

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
A caring, inclusive community, loving God and neighbour
248 Highland Road East, Kitchener, Ontario
Email: office@ststephenchurch.ca
Phone: 519-744-2521
Website: www.ststephenchurch.ca

April News 2026

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

"Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these."
Luke 12:27

Greetings People of St. Stephen,
Happy spring to you and yours!

I don't know about you, but for me this past winter seemed a little bit harder to get through than in years past. I'm usually an eager beaver when it comes to winter, my family and I like to get outside and play in the snow as much as we can. And, in general, we made the most of it. Still, I find myself unusually relieved that spring is finally here.

The birds are returning, their sweet songs filling the morning air. As I was walking my daughter to school earlier this week I saw the most pregnant Robin walking beside us and it warmed my heart. I was filled with awe and expectation about what was soon to come. It reminds me that God is continually doing a new thing! Soon, a new batch of robins will be filling the air with their new songs of creation. Right there in my neighbourhood, "near my house just 'round the corner." (ACS 1042)

Another thing I love about the dawn of spring is that the buds on the trees begin to emerge. I like to pick out a good tree to track as the season progresses, usually a tree on the way to the kids' school. Each opportunity I get I like to stop what I'm doing, stop rushing to the next thing and just observe the process of the trees becoming active again, I wonder with admiration at the creative forces that God has put in motion to sustain the earth and all of us passengers, the birds and humans alike and everything in between. I marvel about how God has "clothed" the birds and the trees with divine beauty.

Very appropriate for the season of Lent which is characterized as a journey through a time of wilderness. As you go about your days, remember to take some time to stop and notice, to marvel at what God has done and what God is doing. Remember that we too are a part of God's creation, clothed in faith, called to spring forth and participate in the new life that God ushers in...

Easter Egg Hunt

Will be held April 4th at 10am – please sign up on the bulletin board



FINANCIAL REPORT – February 2026 Finance Notes

Our income so far this year is similar to what it was last year. Our expenses, however, have been higher. For February, half of our deficit is because we are now paying for a fulltime pastor, and the other half is an increased expense for clearing the snow from the parking lot. On an ongoing basis we will need to find more money to meet our budget. This will need to be a combination of reducing costs, increased donations, and more rentals of the building. Each of these three options will have an impact on members of the congregation.

One of our goals is meet the needs of more people, which means doing some things differently, and that may lead to more people donating to the church.

	February	Year to date	YTD budget	YTD prior year
Income	\$18 475.56	\$35 784.16	\$47 274.02	\$35 014.11
Expenses	\$26 478.28	\$63 070.20	\$58 308.98	\$44 250.73
Income-expenses	\$-8 002.72	\$-27 268.04	\$-11 034.96	\$-9 236.62

COMMUNITY LIFE TEAM UPDATE

Happy Easter!

The next Birthday Sundays will be held on:

April 19 & May17

Card Making with Audrey:

Thursday April 9th & Thursday June 11th at 1 pm

Cost \$20 pp. Please bring scissors, tweezers, liquid glue, and a ruler.

Games / Card Night

The next card /games night will be on Saturday April 25th starting with a POT LUCK supper at 5:30 pm followed by games and cards.

All are welcome and please feel free to bring a game of your choice.

Guse Productions:

For those that have signed up for the Spring Show, Sentimental Journey 4 – A Journey through the Decades a reminder it is on Friday May 8th show at 2 pm.

I will be collecting the monies the beginning of April then I will hand out tickets once I receive them.

Agape Thursday Dinner & Service (Free Will Offering):

Will be held on Thursday April 2 at 5:30pm

The menu will be the same as last year. Chicken, Ham, Mashed Potatoes, vegetables/salads & Pot Luck desserts.

Easter Sunday Breakfast (Free Will Offering):

Will start at 8:30 am before service.

Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford:

We are attempting to organize a group tour of this centre in September. Stay tuned.

On behalf of your Community Life Team ~ Debbie

April Youth Events

Sunday April 12

Time: 11:45-2pm

Where: St. Stephen Youth Room

Food: TBD

Activity: card games/board game

Senior youth only (grade 7+)



Blessing Box

We appreciate your continued support with donations of food, clothing, school & art supplies and personal hygiene items which we place in the “little library” style box by the labyrinth. While there is still danger of frost, we are avoiding putting out items that can be damaged if frozen. Good food items to donate for the next couple of months include dry beans, pasta, rice or other grains like quinoa, crackers, dry soup mixes, granola or cereal bars, and oatmeal. We focus on healthy food options with occasional treats. Most weeks we fill the box on Sundays and Wednesdays. Sometimes books for adults and kids linger, but the other items are almost always gone by the next restocking day. Thank you for continuing to contribute to this project and helping our community since November 2023. It adds up! In our first 20 months of the Box you donated 42 bags of dry beans and 33 containers of rice!

Pet Food Campaign

We are continuing to gather pet food for the Emergency Pet Food program at the Humane Society until the end of Lent.

Donations can be placed in the shopping cart in the entrance.

TLC Pet Food in New Hamburg made a large donation of dog and cat food and treats to our drive.

Thank you to Tom and Audrey for approaching them!

Council Secretary ~ Linda Weinstein

My Perspective:

My Perspective- April 2026 Contrasts

On Palm Sunday, we celebrate Jesus by waving palm branches, as the people did in Jesus' time. Not long before the tide turned and he was arrested.

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" -John 12: 12, 13 Holy Bible NRSV

Things got very complicated (v. 10), with many Jews deserting traditional worship in the Temple and believing in Jesus. The chief priests were not happy. I wonder, though, at that going from Hosanna to crucify him. Were those same people incited? We know the outcome and why Jesus was meant to die, but Roman death on the cross was not comforting in any way. And yet...

In my poem published in *Esprit*, a Lutheran Women's magazine, "Sacrifice" contrasts the Hallelujah's with what's coming.

Sacrifice

My borrowed beast
climbs the rocky path
treading cautiously over robes
that carpet dusty earth

shaded
by a canopy of palms
his body trembles amid shouts of

such a young colt
he does not hurry –
as if he knows what is to come

outside the city gates
the crowd thins and hosannas fade
inside
a poor man empties his pocket
to buy a dove

my beast of burden can rest now
my time is coming

-Carolyn Wilker *Esprit*, Spring 2006

For full post with photos: <https://www.storygal.ca/2026/03/19/contrasts/>

Jamming Together

Come to church and make some music. Bring your own instrument or borrow one (if you talk to Jan, he will do what he can to have your instrument available). Anyone who is interested in singing along is more than welcome also. Finally, if you just want to hang out, listen, and share in the snacks, we would love to have you there too. This is happening on the first Saturday of the month, from 2:00 to 4:00 and is open to people of any age and whether or not they are part of our community of faith.

Feather and Cross Residential School Tour

The trip costs \$70.00, which includes a ticket for the tour, a catered lunch, and bus fare. Tickets will be available for purchase on Eventbrite starting Monday, March 23, 2026, and are limited to 20 participants.

We will have two pickup locations: the first at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Kitchener at 8:00 AM sharp, and the second at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cambridge at 8:30 AM.

Participants will experience a self-guided tour of the Woodland Cultural Centre Museum and the Former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School, which includes an audio wand. This experience allows you to explore the historical site, listen to survivor stories, and view displays that highlight history, culture, artifacts, and contemporary art focused on resilience.

After the tour, we will share a catered lunch at St. Luke's Anglican Church in Ohsweken, Ontario, with time for a sharing circle in a caring environment. We will also stop at Irocrafts for a fun shopping experience featuring books, local arts and crafts, and supplies before heading home at 3:00 PM.



Mohawk Institute

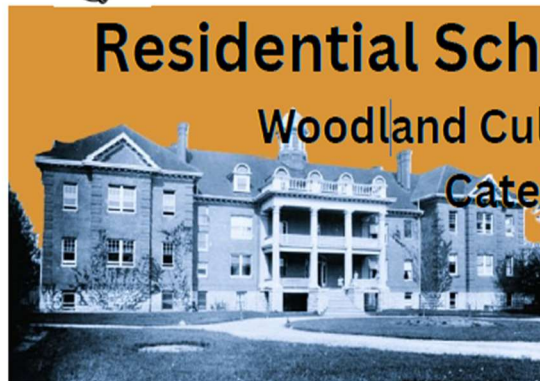
Residential School Tour

Woodland Cultural Museum

Catered lunch and

Sharing Circle

Irocrafts



Saturday April 18, 2026

8am-4pm

sign up and pay via
Eventbrite



Scan me

For complete
information see
itinerary on website

1 Pick up in Kitchener,
1 pick up in Cambridge

Suggested age 14-adult. spaces limited to 20

April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Multi Purpose Rm Rental - AM Choir	2 Exercise 9:30 Agape Meal 5:30 pm	3 Good Friday Service 10am 6-10pm Rental – Fellowship Hall	4 Easter Egg Hunt & flower drop of 10am Jamming Together 2PM
5 Easter Breakfast 8:30am Worship 10am	6 Book and Prayer Group 10am	7 Quilting 9:30am Cards 12:30pm	8 Multi Purpose Rm Rental - AM Choir	9 Exercise 9:30 Card Making 1pm	10 Exercise 1pm 6-10pm Rental – Fellowship Hall	11 Hall Rental 8-1pm
12 Worship 10am	13	14 Quilting 9:30am Cards 12:30pm	15 Multi Purpose Rm Rental - AM Choir	16 Exercise 9:30	17 Exercise 1pm 6-10pm Rental – FH	18
19 Worship @ 10am Birthday Sunday	20	21 Quilting 9:30am Cards 12:30pm Hall Rental 6-10pm	22 Multi Purpose Rm Rental - AM Choir	23 Exercise 9:30	24 Exercise 1pm 6-10pm Rental – Fellowship Hall	25 POTLUCK Cards & Game Night @5:30 pm
26	27	28	29	30		
Worship @ 10am Taize Service 7pm @ St. Luke's		Quilting 9:30am Cards 12:30pm	Multi Purpose Rm Rental - AM Hall rental 9am-2pm Choir	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Save the date: Maundy Thursday Meal – April 2nd Good Friday 10am, Easter Egg Hunt - April 4th @ 10, Easter Sunday Breakfast @ 8:30am</p> </div>		