

The Enlightener



Newsletter: The contribution deadline for the March issue of the newsletter is February 14th. Any submissions received after this date will be printed in the April Enlightener. We reserve the right to edit and condense all submissions.

Office Hours: The church office is open weekday mornings.

Magazine Rack: Do you want to know more about what is happening here at the church? Take a moment and check out the magazine rack!

Please note: Tax Receipts are now available.

Upcoming Events:

<p>Annual Meeting: February 2nd after the 10am service. Reports, Financials and the 2020 Proposed budget can be found in a package on the table at the back of the fellowship hall.</p>	<p>ELW Bring A Friend Brunch: Please join us on February 8th at 9:30am for a fun morning. Sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex And Bring a Friend!</p>	<p>After Worship at St. Stephen: February 9th and 23rd After Sunday worship, and coffee hour, we will serve a light lunch (at 11:45) and around noon our presenter introduces us to their faith experience. There will be time for questions, and by 1:00 we will be finished.</p>
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Soup Supper and Service of Ashes

Please join us on Wednesday February 26th, 2020 for a soup supper followed by the Traditional Ash Wednesday 'Service of Ashes'

Dinner will begin at 5:30pm.
Food Fun & Faith will be meeting as scheduled
and we will share a meal together.

From the pastor's desk...

February is here; the month of cold snowy evenings, winter walks, Valentines, romance and love. Also, the time for our Annual Meeting. Kinda fits together doesn't it? We walk in love, while reminiscing about the past and making plans for the future. And our mission statement provides a compass to keep us on track with our values. We are a caring community in Christ, striving to love God and neighbour through worship, service, witness, stewardship and spiritual care.

Decisions at the church are to be made keeping this statement in mind, asking ourselves, "Does our decision show love of God and neighbour? Or are we doing this for those we love and know? Is it for us, that we might share a common benefit and fulfill needs?" There are many possible ways to discern what is right and what is best and if there is one thing that we can all rest comfortably knowing, is that we do the best we can to follow Christ in what we do and say.

For many years now, we have identified ourselves as a community of welcome and hospitality. There has been good reason for us to do so. It is with full intention that we live this radical welcome as Jesus taught and I would suggest that it has become a big part of our DNA.

The dream of some that St. Stephen be a church for the community has not fallen by the wayside and the doors have been open to others through use of inclusive language, diversity of worship styles, global song, and an increased awareness of the needs of social justice in our neighbourhood. How great it is that we have supported Benevolence (the giving to others) while managing to support our church home that has needed various updates to the physical building.

I would like you to consider the idea of welcoming. It is being friendly, speaking with people who may be new to the congregation. It is inviting someone to stay for coffee time and sitting with them. It is looking for the person or persons who seem isolated, not within a specific "group" and inviting them. It is learning to call people by name. It is sharing a meal. It is offering a ride or helping with a coat or offering a place to sit. The list goes on, and we're really good at it most of the time.

Even so, there are times we fall a little short. It's important for us to consider the opportunity when we fall short to pick ourselves up and try something different. Have you looked around the church and sadly seen who's missing at worship, at social times, at learning times and in service?

The goal of offering love and acceptance through our worship has been considered through the lens of our mission statement. It's been noticed that we don't seem to have many families with children coming to church, we don't have many young people. And so, we have been discussing at various committee meetings and council, to discern what God is calling us to do. There is no "insta-cure" or sure solution, but if a space is not inviting and welcoming, it will not allow the freedom to worship in a meaningful way.

Keeping in mind that it is the month of love and that we are called to love God and neighbour, we work together to be more inclusive and experiment using different configurations of children's /family/ intergenerational space with a goal of creating an inviting atmosphere. I ask your support and indulgence as the appearance of our worship space reveals something new, and invites, to find a place for everyone.

Peace and blessings to you --Your brother in Christ, Pastor Richard

Thank you all!

Jo-Anne and I would like to express our deepest thanks for the love and support you have shown to us and our family with the death of my mother. Your cards and letters, digital messages and likes on facebook reminded us once again of God's love, reaching out through your words to comfort. *P.Richard*

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND GROUPS

Card Group Coordinators	Larrie Brown	519-745-3919
	Larry Kennedy	519-576-9697
E.L.W.	Donna Seidl	519-570-0272
Finance Committee	Geoff Schmitt	519-595-4060
Food, Fun and Faith	Lori Hansen	519-579-3223
Health and Safety	Charlene Crozier	519-579-4066
Hospitality	Jo-Anne Schwass	519-742-0520
Human Resources	Paula Sears	519-579-4417
Learning and Youth	Jessica Kennedy	519-498-8807
Mutual Ministry	Paula Sears	519-579-4417
Outreach	Maureen Jackson	519-208-5261
Property	Paul Buick	519-748-4311
Quilting Group	Wilma Peirson	519-884-4068
Faithife Financial	Pastor Lloyd Wiseman	519-576-9989
Witness and Stewardship	Suzanne Brown	519-745-3919
The Women's Prayer and Book Group	Suzanne Brown	519-745-3919

CHURCH COUNCIL

Chairperson	Terry Delion	519-500-0545
Vice-Chairperson	David Kruk	519-578-3594
Treasurer	Geoff Schmitt	519-595-4060
Secretary:	Peggy Nickels	519-576-7376
Members	Paul Buick	519-748-4311
	Lori Hansen	519-579-3223
	Jessica Kennedy	519-498-8807
	Larrie Brown	519-745-3919
	Jim Penny	519-578-9144

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Pastor	Rev. Richard Schwass	lutheran.rich@gmail.com
Church Musician	Elizabeth Hackett	ststephenmusician@gmail.com
Office Admin.	Kathleen Robert	ststephen@live.ca
Financial Secretary	Donna Seidl	seidl@rogers.com
Accounting	Dave Warnica	647-309-4592

If **pastoral care** is required you may call Pastor Richard at the church office 519-744-2521, or at home, 519-742-0520.

Happy Birthday to YOU!

Bob Cruickshank February 14th

Marlene Wolff February 14th

Al Forler February 17th

Marlene Greulich February 17th

Doris Uebele February 18th

Jean Dramnitzke February 23rd

John Schnider February 25th



Recipe by Request:

(dessert served at the lasagna lunch)

Warm Winter Lemon Cake

Prep: 15 min. – Total: 1 hour 35 min.

1 pkg. (2 layer size) yellow cake mix

2 cups cold milk

1 ¼ cups water

2 pkg. (4 serving size each) Jell-O Lemon Instant Pudding

1/3 cup granulated sugar

2 Tbsp. icing sugar

Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare cake batter as directed on pkg.

Pour into greased 13 x 9 inch baking dish. Set aside.

Pour milk and water into large bowl. Add dry pudding mixes and sugar.

Beat with whisk 2 min., or until blended. Pour sauce mix directly over batter.

Place dish on baking sheet in case any sauce boils over during baking time.

Bake 55 min. to 1 hour or until wooden toothpick inserted in ctr. comes out clean.

Cool 20 min. (Sauce will thicken slightly as cools). Sprinkle with icing sugar.

Can be served warm or cold. Store in refrigerator.

Makes 16 servings.

Hospitality

Games Night on February 1st @ 7pm.

All are welcome.

Please sign-up sheet on the Bulletin Board.

Card Group

Our Card Group meets on Tuesdays at 12:45pm. Join us for an exciting afternoon of Euchre or Solo. There is a voluntary fee of \$1 and light refreshments are served. If you have any questions, please speak to Larrie Brown or Larry Kennedy. *Everyone is Welcome!*



Women's Book and Prayer Group

The Women's Book and Prayer Group meets Mondays at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.. You are welcome to join us. There is always room for more!



ELW News

All ladies, girls and friends are invited to attend the 'Bring a Friend' brunch on Saturday, February 8 at 9:30 am. The speaker will be Ruthanne Snider of 'Days for Girls'. There is no charge for the brunch but there will be a freewill offering for 'Days for Girls'. Please sign the sign-up sheet on the easel in the narthex if you are planning to attend. Hope to see you there.

Quilting Group



The Quilting Group meets every Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. There are a variety of tasks that are done including organizing and piecing together material, hand stitching, tying, machine sewing and many others. You don't have to be a sewer to be part of this dynamic group! If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the office or speak to Wilma Peirson. All donations of sheets (especially flannel) and pillowcases are appreciated. We hope to see you there!

Rent-A-Book – There is a bookshelf in the window alcove in the Fellowship Hall with many new books for your reading pleasure. Books can be borrowed for \$1.00. The Youth thank you for renting books to help them attend CLAY in 2020.

Music Notes

On **February 23**, St. Stephen will be hosting a **Taize service at 7:30 pm**. These services consist of prayers, scripture readings, and the singing of Taize songs. The service is contemplative with a lot of time for prayerful reflection. The choir and other members will be involved in participating. We hope to see other members of St. Stephen there.

February 26 is Ash Wednesday and the choir will be rehearsing at 7:45 pm following the soup supper and service.

The handbells are continuing to rehearse on Monday evenings in February.

Elizabeth Hackett
Church Musician

Youth

Next St. Stephen Youth Activity:

Next J-Squad Youth at St. Peter's:

Who: Senior Youth
(grade 7+)
Tubing and a sleep
over! Feb 29th.



We'll start at
Chicopee at 7 and
then go to St. Matt's.
Sat. Feb 29:

Thursday March 12; Cards night at St. Peter's

Thursday April 2: Muffin baking and CLAY meeting

Thursday May 7: Bubble soccer

Joint Confirmation Session:

- February 22: (@ St. Matthews) Downtown Theme/ Youth Homelessness.
- March 28: (@ Mt. Zion). Interfaith/ Muslim/ Ramadan (April 23-May 23).
- May 9: 6 Nations trip

Outreach: February Potato Blitz

During the month of February we will once again be collecting bags of potatoes in memory of Vi Allenson to support the House of Friendship's Potato Blitz. The House of Friendship provides food to more than 20,000 people in need each year. Bags of potatoes should be brought to the church where they will be delivered weekly to the

House of Friendship's Emergency Food Hamper Program on Guelph St. in Kitchener. If you would prefer to give a cash donation include the money marked 'House of Friendship' in your regular offering envelope.

Last year St. Stephen donated 705 lbs. of potatoes as well as \$290 cash to this initiative. Let's see if we can beat that total this year!

Thank you to everyone who continues to donate to our Mitten Tree. Your lovely donations are providing warmth to many who need it.

The next Saturday Supper at the Mennonite Church will be on February 22nd, 2019. The suppers each week provide a nutritious meal for over one hundred people each week. It also provides fellowship and companionship for many in our community.

In April we will have our food drive to assist the Food Bank.

Maureen Jackson
Outreach Chairperson

After Worship @ St. Stephen:

Interfaith Learning

If you haven't been out before, don't worry. Each session is a whole new learning opportunity. After Sunday worship, and coffee hour, we will serve a light lunch (at 11:45) and around noon our presenter

introduces us to their faith experience. There will be time for questions, and by 1:00 we will be finished, so this is not a huge time commitment. Interfaith dialogue is an opportunity to get to know faith experiences beyond our own, and a chance to ponder how we answer questions in our own faith. Please let us know if you plan to attend by signing up on the bulletin board.



Upcoming Sessions: February 6 Judaism, February 23 Baha'i Faith. Come on out and get to know your neighbour, and yourself, better.

My Perspective - February 2020

Submitted by Carolyn Wilker

What are the chances?

We celebrated Epiphany ... and our Christmas tree is put away. A few last decorations remain in our home—a couple of door wreaths that are as much winter as they are about Christmas, and a string of Christmas cards across the picture window ... I leave those a little longer to remind me of the special moments of the holidays, including time with family, and the reason we celebrate.

At our Toastmasters meeting this week, the Table Topics Master asked his impromptu questions. The last one was “What is your favourite holiday tradition?” I sat there thinking... then put up my hand and was called forward to give my short speech....

I spoke about Christmas Eve service being my favourite tradition, after all I've been part of it for many years, ... singing in choir, helping my children with their violin preparations, and then many times sitting there and soaking in the atmosphere. ... I remember, too, the Christmas that tears rolled down my cheeks because a friend had died only two days before. The tears were there because I missed her, and I felt that my prayers for her had gone unnoticed I had prayed that she might have another chance with the transplant, but it was not to be. ... There had been a small sign while we held our lit candles that Christmas Eve, as we sang Silent Night, that assured me she was in heaven. I talked with her husband afterwards about that moment that was so hard to put into words.


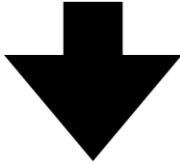


But I didn't speak of that Christmas Eve in my impromptu speech. What I did talk about was the beauty of the carols, the music, the flowers and candles and being surrounded by friends who also loved that same person we came to celebrate. In that Google workplace, I didn't name Jesus, but I'd said I was a Christian by practice. And I spoke of the feeling of calm and peace at the end of a year that might have been challenging or painful in many respects, but here was calm and peace. That was how I ended my short one-minute speech.

This morning as I prepare... for the good-bye service of a friend's mother, I got this line in my head. What are the chances? And I started writing.

And so I ask, what if that calm and peacefulness could last much longer? What if more people who struggle with feelings of being alone or lost, what if they could feel that same calm and peace in the middle of their challenges? Even if it's an oasis they could move to in their minds ... that would see them through? What are the chances? What do you picture there?

Read the whole article here: <https://twgauthors.blogspot.com/2020/01/what-are-chances.html>

FEBRUARY 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Sunday Services at 8am and 10am. Sunday School offered during the 10am service.</p>						<p>1 Rocks Practice -10am Card n'Games Night @7pm</p>
<p>2 Epiphany 4 Annual Mtg after 10am worship</p>	<p>3 Women's book and prayer group 10am 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>4 9:30am Quilting 12:45pm Card Group</p>	<p>5 10am Service at Laurelwood</p>	<p>6 Kitchen and Hall in use from 10am to 2:30pm Senior Choir Practice 7:30pm</p>		<p>8 Bring A Friend Brunch 9:30am</p> 
<p>9 Epiphany 5 After Worship Session – Jewish Faith</p>	<p>10 Women's book and prayer group 10am 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>11 9:30am Quilting 12:45pm Card Group</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Kitchen and Hall in use from 10am to 2:30pm Senior Choir Practice 7:30pm</p>	<p>14 Articles for March Enlightener are due today!</p> 	<p>15 Happy Family Day Weekend!</p>
<p>16 Epiphany 6</p>	<p>17 Family Day Church Office Closed Today.</p>	<p>18 9:30am Quilting 12:45pm Card Group</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 Kitchen and Hall in use from 10am to 2:30pm Senior Choir Practice 7:30pm</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 Area Confirmation @ St. Matthews Rocks Practice 10am</p>
<p>23 Transfiguration Rocks Sunday After Worship Session – Baha'i Faith Taize Service 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary</p>	<p>24 Women's book and prayer group 10am 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>25 9:30am Quilting 12:45pm Card Group</p>	<p>26 Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Service @ 5:30 Senior Choir Practice after Worship Food Fun & Faith @5:15 Miller Rm</p>	<p>27 Kitchen and Hall in use from 10am to 2:30pm Choir on Wednesday</p>	<p>28 Please call church to make arrangements if you need access between Feb 26- and March 6th as the office is closed.</p>	<p>29 Happy Leap Year!</p> 