

Sunday Morning  
Worship Time  
Every Sunday  
Starting at 10:30 am



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The St. Thomas Newsletter is published monthly except for July and August. Submissions are due by the 20th of the preceding month.

Send submissions to  
pr@stthomasunited.ca

## Minister's Message: Reverend Marion Martin

It seems time flies faster and faster, I can hardly believe that it is September already and that Christmas is just around the corner. LOL.

Sorry, I couldn't resist.

Putting all silliness aside for a moment, I hope you all had a great summer.

In August I talked about taking time to rest and to take time to clear out the noise in our lives, so that we can become more connected to the Divine. I am really glad that you all took my advice. Because the next few months are going to be jam packed with upcoming events here at St. Thomas.

Kicking it off with the Welcome Back Service & BBQ [September 8, 2024](#), Meditative Worship September 9, Hobbit Sunday September 22, Choir practices, Drumming at Foothills [September 11](#), [October 9](#), [November 13](#), the Fall Fling [October 5, 2024](#), and of course all the committee and council meetings. This is list of just a few of the fun things that we have to look forward to, make sure you check out the bulletin each week to stay in touch with other events that are coming up.

At the beginning of August, we had a chance to review John Wesley's Directions for Singing. Needless to say, it was interesting, and brought a few giggles, or gasps from those gathered.

One of the suggestions that was shared, was to use the hymns as a type of devotional.

I have done this in the past and the hymn that I sometimes turn to is "Be Thou My Vision."

As we enter into a new season, I would like to share a few lines of the hymn that always stand out to me:

[Continued...](#)

Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;  
 naught be all else to me save that thou art,  
 thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
 waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;  
 I ever with thee, and thou in my life;  
 thou loving parent, thy child may I be,  
 thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee....

What is your favourite hymn?

As we jump into our fall activities, I invite you to enter into a time of rest, clear out the noise and take some time to connect with the Spirit, as you read the words of your favourite hymn.

See you at the many upcoming events.

Peace

Rev. Marion Martin

## Worship at St. Thomas - Cathy Rivard

Welcome back to worship at St. Thomas. Be sure to watch our online Citywide Pride Service on September 1, or even better attend the Pride Parade along with Reverends Tracy and Marion. September 8 will be our official Welcome Back Sunday. Backpacks will be blessed, Communion will be served and there'll be a BBQ after the service. Don't miss it. On September 15 Reverend Tracy will begin a sermon series entitled "Walking Together With Joy."

### Upcoming Services for September

#### September 1

Affirming Network of Calgary online  
 Pride service (pre-recorded)

**There will be no in-person worship**

#### September 8

Welcome Back Sunday, Equality Among All God's Creation (Reverend Tracy)  
 Mark 7:24-37

Music:  
 Adult Choir,  
 Kari Orosz .

#### September 15

Walking Together With Joy in Ourselves (Reverend Tracy)  
 Scripture:  
 Mark 8:27-38

Music:  
 Children's Choir,  
 Strummers,  
 Kari Orosz.

#### September 22

Walking Together With Joy in Community (Reverend Tracy)  
 Scripture:  
 Mark 9:30-37

Music:  
 Youth Choir, Pam Bazinet, Kari Orosz.

#### September 29

Walking Together in Joy ... in Church  
**Orange Shirt Sunday** (Reverend Tracy)  
 Scripture:  
 Mark 9:38-50

Music:  
 Adult Choir,  
 Kari Orosz .

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## The Wise Women of St. Thomas

### Pharisee and Tax Collector, Luke 18: 9-14 - Wanda Veer

This parable conjured up many memories. I've met a lot of Pharisees on our cruises and travels throughout our globe. Since I love to ask questions of new acquaintances, I've received verbal pages and pages of "I did, I am, I like, I know" and so on. Sometimes I get an actual dialogue, but often, I learn much about these folks and they know nothing about us. I, like Maureen, am very suspect of anyone telling me how wonderful/pious/brilliant/tolerant they are. Sadly, often I've found it to be the opposite.

But enter the tax collector. Now in this day and age, tax collectors are an important part of our global economy. Everyone wants "someone" to help pay for our education, medicine, infrastructure, and general well-being. Can't be done without our local and federal tax collectors. The Bible seems to paint these fellows with a bad brush, kind of assuming that they are the loan sharks of Jesus' Day. But, I wonder. Do you suppose some of those funds ended up in support of the community? Who's to know? Clearly the tax collector was repentant. He didn't try to explain himself away, or avoid taking responsibility. Good on him. It's not an easy thing to admit when we're wrong!

Hope you have soldiered through the summer of too cold, too wet, then too hot, then too dry, then no water! Sheesh.

Happy Autumn.

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### Pharisee and Tax Collector, Luke 18: 9-14 - Maureen Dodd

Welcome to the Wise Women Bible Study (W.W.B.S.)- the first of our treatises on Bible passages.

In this parable, the tax collector admitted he had done some questionable deeds and asked for forgiveness. Having raised three sons, I'm a bit suspect when I hear sudden confessions and pleas for forgiveness. Is this a distraction from more heinous crimes? Is it a set-up, proving that at least he's not as naughty as his brother? Or is it a Get Out of Jail Free card, exempting future misdeeds from punishment?

The Pharisee listed all his good works and was full of admiration for himself, so obviously he would be looked on with favor. I have seen many Pharisees in the resumes I've received.

How tempting it is for us to go to extremes when considering our actions, rather than being honest.

However, the lesson for me in this parable is that Jesus gave the tax collector the benefit of the doubt, unlike me, when my progeny confessed. He assumed that the tax collector was genuine in his confession and would change his ways. Perhaps he did, because that one person believed him and saw some goodness in him. We may never know how our interactions affect others, but we always have a chance to give someone the benefit of the doubt and make their day a bit better.

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Continued...

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## Pharisee and Tax Collector, Luke 18: 9-14 - Ruthann Watson

A few thoughts and quotes from my readings and wanderings:

Christians are defined by belief, not nationality. If Canada is a "Christian nation" it's by default. Our national identity was shaped by a railroad. Jews are a people because of an unbreakable covenant. Born into or a convert, you're always a Jew with responsibilities to the community and the world, unlike Christians, who can wander off and become "Nones".

"Both the Pharisee and the Tax Collector are caricatures. Neither behave as 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews would expect. The Pharisee is dismissive of others in his community. The tax collector is repentant (although he doesn't say that he'll stop) and his prayer doesn't end in an expression of hope as do the penitential Psalms." *Short Stories by Jesus, Amy-Jill Levine*

"...we might see the Pharisee as helping the tax collector. Just as the sin of one person impacts the community (e.g. "forgive us our sins" rather than "forgive me my sins") so the merits of the righteous can benefit the community...Jews who first heard the parable may well have understood the Pharisee's merit to have impacted the tax collector. This would be the parable's shock: not only that the agent of Rome is justified (restored to a right relationship with God), but that the Pharisee's own good works helped in that justification." *Jewish Annotated New Testament*

"Rather than" in Greek could be translated as "alongside", suggesting that both were justified.

So, my faithfulness to the spirit of the Word and the actions that follow work to bring others into a better relationship with God which in turn promotes better relationships with others. I'm guessing that this takes place over the fulness of time and often without my knowledge.

Happy Autumn!

Ruthann Watson

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## Primetimers - Jan and Keith Campbell

### Rosebud Theatre

**Saturday, October 19, 2024** Buffet luncheon at 11:30am, followed by the play *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*

"She loves Opera. She loves Drama! She's a little nutty and lovable. This is about an eccentric mother, dreaming of a life larger than the one she has. It displays the enduring love between a mother and son."

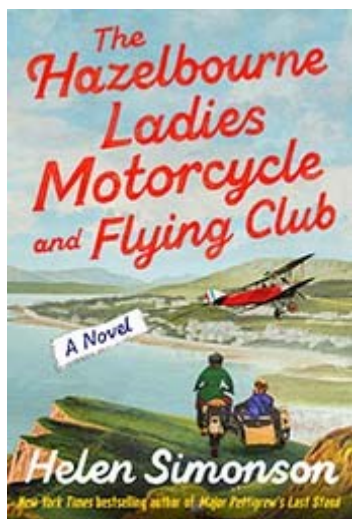
Please arrive at 11:15 am. The play begins at 1:00 pm. \$72.00 per person (senior and group rate). This includes a buffet luncheon and the play. Please sign up in the Narthex. Deadline to sign up is **Sunday, October 6, 2024**. We would really encourage people to carpool to Rosebud. If you would be willing to drive others, please let us know. If you would require a ride, please let us know. Looking forward to a Rosebud experience!

# St. Thomas Book Club - Rachel Murray

For more information contact Rachel at [rachelmurray@shaw.ca](mailto:rachelmurray@shaw.ca)

New members welcome!

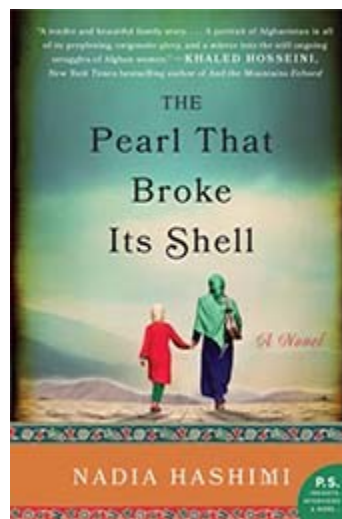
Meets every second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm on Zoom. This year's book choices are:



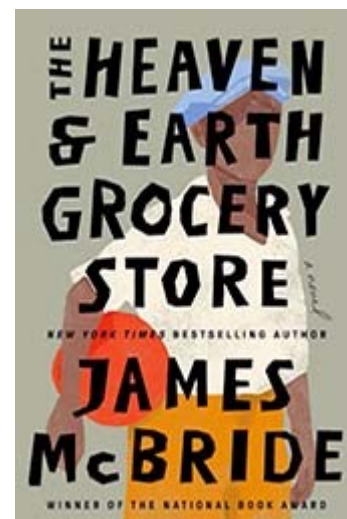
September



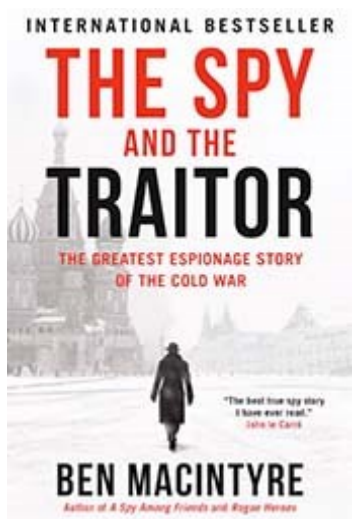
October



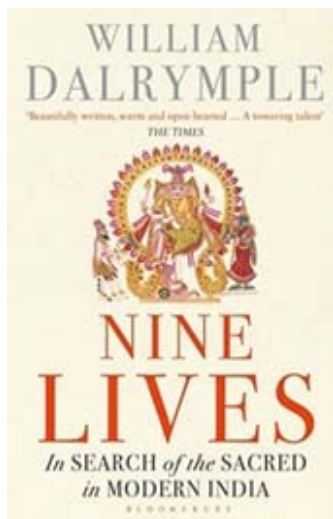
November



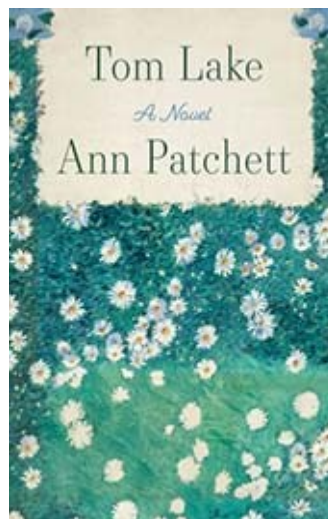
January



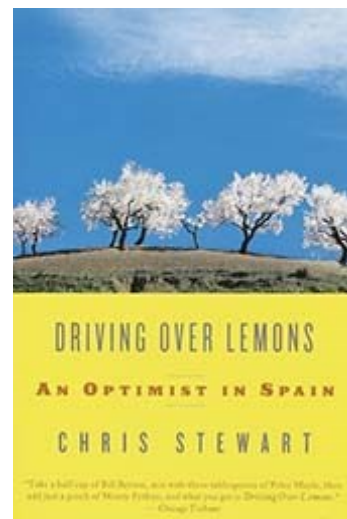
February



March



April



May

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## Sunday School - Ashley Dressler

Welcome Back Sunday School Families!

I hope you have all had a wonderful summer, and I am so excited to welcome you back to another year of Sunday School! We have lots of exciting things planned for this year, and I can't wait to get started!

Some important dates to mark on your calendar:

**September 1:** We are participating in the Calgary Pride Parade! All are welcome!

**September 8:** First day of Sunday School! Join us for our annual blessing of the backpacks (make sure you bring yours!)

**October 25:** MESSY CHURCH! Our first of 4 this year. Stay tuned for more details, but since it's so close to Halloween, we will be dressing up!

Please note there will be no Sunday school on October 13, November 10, December 29, and January 5.

To register: Please fill out forms for your child on September 8, we will have printed forms, or alternatively, a link will be available soon to complete them online.

We are still desperately looking for volunteers for Sunday School. All lessons will be provided as well as all materials. Minimal set up is required prior to the class. Don't want to take on a whole class? That's ok! I also need classroom help and would love to have you join me.

\*We require a valid police check, and the process is online and very easy.

If you have any questions, please let me know!

Looking forward to seeing all of you soon!

Ashley Dressler 403.397.0792

[sunday-school@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:sunday-school@stthomasunited.ca)

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## Gift Cards - Richard Taylor-Kerr

Gift card sales were slow but steady over the summer. To-date we have fundraised over \$4,300 which is 54% of our goal of \$8,000. Keep up the great work St. Thomas!

We have gift cards available in \$50s and \$100s for Safeway / Sobeys, Co-op, and Superstore. Payment is by e-transfer, cash or cheque (payable to St. Thomas United Church). Safeway / Sobeys and Superstore cards can be used in any of their affiliated stores across Canada. Co-op cards can only be used in Calgary.

The best way to order cards is to e-mail [fundraising@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:fundraising@stthomasunited.ca) Cards will be ready for you on the following Sunday. We can also make arrangements for pickup.

Thanks for you for supporting this important fundraiser. Every purchase helps, no matter how small.

## Truth and Reconciliation - Elaine Gray

September 30 is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation; it's also known as **Orange Shirt Day**. Have you ever wondered how this came to be?

In her book *North of Nowhere – Song of a Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner*, Dr. Marie Wilson says some residential school Survivors had been fighting since the 1980s and '90s to have their voices heard by bringing legal actions against the churches and the federal government to seek redress for the abuses suffered because of the schools. Eventually Survivors agreed to settle out of court; in 2006, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was approved. A key obligation of the agreement was to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

With a 5-year mandate, it eventually became 6 ½ years, the central commitment of the TRC was documenting residential school history, realities, and consequences. The core of the work was recording the lived experiences of as many residential school Survivors as possible with a promise to Do No Harm. Residential schools had been in every region of the country; Survivors were just as spread out. The Commission crisscrossed the country over 6 years from coast to coast to coast.

The Commission's 2015 final report and Calls to Action are based on the many recurring themes that emerged. They recorded statements from close to 7,000 residential school Survivors, all voluntary participants from among the estimated 80,000 who were still alive at the time the TRC was established. One elderly Survivor recalled a feeling of sadness at the end of the summer as children prepared to go back to the school; some, but not all, were allowed to return to their communities for the summer. The Elder referred to September as "Everybody Cry Month." This memory would later help inform the TRC call for the establishment of a new statutory holiday in September. In Canada, **September 30** is now the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

**September 30** is also known as **Orange Shirt Day**. Posters, pamphlets, and early TRC T-shirts were all bright orange, as were the 7 flames on the TRC logo. Eventually orange shirts gained wider recognition and new symbolism. On her first day of residential school, Survivor Phyllis Webstad had a new orange shirt taken away; The commission heard many stories of confiscated treasures. The orange shirts first seen at the TRC now have much wider public awareness thanks to Phyllis's campaign to share her personal orange shirt story, especially among students still learning about Truth and Reconciliation.

Note: Dr. Marie Wilson was the only non-Indigenous commissioner on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The others were The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair and Chief Wilton Littlechild. A portion of the proceeds from her book will go to a fund established for the creation and perpetual care of a national monument for residential schools in Ottawa.

### Meditative Worship Service

Monday, September 9, 2024

Monthly - 2nd Monday at 7:00 pm,  
except for holiday Mondays.

Led by Fiona Craig  
and Reverend Marion Martin

## Pastoral Care - Richard Taylor-Kerr

As we return to St Thomas after a busy summer and start a “new” church season, it is important to become re-acquainted with what Pastoral Care is at St. Thomas. Our purpose is to care for the congregation in a practical way by working with the ministry team and to initiate and oversee compassionate programs. 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. 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 (Senior’s Wellness Day).
- Funeral receptions.
- Hope and Light Christmas Service each December.
- Prayer Shawls, Baptismal Shawls, Prayer Squares and Quilts.
- Deliveries of Christmas candy bags.
- Cards sent for a range of occasions on behalf of the congregation.
- Benevolent Fund.
- Support and referrals to Rise Calgary.
- Support Rev Tracy in delivering monthly Church Services at Senior Residences in Varsity and Rocky Ridge.

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

If you know of someone who could use a spiritual lift, a visit, a phone call or some other kind of support – please do not hesitate to be in touch with any of us on the Pastoral Care committee. ([pastoral-care@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:pastoral-care@stthomasunited.ca)) or our ministers.

Richard Taylor-Kerr - Chair of Pastoral Care - on behalf of the Pastoral Care Committee: Marj Aucoin, Diane Latter, Jan Mingo, Cathy Olson, Louise Scott, Betty Thompson, and Heather Worton.

ST. THOMAS  
UNITED CHURCH

Welcome Back Coffee & Conversation



Join us on :

**Wednesday, September 4 at 10:00 am**

Come ready to share a coffee or tea, some goodies and some stories (about all the wild adventures you had over the summer).



## Fall Fling - Elaine Taylor-Kerr

Save the Date! **Saturday October 5**, for this second annual family event. Come and enjoy a live band performing 60's, 70's, and 80's music. Snacks will be provided and wine, beer, and pop will be available for purchase. Join us for an evening of fun and relaxation or hit the dance floor and shake a leg. Tickets priced at \$20 per adult, \$10 per child and \$50/family will go on sale in September. Family and friends are welcome! For more information contact Carol Rix ([pgrix14@gmail.com](mailto:pgrix14@gmail.com)) or Elaine Taylor-Kerr ([taylor-kerr@shaw.ca](mailto:taylor-kerr@shaw.ca)).

JOIN US FOR OUR

FALL FLING

# SATURDAY OCTOBER 5, 2024.

## 6:30 PM - 10:00 PM

COME AND ENJOY A LIVE BAND PERFORMING 60'S, 70'S AND 80'S MUSIC. SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED AND WINE, BEER, AND POP WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE. JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN AND RELAXATION OR HIT THE DANCE FLOOR AND SHAKE A LEG.

TICKETS PRICED AT \$20 PER ADULT, \$10 PER CHILD AND \$50/FAMILY WILL GO ON SALE IN SEPTEMBER. FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE WELCOME!

For more information contact Carol Rix ([pgrix14@gmail.com](mailto:pgrix14@gmail.com)) or Elaine Taylor-Kerr ([taylor-kerr@shaw.ca](mailto:taylor-kerr@shaw.ca)).




## Lunch and Learn - Linda Miller

Introduction on how to become an anti-racist church. **Saturday September 21, 2024** from 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm, at St. Thomas United Church. All are invited and welcome

The guest speaker will be Rev. Beth Baskin, Network Coordinator, Identity and Mission from the United Church of Canada. She is one of the leaders of the anti-racist church process the Affirming group of 10 is working with this year. Have you ever pondered questions on anti-racism? What activities can our congregation participate in that will help us learn more about other cultures? Who might be excluded from church spaces literally, figuratively, through words, music, etc?

### Introduction on How to Become an Anti-racist Church





Saturday, September 21, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

At St. Thomas United Church

Guest Speaker: Reverend Beth Baskin, Network Coordinator, Identity and Mission from the UCC.

# Youth News

## Junior Youth Group

We have had another exciting year with Junior Youth group. Ev has enjoyed leading the monthly on-line meetings. Sam has had lots of fun leading the monthly in-person meetings. We have also collaborated with Symons Valley to hold a few joint events with their Junior Youth group. The children have enjoyed meeting new friends from both St. Thomas and Symons Valley United Churches.

Junior Youth Group is for children in grades four, five, and six. We plan to offer both in-person and virtual events again next school year. If you know of a child who will be in this age range in the fall, who would be interested in joining in, and who isn't already on the email distribution list, please email [junior-youth@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:junior-youth@stthomasunited.ca) to be added to the list.

The first in person events for the 2024/2025 season will be on **September 13, 2024** and **October 11, 2024** at St. Thomas. The first virtual events of the season will be on **September 27, 2024** and **October 18, 2024**.

## Youth Group (Grades 7 to 12)

### New Youth Leaders

I am pleased to announce that we had two new youth leaders join Isaac Reimer on the youth leader team effective **July 1, 2024**.

Jonah Edwards was active in Fish Creek United's youth program while he was in school. Since graduating, he has been actively involved with the Fish Creek Shared Ministries young adult program and has volunteered to help with the Fish Creek Youth Group.

Serena Moar grew up attending the Wild Rose United Church. She is part of the Fish Creek Shared Ministries young adult community. She has experience working with youth through summer jobs at the YMCA, working for VIVO for Healthier Generations, and working for Foothills Nordic Ski Club in a job that includes coaching cross country skiing. She is also a student at the U of C working towards a BA majoring in Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Please join the YAC team in welcoming Jonah and Serena.

Additional Youth leader still needed




We Are
  
 Looking For A New Youth Leader

*We are currently looking for enthusiastic and energetic people to join the youth leader team. The people in this role will be key to the continuation and growth of the shared youth program at St. Thomas and Symons Valley United Churches. Responsibilities will include planning and running social activities and Sunday morning youth classes as well as communicating with other staff members and committee members to ensure the success of this program.*

**Apply for this position at:**  
[youth-advisory@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:youth-advisory@stthomasunited.ca)

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# Youth News

## Youth Group (Grades 7 to 12)

The Youth Leaders of St. Thomas and Symons Valley are excited to invite you to Youth Group! Youth Group is for everyone who is in grades 7-12. Typically we meet on Friday evenings or Sunday afternoon for our social event and at service on Sunday morning. The Youth Leaders will send out an email every Monday to let you know what activities are taking place that week. Our social events typically last two hours and include activities such as charades, crafts, and movie nights. Sunday mornings are focused on faith discussion, learning more about various scriptures, or exploring social justice issues. Friends are always welcome to come to Friday activities and Sunday mornings. A Zoom link can be provided for Sunday mornings if you would like to join us virtually! If you are interested in joining us and aren't currently receiving our weekly emails, please reach out and send us an email at [youth@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:youth@stthomasunited.ca) or call the church office to be added to our mail-out list!

This Summer there were no Sunday Morning meetings, but youth did meet multiple Fridays to do fun outdoors activities, such as disc golf, mini golf, and swimming. Now that the school year is coming back in full swing, the youth group will go back to meeting every Sunday and Friday and we look forward to seeing you all more!

### What is Happening this Month?

Here are the events we currently have planned for September. Our Sunday mornings will largely be spent discussing the New Creed, but keep an eye out for our Terry Fox Run on **September 15!** Please remember that this schedule is subject to change on short notice. Keep an eye out on your weekly emails for the most up-to-date information!

**September 6** - We're Back! Join us as we confirm our rules for the year, and play some fun churchwide games!

**September 13** - We will be doing some baking (which may have a twist)! Meet us at St. Thomas United Church with chefs hats on!

**September 20** - Join us at Symons Valley United Church as we meet up for a board game night! Feel free to bring your own favorites!

**September 27** - As we end September we are hosting our first out of house event as we paint some pottery! Keep an eye out for location.

### Calgary Queer Church

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 about upcoming services on their website at [www.calgaryqueerchurch.com](http://www.calgaryqueerchurch.com) or on Facebook by searching Calgary Queer Church.

### Naked Faith

Naked Faith is still going to be on break for September, but we will be joining them again next month! 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, with the service starting at 7:00 pm. Youth Are welcome to stay for games after and young adults go out to a pub. All are welcome!

### Dirty Theology

Dirty Theology is hosted by Fish Creek Shared Ministries, a United Church ministry in the Calgary area and usually occurs on the first Sunday of the month. It is a Christian program, but very open and intended for all young adults across Calgary and beyond, from any or no faith tradition. It is the beautiful space you've all been waiting for, where adult conversations meet Christianity, no holds barred. It's a space for young adults to build connections, get real and dig deep into the lived reality of our faith and our lives - the good, the bad and the ugly. Our favourite topics are taboo topics, and we love exploring questions, without needing answers.

### Young Adult Pub Night

Pub night usually occurs on the 4th Sunday of the month at the Southland Bull and Finch pub. For more information, visit the Regional Youth and Young Adult page contact Brenda McKellar at 403-850-7874 or contact the youth leaders for more information!

## Music News - Elaine Taylor-Kerr

All of the musical groups are looking forward to another year of making music together. New members, regardless of skill level, are always welcome in all groups.

### Upcoming Special Music Presentations and Events:

**September 14:** Adult Choir Advance – contact Pam Bazinet for the details

**December 1:** Maple Leaf Brass will provide the music for this service

**December 8:** Children’s and Youth Choirs’ Christmas Musical

**December 15:** Cocoa and Carols following the service – a chance to enjoy singing some of your favorite Christmas Carols.

**December 24:** 8:00 pm service – Adult Choir Canata will be the message for this Christmas Eve service

Group	Practice Time	Ages	First Fall Practice	Contact
Children’s Choir	Thursdays 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	ECS – Grade 6	Sept 5	Kate Power <a href="mailto:childrens-choir@stthomasunited.ca">childrens-choir@stthomasunited.ca</a>
Youth Choir	Wednesdays 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm	Grade 6 – University	Sept 4	Barb Robertson <a href="mailto:barbrob@telus.net">barbrob@telus.net</a>
Adult Choir	Thursdays 7:15 pm – 9:30 pm		Sept 5	Pam Bazinet <a href="mailto:pmbazinet@shaw.ca">pmbazinet@shaw.ca</a>
Orchestra	Mondays 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm		Sept 9	Dick Worton <a href="mailto:dworton@telusplanet.net">dworton@telusplanet.net</a>
Strummers	Thursdays 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm		Sept 5	Ron French <a href="mailto:rondifrench@telus.net">rondifrench@telus.net</a>
Strummers Outreach	Tuesdays 1:00 pm - 3:00pm			George Zirotf <a href="mailto:gzirotf@shaw.ca">gzirotf@shaw.ca</a>

### Adult Choir

As I write this newsletter, it is 30 degrees outside and the outdoor water restrictions have just been lifted.

After a well deserved break over the summer, our first rehearsal for the new season will be on **Thursday, September 5, 2024.**

Our first session back singing in church will be on Sunday, **September 8, 2024.**

Our annual “Choir Advance” will be held on Saturday, **September 14, 2024.** It is always fun for all with a look at our new music and lots of snacks during the day. When all the work is done, we have a delicious BBQ.

Everyone is welcome in our choir. Pop in sometime and try it out . All you need is a love of singing. You do not need to know how to read music.

Pam Bazinet [pmbazinet@shaw.ca](mailto:pmbazinet@shaw.ca)

## Youth Choir

Christmas is coming and the youth and children's choirs will take you inside the "Ugly Sweater Factory" on [December 8, 2024](#). We are looking for choir members to play the parts of Bob Cratchit, Humbug, Sam Ebenezer, and lots of workers. The factory even has its own sheep.

The youth choir begins practices Wednesday, [September 4, 2024](#). Most practices are Wednesdays from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. We will also have a couple of Sunday practices in the fall, including September 8. We will sing music from Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat [September 22, 2024](#).

Do you know someone who likes to sing and act? No experience necessary. Grade 6 - University students are welcome to join us.

Cindy Ma, a former choir member will be joining us as our accompanist.

Contact Barb Robertson at [barbrob@telus.net](mailto:barbrob@telus.net) if you have any questions.

## Children's Choir

We are very excited to get our season up and running the Thursday after Labour Day, [September 5, 2024](#). Do you know any elementary-aged kids who would like to sing in a church choir? Please let them know about our program. The commitment is one-hour rehearsals each week; Thursdays at the church from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and singing in Sunday services about once per month. We will sing our first anthem of the year on [Sunday, September 15, 2024](#).

Kate Power [childrens-choir@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:childrens-choir@stthomasunited.ca)

## Orchestra

The Orchestra will begin rehearsals on [Monday, September 9, 2024](#). We are looking forward to another great year of sharing our music with the St Thomas family. We are always eager to accept new members to our group. We rehearse Monday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Players of any level are welcome.

Dick Worton [dworton@telusplanet.net](mailto:dworton@telusplanet.net)

## Strummers

The Strummers will be practicing on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm in the Library. They are practicing for both church services and outreach concerts. A subset of the group also practice on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm to learn extra music for their outreach program. They plan to sing for worship services and at various seniors' residences.

New members are always welcome. If anyone is interested in joining, please contact Ron French. [rondifrench@telus.net](mailto:rondifrench@telus.net)

## Other Opportunities for Soloists and Instrumentalists

If you would like to share your talents as a singer or instrumentalist during the Offering time, as a Prelude or Postlude, or when one of our regular groups is not available to provide an Anthem, there are lots of opportunities to do so. This invitation is open to people of all skill levels. It would be particularly fun to have some children sing or play the piano or another instrument, for example. If you are interested send an email to [music-team@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:music-team@stthomasunited.ca) or talk to Elaine Taylor-Kerr.