

Autumn 2024

VOL. #16 ISSUE #6

# SHEPHERD'S STAFF

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church



For those who were away during the summer months, welcome back to church for the Autumn season!

Looking ahead this Fall, there will be more opportunities to gather and celebrate fellowship with each other, just as we did at the Community BBQ on August 28<sup>th</sup> (see photos below).



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*Shepherd of the Valley  
Mission Statement: Grounded in the  
word of God and centered in Christ,  
SVLC is an accepting and caring  
community sharing God's love, grace  
and forgiveness with all.*

Shepherd's Staff is published four times each year (Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn). It is the voice of the congregation; your articles, letters, and comments are welcome at any time. Submissions to the newsletter must be signed when received, although names may be withheld from the newsletter upon request.

Submissions are subject to editing for space and clarity.  
Please submit articles by email or directly to the office.

The deadline for the Winter issue is Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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# Community Barbeque at SVLC

Photos shared by Ellen van Eijnsbergen



Thank you to everyone who helped to bring this event together! Extra thanks to Ellen & Ralph, Lorne & Carol, Cheryl, Gail, Edna, and all the volunteers who helped!





# Music Director's Report - Seasons of Change

Gail Suderman

A couple of mornings ago at about 6:00 a.m., the time my dogs wake me up and ask to go outside, they hit the ground running, eager to get outside. I followed them out and immediately stopped on the porch, saying out loud (to nobody in particular), "it's cold outside!" And as I was driving this past week, I saw a tree that had mostly green leaves, but also a few leaves that had already changed color to yellow. After a summer of sunny and warm days and very little rain, the brisk, fall-like temperature and those yellow leaves were a reminder that there is change in the air.

Change seems to happen more quickly these days, especially with things like technology. We barely get used to one smart phone and the next model is out, with claims that it's better, upgraded, faster, more powerful. Every summer (and throughout the year) we hear and see and feel, that Climate Change is creating serious weather-related change year to year – forest fires that are huge and out of control, extreme rainfall and flooding, heat domes. We experience changes in the cost of living, significantly so in the past 4-5 years with grocery prices skyrocketing. We just need to look at the price of gas at the pumps to see daily and weekly change. Jobs change, people move, changes in health, loss of friends and family.

We often think of change in the negative as there are so many changes that can throw us off our game. Change, though, can often be a good thing – meeting new people, finding a job that is rewarding and enjoyable, a special lunch visit with a friend we haven't seen for awhile, going on a vacation to a place we've never been before, an unexpected gift, achieving a hard-fought goal. There are many ways we experience change – both challenging and gratifying.

Songwriters have taken pen to paper and voiced many thoughts on the topic of "change." As we move into another Fall season, we will undoubtedly experience change – positive and perhaps negative, and with that change, maybe some uncertainty. Here are some reminders from songwriters past and present that whether the changes be personal, or bigger world-related changes, we can remain steadfast and strong and find encouragement and even joy in the midst of it all.

*There've been times that I thought I couldn't last for long,  
But now, I think I'm able to carry on.  
It's been a long, a long time coming, but I know  
A change is gonna come, Oh yes, it will.*  
(A Change is Gonna Come, Sam Cooke)

**Got my hand on the Gospel plow, wouldn't take  
nothin' for my journey now,  
Keep your hand on the plow, Hold On.  
Freedom's name is mighty sweet, one of these day's  
we're gonna meet,  
Keep your hand on the plow, Hold On.**  
(Hold On, aka Keep Your Eyes on the Prize,  
African American Spiritual)

*Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest;  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness to Thy  
great faithfulness, mercy, and love.*  
(Great Is Thy Faithfulness, Thomas O. Chisholm)



**Jada Leroux,  
local musician  
who performed  
at the August  
Community  
BBQ.**

# Community Garden Flowers

Ellen van Eijnsbergen

As a child growing up in Michigan during the 60s I was blessed to be surrounded by nature. With limited toys, no digital technology, and the great outdoors at our doorstep, my siblings and I experienced the freedom to roam the rural area surrounding our childhood home. My parents had a quarter-acre garden where they grew most of the vegetables that we consumed throughout the year. Everyone helped in the garden; Dad handled the heavy job of working the rototiller through the wet clay soil. Mom advised us - making furrows, planting the seeds then weeding throughout the summer months and hunting for pesky tomato hornworms. From the early spring asparagus to the late ripening pumpkins, we enjoyed the bounty of that magical garden.

My mother and my grandmother also had extensive flower beds. Lilacs, Peonies, Lily of the Valley, Foxglove and Delphinium were some of their favourites. Weeding the flower beds was my favourite chore. I imagined dainty fairies dancing and flitting through the blossoms, harnessing butterflies, snails and frogs as their playmates. My grandmother had a children's book about fairies that inspired my daydreams. She also had a small plaque that hung in her house until the day she died which was inscribed with the poem:

*The kiss of the sun for pardon  
The song of the bird for mirth  
One is nearer God's heart  
in the garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.*  
Dorothy Frances Gurney (God's Garden)

That poem has stuck with me throughout my life. All this is to say that I come by my love of gardening quite naturally. While my grandmother and mother have passed, my three sisters and I are all continuing the family tradition of getting our hands in the dirt and creating magic from seeds and starts.

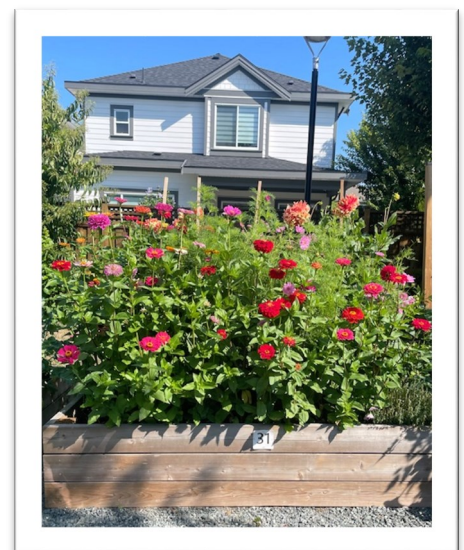


I'm guessing it was close to fifteen years ago that one of the Long Term Planning Committees began talking about the development of a housing project on the West Property. Pamela Nel, Pastor Kristen and I attended a weekend gardening workshop at A Rocha in Surrey where we learned about community gardens and became excited about the idea of including them in the future project. Fast forward to today with Emmaus Place next door and the beautiful garden boxes that are overflowing with veggies and flowers while providing a great space for our neighbours to connect and build community. The program has been so successful that we installed additional beds two years ago. Last year we engaged Langley Environmental Partners to lead a series of gardening workshops to make use of one of the newly constructed beds.

This year we decided that I would use the plot to grow flowers for the chancel in the Sanctuary. We use the flowers to fill-in when there is no one in the congregation providing flowers on any given Sunday. The garden is overflowing with colourful Zinnias, Cosmos, and Dahlias. Dan & Savia Krygsveld have a plot next to the church plot and Dan has been helpful by watering and cutting flowers when I have been away on vacation. This fall I will plant bulbs for spring blooms and prepare the bed for next summer.

If anyone has access to bulbs, seeds, or plant starts to share, please let me know!

Through Christ,  
Ellen van Eijnsbergen



# *The church isn't dying. It's being remade.*

*Author: Shannon Hopkins,*

*Co-founder & lead cultivator, RootedGood*

*Article provided by Faith & Leadership: A learning resource for Christian leaders and their institutions from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity.*

As the 1950s model declines, new ways of being the church are popping up all over, and gospel truths are now being found in new containers, writes a social entrepreneur.

Picture this: An old church is now a cafe. From 9 to 5, it serves coffee, cakes and sandwiches in the historic hallowed space, with light streaming through the stained glass. Young people with piercings serve chai and lattes to customers of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Then, on a Sunday evening, with the smell of coffee still in the air, people gather around tables to talk about justice and economics and to question the role faith plays in their lives. It's not a secret: the way we church is changing. Yet many of our structures and systems and ways of doing church still hang on a model from another era. Modern life is different. Work is different; dating, community life, technology — they're all different. So shouldn't church be different as well? This is a question I've been asking for nearly 30 years. Perhaps it started when I took my college friend Kim home with me one Easter. When we went to church, everyone else got dressed up, but Kim just had jeans. Afterward, she said that while her experience in church had been nice in some ways, she had felt like a fish out of water.

After college, I had friends who were longing for conversations about meaning and purpose — but church was the last place they would look for such discussions. Over the last 20 years, I've worked to create communities that offer space for deep relationships and deep questions while at the same time serving people less fortunate than ourselves. I've tried a lot of experiments, building the road as I've walked it.

In turbulent times, we look for the safe harbor, the thing that doesn't change, to help us stay grounded. For the church, I believe that the gospel — not the form of church — is that thing.

As new forms of mission and ministry are taking shape, this is a moment of hope as well as pain. Just like the messy but beautiful process of giving birth, the re-imagining of the landscape of the church is an intricate dance of pain and promise.

There's always a risk when we step into the new. We have to let go of something to make room for fresh things. Isn't this a hallmark of the Lord's leading? There is an invitation to trust. We don't have to have it all buttoned up and figured out before we step out.

As someone who has lived and worked on the margins of the institutional church for decades, I am grateful, proud and optimistic when I see all the vibrant initiatives that are taking root. It is clear this is no longer a fad of the 90s.

You don't have to look far to see breweries and bakeries popping up in restored church properties or in new monastic communities. Just look around and you will find kitchen table entrepreneurs putting idle church kitchens into service, using food to address loneliness and food insecurity. Churches are also leveraging their land to meet the needs of their neighbors with efforts such as affordable housing, senior communities and new economic development.

These new models are creating jobs, community and new financial futures for congregations. But they're also showing the world a dynamic church, transforming the lives of people and the community around them. To me, that looks like the gospel in action.



**If you are in a church longing to see something new, how do you know where to start?**

- **Don't look back.** When I travel, I'm often struck by the way that people in other countries seem to be looking ahead, looking forward. I find that in the U.S. and Europe we tend to look back to the "good old days." This is not a time to look back but rather a time to look ahead and embrace the future.
- **Lament.** You do need to grieve what is being lost. The ability to grieve well is a signature gift of those with Christian faith. After all, we believe in a gospel of death and resurrection.
- **Experiment.** When you try new things, hold them lightly. If you want to do something with food, host a farmers market or a pop-up restaurant, but do it once or twice before making further plans and see what you learn. If you know a lot of people working from home, try a work-from-church day. As you set off to do some experiments, it is helpful to embrace a theology of enough and to approach it as a learning exercise.
- **Serve.** It is important to adopt an attitude of service and to make justice a priority. This starts by really seeing others, loving others and understanding the challenges they face. Launch a listening tour in which you ask questions, listen deeply and find out from your neighbors what they need most. Then start right there! It will lead you to bigger systemic issues, and you'll be able to approach that complex work grounded in the experiences of those most directly affected.
- **Be open to surprise.** We know that the ways of God are not our ways. After all, God came to us as an infant and not as someone in power. Be ready to be surprised — and to surprise your community — by doing something new. The church is turning up and creating impact in ways that are unexpected.

I use the acronym BLESS to teach these five steps: Don't Look Back, Lament, Experiment, Serve, Surprise.

The world hasn't been expecting the church to radically create affordable housing, provide for those exiting prison, offer services for seniors, etc. To be honest, a lot of people see the church as an in-group seeking to push its own agenda. But that isn't our story.

Churches becoming pubs and cafes and new housing developments? I say yes, because it is all part of the church becoming new. We can repurpose our sacred buildings so they can shimmer with hope and justice for all.

*Article published on Tuesday, February 6, 2024*

**Resources:**

*Lake Institute on Faith & Giving's Faithful Generosity Story Shelf, with case studies and stories of innovation*

*RootedGood's Good Futures Accelerator, a course to help churches unlock resources and imagination*

*Faith & Leadership feature articles, with stories of innovation and creativity in the church*

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tea

**Join us on October 27<sup>th</sup> (Reformation Sunday) for a special Tea event in the hall. You are encouraged to invite church members from the past who you still keep in touch with. Let's celebrate 50 years of people at SVLC!**



# SVLC Quilters Group

Submitted by Darlene Gamble

The quilters have kept busy over the summer . . . going through their stashes of supplies at home and at church . . . sorting out fabric to fulfill their creative thoughts. Some quilters have made children's clothing, quilt tops, and a few have made entire quilts from start to finish. We will start quilting again on Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.





# "What a Difference a Year Can Make!"

Submitted by Edna Schuerhaus

Aren't you glad things cooled down a bit last week? You know, the weather. Despite the much-needed rain we received, the cooler weather just seems to take the pressure off. By the time you read this article, we'll be back in a warm-up, but nowhere near the heat of earlier this summer.

Lately the events of one year ago in August 2023, in the North Shuswap where we own recreation property, have been taking up space in my mind. At that time, our family members were watching the rapid progression of the Bush Creek fire. This fire had begun at Adams Lake and then tore, with the intensity of an inferno, through the Shuswap communities of Scotch Creek, Celista and Sorrento. Our North Shuswap community members were forced to evacuate on order of the RCMP and the BC Wildfire Service. Folks grabbed what they could and fled their homes to avoid the apocalypse that moved an astonishing 20 kilometers in just 12 hours. Over 240 homes and cabins were destroyed. Thank God, our little bit of paradise was spared, with the fire coming just four kilometers from our property. God watched over us on that day. Oh, how lucky we were...

What a difference a year has made. We've just returned from our summer sojourn at the Shuswap much less anxious and considerably less stressed than a year ago. Evidence of renewal was certainly noticeable around the area. And while there are, understandably, a few properties for sale, there is new construction happening and the tourists returned. There is hope and optimism in the air (and no smoke!). As bad as it was, the disastrous fire forced our community to grow stronger... Shuswap strong! The resilience of that community is inspiring and motivational, and having experienced that resilience this summer, I am reminded once again of our little SVLC community.

These past many months have also been difficult and stressful for us. We continue to pray for our pastor, who is on long-term medical leave. Initially we struggled to find our way, but God has sent us Pastor Marlys. Oh, how lucky we are. We are also a resilient community and because we foster a welcoming and supportive environment, through caring for one another, we are still together... welcoming new members and new families. We too will continue to have hope and be optimistic.

But it's kind of renewal time anyway, isn't it? Late August - summer's curtain call. We begin to savour the remaining sunny days while at the same time knowing that the cooler days of fall will soon arrive. It's almost time to go back to school and **time to come back to church...**

Having been in the school system for over thirty years, the late August buzz of 'coming back' to school was always there. I typically started back to work the middle of August. New families would come in to school and want to register their children; teachers came in 'to photocopy' but maybe they were just missing school... Parents and children were busy buying school supplies, new clothes, and awaiting the school schedules – in which class did they land. There was always hope for a new, fresh start; a promise to do better this year. There was excitement and optimism in the air...

When school begins in September, we hope that children are inspired to get involved in the school community, to take some risks to improve themselves, and ultimately end up having a positive school experience. We want students to know that they are important and that they matter to the school community.

Last Sunday our church hosted a Welcome Back BBQ so that our congregation members could experience a **comeback to church**, kind of like the school comeback. Pastor Nel reminded us of the congregation's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and to re-commit to God's mission and ministry. He noted that our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary gives us reason to gather and helps us to re-focus and to be a blessing to those around us.

Just like in school communities, please know that you all are important; you all are valued and that you all matter to our church community. Take an opportunity to re-focus and become involved in something new at church this fall. Talk to someone new! We love seeing you on Sundays, and anywhere and anytime you might feel called to serve. Enjoy yourselves!!

Welcome back to church!!

In Peace,  
Edna Schuerhaus



# Plan Your Calendar for the Fall Months

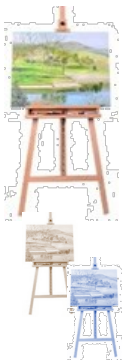
**Outreach Community Meals**  
Sunday afternoons  
**September 8<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**October 27<sup>th</sup>**  
In the Fellowship Hall.  
(Meal Prep is on the Saturday before at 9:00)



**Quilting Starts**  
Monday, **Sept 9<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 am in the hall  
Gathering are every Monday except holidays. Everyone is welcome to join quilting!



**Artist's Circle**  
Drop-in Group  
Starts Tuesday, Sept 10<sup>th</sup>  
**9:30 am - 3:00 pm in the hall.**  
Artists gather every Tuesday in September, October, and November. Ask Ruby for more details.



**Church Council Meetings**  
Tuesdays at 7:30 pm  
**September 10<sup>th</sup> (in the hall)**  
**October 8<sup>th</sup> (in the hall)**  
**November 5<sup>th</sup> (via Zoom)**  
(dates are not set in stone and can change)



**Choir Rehearsals**  
Wednesdays at 7:00 pm  
Starting September 11<sup>th</sup>


**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee**  
The September meeting will be Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> following worship.



**Worship & Music Meeting**  
11:00 am Wednesday,  
**September 25<sup>th</sup>**



**Scrapbooking Group, Saturdays:**  
Sep 28<sup>th</sup>, Oct 19<sup>th</sup>, Nov 16<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 am to 9:00 pm



**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Worship Service**  
On October 27<sup>th</sup> (Reformation Sunday)  
This celebratory service will be followed by a special Tea event in the hall. You are encouraged to invite church members from the past who you still keep in touch with. Let's celebrate 50 years of SVLC!



**Winter 2024-25 Newsletter Articles**  
Submissions due by Sunday, Nov 17<sup>th</sup>  
Send photos and articles to:  
[eleanor.svlc@shaw.ca](mailto:eleanor.svlc@shaw.ca)



Plan ahead! **Men's Bibles & Breakfast**  
December 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM  
at the home of Michael Nel

