

# CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026



1925-2025  
**100<sup>TH</sup>**  
ANNIVERSARY  
Deep • Bold • Daring

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



# Central Okanagan United Church

FEBRUARY 2026

# 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)

# The Season of Lent

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. The day before is known as Shrove Tuesday. The word ‘shrove’ comes from the word shrive, which means to be absolved of wrongdoing.

It is a day of forgiveness and preparation. In many parts of the world celebrations on this day (known as mardi gras, or “fat Tuesday”) involve eating, parades, and parties. People feast on rich foods such as pancakes—a way to use up rich ingredients like butter, milk, and eggs before they begin fasting for Lent.

Sometimes it is even referred to as “Pancake Tuesday.” We hope you will join us for a Pancake Supper followed by a brief worship service on Tuesday, February 17 (see separate poster). And, enjoy testing your knowledge of Lent with this quiz!



# Quiz

## 1. What is the liturgical colour associated with the Season of Lent?

green  
yellow  
purple  
gold

## 2. Which of the following foods are not traditionally enjoyed at Mardi Gras?

pancakes or crepes  
beignets  
gumbo  
King cake  
pretzels

## 3. The word “carnival” comes from the Latin words carne levare because during Lent people traditionally don’t...

eat meat  
go to church  
sing or say “alleluia”  
eat sugar

## 4. The Season of Lent is 40 days long because...

Moses and the Hebrew people wandered in the desert for 40 years before reaching the promised land  
Jesus was tempted in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights  
It rained for 40 days and nights in the story of Noah’s Ark  
Moses was on the mountain for 40 days while he received the Ten Commandments

## 5. A common activity in Britain associated with Shrove Tuesday is...

bonfires  
pancake races  
sausage eating contests  
hitting a shrove barrel

## 6. A ‘pancake landing’ is something you want to avoid. What is it?

When a diver lands in the water belly first  
When a boat is tossed up on a dock in a storm  
When an airplane lands without its wheels  
When food falls on the floor

## 7. During Lent it is traditional to not sing or say this word in church...

amen  
alleluia  
lent  
swear words

(Answer page at the end of the newsletter!)

# Stewardship

*“Helping one person might not change the world,  
but it could change the world for one person.”*

Thank you for your many contributions to Central Okanagan United Church in 2025!  
The start of this new year is the perfect time to take a moment and think about all that was accomplished by our church in 2025.

Yes, the weekly Sunday services, and monthly Jazz Vespers and Queer Vespers, but also the many activities and events that occurred during the year. For example:

- The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, including a high tea attended by the Queen!
- An organ concert that had the sanctuary overflowing with attendees, and another ‘Spooky’ concert in the Fall.
- Pictures and planning for a new photo directory.
- An Outreach program that served over 6300 meals and distributed over 6200 bags of groceries to meet the needs of so many from our local community.
- Various programs for children, youth, adults, and seniors
- Workshops, book studies on Reconciliation, Cultural Awareness, the Syilx Okanagan Nation, and other topics
- Supporting many different projects across the country and around the world through our donations to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada.

Your generous gifts made all of this, and so much more, possible. Together, we can make a difference in the world and do so much more than any of us can do individually. Thank you!

***“Stewardship isn’t just about keeping our congregation afloat. Stewardship is how we use ALL our resources to help change the world to be closer to God’s vision.”***

## **Tax Receipts**

Tax receipts for donations made between March 1 and December 31, 2025, will be ready for distribution before the end of February. They will be available for pickup before and after the service on Sunday, February 22 (and maybe earlier) and those not picked up will be mailed on February 23.

Your receipt for donations made between January 1 and February 28, 2025, were distributed in March and should be in your files.

*Thank  
You*

# *A Generous*

YOU ARE INVITED

SAVOUR, SIP & SUPPORT

# *Affair*



SATURDAY,  
FEBRUARY 7TH  
3PM - 5PM  
(DOORS AT 2:45PM)

## AN ELEGANT EVENT

- FUNDRAISING
- GIFT BASKET AUCTION
- APPETIZERS
- LIVE JAZZ MUSIC

**RAFFLE INCLUDES TWO CLUB SEAT TICKETS FOR A KELOWNA ROCKETS GAME AND DINNER FOR TWO IN THE MANHATTAN POINT RESTAURANT IN PROSPERA PLACE.**

*Tickets \$10 Per Person  
Includes: Entry, Auction, Appetizers & Beverage*

# Outreach

January was another busy month for Tuesday morning Outreach as we hit new highs with 180 meals served and 169 bags of groceries distributed on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Over 100 rolls of toilet paper were distributed that day and four items (canned fruit, cereal, sugar, and coffee) were in the 90's.

The higher numbers keep our volunteers moving whether they are preparing and serving food, doing dishes, packing grocery bags, or shopping for groceries. We have an amazing group of volunteers and the success of our program depends on their involvement. **Thank you, volunteers!!!**

While reaching these higher numbers is definitely not the main goal of our Outreach program, the numbers do indicate that the need in our local community is great and more people are suffering from food insecurity. Seniors or youth, newcomers to Canada or long-time Kelowna residents, housed or unhoused; food insecurity can (and does) happen to anyone.

Our February sessions on Poverty, Homelessness and Addiction illuminate the statistics and help explain how the cycles of poverty, homelessness and addiction happen and why they keep repeating. Please consider joining in these discussions as we look for and discuss ways to help break these cycles. The sessions are Sunday after church on February 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM with lunch provided.

## **Do you have some spare time?**

We are looking for one or two more shoppers to shop for Food Pantry items once a month. We provide the list of what to buy, how much to buy, what price to pay, and where to buy. All you have to do is drive, shop and deliver.

**We are also looking for more sandwich makers willing to make sandwiches once or twice a month. With so many people attending our Tuesday morning program, we need more sandwiches.**

If you can help with the shopping or the sandwich making, please contact Jayne Brooks to discuss further [k.jaynebrooks@gmail.com](mailto:k.jaynebrooks@gmail.com) or 250-762-9606.

## **Reusable Cloth Grocery Bags Needed**

We are again in need of reusable cloth grocery bags. If you have any at home or know of a business that wants to give some away, or if you want to make some yourself, we would love to receive them. They can be dropped off at the Food Pantry or the church office at any time.

## **Food Pantry**

Speaking of the Food Pantry, we have installed more shelving to accommodate all our groceries. Our very busy Food Pantry is now more organized and functional. Stop by for a visit sometime and check it out.

## **Outreach Visits**

And speaking of visits, please feel free to stop by on any Tuesday morning to see how Outreach is operating these days.

**We would love to show you around and explain what we are doing, and I am sure some of our guests would love to chat with you if you have time.**

You Are Invited!

# SHROVE TUESDAY

FEBRUARY 17TH  
5:30PM - 7:30PM



**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.**

**Please submit your annual reports by Monday February 9<sup>th</sup> to  
[admin@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](mailto:admin@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)**

Central Okanagan United Church

**ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING  
2026  
MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> 12-2PM**

Join us as we reflect on our journey over the last year, celebrate achievements, and discuss the future together.



**DATE**

08 March, 2026

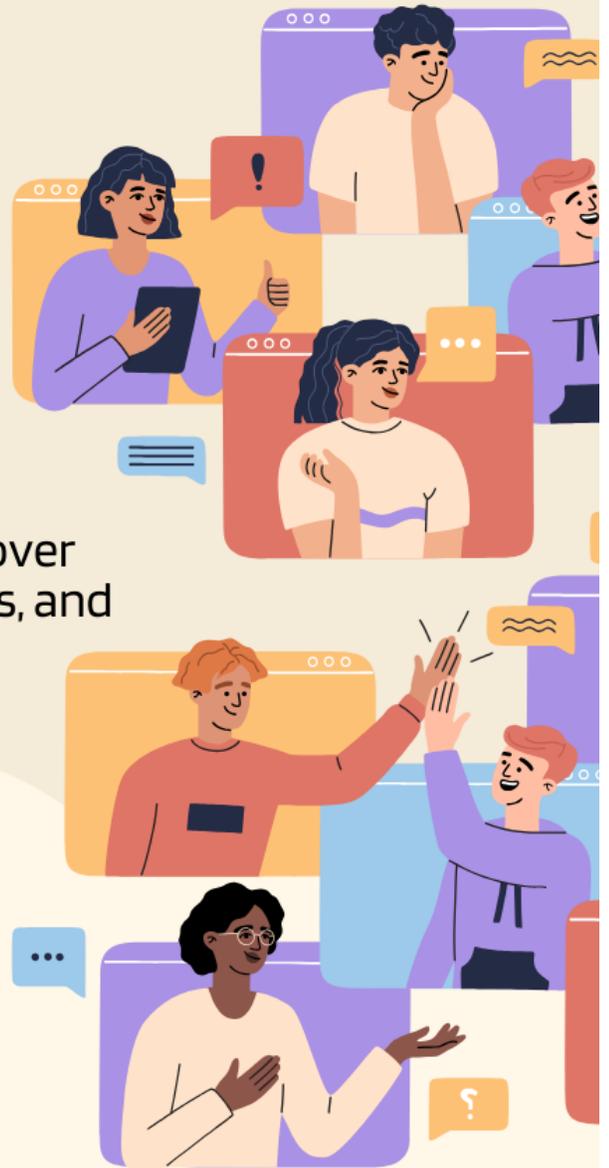


**TIME**

12:00 Noon - 2:00PM



COUC  
Sanctuary



# Queer Vespers

Central Okanagan United Church - 721 Bernard Ave

## Monthly Evening Queer Vesper Worship at COUC

Worship Fellowship Community Connection



6:00pm

Monthly:

January 18th

February 15th

March 15th



721 Bernard Ave.  
Kelowna BC



[centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](http://centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)



# JANUARY





# 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



## 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!**



# Winter

What's on at COUC  
Groups  
Events  
and More!

# Exploring Addiction, Poverty and Homelessness in Kelowna

February 1st and February 8th  
11:30am to 1:30pm at COUC.

Join John and Andrea for a two-part series exploring addiction, poverty and homelessness in Kelowna through the lens of lived experience and the importance of peer support. Discussion and questions will be encouraged and welcomed.

We will take a break to enjoy soup and a bun together during the session

**RSVP TO ANDREA**

[andrea@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com](mailto:andrea@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com)





**CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH**

# **LIFE PLANNING CONVERSATION SERIES ON ZOOM**

**February Mondays**

**7:00pm**

**Held on Zoom**

## **OUR SESSIONS WILL INCLUDE**

- **Feb 9th: Preplanning a Meaningful Service with Cheryl Perry**
- **Feb 16th: Advance Care Planning with Dr. Julie McNally**
- **Feb 23rd: Writing Your Own Obituary with Ally Phillips**

Zoom Link Available in  
Weekly E-Letters.



A large, abstract watercolor splash in various shades of teal and green, with soft, irregular edges, occupies the top half of the page. The text is overlaid on this background.

# 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



**Strengthening Voices. Inspiring Possibility.  
WHERE VOICES COME TO LIFE**

**Mondays at 1:00pm**

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>



# Quiz Answers

## 1. What is the liturgical colour associated with the Season of Lent?

The colour purple signifies penance or repentance. It is the “I’m sorry” colour. In Lent we think about the things that are not right in the world or in our lives, that need to be ‘turned around’ which is the meaning of the word “repent.”

## 2. Which of the following foods are not traditionally enjoyed at Mardi Gras?

Pancakes and crepes are a great way to use up eggs and butter or oil, as are beignets, a sort of French doughnut! Gumbo and Kings Cake are especially popular at Mardi Gras celebrations in places like New Orleans. So the correct answer to the question “Which of the following foods is not traditionally enjoyed at Mardi Gras is... pretzels! They were originally called “bracellae,” the Latin term for “little arms,” from which Germans later derived the word “bretzel.” It was believed that Italian monks first made these, in the shape of arms crossed in prayer—as this was the customary position people prayed in during the Middle Ages. It was thought that their shape would remind people to pray during Lent, and because they were made with only flour and water, they could be eaten during Lent, when Christians fasted from dairy and eggs. So pretzels are in fact associated with Lent, not Shrove Tuesday.

## 3. The word “carnival” comes from the Latin words carne levare because during Lent people traditionally don’t...

Carne is the Latin word for “meat”—as in chili con carne. So, the answer is during Lent people don’t eat meat!

## 4. The Season of Lent is 40 days long because...

Any and all of these is correct! Forty is a number, in the Bible, that symbolizes a “long” or “significant” time. So whenever you hear the number 40 it probably isn’t literal—the Hebrews probably didn’t wander for exactly 40 years before entering the Promised Land and Jesus may not have fasted and prayed in the desert for 40 days—instead the number 40 represents that this was a significant time as he prepared for his ministry.

## 5. A common activity in Britain associated with Shrove Tuesday is...

Legend has it that pancake races derive from a 15th century housewife in Olney, Buckinghamshire who was so busy making pancakes that she forgot the time. When she heard the church bells ringing for mass she ran out of her house, still carrying her pan and pancake. Of course, if you chose bonfires you would be incorrect--these are more associated with All Hallow’s Evening in October. However, hitting a shrove barrel is a thing: in Denmark on Shrove Tuesday, children traditionally hit a ‘shrove barrel’ -- similar to a Mexican pinata – until it breaks and scatters candy across the floor.

## 6. A ‘pancake landing’ is something you want to avoid. What is it?

A pancake landing is when an airplane lands without its wheels. Pancake landings usually only happen from very low altitudes when an aeroplane stalls. Not too dangerous, but still best avoided!

## 7. During Lent it is traditional to not sing or say this word in church...

It is traditional not to sing or say the word “alleluia” during Lent. Some churches follow the practice of burying the alleluias until Easter. Then, at Easter, the word can be sung with greater joy!

Alleluia! You made it to the end of our quiz!



*Thank You*

FOR READING