



Spirit of Shalom

Duncan United Church

Sharing our faith from the beautiful Cowichan Valley of Vancouver Island
British Columbia, Canada.

Lent Edition 2019

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Welcome to Lent

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the season of Lent. In this time we consider our place in Creator and Creation, while on the journey with Jesus to Jerusalem. Where are we on the path to the cross? Where are we in the metamorphosis of resurrection? Where are we in Christ? Where is Christ, in us? Who travels along side?

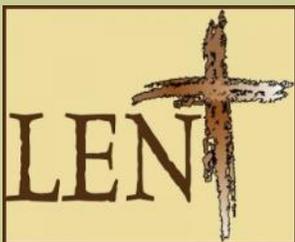
We will spend some time considering the gifts brought by those who travel with us. Joining in worship, coming by for a warm place and a meal, sharing stories about their children, offering care and comfort to others. Folk seeking help and friendship from the corners of our streets, folk looking for welcome and affirmation in our hearts. Folk seeking a place to give, receive and grow in the blessing of warm love and deep joy.

The Lenten theme "I make all things new - metamorphosis" plays on an ancient assurance that by opening ourselves fully to the Living Word of our Creator we are offered opportunities to re-create both our communities and ourselves. Each week will visit a different story, told through another set of eyes, out of another's life experience and journey. All coming from folk who have much to share and weave into the tapestry of stories told and appreciated together.

During this time we are encouraged to consider our personal journeys. What roads combined to take us here? What points of intersection turned us in this direction? What have we discovered about God's grace? How can we be present for those seeking love's affirmation now?

In all things we are encouraged to live fully into the call of Jesus of Nazareth, who spent his life assuring others that the living word of God was as much for them as it was about them. Calling all into Love's community, as he did, may we be for one another, the embodiment of the love he is for us.

Blessings on your Lenten Journey
Keith



Empty Benches

Whether I am walking along a coastal trail, a path in town or hiking up in the mountains I always come across benches. These benches have been placed there to give people a place to rest and to enjoy the wonderful views. Many of them are in memory of loved ones, of folk who lived lives well, people who were loved and valued. The benches are a way of saying thank for the gifts you gave to others in life – a way to honour them for all they have done and a place to remember them, so they are not forgotten. So many people stop and take advantage of the place to rest.

I find Lent can sometimes be an empty time or a time of emptying ourselves of regrets or grudges, letting go of those things that hold us back from being grateful. I'm sure we all have those times when we feel empty, a feeling of unfulfillment, loneliness or something just missing. Even when our lives are filled with the busyness of life, filled with family and friends there can be a small spot of emptiness. We all need to have a purpose, to be helpful to others, to be valued and to know that no matter what has happened in the past, it is what we do in the current moment of time that matters. These benches along the pathways look so empty and alone, just waiting, waiting to welcome the strangers that will come along and take a rest upon them. When people stop and rest the bench's purpose has been fulfilled.

Imagine the people who have met others, strangers meeting strangers, sharing in a short or long conversation as they enjoy time sitting on these benches. I often wonder about the conversations these benches have heard over the years and the memories they hold.

I am always so grateful to come across a bench especially when I am on my own. It's a place to stop and be contemplative or maybe say hello to someone. They really are a gift to us all and have brought joy and conversations to so many people. We can all be thankful for the people who journey beside us, in work or in play, for those who sit beside us on the benches and give us a sense of value or for the strangers we meet and share stories with. It can fill our hearts with the same joy people feel on Easter morning as they celebrate the risen Christ.

During this season of Lent we will be using photos of empty benches for our bulletin covers. Take a look and envision the stories of the people that have sat upon them and the companionship they have brought to strangers.

Submitted by Linda Evans, Office Administrator



Services of Lent/Easter

Shrove Tuesday—March 5th, 5:00—6:30 pm. Pancakes!

Ash Wednesday Service—Wednesday, March 6th 6 pm

Taize Service—Sunday, April 7th, 7 pm

Maundy Thursday Service—Thursday, April 18th 5 pm

Good Friday Service—Friday, April 19th 10 am

Easter Taize—Saturday, April 20th 7pm

Easter Sunrise Service—Sunday, April 21st 7am—Art Mann Park

Easter Service—Sunday April 21st 10 am

Our Faith Study for Lent—Bursting Out!

Bursting Out! - A Study in Lent

Join Kathie Fielding and Keith Simmonds as we explore six themes,
through scripture, poetry and paints.

No experience necessary! A sense of play and an urge to go deeper is helpful.

Saturdays during Lent March 9 – April 13 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Led by Kathie Fielding and Keith Simmonds, using a 'perception/reflection action' model, this year's Lent study combines Sacred Writings (Scripture and Poetry) with mono printing.

Falling somewhere between painting and printmaking, monoprinting needs no prior experience or training. Works of art are created using coloured inks, plastic 'plates' and impressionable paper in response to the impression made by the readings and responses to them.

We will share readings from scripture and poetry, speak about our initial impressions, and create prints using splashes of colour on a plate to create impressions on paper. The study promises to help us let go and let be. To let go of our need to control and allow something new to emerge.

Please register in the church office. admin@duncanunited.org /250-746-6043

Donations towards costs will be received with gratitude.

**This series is based on a Pacific Jubilee Soulwork event,
led by Julie Elliott, at Naramata Centre.**

For more information on the Pacific Jubilee Program, go to www.pacificjubilee.ca.

Life and Times of Bette Cunningham

Bette (Elizabeth) Cunningham, was born by the ocean in Belfast Ireland in 1928, moved to B.C in the 50's with her husband Ed. Due to the economy in Ireland, Bette moved here to have more opportunity. She had always gone to the Methodist Church and they began attending the United Church first in Boundary Bay then Duncan. Ed was an Electrician locally, working on houses, buildings in town and the Hospital. They both loved the events and dinners at the Church. They became friends with Pat and Ken Slade, where they sailed their boat from in summer, on the Lake. They loved the camaraderie of the Church members at social events and bible study. Bette enjoyed working in the Thrift Shop for ten years and any other activity where she was asked to contribute, including hospitality.

They had 5 children, Scott, Jeanette, joy, Erin and Mark and many talented grand children, who visit and help Bette. She is very proud of her adult children and grandchildren for all of their attributes and strengths of kindness, honesty, hard work, love of family. Bette appreciates their daily care and going about town for variety and special meals together.

She herself accredits her strength to be from God, has a strong faith and believes she has been a good listener. Bette loves to laugh and is found often among the residents of Ts'its'uwatul'Lelum where she lives now, on the main floor, content to sit and congenially say good morning. She values the atmosphere, the culture of enjoying their diversity, the residents looking out for one another with care. They enjoy excellent meals, recreational groups and hymn sings and the comfort of home, including for Bette, the quiet well organized suite she has looking out into the woods. She is in Canada now and has a great life here. Bette does not miss Ireland, although they went back to visit her family, so feels connected. There was fighting among religious groups and their family did their best to keep the peace, sometimes by inviting human beings into the house and tucking them away for a cup of tea if they were being pursued. She grew up playing field hockey, swimming in the ocean, roller skating and sailing. Their family rose early as their father delivered bread from a bakery to a Hotel. Originally Methodist, she sang soprano in the choir and went to a public school. Once settled in Boundary Bay in a home they fixed and loved and sailed a wooden boat together on day trips and longer vacations, up Vancouver Island. Bette made sandwiches ahead and trimmed the sails for her part. They bought and fixed, then sold many sail boats. Later they moved to Duncan and became friends with the Slades in '95 and began attending Duncan United. She says kindly of her dear neighbour and friend, Arline, put on the kettle, I'm coming round for a cup of tea and a good yarn. She misses her husband Ed, who died in 2014, and says he's off sailing now. She finds she misses her family coming to Church with her, yet like her parents, she believes each have been Christian in their own hearts and holds her faith in prayer and devotion with God. Bette loves the Thursday morning Pause Café bible Study with Keith and is deeply grateful to Pat for driving her. She enjoys quiet time in her suite where she enjoys music, and gardening, especially her Irish clover, sedums and Christmas cactus. Yes, she thinks I will go and try Celtic Knots, Why not! (con't on next page)

Bette Cunningham con't

Bette's Pearls of Wisdom: Join In. Accept Others. Make each Experience Special. Always find Time for Daily Devotion with God.

*Almighty God
Unto Him all hearts are open,
All desires are known,
And from Him, no secrets are hidden.
Cleanse the thoughts of our Hearts,
By the Inspiration of Your Holy Spirit,
That we might perfectly love thee
And Worthily Magnify Your Holy Name.*

Amen



Submitted by Susan Murray, Spiritual Health and Wellness Coordinator

The Affirm Group



The Affirm group of Duncan United Church meets monthly with an average attendance of six members. Our goal is to explore the process and the possibility of Duncan United becoming an Affirming congregation in the United Church of Canada.

During our meetings, we have been reviewing the Affirming Ministry requirements developed by Affirm United. We have been looking at the scriptural basis for ministries of welcome and inclusion for all people of faith. We have been looking at modern media around LGBTQ2S relationships with organized religion. The exploration of becoming an Affirming Ministry can take several years and it involves five steps of discernment and documentation. One of the steps includes hearing personal stories from members of the congregation and community to help understand the need to become Affirming. If anyone would like to share their story with the Affirm group, please contact Brenda at brenmarwalk@shaw.ca. Information about the process is available at www.affirmunited.ca.

Church Life in Photos-Eric Marshall

Nativity Scenes
and Labyrinth



Christmas Carol Service



Children's Christmas Pageant



Burns Night Dinner



Senior's Exercise

What exactly are "Senior Exercise" classes? Well, all participants work at, or to, their own level of fitness. This is achieved with guidance from the instructor so that all members reach a positive movement goal.

Fun with safety, is the next major aim. The next aim is socializing with tea/coffee and chats providing a feeling of warmth and acceptance.

Equipment used is small and large balls, swim noodles, bean bags, weighted rings, hoops and chairs for balance work. The above promote hand-eye coordination, aiming skills etc.



Professional –specially chosen music tapes aids in dance steps, footwork, leading to good posture and listening skills. Breathing exercises and stretches and of course balance work take place through out the lessons. The above is a synopsis of what takes place each Wednesday morning (men and women are welcome)

Submitted by Maureen Gallacher, Instructor Scottish trained "Physical Education Teacher (specialist)"

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

Tuesday, March 5th 5:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

in HERITAGE HALL

By donation at the door!

Funds going to our Children and youth programs

Sponsored by Duncan United Church Youth Groups

Bring your family, bring your friends!



Our
Ash
Wednesday
Service,
March 6th at

6:00 p.m. will mark the beginning of our journey through the season of Lent. Please join with us for this meaningful occasion of worship.

