

The Hardest Part – Hurt We Carry, Hope We Find

Besides Advent, Lent is my favourite church season. You may find that weird. Don't we focus on Jesus' pain and our sorrows during this time? Yes, you are right! But life is this strange, tender mix, isn't it? Joy and sorrow. Love and loss. Big wins and even bigger failures. We cling tightly to the beautiful moments in our lives, but then the phone rings, a diagnosis drops, or some creeping ache reminds us that everything is so much more fragile than we would like to admit. Life can be too much. And Lent is the season where we sit in that heaviness.

For 40 days, we stop pretending things will suddenly get better and face the truth: life is fragile, and so are we. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when we hear the words no one really wants to say out loud: you are dust, and to dust you shall return. It is not exactly the kind of thing you would embroider on a pillow, but it's a truth we need. Lent invites us to stop pretending we can hold it all together and instead sit with the weight of what we carry—the grief, the regrets, the messes we can't untangle, no matter how much we try. Here's the hardest part: to be human is to carry the weight of our own mortality.

We love the joy and triumph of Easter morning, but first, we have to sit with Good Friday, when God is on the losing team. Jesus, who we look to for hope and healing, suffers and dies. His pain is real, just like ours. We cannot rush past it. We cannot skip to the good part, because it is through the deepest hurt that we begin to understand what it means to be fully human, fully broken. In *The Hardest Part: Hurt We Carry, Hope We Find*, we'll walk through these paradoxes together using material from Kate Bowler, a Professor for Religious History, New York

Times Bestselling Author, and award-winning podcast host from Manitoba. Not to be devastated, but to find hope.

We will look at the hardest parts of being human—heartbreak, emptiness, shame, and longing—and acknowledge the weight of it. We will explore scripture to remind us that grace has a way of sneaking in, even when life feels impossible (kind of like finding your phone after you've torn the house apart for the fifth time). So, let us do this hard part together. Let us sit with the ache and the fragile parts we would rather avoid, and trust that hope is somewhere nearby, waiting for us to notice. Because when we stay with the hard part, something else happens: the good part begins to unfold, slowly but surely.

I'm looking forward to going with you on this journey through Lent, exploring new pathways, acknowledging the hard parts, and trusting that God is along with us on the way.

Wishing you all a blessed season of Lent and Easter,
Pastor Heike





Our Love and Prayers go out to all who are in need of God's grace.

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*

Specialty Events:

Men's Cooking Club

The Men's Cooking Club will resume on

Sunday, April 6 at 1:00-6:00 pm

If you're a guy and want to learn new cooking tricks, call...Gail Atkinson at 519-893-7097.

Soup Sundays

March 23

April 27

Proceeds for Servants' Heart Ministry

Friday with Friends 5:30-7:00 pm

March 28

May 2

May 30

Please join us on selected Fridays to enjoy a meal and conversation at St. Luke's.

We meet from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Dinner (and dessert) is provided. There is no cost.

It is an opportunity to enjoy a meal with friends.

Please add your name to the sign up list posted on the courtyard bulletin board (so we know how much food to make!).

The menu is not posted ahead of time – it is a surprise!!

If we have children joining us, there will be a craft activity for them to do.

Congregational Townhall - March 30

Constitution and Bylaws Townhall Meeting on March 30 following the Worship Service.

Summer Camp @ Lake Huron

This year St. Luke's will join the Summer Lutheran Youth Camp (SLYC) at Camp Kintail located on the shores of Lake Huron in Goderich.

Check it out: <https://www.campkintail.ca/>

The Camp runs from August 25 to August 29. Costs for the week per camper are \$725, but ... St. Luke's council pledged to support us and we will do some fundraising, so that the costs are down to \$125 per camper. Youth entering Grades 6 to 12 in fall are welcome to join. High School students are welcome to participate as camp counselors (applications due beginning of March), which comes in handy if youth still need to do their community hours. Some advance training will be offered. This is **not** a confirmation camp. The focus is on having fun in a welcoming and inclusive environment. There are high-ropes courses, archery, disc golf, gaga ball, and a gorgeous waterfront with watercraft programming. Campfires, dances, and a talent show are just some of the favourites of past campers. Let Pastor Heike know by March 20 if you would like to participate.

Socialites

The Socialites present: **'A Sentimental Journey 3'** - a new musical journey through the decades; conceived and directed by Nicole Guse (with an acute accent on the e; don't know how to make it on my iPad). Mark your calendars for **Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 2:00 pm** for this event with dinner out afterwards. Watch for details.

Lent at St. Luke's

This year the Season of Lent started March 5 with an Ash Wednesday Worship Service. Until April 9 we are getting together each Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm for a contemplative Worship Service with music from Taizé and a short devotion. Our Midweek Services follow along the theme 'The Hardest Part – Hurt We Carry, Hope We Find' from Kate Bowler. We look at the hard parts of being human without losing hope in the process. Please note that this year's Midweek Services start at **7:00 pm** and that there will be **no** soup beforehand. A take home personal devotional for the time of Lent will be provided and can be picked up from the entrance area of the church.

Holy Week at St. Luke's

Sunday, April 13, 10:00 am

Palm Sunday Worship Service with Procession led by the Sunday School Children

Thursday, April 17, 7:00 pm

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

Friday, April 18, 10:00 am

Good Friday Worship Service

Saturday, April 19, 10:00 am

Sunday School Easter Egg Colouring

Sunday, April 20, 9:00 am

Easter Breakfast

10:00 am

Festive Easter Worship Service with special music, Sunday School and Easter Egg Hunt after the service.

Easter Breakfast - April 20

Many thanks to Gail and Tom Atkinson, Nahlah and John Carapanta and their team for organizing this year's Easter Breakfast on Easter Sunday, April 20. Please keep your eyes open to sign up on the bulletin board to help with setting and cleaning up. Breakfast starts at 9:00 am.

Sunday School News

There will be no Sunday School on the two Sundays framing March Break (March 9 and March 16). On Palm Sunday the children are invited to lead the procession into the church with noisemakers and palm leaves. Class starts after the children's message in church. On Saturday, April 19 the kids and their special people are invited to join Pastor Heike in colouring Easter eggs at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall and decorate our trees in the courtyard with Easter decorations. Each child can keep one egg and the others will be given out at the Easter Breakfast on April 20. 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. Last day of Sunday School is May 4 with special activities, hotdogs and ice cream.

Earth Day – April 22

This year Earth Day turns 55! And it's evident that we need a reminder to be good stewards of God's creation more than ever. Actually, every day is Earth Day, but we can always do better. Please make use of our 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. Why not share rides to church or walk when you live close by and the weather is nice? Every little bit counts.

Hymn Sunday – April 27

On Palm Sunday, we will start to collect your favorite Hymns from you. A sign-up sheet will be provided on the Narthex table. The Worship Service on April 27 will be full of music and we will hear some interesting background stories and short devotions about our most beloved Hymns.

Sunday School Wrap up May 4

On Sunday, May 4, St. Luke's Sunday School will wrap up with special activities during class as well as Hotdogs and Ice Cream after the Worship Service. Many thanks to our Sunday School Team: Darlene Brooks, Dianne Metcalf and Rachel Sutton. We wish all our Sunday School families a great and restful summer. Sunday School will resume on Rally Sunday, September 7. For the new season our Sunday School Team needs some support. Please prayerfully consider if you would be able to join the Team and help to make St. Luke's a great place for our children to grow in faith, make new friends and have fun.

Blessing of the Seeds on Rogation Sunday – May 25

On May 25, bring your seeds, flowers, and vegetable plants to church. The seeds and plants will be blessed for a bountiful harvest. Traditionally the 'Blessing of the Seeds' will be celebrated on Rogation Sunday (the sixth Sunday of Easter) which falls this year on May 25. The word rogation comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning 'to ask', which reflects the asking for God's blessing on agriculture and industry.

Church Doors

As you all know our front doors to the sanctuary will be replaced soon. The wooden door has been our companion now for over 60 years. We are collecting creative ideas how these doors can be repurposed and maybe brought into a new and different life. Ideas and suggestions are highly appreciated. Please reach out to Pastor Heike.

Confirmation Classes in Spring

March 23 – The Sacrament of Baptism (creating Baptism candles, Baptism Commemoration)

April 6 – Death and Resurrection (Cemetery Visit)

April 27 – The Sacrament of Holy Communion (Baking Communion Bread)

May 11 – Lord's Prayer (station work)

May 25 – Creeds (write your own faith testimony)



St. Luke's Women

2025 Collectible List ...

Pray Shawl Ministry

Yarn, prayer shawls

Legion (for wheel chairs)

Pop can tabs

Mitten Tree

Mitts, gloves, hats, scarves

Slippers, socks

New items only please.

Recycling

Used batteries

Currency for Kids

(For Family & Children's Services)

Pennies, foreign coins

Foreign currency

Canadian Tire money

Leprosy Mission

Used postage stamps

March Meeting:

March 13, 6:30 pm

Fellowship of the Least Coin

April Meeting:

Apr 10, 6:30 pm

Pot Luck dinner with guest speaker on "Honey".

Canadian Food for Children

Pneumonia vests

Eye glasses, sun glasses

Yarn, material, craft items

Adult & children's clothing

Baby items

Pots & pans, kitchen utensils

Plastic bowls & containers

Medical supplies, unopened medications

School supplies, knapsacks

Small toys, stuffed animals

Non-electrical tools, household items

Towels, table cloths, bedding, blankets,

Purses, shoes, boots

Bar soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion

Toothpaste, tooth brushes, shaving items

Hair brushes, combs

Rice, flour, sugar, salt, cooking oil

Community Connections Committee

Blessings Box: We are always in dire need of children's books. We appreciate your donations, thank you.

Upcoming events

Quilt Raffle:

Sunday, March 9 & 16

Proceeds to church deficit.

The Sharing Place:

Friday, March 7 – 12:30 - 3:30 pm

Saturday March 8 – 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Clothing, toys and household items are free to those in need in our community. This initiative is jointly run by ourselves and Rosemount United Church.

Queries: Gay Anderson 519 893-6827

Trunk Sale:

Saturday, May 31

Save the date ... once again, we will be having rental spaces available – contact Donna Berscht. Plus we will have our own church "garage sale" table and a bake sale table. Watch for further details closer to the date.

We will start to collect 'garage sale' items on May 5. Please drop off your gently used treasures in the Nursery Room.

Check our bulletin board for full details on all our activities.

Do You Know Your God? An Invitation to Bible Study

How many people have read the entire New Testament? How much smaller does that number become if we were to include reading the Old Testament? It leads one wanting to ask, 'do you even know your God'?

Now if someone were to come up to you, and ask these scripture related questions, how would you respond? Would you even have an answer? I ask because these are questions which I also wrestled with before:

- If Jesus is God, why does He shout, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me" when He's hanging on the cross (Matthew 27:46)?
- When Christ says, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, *that is*, God" (Mark 10:18)? Is He saying He's not good or not God?
- When Jesus was tempted by the devil, does that mean Satan tempted God? Can God be tempted?
- Why does Jesus say only the Father knows the hour? If He's God, shouldn't He know the hour?
- Jesus says, "Do not think I have come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword" (Matthew 10:34-36). So, is Jesus not really about peace?

So, I ask again, do you really know who this God that you worship is?

Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

I invite, and implore you, all to join us in Bible study. Learn with us, as we seek to answer these questions, and deepen our relationship with the Lord. Feel free to join any of these dates, or more than one if you desire, and bring any and all questions you may have. Our God can withstand any questioning, and God willing, we can provide answers (or find them together). I hope to see you all.

Bible Study Times

Sundays – 8:00 am

Tuesdays – 6:30 pm

Thursdays – 6:30 pm

We are currently reading the gospel of John. Every session is enclosed in itself; you can join in at any time.

All are held here, in St. Luke's Church. Feel free to invite anyone, and we look forward to seeing you.

Submitted by Dani Yousif

Stanley Park Eats

Stanley Park Eats is looking for volunteers to help cover shifts on Wednesdays for the Tiny Home take out from 6:15 – 7:45 pm. If you are available and willing to lend a hand, please reply by email to speats@spcakitchener.ca. Your support is greatly appreciated in helping us serve the community.

Donations needed: Caesar salad dressing for their chicken Caesar wraps, small pasta macaroni and penne for our salads, canned Pork'n Beans for their baked beans (only those in tomato sauce), muffin mix-only blueberry, carrot or bran (the muffins are well received), dried cranberries and currants, raisins.

85 years St. Luke's

On March 2, we celebrated St. Luke's 85th Anniversary with a special Worship Service. We welcomed our new Bishop, Bishop Carla Blakley as guest preacher and came together for a reception after the Service. Our history books were available as well for a journey back on memory lane.



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. 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.).

If you have any questions, please contact Dave DeCoppel at stlukestreasurer317@gmail.com

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

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: Roger Wyatt and Ken Wolfe
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 – 3:00 pm

Website:

stlukeslutheran.ca

Pastor Heike

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

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