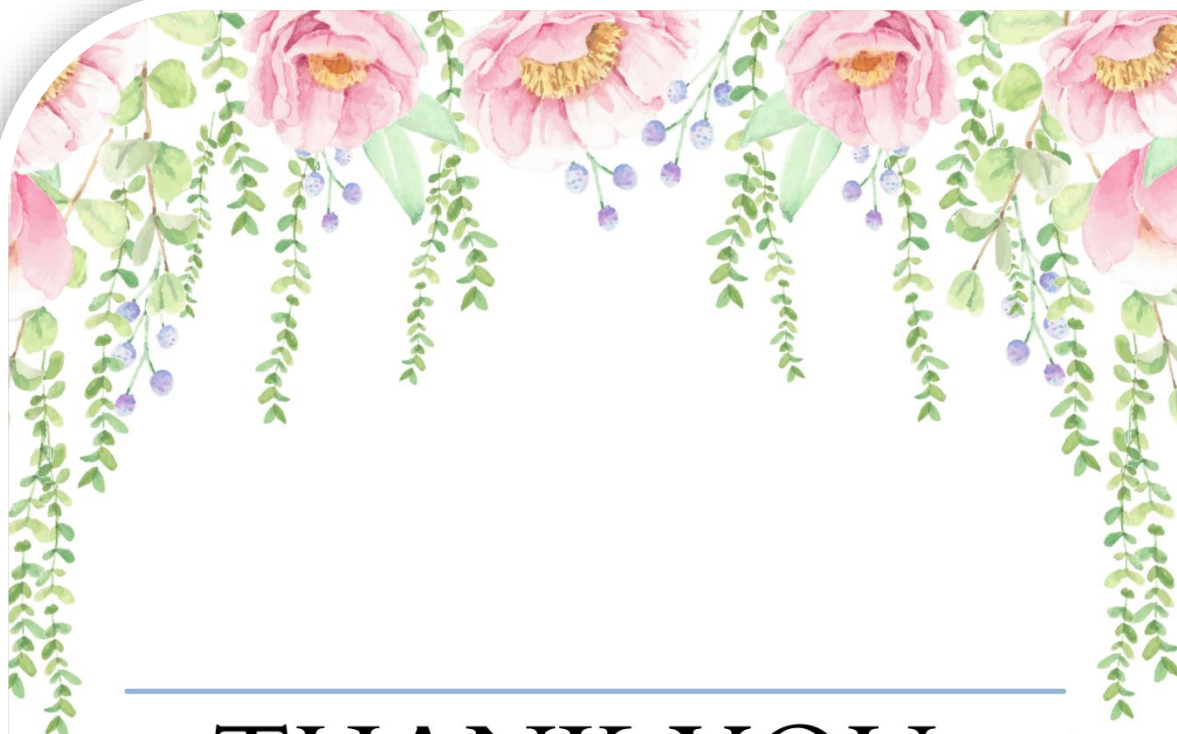
**Join in for all UCC chat & news!**

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

**YouTube Channel (Worship videos posted weekly):**

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





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THANK YOU  
FOR READING

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