

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

It has been almost a year since Reverend Tracy, Reverend Vicki, and I travelled to Tanzania. Over the past year, I have often reflected on that trip and the time we spent there. One phrase our safari guide, Edward, repeated often was: "Why not?"

Since returning home, Reverend Tracy has carried those words with her and has repeated them many times:

"Why not?"

Why not go for a walk?, Why not have a nap?, Why not volunteer? Why not be an ally? Why not do it?, Why not try?

You get the picture.

If you were to finish that phrase yourself, what might you say? Most mornings, I begin my day by reading Father Richard Rohr's daily meditation. Recently, one particular phrase stood out to me, "True prayer begins with a positive 'yes,' a surrender to God and Reality."

Father Richard goes on to say, "Our first energy has to be 'yes' energy. We must choose the positive, which is to choose love." He also writes that we must rest in contemplative prayer "for a minimum of fifteen conscious seconds." Apparently, that is how long it takes for positivity to imprint itself on our neurons.

In a world filled with chaos, violence, fear, pain, judgment, and division, it is important to remember that so much of life comes down to choice.

What if, upon waking each morning, we began the day by saying:

"Why not...yes?"

Why not say yes to love? Why not say yes to something positive?
Why not say yes to kindness? Why not?

As we move into summer — a season of new adventures and new possibilities — I invite you to say, "Why not... yes?" Yes to positivity. Yes to love. And then see what kind of memories you can create. See what kind of change you can make — within yourself and in the world around you.

Why not?

Worship at St. Thomas - Cathy Rivard

We will have some interesting services during June. The Adult choir will be gracing us with three performances during the month. Sadly Foothill United Church is having their decommissioning service on **June 21, 2026**. Everyone is welcome to attend, Tracy will have a pre-recorded message at St. Thomas on that day. Reverend Marion will be doing the message on **June, 28, 2026**. Have a great June.

Upcoming Services for June, 2026.

June 7

No Judgement
Pride Service

Reverend Tracy.
Scripture:
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Music:
Adult Choir,
Kari Orosz.

June 14

Hospitality and Sur-
prise

Reverend Tracy.
Scripture:
Genesis 18:1-15 (21:1-7)

Music:
Adult Choir,
Kari Orosz.

June 21

Indigenous Sunday
Father's Day
Last Service at
Foothills

Reverend Tracy
recorded.
Scripture:
Matthew 10:24-39

Music:
Adult Choir,
Kari Orosz.

June 28

Welcoming and offer-
ing a cup of water

Reverend Marion.
Scripture:
Matthew 10:40-42

Music:
Kari (recording) -
'Mary Ellen Carter' by
Stan Rogers, arr. Erica
Phare-Bergh

Gift Cards - Richard Taylor-Kerr

As of mid May, we have fundraised almost \$3200 through the sale of gift cards. 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/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. 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

Getting Lost - Ruthann Watson

Our theme this month was "getting lost". I'll leave the humour to Wanda and Maureen.

I stumbled on this wonderful poem. If you'd like to hear the poet read it in his own Irish accent:
<https://www.thetrailblazery.com/info-message-from-president-2025>

EXILES

No it is not the end of history,
 Nor is it a possibility exhausted,
 Not yet the end of ideas.
 It is the time of a single idea
 Crippling, vicious and deadly,
 Closing us off from what we imagined of a
 world

We have not yet managed to create.
 Rejecting the possibility of hope,
 Of a better version of ourselves
 And in the new intolerance
 We may not speak of prophecy.
 We may not make a criticism
 Of the choices made
 In our name.

The mind of war is being re-made,
 New demons invented,
 And language gives way
 To description of demons.

A picture is being drawn
 Of those less human who differ.
 An old vision of the freedom
 From hunger, fear, abuse
 Has faded in the terrible times.
 We are invited to forget an old promise
 That ours was a world to create.

Out of the depths we cry.

We shrink in fear.

Few break the silence.

But the light flickers in hope,
 In resolution.

We must make our own answer
 Our liberation from the nightmare will
 come

Our exile will end.

Not from the making of miracles

But from the strength of will and heart combined.



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

**EXPERIENCE
CAMP CARAVAN THIS
SUMMER**

JULY 13-17, 2026
ST. THOMAS UNITED CHURCH
 SPIRIT-FILLED DAY CAMPS IN SOUTHERN
 ALBERTA AND SURROUNDING AREA'S

FOR K-GR. 7

CREATIVITY **COMMUNITY** **ADVENTURE**

INVESTMENT:
 \$150 FOR THE FIVE DAY CAMP
 \$120 FOR THE FOUR DAY CAMP
 DAILY SNACKS & LUNCHES
 DEPENDING ON LOCATION AND
 WILL BE CONFIRMED CLOSER TO
 THE START OF CAMP
 BURSARIES ARE AVAILABLE!!!
 DETAILS CAN BE FOUND WITHIN
 THE REGISTRATION LINK

**Come to Camp Caravan
and get ready to:**

- JUMP INTO ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURES
- EXPLORE HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES
- CREATE UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES
- MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND HAVE A BLAST!

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER VISIT
www.camp-caravan.ca
 OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER AND TO SEE MORE INFO

Continued...

With heart and head.
 We make our common fate
 Together
 We move on and affirm
 An old promise,
 Not rejected,
 Unfulfilled.

From: *An Arid Season*, 2004. Michael D. Higgins

Getting Lost - Maureen Dodd

I'm no stranger to things getting lost: keys, phone, wallet, the cat, earrings, passwords, Christmas presents I thoughtfully bought in August. I regularly invoke St. Anthony, the patron saint of lost things: "Dear Saint Anthony come around, something's lost and can't be found."

Lately I have lost different things: use of my credit card, my patience, my mind, and my willingness to be kind. These are all related. Villains compromised my credit card. It took most of a morning to convince the bank that I was the victim and was not just enjoying a jolly prank at their expense. The villains seem to have no trouble doing what they want with my card, but I have a heck of a time being believed. After a not-so-patient ten-day wait, the new credit card arrived. Alas, ne'er-do-wells were waiting for it to be activated so they could continue their spree. I am without a credit card again. I think this time it takes twenty days to get a new one because I have been doubly careless. That poor credit card never even left the house.

I have lost patience telling the same story to the bank, I have lost my mind from listening to the music that is played when you are on hold. It is like a knife through my brain. I am struggling with losing kindness because I have been on hold a lot, whilst the agents allege to be consulting a 'higher authority.' Maybe it's Saint Anthony.

While I wait in credit card limbo, unable to "Add to Cart" online or to shop at Costco, I've tried to appreciate that my inconveniences are small. Small compared to lost relationships, lost faith, lost tolerance and kindness, lost democracy. These losses are what we need to be vigilant against because they have way more impact than lost belongings. When we lose these, even Dear Saint Anthony can't help.

I would wish you a loss-free June, but that might deprive you of the immense joy of finding a long-lost earring in your purse or a \$20 bill in your spring jacket!

Lost / Country Roads- Wanda Veer

OK. I am definitely lost. I was sure we Wise Women had settled on a common theme of Country Roads for the June Newsletter. Apparently not. Actually, I prefer to think that the other two are wrong! So, while Ruthann is travelling Europe, and Maureen is pacing at home without a credit card, I will move through country roads. "Take me Home to a Place I Belong". And, yes, we used to get lost on country roads, but now with our amazing Ms. GPS, we think we know where we are. On the farm, we often had interesting folks drive into the yard saying, "where are we, exactly?" Mom or Dad would invite them in, give them much more local history than they had asked for, and send them off with paper maps of "turn left at the red barn, if you see a blue farmhouse you've gone too far, watch out for cattle two miles up the road".

Continued...

We just returned from a cold and miserable weekend, camping in Three Hills. Except who cared as we had fires, good food, great conversations, card games? We drove along the prairie roads, watching as the trees and shrubs were expectantly waiting to burst into leaf and blossom. I felt my soul settle into a peaceful state. Prairies are where I belong. Where you can see forever; we could see the mountains clearly from east of Beiseker. No hills or rocks to block our view. We so enjoy checking out the rural farmyards. Who has increased their farm? Which farms are deteriorating and now unkempt? The enormous machines that are now used for seeding. Hoping to catch a glimpse of newborn calves. Oh, the possibilities and hope that springtime evokes.

Each of us has a place in our soul about "going home". The roads and sights and smells that were part of our early years. It might be water, oceans, boats, giant trees, industrial areas, suburbs, mountains, rocks and more rocks. Stan and I once, yes once, drove to Vancouver. We had sore necks trying to peer around the mountains, trees, and rocks. The majesty and beauty of our Rockies was exhilarating for about half an hour. Then we yearned to spy on non-prairie human activity like sawmills, cement, boats and marinas, fruit and vegetable orchards. But that's just us.

It's hard for me to imagine Jesus and his disciples trudging through their homelands. Did it look like those areas do in 2026? Rocky? Dusty? Small clumps of thorny bushes? Who knows, but nonetheless, it was home. And good for the soul.

May your summer journeys pull you into roads that remind you of home. Even get lost, stop in at a farm and ask directions. You'll definitely meet new friends.

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!

Faith Formation - Gayle Wilderman

This year, our group has been really busy.

Busy with finding a replacement for our wonderful Sunday School teacher of 4 years, Ashley, the Faith Formation committee has been advertising the position, striking an interview committee, and going about letting the interested applicants understand the particulars of the job. When everything is finalized, we are hoping that Ashley's final three classes and the big Church Picnic after the service on [June 7, 2026](#), will give us a chance to say goodbye. Ashley has said that she fully intends to come to church to be able to listen to Tracy for a change! For years, she has missed the sermons, although she tied the Sunday school lessons with what Tracy and Marion had planned.

If you want to volunteer, please remember that a police check is important, we have the directions on doing it if you are interested, and Tracy has sent out the most recent "Duty of Care" update. All volunteers working with the children can be reminded of the boundaries we need to set and what is okay and what isn't.

The Summer Camp is planned for [July 13-17, 2026](#). Thanks to our enthusiastic congregation, the Sunday School kids collected \$734 to help pay the expenses of the kids. Thanks to the congregation for chipping in. This is a wonderful camp that is run out of St. Thomas. If any of you have a skill or craft that you would like to volunteer and share please step forward. It could be bird watching, a fun craft, and apparently, last year Tobin had some kind of a construction project that the kids participated in and enjoyed!

Elaine G. has sent in some reviews of the latest additions to the library. Check them out and check out a book. Fiona displays some great ones on the table in the Narthex.

Meditative Worship is wrapping up for the year and will re-appear in the fall.

The next Messy Church is planned for [October 23, 2026](#). A great time to get our pumpkins carved before Halloween. Mark your calendars and consider messy churching with us.

Committee: members – Fiona Craig, Ashley Dressler, Elaine Gray, Myrna Malanik, Reverend Marion Martin, Sheila Humphrey, Sharon Ramraj-Thompson, Gayle Wilderman.

AM Fitness - Barbara Robertson

*St. Thomas United Church
A.M. Fun and Fitness Group*

How important is our exercise class at St. Thomas? Here is a quote from one of our members:

"Just wanted to say how very happy I am to be back to exercising after 7 weeks of illness! I really missed not being to attend exercise class! "

Note that June classes are limited and times have changed. Please contacts Barb for more info.



Primetimers - Betty Thompson

Primetimers' Coffee Time

Thursday, **June 4, 2026**, coffee time has been cancelled due to another group needing the Sanctuary and Narthex. There will be no coffee times in July and August. Coffee time will continue again on **Thursday, September 3, 2026**, at 10:00 am.

Primetimers' Picnic at Bowness Park - Thursday, June 18 at 11 am

On the west side of the western part of the parking lot. Hot Dogs and buns, Salad, Snacks, Water, Juice, and Pop will be served.

Cost: \$5.00

Please bring a chair, sunscreen and a hat. If the weather doesn't co-operate, we will go to the Narthex at St. Thomas.

Please sign the sign up sheet in the Narthex by **Sunday June 14, 2026**.

Contact: Betty Thompson betsjet@telusplanet.net

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.

For further information see www.campkasotawest.com



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 to be added to the list.

The last event for this school year will be held **June 12, 2026**, at St. Thomas. Junior Youth will take a break over the summer and start up again in September. Sam and Elaine look forward to seeing you there!

Fundraising to Support Youth Trip

Two of our youth will be attending The Collective in St. Catherine's, Ontario in August. It is a United Church/Presbyterian Church youth and young adult event for young people from across Canada to come together to explore their faith, form connections, and explore their calling to make a positive impact in the world through the way of Jesus. We raised \$195 through the barbequed hot dog sale at the garage sale. There will be a bake sale following the youth service on May 31 to raise additional funds. Watch for other fund raisers to come.

Youth Leader Needed

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.

back to the 80's

PRIDE PROM

NAKED FAITH

Photo Booth!

Snacks!

Soft Drinks!

Door Prizes

All Ages

JUNE 13, 2026

Starting at 7:00PM

MOUNTAINVIEW HALL

ST. THOMAS UNITED CHURCH

THIS IS A SAFE SPACE

Camp Caravan - Elaine Taylor-Kerr

Camp Caravan is a week-long summer day camp designed for children from kindergarten to grade 7, bringing adventure, creativity, and community to various locations across Chinook Winds Region. Each day is packed with dynamic activities, hands-on learning, and unforgettable experiences that help children explore God’s love and “Follow the Spirit” in their everyday lives—all while making new friends and having a blast! St. Thomas will be hosting Camp Caravan **July 13 – 17, 2026**. To register go to [Camp-Caravan.ca](https://camp-caravan.ca)



A SMALL GIFT A BIG SUMMER

Camp Caravan is hitting the road again! We’re bringing faith, fun, and friendship to children and communities across Calgary and Southern Alberta.

This year, we need your help.

Every summer, families rely on our No-Barrier Bursary Fund so their kids can attend camp. Camp costs \$150 per child, but we believe finances should never keep a child from belonging, laughter, and faith-filled community.

No child is ever turned away.

Right now, however, our **bursary fund is nearly empty**, and the need is greater than ever. Your gift helps us keep saying YES. \$150 sends one child to camp \$75 shares the cost Any amount opens the door for another camper

When you give, you're not just funding a week of camp you're creating friendships, confidence, faith, and lifelong memories. Help keep the Camp Caravan rolling. Scan the QR code for a donation or visit:

<https://camp-caravan.ca/>

(Tax receipts provided for gifts over \$25.)



INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT
AND
CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Wednesdays October 14, 2026, to November 25, 2026, from 4:00 pm -5:30 pm.

Come as a small group to explore what intercultural engagement and cultural diversity might mean in STUC.

Contact Linda Miller by the end of June if you're interested in attending.

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:

July 5, 2026: Annual Stampede service put on by the Strummers.

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

Adult Choir

As summer rolls around, the choir gets ready to take a break. The STUC SHOW on **May 9, 2026** took tremendous effort from all involved and it was outstanding. Thank you to all participants and helpers who made this possible. I hope you were able to be there to enjoy it.

Our last anthem this season will be presented on Fathers' Day, **June 21, 2026**. We will start up again in September with our first rehearsal on Thursday, **September 10, 2026**. Our annual CHOIR ADVANCE at Ghost Lake will be on **Saturday, September 12, 2026**.

Research continues to support the message that singing is very good for both your physical and emotional health. It "reduces stress, anxiety, and depression, while boosting mood through the release of endorphins, dopamine, and oxytocin". It is a social activity, it involves breathing, reading, and making beautiful harmony with friends. And to top it off, it is just plain fun! 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

Continued...

I agree strongly with Hans Christian Anderson's sentiment that, "Where words fail, music speaks". 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

Youth Choir

The youth choir has had a great year of music. Nine choir members finished the year with fantastic presentations of 2 major works, *Noah and the Ark* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The Christmas play, *Carol and the Belles* was superb. We celebrated with a party after Church May 24, 2026.

We look forward to welcoming new members to our awesome choral group in September. Stay tuned for more music.

For further information please contact: Barb barbrob@telus.net and Cindy.

Children's Choir

The children's choir season is finished until September. We had fun singing in the STUC show on May 9, 2026, followed by our Mother's Day wrap up on May 10, 2026.

We look forward to seeing returning and new choristers in September.

Kate Power: childrens-choir@stthomasunited.ca

Orchestra

The Orchestra has enjoyed providing music for St Thomas. We have finished rehearsals for the year and are looking forward to a wonderful summer. It was a good year for the Orchestra and we were pleased to welcome two new players. We will miss the help and support given to us by Ron French who has moved to Sherwood Park.

The St Thomas Orchestra is a wonderful group of people and we are always eager to welcome new members. We rehearse Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 from September – early May.

If you are interested in joining us please contact

Dick Worton: 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.

Their focus right now is practicing music for the annual Stampede Service on **July 5, 2026**.

New members are always welcome. If anyone is interested in joining, please contact David Gray 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 or talk to Elaine Taylor-Kerr.

ST. THOMAS UNITED CHURCH Stampede Service



Led by The St. Thomas Strummers

& Breakfast

Sunday, July 5, 2026, 10:30 am



Join us for a Stampede Breakfast in the Mountainview Hall following the Strummer's Stampede service, approximately 11:30 am. There will be a breakfast of pancakes and sausages following the service. We hope you will be able to attend!



WANDA'S PRESERVES.

Wanda will be selling preserves on June 7, 2026, before and after the church service.

Stop at her table before joining the Sunday School picnic!!

****Bring lots of money... had to raise my prices. Sheesh.**