



St. Thomas United Church
Open Hands – Open Hearts – Open Minds

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January & February 2020 Newsletter

Ministry Message: Rev. Justin McNeill

There are very few things I dislike about the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Between the lights, the decorations, and the whole festive atmosphere, it is a time of year that seems to bring out the best in people. And while I could certainly do with a little less of the overall consumerism that seems to run rampant this time of year, I even love searching out those perfect gifts for loved ones. Yes, Christmas is that time of year when anything is possible and most of humanity seems a little more human.

But the one thing that I dislike most out of this whole season is that eventual time when the Christmas decorations must be taken down, packed up, and put into storage for yet another year. I don't know what it is about that day, but every year it puts me in a bad mood and I tend to look closer to the Grinch at the beginning of the movie rather than the end. I don't know whether I am alone in these feelings or not but every year it is the same. The tree comes down, the decorations are carefully wrapped and packed away, and no matter how much hot cocoa there may be, I can't help but be left feeling sullen. Like the lights are dimmed and winter is still upon us.

Maybe it is a feeling that the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love of the advent candles are being packed away along with the rest of the festive paraphernalia. If this is the case, I can't help but wonder if I was paying enough attention to the Christmas story to take note that the birth of Jesus is not the end of the story but the beginning. Christmas after all isn't about the lights, the decorations, or even the tree. It's about the gift of light and love that is birthed into the world once more. That was what all

of our Advent waiting was all about. Shouldn't that be something not easily packed away in the storage room beneath the stairs? Instead of being put away in the midst of winter, it should be something that we can't help but continue to shine the whole year through.

The hope, the peace, the joy, the love, the light of Christ; these things are not present in the presents but rather in each of our lives. And while it is helpful to have a time each year that we are intentional about remembering these truths of our faith, they ought not to be diminished simply because we pack a few boxes. Maybe in the packing away of these physical reminders of Christmas, we should also be taking those reminders from their place on the mantle or hung in the tree and instead of looking at them with amazement we should be living them out in our lives.

This Christmas, may Christmas be the beginning of our faith story, lived out in the world in hope, in peace, in joy, and in love. Not needing reminders in our lives, but being those reminders through our lives. For each of us in our own time and place, this is my Christmas prayer. Amen.



STAFF

Ministers:

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Office Administrator:

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Sunday School & Nursery

Coordinator:

Erin MacLean-Berko

Adult Choir:

Pam Bazinet

Children's Choir:

Erin MacLean-Berko

Youth Choir:

Barb Robertson

Orchestra:

Dick Worton

Organist & Accompanist:

Kari Orosz

Youth Accompanist:

Kloria Wen

Youth Leaders:

Heather Robertson

Eden Middleton

Caitlin Hornbeck

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Thurs 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Fri 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

The St. Thomas Newsletter is published bimonthly October thru June. Submissions are due by the 15th of the preceding month. Send submissions to office@stthomasunited.ca

Program/Event Registration:

To register for any programs or events at St. Thomas, please sign up on the Communication form found in the pews at Sunday Services or online, or contact the church office.

Baptism:

if you are interested in baptism, please contact the church office.

Worship at St. Thomas: Dan MacDonald

WORSHIP SERVICES

January & February, 2020

JANUARY 5 - Epiphany Sunday

Scripture: *Matthew 2:1-12*

Music Leadership: *Adult Choir; Youth Choir; Kari Orosz*

JANUARY 12 - Israel/Palestine with Eden Middleton & Matthew Taylor-Kerr

Scripture: *Luke 5:17-26*

Music Leadership: *Strummers; Kari Orosz*

JANUARY 19 - John the Baptist & Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Scripture: *John 1:29-42*

Music Leadership: *Adult Choir; Children's Choir; John Robertson (solo); Kari Orosz*

JANUARY 26 - God's Call

Scripture: *Matthew 4:12-23*

Music Leadership: *Orchestra; Kari Orosz*

FEBRUARY 2 - Joy of Song

Scripture: *TBD*

Music Leadership: *Children's Choir; Youth Choir; Adult Choir; Orchestra; Strummers; Kari Orosz*

FEBRUARY 9 - Salt & Light

Scripture: *Matthew 5:13-20*

Music Leadership: *Kari Orosz*

FEBRUARY 16 - Setting a High Bar

Scripture: *Matthew 5:21-37*

Music Leadership: *Adult Choir; Kari Orosz*

FEBRUARY 23 - Transfiguration

Scripture: *Matthew 17:1-9*

Music Leadership: *Orchestra; Kari Orosz*



The Worship Team are:

Linda Bouchard

Dan MacDonald

Rev. Justin McNeill

Cathy Rivard

Inside this Issue:

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Ministry Message | 1 |
| Worship | 2 |
| Outreach | 3 |
| Executive Council | 3 |
| Pastoral Care | 4 |
| Path to Reconciliation | 5 |
| Young Adult News | 5 |
| Youth Group | 6 |
| Music | 7 |
| Children & Family | 7 |
| Hospitality Team | 8 |
| Affirming Team | 8 |
| Primetimers | 8 |
| Book Club | 8 |
| Upcoming Events | 9 |
| Wise Women | 10 |
| Stewardship | 11 |
| Community Formation | 12 |

**St. Thomas is an Affirming Ministry within The United Church of Canada.
LGBTQI2S+ people are whole people
and full members in this community of faith.**



Outreach: Hope Cochran, Karen Kavanagh, Loree Irving, Linda Dick, Melinda-Rae Lyse, Rachel Murray, Gwen Campbell

Christmas Miracle by Karen Kavanagh

I have been coordinating the Adopt A Family project for more than 10 years and it has always worked out. It is my favourite project of the year. In past years, St. Thomas has had up to five families but this year I decided that it would be best to scale it back, to three 'Adopted' families.

The first Sunday that the gift tags were available they flew off of the boards and I thought it was going great. The second Sunday we had a few tags left but very few additional tags were taken.

As I was packing up to leave someone asked what would happen with the tags that were left, the presents that no one had offered to donate. I replied that "things always work out", but at the time, I wasn't convinced myself, but it sure sounded good. I was left with 9 tags, all for expensive items and there was only \$170 to cover the cost.

Then, out of the blue, I was offered money that the Bridge Club had been collecting all year, which was \$200. and a huge help. When I arrived home, I had two emails from people who had missed out on taking a tag and wondered if there were any left. I happily sent them the list and let them pick what they would like to purchase. Then I was sent an email by someone who would happily pay for a gift if I would buy it for them. I was beginning to think things might actually work out!

Now the biggest problem; I had no idea how I could possibly find time to shop for all these very personal items with what time I had left before next Sunday. I went to the Outreach Committee meeting on Tuesday feeling overwhelmed. One of the people on Outreach said "I have

some extra time this week, can I pick up the gifts for you?" I could not believe that all the obstacles which had been turning my favourite project into a nightmare had been handled, without me even asking! It just happened! I now know the power of remaining positive despite seemingly overwhelming obstacles. I had told that person on Sunday "things always work out" and they did. Thank you God and thank you, the people of St. Thomas for helping to create this 'Christmas Miracle'.

Adopt-A-Family:

Thank you so much for your donations to our 'Adopted' families. Your generosity provided each member of the family with a personal gift, some essential clothing or footwear, and grocery store gift cards to assist them with survival in the coming months. Your caring showed these families the love of God and let them know they are not alone in the world.

Calgary Alliance for the Common Good:

Thank you to all of you who wrote letters to their City Councillors and the Mayor during the recent budget talks. It was that action and the presence of more than 150 members of the Alliance that showed City Council that the people of Calgary do not want budget cuts to affect the low-income citizens who need the city services the most. Our actions showed City Hall that low-income bus passes and effective city transit services are essential to families, seniors and many citizens struggling to survive in Calgary.

Executive Council: Linda Bouchard

Thank you to everyone who participated and continue to participate in our fundraisers. The grocery gift cards have so far raised over \$4,000 to help with our deficit. The sale of Purdys Chocolates has also raised over \$600 which will be allocated to the St Thomas membership in Calgary Alliance for the Common Good (CACG).

Here are a couple of save the date events:

The Family Dance will be held on February 22, 7-10 pm.

Please check your bulletin for further information about the dance.

The **annual congregational meeting will be held on March 15** after the service.

AGM
Annual General Meeting

Pastoral Care Ministry: Marjorie Aucoin, Chair

What is Pastoral Care at St. Thomas?

Our purpose is to care for the congregation in a practical way by working with the ministry team, and initiate and oversee compassionate programs. Strong lay leadership is paramount to St. Thomas as we collaborate with our Ministers to make St. Thomas the best we can be. Everything we do is through our Faith Statement of Open Hands, Open Hearts and Open Minds. St. Thomas believes in supporting each other. It never ceases to amaze us that so many are so willing to lend a helping hand – from making everyone who comes through our doors feel like family to helping each other in times of crisis. Pastoral Care is what we are passionate about through:

- Food support during times of crisis
- Friend-to-friend visiting program: home and hospital visitation
- Inspiring Conversations that Matter – programs geared to compassion, health, wellness, safety, seniors, families
- Funeral receptions
- Blue Christmas service each December
- Prayer Shawls, Baptismal Shawls, Prayer Squares and Quilts
- Healing Touch program
- Cookie deliveries at Christmas, cards at Easter
- Cards sent for a range of occasions on behalf of the congregation
- Benevolent Fund
- Support and referrals to BowWest Community Resources



It takes a village, and we are the village. We are here to respond in a practical and caring way to the emotional and spiritual needs of the congregation of St. Thomas.

Never hesitate to be in touch with our Ministry team or Pastoral Care chair. Our hope is that there is something to help you connect and feel that sense of belonging and community that we want to convey. Thank you to all who participate in any way.

Mark your calendars for the Domestic Violence **Lunch & Learn on January 19th**, followed on **January 20th** by an **11-week video series** based on Theo Fleury's "Conversations with a Rattlesnake". Join us for this compelling reflection on healing and trauma.

Rev. Tracy's Sabbatical

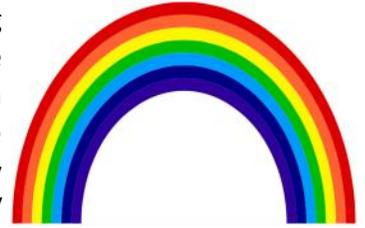
Support for our community while Rev. Tracy Robertson is away on sabbatical:

As most of you know, Rev. Tracy is away on sabbatical for January, February, and March 2020. Joe Kadi will be helping fill some of the gaps left by her absence. Joe is a theology student at the Centre for Christian Studies in Winnipeg, and his work at St. Thomas will be one of the practicum experiences that will allow him to fulfill his degree requirements. Joe will be helping out at some of the worship services, and will also be offering pastoral care support. Rev. Justin McNeill and Marj Aucoin will coordinate the pastoral care work; anyone needing that support should reach out to one of them, as they will be coordinating this part of St. Thomas' ministry.

Young Adult News - Heather Robertson

Calgary Queer Church

The services tend to be on the first Sunday of every month (likely January 5th and February 2nd) but the schedule for the new year has not been confirmed yet so keep checking in on their facebook page and website! Calgary Queer Church is a community of people who are passionate about leading a spiritual life. We are an inclusive space where faith and identity can be reconciled. If it's your first time or you've come every time, you are welcome in the space and encouraged to check it out! Everyone is welcome at Calgary Queer Church. You can find more information on their website at <http://www.calgaryqueerchurch.com/> on Facebook by searching Calgary Queer Church.



Naked Faith

Friday, January 17th location TBA and Friday February 21st at St. Thomas. Naked Faith is an alternative worship experience aimed at youth and young adults but open to all. The evening begins with dinner at 6:00 pm, followed by an hour-long service that includes lots of energetic, upbeat music. Afterwards, youth from grades 6 through 12 are invited to stay for games and activities until 10:30 pm. Young adults are invited to head to a nearby pub to engage in further discussion about the theme, or to simply enjoy the community.



Dirty Theology

Sunday, January 12th and Sunday, February 9th from 6:30-8:00pm at Knox United. Dirty Theology is an initiative of St. Andrew's Regional Ministry and the YYC Campus Ministry. It is a space for young adults to build connections, get real and dig deep into the nitty gritty of what our faith means in our daily lives. We will do this by meeting typically on the 2nd Sunday of every month to explore some of the racier stories of the Bible - the ones that are most challenging, dirty and messy. What do these tell us about the nature of God, and what do they say about how we do relationships with one another, both bad and good? No wrong questions or answers - let's get dirty, dig in, and explore together. Check out more on their facebook page at YYC Campus Ministry or their website <http://www.yycampusministry.com/dirty-theology>

Young Adult Pub Night

January 30th and February 27th come hang out and chat with other young adults about whatever topics come up! It boasts a great atmosphere and an all-around good time! Location: Bull and Finch Pub Restaurant, 190-10233 Elbow Dr. SW, Calgary. (On Elbow Drive, just south of Southland). For more information, contact Brenda McKellar via email or

Path to Reconciliation: Elaine Gray



We're excited to announce that Tim Fox, Top 40 Under 40 winner, will be guest speaker at our next **Lunch & Learn** event early in the New Year (date to be determined). Tim Fox holds the position of Vice-President Indigenous Relations for Calgary Foundation, providing community leadership in helping both Indigenous & non-Indigenous Calgarians work toward an honest understanding of what Truth & Reconciliation really means. Watch the bulletins for more info.

Youth Group: Elaine Taylor-Kerr

The Youth leaders of St Thomas are excited to invite you to Youth Group! Youth Group is for everyone who is of Junior High and High school age. We meet on Friday evenings and at the service on Sunday. The Youth Leaders will send out an email every Monday to let you know what activities will be taking place on the upcoming Friday. Normally we meet at 6:30 pm on Friday and carpool to our activity if it is not at the church. Sunday mornings are focused around faith discussion, learning more about various scriptures or exploring social justice issues. We typically start in the Sanctuary and then head upstairs to the Youth Room, for a discussion and activities. We also have a Sunday Breakfast before the church service on the last Sunday of every month. Friends are always welcome to come to Friday activities and Sunday mornings.

The last two months of 2019 were fantastic! In November we went skating at the oval, watched the Nightmare Before Christmas, attended Naked Faith, made over 200 sandwiches that were donated to Alpha House, and baked cookies that we delivered to members of the congregation when we went caroling the following week. In December we went caroling, had our own Christmas party which included a gift exchange and a cookie decorating contest, and attended the Regional Youth Christmas Sleepover from December 20-22. On Sundays we had some excellent discussions, had our delicious monthly Sunday Breakfast and had another successful senior high coffee night in November, and helped with gift wrapping for adopt a family in December. Here's what we have planned for January!:

JANUARY

Games Night – January 3 – Join us for games and a chill night as we restart after the holidays, reconnect with people we haven't seen in a few weeks, and kick off 2020!

Sledding – January 10 – Cross your fingers for snow, we're going sledding! Dress for the weather, bring your favourite sled, and get ready for some winter fun!

Israel Service – Sunday January 12 – Our very own Eden Middleton, together with Matt TK, are speaking at St. Thomas about the trip to Israel they participated in last summer. Come support them and hear about their unique experiences, and maybe get some inspiration for a future trip of your own!

Naked Faith – January 17 – Naked Faith is a monthly alternative worship experience put on by the Regional Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The location is TBA, check with a leader in the new year! Naked Faith is aimed at youth and young adults but open to all! The evening starts with a 6:00 pm dinner, then a concert-like service, followed by games and activities for the youth to wrap up the night. Come hang out with all the friends you met at the winter sleepover in December. Congregation members are always welcome to come check out Naked Faith too.

Laser Tag– January 24 – Bring your good aim and a competitive spirit! We are going to Laser Quest for a fun evening of laser tag. More details and pricing will be coming out in the new year so keep an eye out for those!

Monthly Sunday Breakfast – (Sunday) January 26 – Join us at 9am at St. Thomas for a tasty breakfast before the church service! Suggestions for the food are always welcome!

FEBRUARY

The schedule for February will come out in the new year, stay tuned!



Music: Elaine Taylor-KerrFor further information see <http://stthomasunited.ca/stthomaschoir/index.html>

If you are looking for a fun group to sing with or play your instrument with, regardless of your skill level, consider joining one of the choirs, the orchestra or the Strummers. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to share your musical talent by offering a solo, duet, etc. during worship, please let us know. Upcoming events include:

Annual Twelfth Night Concert: Sunday, Jan. 5 @ 7:00 pm Each year, the NW Calgary United Church choirs get together to sing some of their Christmas anthems for each other and to sing some Christmas carols. Treats are served afterwards. This year it will be held at Symons Valley United Church (38 Kincora Rise NW). All are welcome.

Joy of Song Service Sunday: Feb. 2 @ 10:00 am This service will celebrate the role of music in worship and in our lives. All of the musical groups will participate. There will be a number of opportunities for the congregation to sing hymns as well.

2020 STUC Show: Saturday, April 25 @ 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm Save the date and see further details on page 9!

| | Practice Time | Ages | Service Participation | Contact |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Children's Choir | Thurs 5:30 – 6:30 | ECS – Grade 2 | About once a month | Erin Maclean-Berko 403-710-0688 |
| | Thurs 6:00 – 7:00 | Grade 3 - 6 | About once a month | Erin Maclean-Berko 403-710-0688 |
| Youth Choir | Wed 7:00 – 8:30 | Grade 6 and up | About once a month | Barb Robertson (403)241-1002 |
| Adult Choir | Thurs 7:15 – 9:30 | | Weekly | Pam Bazinet (403)288-7475 |
| Orchestra | Monday 7:00 – 8:30 | | About once a month | Dick Worton (403)239-7807 |
| Strummers | Thurs 6:00 – 7:10 | | About once a month | Ron French (403)239-2136 |
| Soloists | | | | Elaine Taylor-Kerr (403)239-8271 |

Hymn Sing: To give folks a chance to sing some favourite hymns there will be a hymn sing for 10 minutes prior to one service a month. This will usually but not always be the first Sunday of the month. The next ones will be Jan 5 & Feb 2. Come ready to request your favorite hymn!

Children & Family Ministry: Elaine Taylor-Kerr

Junior Youth Group Social Event: Junior Youth group is for children in grades 4, 5 and 6. They meet monthly for an evening of games and community building. All children in this age group are welcome and those attending are welcome to bring friends. The next Junior Youth Group meetings will be on **Friday, Jan 10 and Feb 7 at 6:30 pm**. Volunteer leaders are Evangeline Robertson and Sam Abel with additional leaders yet to be determined. All youth attending are requested to fill out a registration and waiver form the first time they attend in a school year. Forms are available at <http://stthomasunited.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Jr-Youth-Group-Registration-Package-2019-2020.pdf> or will be available at the meeting. Friends are always welcome but must bring a completed registration form so we have emergency contact information just in case.

Junior Youth Group Sunday Mornings: In addition to our social event each month, there will be a special program for children in grades 4 – 6 on Sunday morning, Jan 19 lead by one of the Junior Youth group leaders. Watch the bulletin for the February date. All children in this age group are welcome and welcome to bring friends.

Family Dance: St Thomas will be holding a family dance on **Feb 22 from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm**. **The Turbines** will be providing the music. They sing and play a variety of Classic Pop (Eagles, Fleetwood Mac, Paul Brandt, The Beatles etc.). There will be the opportunity for some audience participation. Snacks and beverages will be served. Tickets will be on sale following the services in Jan. and Feb. \$15/adult, \$10/child, \$40/family.



Affirming: Evangeline Robertson



Mark your calendars for upcoming Affirming Movies and discussions in the sanctuary:

January 11 at 7pm-9pm: **Gen Silent**

February 9 at 11:30am-1:30pm **Queer Eye S2 E1: God Bless Gay**

March 3 at 6pm-8pm TBA

April 4 at 7pm-9pm TBA

May 3 at 11:30am-1:30pm TBA

June 2 at 6pm-8pm TBA

The Affirming Team will let you know if a movie is NOT family friendly.

Primetimers: Jan & Keith Campbell

Come join us for our next "Coffee and a Chat" on **Thursday, January 9** at 10:00 am in the Narthex.



Book Club: Rachel Murray

Wednesday Night Book Club meets at 7 pm the second Wednesday of each month in the St. Thomas library.

We will be holding our December meeting in a restaurant with a private room. Stay tuned for details.

Everyone is welcome!

Our 2020 reading list is:

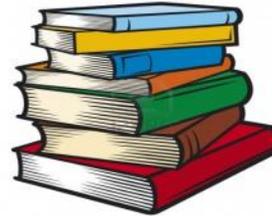
January: *'The Stone Carvers'* by Jane Urquhart

February: *'Rockbound'* by Frank Parker Day

March: *'The Figgs'* by Ali Bryan

April: *'The Mother-in-law'* by Sally Hepworth

May: *'Transcription'* by Kate Atkins



Hospitality Team: Wanda Veer

This newly formed committee has been meeting once a month, and believe me, we are hospitable. Our members include: Rev Tracy Robertson, Linda Miller, Sherrill Knight, Marj Aucoin, Lori Weller, and Wanda Veer. There are lots of ideas, lots of enthusiasm, many plans, and even actions to follow. How good is that? Newcomers, Ask Me Hosts, Birthday Sundays, Coffee, and Nursery are under our umbrella.

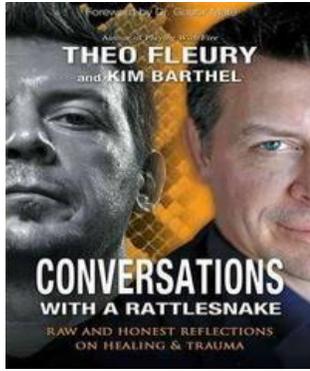
Our November 11 Remembrance Day program went very well. Viewing the Ottawa ceremony with a group of friends seemed to be a very good idea. Thanks to all those participants and to the muffin makers. Our mandate is to provide hospitality to our members at St Thomas, as well as ideas to increase our presence outside the walls of St Thomas. Areas of concern are: the nursery staffing it consistently, and community involvement.



Birthday Sundays are scheduled for **January 26; February 23; and March 29.**

If you have any ideas or concerns for this team, please contact one of our members. We are happy to hear all suggestions including what other congregations are doing.

Conversations with a Rattlesnake Small Group Study



Join us beginning on **Monday, January 20th from 7pm - 8:30pm**, as we begin an **11 week series** discussing the videos *Conversations with a Rattlesnake: Raw and Honest Reflections on Healing and Trauma* by Theo Fleury and Kim Barthel. The videos we will be discussing are a follow up to Theo Fleury and Kim Barthel's book by the same name where they discuss their journeys in the five years following the book's publication. Come to some or all of these sessions, where we will talking about the far reaching impacts of trauma in our lives and the journey of life and healing in the wake of our experiences.

Correspondence Club—Todd Robertson

The correspondence club will be meeting on the following upcoming Mondays. All are welcome to join us:

January 13, 27
 February 10, 24
 March 9, 23
 April 13, 27
 May 11, 25
 June 8, 22



Dear Sir/Madam...
 Dear Potential Customer...
 Dear fellow citizen...
 Dear friend...
 Mon ami...
 Hey you gorgeous thing, you...
 Dude...

St. Thomas Babes - Wanda Veer

Potluck for Ex-UCW Ladies aka St. Thomas Babes:

We are delighted to once again offer a potluck brunch/lunch for any gals in St Thomas who like to eat, visit, and get to know each other. Note the date: **Saturday, January 25th from 10:00 am to noon** in the Narthex. We'll eat around 10:30 am. Bring your food, your plates & utensils, stories, and laughter. Contact Wanda Veer or Lois Shewan if you would like a ride. Please join us.



Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

St. Thomas will be producing its sixth biennial musical production on **Saturday, April 25th**, with both afternoon and evening shows. This year's production will feature the music of **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**. This year's show follows the previously acclaimed STUC on Broadway, STUC on Radio, STUC on the Movies, STUC on a Musical Quest and STUC on the Thommies. Once the Christmas season is finished, our talented musical groups will start preparing their contribution to the production while our director/producer, Sheila Humphrey, will put the program together. Please mark April 25th in your calendars. You won't be disappointed!

Three Wise Women: Maureen Dodd, Wanda Veer, and Ruthann Watson

THINGS I LEARNED IN 2019 —Maureen Dodd

Get a fresh journal every January, so you can write down all the things you mean to remember about the year, before you don't.

Don't ask a five-year-old for their opinion on your singing, ukulele playing, fashion choices, or jokes, unless you want the devastating truth.

Don't take your friendships or health for granted. Take care of both, before it takes a crisis to learn that lesson.

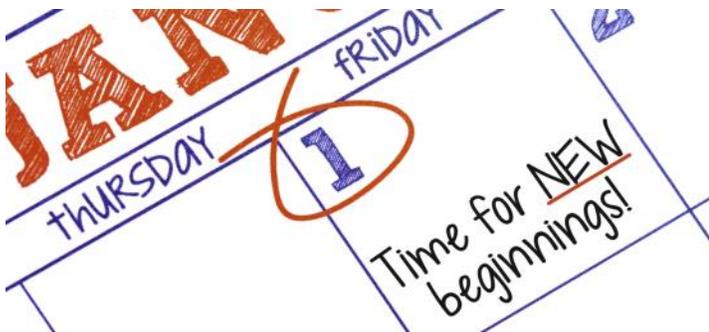
Don't take a hiking holiday when you have pneumonia.

There's no tooth fairy after age six. Because if there were, she'd leave enough money under your orthopedic pillow for a crown.

There is no etiquette for when you drop your knitting needle on the plane, and it rolls under the bottom of the gentleman sitting next to you.

Sing lustily and with good courage. Sometimes even those judgy five-year-olds will appreciate it, and it's great fun besides.

Make realistic New Years Resolutions: like eat more desserts and stay up late and always say "Yes" when someone asks you to do something fun.



THINGS I LEARNED (or realized or was reminded of) IN 2019—Ruthann Watson

One of the upsides of holidaying in Cuba is that there are no Americans. One of the downsides is realizing that the obnoxious Anglophones there are not Americans.

Many self-described social and religious progressives will vote for political parties led and supported by social conservatives.

The goal of house finches is world domination.

Watching a foreign film or TV series is a good way to learn about other cultures and our common human experience.

Attempting to multitask while watching subtitled shows is counterproductive.

I don't care if I never hear about Woodstock or The Sixties

THINGS I LEARNED (or re-learned) IN 2019 —Wanda Veer

No matter how long you live with, or know someone, there are always surprises.

The sun shines every day. It's up to you to appreciate it. All those tasks I left "until I retire", are still not complete. I think this means I don't want to do them.

Children's wisdom is very often correct. (i.e. Child: I'll never be good at skiing. Adult: Of course you will. All it takes is practice and more practice. ... blah blah blah Child: Why aren't you good at skiing?)

When exactly is the paperless age arriving?

What was wrong with on and off switches?

ALWAYS put a password on your computers and cell phones. DO NOT leave your garage door opener in your car. DO NOT leave keys where they are easily accessible to you and therefore, thieves. LOCK your doors all the time. DO NOT "remember" bank card #'s and passwords on your computer.

Don't you just love to see people who do things "with a passion".

We've all been listening to a 16 year old, Greta Thunberg, tell us what we've done wrong, and suggesting we should change our ways. I, for one, listen with dismay and anger and shock. Hmmm. Is my reaction similar to that displayed by the Jewish religious leaders as they listened to that young upstart, Jesus of Nazareth?

I am so appreciative of every soul who touches my life.

May blessings accompany you through the days of 2020.

again.

A lot of the unfairness in the world is predicated on concepts of Winners and Losers.

Contrary to what I was told as a child, racism isn't something that only happened in Mississippi and South Africa.

Bacon butter tarts are a peaceful solution to the "raisins vs. currants in butter tarts" dispute.

Looking back on my public school experience, a lot of what was called "maintaining discipline" was actually bullying and, occasionally, assault.

I need a master list of the places I put things so that I won't lose them. Also, I need a reminder of where I put this list.

The world is full of interesting, caring, generous people and I can't wait to meet more of them.

Stewardship: Bob Nixon

2019 Stewardship Campaign – Boldly Making A Difference

St. Thomas is an amazing and inspiring community where people live out their full Christian potential with **Open Hands, Open Hearts and Open Minds**. We thank God for the many blessings in our lives.

This year’s Stewardship Campaign is officially over! We want to Thank You and offer our sincere gratitude for your generous gifts of time, talent and treasure.

Good news! As of November 24, we’ve heard from 89 families who have returned their Stewardship Commitment Pledge cards. If you haven’t returned your Commitment Pledge Card, here’s our ask:

- Please review your current commitment, the Step-Up Chart and consider moving up to the next level or to increase your annual pledge if possible. Remember – your charitable contributions are personal tax deductible.
- Please return your Commitment Cards (whether or not you’ve made a change) to the Offering Plate or to the St. Thomas Office.
- If you can’t find your Stewardship Pledge Form, Justin has some extras in his office.

Why is this important?

- St. Thomas has plans to Boldly Make a Difference in 2020 for our congregation members and our community. We look forward to your involvement and contribution to make this happen.
- Your contributions of Time, Talent, and Treasure will support the great new and ongoing ministry programs and initiatives you love.
- We believe that by having families reviewing their current commitments and considering if they can “Step Up” or increase their Commitment Levels St. Thomas can work towards a 2019 balanced budget to support all the programs and services you love.

We hope this year’s **Boldly Making A Difference Stewardship Campaign** has encouraged you to feel:

- Inspired to consider how we serve God’s Mission and Our Mission – through our “Minute for Stewardship speakers”, scripture messages, song, Stewardship Fair, and Jeopardy skit.
- Invited to make a difference in our local and wider community through your generosity by making appropriate and meaningful gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

Thanks very much for your generosity supporting St. Thomas’ great programs so they continue in 2020!
-Faithfully yours, the Stewardship Team: Andrea Sonpal, Bob Nixon, Mark Powell and Rev. Justin McNeill



Thank You Bouquets go to:

Wanda Veer, Dale & Dawn Block, Jan & Keith Campbell
 Bev Smith, Lori Weller, Myrna Malanik
 Diane & Ron French, Val McNeill, Judy Booth
 Betty Thompson, Jan & Barry Mingo, Brian Dodd
 Joe Kadi, Dick & Heather Worton, Cathy Olson
 Diane & John Latter, Hal & Lyn Tonkin.



Community Formation: A Place for You - Sign Me Up

VOLUNTEER CORNER

If anyone needs a helping hand, long- or short-term, we can provide it. Contact the office if you would like something in the newsletter or would like to offer help.



OPEN ART STUDIO

Wednesday 1:00-3:00 pm
Call Linda at 587-362-1554
or the church office



NURSERY

We welcome children during worship and have activity packages available when you walk in. We also have a nursery available for little ones (newborn to 3 years). The nursery works on a drop-in basis, and you are welcome to bring your child at any time during worship. The caregivers are youth who have their Red Cross

Babysitting Certificates, and adults. Caregivers are paid \$10 per service. If at any time your little one becomes unhappy in the nursery the caregiver will have someone let you know.

CANDLE LIGHTERS We are looking for all members of our congregation to participate as candle lighters. This includes parents, seniors, teens, and children. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. Contact Diane French at 403-239-2136 if you have any questions.



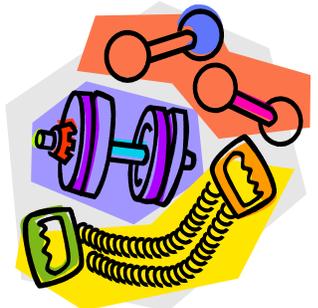
WOMEN'S FITNESS FOR ALL AGES

It's never too late to get moving and improve your health....so why not get moving with us! Whether you have been exercising for a while or are wanting to get into a fitness routine, you are welcome here! Chairs and walls are friendly supports when needed!

Mondays with Laurie – The focus for this class is strengthening, stretches, targeted weight routines, yoga, aerobics, balance and dancing!

Wednesdays with Barb – This class incorporates a warm-up routine, followed by aerobics, balancing, stretching and core strengthening. We dance in this class too! **NEW!** **Fridays with Sheryl** – This fun and relaxing workout will concentrate on *Callanetics*. This low impact exercise helps to tone and strengthen the muscles in your

body and can be done in any position (standing, sitting, etc.). The cost is \$35 per month or \$7 per drop-in session. For more information please contact Pam Bazinet at 403 288 7475 or 403 923 7395.



QUILTING FOR OTHERS

The Quilting for Others group makes compassion quilts for members of the congregation of St. Thomas, as well as quilts to be donated to charity. We meet every Thursday morning in the Mountainview Hall from 9 am until noon. You do not have to be an experienced quilter or machine sewer to join our group. Some of our members never go near a sewing machine and prefer handwork. Many hands make light work but they also make beautiful quilts. Please consider joining us to take the mystery out of the quilt making process. Everyone is welcome to join. For more information, please contact Hope Cochran at 587-581-2619 or hopeco7@gmail.com.



BRIDGE CLUB

In the Mountainview Hall
Mondays at 1 pm

For the most up to date information regarding what, where, and when events are happening in our church community, please visit our website calendar which is updated weekly:
<http://stthomasunited.ca/what-we-do/calendar/>

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you stop receiving the weekly announcements please let the office know. The program we use does randomly disable accounts from time to time. **It doesn't mean you have been removed from our distribution list.** We will only know that you are not receiving them if you let us know.