

Duncan United Church

Sunday Journey Newsletter – Fall 2015

Dear parents and guardians,

Welcome to the start of another great year in Duncan United's Sunday Journey! We hope that you and your family have had a wonderful summer, and are looking forward to "back-to-church" this September.

At Duncan United, children and youth generally stay upstairs to participate in the 10:00 service for 20-25 minutes, then head downstairs to their age-appropriate Sunday Journey classes. There is a family-friendly area at the front of the sanctuary with colouring pages. The children participate in worship together with their families during the service by ringing the church bell, lighting the Christ candle, collecting the offering, listening to a story at children's time and singing a family hymn, as well as by also having the opportunity to sing in our youth choir several times throughout the year.

Once a month, we all worship together in an "Everyone Upstairs" intergenerational Communion service, which is specifically designed to engage our children and youth in worship. All are welcome to participate in Communion, including our children and youth. We also celebrate special times together, such as our annual Advent Eve celebration on the Saturday before the 1st Sunday in Advent (Nov. 28, 2015 this year), Christmas pageant (3rd Sunday in Advent – Dec. 13, 2015), and fundraisers such as pancake breakfasts and hot dog lunches after church. You won't want to miss our Teddy Bear Picnic after church on Oct. 4th – make sure to bring your stuffy to church!

Our Sunday morning "Sunday Journey" classes are as follows (age designations are flexible depending on the needs of our children and youth):

Nursery (Ages Newborn to 2):

- For our youngest church goers, there is a bright and cheerful nursery area beside the sanctuary where parents can take their children if they get restless. There is a speaker to listen to the service.
- If it would be helpful to you to have a church volunteer care for your child in the nursery during the service, please speak to Erin.

Sunday Adventures (Ages 2-4):

- Sunday Adventures for our 2-4 year olds takes place in the Sundance room during the service with a volunteer teacher.
- Parents are welcome to stay with their children if they would like, or can also use the nursery area beside the sanctuary where they can listen to the service.
- The children enjoy a story, activities from the Whole People of God curriculum, and a snack each Sunday.

Godly Play (Kindergarten to Grade 6):

- In Godly Play, the children first listen to a trained storyteller share a story from our faith, then wonder together through discussion. The storyteller then invites the children to work with that story through playing with the story materials, or by responding through art (e.g. drawing, painting, journaling or sculpture). The children explore the meaning of each story in their own way and at their own pace.

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- Due to the painting and clay work that your child may choose to do as part of his or her response activity, please send your child in clothing that can get dirty. We have old shirts available to protect clothing if necessary, but sometimes this work can get a bit messy!
- Our Godly Play storytellers and doorkeepers have all taken a one-day introductory Godly Play training course. For more information on Godly Play or if you are interested in assisting with our Godly Play program, please contact Erin at childrenandyouth@duncanunited.org or visit <http://godlyplay.ca/>.

Breakfast on the Sun (Grades 7-12):

- Jim Walker, Ted Lofto, Kathie Fielding and Cathy Coulter have each volunteered to teach our Breakfast on the Sun youth once a month. Sarah Prestwich, our new youth leader, will also be available for our youth on Sunday mornings.
- Our youth will have some opportunities for service, such as helping with preparing our monthly community dinner and serving at pancake breakfasts, will explore the "Story of Stuff" regarding consumerism, faith and the environment, and will discuss lectionary readings from the Bible through our Whole People of God curriculum.

Duncan United Youth Group (Grades 4-12):

- If you are in grades 4-12, our Duncan United Youth Group (DU Youth) meets on Friday nights during the school year. Sarah Prestwich, from First Metropolitan United Church in Victoria and Chaplain at Camp Pringle for the past two summers, is our new youth leader and is looking forward to getting to know our youth!
- Sometimes DU Youth meets together from 7:00-8:30 pm, and sometimes we meet in separate groups:
 - Jr. Youth (gr. 4 -7) meet from 6:00 – 7:30 pm
 - Sr. Youth (gr. 8 and up) meet from 7:00 – 8:30 pm.
- Our first meeting will be Sept. 25, 2015, and we have lots of fun games and activities planned!
- For more information, please take a look at the youth group page on the Duncan United website (<http://www.duncanunited.org/youth.html>), on Facebook (Like "DU-Youth"), on Twitter (Follow @DUYouth), or contact Erin.

This will be my fourth year as Children and Youth Coordinator at Duncan United Church. I want to ensure that we put together an excellent Sunday Journey program and intergenerational worship experience for our children and youth, so I would appreciate any feedback that you have regarding our existing offerings or any new ideas. If you have any comments or suggestions, please make a note of them on your Sunday Journey registration form, or send me an email, and I will get in touch to discuss them with you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding either Sunday Journey or Youth Group, please feel free to contact me as well.

Looking forward to a great year working with you and your family!

Erin

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Erin Arrowsmith

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Duncan United Church

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