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**Contact:**  
**111 Superior St.**  
**Victoria, BC V8V 1T2**  
**250-382-5412**  
<http://cotvictoria.ca>

## NURTURING OUR NATURE

This is a special month for The Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living, as we are celebrating its 30th anniversary. The opening line on the home page of the church's website (<http://cotvictoria.ca/>) states; "We are a spiritual community supporting each other in exploring our personal journeys, regardless of beliefs or spiritual paths."

Our theme for the month of April is "nurturing our nature" and it seems an appropriate topic for what the church has brought to its members and outside visitors/users. Over the years we have had an abundance of mainstream and alternative speakers, presenters and events that have helped define us as a community. We have found a way to nurture ourselves while exploring the world around us.

One of the many models of nurturing ourselves as individuals looks at the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects of humanness. As a conscious community, we collectively know and recognize that we are made up of a community of unique individuals. We do not follow a specific dogma; we view the world from many different perspectives. For many of us we strongly live mainly through one of the four aspects, the physical, emotional intellectual or spiritual. As a community we instinctively know this and create avenues of exploration that honor each of those outlooks.

I was curious what the community has facilitated over the past 30 years. I looked at past church newsletters, talked to older members and asked current members what were their favorite services. The following are not a complete list but a mini snapshot of what we have hosted. The first list is a smattering of the offerings that outside individuals and groups who have used the church space. The second list is collected from the Sunday services that have been presented over the years. I apologize in advance if I have missed one of your favorites. There were so many choices.

**Community Use:** Sound, crystal bowls, toning, chanting, choir practice, concerts, dancing which includes free form to circle dancing, dreaming, silent meditation, chi gong, kirtan - call and response chanting, wellness fairs, funerals, celebrations of life, weddings, drumming circles, despacho, solstice celebrations, death cafes, chakra dance, walking the labyrinth, satsang, meditation workshops, book launches, healer training courses, writing workshops, breathwork, yoga, birthday celebrations, movie night and oneness Wednesdays.

The Lighthouse April 2014  
A Newsletter for Friends of the Church

We are a spiritual community supporting each other in exploring our personal journeys regardless of spiritual path or belief. Our community is comprised of a rich field of individual and collective energies that is ever changing and evolving.

While we are accepting of diverse expressions of belief, we recognize the interconnectedness of all things and the power of love and appreciation. We hold reverence for all life.

We welcome those who wish to share their journey with us through their insights, reflections, experience and creative self-expression.

We are open to inspiration and recognize that our openness to others' ideas enhance our own awareness and expansion.

We meet our basic human need to socialize, bond, cooperate, celebrate and have fun, in a warm-hearted way, through a variety of events and activities.

We acknowledge our opportunity to be agents of change in the world and we encourage and support service to others through individual and group activity.

We share our sacred space with the larger community.

With gratitude, we live thoughtfully on the Earth with kindness and compassion for all.

We welcome you.

The Church of Truth - Community of Conscious Living

Sunday Service – 11:00 am  
Working for you - Your Board of Directors

President	Roland Guenther	778-433-4386
Past President	Patti Huot	250-385-0941
Vice President	D. Joan Thomas	250-721-4054
Treasurer	D. Joan Thomas	250-721-4054
Secretary	Paul Monfette	250-896-4439
Rentals	Esther Hart	250-896-5933
Outside Maintenance/SDC Liaison	Jack Hyatt	250-592-1422
Inside Maintenance		

Your Spiritual Directions Committee Members are:

Susan Blackwood	250-889-5335
Stephen Graves	778-677-7597
Colin Lee	250-514-1270
Peggy Muncaster	250-888-7664
Dancing Wolf	250-418-0694

Community Care Liaison – Lorna Rennie 361-2079

Newsletter—Deborah Hawkey Email [dbhawkey@gmail.com](mailto:dbhawkey@gmail.com)

Continued from page 1

Church Service Topics, Speakers and Themes:

The love project, heart meditations, gardening, Buddhist teachers, oneness teachers, poetry, dance, yoga, earth day celebrations, chanting, singing, aboriginal speakers and ceremonialists, death and dying, astrology, photography, community discussion, walk the talk, writing, Maître project, choirs, speakers from different spiritual practices such as Baha'i Buddhist, eckinkar, Wicca, and Quaker, and a wealth of topics too numerous to name that have been presented by our own members.

Wow! It is abundantly clear we have found a way to nurture our nature while honoring and respecting our fellow human travelers. We are amazing and very fortunate to have a safe place to discover our true nature.

Submitted by Susan Blackwood, SDC

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This April is a very special month, an Anniversary month, with it ending with a Celebration of the Church's 30 years so far in Victoria. Over the years the Church has moved from a Minister led Congregation to a Community led one. Only a Conscious Community could pull this off, and we have, and very well, in my opinion. There has been a distinct opportunity within those hallowed walls we call the Church of Truth to dissolve much of what we were taught by dogmatic doctrines and societal mechanisms and become more conscious individually and collectively. I cannot say that the collective interests me more than the personal as I question the very nature of evolution but I can say, for me, they both matter and greatly. Being conscious in community offers me a better or a more whole opportunity to accept who you are and who I am, while walking in service not far from my ancestors, yet within the penetrating perception of our children.

Submitted by Susan Blackwood, SDC



# SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

## April Theme: Nurturing our Nature

**April 6**

### Conscious Community

Co-ordinator: Dancing Wolf  
Moderator: Troi Leonard  
Meditator: Natashya Ranson  
Speaker: Colin Lee  
Greeter: Daniel Ouimet

Good Vibes: The Congregation

**April 13**

### Nestling in with our Inner Child

Co-ordinator: Peggy Muncaster  
Moderator: Peggy Muncaster  
Meditation: Troi Leonard  
Speaker: Deborah Hawkey  
Greeter: Elsie Mary Paliquin

“Beloved” is a term we all have the right to inhabit.  
Every child born, every inner child in an adult body,  
We all are worthy of love – even by ourselves.

Finding a sense of community with others and making this a home space, too, by  
allowing some sweetness of interaction and common ground,

We inhabit our inner and outer space and make peace with our inner child and do  
what it takes to be at home. We nestle.

**April 20**

### Theme: Egg Static

Coordinator: Stephen Graves  
Moderator: Brian Martin  
Meditation: Stephen Graves  
Speaker: Blair Little  
Greeter: Pat Miller

Blair Little is the Founder and President of the Society for the enhancement of Quality of Life (SEQL), an all-volunteer charitable organization which since 1998 has provided educational programs to help people Live Soul, Act Group, Reveal Oneness. Blair is the author of "Freeing The Light of Soul". He seeks to uncover the mysteries of life and communicate them in non-mysterious ways.

## **April 27                      Special Community Service**

Dedicated to 'Nurturing Our Nature' and celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living.

The planning committee has designed a fun-filled program of songs, rituals, history, and open mic for your reminiscences and contemplation.

Co-ordinator:            Planning Committee  
Moderator:              Brian Martin

Service Time:        11:00 am to 1:00 pm  
**(Doors 10:30 am - Light brunch provided)**

Sign up to confirm attendance and contribute

For further clarification contact:  
Lorna: 250-361-2079 (lornajr@shaw.ca)  
Marie: 250-652-8586  
Laura: 250-474-9938 (lauras.myc@shaw.ca)  
Colin: 250-514-1270 (eelniloc@yahoo.com)

### How to Help/Contribute:

- Table and chair set up in sanctuary
- Greeters (2)
- Food set up in Quiet Room
- Beverage preparation and set up in Quiet Room
- Quiet Room Monitor of Needs
- Microphone set-up
- Video-taping
- Food clean-up after service
- Sanctuary clean-up after service
- Table take-down and chair put-away after service
- Collage-making to display (see Laura)
- Display set-up, such as photo albums
- Cake table set-up for special display
- Distribute music on tables

## **PROFILE: CHURCH OF TRUTH - COMMUNITY OF CONSCIOUS LIVING**

Do you know our roots? Our church was initially named the "Canadian Fellowship of Religious Mysticism"! On May 25, 1984, it was incorporated as a legal entity under the British Columbia Society Act. Over the years, our name has changed, in sometimes subtle ways, culminating in the "Church of Truth - Community of Conscious Living" May 3, 2001. Since 1994, the church has been managed and administered by a volunteer Board of Directors made up from the membership.

### **Evolution of our Spiritual Direction**

Background: The church began as an enthusiastic group formed around the spiritual leadership of Richard Di Castri, ordained as a minister in Pasadena California's Church of the Truth. The combined energy of this group manifested the funds and drive to create this body as a non-profit society, and to design and construct our building. In 1989, Richard ordained Joan Hopper who was the only minister member of our church to hold this distinction.

During its early evolution, the church maintained an association with California's Church of the Truth\* and with the International New Thought Alliance; our last membership with this Alliance was in 1994. Since then the church has evolved on its own auspices and is an independent entity.

In the early 1990s, Richard resigned as minister to follow other interests. With his resignation, and the subsequent hiring and departure of another minister after one year, challenges to the church's survival manifested with a greatly reduced number of members and no revenue. The Board was considering dissolution of the society.

The Board was then approached by church members Maria Escude and D. Joan Thomas; Maria with a deep sense of guidance, proposed that the church did not need a minister. She and Joan volunteered to coordinate Sunday speakers and recommended that the community look at the prospect of renting the church space for much needed revenue. The Board agreed and committed members brainstormed for methods to make the church viable. This began the one step at a time of rebuilding the church. Our community is deeply grateful to the dedication of Maria and D. Joan, Marie Logan, Laura Lane, Brian Martin, Lorna Rennie, Madge Tolmie, and Trish Coleman who were among those instrumental in keeping our church alive.

Spiritual Directions Committee: Maria and D. Joan were the precursors to the Spiritual Directions Committee created in the late 1990s. This Committee is elected by the members and has the mandate of ensuring spiritual activities are provided that are congruent with our constitution.

\*The Church of the Truth was founded in 1913 in Spokane, Washington by Dr. Albert Grier; his vision was to shape a broad, universal religion of inclusiveness with no perception assumed as exclusively true or superior. The Churches of Truth ultimately became part of the already established New Thought Movement of which Dr. Grier became a prominent leader.

## **Who We Are**

As the foregoing illustrates, a unique element of the church is that no minister is employed by it. Another distinctive aspect of our church is that we are a spiritual community that welcomes all, regardless of spiritual path or belief. Our openness and evolving nature is well expressed in our current Who We Are pamphlet:

“Our community is comprised of a rich field of individual and collective energies that is ever changing and evolving.”

While the church remains committed to the vision of a no minister policy, we currently have two church member ministers, Greg Skala, and Gordon Thurston, who have been granted the status of “religious representative”, that is, they are licensed under the Marriage Act to perform marriage services.

## **Our Sacred Space**

The spirit of our church is embodied in its history, architecture, and with the energy of all who have graced it with their presence.

Architecture: Notes from John Cawood, a church co-founder and designer of our building, reveal the following. The sanctuary is designed in the transcendent image of the mandala which is a diagrammatic metaphor by which we can understand the deeper mysteries. The mandala is expressed in the form of a cross, representing the temporal body; the cross is within a circle representing the eternal spirit. All directions are drawn to the centre as illustrated by the break lines (converging on a small circle) set into the floor matching the rooflines overhead. From this centre, the spirit of our congregation flows out to the world beyond. Windows set high raise our vision to the light by day and carry the light of the church out into the world by night. The triangular skylight symbolizes God’s blessing on our church and also brings light to the memory of Marion Bruce Ewart whose gift of land and money was instrumental in making the building a reality. The exterior roof’s triangular form of a tent symbolizes faith in the protective presence of God which we carry with us on our journey. The triangle is also a metaphoric image of consciousness. Its horizontal base is our dualistic consciousness; the vertical thrust is our transcendent consciousness.

Rentals: Our sacred space is imbued with the energy of its architectural uniqueness and symbolism as well as with the spirit of all who have been drawn to it. It serves the larger community via rentals for such events as musical performances or concerts, workshops, meditation/yoga and private functions such as weddings, memorials and other celebrations of life. Rentals help defray our operational costs. Some events may be subsidized at the Board’s discretion.

Sources include:

Liz Connolly Bennett, Notes from November 7, 2004

Church historical files

John Clinton Cawood, The Thought Behind the Design of our New Building

Website: [albertgrier.wwwhubs.com](http://albertgrier.wwwhubs.com)

The foregoing is a brief profile only and does not presume to do justice to our church's rich history and the many people who have contributed in countless ways.

submitted by Genevieve Eden

# Table du Jour



## Appetizers

*Roast Butternut Squash Soup*

With flavorful hints of coconut and curry

*Waldorf Canadienne Salad*

An old favourite with a west coast twist

## Entrees

*Baked Halibut with Ginger Lime Drizzle*

Accompanied by Forbidden Rice and Roast Vegetable Medley

*Fettuccine Alfredo with fresh Basil and Pine Nut Garnish*

Delicious fettuccine “al dente” served with a rich cream sauce made from a flavorful blend of Romano and Parmesan cheese and garnished with fresh basil leaves and pine nuts

*Fettuccine “Al Diavolo” with Pine Nuts and Almond Cream Sauce*

Gluten free pasta served with a creamy blend of various dairy free cheeses and almond cream topped with fresh basil leaves and pine nuts

Both pasta dishes are served with our “Special House Caesar Salad” made with gluten free croutons and dairy free Parmesan cheese

## Desserts

*Strawberry Apple Pie with dairy free Coconut Ice Cream*  
(gluten and sugar free)

*Chocolate Quinoa Cake with home-made Mint Ice Cream*  
(gluten and sugar free)

## Beverages

*A Selection of Teas and Coffee*



## **ONENESS WEDNESDAY IN APRIL**

Church of Truth

111 Superior St.

7:30- 9:00 p.m.

**April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30**

**SOMATIC MINDFULNESS from the Inside Out**

**With Renee Lindstrom**

Begin your Spring with exploring mindful somatic connections in your body, brain and behavior functions. Increase clarity using a technique to explore your own self-image and heightening your sensory awareness. Expect to be taken through guided exercises that may give you a surprising outcome!

Each of the following Wednesday evening events may leave you with a heart-mind-soul connection not unlike devotion even though the focus is softening an inward view of oneself.

Special Guest, Betsy Nuse, a student of Sacred/Circle Dance, will be joining us to enhance your movement experience in connection to dance. Each Wednesday evening will end as it began; in a circle as we explore our movement integration with a Sacred Circle Dance. A beautiful simple dance has been chosen to increase the inner felt sensation of the powerful connection through your body from feet to outstretched hands.

The music we have chosen is "Ya Ribon Olam;" a Jewish Sabbath song with lyrics in Aramai on the album by Giora Feidman called "Jewish Soul Music."

Historically a community would dance one (or few) dances together year after year. By adopting this tradition for April's Oneness Wednesday Community it may enhance the group connection to deepen inner conscious connection!

\*\*\*\*You may bring a blanket to lie on and remember to dress comfortably.\*\*\*\*  
(Recommend no jeans or tight belts)

**April 2**            The first Wednesday of April will be a **Journey of Inner Reflection and Connection** that will let your mind become restful. Through focused movement and a quiet mind you may find a gap of clarity become available. This result is much like a sitting meditation yet with a different focus. The difference in meditation is that the focus is on observing your mind and in this the focus is integrate your mind.

By integrating your mind it will cut confusion and balance body and mind, behavior and increase your ability of inner focusing. This somatic awareness enhances your meditation and yoga practice, it doesn't compete with it!

**April 9** On this second Wednesday you will focus on **Deepening Body Awareness** to encourage a quieter mind and expanding your “3 D self-image.” Currently the world reflects back to you your self-image. Often it is a mirror reflecting back to you your self-image. This evening you will explore a somatic experience of your own self-image. Enjoy increasing your potential of experiencing more balance in your environment from the inside out!

**April 16** On this third Wednesday you will experience a **Focus on Body Movement** that becomes prayer like in your own balance of inner and outer connection! Not to be missed if you want to find yourself in self-connection that is unlike any other system! You may find yourself in a state of appreciation that you may not be expecting and it is without any doctrine or guru. It is simply through your own ability to connect to all parts of yourself in a balanced and harmonious way.

**April 23** The fourth Wednesday will focus on a **Movement Sequence** that will be a gift for a lifetime. It will be a movement pattern that is easy and that will balance your emotions, nervous system and your bad posture habits. This pattern sequence will support your nervous system and given you a strong ability to cope with your everyday life. It may become a must do sequence of self-connection before meditating! It will enhance all your abilities and deepen your coping skills!

**April 30** The final Wednesday will bring you into **Exploring Bigger Movements** to integrate your body, mind and behavior inner sensing into regular daily activities and others you pursue such as dancing, walking, fitness. The skill of observation will give you increased awareness of yourself in other areas of enjoying your life!

In 2012 Renee hosted a month-long Oneness Wednesday Awareness program with the Church of Truth. The focus was the Season for Nonviolence and using the skills of nonviolent communication.

In 2013 Renee hosted a month-long Oneness Wednesday Awareness program at the Church of Truth. The focus was on Labyrinths for Walking and Integrating it with movement and inner communication and self-empathy.

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## Why We Sit

Here at the Church, each Monday to Friday morning from 10am to noon, there is a group that meets to share only silence. We just sit. That's it.

The simplicity of what we're "doing" can never be overemphasized. We maintain our focus on uncontrived, non-conceptual sitting meditation. We simply express the Moment (call it whatever you wish—God, Existence, Consciousness, Awareness, Life, "I") exactly the way it is. We're simply being together, and we don't add anything extra to this endeavor. Nothing needs to be said and nothing needs to be done. This is our Practice.

At a certain stage in the spiritual seeking life, one comes to realize that the "missing link" one hasn't yet explored in depth is one's own Silence. It's a funny thing. We can spend decades moving from book to book and technique to technique in our longing for the truth. Nothing is wrong with this, as it is all part of a natural process of learning, deepening and confirming we're "on the right track." We take heart in the great teachings of the sages and are encouraged by our spiritual communities. Soon enough, what we become most interested in is the essential nature of reality—which must be identical with my own nature—as the unbounded, cosmic, indivisible, imperishable source of everything. We come across the affirmation (in books, teachings, ah-ha moments) that this is what reality actually is, and we wish to empirically confirm it, inside, for ourselves.

This is a stage of great maturity. If we already have an established quiet Meditation Practice, our only job is to keep refining it by making it more and more simple, more and more "hands off," with less and less interference of whatever concepts we have accumulated. If we have not yet begun our daily practice of observing silence and stillness, we decide it's time to get down to business.

If I want to be intimately in touch with what "I" already am, I have to be willing to sit without saying anything about what I am, what you are, what God is, what Enlightenment is. I have to be willing to just be here without tampering in any way. Totally quiet. I have to have great faith in the fact that the Magic that's spinning my billions of cells in this moment has to be the same Magic that's spinning all the billions of galaxies in all directions everywhere, because it's all happening at once. This is not esoteric or metaphysical hearsay. It's the truth. With this understanding, I Sit. I am no longer interested in what concepts my thought process has to offer me about this, or what someone else said or a book said. I'm interested in the whole Big Picture here and now, which is automatically and spontaneously self-evident in untouched silence.

This is also known as "Self-Inquiry." In Silent Sitting, we inquire into the true nature of reality. We inquire into what "I" am. We recognize and become devoted to what has always been and can never-not be. Becoming stronger at not getting involved in the antics of the thinking mind when we meditate, becoming more curious and attentive and humble, our practice will expand and deepen eternally. We will know with total conviction: I am infinite, boundary-less, complete, all-inclusive, much more than just

“my body” and never separate from any other body. There is no end to this discovery. We sit to know ourselves as this. With this knowledge we live in peace.

Submitted by Sally Ross

### **WANTED: Good Used Clothing for Children (ages 4 to 13)**

Blessings to All,

I will be leaving for Tanzania on May 17th this year to volunteer teaching English at an orphanage. The orphanage has asked me if I could bring good used clothing for their children. The temperature ranges from 10 to 30 degrees so sweaters or light jackets would be good. If you can't bring the clothes to church, I will be glad to pick them up.

Phone: 250-382-3079

Many Thanks,

Maureen Nicolson



## **COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORY**

**For information only. These events and services are not endorsed by the Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living.**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>CONTACT INFO</b>
<b>Susan Blackwood</b> 250-889-5335 Weddings, Funerals, Celebrations of Life, Divorce, Retirement, Baby Namings	<b>Ceremonies</b>	<a href="http://www.ceremoniesbydesign.ca">www.ceremoniesbydesign.ca</a>
<b>Renn Butler</b> Archetypal Astrology Consultations, Holotropic Breathwork Workshops	<b>Consultations/Workshops</b>	<a href="mailto:rennbutler@shaw.ca">rennbutler@shaw.ca</a>
<b>Tracy Fraser</b> 250-661-8365 Email: <a href="mailto:tlcpersonalassistant@gmail.com">tlcpersonalassistant@gmail.com</a> Supporting seniors in maintaining their freedom, dignity, home and connection to community. TLC Personal Assistant and Companion offers support with personal shopping, errands, meal preparation, light house-keeping, laundry, assist in and out of shower or bath, dressing and grooming. Chauffeur and accompany to shops, appointments, events, socials and exercise. Also offering respite for primary caregivers, pet care and house-sitting.	<b>Personal Assistant and Companion to Seniors</b>	

**Tracy Fraser                      Tarot Reader, Spiritual Intuitive and Empathic**

250-661-8365

Email: [divinemisst@gmail.com](mailto:divinemisst@gmail.com)

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[www.victoriahomeopathy.com](http://www.victoriahomeopathy.com)

email: [roland@natures-mystery.com](mailto:roland@natures-mystery.com)

Roland is specialized in helping people with severe chronic diseases.

Homeopathy is a holistic modality that can provide healing in a wide range of health problems, anxiety, and depression, and their manifestations in the body.

**Esther Hart                      Author, Speaker, Freedom Coach, Author Mentor**

250-896-5933

[www.authorssolutions.com](http://www.authorssolutions.com)

Esther inspires people with her talks, coaching and writing, always encouraging people to experience freedom by trusting their own knowing.

She gets great pleasure from supporting other writers to blossom into authors so that their inspirational stories can reach the people they are meant to inspire.

**Deborah Hawkey                      Technical Writing**

250-813-1747

[writeitright@shaw.ca](mailto:writeitright@shaw.ca)

Sales & Marketing, Career Coaching, Websites, Desktop Publishing, Resumes & Cover Letters

**Cedona Holly**      **Spiritual Counsellor/Meditation Facilitator**  
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[www.whitelionschildrensbook.org](http://www.whitelionschildrensbook.org)

**Gillian Huot**      **Housekeeper**      250-385-0941  
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**Pauline Karch**      **Videography Services**      [paulinekarch@gmail.com](mailto:paulinekarch@gmail.com)

**Kelly Kerr**      **Massage, Energy Healing**      250-999-9282

**Laura Lane**      **Celebration Pianist**      250-893-9656  
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**Paul Monfette**      **Carpenter**      250-896-4439  
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For make-up consults and pricing please email me at  
[sweetpeamakeup@gmail.com](mailto:sweetpeamakeup@gmail.com)

**Sharon Schroeder**      **Alternative Healthcare Services**      250-661-0072  
Healing Energy with Foundation Beauty

**Bernadine Sperling**      **Pet Sitting**      250-384-5721  
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**Junie Swadron**      **Author, Writing Coach, Workshop Facilitator**  
250-384-2205      **& Psychotherapist**      [www.junieswadron@hotmail.ca](http://www.junieswadron@hotmail.ca)

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**  
We Celebrate with YOU!

Steve Atkinson      April 14  
Cynthia Pattison      April 27  
Peggy Muncaster      April 30

