

Oh, what a wonderful smell

A mighty storm rages outside. The sea is in uproar; the cargo ship gets tossed around, helplessly at the mercy of the forces of nature. Below deck the cargo shifts. Crates and barrels fall apart, open, and all the contents scatter around. Tealeaves and spilled Bergamot oil mix with each other – what an awful mess. But the ship makes it through the storm and arrives in London harbour. Thank goodness everyone is alive. But the cargo ... 'Best, we throw it overboard right away', says one. 'Wait a minute', someone else interposes, and picks up some of the scattered tea leaves, rubs it under his nose and inhales the scent. He puts some of it into his pocket and invites everyone to come with him to his house. While everyone is talking wildly in the parlour about the storm, about what happened, about how close they had been to drowning, he boils a kettle of water. The tea pot with the messed-up tea leaves awaits the hot water and the table is set with the finest China. After awhile he slowly pours the hot tea into the delicate cups. Warmth and well-being enter the room. Someone says: 'Ah', another one says 'Oh' and again another one says: 'Oh, what a wonderful smell'. The host sees opportunity, decides to create a new mixture of tealeaves, fermented in bergamot oil, and brings it to the market. You might have guessed - the mixture was a huge success. So says, the legend.

Who was the smart host, creating a warming, wonderful smelling delicacy out of the remnants of a destroyed ship load? His name is Charles Earl Grey – and thus the name of his tea, which can still be found in every grocery store nowadays. Charles Earl Grey was once Prime Minister of the UK, but who remembers that? His tea however is quite literally on everyone's lips. Sip by sip, this tea tells a story of how something bad can turn out unexpectedly well.

Something beautiful and delicious has emerged from a chaotic hullabaloo. In the midst of a hopeless muddy chaos, serendipity emerged. From turbulent diversion to divine invention. And this all because someone said: Wait a minute. That can't be all. Let's try something out. Let's not be afraid of failure. Let's make something out of it. Be open for something new. Embrace the opportunity.

For me that's an Easter story. After Jesus' death at the cross the disciples were scattered, hiding away, scared. It seemed that this was it. The end. And yet the message of Easter is: God is not done here, wait a minute, let's see what God is able to do; let's see how God creates new things out of everything that is broken, messed up, scattered. This is Easter hope – we sometimes might be like that ship tossed around in the raging sea, feeling like a failure, hurt, broken, and then someone comes and reaches out and lets us know that we are loved, and shows us how wonderful life can be when we truly open our eyes to the blessings in our lives. Easter means – to never lose hope in the midst of the storm. God promised to be our companion and to be at our side when it's getting rough and it is my belief that God is with us as well when we gather the broken pieces of our lives. That needs courage, and an openness for new possibilities.

May God be with you in this holy time, may you always feel hope and see opportunity to create something new. And have a cup of tea. Maybe try a different kind this time, and see what kind of story the flavour of the tea tells you.

*Wishing you all a blessed Easter,
Pastor Heike*



Our Love and Prayers go out to all our Christian brothers and sisters who are ill, grieving or in long-term care.

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

For a visit from the Pastor, please contact Pastor Heike at 519-212-9952

Messy Church

Friday, March 22 – CANCELLED
Please join us on Friday, April 26

St. Luke's Women

Spring Programs:

Thursday, March 14 at 6:30 pm Meeting: Fellowship of the Least Coin
(bring your nickels!)



Thursday, April 11 at 6:30 pm Pot Luck Dinner and Program

Reminder: We are always in need of worsted weight yarn for all our knitting projects. Thanks so much.

Gay Anderson, Jeanette Wyatt

Lent at St. Luke's



Soup Suppers

Until March 20, we will offer Lenten Soup Suppers each Wednesday evening from 6:15 pm until 7:00 pm. Soup, buns and dessert will be served in the Parish Hall.

Short Contemplative Worship Services

After the Soup Suppers on Wednesdays, we will meet in the Sanctuary for Worship Service at 7:15 pm with music from Taizé and a short interactive and contemplative service in the Sanctuary.

(Soup image from pinterest.ca)

Community Connections Committee

Pop up Bakeries (and more)

Following this very busy Easter season, we will be presenting more little bake sales to raise funds to reduce our deficit, as we did in the fall, perhaps monthly. Watch for more details and please speak to Gay or Heather if you are able to supply some goodies.

Beginning March 17th, we will be putting the "Loose Change" jar back out to collect coins again, to be applied against the church deficit.

The Sharing Place

The Sharing Place had their second event on March 1 and 2 to give those in need the opportunity to come to St Luke's for FREE clothes, toys and household items. It is indeed our pleasure to work with this organization and to serve the needs of our community. *(see photos on page 5)*

Blessings Box

Thanks to a wonderful donation of funds, we are slowly building our supply of children's books. However, they are hard to come by at a reasonable price, even 'used books' from the thrift stores. If you find a bargain, we would be delighted with any donations.

Visitation Team

Thanks to those who are presently visiting our sick and shut-in. If you feel that this is a task you could do for the church, please contact Pastor Heike, thanks.

Stanley Park Eats

Please be reminded that we are continuing to collect food items for the weekly Wednesday food programme at the Stanley Park Community Centre. Our collection area is between the doors at the Sunday School entrance. We are thankful for every donation, as there is a great need in our neighbouring community.

Gay Anderson, Heather Meyer-Kraft

Joint Easter Vigil with St. Matthews

Together with our siblings of Christ from St. Matthews we will celebrate an Easter Vigil on Saturday, March 30, at 8:00 pm at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, 54 Benton Street, Kitchener. The Vigil starts in the courtyard of the church with an Easter fire and we will make our way along different stations into the sanctuary of St. Matthews (please note that there will be several steps to walk). Pastor Heike will preach.

Holy Week at St. Luke's

Sunday, March 24, 10:00 am

Palm Sunday Worship Service with Procession for all led by the Sunday School Children.

Thursday, March 28, 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday Worship Service with Holy Communion at Tables in the Sanctuary.

Friday, March 29, 10:00 am

Good Friday Worship Service

Saturday, March 30, 8:00 pm

Joint Easter Vigil at St. Matthews Lutheran Church with Pastor Heike preaching.

10:00 am: Easter Egg colouring at St. Luke's

Sunday, March 31

8:00 am: Easter Breakfast (*see details below*)

10:00 am: Festive Easter Worship Service with special music, Sunday School and Easter Egg Hunt following the service.

Easter Breakfast

Easter Breakfast is being hosted by Tom and Gail Atkinson and John Carapanta. Breakfast menu is scrambled eggs, pancakes, tea, coffee and juice. Free will donation, but you must sign-up so we know how much food to prepare. We also need volunteers to help with set-up, serving and clean-up. Sign-up sheets are posted on the Socialites bulletin board.



Image from freepik.com

Lent Envelopes

Yellow Lent envelopes are available on the Narthex table for your convenience. Lent offerings (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday) go towards Benevolence.

Sunday School News

There will be no Sunday School on the two Sundays framing March Break (March 10 and March 17). Sunday School and Children's Choir are back for Palm Sunday, March 24. On Palm Sunday, the children are invited to join the procession with the palm leaves. Class starts after the children's message in church. On Saturday, March 30, the kids and their special people are invited to join Pastor Heike in colouring Easter eggs at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall to decorate our trees in the courtyard with Easter decorations. On Easter Sunday we will celebrate a festive Easter Service with Sunday School and there will be an Easter Egg Hunt after the service for all children. The last day of Sunday School is May 5 with special activities, hotdogs and ice cream.

Hymn Sunday – April 21

After Easter we will start to collect your favorite Hymns. The Worship Service on April 21 will be full of music and we will learn some interesting background stories about our most beloved Hymns.

Earth Day – April 22

Every day is Earth Day, but we can always do better. We have special containers set up in the Narthex of the church for the recycling of batteries, Britta filter items, markers and pencils and more. Help us to reduce garbage as much as possible in church and make proper use of our recycling containers. Every little bit counts.

Blessing of the Seeds and Sunday School - May 5

On May 5 bring your seeds, flowers, and vegetable plants to church. The seeds and plants will be blessed for a bountiful harvest. This will be our wrap Sunday for Sunday School as well. Many thanks to our amazing Sunday School Team: Darlene Brooks, Dianne Metcalf and Rachel Sutton. We will celebrate this day with Hotdogs and Ice cream after the Worship Service.

Visit from Bishop Mike – May 12

One last time before his retirement Bishop Mike will visit us during our Worship Service. We will give him a farewell during Fellowship time after the Worship Service. To our former St. Philip's people: If you happen to have pictures of Bishop Mike, please consider bringing them to church until May 9. We will create a slide show with your memories of Bishop Mike.

The WEPP Team: *About Witness and Lent*

As this article is written, we are surrounded by the season of Lent. In the Gospel of Matthew chapter 6:1-6, 16-21, Jesus focuses on the disciplines of Lent: *giving alms, prayer, fasting, penitence, and repentance*. One of the prayers assigned to Ash Wednesday, in our Book of Evangelical Lutheran Worship, calls on our merciful God *"to strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord..."* One of the ways in which St. Luke's congregation offers us to strengthen our faith and gain confidence in Jesus the Christ is through small groups who come together regularly to study and discuss the scriptures, share their faith, pray, and support each other on our faith journey.

Today, I invite you to do just that; dedicate some time in your own home to read, study, and contemplate the scriptures listed below, and try to write your answers to the questions posed. There are no wrong answers. If you wish to share and talk about your thoughts, you may call Pastor J.R. at 519-896-1928 or by email at jr.bestvater@bell.net. We can also meet as a group.

Readings:

Luke 22:1-5

- Was the devil making Judas betray Christ or was he generally controlled by Satan?
- Who is in control now? God? Jesus? Satan? Judas the chief priests?
- Who is in control when you commit an act that makes Jesus weep?

Matthew 26:14-25

- Was money the motivating factor in Judas' decision to betray Jesus? Politics? Love? Jealousy? Other?
- What act, thought or word of yours would be the most likely to betray Jesus?

Matthew 27:1-10

- Having repented could Judas now be forgiven by Christ? After all he repented.
- Judas killed himself. How does this fact figure in your thoughts as to whether or not Jesus could forgive him?

John 6:57-66

- Many of the disciples drew back at the "hard saying" of Jesus. The twelve stayed with Jesus. Would you?
- What is this hard saying? Is it hard for you? What makes it so hard?

John 14-18

- Who might be the other sheep in this fold? What is the mark of the sheep who follow Christ?
- What would you say to one who ridicules the idea that Christians are his sheep?

Having grappled with these texts and the questions you have taken steps toward expressing, be blessed.

- Pastor J.R. Bestvater for the WEPP Team

Constitution Amendment

**Second reading date will be
Sunday, March 17.**

Photos from The Sharing Place: March 1 and 2



Left to right: Sharing Place coordinator, Muriel Steeb, Pastor Heike and Dianne Metcalf



Dianne Metcalf, Gay Anderson and Sharing Place coordinators.



All set and ready to go.

Council Members:

Council Chair: Kathy Thomsen
Vice Chair: Brent Clarke
Secretary: Donna Finch
John Carapanta
Nahlah Jeorje-Carapanta
Cathy Dowsling
Barb Pitz
Don Snow
Dennis Willfang

Standing Committee Chairs:

Finance: Christine Petersen
Mutual Ministry: Kathy Thomsen
Worship and Music: Kathy Thomsen
FMT: Cathy Dowsling
Property Mgmt: Vic Lytle
Christian Ministry & Parish Life:
- Community Connections:
Gay Anderson & Heather Meyer-Kraft
- Sunday School: Darlene Brooks,
Dianne Metcalf, Rachel Sutton
- WEPP: Pastor Heike Toeller
Dream Team: Pastor Heike Toeller

Church Office:

(519) 893-3826
Email: info@stlukeslutheran.ca
OR stlukeslutheran317@gmail.com

Office Hours:

Mon/Wed 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Thu 9:00 – 2:00 pm

Website:

stlukeslutheran.ca

Pastor Heike

(519) 212-9952
Email: pastor.heike@gmail.com

Weekly Offerings

We appreciate your support to meet our financial obligations. Please send your offerings in through the mail or drop it off in the church's mailbox on the left side of the doors to the narthex.

We also accept e-transfers, which are set up as automatic deposits; so, there is no need for secret question/answer.

Please send e-Transfers to our email address at stlukeslutheran317@gmail.com

When the transfer is sent, you can put the designation into the comment box (current, benevolence, building, etc.).

Please contact Dave DeCoppel at stluketreasurer317@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Our mailbox is checked regularly; however, for your peace of mind, arrangements can be made with Helga to ensure your offering is retrieved the day you drop it off.

We are thankful for all who have joined PAR for their contributions. For PAR information, please contact the church office.

We graciously thank all who have continued their generous offerings.

Keep in touch...

Visit our **website at www.stlukeslutheran.ca**
for our online worship services, Newsletters, and updates.

Like us on Facebook and subscribe to our YouTube Channel
under
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kitchener

**DEADLINE for June-August 2024
Newsletter is May 15.**



Image from freepik.com