

# *Sylvan United Church*

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Minister**

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**SYLVAN UNITED CHURCH – 2018 ANNUAL REPORT  
For Annual Congregational Meeting – March 8, 2020**

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**SYLVAN UNITED CHURCH**  
**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**March 3, 2019**

Meeting called to order at 11:45 a.m. by meeting Chair Blair Howard.

**Orders of the Day**

**Chair**

Moved by Brian Young that Blair Howard act as meeting Chair. Seconded by George Power. CARRIED

**Voting**

Moved by Jane Shapley that voting privileges on temporal matters be extended to adherents. Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED, with 1 abstention

**Adjournment**

Moved by Mari Brown that the meeting close at 1:00 pm. CARRIED

**Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Brian Young that the agenda be approved with the following changes:

- that the endorsement of Council appointments be added under New Business;
- that a report on the relationship between Camp Pringle and Sylvan be included as part of the Minister's Report; and
- that an Alcohol and Drug Policy be included under New Business.

Seconded by Judi Todd. CARRIED

**Minutes of last Annual Congregation Meeting – February 25, 2018**

Moved by Hap Shapley that the minutes of the last ACM be approved. Seconded by John Kamphof. CARRIED

**Minutes of Congregational Meeting – June 17, 2018**

Moved by John Kamphof that the minutes of the June 17, 2018 congregational meeting be approved. Seconded by Janet Power.

Hap Shapley requested a round of applause for the work of the Ministry Profile and Search Committee.

**LOOKING BACK – REPORTS 2018****Minister's Report**

Rev. Katherine remarked that the desire of the congregation to partner with Camp Pringle was clearly indicated by the numbers of Sylvan folk who attended the Sunday church service at the Camp during the Youth Retreat the previous Sunday (February 24<sup>th</sup>). Even with a considerable amount of snow at Shawnigan Lake, over 40 congregation members were there! Rev. Katherine noted that she has spent time in recent months getting to know the staff, taking part in interviews and learning the routine of the year. She is trying to raise Pringle's profile in the community and with the broader United Church and will hold a Camp Board there on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Moved by John Kamphof that the Minister's report be accepted. Seconded by Brian Young. CARRIED**

**2018 Passages**

Rev. Katherine read the names of those who had passed away, the children who were baptized and the couple who were married during 2018, and offered a prayer for all.

**Council Chair's Report**

Tom Baxter expressed his thanks to Council for their work over the past year. He also advised that Council will be making a plaque to recognize Sylvan folks for their years of service. He was pleased to announce that Jane and Hap Shapley were the first to be recognized, and they were presented with a planter from the congregation (along with a warm round of appreciative applause).

**Moved by Tom Baxter that the Council Chair's Report be accepted. Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED**

**Ministry Profile and Search Committee Report**

**Moved by Jane Kilthei that the report of the Ministry Profile and Search Committee be accepted. Seconded by Peg Cox. CARRIED**

**Finance Committee/Treasurer's Report**

Brian Young reported that the record keeping system had been streamlined. He also noted that Council would be appointing two people to review the church's financial statements and report back to the congregation. He expressed his thanks to Kim Hennecker for his many years of service.

**Moved by John Kamphof that the Treasurer's report be accepted. Seconded by Brian Young. CARRIED**

**Envelope Secretary Report**

**Moved by Brian Young that the report of the Envelope Secretary be accepted. Seconded by Hap Shapley. CARRIED**

**Board of Trustees Report**

**Moved by Judy Duncan that the Trustees report be accepted. Seconded by John Kamphof. CARRIED**

**Shawnigan Cemetery Report**

**Moved by Judy Duncan that the report of the Shawnigan Cemetery be accepted. Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED**

**Ministry and Personnel Committee Report**

**Moved by Monika Morgan that the Ministry and Personnel report be accepted. Seconded by Melissa Howard.** Thanks to Hap Shapley for his leadership of this Committee over the years. **CARRIED**

**Worship Report**

Nan Goodship noted that there have been many changes over the past year or two including our ministry leadership (Murray, Maggie and now Katherine). Nan has appreciated the congregation's ability to go with the flow and is grateful for our connection with Camp Pringle.

**Moved by Nan Goodship that the Worship Team report be accepted. Seconded by Mari Brown. CARRIED**

**Children's Worship Report**

**Moved by Robbie Fritz that the Children's Worship report be accepted. Seconded by Jane Shapley. CARRIED**

**Pastoral Care Report**

Joan Keith-Burgwin thanked the members of the Team for their work through the year. She encouraged the congregation to let her or a Team member know if there is someone in the congregation needing help or a visit (with the permission of that person).

**Moved by Joan Keith-Burgwin that the Pastoral Care Report be accepted. Seconded by Judy van der Boom. CARRIED**

**Outreach Report**

Robbie Fritz identified the members of the Outreach Team: Connie Harris, Corrie Kamphof, Blair Howard, Jane Kiltnei and Robbie Fritz. Clarification was provided regarding our support of El Hogar. The cost of supporting a child for a year is \$1,800 which was not sustainable for our fundraising efforts. Although we will no longer be supporting a specific child, we will still be able to direct gifts to El Hogar throughout the year.

**Moved by Robbie Fritz that the Outreach Team report be accepted. Seconded by Tom Baxter. CARRIED**

**Affirming Church**

Jane Kiltnei explained that although the work to become an affirming congregation had been done a number of years ago, the official paperwork had never been completed. Before everything can be finalized, we must have a wedding policy in place and we must submit \$100 to Affirm United.

**Moved by Peg Cox and amended by Jane Kiltnei that we complete the process to formally become an affirming congregation by sending the requisite \$100 and that we ask Council to finalize Sylvan's wedding policy by the end of March, 2019.  
Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED**

**Choir Report**

**Moved by Tom Baxter that the Choir Report be accepted. Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED**

**Music Mosaic**

**Moved by Nan Goodship that the Music Mosaic report be accepted. Seconded by Judy Duncan. CARRIED**

**Hospitality Report**

**Moved by Brian Young that the Hospitality Team report be accepted. Seconded by Tom Baxter. CARRIED**

**Hand in Hand Thrift Shop Report**

**Moved by Monika Morgan that the Hand in Hand report be accepted. Seconded by Mari Brown. CARRIED**

**Women Together**

**Moved by Melissa Howard that the Women Together report be accepted.  
Seconded by Joan Keith-Burgwin. CARRIED**

**Women Together Financial Statement**

**Moved by Judy van der Boom that the Women Together Financial Statement be accepted. Seconded by Melissa Howard. CARRIED**

**Property and Environment**

Reg Hall noted that the donations for the new roof for the Hall had been outstanding.

**Moved by Reg Hall that the Property and Environment report be accepted.  
Seconded by Mike Rybchuk.**

**Communications Report**

**Moved by Janis Jones that the Communications report be accepted. Seconded by Peter Spohn. CARRIED**

**Men's Fellowship Report**

Moved by Hap Shapley that the Men's Fellowship report be accepted. Seconded by Tom Baxter. CARRIED

**Nominating Team Report**

Moved by Mike Rybchuk that the Nominating Team report be received. Seconded by John Kamphof. CARRIED

**George Pringle Memorial Camp Report**

Moved by Jane Kilthei that the Camp Pringle report be received. Seconded by Peter Spohn. CARRIED

**LOOKING AHEAD – 2019****Budget 2019**

Brian Young explained that the proposed budget projects a deficit of \$17,500. Everyone was asked to give prayerful thought as to what we can do to relieve the situation. Suggestions that were made at the meeting included a Skills and Services Auction, seeking permission to move money from designated funds to operational, and an every-member canvass. Thanks was expressed to Brian for his ongoing efforts.

Moved by Brian Young that the proposed 2019 budget be approved. Seconded by John Kamphof. CARRIED.

**New Officers for 2019**

Moved by Tom Baxter that the following appointments be accepted:

- Property and Environment: Bary Beck
- Finance: Don Thomson
- Treasurer: Brian Young

Seconded by Judy Baxter. CARRIED

**Drug and Alcohol Policy**

It was noted that there is a "No smoking and no alcohol on the premises" policy in place for rentals but no formal policy for our own church events. It was explained that our insurance policy requires an additional payment of \$145 per event if alcohol is to be served, and a license must also be obtained. Church Council will continue to work on developing and finalizing a policy.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m. following a motion by John Kamphof seconded by Jane Kilthei.

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Blair Howard, Chair

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Brenda Sober, Recording Secretary

## Minister's Message

*John 1: 37-39*

*<sup>37</sup>The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup>He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.*

Come and see.

I recently preached on this text from John, a standard Bible verse for the season of Epiphany. Fishermen who had been hanging around, listening to John the Baptist, start following John's cousin Jesus. Jesus turns to them and asks "what are you looking for"? They can't answer the question, so instead ask where are you staying, and this is when Jesus issues that invitation that will change their lives.

Come and see.

Some things can't be described in words, no matter how eloquent. They need to be experienced. We are truly moved by experience – that is why art, poetry and music touch us in deep and powerful ways – they are experienced. What Jesus is offering these curious men is an opportunity to be moved and changed, challenged and empowered by an experience of something more, something holy, something life-changing. Come and see, he invites, come and see. Have an experience of what God is doing, and see if you want to be part of it.

People all around us are craving an experience of God, of the Divine, of the "something more", and churches are just beginning to remember that. Instead of getting trapped in dogma or judgement, instead of being a closed group that only the chosen few are invited into, instead of sitting around and lamenting that they are aging and dying and Christendom is ending, some churches are finding new ways to truly experience God at work in the world. Ancient spiritual traditions and disciplines like meditation and prayer-walks – wild church -- are finding new life, offering new life. Things we do well - like feeding people – are being lifted up as sacred practices of hospitality, breaking bread – supper church. Intentionally fostering spaces and times for people to have "conversations that matter", truly connect with each other over meals, sharing life-

transitions, having face-to-face conversations are ways that thriving churches are answering the desperate loneliness that social media seems to be fostering.

All things that we are experimenting with at Sylvan. Ways to be a place for people to even begin to identify what they might be looking for. Ways to experience the mystery of God at work in the world, in our lives. Our challenge is to invite others to join us. Invite them to come and see. Come and see what we are celebrating, struggling with, creating as a community of faith. Come and see.

It takes courage to try new things, new ways of being church. It won't be easy. It won't always be comfortable. But change and progress do not come from ease and comfort – they come from a longing, a desire, a soul-thirst for something more than ease and comfort.

What will 2020 look like for Sylvan United? Come and see – it just might change your life.

Rev Katherine Brittain



*Photo: Robbie Fritz*

**Passages 2019**

*We remember . . .*

John Stephen

February 25, 2019

Jean Luscombe

May 23, 2019

Wilder World

June 25, 2019

Bob Bauder

September 8, 2019



## Chair of Council

We began 2019 under the dark cloud of a considerable projected deficit. Council renewed its commitment to stewardship and the congregation responded with tremendous support and generosity. Our 2020 budget is much improved and we look forward to continued growth in faith and commitment.

After almost two years of transition, Council is enjoying settling in to the rhythms of working with Reverend Katherine. The teams have been working hard to maintain our traditional Sylvan activities and events as well as developing new opportunities to involve more members of the congregation and the community at large.

Looking ahead to 2020 and beyond, Council is planning to allocate more time and energy to revitalizing the visioning priorities started in the *Planning Today Thriving Tomorrow* report completed five years ago. Starting with the Annual Congregational Meeting, Council wants to hear what priorities are important to the congregation and what future possibilities can be envisioned to help support and expand our unique community.

I look forward to working for another year with the exceptional group of people on Council and in the teams that support them. I entreat anyone in the congregation looking for opportunities to become more involved to join a team and enjoy the fellowship that comes with it while helping to shape the future of Sylvan.

Tom Baxter,  
Council Chair

## Finance Team Report

The Finance Team is pleased to report that the 2019 fiscal year turned out to be a much better financial year than we anticipated when preparing the budget the previous fall. While both revenue and expenses exceeded our forecast, the year ended with a net income of \$7,368. Considering that we had originally budgeted for a deficit of \$13,943, it represents an improvement of over \$21,000. Clearly the special appeal made a significant impact and also that we were able to reallocate \$3,000 from Designated Funds to the Operating Account. Nevertheless, the church is in a much better cash position than it was in the fall of 2018 when we were near the limit of our borrowing power.

In preparing the Budget of 2020, we are again forecasting a small deficit of \$5,225, as it is difficult to forecast revenue accurately. However, a balanced budget is still quite achievable. The mortgage will be up for renewal later this year and consideration should be given to extending the amortization period in order to reduce payments from our Operating Account.

The Finance Team met regularly to review the monthly statements and ensure that there were no surprises and that the statements correctly reflected the financial position of the Church.

I wish to thank the members of the Team: Betty Gutensohn, Lois Turner, Reg Hall, and particularly our Treasurer Brian Young who worked diligently to ensure the Church's funds were being collected, deposited and managed appropriately. Also, thanks to Kim Hennecker for preparing the statements on a thorough and timely basis.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Thomson



Budget &  
Congregational  
Meeting











## Envelope Secretary

Registered Envelope Donors 2019				
Active	38		38	38
In-Active	1			
<b>Total Registered Envelope Donors</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>		
Registered PAR* Donors 2019	40	40	40	40
Casual / One-Time Donors 2019	12			12
<b>Total Registered Donors</b>		<b>79</b>		
<b>Total Registered Donors – Active</b>			<b>78</b>	
<b>Total Donors 2019</b>				<b>90</b>

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Hennecker  
Envelope Secretary  
Financial Records and Accounts



*\*Pre-authorized remittance*

## Board of Trustees Report

The main items of business for the Trustees were:

- Greg Jackson resigned from the Board of Trustees and we thank him for his many years of dedication and for the wisdom he brought to the Board.
- Signed a new agreement which formalized the relationship between the United Church of Canada/Trustees of Sylvan United Church with the newly formed Shawnigan Cemetery Society.
- Updated the insurance company as to the purchase of the AED and the new hot water tank.
- Liaised with the insurance company regarding the replacement of the damaged gate.
- Held discussions with the Finance Chair, Brian Young, regarding the terms of the mortgage renewal, due April 16, 2020.

The Board of Trustees continues to exercise stewardship over the management of the Shawnigan Cemetery Society in conjunction with members of the wider community. There is a separate Cemetery report.

Thank you to my fellow Trustees for their support, shared wisdom and guidance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Duncan

Judy Baxter

Bill Davies

Rev. Katherine Brittain



*Photo: Janis Jones*

## Shawnigan Cemetery – something to remember

The congregation of Sylvan United Church has a unique relationship with the Shawnigan Cemetery.

The Board of Trustees of Sylvan United Church and a number of community members jointly oversee the ongoing management of the Cemetery. In the late 1940's and early 1950's the community of Shawnigan Lake wanted to establish a cemetery. Discussions, negotiations and planning went on for years – the major stumbling block was that the BC Utilities Board required an “organized body” to be involved with the management of the Cemetery. The Shawnigan Lake United Church was the only “organized body” that stepped up and agreed to participate. This is how it came about that the Board of Trustees of what is now Sylvan United Church, participate in the stewardship of Shawnigan Cemetery.

This unique relationship is why Shawnigan Cemetery is a community Cemetery, not a church cemetery. It is a community resource for anyone who wishes to be interred there.

Shawnigan Cemetery must adhere to bylaws approved by the provincial government, must report to, and maintain records for the provincial government and the provincial government licenses it. As of January 2019, the Shawnigan Cemetery has become the Shawnigan Cemetery Society and will follow the provincial rules required for Societies as well as Cemeteries.

Periodically, when Sylvan United is stretched for finances someone will float the idea of selling all or part of Shawnigan Cemetery to raise funds. The Cemetery is not Sylvan's to sell. If, for any reason the Cemetery 'fails', it will be the provincial government who will be the beneficiary of its assets.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Duncan,  
Trustee

## Shawnigan Cemetery Report

The Annual General Meeting of Shawnigan Cemetery Society was held January 19, 2020, in the Sylvan United Church Hall. At that time we discussed the ongoing business and management of the Cemetery.

The Cemetery committee is comprised of the Board of Trustees, including the Minister of Sylvan United Church, Rev. Katherine Brittain, Roy Davies, Kim Hennecker, Jason Whitehead and Tom Worth, Malahat Lions representative.

Roy Davies is the administrator; his responsibilities include: maintaining the plot and burial records, liaising with the funeral service providers, the bereaved, Jason Whitehead and with the Malahat Lions Club. Kim Hennecker, treasurer, is responsible for the financial transactions of the Cemetery. Both Roy and Kim have faithfully served the Cemetery since 2010. Jason Whitehead is the contractor who has provided services for more than 13 years.

The Shawnigan Cemetery became the Shawnigan Cemetery Society in late 2018. In 2019, the paperwork was completed between the Shawnigan Cemetery Society and Sylvan United Church thus allowing the transfer of the cemetery operations to the Society, and including the operations with Mill Bay Cemetery. We are grateful to Roy for his diligence in seeing this change come to fruition and for his administration of the cemeteries.

The plan presented by Jason Whitehead in January 2019, to develop the lower area of the Cemetery between the gazebo and the road, will begin to be implemented in May 2020. The committee is thankful to Jason for his well thought-out design and the care he takes preparing the sites for interment.

The team from the Malahat Lions Club faithfully maintains the Cemetery as part of their community volunteerism. The members of the Lions team are: Tom Worth, who oversees the team of Dave Aaronson, Alf Symington, Bruce Morrison, Neil Haley and Gary Bishop. The team lost long-time volunteer, Gordie Maber and we extend our condolences. The Malahat Lions Club presented a \$1,000.00 donation to the Cemetery in 2019. This church/community partnership has been ongoing for more than 17 years. Almost every Wednesday the team diligently attends to whatever is required in order to keep the Cemetery looking park-like. This is a challenge when you consider that the

water is supplied by Mother Nature. The cistern is occasionally topped up by the Shawnigan Lake Fire Department and we extend our thanks to them.

The Cemetery committee would like to thank Roy Davies, Kim Hennecker, Jason Whitehead and the Lions Club Cemetery Team for their dedication and spirited volunteerism in maintaining the operations of the Cemetery.

There were 12 interments at the Cemetery in 2019:

Clara Ashford

David Bell

Jennifer Budding

Sara Mary R. Davies

T. Garth Harvey

Gordon Maber

Carl McCauley

Anne Olwen Mills

Irene Oullette

Darcy Oullette

Jacqueline Prenevost

Hilda E.I. Venables

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Duncan, Trustee



## Ministry and Personnel Committee Report

This year our M&P committee consists of: Monika Morgan, John Kamphof, Bill Wallace, and Blair Howard who recently came on board. Judi Todd was committee member for short period, but is unable to continue.

As we are navigating the adjustments of a 3/4 time minister with Camp Pringle, M&P has met with the Pringle Board a couple of times and with Katherine periodically to review progress and offer support as we are able. This will continue to evolve. It has been refreshing to take part in this process and become more familiar with the beautiful Camp setting and programs offered there. Wonderful to feel the youthful energy especially when some of our Sylvan youth were a part of the programs. Wonderful also to see Rev. Katherine in action there.

We have been fortunate to have Eve Daniell take over the Choir Director/Pianist role when Trisha was unable to continue with us. Her youthful energy has been quite exhilarating, although it has been a short stint for now as she has commitments across the pond for three months. We look forward to her return to us in April.

Catharina De Beer is our other main pianist. We are truly blessed to have such a talented pianist playing at our services.

We were also fortunate to hire a new Custodian in May. Terry Valley works just once a week and travels from Crofton. He keeps our place in tip-top shape. We are very grateful.

Brenda Sober, our Office Administrator, has continued keep things running smoothly with all the happenings and her limited hours. Brenda plans to retire in June so we will start recruiting for this position in the next few months (not an easy task.).

Kim Hennecker continues to be our dedicated book keeper.

We are truly grateful for all the work these folks do to make Sylvan our special place of worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Monika Morgan

Coordinator, Ministry and Personnel Committee

The image shows the letters 'M&P' in a bold, red, 3D font. The letters have a slight shadow and a glossy finish, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. They are centered on the page.

## Worship Team Report

The Worship Team met five times during 2019. The members are: Nan Goodship (Chair), Rev. Katherine Brittain, Kathy Twiss and Peg Cox.

Our mandate has been to “meet the needs of the Sylvan community with both traditional services and new ways of worshipping”. Our activities have centred around the seasons of the church year.

In February there was a joint Sunday morning service with Pringle Camp attendees at a Youth Retreat conducted by Rev. Katherine. Despite snow, it was well attended by about 40 Sylvan adherents who enjoyed mixing with young people from across Vancouver Island and engaging in an interactive service with a variety of crafts and conversations as well as lunch. In September a second joint service at Pringle included a pancake brunch and attendance at the camp’s Annual Meeting. Our Minister participates in a shared arrangement pilot plan with Pringle, involving 25% of her time.

During Lent a series of discussion groups, one daytime and one evening, were led by Rev. Katherine using the guide “The Poetry of Lent”, a companion to poet Mary Oliver’s “Devotions”. Participation was active and enthusiastic and included some persons from the community who have subsequently attended Sylvan church services. The Stations of the Cross were set up in the trees surrounding the labyrinth, and were visited by many during Lent, particularly on Good Friday, when the outdoor service was supplemented by arts and crafts tables. Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday observations were combined, and on Maundy Thursday a symbolic hand washing and supper attracted about 30 people seated at a long table in the Sanctuary, decorated with grapes and flowers. A Communion service followed supper. On Palm Sunday a procession carried cedar boughs into the Sanctuary, and on Easter Sunday the sunrise service was held outside around a bonfire, followed by breakfast in the Hall. At summer solstice an overnight camp and craft workshops plus a potluck supper and bonfire singsong attracted persons of all ages.

Pulpit supply for July-August was organized with the appreciated leadership of Katherine Bell, Jane Shapley, and Carrie and Geoff Whitey-Brown while the Minister was at Camp Pringle and on holiday.

Rev. Katherine initiated “Wild Church” in the fall, with a dozen people attending a walk in the woods adjacent to Sylvan, followed by meditation on nature and collection of

natural objects as well as exchanges of personal experiences in this conducive environment. Wild Church will resume this spring.

The place of music in worship has been a transition of direction of the Choir from Director Trisha Daniell to her daughter Eve Daniell, who undertook rehearsals of one anthem a month on Communion Sunday from September to December. Catharina De Beer continues as Pianist and has offered to lead the Choir, under the direction of Brenda Sober for the months of January/February 2020 while Eve Daniell is in Europe. Eve organized a “Pop Up” Community Children’s Choir of 25 rehearsing over 5 weeks with a concert on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Special thanks go to the Hospitality Team and Choir helpers who made sure there were warm drinks and goodies available to parents and children each week. The Choir will resume in April and present a concert again in May.

The importance of visual arts in worship at Sylvan has been exemplified by the hanging of paintings, particularly those depicting creation and the seasons, by Nan Goodship. Other artists are invited to display their work from time to time. The lending of diverse nativity scenes by members of the congregation every December has enriched the Christmas experience.

Planned events for 2020 include:

- February 29 and March 1: A Gospel Signing Workshop conducted by Ann Antonides and accompanist Tanya Gillespie from the Freedom Gospel Choir. The registration fee is \$30/person or \$50/couple to cover costs and the workshop is open to the community
- Supper Church: Potluck meals interwoven with liturgy are planned for January 24, February 26 (Shrove Tuesday/Ash Wednesday), March 27, and April 9 (Maundy Thursday)
- Wild Church will be on February 23, March 22 and April 26
- At Camp Pringle a “Theological Buffet” is planned for Saturday, March 7, and a worship service on Sunday, May 3 followed by an Open House.
- A “Poetry as Prayer” workshop will be held April 3-4 with Richard Osler.

- Another Lenten study will be “Holy Habits and Spiritual Discipline”. We anticipate that the 12 Stations of the Cross will be installed again the labyrinth area over Holy Week.
- Advent: We hope to again offer the Advent Spiral, perhaps with a meal afterwards, the Blue Christmas service, and Christmas Eve service with the possibility of an earlier service for families with young children as well as the traditional 7:00 pm service. We hope also to host the Shepherds’ Play in collaboration with the Waldorf School.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathy Twiss, Peg Cox and Rev. Katherine

(Nan Goodship was away on retreat when this report was due.)



## Children's Worship Report

The children continue to begin worship with the congregation in the Sanctuary. They will often enthusiastically call us into the Sanctuary with the ringing of the bell. The congregation acknowledges Sylvan's location on the traditional lands of the Hul'qumi'num people, led by Clare Brittain, sometimes with a small assistant or two. Then Reverend Katherine invites the children to join her in front of the altar for "Children's Time", when she presents a short lesson. Of course, there are always enthusiastic responses from the children, often from some rather unique points of view. Always delightful; sometimes amazingly perceptive.

The children then leave for the Children's Worship Room in the Hall, where they review the importance of "Holy Manners" and settle themselves before entering. Our Children's Worship continues to be grounded in the "Godly Play" curriculum. It is structured on the Montessori method of teaching. After their formal lesson, the children enjoy a "Feast" in which they are served a snack and have an opportunity to socialize about any topic of their choosing. They finish their session with free time in which they may choose to do a craft or play indoors or out. We diverged from the Godly Play curriculum to some extent this fall. To begin with, five "orange" Sundays have been added to the liturgical calendar, entitled "Creation Sundays". Thus, the first Sunday back, the children gathered at the Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre in Cowichan Bay, under the guidance of Jane Kilthei and Connie Harris, to promote ocean awareness. The following two weeks touched on Jesus Calming the Storm and Cosmos Sunday – The Creation. For six sessions, the children studied "The Lord's Prayer", petition by petition. (Resource: Illustrated Children's Ministry). Through Advent and Christmas, the children were presented with a program entitled, "The Advent Conspiracy: Our Special Christmas Plan". Here the children were invited to join a special "conspiracy" wherein they were encouraged to look beyond the "getting and spending" of worldly Christmas festivities and focus on the themes of: "Worship Fully", "Spend Less", "Give More", and "Love All". Interspersed through the year were three "All Ages" events, including a worship service at Camp Pringle.

The number of children participating in Children's Worship varies considerably from Sunday to Sunday. We may have as few as two. Our attendance sheet lists nineteen names, with the children ranging in age from three to about twelve years. Ideally, we should have two separate classes to meaningfully meet the needs of such a diverse group.

We are truly grateful to those who have served as teachers this past year: Judy and Tom Baxter, Katherine Bell, Laura Fritz, Robbie Fritz, Connie Harris, Corrie Kamphof, Cassidy Marat and Delaney Marat. Special thanks to Judy and Tom who have served for a number of years but have now stepped down. Our Children's Worship team would warmly welcome new recruits! Or just join in spontaneously for a day, as a second "calming presence" if our numbers are up.

Respectfully submitted,

Robbie Fritz



## Pastoral Care Team Report

Our team members are:

Lois Turner

Barb Munroe

Mari Brown

Jeanne Tighe

Rev. Katherine Brittain

Helen Easterbrook

Joan Keith-Burgwin, Convenor

Our team meets every month at the church hall. We have an ever-changing list of folks that we privately pray for. We follow our congregation members who have had challenges regarding loss, surgical procedures or other health issues, and who have had rough patches in their lives. We offer help through letter and card writing, visits to the home or hospital or other facility, deliveries of flowers, and plain old fashioned phone calls, to just check in. A valued duty is delivery of prayer shawls, to an ailing church friend. These lovely knitted, colourful items are made by our Sylvan member, Bobbi Bradley.

At Christmas time, we deliver small poinsettias to our church members who cannot make Sunday Services.

We appreciate all referrals for someone who may need a little time, a visit, a call, or just a gentle hug. Please contact Reverend Katherine and one of our team will be glad to help.

One word of appreciation from me, to our Pastoral Team mates, who take their precious time, and give it in concern and with God's love to others.

Sincerely submitted,

Joan Keith-Burgwin,  
Convenor



## “Outreach and Social Justice” Team Report

First of all, we’d love to have you on our committee. Thanks to all who helped us this past year.

We’ve had a busy year and are planning for more to come in 2020. Our aims are to reach out to the community, help make Sylvan a welcoming place, provide financial and material support for areas of need, and promote justice in areas of life and relationships where we could become more socially responsible.

Some programs we in Sylvan have been supporting for many years, and some are new recently. Our enduring programs include the CMS Food Bank, and Camp Pringle. Each of those programs receives \$50 a month regularly, for a total (each) of \$600 per year. Another regular project that we donate to is the Chaplaincy at UVic for the students.

Connie visited the Cobble Hill/Mill Bay/Shawnigan (CMS) Food Bank last May and wrote a report on that for our magazine *“Celebrating-A-Round”*. Another regular program that we do is the “Smitten Tree”, started by Joan Keith-Burgwin, carried by Outreach for a few years, and now taken care of by Joan and family once again. The scarves and mittens are given to the CMS Food Bank to be part of their winter distribution of cold-weather gear. Delivery of weekly food donations for the CMS Food Bank has been taken over by Karen Younie, so that’s another way that Sylvan supports our local community in need. Thanks to all the contributors.

Blair Howard attends the Foot Clinic at Warmland House in Duncan monthly and brings over lightly used shoes and new socks, and we were also able to send some financial support to the program for cleaning and disinfection supplies in the fall.

At Christmas some of the Outreach team visited the care home Acacia Ty Mawr (now Trillium Lodge) on the east side of Shawnigan Lake and helped the residents write Christmas cards to loved ones.

For Our Place we support the annual “Angel Gift” program, with the help of Monika Morgan. This year we provided 72 gifts for street-entrenched people known to Our Place staff; gifts of new clothing for cold weather which were given out around Christmas time. Thanks to everyone who helped. With all the Victoria and area United Churches helping, it makes quite an impact to about 1,000 people in need.

Locally we helped individual families and people in need, using funds from the “Community Outreach” accounting line. Funds in this account come from recycled pop cans and bottles, thanks to the endeavours of Bill and Robbie Fritz, and other bottle-donors, rather than direct financial donations to Sylvan. From that source we also were able to help the El Hogar project in Honduras, the school that we have in the past supported via individual students, but now we are giving to the general revenue for the project.

For the UVic project, in 2019 we provided two “Soup Suppers”. Thanks to all the folks at Sylvan for your generous contributions of soup, buns, cookies, vegetables and dips, etc – the students and Rev. Henri Lock are appreciative of our efforts. Rev. Lock teaches Christian meditation and has an enthusiastic community of about 50 students monthly, many from foreign countries and even non-Christian backgrounds, so it’s quite an outreach. Connie and Robbie have been delivering the supper.

To encourage thoughtful social justice, each month we’ve had a film night or after-church event. The films are chosen to highlight an area where we as Christians, or our community at large, need more awareness. All these events are open to the general public and we have had a fair number of visitors to Sylvan. The format is usually pot-luck supper, film, and short discussion. Thanks to our Communications Team for advertising help. Some of the topics from last year:

- May – LGBTQ awareness – “Milk” the movie was about Harvey Milk, the politician from San Francisco who represented and legitimized the gay community in that city. Sylvan had an official “Affirm United” service in which we renewed our commitment.
- June – Our guest was Harold Joe from Duncan, showing his own film on First Nations beliefs around death and burial, and his struggles to reclaim sacred burial grounds. We had many visitors for that one.
- September – Guest speaker Michele Mech (Saltspring Island) came over and showed her presentation on Ocean Plastics. Our Sunday School visited the Cowichan Bay Nature Centre the next day as it was Ocean Sunday in the United Church year.
- October – Elections were on our minds, so we had a movie about how Swiss women gained the right to vote very recently, in the 1960s. Women’s rights and awareness were highlighted in “The Divine Order”
- November – We showed documentary film-maker Michael Moore’s “Where Shall We Invade Next” which highlighted many areas of social progress around the world; ideas that had originated in the USA but have been forgotten. France’s sponsorship of good meals for children’s lunches was one of the

- pointers, which stimulated us to support the local school lunch program here. Some of our team members visited the school lunch project, Nourish Cowichan, and donated \$200. Robbie wrote a report on that for *Celebrating-A-Round*.
- December – our film was a fictional one about answered prayer since it was the first Sunday of Advent. “The Christmas Candle” based on a book by Max Lucado, beautifully filmed on the Isle of Man, was shown after a soup lunch for the congregation.
  - January 2020 – we were snowed out. “Maudie” awaits another time.
  - February 2020– For Black Awareness month the film was “The Green Book” which recounted the true story of how a famous black pianist Dr. Don Shirley toured the USA in the ‘60s, and despite slavery being outlawed for 100 years, still faced racial discrimination in his home country. This is an ongoing problem.

We have met a new refugee family, the Darawshehs, sponsored by Cowichan Intercultural Society, and in February they were welcomed to Sylvan and presented the story of how they hope to have a second closely related family also from Syria join them here. Sylvan was able to give a financial gift from the “Community Outreach” fund.

Also, on the Outreach side, Sylvan had a presentation table at two community events this year. In August we had a table at the “Cobble Hill Fair” where passing children were invited to make a pair of animals for Noah’s Ark. Later in the fall we had a table at the “Think Shownigan” event, manned by Rev. Katherine. We are hoping to highlight Sylvan as a go-to church, active in the community.

In summary, we had a very busy, productive year in Outreach. We are hoping that the fruits of our labours will be reflected in increased attendance in 2020, bringing more people to hear the challenging and interesting sermons of Rev. Katherine and more from the community who can be touched by God’s love.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Harris for the Outreach Team.



## Sylvan Choir Report

The Sylvan Choir enjoyed another year of offering music for Sunday Services. Trisha Daniell was our Director for the first half of the year, and we extend our sincere thanks to Trisha for her leadership of our little choir for two years. In September, her daughter Eve Daniell assumed the role, and we are so pleased to have her as our Director.

We continue to lead the music at the 10:00 service every week, and pianists are usually either Catharina De Beer or Eve Daniell. On the first Sunday of the month, when we have communion, we present an anthem. To prepare this we meet the Thursday evening before the service, the Thursday evening two weeks before that, and then come early for a 9:15 run-through prior to the service.

Happily, our numbers have grown over this past year, but we are saddened by the news that Jane and Hap Shapley have decided to retire. They have been a mainstay for a number of years and the heart and soul of the tenor section. We thank them so much for their dedication and leadership and will miss them on Thursday nights.

We are so fortunate to have musicians such as Eve and Catharina here at Sylvan, and we look forward to continuing to work with them both.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Sober on behalf of the  
Sylvan Choir



## Hospitality Team Report

Hospitality is led by a Team of Two but is one of the largest Teams in Sylvan!! Hospitality is given by ALL who have hosted coffee time after worship, helped prepare and serve hot chocolate to the Children's Choir, baked and served for special events, kept fresh milk in the fridge and stayed behind to help wash dishes and clean up!!

Volunteering for Hospitality is appreciated and rewarding when you see the smiles of comfort as we feed souls and warm hearts of all who we welcome to Sylvan!

We embrace new hands of help. Few domestic skills are needed, mostly a caring and welcoming heart. We like to keep our kitchen ready for visitors and make it the place to come for coffee and conversation ... after all, we do offer the best coffee anywhere!!

Thank you to Brenda; Thank you to the painters; Thank you to the Property and Environment Team; Thank you to Women Together and Thank you to everyone who makes hospitality shine in Sylvan and the wider community!

Respectfully submitted,

Marian Davies and Miriam Coughlin  
Co-Convenors



## Hand in Hand Thrift Shop Report

The Hand in Hand Thrift Shop is a joint initiative with St John's Anglican Church in Cobble Hill. The shop is located behind St. John's Church at one end of their administration building. Both churches share all profits.

It is supported by very generous donations dropped off often from folks in our community and beyond. Shoppers come from our community and far beyond like Victoria and Nanaimo! We pride ourselves with creative staging that attracts the eye immediately when entering. Clothing for both men and women and a large amount of collectables are the main inventory. Staffing is completely by volunteers who sign up to serve on the Friday openings and once a month on the last Saturday of the month.

We celebrate our fifth anniversary on Valentine's Day 2020 and are excited to realize \$70,000 in total income!! We extend our greatest appreciation to our donors, shoppers and volunteers for their commitment and dedication that made our little shop so successful!!

It is a rewarding experience for all who donate, shop and volunteer, especially the warm friendships that have been made through this partnership of Sylvan United and St. John's Anglican Churches! Blessings to all who have enjoyed the experience!

Respectfully submitted,

Marian Davies and Monika Morgan  
Sylvan Reps



## Women Together Report

As I come to the end of a two-year term as Chairperson of Women Together, I would like to express my thanks to Women Together, Sylvan Council, Rev. Katherine Brittain and the congregation at large for encouragement and support. It has been a joy to work with you all.

Women Together are a group of approximately eight - ten ladies who meet on the first Thursday of every month at the lunch hour. We bring our lunch, open with prayer and meditation. We share with the group an update on our current life situations. As the meetings progress, we do planning for a month or more in advance.

Highlights of 2019 include the following:

- Purchase of an AED for the church hall
- General repairs, cleaning, purchasing of a new microwave and new blinds for the kitchen, as well as the painting of the kitchen cabinets, the walls and the main hall
- Several outings, including movies, and a visit to the local tea farm as our Christmas outing
- Women Together hosted a Raspberry tea/bake sale and quilt show in the month of July for the community at large
- In late November we hosted a Christmas Tea/Bake Sale/Silent Auction, which also included Hand and Hand Thrift Store's travelling booth, again for the community at large

A report from Judy van der Boom, Women Together Treasurer, follows.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Howard  
Women Together



*Photo: Janis Jones*

**WOMEN TOGETHER FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Forward balance in care of General Fund			\$2,654.92
AED Purchase	\$1,835.68		
Sub Total			\$ 819.24
Kitchen and Hall Reno	\$ 850.42		
Sub Total			- \$ 31.18
Christmas Tea		\$2,534.40	
Sub Total			\$2,503.22
Expenses: Reimbursements	\$ 487.00		
Balance in care of General Fund			\$2,016.22
Balance Cash on hand forwarded		\$ 102.35	
Income: Givings and donations		\$ 177.32	
Pancake Supper		\$ 180.25	
Silent Auction		\$ 20.00	
Sub Total		\$ 384.92	
Expense Reimbursements	\$ 369.92		
New Balance cash on hand			\$ 15.00
<b>Total Available</b>			<b>\$2,031.22</b>

Respectfully submitted,

Judy van der Boom,  
For Women Together



## Property and Environment Team Report

At present the Team consists of: Peter Elphick, Mike Rybchuk, Reg Hall, Derek Coughlin, Bary Beck and Bill Wallace who undertakes the annual bell maintenance. Other members of the congregation assist and support the P and E team throughout the year,

Work undertaken over the last year:

### **Annual Maintenance/small projects:**

- Fall and Spring Clean Up. Thank you for all the members of the congregation who participated
- Sanctuary sound system adjustment
- Gutters cleaned out
- Bell Maintenance
- Shelving provided for AED in Hall
- Sanctuary lighting repaired
- Installation of Christmas lighting along covered walkway
- Caulking Sanctuary windows
- Ongoing repairs for Hall entrance ramp
- Ongoing seasonal repair of road way pot holes
- Responded to numerous maintenance requests and assisted other Team efforts, such as Raspberry Tea event

### **Large Projects:**

- Retrofit of the Hall washrooms
- Removal of three dead trees that posed a risk to the Sanctuary and Sylvan members
- Clean up of Hall Basement
- Shredding of dated documents and other materials
- Gate replacement (ongoing)
- Hall Basement Ventilation postponed to early 2020

Proposed projects for 2020:

- Clean up of maintenance shed
- Replace Hall entrance ramp

## Sylvan Gardeners

Sylvan Gardeners is a new group that was established last summer. It was recognized that maintaining Sylvan's beautiful, but expansive garden takes considerable effort, and requires many hands. A map was drawn up, dividing the grounds into twenty manageable units. Individuals signed up to make a unit or two, their "own". Members generally prefer to work on their own. However, it was decided that it would be beneficial to meet once a month, with a winter hiatus. The time selected was the first Monday of the month at 10:30 am. However, as the first Monday is often a holiday, this will be revisited. Although twenty-two people have signed up, there are still some areas without volunteers, particularly on the periphery of the grounds, such as the fruit and nut trees.

Last summer and fall, in addition to maintenance, bulbs were planted, new plants were introduced, dead ones replaced, a revitalized shade garden was established at the back entrance to the hall, and a wildflower bed was established at the end of the ramp entrance to the hall. It was decided that the periphery of the labyrinth would be finished with a black in-ground plastic lawn border. This should make weeding easier. The materials have been purchased and the first 40 feet have been installed. The remainder awaits better weather.

A couple of boxes of apples from our trees were delivered to the Food Bank.

Many thanks to all our Sylvan Gardeners and we heartily welcome new participants. Please contact Robbie Fritz if you would like to join the group.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bary Beck,  
Convenor



*Photo: Janis Jones*

## Communications Report

Team members for 2019 - Derek Coughlin, Robbie Fritz, Janis Jones, Judy Baxter.

Throughout the past year Communications team members have worked hard to share the good news about Sylvan United Church and its work with congregation members and with the wider community.

The team publishes *Celebrating-A- Round*, the quarterly review of the life, work and in particular, the people of Sylvan United Church. Over the past year the review has been well received and supported with many contributions from members. The themes this year have been Devotion, Community, Plenty and Peace. The magazine is published in hardcopy print and online. An archive of past hard copy issues is in the church Hall and there is an online, digital archive which is accessed through the website.

Statistics show that the Sylvan Facebook Page and the website, sylvanunited.ca, reach well out into the community with many followers. Managers work with the Office Administrator to keep members up to date and informed of events and activities.

Other responsibilities for this team include assisting with audio-visual presentations, keeping the church noticeboard near entrance up-to-date and also managing distribution of Broadview magazine to subscribers.

Respectfully submitted

Derek Coughlin

Team Leader - Communications



## Bay-Lake-Hill Men's Christian Fellowship Report

All men from churches in Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill are invited to meet on the third Wednesday of each month for dinner, fellowship, singalong fun and a guest speaker on a topic of interest, edification and sometimes controversy.

Meetings are held at Sylvan United Church but the group is ecumenical and reaches out to all Christian men in the community.

Partners are invited to the annual Christmas dinner and summer party, always very happy events.

Over the past year this group has raised funds in excess of \$500 and donations in kind to support the local food bank, its designated charity.

We are blessed and privileged to have Sylvan volunteers who prepare and serve the meals. Their work raises some \$2,500 each year for Sylvan Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek Coughlin





## United Church Campus Ministry

At the  
University of Victoria  
Multifaith Services

### Dear Friends of Campus Ministry!

### Annual Report, January 2020

In a departure from the experience of many congregations, **Campus Ministry with young people is growing**, reaching over 600 students every week in a vibrant community of faith learning and spiritual practice. But unlike a typical congregation, participants are mostly transient, involved for only a few years at most before they move on. They are financially constrained – part of the appeal of our ministry is that we ask only nominal contributions to support program activities. This is why our donors and the wider church are so important for the continuation of this ministry with young people.

### Program highlights: integrating spiritual practice and social change

The United Church is represented on campus through the leadership of our full-time campus minister, Rev. Henri Lock and a large group of students and volunteers. Students who identify as Christians gather weekly for the *Wine before Supper* ecumenical communion and dinner. Hundreds of students participate in weekly spiritual practice groups, such as *Learn to Meditate*, *Yoga for Meditation*, *Centering Prayer* and *Mindfulness*. **Students gain valuable leadership skills** organizing and facilitating weekend *Meditation Retreats* at Camp Pringle and hosting the popular *Momentum Festival* at the UVic Chapel each term to celebrate spiritual growth and community connection.

This year, students requested program support for initiatives that integrate faith and mindfulness with social change and justice

action. The Campus Ministry hosted *Ego to Eco*, an evening of student art, music and spoken word on the theme of Indigenous wisdom and relationship with Creation. It supported student leadership for the Friday Climate Strike at the BC Legislature. Spurred again by our student leaders, the Campus Ministry



*Meditation Retreat October 2019*

hosted an 8-hour 'Meditation Marathon' fundraiser for RAVEN, the Indigenous legal defense organization. **We are enthusiastic to support reconciliation** through collaborative activities with Indigenous groups on campus.

### UVic invests in student spiritual development

With the advocacy and engagement of our Campus Ministry, the University has come to affirm the

**The meditation retreat was a beautiful experience, I am still buzzing from it. It got me more connected with myself and God and gave me the opportunity to make connections with beautiful people. I learned so much about the art of meditation and my appreciation for this form of prayer grew. I have so much gratitude for the experience that my heart glows when I think of it!**

Student at the October 2019 Meditation Retreat

importance of spiritual development in the mental health and wellbeing of the campus community. **This**

**The presentation by Henri Lock was really valuable to me because it helped me open my mind up to a different view of the world and religion in particular. It is very important to stay in touch with your spiritual side of well being and I will now try to add meditation to my repertoire and check out what is offered at Multifaith.**

*Student in EPHE142 Class, November 2019*

year UVic will open a new **Student Wellness Centre**, joining together three student support services – Health Services, Counselling Services and Multifaith Services – and affirming physical, emotional and spiritual well-being as essential for student life. The university supports partnership with the Multifaith community, including the United Church, by providing administrative support and space within the Interfaith Chapel for spiritual learning and practice. This year, UVic will fund the construction of a permanent labyrinth in the Finnerty Gardens. We are noticing a cultural shift: academic instructors are inviting faith leaders into their classes to speak of spirituality in a faith context and to teach basic spiritual practices as part of personal wellness and social change. For many students this is the first positive exposure they have had to spirituality, and many follow up by trying out one of the learning and practice opportunities offered through the Interfaith Chapel.

### Help us deliver this growing ministry

A crucial contribution to our campus faith community is made by volunteers from United Churches, who support the ministry through preparing weekly soup dinners and joining in the fellowship following instructional or communion sessions. Few young adults explore their faith identity and development in traditional Sunday morning services any more. But **our United Church Campus Ministry faith activities are active and growing.** Student participants welcome elders from our churches to join them in our campus community of faith, to share and explore the relevance of faith in a troubled time.



*Lighting Candles of Hope*

The United Church Campus Ministry and the student community of spiritual learning and practice is dependent upon the generosity of our donors. This year, the Campus Ministry needs to raise \$25,000 to sustain this ministry through 2020. **Can we count on your personal financial support through a donation of \$150, \$500, or more? Will your congregation make a contribution to Campus Ministry through its outreach budget or designated line item in the Annual Budget of the congregation? Without financial support from individuals and congregations in the Victoria region, our ministry is not sustainable.** Please help in whatever way you can!



Donate to the United Church Campus Ministry with CanadaHelps by means of the Pacific Mountain Region of the United Church, and receive a charitable donation receipt. Be sure to apply your donation to the **United Church Campus Ministry – UVic** fund. Thank You for sustaining our growth!

Rev. Henri Lock  
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