
Mission Statement: To share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all people through the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments and through service in Christ's name.

Easter morning

'But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said.' Matthew 28:5-6

Early mornings are special. It is a moment of awe when after a quiet night's rest, the world slowly comes back to life. The chorus of birds singing. The dew on the grass. The hustle and bustle of families getting ready to go to school and work. Although I'm not a morning person, my senses feel sharp in the morning. Everything feels clearer, more defined during this time between the darkness of the night and the light of the day, when the sky turns purple, and nature awakens.

Easter begins in darkness—sometimes outside, by the fire. The church is left dark. We bring the chill of the night into this darkness. And then, a small light. The Easter candle is lit. It breaks the darkness. One after another we light the candles on the altar and the candelabra and the light enters with it.

When we joined the Easter Vigil at St. Matthews a couple of years ago, we heard the story from the very beginning: God separated light from darkness. And then, the angel rolled the stone away from the tomb. The women stood there—full of fear, full of questions. Mary Magdalene. Mary, the mother of James. They came to the tomb early in the morning. The sun was rising. But what they saw shocked them: the stone was gone. The tomb was empty. A young man in a white robe said, "Do not be afraid! Jesus is not here. He has risen." But they were afraid. They fled. They said nothing. They could not comprehend it. Who could?

Easter is incomprehensible. Life conquers death? God breaks through the darkness? Really? The disciples doubted. Thomas wanted proof. Mary wept. And yet the message went out into the world—because it is true, because it is stronger than fear, because God lives. The tomb is empty—but not meaninglessly empty. It means that death does not have the last word. It means that justice will prevail. It means that love conquers all. Not naively. Not as a pious illusion. But as hope against all evidence.

We live in times full of fear. Full of lies. Full of war. Full of hopelessness. And yet Easter calls out to us: Believe in life. Hold on to hope. Trust in love. The women at the tomb ran away at first but the message stayed with them. Eventually they spoke. They told their story. They believed.

It is the same for us. Perhaps we doubt. Perhaps we fear. Perhaps we do not know what to believe. But we can dare to trust in Easter. Christ is risen. He is truly risen. The tomb is empty. Hope lives on.

I wish you all a blessed Easter, full of light and confidence.

Blessings, 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

Council Update

December 2025-February 2026

- received Synod Council's acceptance of our updated constitution and bylaws
- approved the purchase of a new defibrillator
- John Carapanta keeps us up to date on the salt shortage
- we are working on how best to archive materials of historical importance
- approved the dissolution of FMT and WEPP
- working to find solutions to the new garbage and recycling rules
- installation of council will be during the service on March 29
- discussed management of our security system

Finance Committee:

Offerings for Lent, Holy Week and Easter

You may use the yellow envelopes which can be found on the table in the entrance area of the church.

Lent, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday offerings are included as part of our regular benevolence commitment.

Easter offerings will go to Anishnabeg Outreach - Centre of Indigenous Healing located in the former St. Philip's Lutheran Church in Kitchener.

Garbage, green bin and blue bins - Oh my!!

The province has privatized blue bin pick up. Unfortunately for us, this means we no longer have blue bin pick up. Council has established a working committee to see how we can continue to recycle without having to pay several thousand dollars per year to pay for pick up of this type of recycling. Also, we are only allowed 3 garbage bags every two weeks. We need to cut down on our garbage - this is good for the planet. We are allowed green bin pick up every week. We are going to try to increase our green bin recycling as much of what is allowed in the green bin is currently going to garbage - specifically paper towels from the bathrooms. We will be working with our long- and short-term renters for help with solutions to these issues.

The Garbage & Recycling Committee met on March 5 to discuss options for blue bin pick up and in-house solutions to reduce the amount of garbage. More research is in progress for blue bin pick up, but here's what we would like to try in-house:

- The Kitchen and Board Room will be outfitted with a garbage pail, green bin pail (for paper towels and tissues only) and a blue bin for recyclables.
- The Men's, Women's and Family bathrooms will be outfitted with a garbage pail and green bin pail (for paper towels and tissues only).

We ask that our congregation and committee events help the recycling program by making sure items are placed in the proper bins. For 'containers', please empty, rinse and crush water bottles, as well as straws of any kind be removed from juice boxes.

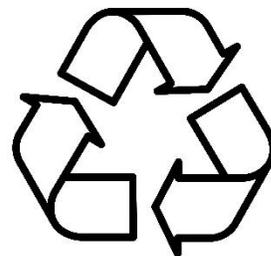


Image from freepik.com

Summer Camp @ Camp Kintail in Goderich

Since we had so much fun last year, we are going to the Summer Lutheran Youth Camp (SLYC) again this year. Check out the camp at:

<https://www.campkintail.ca/> Youth entering Grades 6 to 12 in the Fall are welcome. The Camp runs from Sunday, August 30 to Friday, September 4. Drop off and pick up need to be organized by parents. Pastor Heike will accompany St. Luke's youth for the week. The cost is only \$150 per St. Luke youth thanks to the St. Luke's campership subsidy of \$600 per camper. The youth will participate in fundraising efforts during the Sunday School Wrap Up and the Trunk Sale in May. 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 April 25 if you would like to participate. Please register by April 26 at: <https://forms.gle/6KVQgbNQaxp24Qit9>

Lent at St. Luke's

This year our Lenten Schedule looks a little bit different as we collaborate with three other congregations (St. Paul's Bridgeport, St. Matthews and St. Peter's). Worship Services take place on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. The schedule for the remainder of the Lenten Season is:

March 11 – Holden Prayers around the cross: For the healing of the Nations (Presider: Rev. Carey Meadows-Helmer; Preacher: Rev. Mario Hryniewicz),

St. Matthews, 54 Benton St., Kitchener

March 18 – Contemplative Service with Hymns from Taizé at St. Luke's

March 25 – Compline (Presider: Rev. Mark Ehlebracht), St. Peter's, 49 Queen St. N, Kitchener

Holy Week and Easter at St. Luke's

Sunday, March 29, 10:00 am – Palm Sunday Worship Service with Procession led by the Sunday School Children.

Thursday, April 2, 7:00 pm – Maundy Thursday Worship Service with Holy Communion at Tables in the Sanctuary.

Friday, April 3 at 10:00 am – Good Friday Worship Service

Saturday, April 4 at 10:00 am – Sunday School Easter Egg Colouring and Easter Tree decorating

Sunday, April 5, 8:30 am – Easter Breakfast at **10:00 am** – Festive Easter Worship Service with special music, Sunday School and Easter Egg Hunt after church

Traditions during Holy Week explained

Communion at tables on Maundy Thursday

The word 'Maundy' comes from the Latin *mandatum* (command), referring to Jesus' mandate or new commandment to 'love one another,' shown through service (foot washing) and communal eating. To experience this on a deeper level, we will once again celebrate Communion at tables in the sanctuary on Maundy Thursday. The setting is festive, the table decorated, light snacks

like crackers, cheese, grapes, dates and dips are provided. The table setting evokes the atmosphere of a shared meal among friends, highlighting Jesus' desire for intimate connection with his followers. Instead of washing feet, the washing of hands is offered to those who would like to participate. Instead of a sermon, we have a conversation on how we can be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. Communion is celebrated at the

table in the sharing of bread and wine with each other. It is a quiet and joyful celebration, and a meaningful start to the three Holy Days.

The five red roses on the Good Friday altar

Why are there five red roses on Good Friday on the altar again? This tradition from the Finnish Lutheran Church has been introduced to us by former interim minister Rev. Olavi Hepomäki. The five red roses are a poignant symbol representing the five wounds Jesus Christ suffered during his crucifixion (hands, feet and side).



Easter Breakfast

Many thanks to the Jeorje-Carapanta family who will be the organizers of this year's Easter Breakfast. The Easter Breakfast takes place on Sunday, April 5, at 8:30 pm. Please look for sign-up sheets on the Socialites' Bulletin board in the hallway. A free will offering will be used to cover the cost of the food.

Sunday School News

There will be no Sunday School on March 15 and March 22 (March Break). 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 4, the children 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 5. 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 3.

Sunday School Wrap up May 3

On Sunday, May 3, St. Luke's Sunday School will wrap up with special activities during class as well as ice cream after the Worship Service (all are invited to join). Many thanks to our Sunday School Team: Darlene Brooks, Dianne Metcalf, Jeni Metcalf, Brenda Robinson and Rachel Sutton. We wish all a great and restful summer. Sunday School will resume on Rally Sunday, September 13. Come September, our Sunday School Team will need 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.



Image from thedailymeal.com

Friends of Creation Challenge

Way to go St. Luke's – we have almost reached our goal of restoring 100 acres in the Lake Chad Region. We are short by \$455.95. Help us reach our goal by the end of March by donating directly at: <https://donate.clwr.org/fundraisers/st-lukes-evangelical-lutheran-church-kitchener-friends-of-creation> or through our benevolence (please mark your donation with Friends of Creation Challenge).



St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church Kitchener - Friends of Creation



 Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Hymn Sunday

On Palm Sunday we start collecting your favourite hymns for Hymn Sunday on **April 19**. Look out for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex to write down the name of your favorite hymn.

Ecumenical Prayer Service with Taizé Song

For the first time, we will host the KW Ecumenical Service with Taizé Songs (KWESTS). This is a contemplative prayer service featuring meditative music, scripture and silence. It takes place on **April 26, at 7:00 pm** here at St. Luke's.

Blessing of the Seeds on Rogation Sunday – May 10

On May 10 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' is celebrated on Rogation Sunday (the sixth Sunday of Easter) which this year falls on May 10. The word rogation comes from the Latin verb *rogare*, meaning 'to ask', which reflects the asking for God's blessing on agriculture and industry.

Some housekeeping announcements

Please help us take care of our sanctuary and church building to be an inviting and welcoming space. We all can make a difference by doing a few simple tasks. Please put all used bulletins and prayer strips into the recycling basket in the entrance area of the church. Often the ushers are holding the basket while you exit for easy access. Place other recycling in blue or green bins and dispose of garbage in one of the garbage bins provided in our building or better yet, take your garbage/recycling home with you (please do not use the book holders for garbage disposal or tuck used bulletins/prayer strips into the Hymn books). At the end of service, please tuck the ribbons back into the red Hymnbooks. Do not let them hang loose. It might sound picky, but it actually makes a huge difference if all books are set up the same way in the book holders (see picture).



With the changes in garbage and recycling pick up we are challenged to reduce garbage and recycling as much as possible. Whenever possible, please take your garbage home. Be mindful with recycling – do it as you would at home. In the coming weeks, there will be information and educational signs as well as more green and blue bins in the building to help with this process.

Changes to the WEPP Team

At their meeting in February, the members of the WEPP Team unanimously decided to dissolve the WEPP Team. This doesn't mean that the good work of the WEPP Team is done. The former WEPP Team members will still provide spiritual experiences and services. Everyone is welcome to join at any time: Breakfast Bible Study Group, Prayer Box Ministry and Talk Faith with Friends.

The **Breakfast Bible Study Group** under the leadership of Karin Mielke will continue to meet all year round every Sunday morning at 8:30 am. The topics will be determined by the group. Until the end of March the group is learning about the important roles of the 'Women in the Bible'.

The **Prayer Box Ministry** will work in a slightly different way. You are invited to make use of our prayer nook in the entrance area of the church or the Prayer Request Notebook in the pew. If you use the prayer nook, please place your prayer directly in the prayer box and if you use the notebook, please place your prayer onto the offering plate when it comes to you during the Worship Service. The ushers will place your prayers into the box. Please write down a prayer request – not just names – as this will be helpful for those who pray. For example: I pray for healing for my aunt *Name* as she suffers from chronic pain. There will no longer be a formal prayer group. Pastor Heike and members of the spiritual groups at St. Luke's will take your prayers during a quiet time and lift them up to God. Please be assured that your prayer requests are handled with great diligence and the utmost confidentiality.

Talk Faith with Friends meets at 1:30 pm on the last Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise determined and not during the summer months in July and August). Talk Faith with Friends offers different tools to enhance and deepen our spiritual life. Until summer we explore the 'Wreath (Pearls) of Faith' – a Lutheran Rosary – and learn how it can help us to pray and contemplate. Scripture and everyday life are intertwined with each other in every aspect of the topics we talk about. This is a low threshold entrance group for those who are curious to discover new things in scripture and like to listen to the stories

and experiences of others and how faith carried them through their lives.

Music at St. Luke's

Upcoming events:

Palm Sunday: Flautist Wendy Wagler will be providing flute music during the service.

Her bio can be found at:

<https://share.google/laOA7y3N5JufawhXH>

May 3, 2:00 pm: Concert of Choirs

A concert including our own choirs at St. Luke's as well as a variety of guest choirs. More details to follow. Please plan to attend!

What's in a Name contest:

We are looking for a new name for our Adult/Senior Choir, preferably a name that doesn't imply an age range. Use your imagination and send your suggestions to Lois_horst@hotmail.com.

We'll choose the winner at the end of March.

Our Open House for Choir did not garner us any new members - but you can still join any time! The choir-still-to-be-named practices on Saturday mornings at 10:00; Handbell Choir practice follows at 11:30.

Community Connections Committee

Next Pop-up Bakery:

Sunday, March 29 during coffee hour. Proceeds to church deficit.

Recycling Beyond the Blue Box:

We appreciate the support of this project. Just as a reminder – the bins are on the shelf of the information table in the narthex, and collected items are used:

- Brita parts
- Pens, pencils etc.
- Makeup
- Hygiene items

Please note: the used battery collection container is on top of the table. If you are bringing batteries in baggies, please empty them into the container.

Please be informed that **AIM** (Adults in Motion) at our church is collecting e-waste. You may bring it to the church anytime. They are located in the Sunday School wing of the church.

The Sharing Place:

Saturday, March 7 - 9 am - 3 pm

We are pleased with the wonderful response to our work with Rosemount United Church to offer gifts of clothing, toys and household items to our community in need. We find it to be a time of fellowship and enjoyment for both ourselves and our visitors.

Mark the date:

Trunk Sale – Saturday, May 30

Please think of us when you are doing your spring cleaning. We will be collecting items for our garage sale table closer to the date of the sale. Thanks so much!

St Luke's Women

Next meeting:

Pot Luck Dinner, Thursday April 9 at 6:30 pm

Guest Speaker – Hospice Waterloo Region
(Plus - Fellowship of the Least Coin)

We would like to invite the men to attend also, as this topic is of importance to all of us.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Celebrating 28 years in 2026!

"Shawls ... made for centuries, universal and embracing, symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God. They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace, mother, hug, shelter and beautify. Those who have received these shawls have been uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to fly above their troubles..."

Written in 1998 by: Janet Severi Bristo

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Some uses for the shawl...

Shawls can be used for: undergoing medical procedures; as a comfort after a loss or in times of stress; during bereavement; prayer or meditation; commitment or marriage ceremonies; birthing, nursing a baby; bridal shower or wedding gift; leading

ritual; during an illness and recovery; ministering to others; graduation, birthday, anniversary, ordination, holiday gifts; or just socializing...there are endless possibilities!

Prayer of Blessing

May God's grace be upon this shawl...

warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing.

May this mantle be a safe haven...

a sacred place of security and well-being...

sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones.

May the one who receives this shawl be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, and wrapped in love.

Blessed be!



Image from stitchingharmony.com

Request: We are in need of more prayer shawls please – knitted or crocheted. Thank you for your support. *“Prayers are worked into these projects with love!”*



This Lent, please support the efforts of the Lutheran Churches to gather pet food and basic supplies for our local Humane Societies' Pet Pantry Programme and Emergency Pet Foodbank. You can donate cat, dog and small pet foods and supplies like toys, treats bedding and cat litter however, **food is the priority of these programmes.** This Lent, help an animal in need and donate.



Please drop off items in the wooden box under the Narthex table.

Council Members:

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

Standing Committee Chairs:

Finance: Christine Petersen
Mutual Ministry: Kathy Thomsen
Worship and Music: Kathy Thomsen
Rentals: 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, Jeni Metcalf,
Rachel Sutton, Brenda Robinson
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

Facebook and YouTube

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Kitchener

Instagram: [stlukeskw](https://www.instagram.com/stlukeskw)

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. 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**

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