

First Met News

Spring 2023 Newsletter



On February 12th, congregants gathered in the Fellowship Hall to create banners and posters in preparation for the February 25th United for Old Growth Rally at the BC Legislature.

Volume 24 Issue 1

- 02 Coming in Broadview
- 03 Shelagh's Message
- 04 Report from the Board Chair
Refugee Family New Canadians
- 05 Lent Worship Series:
Roll Down Justice
Spring Events
- 06 Fraud Prevention for Seniors
- 07-10 Spiritual Care and Wellness News
- 10 Hospitality Team
- 11 Climate Justice Activities
- 12 Children and Youth Ministry
- 13 Evolving Church Team News
- 14 Intimacy
- 15 Thank You City of Victoria
Welcome Sihan and Wayne
- 16 Thank You First Met Angels
Read Locally Book Fair
- 17 NPNA News
- 18 Remembering Robin Krause
- 19 Looking for Summer Ideas
Secret of the Dance Book Review
- 20 AbbeyChurch Events
Welcome Back Linda Hallett
- 21 UCW News
- 22 December 2022 Pictures
- 23 In Memoriam
- 24 Event Listings

Inside this Issue



First Met Hours of Operation

CHURCH BUILDING HOURS

Monday
9:00 am–3:30 pm

Tuesday–Friday
9:00 am–10:00 pm

Saturday
3:30–10:00 pm
(for events only)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Friday
9:00 am–4:00 pm

SUNDAY HOURS
9:00–1:00 pm

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.

March Issue of Broadview

The March issue of Broadview is out!. Here's a peek at some of the stories:

- Drag queens and kings who brought their art to their hometowns.
- Canada's first foster care agency for Muslim kids
- Why we need more embodied worship
- The United Church needs to do a better job of attracting young adults.
- Experts offer churches advice on how to prevent clergy abuse.
- Indigenous forester sees burning forest biomass as better for the environment and his culture.



You can check out some of these stories and some online articles at <https://broadview.org/magazine/march-2023/>

Schedule for Upcoming Newsletters

The deadlines for submissions for upcoming newsletters are:

- Summer 2023: June 12 (published by June 25)
- Fall 2023: August 4 (published by August 28)
- Winter 2023: November 13 (published by November 26)

Sunday Services

Weekly in-person services at 11:00 am

Chapel Communion service: First Sunday of the month at 9:00 am
Masks and vaccination against COVID-19 are strongly recommended

Virtual church services: firstmetvictoria.com/pages/live-stream

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



Like us on Facebook
[firstmetvictoria](https://www.facebook.com/firstmetvictoria)



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

Shelagh's Message

The season which culminates in the celebration of the Christ's Resurrection is here again! This time of year is rich: recognition of pain and the harshest realities of life is driven toward the Good News of the victory of the power of the love of God. Each year, this church rhythm is a separate drumbeat beside the changing realities of our own lives as individuals, families, and a community of faith. It is referred to as both ancient and ever new. I believe this is a remarkable time for us at First Met as well as for our denomination. It also feels the energy of several rhythms simultaneously.



As I write this the memories of the Evolving Church Team's wonderful celebration of Candlemas fill my heart! It was fresh and new, and I deeply thank Emily, Kyla, and the whole team. But, a sentence stood out for me, amid the evocative readings from Joyce Rupp and others. It was the explanation of where this ministry is coming from: deep in its roots is the mantra of "try": evaluate, learn and try again. This is a very helpful lesson for us. We try in many areas, and prayerfully evaluate our options... what can we try next?

I think there are about 24 different articles in this newsletter! This represents an amazing breadth of activities and projects. First Met is blessed to have such strength and commitment — we are so grateful to so many!

Our staff and key volunteers are supported by so many whose names may not be as well known: they are often the unsung heroes of our day-to-day achievements. For all the gifts of time, prayer, energy and resources of many kinds, my deepest appreciation. I know it can be hard to "hang in there" in the uncertainty of the current situation. The amalgamation steering team is working hard. The building needs constant monitoring. The search for new tenants is a demanding job, that is going well. New paths for hospitality are being explored. So much change! Aren't we blessed by the strength of our community of faith? We are reminded each week that the Light of our world lives inside us, among us and between us!

My prayer is that the season of Lent, with its focus on the Biblical call to Justice, will be a supportive way for us all in these changing times. Our worship in person and online will offer us new opportunities to hear and feel both the ancient rhythm of Christ's life, ministry and resurrection, and also the new drumbeat of how we will live that out in the coming time.

With on-going and most sincere joy in serving with you at this time,

Shelagh



Daniel Martin, a candidate for ordained ministry and Campus Ministry Animator for the Pacific Mountain Region of the United Church of Canada was our guest preacher on February 5. Following the service, Daniel also announced that the new Campus Minister at UVic is Min-Goo Kang, who also works part-time at Broad View United Church.



Report from the Board Chair



“We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.”

This sounds like a quote from the Bible, but it is actually a quote from Marianne Williamson. I googled her to learn more and found another quote of hers that I liked: “A conversion to Christ is not a conversion to Christianity. It is a conversion to a conviction of the heart. The Messiah is not a person but a point of view.”

I believe this is an important message in an age when Christianity has such a bad rap. And I also believe that we here at First Met share that conviction of the heart in all that we do.

So, what has the Board been up to? My report is almost unnecessary because this whole newsletter is an expression of what we do, not only us Board members, but all you who volunteer, no matter how great or small the work that you do.

On the Board:

- Ross Breckon is actively working on the finance and administration - the biggest job in the church. We owe him a great debt of gratitude.
- Emily MacDonald's team, the Evolving Church, is living out the message of being a good neighbour on our behalf and we thank her for her work.
- Linden Holmen continues to investigate ways that we can improve the physical church with his Property and Management Group.
- Our ad hoc Amalgamation Team is hard at work finding ways for us to join with others in our conviction of the heart.
- Each member of the Board liaises with the many teams of volunteers in the church who are working on all of the stories you will read about here.

It is important to remember that each of us is using our unique gifts and striving to do our best. We should not compare ourselves with others. As Saint Paul said in his first letter to the Corinthians, “All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.” In other words, each of our gifts, whatever they may be, are important, and together we make up one whole, wholly dedicated to making manifest the glory of God.

Edeana Malcolm, Chair of the Board

Refugee Family Now Canadian Citizens

I was honoured to be present as Roua Bilal and her two adult children Narwar and Tala Abdulkhalek became Canadian citizens. Of course there was celebrating and food is part of any good celebration!

The words of the ceremony were quite moving and meaningful. The words now recognize that it is the Indigenous people of Canada who are the first people here and that we are all newcomers! 110 people became new Canadians at this BC virtual ceremony.

Janet Gray



Lent Worship Series: Roll Down Justice

Lent is a time of reminding ourselves who we are called to be in this world. Our Lenten series is inspired by Amos, a prophet whose message is that God calls us to let “justice roll down like waters.”

Often we see the Lenten journey simply as a journey inward, a self-reflective time, an inward self-examination. While it is important to take this inward journey and to spend some time in solitude and reflection, it isn't the whole story. Examining your soul is more than just looking inward; it is also considering the state of your soul as it walks about in the world. How do you live in the world around you? How do you impact, or better, how does your faith impact, your community, your church, your family?

Our worship series will offer us reflection and renewed inspiration to let our voices be turned to the heart of the Gospel - proclaiming God's love for all people. What prejudices are we challenged to “give up” as a Lent practice of abstinence, and further, how are we willing to “give” of ourselves for the sake of the world?

The series includes:

- Ash Wednesday: Make Me an Instrument of Peace (Feb 22)
- Lent 1: Child of God - Naming Each One (Feb 26)
- Lent 2: How Long - Renouncing Evil (Mar 5)
- Lent 3: I Dream of a Church - Christ's Representatives (Mar 12)
- Lent 4: I Choose Love - Communities of Forgiveness (Mar 19)
- Lent 5: God Has Work for Us to Do - Faithful Disciples (Mar 26)
- Palm Sunday: The Day is Coming - We Are One (Apr 2)
- Good Friday: Travelling Companions (Apr 7)
- Easter Sunday: Welcome - the New Jerusalem (Apr 9)

The February mailing includes the following:

- Spring 2023 Newsletter,
- A Lenten prayer card,
- A poster - “Justice is what love looks like in public” to put up in your window,
- Actions for Justice: a list of suggestions for ways you can work for justice in our world.

The newsletter, prayer card and Actions for Justice can also be downloaded from the First Met website. For those who prefer a printed copy, packages will be available from the office from February 26 on.



First Met

Spring at First Met

February 24 Victoria Chamber Orchestra Concert
March 18 Victoria Read Locally Book Sale
March 31 SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus
April 1 Christopher Mann in Concert
April 7 Good Friday Service 11:00 am
April 14 Victoria Chamber Orchestra Concert
April 15 Martyn Joseph In Concert
May 4 - 6 Resurrect UCC Regional Conference
May 13 Sweet Soul Choir - Mother's Day Concert

*See website for up to date event listings

There is no Financial Update in this Newsletter because 2023 Budget information is being sent to all congregants in preparation for the February 26 Congregational Meeting.

Fraud Prevention for Seniors

In 2014, CPA Canada, the umbrella organization representing Chartered Professional Accountants (CPAs) in Canada, identified a need to improve the financial literacy of Canadians and developed a program to do so. The CPA Canada website at cpacanada.ca offers free virtual sessions on key topics and links to other financial literacy materials.

I offered a program on Fraud Prevention for Seniors towards the end of 2022 and had 22 people attend over three sessions. Even though I presented numerous different types of scams, I continue to hear and be told of new scams on a regular basis. Please always remember that the most important thing is to never make any financial decision quickly even for small amounts of money. Scammers want you acting, not thinking. I will highlight one new scam and provide more information on how bank scams work.



Delayed Disconnect Scam (as explained by Consumer Protection BC)

The fraudster calls you on your landline to tell you that there are fraudulent charges on your bank account or credit card and pretends to be your bank. To convince you further, they ask you to call back the bank's fraud department or the police to re-affirm the charges and they pretend to hang up.

Because they don't actually hang up, they are still on the line when you attempt to call your bank or the police. The fraudster might use a fake dial tone or ringtone and might change their voice so that you truly believe you have reached your bank or the police. They will ask questions to validate your identity getting the information they need to misuse your credit card or withdraw money from your account. Sometimes, they will even ask you to transfer the money to a "safe" place which turns out to be the fraudster's bank account. Remember that your bank likes holding onto your money and would never suggest that you transfer it elsewhere!

The people who run this scam can be incredibly convincing and by remaining on the line while you dial, it seems as though the issue is legitimate and has been verified by a credible source, like your bank or the police.

To prevent this type of scam, wait at least ten minutes before making another call on your landline or use your cellphone to make the next call. Cellphones do not have a disconnection delay issue.

How Banking Scams Work

This information was sent to all customers of one of Canada's major banks:

- Fraudsters get your personal information and banking login credentials through "phishing" which is the fraudulent practice of sending emails or other messages purporting to be from reputable companies in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers.
- The fraudster will start the login process to your account then call you pretending to represent the bank.



Continued on p. 7

Fraud Prevention continued from p. 6

- On this call, they will inform you that there has been suspicious activity or fraud on your account. They will ask you to share the six-digit One-Time Verification Code you received from your bank as part of securing your account. This code could be used to access your account or approve unauthorized transactions.
- If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from your bank and are suspicious, please disconnect the call immediately, wait at least ten minutes if you are using a landline then call your bank directly using the phone number on the back of your bank card.
- Reminder to never give your personal or financial information to people you do not know, including your bank account and credit card details, codes, passwords, PINs, and SIN. Everyone you do share bank accounts or credit card accounts with (like your spouse) should have their own login ID and password.

If you have any questions about this article, please contact Liane Clark at clark.liane@gmail.com or 250-886-5661.

Spiritual Care and Wellness News

We welcome new members to join our Spiritual Care and Wellness Ministry Team. Our purpose is to advocate and support health and wellness needs of Frist Met members and the wider North Park community.

A Caregivers Support Group, Gentle/Chair Yoga or Tai Chi sessions, Visitation/Care Call Ministry for the homebound, a Knitting/Prayer Shawl Ministry, walking groups and Prayer Connections can be interesting offerings to consider for your spiritual and holistic health journey.



For information, call First Met Office: 250-388-5188 or office@firstmetvictoria.com

Sharron Higgins, Leader smhiggin80@gmail.com

Ramblers Update

On December 17th 2022, under the ominous threat of rain and storm, we consulted the weather guru who predicted the rain would end at four. An executive decision was made to continue our walk in the Forest, so sixteen Ramblers and Flatlanders, from 16 to 86, proceeded to a campsite in Goldstream Park. We enjoyed a chocolate treat, lit candles, hung them on an evergreen tree and sang Carols. We then gathered at the Jenson's for dinner. Gordon played Christmas Carols softly on the piano as we ate and visited. We look forward to others joining us for this festive occasion another year

The Ramblers hiking group continues its monthly scheduled activity. In 1922 our numbers ranged from three to 12 participants with an average of eight to nine people. We select our hikes from a total of 60 local venues, often repeating those we find interesting and beautiful. Examples are: Mt. Wells, various trails in Thetis Lake Regional Park, Francis King Park, East Sooke Park and Matheson Lake.

Rennie Warburton



The Lunch Club

The Lunch Club or “TLC” as its known has had a wonderful start! This past fall we were fortunate to receive funding through a Pro-vision United Church of Canada Grant, thanks to the help of Cheryl Black’s leadership. The funding is for one year and the mission and vision of this grant is to continue to build connections and to foster community with the North Park neighbourhood and surrounding community in downtown Victoria.

This small grant funds a few additional staff hours to help our Health and Wellness Advocate Kyla coordinate the program and covers the cost of the hiring a cook and food supplies. Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month we open our doors to welcome folks from First Met and the community for a drop-in hot lunch, prepared by cook Kathy McMillan. She has been cooking up some crowd favorites, like soup and chilli.

The meals are served by a group of dedicated volunteers, who are both from the congregation and the community. We are so blessed to have this wonderful team of individuals who make this program a huge success!

January brought excellent participation to this new program with 25 guests at our first lunch and 27 at our second lunch. Guests are a mixture of folks from both the church, surrounding neighbourhood and even those who are unhoused joining us for a warm meal and fellowship. It has truly been a blessing to witness the inclusive welcome being extended to all. I hope you’ll come out to join us for the “TLC” or consider signing up to volunteer this year.

For more information please contact Kyla Morrison Morgan at kyla.morgan@firstmetvictoria.com or call the office. Details are also available on our website.



Prayer Requests

Prayer Connections Team members are committed to praying during their personal prayer time for requests from the congregation and staff. Prayers can be for yourself or those you care about regarding anything that concerns you including illness, bereavement, family issues, financial worries, etc. Private information is kept strictly confidential. Make a request:

- By emailing prayer@firstmetvictoria.com
- Completing a prayer request form and dropping it in the donation baskets at Sunday services or at the office
- Asking a staff member to relay your request.

Visitation Ministry

Through our Visitation ministry, we delivered special Valentine packages and now are preparing for Lent and Easter. A story illustrates the impact of our ministry:

On November 19, Gloria Stott's 93rd Birthday, I phoned to wish her a very happy birthday. A man answered. As soon as I introduced myself, he replied joyously, "Megumi, we are bringing Mom to the church tomorrow! It's her Birthday wish! She wants to go to her church to attend the service!" So, it was a very special Sunday for Gloria. Two sons visiting from far away to celebrate her birthday with other siblings, brought her to church in a wheel chair.

Until Gloria was unable to come to church because of her health conditions, she was one of First Met's super volunteers: teaching Sunday School, helping Mothers Morning Out and other child care needs, regularly attending Sunday School teachers meetings, UCW event, etc. She was a very dependable volunteer. Just how many total hours she spent at church, volunteering, we'll never know. She also self-published her children's story book, which is in our church library.

One of her wonderful characteristics is that in any circumstance, she is always positive. Her smile is infectious. During her teaching and childcare, she was always sympathetic to children, appreciating their side of situations and being caring. What a wonderful ministry she shared with many of us. That Sunday, we quickly managed to gather some former Sunday School teachers and Kyla to take the photo on the right above.

After sending photos to one of Gloria's sons, he replied, "My Mom was smiling all day saying how amazing the service was with God's presence and her church family. Thank you for making it so special for her. Be Blessed."

One of the purposes of our Visitation Ministry is to honour the housebound congregation and connect with their families. This is one example that worked well. Irene Baddeley is Gloria's visitor. Being a special friend for many years, she connects with Gloria on the phone and makes visits.

Megumi Matsuo Saunders



Thank You, Elaine!

The Yoga classes at First Met presented yoga teacher Elaine Duke with a gift basket to thank her for the classes she gives at the church. She presents classes for Gentle Yoga, Chair Yoga and Restorative Yoga throughout the year.



Joan Mickelson Honoured

Joan Mickelson was recognized and presented with a gift to acknowledge her volunteer contributions to First Met. Joan has been key member of the Knitting Ministry, and for many years organized the Healing Touch program at the church. She founded a program to provide tenant starter kits for those transitioning to housing. As this program drew to a close, kits were provided to residents moving into the new Albina Street Housing project. She is also an involved member of the 9:00 am worship group, assisting with lay aspects of the service.

Joan continues as a knitter, member of the Evolving Church Team, and also assists in the office occasionally.

The Knitting Group offered some of their prayer shawls and prayer scarves to congregants this past November.



Hospitality Team



The Hospitality Team would like to extend their gratitude to all the volunteers who have helped make our refreshment time after the 11:00 o'clock service so successful since returning after Covid. We love being in the Doreene McLeod Room now as it feels more intimate and cozier.

Thanks, too, for the contributions of goodies from our congregational members. It's always a lovely surprise to see what delectable offerings appear on our tables after the service! We wish to express again our gratitude to Brenda & Gloria Porter for their faithful delivery of delicious home baked pies that have been appreciated by many each Sunday. Any further cookie donations (nuts excluded) will be gratefully received.

We are always in need of more volunteers to spell off the few that are now able to help in the kitchen. If you can offer to volunteer with Sunday Refreshment Hour in the Doreene McLeod Room after the 11:00 am service (either set up, clean up or both) at one or more Sundays during the year, this would be greatly appreciated. There will always be a coordinator in the kitchen to guide you if you are new to this ministry. Please call Moira Nasim at 250-383-0400 or email me at moira.nasim@gmail.com for further information.

Moira Nasim and Robin Breckon

Climate Justice Activities



Following the Feb 12 church service, many gathered to create posters and banners in preparation for the United for Old Growth Forest Rally on Feb 25.

Members of ClimateFast and For the Love of Creation invited groups across Canada to host candlelight vigils in their own communities on during COP27. The Victoria vigil, organized by KAIROS, gathered on the steps of First Met on the afternoon of November 13 and walked around the neighbourhood. First Met and Abbey Church congregants participated to reflect and share our love for our planet, our concern for ourselves and our fellow human beings at risk from climate change, and our hopes for truly transformative action to happen at COP and through each other.



Join in the Rally:

- meet at 11:30 am at the front stairs of First Met UC and we will walk together to Centennial Square rally with our banners OR
- meet at 12 noon at Centennial Square where the rally begins - look for our United Church Banner / First Met banner OR
- Go to the Legislature building at 1:15 pm and look for our United Church banners

All congregants are invited to participate in the United for Old Growth Rally on February 25. There are three options for joining the group as outlined in the poster to the left.

Children and Youth Ministry Update



November to February was busy and joy-filled, with lots of learning, community and fun! Joan Wilkinson and others led our traditional Advent Craft event, this year with Reverend Al Fowler as story-teller!

Our Youth Group is growing—we had a blast here at First Met playing games, cooking and baking in December, skating at the recreation centre in January, and have plans for food (always a favourite) and games next time.

Christmas was wonderful and it was so great to be back in person! Our families were part of worship to light the Advent candles, and we had a good crowd for our beloved Christmas Eve Family Service. (See p. 22 for Christmas photos.)

We continue to connect with families yet to return to in-person church attendance, through our Faith at Home kits, thanks to our Pacific Mountain Region, First Third Ministry.

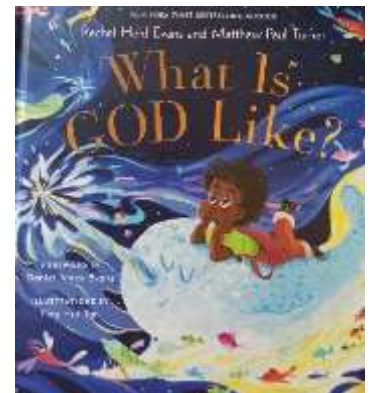
On December 29th First Met Young Adults gathered from all over Canada for their annual event, hosted by Minister Emeritus Megumi Matsuo Saunders. We played Jeopardy—including a ‘First Met Church’ category, enjoyed reconnecting and sharing news, and feasted on sushi, pizza and cake.

In Sunday School we learned that we’re all BELOVED, explored the Beatitudes, and did some awesome science with light and salt! Can you balance two eggs?

We’re excited about Pink Shirt Sunday and the start of a very special season of Lent. We’ll enjoy the beautiful picture book *What is God Like?* by Rachel Held Evans and Matthew Paul Turner, and learn about the Seven Sacred Laws, the connection between Spirit and Land. We’ll look at Love as represented by an eagle, Courage as a bear, Honesty as Sabe or Bigfoot, Wisdom as a Beaver, Humility as a wolf and the teaching Truth as a turtle.

Our thanks to all for your support of this important ministry.

Micia Kanstrup



Evolving Church Team News

The Evolving Church team came about as a result of a weekend workshop on the topic “Weird Church” several years ago. It was based on the book “Weird Church”. It talks about the need for transformation, in light of our changing society, and in the realization that churches were closing in great numbers. So, the question becomes, “What do we need to let go of in order to live into the future of the church, and what do we need to keep?” We may need to let go of some traditional ways of “doing church”, living into the 21st century. We may decide to keep some aspects. The problem is, the mainline churches don’t seem to attract people who were born after the Boomers. We can see that as we look around. A shift is a change, and people in general don’t like change. How does entering a shift in the way church is experienced challenge, trouble or puzzle you? Could it encourage or energize you? These are some of the topics that we are exploring in Evolving Church.

On February 12th, the Evolving Church Team organized the Sunday church service. We hired a jazz band to play our music, spoke on the same level as the congregation, had a young person lead some of the singing, and played some modern music—some hymns, some not. We moved the chairs into half-circles, and created a time for people to discuss a couple of questions: who has brought light in your life?, and how have you brought light to others’ lives?

We used the theme of light as we are in the season of Epiphany, when the light of Jesus was made visible to the magi. There was laughter and participation in the service as it progressed, and people enjoyed learning a new song, “Light One Candle”, as well as had some foot-stomping fun with new words to “This Little Light Of Mine”, led by 10 year old Maya Badel. Feedback was very positive, and there were requests to offer this kind of service more often.

Emily MacDonald, Team Leader

RIGHT and BELOW: Photos from the February 12th service; Maya Badel leading the singing in the photo below.



The team had a booth at the Multicultural Fair sponsored by NPNA in December.



Morrison Morgan Family delivering the team’s Christmas gifts to Tiny Homes Village.



Intimacy

“To feel safe in the deep end of the pool of intimacy, a person needs to speak their own truth and be comfortable with closeness.” - Rick Hanson, Ph.D.

Intimacy is defined as a “close familiarity or friendship”, a “closeness between people in personal relationships.” People connect emotionally, form a bond based on knowledge of each other, feel comfortable and care about each other.

What are the foundations of intimacy? Dr. Rick Hanson, clinical psychologist and best-selling author, writes about four foundations of intimacy: personal autonomy, empathy, compassion and kindness and unilateral virtue.

How can we practice each of these foundations? Some suggestions are listed below:

Personal autonomy

- Stand up for ourselves and make our own choices based on our own values.
- Express our thoughts and feelings.
- Establish appropriate boundaries.
- Take care of our needs.
- Ask for what we want.
- Trust our judgment.
- Stay open to the feelings of other people.
- Be determined, centered and strong.



Empathy

- Try to understand other people: their beliefs, values and plans.
- Increase our self-awareness, tuning into the sensations, emotions, thoughts, and desires inside ourselves.
- Step out of our perspective and enter another person’s inner world.
- Be sensitive to the powerful impact that life experiences such as parents, relationships and culture have on other people.
- Do our best to become more knowledgeable and skilful with people who belong to a group that is different from our own.

Compassion and kindness

- Show concern, care, respect and support for others.
- Relate to others with kindness and acceptance in instances of pain, struggle, suffering or failure.
- Understand that experiencing pain, suffering, struggle, failure, and hardship are part of common humanity, our shared human experience.
- Support, encourage, and protect ourselves and others from harm.
- Help others who are suffering as best we can.



Continued on p. 15

Unilateral virtue

- Identify what really matters to us.
- Stay true to our own code of conduct.
- Know how we want to speak and act.
- Focus on our responsibility.
- Be determined to help others with caring, decency and respect.
- Be centered in our bodies and rest in our integrity.
- Do no harm.

“As you open up and invest in relationships, you become more exposed and vulnerable. At the same time, close and nurturing relationships help you feel safe and worthy as an individual.” — Rick Hanson, Ph.D.

Wally Lazaruk, February 2023

Thank you, City of Victoria

The City of Victoria exempts registered charities and other non-profit organizations providing services in certain categories defined by the city from paying property taxes for a period of three years upon approval of those organizations' applications. First Metropolitan United Church has recently been granted a permissive tax exemption for the 2023 to 2025 taxation years. As per the table below, this exemption is worth just over \$45,000 per year.



Type of Tax	2023	2024	2025	Total over 3 Years
Total Exemption	\$44,615	\$45,954	\$47,332	\$136,901

Welcome Sihan Wang and Wayne Ridley!



Sihan Wang joined First Met as a Communications Technician cooperative education student in January 2023. She is a Masters of Global Business student at the University of Victoria. In addition to working at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, Sihan will be assisting the church in marketing event and office space at the church and events sponsored by First Met.

Wayne Ridley is joining the custodial team at the church and will be working full-time during evenings. Wayne has previous experience working with the Victoria Cool Aid Society.



Thank You First Met Angels

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the 2022 Angel Gift project! First Met folk donated 45 gifts to members of the Our Place Family. Your generosity and caring will have made these Family members very happy. It means a lot to them to know that there are Angels out there watching over at the holiday season and onward into 2023.

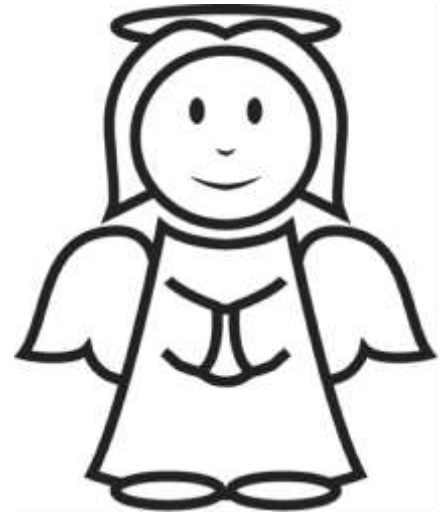
Special thanks also to First Met staff – Shelagh, Lauren, Katya, Bruce and his team – who provided space and assistance throughout the collection and sorting process. You helped to make the work easier. Also, the help of the Communications Team was invaluable in spreading the word that the Angel Gifts project was happening.

Very special thanks go to Micia Kastrup, Robin Breckon and Janice Drent, who spent several hours sorting and bagging the 45

gifts before they were transported on the last stage of their journey. This year that trip, for some gifts, meant moving them by kitchen trolleys across Balmoral Road to Our WorkPlace – surely quite a sight for vehicle traffic at that intersection!

In 2022, the overall coordination of the Angel Gift program was assigned to Our Place staff members – Maria Green, Manager of Wellness Services; Jordan Cooper, Director of Services; and Adam Flegel, Community Centre Manager. This was the first time since the beginning of Angel Gifts, over 20 years ago at the Open Door Inner City Ministry, that there was not a volunteer overseeing the coordination of the program. The growth of Our Place's many services, including housing, led to the decision that the responsibility had become too widespread and complex for a volunteer to coordinate.

Penny Bond, FMUC Angel Gift Coordinator,
angelgifts-pb@shaw.ca, 250-384-2538



Read Locally Book Fair

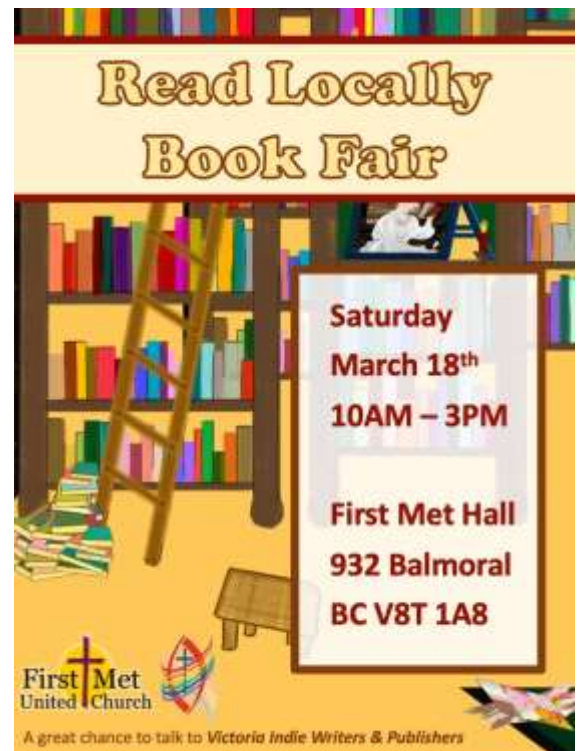
Mark Saturday, March 18 on your calendar. First Met is sponsoring its first ever Book Fair called “Read Locally!” featuring independent writers and publishers.

Victoria is home to hundreds of writers, many of whom are self-published, including our own Larry Scott and Edeana Malcolm. As of the end of January, First Met has rented twenty tables in the Fellowship Hall to some of these writers, eager to sell their books to a larger public. There will be something in every genre and for everyone from children to their grandparents - original books, many of which are not available at book stores.

This is your chance to meet some of these Victoria writers, speak to them about their books, and, maybe even buy some of them.

Come and support local writers and your church at the same time! Spread the word to your reader friends as well.

Books will be on sale from 10am to 3pm.



North Park Neighbourhood Association News

NORTH PARK
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE
AT THE plaza

upcoming artists:

Maria Fernanda Barallobres
January 09
experiments with different mediums such as oil painting and drawing, woodworking, sculpture, jewelry making, crochet, and printmaking.

Naomi Duska
February 06
playwright and storyteller who aims to provoke, unsettle, and invite big feelings by exploring themes of human connection and heartbreak, blending the bittersweet with the hilarious.

Noah Gilroy
February 06
uses fiber to preserve the textures and environments most often threatened by climate change - moss, tide pools, salmon, cloud formations to evoke joy and curiosity.

Eli Gloor
March 06
works with acrylic paints and markers in a spontaneous, intuitive practice taking inspiration from memories, media, art, nature, dreams, and imagination.

Find the artists on Vancouver Street at Caledonia Ave!

north park
EVERY TO THE CORE

Thank You and Goodbye!

Since moving into our office in Room 114 last summer - and long before! - First Met has made myself and Ruby, and the whole North Park Neighbourhood Association feel very welcome. We love working in this supportive atmosphere, and sincerely appreciate all of your support!

The new year is often a season of change, and this year is no exception! At the end of February, I will be moving to a new role. Leaving this job that I have loved and that has enriched my life is bitter-sweet. North Park is such a special place, and it has been such a joy putting on events like the Multicultural Festival, and delivering programs like the weekly grocery hamper program. At the same time, I am excited for my next adventure! I'll be moving onto work with a local company that helps non-profit housing providers build new affordable housing developments - something we need much more of throughout the country.

Over the next little while, the North Park board will be posting and interviewing for my position, and we look forward to continuing to serve the North Park community. Before I sign off, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone that has volunteered, donated to the hamper program, read our newsletter, attended a meeting or an event, and made us feel so welcome here at First Met - we appreciate all of your support!

Sarah Murray, NPNA Executive Director

Things are always going on in North Park, though some activities have slowed down during the Winter weather. Planning for 2023 is in progress.

The "Lending Hub" in the North Park Plaza on Vancouver Street recently has been hosting Artists-in-Residence, continuing into early March. This program includes artist-led workshops.

The "Little Free Pantry", with its motto "Give what you can; Take what you need", remains attached to the Hub, and the "Little Free Library" is nearby. The Hub and its associated structures are seeking a new place in North Park to put down roots. If you know of any nearby suitable and available sites, please let NPNA know.

The Winter Multi-Cultural Festival took place at the Save-On-Foods Memorial Arena and was a combination of a Market and a free Neighbourhood Skate. First Met's Evolving Church team had a booth at this December event—it's a good way for First Met folk to meet our neighbours.

The Wednesday Craft Socials are continuing. These are an opportunity to work on a personal craft project; share or teach your skills with others; share your supplies if you have extras; and socialize with other crafters. This free event is on Wednesdays, 6:00—8:00 pm, in the Community Room at 1025 Mason St.

The monthly Pandora Green Good Neighbour Agreement (GNA) Meeting has changed its focus from being primarily an information-sharing gathering to also include some advocacy work. Its current undertaking is to lobby for a 24/7 supervised public washroom on the 900 Block of Pandora. This is an ongoing campaign. Sarah Murray and Penny Bond represent NPNA at these meetings. [Pandora Ave. is the southern border of North Park.]

Victoria has established a new team called Pandora Caretakers, which is staffed by members of SOLID Outreach Society, Katherine Frances and James (Jimmy) Sarasin. The goal is to strengthen the community. They work jointly with Victoria Bylaw, City Parks Dept., and VicPD. They are sending out feelers and communicating with people on the street, with the aim of building trust. Katherine is the new Chair of the GNA meetings.

The new City of Victoria liaison for North Park is Councillor Stephen Hammond.

NPNA held its AGM on January 31, with a good turnout despite its being New Year's Eve. Two new Board members were elected, who will join one ongoing and four re-elected incumbents.

Penny Bond, First Met/NPNA Liaison

Remembering Robin Krause

Dr. Robert (Robin) Krause, who died peacefully at home in Victoria on Dec. 6 at 97 years, carried a vision for the well-being of our most marginalized citizens, and Victoria is all the better for it.

“Robin was a friend and chair of the Open Door ministry,” said Rev. Allen Tysick, former executive director of Our Place, and known as ‘Reverend Al’ to those he helps.

“He negotiated the amalgamation of the Open Door Ministry and the Upper Room to become Our Place. His sweat and tears are in Our Place’s foundation.”

Personally, he reminded me of the biblical character Barnabas. The name means “son of encouragement,” which he was to me and to countless other people.

He encouraged us by taking a genuine interest and also by setting an inspiring example. His example was the main reason I agreed to serve on the Our Place board.

Before the creation of Our Place in 2005, Krause served as chair of Open Door for 10 years. He saw the Open Door move from upstairs at Metropolitan Church (now the Conservatory of Music) to the B.C. Hydro building at Pembroke and Store, to the Gospel Chapel on Pandora, and then to the current Our Place location on Pandora. His deep caring, dry wit and perseverance paid off.

A board member from those days, Dawn Williamson, notes: “In his career in medicine, Robin was a highly regarded, kind and compassionate man. He served The Open Door and Our Place with great organizational skills and that same kindness and compassion.”

Before retiring to Victoria in the early 1990s, Krause was a doctor extraordinaire. He focused on the person in the patient.

Born in the Kingdom of Fife, Scotland, he graduated from Edinburgh University. He practised medicine in the U.K. until he and his wife, Enid, arrived in Canada in the 1960s and he joined a practice in Winnipeg with his sponsor to Canada, M.D. Richard (Dick) Nash.

There, he created the Human Values program in 1986, which became University of Manitoba Medical Humanities. Each year, a prize in his name is given to a medical student “demonstrating leadership in ethical and legal aspects of good practice.”

Krause was the Canadian Family Physician of the Year in 1981 and national president of the College of Family Medicine in 1982. In 1992, he received the Canadian Medical Association Distinguished Service Award for Manitoba.

After retiring and moving to Victoria, Krause was named to the organizing committee for the 1994 Commonwealth Games. He was a member of First Metropolitan United Church, where he served in leadership roles and took part in the Pringle Bells and a men’s discussion group.

“He was a Christian in the true sense of the word,” Tysick said. “His faith gave him the strength to give his life to the most vulnerable in the city.”

Tysick noted that Krause will join his late wife, Enid. “I am sure she will have a double scotch, no ice, awaiting him,” Tysick said.

Krause is survived by his children Susan, Gillian and Robin, 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. A celebration of life will be held in the spring.

Even a week before he died, in failing health, Krause wanted to hear updates about Our Place. He was humbly proud of all that Our Place has become.

Donations in memory of Krause can be made to Our Place, by going to ourplacesociety.com or by phoning 250-940-5060.

(This article by Rev. Allan Saunders, was published in the *Times Colonist* on Dec 23, 2022.)



Photo of Robin Krause courtesy of Our Place

Looking for Summer Ideas?



Camp Pringle

Located on the west side of Shawnigan Lake, Camp Pringle is an excellent United Church camp for everyone. They have day camps and overnight camps for campers from 8–14 years of age, as well as youth leadership opportunities. Campers are grouped by age into 'Pathfinders', 'Trailblazers', and 'Adventure Camps'.

www.camppringle.com



Naramata Centre

Open to people of all ages, Naramata Centre, just north of Penticton on Okanagan Lake, is an inclusive, welcoming place to connect and deepen in mind, body and spirit. Whether you are looking to book a summer getaway and relax with the best Naramata Centre has to offer, or you're looking to participate in our online community, there are many ways to experience the magic of connection. Naramata Centre, operated by the United Church, is celebrating its 75 year of operation. It has spaces for camping, R.Vs, and private rooms for rent. www.naramatacentresociety.org



Sorrento Centre

Located just east of Chase BC (East of Kamloops) on beautiful Shuswap Lake, Sorrento Centre offers a wide range of programs for individuals, groups and families. They have child care on certain weeks as well as a super beach and lots of play area. Sorrento Centre has cabins, cabanas, camping, RV sites, lodge rooms and apartments. It has been run by the Anglican Church for 60 years and offers a diverse range of programs. <https://sorrentocentre.ca/>

Barry Rolston

Secret of the Dance in Mountford Library

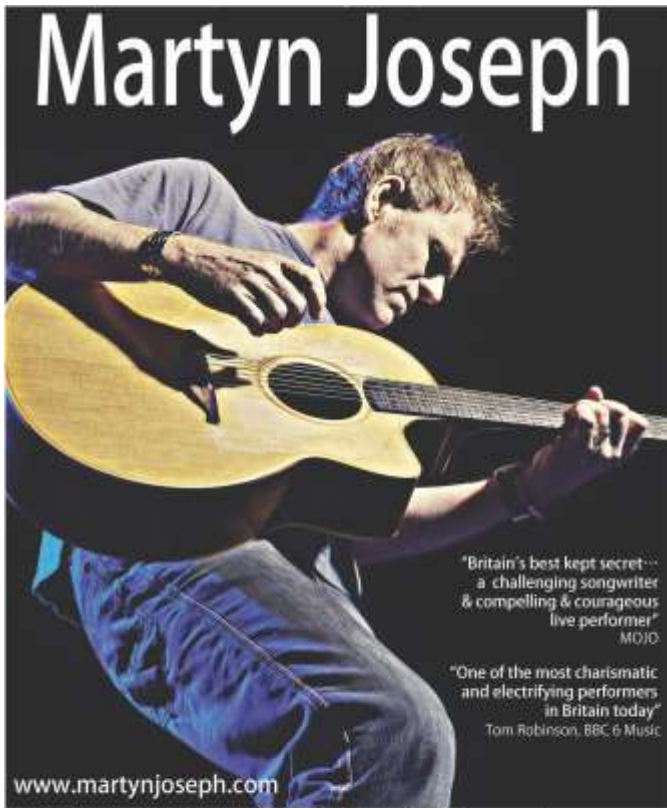
This children's book is set in 1935, when a nine-year-old boy's family held a forbidden Potlatch in Kingcome Inlet. Wat'l'kina slipped from his bed to bear witness. In the Big House masked figures danced by firelight to the beat of the drum. And there, he saw a figure he knew. Aboriginal elder Alfred Scow and award-winning author Andrea Spalding collaborate to tell the story, to tell the secret of the dance at the forbidden Potlatch.

Library volunteer Shelley Gait says, "I am very proud that this children's book in our Library has been illustrated by my cousin Darlene Gait. She belongs to the Esquimalt Songhees peoples on Vancouver Island. She has also created a \$10 silver coin which is distributed by the Royal Canadian Mint. Her art is recognized internationally and is exhibited and held in private and public collections".

Please stop by the First Met library before or after our Sunday service to check out one of the Indigenous books in our growing collection. Or find books on other topics.



Martyn Joseph




"Britain's best kept secret... a challenging songwriter & compelling & courageous live performer" MOJO

"One of the most charismatic and electrifying performers in Britain today" Tom Robinson, BBC 6 Music

www.martynjoseph.com

Martyn Joseph Live in Concert
 Saturday April 15, 2023 + Doors 7pm Show 7:30pm
 First Met / AbbeyChurch @ Quadra and Balmoral
 Tickets: \$25 (advance only)
 tickets: martyn.eventbrite.ca or email admin@emmauscommunity.ca
 Presented by The AbbeyChurch and The Emmaus Community
www.abbeychurch.ca / www.emmauscommunity.ca




A LEARNING PARTY FOR RESTORATION AND INSPIRATION

\$100 WITH EQUITY OPTIONS **MAY 4 – 6** 1PM ON THURS UNTIL
 \$25 YOUTH / CHILDREN CLOSING FEAST SAT

FIRST MET UNITED / THE ABBEYCHURCH
VICTORIA BC

ON THE TRADITIONAL AND UNCEDED TERRITORIES OF THE SONGHEES
 AND ESQUIMALT NATIONS: Lək̓ʷəŋən PEOPLES



CARMEN LANSDOWNE • MICHAEL BLAIR • EDITH AND RANDY WOODLEY • LIZ VICE

WILD CHURCH • STORIES OF INSPIRATION FROM NEW(ER) COMMUNITIES OF FAITH • LIZ VICE
 CONCERT • BEVERAGES AND HYMNS • RAVE IN THE NAVE DANCE PARTY • NEO- MONASTIC PRAYER
 OFFICES • YOUTH AND CHILDREN PROGRAMMING • CLOSING FEAST... MORE TO COME

WWW.RESURRECTPARTY.CA

With generous support from:



Leadership • First Met UG • Yvonne Poddart • AbbeyChurch • Pacific Hummer Region UCC • Centre for Maximal Leadership • New Leaf Network • Anglican Diocese of BC

These two events are being sponsored by AbbeyChurch at First Met. The Resurrect 2023 Learning Party features our Moderator, Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne and Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary of the United Church of Canada.



Welcome Back Linda Hallett!

Linda Hallett was welcomed back to First Met on Sunday, Jan. 29 and joined UCW members for lunch. Through Grandmothers for Africa, Linda volunteers with the ROTOM Group (*Reach One, Touch One Ministry*). Over many, many years Linda has traveled to Uganda to work for three months as a nurse in a remote clinic. Linda calls her Grandmothers -*Jajas*. Our UCW sponsors two Elders. Through Linda's Ministry we offer financial support for specific needs of the grandmothers and grandfathers.

UCW News

On November 17 the UCW held a Mission and Service fundraising meeting with Dell Marie Wergeland speaking about the Compassionate Resource Warehouse, its amazing volunteers, and community supporters. The Compassionate Resource Warehouse packs containers which are shipped overseas to fill requests from around the World. Mrs. Wergeland shared photos showing examples of needs they have met. In 2022, nine containers were packed for Ukraine!

The UCW donated two gifts to the Angel Gift project. We also gave 2023 calendars to the First Met staff. Mildred Mossop unit sent a gift to the Prison Fellowship Canada program.

The UCW is planning an AGM in March. More details will follow.

Marie McKee



Two of the projects supported by the Compassionate Warehouse.



UCW Christmas Luncheon and Carol Sing

UCW Christmas Lunch and Carol Sing

On December 15th, Twenty-seven (27) women, including staff and volunteers, sat down to a Christmas Lunch provided by both groups of First Met's United Church Women. Following lunch, all participated in a rousing Carol Sing led by Jacquie Henderson at the Piano. Thank you, Jacquie!

UCW members of both the Mildred Mossop Group and Unity Groups worked together to plan the event and provide a delicious lunch of Casseroles, salads and desserts. Festive table cloths and decorations were provided by Joan Wilkinson & Marg Zilkie.

All felt it was great way to come together after the long Covid hiatus.

Irene Baddeley, Co-Leader, Unity Group

First Met December 2022 Pictures



A Muslim reading by May Shijadeh and a presentation by Charlene Thornton Joe at the December 6 interfaith service of remembrance.



Lighting candles at the Blue Christmas service.



Congregants and the broader community were delighted by the return of the in-person Family Christmas Eve service (right) and Carols in the Candlelight (above).



In Memoriam



Kathleen Boyce
Died Nov 28, 2022



Ellwood Derbyshire
Died Dec 16, 2022



Marion Pitts
Died Nov 23, 2022



Bill Foscett
Died Dec 31, 2022



Keiko Matsuo
Died Feb 5, 2023



Robin Krause
Died Dec 6, 2022



The church's new snowblower arrived just in time for the December snowstorms and has already more than paid for itself by eliminating the need for a contract for snow removal.



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.

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. Email **fmuc.men@shaw.ca** for more information.

Ramblers Hiking Group

Meets the 3rd Saturday of every month at various locations. For more information: **Rennie Warburton**, (250) 592-9161, **rwarby@gmail.com**.

United Church Women:

Mildred Mossop: 2nd Mon, 10:00 am
Unity: 3rd Thurs, 12:00 pm
Meetings in the Doreene McLeod Rm at the church.

Tai Chi

Meets Mondays and Wednesdays 12:00–1:00 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. December gathering will be Dec 12 from 1:00–3:00 pm in Rm 200 at the church. Contact **Rev. Shelagh MacKinnon** for more information.

Yoga in the Chapel

Gentle Yoga

Mondays 10:30–11:45 am except statutory holidays) and on 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Thursday of the month, 12:30–1:45 pm

Chair Yoga

Wednesdays, 10:30–11:45 am

Contact **Elaine Duke** at **elaineduke1000@gmail.com**

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.

Flatlanders Walking Group

Meets 1st Saturday of the month from 1:00 – 3:00 pm at various locations from February on. Contact the church office for details on who to contact in order to participate in the walks.

NPNA Grocery Hamper Program

Thursdays from 8:00 am–12:00 pm in Rm 119. Contact NPNA to volunteer or receive a hamper at **npna@npna.ca**



Parking Options

Week Days

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

Sundays

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

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

**First Metropolitan**
United Church of Canada

*A centre for
spiritual growth and
community engagement*

932 Balmoral Road Victoria BC V8T 1A8
Phone (250) 388-5188 Fax (250) 388-5186
www.firstmetvictoria.com