

# First Met News

Summer 2022 Newsletter



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Board Chair Edeana Malcolm and David Bray, Communications Team Leader, with the Affirm United banner on March 13, as we celebrated our formal recognition as an affirming church.



## First Met Hours of Operation

### CHURCH BUILDING HOURS

Monday–Friday

8:30 am–3:30 pm

5:45–9:45 pm (Mon/Tue/Thu)

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Thursday

9:30 am–2:00 pm

### SUMMER HOURS

(Jun 26–Sep 6)

Monday–Thursday

10:00 am–2:00 pm

5:45–9:30 pm Mon/Thu)

### SUNDAY HOURS

10:00–2:00 pm

8:30 am–2:00 pm (on first  
Sunday of month)

Office Contact Information  
Phone: 250-388-5188

### Need pastoral care ?

Please call the church at  
(250) 388-5188, press 4,  
then wait on the line.

## July/August Issue of Broadview

The July/August edition of Broadview is out!. Here's a peak at some of the stories:

- 10 Canadian spiritual hikes to rejuvenate your soul
- The decline of small media outlets is bad news for communities and for democracy
- Ten months after the Taliban takeover, thousands of Afghans are stuck in limbo
- The trouble with childcare: women are obligated to rejoin the workforce during their most stressful years
- Waníkiya (Indigenous ghost dance lives on



If you have forgotten to renew your Broadview subscription, there is still time! Please contact Janet Gray as soon as possible by email: [thegrays@shaw.ca](mailto:thegrays@shaw.ca) with Broadview in subject line. The group subscription price is \$25, a \$5.00 saving over the individual subscription rate.

## Schedule for Upcoming Newsletters

The deadlines for submissions for upcoming newsletters are:

- Fall 2022: August 15 (published by Aug 26)
- Winter 2022: November 14 (published by Nov 27)
- Spring 2023: February 13 (published by Feb 26)

## Sunday Services

Weekly in-person services at 11:00 am

Chapel Communion service First Sunday of the month 9:00 am

Masks and vaccination against COVID-19 are strongly recommended

Virtual church services: [firstmetvictoria.com/pages/live-stream](https://firstmetvictoria.com/pages/live-stream)

Online Coffee hour Sunday at 1:00 pm (link on website)

Live streaming of regular Sunday Service is FREE. However, we welcome donations from our online community.



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[firstmetvictoria](https://www.facebook.com/firstmetvictoria)



Follow us on Instagram  
[@firstmetvictoria](https://www.instagram.com/firstmetvictoria)

# Shelagh's Message

"Summer in the city!" Remember that great song from the Lovin' Spoonful? It is one of the great summer anthems of my life's soundtrack. Some great tunes there from such a range of singers from the Beatles to Taylor Swift... Who do you listen to and feel yourself transported back through time to a summer gone by?

We are still adjusting to the new situation the churches find themselves in after the pandemic. So much is different: no wonder we are nostalgic from a time which seems simpler (although it probably didn't feel that way all the time, even back then!) And here we are — in the gradual freedom of our COVID recovery, each family in a different space, negotiating risks of travel and visiting versus being lonely for our loved ones.

Thank you for taking the time to read this congregational newsletter! Our volunteers truly make all the difference, so let me say a big THANK YOU!! This has been an amazing year so far. When I take a step back and look what the Sacred Spirit is doing and how we have been led in the winter and spring, it makes me so excited for the rest of the year. Hasn't it been fun to sing (or hum) again in church? I so appreciated having the Choir back from March till the end of May. Now they are off for the summer. I am grateful for Kelly's choice of music each week! .

I've loved dreaming with Kyla Morrison Morgan and Sharron Higgins about our outreach to the North Park Community through the Pop-Up Cafes! I have enjoyed working with Ethan Slogotski, Joan Mason and David Bray to dream up ways that we can better communicate all that our church has to offer. We have also been focusing on how we can establish and grow our presence in our North Park.

I've appreciated the way Micia has responded to the needs of our children and youth to inspire them to grow in their faith and make sure they feel the love of God incarnate! In worship this summer, we will look at *The Awakened Traveler*, based on the writing of Rick Steves! Later, Creation will be our focus, relying on the inspiration of Matthew Fox's works. Our Zoom Chapel service continues on Thursday mornings as part of our hybrid offerings, with an in-person 9:00 am communion service on the first Sunday of the month.

I am grateful for Katya and Bruce and the custodial staff for their constant support as we transition back to more in-person activities. Many on our staff team will also be taking well-deserved breaks in the next couple of months. I pray they are refreshing times

We welcome Sarah Murray of the North Park Neighbourhood Association to our Christian Education Building! Their office is at Room is 114. We also say goodbye to Lindsey in the front office. It has been a pleasure to work with her and we wish her all the very best going forward.

Thank you for your support this year, thank you for your presence in church on Sundays, and thank you for being part of our congregational life here.

*God's Blessings,*

*Shelagh*





# Report from the Board Chair



During the early months of 2022, The Board struggled along with fewer and fewer members, but I'm happy to report that two more brave souls have been added to our number. Our church gardener Larry Scott has agreed to be secretary. I hope he will do as good a job with the minutes as he does with the garden! Linden Holmen is also joining our group. He is the new Redevelopment Task Group leader, replacing Ross Breckon who has stepped down after thirteen years of arduous, and often frustrating, work. These two new members were elected at our Congregational meeting on May 29. Our Board looks like this at the moment:

- Edeana Malcolm, chair
- Ross Breckon, treasurer
- Larry Scott, secretary
- Emily MacDonald
- Marketa Meadows
- Linden Holmen, RTG representative

Also, on June 5, we had a celebration to thank Liane Clark for all the work she has done, and continues to do, for the Church.

We could still use another person or two on our board. If anyone is interested, contact me at ([dnmlclm3@gmail.com](mailto:dnmlclm3@gmail.com)) We continue to meet monthly via Zoom on the third Wednesday of the month from 3 to 5pm.

In June, the congregation held "legacy" discussions to talk about the future of the First Metropolitan United Church. These were important discussions in the wake of our unsustainable financial situation and the stalled redevelopment plans. As a Board, we need direction from the congregation so that we know how to steer the ship. If you were unable to attend any of these meetings, we would still like to hear from you. Please send your ideas and suggestions at [dnmlclm3@gmail.com](mailto:dnmlclm3@gmail.com)

My sincere blessings for a healthy and restful summer whether you stay home or venture out into the wider world.

Shalom

*Edeana Malcolm, Chair of the First Met Board*



LEFT: Liane Clark at the celebration thanking her on June 5.  
BELOW LEFT: New Board member Linden Holmen.  
BELOW RIGHT: New Board member Larry Scott.



# The Awakened Traveler Worship Series

Beginning a journey involves leaving “home” - whether that is a physical place in order to explore another part of the world or changing a mindset that keeps us from expanding our spiritual capacity. If we seek out and remain open to new encounters, new people and new relationships, we allow ourselves a spiritual rendezvous with humanity. We discover more spiritual depth within us than we previously imagined.

We must try to shift our perception, redefining “strangers” as “friends we have not yet met.”

As we broaden our experience of lands and peoples in our travel or even just in our own towns and cities, we may move through a personal crisis if the breadth of religious thought and practice has not come into close view in our lives before. When we reflect and keep an open mind, this seemingly very different experience may be closer to us than we thought possible. This seven-week worship series will encourage us to open ourselves more fully to the curiosity, wonder, reflection and transformation that travelers – not merely tourists – experience when they choose to immerse themselves in soul-widening adventures. The weekly themes are:

Week 1: “Leaving Home” (Jun 19): What must we do to embark into the unknown?

Week 2: Pride week in Victoria (Jun 26)

Week 3: “The Encounter” (Jul 3): How can we shift our perception, redefining “strangers” as “friends we have not yet met?”

Week 4: “The Lands We Arrived On: First Nations Awareness” (July 10): How can we learn from, and immerse ourselves in, the cultures and lifestyle of those that were here before us?

Week 5: “The Reflection” (Jul 17): How can deeper reflection about our own hesitation to connect to the wider human family free us to explore more possibilities for a better world?

Week 6: “Returning Home” (Jul 24): The beauty of travel as a spiritual act is that our prized souvenirs are the “strands of different cultures we decide to knit into our own character.”

Week 7: “A Meal Before Departing” (Jul 31): Communion is both spiritual and human connection.

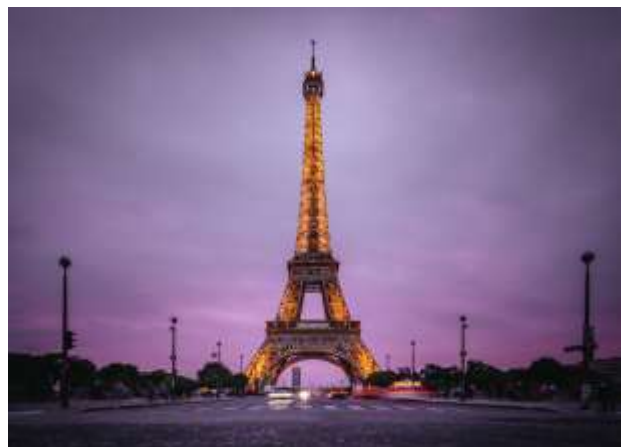
*“Leaving home, we set our seeing on a quest for deeper meaning. What we find can change us for the love of all the creation and its beings. Far from home, we know we’re seeing, everywhere is full of meaning; different folk expand our world and awe of all the creation and its beings. Coming home, we set our seeing to hold onto deeper meaning; loving life and making home a place for all the creation and its beings.”*

Ethan Slogotski



## First Met Online From Paris

Journey virtually to France each Sunday this summer! In amazing synchronicity with our worship series, *The Awakened Traveler*, First Met Online host Jodie Brady-Quinton has a cooperative education work term in Paris. She will be sharing her perspectives on the traveler’s mindset in the virtual coffee hour held each Sunday at 1:00 pm as well as the live chat at the worship livestream on YouTube. It may be evening in Paris, but Jodie will be hosting the sessions, café au lait or “un verre de vin” in hand.



# August Worship Series: Sacred Earth, Sacred Work

What if we lived life truly connected to the origins of Creation and the Creator? In the beginning God created all things and called them originally “good.” The Universe and all life within it, including us, is fundamentally a blessing, fundamentally good, and created to flourish. This doesn’t prevent us from experiencing hardship and difficulties, but it does strengthen us as we go through tough times. This is the message of Matthew Fox’s book *Original Blessing* which revived the tradition of Creation spirituality, the inspiration for this series.

It is through the work of spiritual practice that we move beyond fear and resistance to challenge and discover our deep and true selves. The spiritual journey can be understood as a dance moving in and out of four mystical paths, each with their own gifts. These paths are ‘awe and wonder’, ‘letting go’, ‘creativity’, and ‘compassion and justice.’ Made in the image of the Creator, every one of us carries within us the capacity to be a mystic, to be creative, to be visionary, and to promote and be a part of positive change throughout our community and the rest of the world.

We must try our best to benefit the Earth and all the creatures that live in it. Following Creation Spirituality we rejoice in and courageously honor the rich diversity around us which is expressed in every individual and embodies multiple cultures, religions, and ancestral traditions. We acknowledge that our species and the entire earth community depends upon the healing of harm already done, moving toward sustainability for the future, and harmony that offers life-giving coexistence for all.

Week 1: “Creation as Blessing” (August 7): How might moving through our days with an eye for recognizing goodness and blessing transform our experience of life?

Week 2: “Spirit of Compassion” (August 14): What practices in your life draw you closer to your true essence and closer to compassion for others?

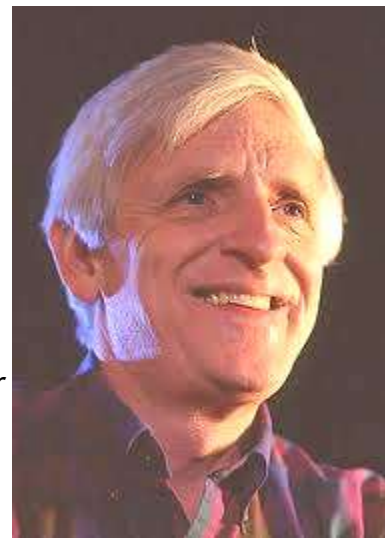
Week 3: “The Paths of Life” (August 21): Can we accept the Holy invitation to move fully into all the rhythms of life?

Week 4: “Sacred Creative Vocation” (August 28): What are we creating in this world that will cause positive ripples into the future?

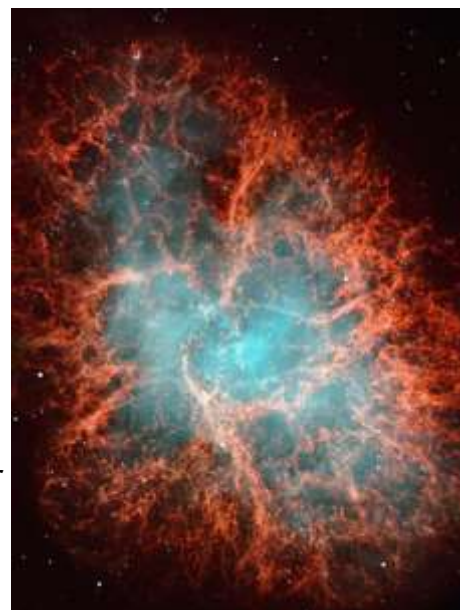
Week 5: “Glorious Diversity” (September 4): What do we lose when we privilege dominant voices and limit perspectives?

*“Creating God, You who spun the galaxies and breathed into us the breath of life,  
Open us to an awareness of the life coursing through us that is connected to all creation so that  
we might become more tuned in to your life force, feeling more vitality in our lives,  
and more loving towards all. We praise you as the One in whom we have life and being.”*

*Ethan Slogotski*



Matthew Fox





# Finance and Administration Report

On May 29, 2022, the First Met Congregation held its 2022 Congregational Annual General Meeting. During this meeting the 2022 Budget was approved and the First Met 2021 Annual Report containing the 2021 Financial Statements (as reviewed by our accountants) was received by the congregation. Also during this meeting it was announced that Ross Breckon will be assuming the role of First Met Treasurer. Ross Breckon and Liane Clarke will be working on the transition of Treasurer responsibilities to Ross over the summer months.

On May 12, 2022, a delegation of First Met staff was invited to tour the new premises of the Greater Victoria Intercultural Association (ICA) located at 808 Douglas St. The First Met delegation were pleased to present the ICA leadership team with a plaque commemorating the 24+ year relationship that our two organizations shared in our Balmoral Road buildings from June 1998 through April 2022. The plaque was designed and constructed by Paul Jenkins using a portion of one of the church pews removed from the Sanctuary in 2015 for the base.

The process to let the space vacated by ICA in May of 2022 has begun and First Met will soon be engaging a commercial real estate firm to help us find new tenants.

In the meantime, First Met is in discussions with the Victoria Symphony Society to rent the sanctuary for some orchestra rehearsals during the summer months.

In May, First Met received Lindsey Bellman's resignation as Administrative Assistant and Letting Coordinator, effective June 30, 2022. Lindsey has received a job offer from a technology company operating in a business area more closely aligned with her long-term career interests, and it is just too good an opportunity for her to turn down. We are very disappointed that Lindsey will be leaving First Met but wish her all the best in the new job. The search for Lindsey's replacement is now underway.

*Ross Breckon, Treasurer*



This plaque, beautifully crafted by Paul Jenkins, was presented to the Intercultural Association.



Shelagh MacKinnon, Paul Jenkins, Jean McRae, CEO of ICA, Ross Breckon, Bruce Davies



Lindsey Bellman is resigning effective June 30.

# The Power of Prayer: Part Two

Prayer is a mysterious thing. It spans cultures, creeds, time, and place. It can be intensely personal, yet something which binds us together so deeply. When we enter into prayer, we can connect with something greater than ourselves. The power of prayer has many reaches, and the Prayer Connections Ministry at First Met is a vibrant expression of how prayer touches the lives of others.

The Prayer Connections Team (PCT) was officially formed in 2009. It is a dedicated group of volunteers who offer prayer for folks in our church, community and beyond when they are in need. They are compassionate folks who follow strict confidentiality guidelines. The team is led by Anne Sikstrom, who has been involved since the beginning.

The power of prayer is illuminated in the reflection by congregation members Alva and Earl J. who shared “When it became known that our daughter Karen was diagnosed with invasive cancer, the First Met Prayer Team started to pray for her. When we were told she was being prayed for, we felt surrounded with love and were grateful to have positive and healing thoughts surrounding her and us. We appreciate the honoring of the privacy that Karen requested. Knowing we were not alone, with others in our faith community sharing our journey was very supportive.”

Prayer has an incredible way of bringing comfort to those who are grieving. As another congregation member recently shared, “The first two weeks after I stayed with my daughter Carlie, I just followed her around in a fog. My family, son Mike and daughter Jean helped me with the necessary paperwork, and Tammy was there to organize the service. Jean and her husband Tim handled the service with Tammy, with participation by grandsons Nathan, Aidan, and Ryan. I talked to members of the Prayer Team, who extended their time, so between the Prayer team, Tammy, and my family, I felt well supported and loved.” (Jacquie M.) Prayer lifts us up and holds us together when it feels like our worlds may be falling apart.

In 2019, my father became increasingly ill with cardiac complications and sadly passed away that fall. At the time my own health had been deteriorating. It was a very scary and challenging time in my life. I began to reconnect with my own prayer life in a more intimate way than I had since I was a youth. Between the daily prayer practice I undertook and the prayers offered by the Prayer Team, prayer began to play a vital role in my spiritual life. The power of prayer had the ability to comfort me even though life felt out of my control. It brought me a sense of calm and peace. I feel deep gratitude for the prayers I received from the PCT and others.

It has been said that “the greatest gift we can give each other is to pray for one another” (anonymous). The Prayer Connections Team is a true reflection of this sentiment. Bob Wilson, member of the PCT, shared “Leslie and I have been members of the PCT from the outset. Recently we have had need of the PCT for several family challenges and tragedies from dire medical situations to deaths and bereavements. The solace gained from reaching out to others with prayer requests is comforting. Much like the Prayers of the People in services, Prayer Connections allows us a daily conversation with God.”



Continued on p. 9



## Continued from p. 8

The spiritual connections created through the power of prayer are undeniable. The First Met Prayer Connections Team is seeking new members to participate in this inspiring ministry. You do not need to be an “expert” in prayer or especially “holy,” it’s a “come as you are” ministry! There is flexibility about how and when you pray: you do it as you are able. If someone is interested, they can meet with Kyla or Anne to find out more. You can arrange to try it out for a month to see if it feels right before committing to join. We invite you to consider becoming a part of this rewarding ministry. Please contact Kyla by email or phone if you are interested.

If you would like to submit a prayer request, please email: [prayer@firstmetvictoria.com](mailto:prayer@firstmetvictoria.com)

*Kyla Morrison Morgan, Health & Wellness Advocate*  
[kyla.morgan@firstmetvictoria.com](mailto:kyla.morgan@firstmetvictoria.com)  
(250) 388-5188, ext 226



## Caregiver Support Group

The Caregiver Support Group supports partners, family members or other loved ones of someone with a dementia. Members support one another by sharing their stories and concerns, and having a safe place to talk. The facilitators are a retired nurse and a social worker who is the Health and Wellness Advocate at First Met United Church. We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 1:00 - 2:30 pm in the Chapel at First Metropolitan United Church on Quadra and Balmoral. We continue to meet all year. New folks are welcome to join us!

Are you registered with the Alzheimer’s Society? - Their address is 202- 306 Burnside Rd and phone, (250) 382 2052. They offer educational classes and support.

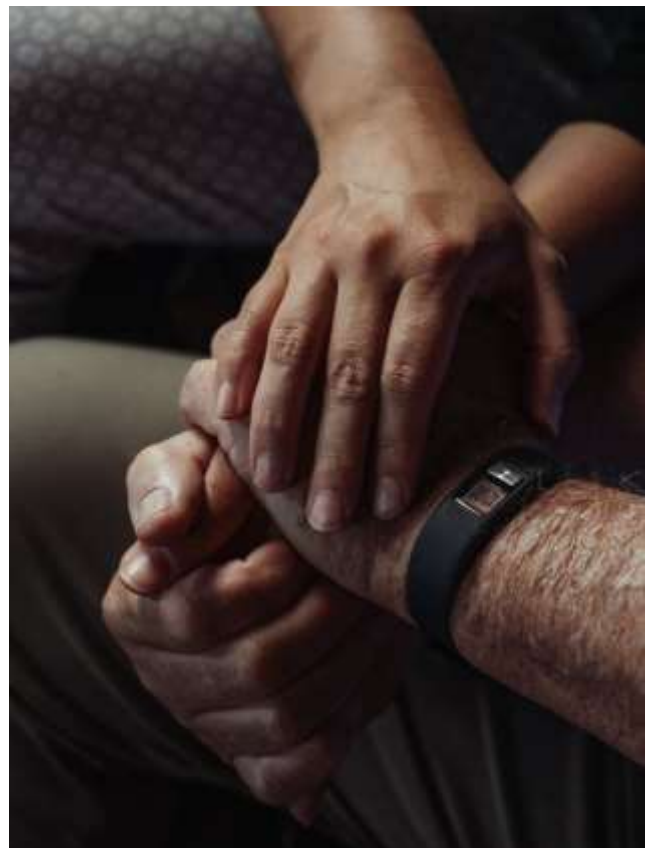
Tips for communicating with someone with a dementia:

- Agree, never argue
- Divert, never reason
- Distract, never shame
- Reassure, never lecture
- Reminisce, never say ‘remember’
- Repeat information, never say “I told you”
- Dowhat they can do, never say “you can’t”
- Ask, never demand
- Encourage, never condescend
- Reinforce, never force

*Emily MacDonald*

*Caregiving often calls us to lean into love we didn't know possible.*

*—Tia Walker*



# Spiritual Care and Wellness Visitation Ministry

Lent and Easter are very important times of the Christian calendar and also for our homebound congregants. Your Visitation Ministry visitors focused on accompanying home-bound folks in our congregation during this special season. The visitors brought Lenten devotional booklets and an Easter gift package with a card, plus a little chick from an egg (but no chocolate).

Some could visit in person, but others just had to drop off the Easter package first, followed by phone calls. Visitation during Covid is very different and challenging. Some visitors have patiently gone through rapid tests at the facility in order to visit and bring communion.

Each visit is different, as are the visitors and recipient. However, honouring our home-bound elders is so important. Our visitors make meaningful connections; they are a great host of God's angels, sharing the love of God from First Met.

Many appreciative comments have come from those visited. I am grateful for this ministry and the increasing number of visitors! We hope summer will allow us to visit more freely as our ministry continues.

*Megumi Matsuo Saunders,*  
Visitation Ministry Coordinator (250) 896-3876



ABOVE RIGHT: The contents of the Easter gift package

RIGHT: Jacquie Henderson presents Joyce Thomson with a hydrangea plant after our Easter service.



You're invited to our

## Pop-Up Café

For Conversation & Connection



No registration required  
Complimentary refreshments served  
Distanced for your comfort  
Everyone is welcome!

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**June 7th & 21st**  
**July 12th & 26th**  
**August 2nd, 16th, & 30th**

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**Volunteers needed!**  
Please contact Kyla Morgan for info:  
(250) 388-5188 ext. 226  
[kyla.morgan@firstmetvictoria.com](mailto:kyla.morgan@firstmetvictoria.com)

Alternating Tuesdays 10:30am - 12:00pm  
Room 119 at First Metropolitan United Church  
932 Balmoral Road, Victoria BC



# Children and Youth Ministry Update

So much has happened in the last few months! We have fourteen families in our First Met community, and here are just a few of the things we've been up to:

March: Lenten campfire, scripture scavenger hunt and activities in the church and Quadra garden, with dinner by Kathy McMillan and help from Liane and Megumi. The kids created a mitten rainbow for P.I.E. Day and our Affirming Church celebration, and Micia took part in a book study with Susan Lukey with her book *Adventure in Faith and Family*.

April: Our traditional flowering Easter cross reappeared in the sanctuary, along with banners unfurled from the balconies by the Biederman and Wilkinson families, followed by an outdoor Easter egg hunt and scripture word-scramble. Camping Sunday was fun and ended with mug-up and the Johnny Appleseed grace for all to take home.

May: Christian Family Sunday was even more special this year with Hannah Oliver's confirmation. Our 20<sup>th</sup> annual Camp Pringle United Church family camp brought 3 days full of sunshine, good times and special guest Reverend John Snow. Families made Pentecost Dove mobiles with the word "kindness" in many languages (thanks for the idea Audrey W!) to decorate the sanctuary, and we've started to plan for September!

Throughout this season we used the Seasons of the Spirit and other resources for Sunday School, with hi-lights including Minoan discs, Pentecost tea-bag rockets and Palm Sunday *Sundaes*. First Met continues to toll the bells at noon each day in support of peace for Ukraine, Faith @ Home kits were provided to each of our families, and Micia gathers with others from the Pacific Mountain Region's First Third Ministry weekly on ZOOM.

Coming up: a farewell picnic at Beacon Hill for our beloved Dubé family, a celebration of our high school and university grads, Pride parade on June 26<sup>th</sup> and a week of Summer Day Camp fun July 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>.

We couldn't have done any of these exciting things without the support of First Met staff and volunteers and you, our wonderful congregation, and so we say THANKS!!

*Micia Kanstrup, Sunday School coordinator*

Photos from top: Lenten campfire, Dubé family, Easter cross decorated with flowers, Hannah Oliver's confirmation, family camp at Camp Pringle





# A Thank You From Our Place

First Metropolitan United Church recently received a letter from Maria Green, Manager of Spiritual Care at Our Place. Here is an excerpt from her letter:

“On behalf of everyone at Our Place, I would like to take this time to say a heartfelt thank you to all of you at First Metropolitan United Church. You’ve put your faith into action through your generosity and support over our past fiscal year ending March 31st. Your donations are vital in supporting our “family members” who often carry the trauma of abandonment and rejection as we work with them to develop a sense of hope and belonging. Thanks in part to you, our family members can receive three nourishing meals a day, enjoy a hot shower, receive toiletries and clothing, and have access to shelter and outreach supports.

Furthermore, your generosity and support has enabled the Spiritual Care program to expand over the last six months beyond Pandora’s downtown drop-in to provide care across eight sites, including housing and shelters, New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community, and:

- A team of 15 caring community volunteers have been recruited to offer Spiritual Care at our housing and shelter sites.
- Monthly we have an average of 35 private sessions and 200 Spiritual Care program participants.
- An Indigenous Elder offers cleansing smudge weekly, as well as Indigenous ceremonies on occasion.
- Memorial services are held to honour the lives of family members that have passed.
- There is a weekly Bible Study, Spiritual Discussion Group, and an Intensive Journal Workshop, providing opportunities for reflection and healing.

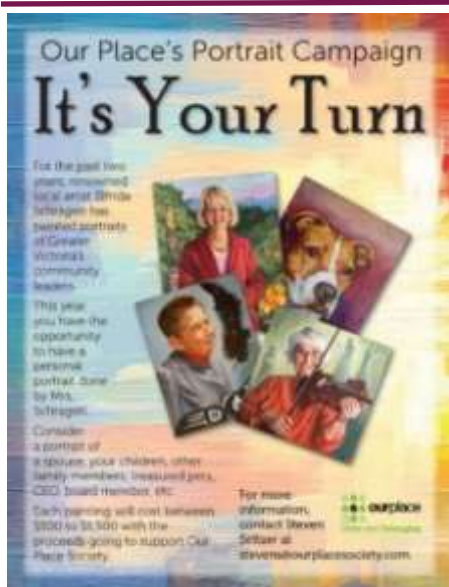


Maria Green  
Manager of Spiritual Care

## Did you know?

Our Place now employs 275+ staff and 300 volunteers who operate a continuum of critical services in 12 locations. These include:

- 919 Pandora Avenue
- Muncey Place on Blanshard St.
- Capital City Centre Hotel
- Tiny Homes Village
- Russell Street Shelter
- My Place Shelter on Yates St.
- First Met Church Shelter
- Pandora Night Shelter
- New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community
- Jaymac Place Recovery Home in Saanich
- Our WorkPlace on Quadra St.



## Portraits of Caring

For the past few years, renowned local artist Elfrida Schragen has painted portraits of emerging youth and community leaders; from lawyer and social activist Trenton Franco to Dr. Bonnie Henry.

This year, you have the opportunity to have a personal portrait done by Mrs. Schragen. Consider a portrait of a spouse, your children, other family members, treasured pets, CEO, board member etc. Each painting will cost between \$500 to \$1,500. What a wonderful way to immortalize someone you love!

All money raised goes directly to Our Place’s vital programs and services in our community.

For more information, please contact Steven Seltzer at [stevens@ourplacesociety.com](mailto:stevens@ourplacesociety.com)



# United Church Women News

The UCW's Mission is to love God; foster Christian commitment, faithfulness, spirituality; and promote respect and love for all God's creation.

Unity and Mildred Mossop units held a joint meeting with Megumi Saunders as the speaker. The UCW has had a special connection with Megumi and her first groups of the Sunday school children. It was delightful to have Megumi share the stories and pictures of the journeys of many of these 'children', now young adults, with stories of their educational paths, interesting careers, and travels. We also celebrated the birthdays of Margaret Zilkie and Sherri Cooknell.

The UCW congratulated Hannah Oliver on her Confirmation and presented her with an Oak cross.

We thanked Fiona Weber for her years of support of the UCW with a gift certificate to purchase fabric for her retirement sewing projects!

Unity and Mildred Mossop units plan to share a June picnic and time of fellowship sharing ideas for our Fall UCW activities.

*Marie McKee*



TOP: Megumi's presentation to UCW

BOTTOM: Celebrating the birthdays of Margaret Zilkie and Sherri Cooknell

LEFT: Some of the tulips planted by the children with Larry Scott

## Jams and Jellies to Support Youth Programs

I hope to be able to have the following jams and jellies available by the end of summer:

Jams: pear, raspberry, plum

Jellies: blackberry, grape, yellow apple, plum, blueberry

Please order as soon as possible as jam season will soon start. The price of supplies has increased; the jams and jellies will now be \$6 a jar. Proceeds go to help youth programs. Thank-you for your support.

*Marion Denton, (250) 478-1800*



**Looking for info on  
First Met events,  
either past or  
upcoming?**

**Check out our  
website**

**[firstmetvictoria.com](http://firstmetvictoria.com)**

# Cultivate Courage in Relationships

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines courage as “the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.” Words that describe courage include “bold”, “brave”, “fearless”, “gutsy”, “heroic” and “stalwart”.

In his book *Resilient*, Dr. Rick Hanson proposes four strategies for practicing courage in relationships:

## 1. Speak from the heart

You say what is important and speak your truth respectfully and skillfully. You are clear about what you see, feel and want in a particular relationship. You keep in mind what is happening inside the other person. You could discuss with the other person how you interact and consider what helps interactions go well or not well. You avoid topics that provoke arguments. You use words that are clear to each of you. You share experiences with empathy, compassion and kindness to promote positive connection. You use expressions such “I feel” and “I am”. You are open and genuine.

## 2. Use wise speech

You are responsible for what you say. Wise speech is well-intended, true, beneficial, timely, kind and wanted. Well-intended speech is speech that aims to help. True speech is accurate, reflecting the facts. Beneficial speech is enjoyable and useful. Timely speech is speech that is used when appropriate. Kind speech is cordial and compassionate. Wanted speech is thoughtful and considerate of the other person’s needs and desires.

## 3. Assert yourself

To assert yourself, you establish the relevant facts and what is true. You clarify your values. You determine what is most important to you related to an issue and why it is important. You find out what the other person’s values are and focus on the result you care about. At a certain point, you consolidate your gains, that is, protect what has been accomplished before taking the next steps. When asserting yourself, make requests, not demands. Use a kind emotional tone to show how much you value the relationship. Finally, make clear agreements.

## 4. Repair relationships

Relationships rest on a foundation of trust, respect and commitment. As trust is based on reliability, you find out what you could count on from others. In a challenging relationship, check your understanding: What is really true? What happened? What is the larger context?

Know that you matter. Do not minimize or justify mistreatment of you by others. Expect others to keep their agreements and treat you with respect.

Speak up. Your feelings are important. Let people know what their impact is on you. Indicate what you would like to change. Consider the obstacles and how to resolve them. Tell the other person what you are doing and why. Start acting in new ways and strive to establish a new agreement with the other person.

## Centering thoughts to develop courage

- I speak from the heart.
- I speak wisely.
- I assert myself to express what I want.
- I repair my challenging relationships.

Wally Lazaruk, May 2022

## Sources and References

[Rick Hanson, The Foundations of Well-Being](#)

[Resilient - Dr. Rick Hanson: \*www.rickhanson.net > resilient\*](#)

[HEAL: The Four Steps to Taking in the Good \*www.habitsforwellbeing.com > heal-the-four-steps-to-ta...\*](#)





# National Indigenous Peoples Day: June 21

Partners and co-hosts from across the region invite you to join us in person to honour National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 at Royal Roads University. This is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We are grateful to gather on the traditional lands of Lekwungen and Xwsepsum ancestors and families to celebrate in person once again! The event runs from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm and is free of charge. Everyone is welcome!



More information is available on the Royal Roads website: <https://www.royalroads.ca/NIPD>. This is just one of the many events offered at the university throughout June. On July 10, First Met will focus on “The Lands We Arrived On” as part of *The Awakened Traveler* worship series.

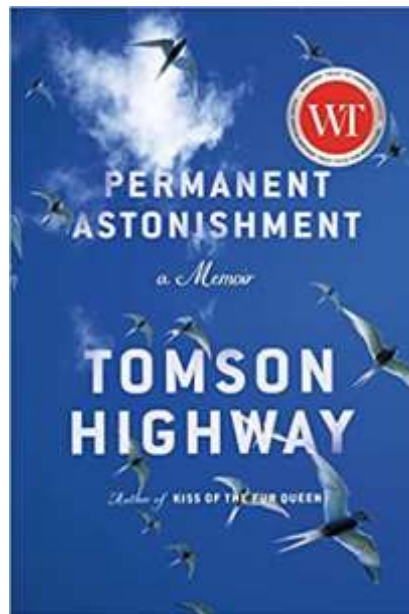
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## New Book in Mountford Library

Our latest batch of new books are dedicated to library volunteers Pat Davey and Clare Lowery, who stepped down from our committee after years of wonderful service to First Met readers. It includes:

**Highway, Tomson. *Permanent Astonishment: A Memoir*. 2021 Call no.: 928.1154 H638H**

Capricious, big-hearted, joyful: an epic memoir from one of Canada’s most acclaimed Indigenous writers and performers Tomson Highway was born in a snowbank on an island in the sub-Arctic, the 11th of 12 children in a nomadic, caribou-hunting Cree family who traversed the tundra by dogsled and lived off the land. In *Permanent Astonishment*, he animates the magical world of his northern childhood, paying tribute to a way of life that few have experienced and fewer still have chronicled. Growing up in a land of ten thousand lakes and islands, Tomson Highway relished being pulled by dogsled beneath a night sky alive with stars; sucking the juices from roasted muskrat tails; and singing country music songs with his impossibly beautiful older sister and her teenaged friends. Surrounded by the love of his family and the vast, mesmerizing landscape they called home, his was, in many ways, an idyllic far-north childhood. Five of Tomson’s siblings died in childhood, and Balazee and Joe Highway, who loved their surviving children profoundly, wanted their two youngest sons, Tomson and René, to enjoy opportunities as big as the world. When Tomson was 6, he and René were flown south by float plane to attend a residential school and begin the rest of their education. In 1990 René Highway, a world-renowned dancer, died of an AIDS-related illness. *Permanent Astonishment* is Tomson’s extravagant embrace of his younger brother’s final words: “Don’t mourn me, be joyful.” Infused with joy and outrageous humour, *Permanent Astonishment* offers insights, both hilarious and profound, into the Cree experience of culture, conquest and survival.



For lists of our most recent books, with descriptions, see the Library’s web page on the First Met website: <https://www.firstmetvictoria.com/about/library>

The Library Committee welcomes our new volunteers Alva and Earl Jenson and Shelley Gait. They are avid readers who can recommend book titles and help you find them!

Denise Holmen

# Thank You From Liane Clark

It's the evening of Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup>. I have just finished reading the cards and emails thanking me for my service to First Met. There are not enough words to thank all of you for your kind messages before, during and after today's event, your presence this morning, your gift certificates, your flowers and your food gifts. There is actually no more space on my desk for cards, in the freezer for food or in my desk drawer for chocolate –yes, I have the back of a drawer reserved for chocolate.

I am overcome with gratitude. I joined First Met because I needed a sense of belonging and community. You have all proven time and time again to being that community. I am planning to continue my journey with First Met though I am still discerning my path forward. I am currently sharing my knowledge with Ross Breckon, the new Treasurer. I will be taking some vacation at the end of June with friends and at the end of July with family. In August, I plan to figure out my areas of interest and next steps in those areas. Hopefully, I will be starting any new endeavours in September. I am, however, not going anywhere and continue to look forward to spending time with you at church for many years to come.

*Liane Clark*



## First Met Celebrates Twenty-Five Years of Amalgamation



Amalgamation Sunday procession, Victoria, BC, July 1997  
(First Met Archives / FMUC\_2004-0530)

Twenty-five years ago, the newly amalgamated congregation of First Metropolitan United Church left Metropolitan United Church to walk in procession the few blocks to its new home at the former First United Church.

*Margery Hadley, First Met Heritage and Archives Team*



# Celebrating First Met's Affirming Status

After close to two years of preparation, education and discernment, First Metropolitan United Church officially became an affirming congregation on March 13, 2022. The mood was celebratory in the 11:00 worship service and the gathering that followed. March 13 was also P.I.E. (Public, Intentional, Explicit) Day in the United Church of Canada, a day that celebrates the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people in faith communities and beyond across Canada.

The Certificate acknowledging First Met as an affirming congregation was presented via video by Rev. Liz Carter-Morgan, the Affirming Ministry Coordinator for Western Canada. Laughter erupted in the congregation as Rev. Carter-Morgan dispatched the certificate from the video screen into the waiting hands of First Met's Board Chair, Edeana Malcolm.

First Met joins the 273 congregations throughout Canada and 33 congregations in BC that have become affirming. Another 160 congregations are in the process leading to a vote.

We were joined by Rev. Mark Green of Broad View United Church, who gave the reflection. Some of the early workshops attended by First Met members took place at his church as we began the process toward affirming.

Following the church service, coffee, tea, and a wide assortment of tarts were served in the Fellowship Hall. The hall was decorated with a rainbow of coloured gloves, created by the Sunday School children.



Participants in the worship service included Rev. Mark Green, Edeana Malcolm, David Bray, Kyla Morrison • Morgan and Rev. Shelagh MacKinnon



The rainbow of gloves created by the children



Fiona Weber, on her retirement from the position of Administrative Assistant and Letting Coordinator

Shirley Tucker celebrated her 105th birthday on May 8th. She is wearing the shawl presented to her by the church.





# The Lekwungen People and Camas

(Editor's Note: This land acknowledgement was given at the June 5, 2022 service and is included in the newsletter because it describes so beautifully the relationship between the Lekwungen-speaking people and the camas plant as well as the misunderstandings of the landscape by James Douglas and other settlers.)

I acknowledge with deep gratitude and respect that the land on which we live, work and worship is the land of the Lekwungen people, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. I humbly thank them for their stewardship of, and their relationship with, this land.

In the spring of 1842, James Douglas sailed along the coastline of southern Vancouver Island looking for a suitable site to establish an English settlement. When he saw the vast and beautiful meadows and grasslands, in the area we know now as Beacon Hill Park, he was greatly impressed. It reminded him of England and he described it as "a perfect 'Eden' in the midst of the dreary wilderness."

What he saw was six square miles of verdant meadows filled with native grasses, Blue Camas and at least 40 other varieties of native flowers. He assumed these meadows were naturally occurring, but he was mistaken. These meadows were the product of careful cultivation and land management by the Lekwungen people over hundreds of years. The bulbs of the Blue Camas plant were the most important plant crop of the Lekwungen people. They cultivated and harvested two varieties, the Common Camas and The Great Camas.

The land was divided into family plots that were passed down from generation to generation. The land was carefully cleared of stones and weeds and the soil was dug. The digging loosened and aerated the soil, ensuring moisture and nutrient retention, seed germination and bulb growth. The poisonous, white-flowered Death Camas was carefully weeded out. To harvest the bulbs in May and June, the soil was dug out in sections and the larger bulbs removed. Smaller bulbs were separated and replanted and then the sod was replaced. In the fall, controlled burning was carried out to prevent shrubs and brush from overgrowing. Camas bulbs resemble small onions and were steamed in large pits for a day and a half until soft. They had a sweet pear-like taste, as they contained the complex sugar inulin.

Camas was far more than a pretty blue flower for the Lekwungen people. Not only was it a staple of their diet, but surplus Camas bulbs were traded with other indigenous groups on the west coast of the island. The cultivation and harvest of the camas also played a very important role in social and cultural life as families gathered in the fields to work.

Sadly, after the arrival of settlers, the Camas meadows were soon gone- taken over for settlement and agriculture or damaged by grazing livestock that compacted the soils and damaged the camas plants. In addition, controlled burning, so crucial in maintaining the meadows, was prohibited.

We are still able to see a few Camas meadows growing in the Victoria area. Let them be a reminder to us to acknowledge and honour the stewardship that the Lekwungen people have shown for thousands of years, and continue to show, for these lands.

*Robin Breckon*



# Climate Conversations at First Met

*“Twenty-five years ago, people could be excused for not knowing much, or doing much, about climate change. Today we have no excuse.”*  
-Desmond Tutu

We know with certainty that we are in the midst of a climate crisis and that it will get significantly worse, unless we act now. We are experiencing flooding, drought, wildfires, melting glaciers, and the loss of species and habitat, to name only a few of the obvious impacts of climate change. It is very easy to feel overwhelmed, powerless, and hopeless at the magnitude of the challenges that face us today, and those feelings can lead to inaction.

We are people of faith and are called to make a difference in the world. In March 2022, a small group from First Met gathered via Zoom to talk, learn, share, and brainstorm about climate change. Our discussions were facilitated by Janet Gray, who used a conversation guide resource developed by “For the Love of Creation”, a faith-based initiative for Climate Justice. (<https://fortheloveofcreation.ca>)

During these climate conversations, we shared honestly our fears and our hopes in a supportive environment. For me, these guided conversations, within a faith perspective, were an antidote to my feelings of fear and powerlessness and provided reassurance that I am not alone in those feelings. We learned basic climate science facts, did brainstorming exercises, discussed measures we are presently undertaking (e.g., reusing and recycling, biking, driving electric vehicles, flying less), and discussed measures we could take on an individual level, as well as at the political level. We also watched a TED Talk video about using positive language, when describing the climate crisis, to inspire hope and encourage people to get involved in meaningful climate action.

When people come together to talk about the climate crisis, they find mutual support, new energy, and common purpose. This spurs them to action in their personal lives and beyond.

We hope to hold more climate conversations in the coming months at First Met or on Zoom. Please join us - to learn, to lament, to share, and to advocate for responsible stewardship of our beautiful Earth.

*"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." - Jane Goodall*  
*Robin Breckon*



# Welcome Ethan Slogotski!

Ethan Slogotski, a third year student in Computer Science and Music at the University of Victoria, is our cooperative education student for the May to August work term. Ethan's previous experience includes live-streaming the Evensong services at Christ Church Cathedral.



# North Park Multicultural Festival



On Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, North Park held a Multicultural Festival at Royal Athletic Park. It is the first of four such festivals planned for the year. Three members of the Evolving Church Team helped out with the Photoshoot. A professional photographer volunteered his time from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm to take photos in black and white of families and individuals who came to the Festival. These pictures were then emailed to all participants free of charge. The portraits can also be viewed on the NPNA website: <https://npna.ca/humans/>



There were a number of people from the North Park neighbourhood selling ethnic food and craft products from many different cultures, along with live music and dancing. The atmosphere was joyous. As part of the festival, a "Jane's Walk" (named in honour of community activist Jane Jacobs) was held. This was a tour of the neighbourhood highlighting new and historical sites, with different speakers at each location. A local resident created a neighbourhood map, which was a piece of art that you could take home. The next festival will be in July - stay tuned!

*Emily MacDonald, Team Leader, Evolving Church,*  
[emilymacd@telus.net](mailto:emilymacd@telus.net) or (250) 886-9975



## NPNA Food Pantry at Royal Athletic Park

The North Park Neighbourhood Association has created a food pantry beside the Lending Hub at the Vancouver Street Plaza (corner of Vancouver and Caledonia). People are invited to take what they need and give what they can. Donations of non-perishable foods are always welcome.

The Lending Hub is a larger-than-life little free library where you can borrow board games, puzzles, lawn games, and sports equipment at no cost!



## Thank you Fernwood Coffee and Parsonage Café!

First Met Church thanks Fernwood Coffee Company and the Parsonage Café for donations of coffee to support our Pop-up Cafés.



# Repair Café a Success

Our very first Repair Café was held March 26 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm in collaboration with the North Park Neighbourhood Association (NPNA).

Volunteers were available to repair electronic items, clothing, jewelry, and more. Refreshments were available for all guests and a light soup and scone lunch was provided to volunteers, thanks to Fiona Weber. The event was organized by our cooperative education student, Zach Young, who even recruited his mother as a volunteer! Other volunteers came from our church, the NPNA and the broader community

Every one who attended rated the event a great success. The most frequently heard comment was “When will you hold another repair café?” While there was no charge for the event, \$184 in donations were received.

Thanks to St. John Ambulance for providing first aid (fortunately not needed!) and our sponsors Castle Building Supply and the Victoria Tool Library.



Volunteers hard at work repairing items brought in by community members



## Pride Week: June 23 to July 2

In the 1960's, police raids on gay bars were very common. Things changed however on June 28, 1969, during a police raid on Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York City when officers lost control of the situation. Tensions between NYC Police and gay residents of Greenwich Village erupted into more protests the next evening and again several nights later. In just a few weeks, residents of Greenwich Village organized into activist groups demanding the right to live openly and without fear of being arrested. Within a few months, three newspapers were established to promote rights for LGBTQ people. A year after the raid, June 28, 1970, the first ever pride marches took place in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Gay rights organizations were founded across the world in the years following this, and pride events occur every June to commemorate the events at Stonewall Inn.

At First Metropolitan United Church, we strive to be fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. As an Affirming congregation are committed to working for justice and support within our congregation and our community. We participated in the Victoria Pride parade in 2019 and will again in 2022. Nathan Homb, Antonio Subtil, and Janet Gray represented First Met in the parade and had many positive things to say about it. “[Nathan] was immensely proud to march in the parade with First Met. It’s such an important and powerful message to help heal the spiritual wounds of people who have previously felt ostracized by the Church.” Participating in events like these can help show the LGBTQ2S+ community that they have our full support. Janet Gray feels that “when we walk together, to celebrate and to show solidarity, we encourage each other and grow towards the community we want to see everywhere!” As a congregation, it is very important for everyone to feel welcome and to welcome everyone into the safe space that is First Metropolitan United Church.

*Ethan Slogotski*



# First Met Spring 2022 Pictures



Chancel decorated for our Lent series "Good Enough: Embracing the Imperfections of Life and Faith"



Our ladder for the Good Enough series was draped with Pride and Transgender flags for the P.I.E. Day service on March 13.



Staff gathered for a farewell to Fiona Weber



Ramblers Hike to Sitting Lady Falls



Board Chair Edeana Malcolm and Rev. Shelagh MacKinnon delivered a card and flowers to St. Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Church after the invasion of Ukraine on February 24.



# In Memoriam



Lois Hicks  
Died Apr 22, 2022



Flatlanders Walk along Dallas  
Road, March 5

## New Sound Board Installed!

Our new Allan & Heath digital sound board was installed on June 1<sup>st</sup> to replace our aging analog board. The audio-visual crew are learning all the new capabilities of the board including the ability to save and recall settings from memory instead of having to reset everything manually. The new board was ordered in October 2021 and supply chain issues have delayed its delivery till now. Watch for more information on its capabilities in our Fall 2022 newsletter.



Families continue to toll the church bells each day at noon as a reminder to pray for peace in Ukraine. The invasion is now more than 100 days in length.



# EVERYONE IS WELCOME !

*Please  
Join Us*

## Caregiver Support Group

Meets the 4th Thursday of the month 1:00–2:30 pm. Contact **Emily Macdonald** at (250) 886-9975

## First Met Knitters

Meetings second Tuesday of each month Sept to June from 1:00–3:00 pm. For more information call **Joan Mickelson**, (250) 385-4033 or **Shirley Chatfield**, (250) 388-9401.

## Men's Water Into Wine Group

Gathers the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7:00–9:00 pm at the Bent Mast, 512 Simcoe St. and virtually on the 3rd Tuesday. Email **fmuc.men@shaw.ca** for more information.

## Ramblers Hiking Group

Meets the third Saturday of every month at the church for car-pooling. For more information: **Rennie Warburton**, (250) 592-9161, [rwarby@gmail.com](mailto:rwarby@gmail.com).

## United Church Women:

Mildred Mossop: 2nd Mon, 10 am  
Unity: 3rd Thurs, 12 noon  
Meetings in the Doreene McLeod Rm at the church.

## Tai Chi

Meets Mondays and Wednesdays noon–1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Call **Edeana Malcolm** at (250) 412-7682 for more information.

## Women Exploring Spirituality

Meets 4th Monday of the month from 1:00–3:00 pm from Sep to Jun via Zoom. Contact **Rev. Shelagh MacKinnon** for more information.

## Yoga in the Chapel

**Gentle Yoga**  
Mondays, Thursdays,  
10:30–11:45 am

**Chair Yoga**  
Wednesdays 12:30–1:30 pm

## NPNA Grocery Hamper Program

Thursdays from 8:00 am–12:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Contact NPNA to volunteer or receive a hamper at [npna@npna.ca](mailto:npna@npna.ca)

## Flatlanders Walking Group

Meets 1st Saturday of the month from 1:00 to 3:00 pm at various locations. For more information, contact **Vicky Attwell** at (778) 433-6061

## Friendship Club

Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month when COVID and weather permit. Contact **Marlene Campbell** at (250) 382-5954 for more information.

## Evolving Church

Meets 1st Wednesday of the month at 10:30 am at the church. Contact **Emily MacDonald** at (250) 886-9975 for more information.



Flowers in the Quadra Garden

## Parking Options

### Week Days

- Balmoral Road
- Ground Level ~ North Park St. east of Balmoral Gardens Apartments

### Sundays

- Balmoral Road ~ Angle Parking
- Ground Level ~ East of Balmoral Gardens Apartments

Observe the one hour and two hour parking limits when using street parking on Balmoral, Quadra and North Park.

**First Metropolitan**  
United Church of Canada

*A centre for  
spiritual growth and  
community engagement*

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