



# Spirit of Shalom

## Duncan United Church

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

### Summer Edition

### "Spiritual Picnics"



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*"A Picnic is a  
state of mind and  
can be made  
anywhere"*





## FROM KEITH...SHALOM

Welcome to the Summer Spirit of Shalom. What do you do to feed the Spirit in summer?

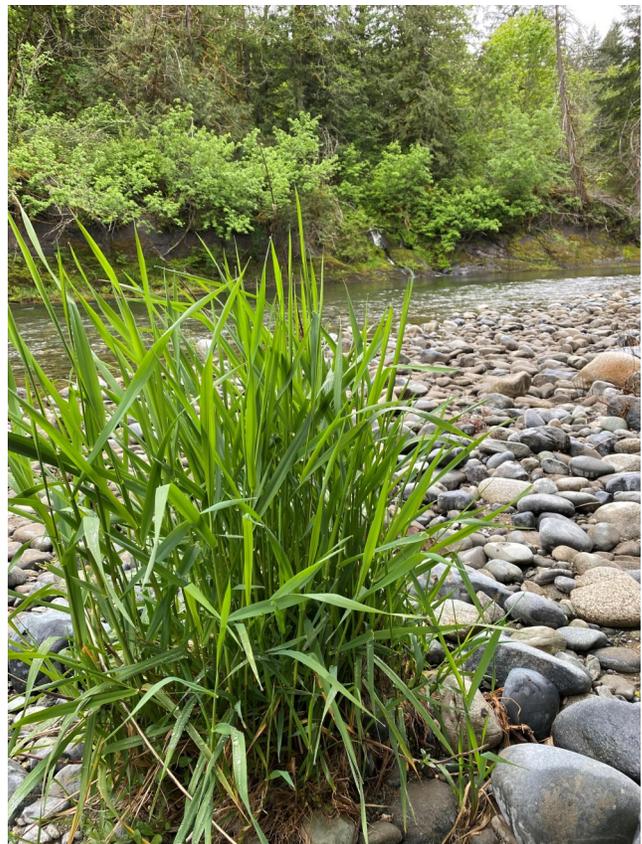
What feeds the spirit? I was a bit startled, recently, to hear faith put into active life by someone reflecting on being fed spiritually. He was musing on ‘adding drops to the river’ pondering whether someone taking time off work to look after an ill family member contributed as much to ‘the river’ as someone working in a key position at an NGO helping thousands of people. What if it was the same person? Would they contribute as much in the former as the latter?

“It’s all drops in the river, isn’t it?” he said. “All feeding the same water, running to the same ocean.”

I think he was right. Feeding the river of the Spirit, running (as one of our hymns says) ‘sweet mystery in you and me’ is a matter of quality, not quantity. Anything contributing to the repair of creation, to the healing of the world, or ‘Tikkun Olam’ as folk who follow the Kabbalah might say, is water for the river.

Last summer Laurel and I spent time camping by the ocean, walking by the river, taking our dog on long journeys (‘snifaris’ a friend joked), visiting friends and spending time with family members living on the Island. Taking photos of glorious night skies, wading in the waters, spending our nights in the tent and our days chatting with folk from the campsite next door. Enjoying one another’s company, taking in the world of waves and trails. Feeding the Spirit and being fed, immeasurably, by her reciprocal, loving, relationship. We could not have asked for any better way to be part of creation. Part of Creator.

‘River running in you and me, river run deep, river run free.’ May you find it so this summer, whatever form the drops take, wherever you and the river might find one another.



### WORSHIP IN THE PARK

Join us on Sunday, July 4th at 10 am at Centennial Park where we will share in worship. Please call the office to register ahead of time as our seating capacity is limited.

The service will also be available on zoom through our Sunday link.





## SPIRITUAL PICNICS—LINDA EVANS, OUTREACH COORDINATOR

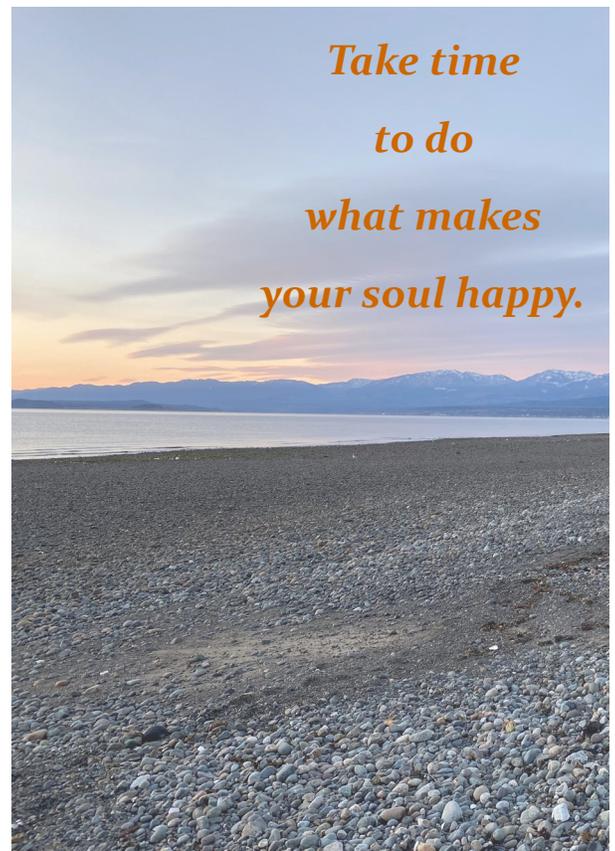
Picnics are one of my favourite things to do! I love food and I love eating outdoors even more. When the good weather arrives each year I look forward to being outdoors, relaxing on my patio or exploring the trails. Either way one of the most important items for me is the food. Some folks may pack healthy food to keep themselves physically fit, however I use this as an excuse to eat the foods I love. Feeding one's body is important but so is feeding our spirits and if on my patio some barbecued food or a bag of chips will bring enjoyment to my taste buds well that is what I shall have. Hiking up to a mountain top or along a ridge, looking down at all of the land and/or water below is one of my favourites adventures. Upon reaching the summit I get to take off my pack, pull out my lunch usually of a peanut butter and jam sandwich and just smile with a sense of accomplishment. Of course a picnic wouldn't be complete with out a cookie or a mini chocolate bar to satisfy my sweet tooth.

There are also those hikes that are family friendly when I bring my grandkids along. Watching them explore and find nature's treasures also feeds my spirit and like me they like nothing more than stopping and diving into their packs for the treats they have brought along to eat.

When I think of a spiritual picnic I think of the many different ways I connect with God and creation. Being outdoors though is what makes my soul happy. It is my "spiritual" picnic. As I hike I can explore God's creation, I can quietly chat with God, I can listen for God, take some deep breaths and then sometimes I just look at some strange plant and say "God what were you thinking" Each of us have our own individual spiritual practices and our own ways to feed our spirit.

So a picnic is described as "an outing where taking a packed meal is involved" For hiking my pack usually contains a P and J sandwich, a piece of fruit or granola bar and of course a cookie or chocolate bar. These things all meet my physical needs. My spiritual picnic is packed with curiosity and awe. Finding time to sit by a running creek and listen to the sound of the water as it travels over the rocks, to hear the sounds of the birds calling to each other among the trees, to sit by the ocean and listen to the sound of the waves either gently flowing or crashing into the shoreline and to see the many unique creations of our forests. It is through these things that my spiritual needs are met and I make connection with our creator.

Summer is approaching and I hope to enjoy lots of spiritual picnics. It's a great time to just be outside whether on a patio, a deck or on a trail one can listen to the sounds of nature, breathe in the scents of the plants around them and see the beautiful colours of creation to enjoy a spiritual picnic. So let's get outdoors in town or out and have a spiritual picnic and it certainly won't hurt to enjoy your favourite snack at the same time!





# CELEBRATING OUR AFFIRMING MINISTRY





**LOAVES AND FISHES ARE NOT DEAD —AFFIRM COMMITTEE**

Here is a story based on the biblical tale of “the feeding of the five thousand”:

As far as I’m concerned, that story doesn’t involve any magic. It’s about the miracle of sharing in community, an everyday miracle that anyone with some courage can pull off. Here’s an example of what I mean, a bit long but worth your time...

After a speech in Saskatoon, I boarded a 6 a.m. Air Canada flight home to Wisconsin. Our departure was delayed because the truck that brings coffee to the planes had broken down. After a while the pilot said, *“We’re going to take off without the coffee. We want to get you to Detroit on time.”*

I was up front where all the “road warriors” sit — a surly tribe, especially at that early hour. They began griping, loudly and at length, about “incompetence,” “lousy service,” etc.

Once we got into the air, the lead flight attendant came to the center of the aisle with her mike and said, *“Good morning! We’re flying to Minneapolis today at an altitude of 30 feet...”* That, of course, evoked more scorn from the road warriors.

Then she said, *“Now that I have your attention... I know you’re upset about the coffee. Well, get over it! Start sharing stuff with your seatmates. That bag of five peanuts you got on your last flight and put in your pocket? Tear it open and pass them around! Got gum or mints? Share them! You can’t read all the sections of your paper at once. Offer them to each other! Show off the pictures of kids and grandkids you have in your wallets!”*

As she went on in that vein, people began laughing and doing what she had told them to do. A surly scene turned into summer camp!

An hour later, as the attendant passed by my seat, I signaled to her. *“What you did was really amazing,”* I said. *“Where can I send a letter of commendation?”*

*“Thanks,”* she said, *“I’ll get you a form.”* Then she leaned down and whispered, *“The loaves and fishes are not dead.”*

Do miracles happen? All the time! “People are hungry and one good word is bread for a thousand.” So make a miracle happen. Speak a good word to someone today!

Written by Parker J. Palmer  
[Center for Courage & Renewal](#)

Submitted on behalf of our Affirm Committee





**IN THE SPOTLIGHT!**



**Jeff Leggat**

**DUC's Tech guy and Sunday morning coffee hour host.**

**Where were you born?**

I was born in Winnipeg and adopted into the Leggat family with three separately adopted siblings.

**Where have you lived?**

I have lived in Manitoba, Los Angeles, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Whistler, Duncan, Lethbridge, Castlegar and Victoria

**What is or was your occupation?**

I was in Public Relations and the Hospitality Industries

**What do you enjoy doing?**

Community volunteering, activism, helping people

**Share a fun fact about an event in your life?**

I once worked for the richest man in the world back in 1996/1997 - Sultan of Brunei - organizing, coordinating and running his transportation & security services for 1997 APEC held in Vancouver, B.C.

**Where were you born?** I was born in Weyburn, Saskatchewan

**Where have you lived?** Weybrun SK, St. Catherines ON, Calgary AB Fort Resolution, NWT, Dawson City, YK, Prince Rupert, BC, Duncan BC

**What was or is your occupation?** Registered Nurse , also a BC Coroner. Once in Duncan continued on as a coroner and then returned to nursing.

**What do you enjoy doing?** Singing in choirs, including our church choir.

**Share a fun fact about an event in your life.** I married for love instead of money so returned to nursing after marrying Mike.



**Irene Simkins**

**Unified Board Chair**





## SUMMER CAMP SPONSORSHIP

### Camp Pringle

Every summer over 500 Children and Youth from Vancouver Island visit the amazing place that we call Camp Pringle! For over 71 years it has been a place for people to come just as they are and to connect with Christ and Community. For some families money can be a barrier for them to experience the magic of summer camp, but we as a Church community want every child to have the opportunity to attend. So, we are asking you as a congregation for donations to help fund the Camper fees. Anything helps! Thank you and God Bless! (Cheques can be made out Duncan United Church with Camp Sponsorship in the Memo)

### Camp Spirit

We are so excited to have Camp Spirit hosting a week of Summer Day Camp this coming July right here at DUC for a whole week. Camp Spirit is a ministry of the First Third Ministry of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council (where Sarah also works!). We appreciate any donations that help to send Children and Youth to this wonderful Day Camp! (Cheques can be made out to Duncan United Church with Camp Sponsorship in the Memo)

## SPIRITUAL PICNICS—MAUREEN GALLACHER

Wow! What a theme for this strange time we are enduring! “Joy” Is in the title—so here goes! As a summer birthday child, a “cancer child of the moon” summer feeds my soul. My amazing parents took us from the huge industrial city of Glasgow every July for a month of running free at the ocean and beach. My two brothers and I climbed seaweedy rocks and swam in the cold water and were filled with joy, fun and health given exercise. Now in warm Maple Bay with the sparkling waves, swims to the float, favourite book, sunshine and early kayaking mornings with friend, this again feeds my soul. What more can one ask for? Yes “Spiritual picnics” abound— we are blessed!





## SOUL'S MYSTERY—SENT IN BY CARIE SAVILLE

I hold inside my soul  
A mystery sure to take  
A lifetime to unravel

Each day I ask myself

Have I traveled the road  
With humility?  
With simplicity?  
With honesty?  
With gratitude?

Have I shown others  
Kindness?  
Forgiveness?  
Understanding?  
My Creator's love?

Have I sought  
Forgiveness?  
Understanding?  
Solitude?  
Communion with the Holy?

Have I taken time today  
To rest in the moment  
Creating space for  
Another soul to enter  
Another voice to be heard  
Bringing me another clue  
Leading to understanding  
The mystery of my soul

Seeking absolution  
That I may begin  
The journey again  
With the rising sun

Shalom Friends (author unknown)





## THE SPIRIT OF SUMMER IN PALESTINE– KEITH SIMMONDS

When I think of the Spirit in summer in Palestine I am drawn to memories of my first encounter with the soil, clumped in muddy constituents, mixed with lime shards, yielding reluctantly to the mattox-like tool employed for tree planting. Olive and fig.

We were setting seedlings that might be allowed to reach maturity, bearing fruit to replace those hundred year old trees cut down by Israel's colonizers a dozen years before. Falling to axe and saw as the owner's home fell to bulldozer and backhoe. His fifteen year old daughter with him, in confrontation of the military's determination to make the area safe for Israelis by destroying Palestinian homes. They spent years in Israel's prisons for trying to save their home. He learned to speak Hebrew there.

When he discovered one of my companions also spoke it he smiled wide and welcome as he hadn't since learning that three of our four were vegetarians, unable to feed on the chicken and beef roasting over coals as we planted our way across the field.

"You speak one of our languages!" I could not understand the words, but knew them to be lifted up in joy. They commenced a lively conversation, he delighted, she a bit nervous, not knowing what speaking the language of the Occupation, the Occupier, might mean. She told us afterwards:

He said, "No, it is one of ours. It was born here, a Semitic language, like Arabic. They speak it funny, with a German pronunciation, but it is from here. Two languages, one country, like the sky and the earth."

Here we were, in our first planting, our first field, learning about seedlings taking root in the thick red soil of the place, growing an abundant new crop, voiced in ancient, sister tongues.

Spirit of summer. Spirit of Shalom.





## RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL IN KAMLOOPS — KEITH SIMMONDS

I lived and worked in Kamloops, mining the north west hills, playing ball in her fields, worshipping at Kamloops United. Gotten to know some of the folk from the local Indigenous community. Knew vaguely about the Residential School there, run by the Catholics, finally shuttered in 1978, the year before I arrived. There were some, perhaps many who wondered why the school was left standing. Why the band made use of it, didn't insist the terrible place be torn down. Dismantled, brick from brick.

Now, perhaps, we are in the beginning of knowing. May we learn well the lessons of this place. Spoken in the bodies of children, hidden from sight and buried in the sandy ground, beneath the sage brushed shadows cast by Mt. Peter and Paul, within whisper and wind of the Thompson River.

Children of the Cowichan were taken there. Qu'wu'tsen girls and boys. I wonder how many returned.

Our ancestral churches and the governments they partnered were blinded, I believe, by the prize. Land, wealth and souls. Willing to pay any price for the harvest. The small graves in Kamloops are testimony to their avarice, to the stories men tell themselves in justification.

What are we to do, in the face of this testament? How then, shall we live?

T'Kemlups te Sewipemc Chief Kupa7 Rosanne Casimir asks us to read again the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and commit to its Calls to Action. To wear an Orange Shirt and engage our neighbours in conversation about why we are doing so.

I might add that we insist our governments be accountable to us on their ongoing apprehension of Indigenous children while refusing the resources that would support Indigenous families. Let us accompany and join those families on journeys towards healing and wholeness. Theirs and ours. May we open ourselves to love.

Vehicles slowing down near the school in Kamloops to show respect.





## RE-OPENING OUR CHURCH

Well here we go again! Last summer/fall we attempted to re-open fully and we made it half way when we had to change our plans due to the rise in Covid cases. Let's hope this time that we can open and get back to somewhat normal services come fall.

Staying with in the BC Worksafe guidelines we can now have 50 people in the sanctuary to worship on Sundays. We will need to wear masks and stay socially distanced for a few more months but at least we can gather and worship together. We will of course continue to zoom our services as well so you now have an option of where you join in .

We are also planning on having our Canada Day worship service on July 4th over in Centennial Park! It's always fun to gather outdoors and celebrate this wonderful country we are blessed to live in. So plan to bring your lawn chair (or we will have some chairs available and join in our outdoor service.

We hope to see you all soon!

## SPITIRUALITY BY MARCIA A NEWTON

Strength, awareness, comfort and awe,  
 a connection to something greater than all.  
 Pure song of the Spirit that brings hope to life,  
 and brings inner peace to the soul it enlightens.  
 Inner strength and centering of mind and of thought,  
 where the heart is readied and calmness is sought.  
 Renewing the soul in harmony and bliss,  
 when you quiet the mind and all worries cease.  
 Inspired by the Spirit of life and of love,  
 a journey of awareness where you see the face of God.  
 Tranquility, quiet, stillness and calm,  
 a reflection of the sacred as a song of a psalm.  
 Unburden oneself to be humble in heart,  
 to be one with the Spirit rather than apart.  
 Awareness in oneself, both body and in mind,  
 and calling into existence the light of the Divine.  
 Living in peace with ourselves, God, and all,  
 a connection with God's creatures, both great and small.  
 Illumination of Spirit of heart and of mind,  
 seeing beyond oneself rather than blind.  
 Transcending oneself beyond limits of mind,  
 to embrace what is good and all that is kind.  
 Yearning so intense for the soul to be free,  
 and being the person God created us to be.....

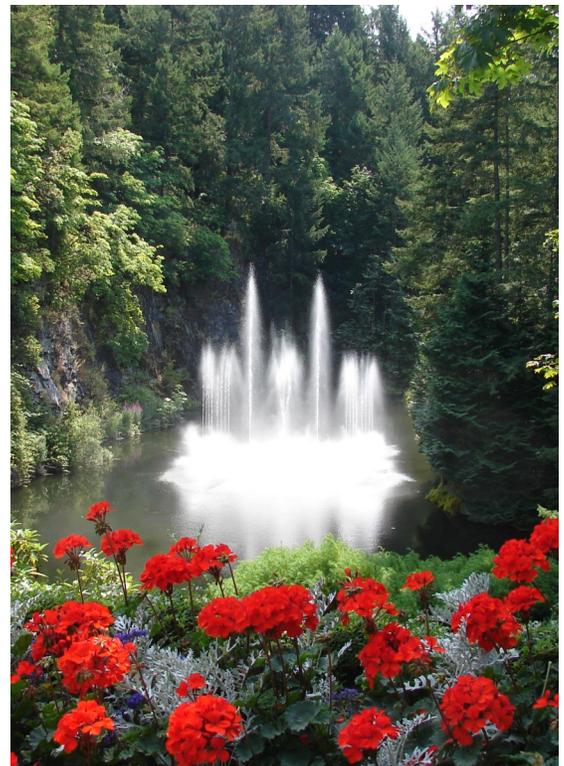


Photo: Butchart Gardens, Marta

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Interesting Links for you to browse...

### Duncan United Church

Web page: [www.duncanunited.org](http://www.duncanunited.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/duncanunited/](http://www.facebook.com/duncanunited/)

### Keith Simmonds Blog

[www.faithfulwitness.xyz](http://www.faithfulwitness.xyz)

Micah 6:8 “What does the Lord require of you...but to seek justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God”

