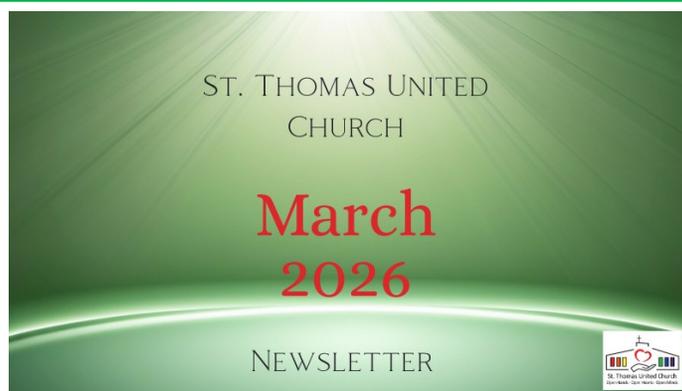


Sunday Morning  
Worship Time  
Every Sunday  
Starting at 10:30 am



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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](mailto:pr@stthomasunited.ca).

## Minister's Message: Reverend Tracy

Since Hot Seat Sunday it was made abundantly clear that people didn't want answers to the remaining questions from the congregation in the newsletter, you want another Hot Seat. Well, okay! Reverend Roslyn and I have decided that the remaining Hot Seat questions will be answered directly after church on **March 8, 2026**. Going forward, the next Hot Seat Sunday will have questions during the closely-monitored-and-timed sermon time, and the remaining questions will be answered directly after that service. We look forward to doing this a few times a year. Huge thanks to Roslyn for being my partner! See you after church on **March 8, 2026**.

Our Lent theme this year is about The Good News and we're sharing scripture and messages that will tell you something good. Fix the News fits perfectly into our Lenten theme (thank you Kim Wagstaff!) and it's something we can continue to access when we need some balance from the overwhelmingly negative. Here are eight of the 99 Stories of Progress from 2025. Check out [fixthenews.com](http://fixthenews.com) for your chance to sign up.

### #6 of 99. A New Era of Global Health

"For the first time in our species' history, infectious disease is not the dominant threat," proclaimed The Lancet in October in a sweeping analysis revealing a new era of global health. Deaths from TB, diarrhoea and HIV have plunged by between 20% and 49% since 2010.

### #42 of 99. Less Litter

Ocean Cleanup has now removed 20 million kg of plastic from the world's waters since 2013. They also have a new goal: one third less plastic outflow from the world's 30 most polluted rivers by 2030. Meanwhile the EU and Australia reported a drop in marine litter of around 30% over the past decade.

Continued...

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### #56 of 99. Forest Protection

2025: a big year for forest protection - from the creation of "The World's Largest Forest Reserve" (540,000 km<sup>2</sup> stretching across the Congo) to the \$6.6 billion raised for November's launch of the Tropical Forest Forever Fund, a public-private purse that pays countries to protect their forests.

### #67 of 99. City Swimming

2025 saw swimmers in Chicago River and the Seine for the first time in a century. Similar scenes are now a feature in cities across Europe. City river clean-ups in Brazil are reducing disease and reviving biodiversity. The once "biologically dead" Thames is now one of the world's cleanest rivers.

### #70 of 99. LGBTQ Milestones

When Hungary attempted to ban Budapest Pride in June more than 30 embassies expressed support for the march. The unstoppable crowd swelled into a 100,000 strong anti-government protest. Months later the Vatican made history, hosting its first officially recognised pilgrimage for LGBTQ+ Catholics.

### #80 of 99. Walking & Talking

2025 saw two world firsts in the restoration of fundamental human functions: an injection of re-programmed neural stem cells enabled a paralysed man to stand once again on his own two feet; a brain implant granted expressive speech to a man with a severe speech disability, even allowing him to sing.

### #90 of 99. Evolving Evolution

Our understanding of evolution evolved last year. February offered us the best evidence yet that birds and mammals evolved their intelligence independently, and in August we learnt that the majority of Earth's species stem from a few evolutionary 'explosions' that sparked rapid diversification.

### #98 of 99. Life's Ingredients

Theories on life's extraterrestrial origins gained extra weight this year as signs of biological activity surfaced on a planet 124 light years from Earth, and NASA's sample of asteroid Bennu revealed 'life molecules' and a history of saltwater that could have served as their activating 'broth'.

"Despite the chaos and carnage that runs alongside them, inspirational stories like these are perennial and pervasive - proof that there's no shortage of humans who choose service, driven by a sense of justice, wonder, or possibility, and follow through until they leave a positive mark on the world." Quote from: Fix the World.

Enjoy (and don't forget to share) more good news!

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## Executive Council - Cathy Rivard

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held in-person on [Sunday March 22, 2025](#) at 11:45 am following the worship service. The annual report will be sent out by email and a few copies will be available in the lobby. Please help us save on paper and refer to your electronic copies if you are able.

# Worship at St. Thomas - Cathy Rivard

Join us on **March 1, 2026**, for "Joy of Song" where the Children's, Youth, and Adult choirs, Strummers, and Orchestra will come together to celebrate worship. Don't forget to put your clocks ahead on **March 8, 2026** for Daylight Savings and feel free to wear your P.J.'s if you like. Guest Speaker Pam Rocker, from Affirming Connections, will join us on March 15 for PIE (Public, Intentional, Explicit) Day and there will be an after church lunch, silent auction, and market. Palm Sunday will close out the month as we prepare the way for Easter.

## Upcoming Services for March, 2026.

### March 1

Lent 2 "Joy of Song"

Elaine Taylor - Kerr.  
Scripture: Luke 7:36-50, Matthew 25:35-40

Music:  
Children's, Youth and Adult Choirs, Strummers, and Orchestra, Kari Orosz.

### March 8

Lent 3 "Together the Impossible is Possible"

Reverend Tracy.  
Daylight Savings, wear your P.J.'s to church.  
Scripture:  
Mark 6:32-44, Ephesians 3:20-21

Music:  
Orchestra, Richard Taylor - Kerr, Kari Orosz.

### March 15

Lent 4 PIE Day (Public, Intentional, Explicit)

Guest Speaker: Pam Rocker - "Protection and Care of the Vulnerable".  
Reverend Tracy.  
Scripture:  
Scripture - Matthew 19:13-15, Deuteronomy 24:17-22

Music:  
Children's and Adult Choirs, Kari Orosz.

### March 22

Lent 5 "Rooted in Justice, Mercy and Faithfulness"

Reverend Marion  
Scripture:  
John 8:2-11, Matthew 23:23

Music:  
Strummers, George Ziroff.

### March 29

Palm Sunday  
"Inspiring Us to Act; Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem"

Reverend Tracy  
Scripture:  
Mark 11:1-11

Music:  
Adult Choir, Kari Orosz.

## Gift Cards - Richard Taylor-Kerr

Gift card sales are off to a good start in 2026. We have raised over \$1000 as of mid February. Good work St Thomas!

We have gift cards available in \$50s and \$100s for Safeway/ Sobey's, Co-op, and Superstore. Payment is by e-transfer, cash, or cheque (payable to St. Thomas United Church). Safeway/Sobey's 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. Thank you for supporting this important fundraiser. Every purchase helps, no matter how small.

# The Wise Women of St. Thomas United Church

## Thoughts about Lent - Ruthann Watson

Almost every religion has traditions or rituals for atonement of sins: Ramadan (Islam), Days of Awe (Judaism). If acknowledgment of our imperfections and shortcomings is the first step toward a better relationship with the Divine, atonement should be about enhancement rather than subtraction. Anyway, deprivation rarely leads to long-lasting success, as anyone who has been on a "reducing diet" can attest.

Perhaps Lent is a time of reflection on where we are and our spiritual needs for the next year. Here are some thoughts from around the web:

To everyone feeling politically and denominationally homeless right now: Don't mistake the Wilderness for the Graveyard. You haven't been abandoned; you've been repositioned. Throughout Scripture, the Wilderness is never just a place of punishment. It's the place of clarification. It's where the idols are stripped away so the voice of God can be heard clearly again. Mid-Faith Crisis podcast episode # 361. After the British banter, they have a great discussion about the meaning of wilderness and Lent.

How To Keep Showing Up Without Burning Out. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Sojourners Magazine, June 2025

And, from the Book of Common Prayer: This is another day, O Lord. I know not what it will bring forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be. If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently. And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly. Make these words more than words and give me the spirit of Jesus. Amen.

May Lent prepare us all for the mystery of Easter.

## Lent - Maureen Dodd

I wonder if Lent was invented long ago by exasperated church leaders, when they realized that people were never going to keep their New Year's Resolutions. So, they decided that six weeks was more reasonable, and maybe then people could actually re-think some of their vices.

By the time you read this, we will be partly through Lent. How is it going? Did you give up something that brings you joy, like dessert, chocolate, vanilla lattes, or judging others?

As kids, Lent was a confusing and terrifying time. We were expected to give up candy or dessert or punching our brother. It was a measure of our moral fortitude. Also, we had to put money in Lenten boxes, which we took back to the church on Palm Sunday for some unexplained reason. That made it easy to give up candy, because that was our candy money. The Sunday School teachers helped us with our fortitude by showing us frightening pictures of Jesus being tempted by the devil. We didn't want to end up on the top of a cliff with the devil.

Continued...

Lent is supposed to be about reflection and restoration. How can I reflect or be restored if I'm crabby without my lattes? I know, I know, I'm supposed to be transcending the pleasures of the flesh and focusing on spiritual enlightenment and being a better person. So, I've given up housework to make more time for reflecting and being grateful. It has been lovely to sit and savor the latte, being grateful for the baristas, the coffee growers, the roasters and that the price hasn't gone up again.

As I see it now, Lent is about slowing down and being free from the distractions that keep us from growing, from being grateful, from living in the moment, from appreciating the joy of Easter and the newness of Spring.

Let's enjoy the freedom that Lent offers – you in your small corner, and I in mine.

## Lent - Wanda Veer

Back in the 1950's, growing up in the small town of Sibbald, Alberta, population 125, there were three churches. Each of them had a small, but dedicated congregation. A United Church, an Anglican church, and a Catholic church. In Oyen, our closest big Alberta town, there were at least 5 churches, including Greek Orthodox. We had no Catholic school in Sibbald, so the public-school housed children from every denomination. As kids, we really didn't think about differences in religion, or faith, or rituals, not when we had skating, baseball, horseback riding, and after school chores to fret over. That is until I heard about Lent. My Catholic friends would say "what are you giving up for Lent this year?" My Mom filled me in on her understanding of Lent. Grandma just tut tutted about how the Catholics had it all wrong! I was curious and often followed the Lent journey with my friends. And I think I was a little jealous. They seemed to have an inner path to heaven and Jesus and God and whatever else you had to go through.

As an adult, I heard the passages, queried the veracity of those 40 days and 40 nights, wondered why on earth Jesus didn't succumb to the devil's suggestions, and then realized it is far larger than that. I always kidded that I could easily give up eggplant, or lacrosse, or homework, if required. Missing the point entirely.

It's taken many years for me to fully understand the spiritual part of Lent. I do not practice it. I tried it once, but the devil drew me into temptation. I yielded immediately! However, I do try to pull myself back, take a good hard look at where I've been, where I am now, and where I'd like to be. Then ask "how do I get there?" That sneaky devil always has such interesting sidetracks. It is very hard for me to give myself over to trusting God completely. I was taught that I was given talents and should use those to my best ability. Sometimes, however, my talents don't align with the problem at hand. "Give it to God," my friend Judy always said. So, I try other solutions, then have to agree; just "give it to God".

So, for Lent this year, I am not dwelling on my past mistakes, or my current foibles, but will concentrate on my wish for my future and the future of those I love and care about. I'll do what I can and learn to turn it over to God. The world is messy. We can make a difference. But just to be on the safe side, I'll give up eggplant!

# St. Thomas Birthdays

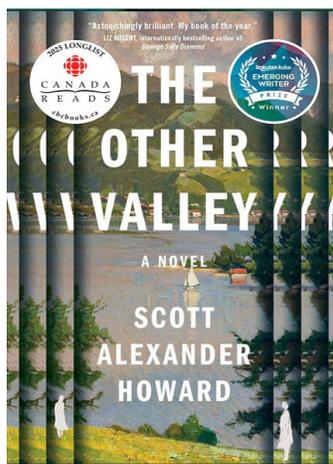
December 2025

January 2026

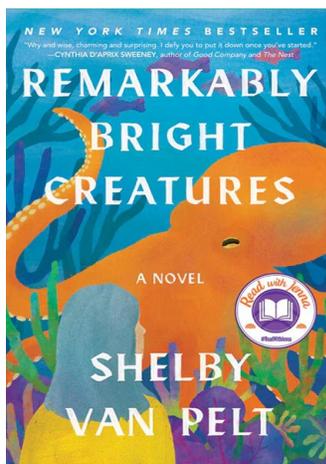


## St. Thomas Book Club - Rachel Murray

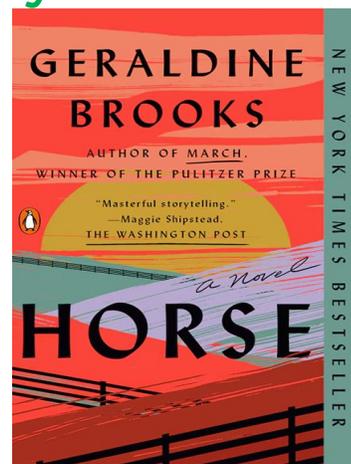
For more information contact Rachel at [rachelmurray@shaw.ca](mailto:rachelmurray@shaw.ca). New members welcome! Meets every second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm on Zoom. Meets every second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm on Zoom. This year's book choices are:



March, 2026



April, 2026



May, 2026

## Paths to Reconciliation - Elaine Gray

A walk to honour Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit Peoples was hosted by Scarboro United Church on Saturday, February 14, 2026. The walk was preceded by singing, drumming, and stories. Ten people, and three lovely dogs, from St. Thomas United Church attended this event to remember the life of Karen Kavanagh and her passion for social justice. Karen was a beloved member of St. Thomas for many years before moving to New Brunswick a year ago.

Thanks to all who attended for your support!

## Faith Formation - Gayle Wilderman

Through March, the Sunday School will have Lent on the agenda. That time in the Christian calendar when we prepare for Easter. [March 1, 2026](#), the children will be a part of "Joy of Song". A special time at St. Thomas when the entire service is given over to celebration of music. Many of the Sunday School class participate in the Children's choir. They will be singing with the Senior Choir. The Sunday School will stay in for the service so they can enjoy and participate in the music.

Plans for Camp Caravan are still in progress. St. Thomas is asking for July dates. In the months to come, look for a "Coins for Camp" program to help families fund their children's attendance at the camp.

The library crew has been quite happy with the up flow of books being taken out. The display table in the Narthax profiles certain books each month which may have a selection you could be interested in.

And finally, we continue to ask that all of you encourage anyone who would be an enthusiastic, energetic Sunday School coordinator to apply to take over from Ashley at the end of this Sunday School year. More information will be forthcoming on the St. Thomas website in the next few days.

Faith Formation Committee Members: Fiona Craig (library), Ashley Dressler, Elaine Gray, Sheila Humphrey (library), Myrna Malanik, Reverend Marion Martin, Sharon Ramraj-Thompson (co-chair), Marie Vallet, Gayle Wilderman (co-chair)

## Affirming - Dan MacDonald

The Affirming Team is preparing for its biggest event of the year, PIE Day, also know as National Affirming Day, which will be celebrated on [March 15, 2026](#)!

PIE in this context stands for Public, Intentional, and Explicit, and celebrates the United Church's inclusion and support for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. This year's theme is Crafting Community, and the fabulous Pam Rocker will be guest preaching on that theme at our service!

Following what will surely be a joyful and invigorating service, the Affirming Team will be hosting a shepherd's pie lunch, with sweet pie for dessert, a silent auction of a variety of donated pies, and an arts market. The Affirming Team is cooking up the shepherd's pie, but we need donations of pies both to eat for dessert and to auction off. All proceeds from the auction and art fair will go toward our Pride Prom this June.

If you can help, please sign up, there's a sheet at the church, donate a pie or two, then mark your calendar to celebrate PIE Day!

Affirming PIE Day!  
[www.pieday.ca](http://www.pieday.ca)



# Foothills United Thrift Store: Elaine Taylor-Kerr

## Clothing Donations

Foothills United collects used clothing for their sales. They are in need of donations of gently used clothing. Donations can be dropped off at Foothills United between 9:00 am and noon Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday but please call the office ahead if you are coming at 403-288-5632. If you have clothing to donate but are unable to get to Foothills, please contact Elaine Taylor-Kerr.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Foothills United runs a Thrift Store as part of the outreach to the community and as a fundraiser, open from 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm on the first and third Thursday of the month plus one Saturday of the month. They could really use more volunteers to help with the sales. For more information or to volunteer, please contact either Reverend Marion or Elaine Taylor-Kerr.

# Camp Kasota West - Elaine Taylor-Kerr

Camp Kasota West is a United Church camp on Sylvan Lake near Red Deer. They offer week long residential camping experiences in July and August for children who have completed grades 1 – 9. They also offer counsellor in training weeks for youth who have finished grades 10 or 11 and sailing camps for youth who have finished grades 9 – 11. The rates are very reasonable. Several St. Thomas children have attended over the years. Several of our former youth group members have been counsellors at camp. All have enjoyed the experience.



Registration is now open. There is a discount of \$40 if you register before **March 27, 2026**. For further information see [www.campkasotawest.com](http://www.campkasotawest.com)





**SERIES AND DATES:**

**MARCH 4: HINDU TRADITION WITH ANIRBAN BOSU.**

**MARCH 11: THE BAHAI TRADITION WITH MAY & HOWIE CUMMINGS.**

**MARCH 18: THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST TRADITION WITH REV. SAMAYA OAKLEY.**

**MARCH 25: THE INDIGENOUS TRADITION WITH DAKOTA EAGLEWOMAN.**

**APRIL 1: THE TURKISH MUSLIM TRADITION & INTERFAITH DIALOGUE INSTITUTE WITH FATIH & AYSE SEZGIN.**

**ALL SESSIONS WILL BE HELD AT FOOTHILLS UNITED CHURCH  
3803 69<sup>TH</sup> ST NW**

# Youth News

## Junior Youth Group

The children continue to have a lot of fun together getting to know each other, doing some crafts, and playing active games.

The Junior Youth Group is an energetic group of children in grades four, five, and six. We plan to have monthly in-person events this school year. We will also be continuing the collaboration with Symons Valley for some joint events. If you know of a child who will be in this age range this school year 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 next event will be held on **March 6, 2026**, at Symons Valley United Church, 38 Kincora Rise NW. The April events will be on **April 10, 2026**, at St. Thomas. Sam and Elaine look forward to seeing you there!

## Youth Group (Grades 7 to 12)

All youth from St. Thomas and Symons Valley United Churches, grades 7-12, are welcome to join our youth group. We usually meet altogether on Fridays 7:00 pm -9:00 pm, and at our respective churches on Sunday mornings following Children's Time during the service. Youth are always welcome to bring their friends. Leaders send out weekly emails at the start of each week to remind youth of upcoming events, announcements, and plan changes if necessary. Each youth, if desired, will also receive monthly check-ins over email. For those with questions, or those wanting to get connected feel free to reach out to us over email at [youth@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:youth@stthomasunited.ca). Alternatively, you can call the office and request to be added to our mail-out list.

## What is Happening this Month?

Here are the events we currently have planned for February. 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! Our Sunday mornings will consist of:

### Sunday Mornings

**Sunday, March 1, 2026:** Joy of Song - For the first Sunday of March, youth will be remaining in the service for St. Thomas' Joy of Song performance.

**Sunday, March 8, 2026:** International Women's Day - **March 8, 2026**, is International Women's Day, and so we will be taking this Sunday to reflect on both the progress we have made as well as the places we still need to grow. It is also PJ day!

**Sunday, March 15, 2026:** Pie Day - For the United Church, Pie Day is significant as it is when we honour the intentional and explicit attempt at including and affirming the struggles of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and our commitment to doing the work to challenge stigma. As a youth group, we will be taking this time to reflect, and acknowledge our history; and more importantly, how we may move forward.

Continued...

**Sunday March 22, 2026:** Youth Service Prep - On **May 31, 2026**, youth from St. Thomas and Symons Valley United Churches will be having youth led services. As it will involve youth contribution, we will be dedicating several Sunday mornings towards its planning and development.

**Sunday March 29, 2026:** Youth Service Prep - We will end off the month by continuing to work on our youth led service!

## Fridays

**Friday March 6, 2026:** D&D - To start the month off, we will be continuing off with our second session of our campaign, Lost Mine of Phandelver. Just as a reminder, we will be splitting into two groups: our roleplay heavy, and not-as roleplay heavy group.

**Friday March 13, 2026:** Naked Faith - This month's service is down south at Southwood United Church. Naked Faith is a monthly alternative worship service designed for youth and young adults, but all are welcome. Dinner will be provided starting at 6:00 pm, and the service will follow shortly after. Finally, youth are invited to play games until 10:30 pm.

**Friday March 20, 2026:** For the day of spring break, in the public school system, youth will be having a relaxed craft night at Symons Valley! The craft has yet to be determined, so please watch out for it!

**Friday March 27, 2026:** D&D - Continuing back with our campaign, this week will be our third session of our campaign, Lost Mine of Phandelver. Our D&D nights have been group favourites.

## What to look out for:

**Coffee Check-in:** As a monthly tradition we typically host a coffee check-in. This gives youth the opportunity to get coffee, hot chocolate, or maybe a sweet treat while getting an opportunity to have more personal / focused conversations with youth leaders. This month our check-in will be on **March 23, 2026**. The location is still TBD.

**Collective 2026: (em) brace for Impact:** In a partnership between The United Church of Canada, and The Presbyterian Church of Canada they will be hosting an event from **August 12-15, 2026**, at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Registration is, and will remain open until **June 15, 2026**. Registration will be \$450, however we will be doing some fundraising in order to help subsidize costs. Registration details can be on the official website, or here: <https://www.collective-gathering.ca>

## Youth Leader Needed

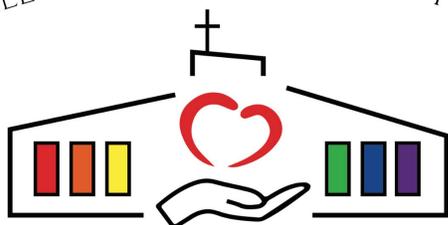
St. Thomas and Symons Valley United Churches have a very active youth group for Junior High and Senior High School Students. The program includes social events, mission, and outreach activities, involvement in the life and work of the two congregations, and Sunday morning faith exploration and social justice discussions. The group meets Sunday morning at each church and holds a weekly joint social event typically either on Friday evening or Sunday afternoon. They also attend Fish Creek Shared Ministry youth events.

Continued...

We are currently looking for an enthusiastic and energetic person to join the youth leader team. The person 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 working with fellow youth leaders to plan and run social activities and Sunday morning youth classes as well as communicate with other staff members and committee members to ensure the success of this program.

For further information or to apply, please email [youth-advisory@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:youth-advisory@stthomasunited.ca).

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF STUC



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

ON MAY 9, 2026 WE WILL HAVE THE HONOR OF CELEBRATING THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ST. THOMAS UNITED CHURCH

THERE WILL BE A MUSICAL REVUE STARTING AT 2:00 PM  
THERE WILL BE SNACKS AND THERE WILL BE WINE, BEER, COOLERS, AND POP FOR PURCHASE.

Hey Primetimers! Join us on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 10:30 am for coffee & snacks in the Narthex. If you can bring some sweet treats, please contact Betty Thompson.



Primetimers



## 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:

**May 9, 2026:** in the afternoon – Celebrating 50 Years of STUC! Save the date for another STUC musical show! As STUC will celebrate 50 years in 2026, this show will include music from various past shows and sermon series.

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

### Adult Choir

We are busy learning new hymns from the "Then let Us Sing" (TLUS) so that we can present them for you to share. There are some lovely new melodies. You have already met some of these new tunes this past February.

The Easter time will be upon us very soon and the choir is practicing music for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. All of our anthems are glorious! You will not want to miss them. The Good Friday service will be at Symons Valley United Church with their choir and our choir joining together.

Our latest STUC Performance is shaping up. There is one show only on Saturday afternoon, May 9. The theme this year is a re-visit to shows of the past. I can tell you that the adult choir is reviving "Mama Mia". If any of you have a song or a skit or a dance or a ??? please feel free to participate in this event. Elaine Taylor-Kerr is the contact person for this.

Continued...

Research continues to support the message that singing is very good for both your physical and emotional health. It is a social activity, it involves breathing, reading, and making beautiful harmony with friends. Consider giving it a try!

As always, new members are welcome. If you are interested in singing, come on out on a Thursday evening and give us a try. You do not need to be able to read music. You just have to love to sing! Pam Bazinet: [pmbazinet@shaw.ca](mailto:pmbazinet@shaw.ca)

## Youth Choir

The youth choir will join the other music groups to share the importance and joy of music with the congregation.

We continue to work on a mini musical story, *Noah and the Ark*, and excerpts from *Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat*, with special guests. All youth are welcome to join the choir for these spring presentations.

For further information please contact: Barb [barbrob@telus.net](mailto:barbrob@telus.net)

## Children's Choir

Winter may still be going strong, but at Children's Choir we've been working hard on our spring repertoire. We're especially excited for our May songs: we're preparing a movie showtune mashup for the STUC Show and a real earworm surprise for Mother's Day.

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

## Orchestra

We recently played on February 8, 2026, and will be playing at the service on **March 8, 2026**. We are also preparing another piece for our part in the STUC variety performance on **May 9, 2026**.

A subset of the Orchestra also provided entertainment at the Mardi Gras event that occurred on Ash Wednesday.

The Orchestra is a friendly group of people who enjoy sharing their music. The orchestra rehearses on Monday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. New members are always welcome.

If you are interested in joining us please contact

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

## Strummers

The Strummers practice 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 David Gray [davidmg1957@gmail.com](mailto:davidmg1957@gmail.com)

## 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 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.

## Hymn Books

We will not be purchasing copies for the congregation of *Then Let Us Sing*, the new music resource for the United Church. Several people have expressed interest in having their own copy so we plan to place a bulk order for all who are interested. The cost is \$34.60 for the full music version or \$52.45 for the accompanist version. If you are interested, please add your name, contact information and version type to the list in the Narthex. If you are interested in a copy of *Voices United* or *More Voices*, we have a few used ones to give away on a first come first serviced basis. Please add your name, contact information and hymnary name to the list in the Narthex. If you would prefer to purchase a new copy of either instead, please indicate this on the sign up sheet. For further information, email [music-team@stthomasunited.ca](mailto:music-team@stthomasunited.ca).

## Naramata - Elaine Taylor-Kerr



### Naramata Centre Summer Programs for all ages

Naramata Centre is conference and retreat centre of the United Church of Canada. Open to people of all ages, Naramata Centre is an inclusive, welcoming place to connect and deepen in mind, body and spirit. Situated on 23 acres of land on the east shore of Lake Okanagan, the

Centre provides a peaceful oasis for children, teens, adults, families, and elders to play, relax, grow and be authentically themselves, supported in community.

Naramata Centre draws and inspires people from many paths and walks of life, as a place for learning, sharing, contemplation, personal growth, and spiritual renewal. The Centre has long provided a space for spiritual retreat and reflection, intentional engagement and professional development. The Centre offers a wide variety of programs in music, the arts, health and well-being, leadership, social justice, and spiritual nurture.

The essence of Naramata Centre is difficult to capture in words. It is a place where being present and connecting to oneself, others, nature, and the Sacred become easier. Come stay at the Centre to experience what it has to offer. Enjoy a program or retreat. Walk the labyrinth and visit the Chapel. Do yoga or play on the beach. Jump into the lake. Snooze or read in the shade under the canopy of trees. Sink into community and laugh and sing. Join others in Sacred Pause or meditate. Explore Naramata village and Naramata Bench wineries. So much to experience...come and discover!

Registration for summer weeks is open. See <https://www.naramatacentresociety.org/> for program descriptions, accommodation descriptions and to register.