



**PASTOR DENNIS BECKER**

10:30 AM WORSHIP SERVICE

**March 2026**

www.peacelutheranchurch.ca  
E: peacelutheran.plc@gmail.com  
Facebook: Peace Lutheran Church  
(Pickering, ON)

# Peace Lutheran Church of Bay Ridges

928 Liverpool Road, Pickering, ON L1W 1S6 ♦ Tel: (905) 839-3521

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## Food For Thought

In the Christian tradition, "walking with Christ" during Lent is a metaphor for a 40-day intentional spiritual journey that mirrors Jesus' own time of fasting and temptation in the desert. It is a season of preparation where believers align their lives with the path Jesus took toward his passion, death, and eventual resurrection. *Moses 6:34: "Behold my Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify; and the mountains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course; and thou shalt abide in me, and I in you; therefore walk with me."*



The 40 days of Lent represent the time Jesus spent in the wilderness. Walking with him means choosing to face one's own "wilderness"—temptations, sins, and weaknesses—with the same reliance on God that Jesus showed. It is an invitation to "walk" alongside Jesus to the cross. The walk does not end at the cross but leads to the **Resurrection on Easter Sunday**. The goal of walking with Christ during this period is a **transformation of the heart**, allowing the believer to emerge renewed and more deeply connected to their faith.

Palm Sunday marks Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, kicking off Holy Week and symbolizing His role as a humble King bringing salvation. It blends celebration ("Hosanna!") with the solemn beginning of His "last mile" toward the Crucifixion, calling believers to follow Him from triumph to sacrifice. It challenges believers to move beyond the crowd's fleeting cheers ("Hosanna") and truly walk with Christ through the shadows of suffering to the light of the resurrection. The triumphant entry commemorates Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9, where crowds hailed Him as King, laying palm branches and cloaks in His path. The donkey symbolizes a, humble king bringing peace. It reminds Christians that true discipleship involves picking up the cross, prioritizing spiritual realities over worldly desires. Palm Sunday acts as a call to repentance and to prepare one's heart for the significance of Easter.

As you hold palm branches, you are symbolically walking with Jesus on his final journey to Calvary, inviting him to be Lord of your life. In ancient times, palm branches symbolized goodness, victory and triumph.

The use of pussy willows on Palm Sunday (also called "Willow" Sunday) is a deeply rooted tradition, particularly among Finnish, Baltic, some Slavic Lutheran, as well as Catholic and Orthodox traditions. Because palm trees do not grow in Northern and Eastern Europe, pussy willow branches were blessed in church. They were used as a local substitute for the branches waved to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

Celebrating and Sharing God's Love for All

### VISION STATEMENT:

Peace Lutheran Church is a welcoming, worshipping and witnessing community in Jesus Christ through whom healing, wellness, love and peace are offered unconditionally to all.

## Welcome to Peace Lutheran Church!

As a community in Christ, we gather together in service and fellowship to discern the call of our Christian faith. Strengthened by Word and Sacrament, we are always seeking creative ways to enrich our community, both locally and globally.

Our congregation is defined largely by its warm and friendly people, a vibrant intergenerational mix of young families, youth and adults. Come as you are!

We invite you to be part of our community. We hope that you will find your time here nourishing and energizing. We look forward to learning from you as well. We listen! We care!

**Our church is open!** We are offering in-person worship services, livestream worship services at 10:30 a.m. or you can watch the services anytime through YouTube. Please join us! Coffee Hour is available after our worship services.

May the love of God and the Peace of Christ find you here and wherever you are! May the fire of the Holy Spirit burn in your heart always!

## Office Hours:

Someone will answer the phone on a part time basis through the week (Mon - Wed and Fri, 9 to noon) to assist with calls and drop-in's. Please leave a message or email and someone will respond:

Office Tel: (905) 839-3521, or:  
peacelutheran.plc@gmail.com

There is a Care Team visiting shut-in's on Wednesdays and Fridays, please contact the office if you would like to receive a visit from the team.

Our Interim Pastor Dennis Becker will be doing 2 Communion Services on the first and 3rd Sunday each month. He will be available for emergency situations only.

## Food For Thought (cont.)

Pussy willows are among the first plants to bloom in early spring, they represent the resurrection, the end of winter, and new life. Sometimes, in areas where both are available, churches may bless both palms and pussy willows together.

The tradition of decorating pussy willow branches with painted eggshells during the Easter season is a, particularly Slavic, Christian practice that blends ancient symbols of nature's renewal with the Resurrection of Christ.

Because pussy willows are among the first plants to bloom in early spring, often while the landscape is still stark, they symbolize the "flower of life" bursting forth from a dry twig, a direct parallel to Christ rising from the tomb. The painted eggs symbolize the tomb from which Christ rose, with the shell representing the sealed tomb, and the cracking/decorated nature of the egg representing the Resurrection. The branches represent being rooted in God and the hope of new growth after a hard season of life.

Also in Christian tradition, forsythia branches are often referred to as an "Easter tree" or "Easter bush," symbolizing the transition from the death of winter to the new life of the resurrection. Their vibrant yellow blooms appearing on otherwise bare, seemingly dead branches represent the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of life after death.

During my childhood and to this day, I carry on with the tradition handed down to me of decorating pussy willow branches and forsythia branches bursting with buds of new life at Easter and hang colored and decorated blown out Easter egg shells on the branches to remind me that we are human, we are fragile, and we cannot save ourselves.

Lent begins not with celebration, but with honesty. For many of us, hope can feel thin right now. We look around and see broken systems, strained relationships, unanswered prayers, exhaustion we can't quite shake. Some of us come into this season carrying grief, disappointment, or a sense that life has not turned out the way we hoped.

And yet—this is exactly where Lent meets us. Lent does not ask us to pretend everything is fine. It invites us to slow down, to tell the truth about our lives, and to remember who God is even when the road feels uncertain. It is a season that says: you are dust—and you are deeply loved.





# Food For Thought (cont.)

We remember what God has already done. God has been faithful before and God is still at work—even here. It says: This story is not finished. As we journey through these forty days, we are not walking toward despair but toward resurrection. Lent helps us clear away distractions so we can see again the steady, grace-filled presence of God. It teaches us that even in the wilderness, God provides. When hope feels thin, may we lean not on our own strength, but on the love of a God who meets us in the ashes and leads us, step by step, toward new life.

Join us as we gather for Passion/Palm Sunday, a day that holds both celebration and solemn reflection. Together, let us remember Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and begin the journey toward Holy Week.

Come as you are, and walk with us through this meaningful moment in our faith story.

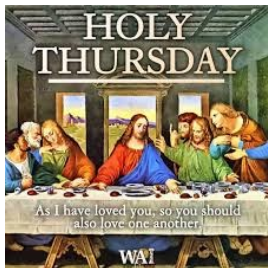
Peace and blessings, Rosie Lantzsch

## Upcoming Events

Sun., Mar. 1st, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Pastor Dennis (Communion Service) Name Tag Sunday
Sun., Mar. 8th, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Rosie/Shari
Sun., Mar. 15th, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Pastor Lowell (Communion Service)
Sun., Mar. 22nd, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Elizabeth/Arnold/Rosie—Healing Service
Wed., Mar. 25th, 2026 at noon	-	Congregational Lunch
Sun., Mar. 29, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Pastor Rasma (Communion Service), Palm Sunday
Thurs., Apr. 2, 2026, 7 pm	-	Rosie/Arnold (Maundy Thursday)
Fri., Apr. 3, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Pastor Dennis (Good Friday)
Sun., Apr. 5, 2026, 10:30 am	-	Pastor Dennis (Easter Sunday) Name Tag Sunday FYI—Council Installation during service Easter Breakfast (9 am)

## MAUNDY THURSDAY

Please join us on Thursday, April 2nd,  
For service at 7 pm



AND

## GOOD FRIDAY

Please join us for service at 10:30 am on April 3rd





## Congratulations to our Council Team

At the annual general meeting held on Sunday, February 23rd, 2025, the following first and second term members were elected to church council:

**Jens Ehlers (1st Term)**

**Rosie Lantsch (2nd Term)**

After the annual meeting the council met to elect the executive. Your new council executive and members are:

Rosemarie Lantsch – Chair

Jens Ehlers – Vice Chair

Fiona Haapalehto – Secretary

Sunny Wishart – Treasurer (non-council member)

Jeremy West — Financial Recording Secretary (non-council member)

Council members: Karen Bunbury, Kavita Kanavalli, Rainer Knabenschuh, Shakura Persaud and Cameron Ylimaki

We wish to thank Sirkka Taylor and David Wishart for their service and dedication to Council.

Installation of Council will be on Easter Sunday, April 5th, with Pastor Dennis presiding.

Please welcome and support your new Council Team!

## Women of Prayer

Please join or drop in to the “Women of Prayer”, which meets on the first and third Sundays of the month, after the service – with refreshments in either the old Narthex or the Jim Hern room. The duration is 30-40 minutes. Fellowship is warm and sincere. I hope to see you there!

Elizabeth Johns



## PLC Men’s Bible Study

The PLC Men's Bible Study continues to meet on the 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month.

Any men who are interested in joining should reach out to Jens Ehlers at: [jensehlers@sympatico.ca](mailto:jensehlers@sympatico.ca) or 416-951-0177, or contact the church office.





## Labyrinth Lenten Retreat Day

There is a labyrinth Lenten retreat day at St. George's Anglican Church in Pickering Village, 77 Randall Drive, Ajax, from 10-2:30 on March 7th

All are welcome to attend. Please contact Elizabeth at [ehmjohns@gmail.com](mailto:ehmjohns@gmail.com) by Thursday Mar 5th so she can notify the host and facilitator, or you can register directly. For more information, please see the flyer

## A Christmas Poem

### The Work of Christmas

When the song of the Angel is stilled,  
When the Star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and the princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers and sisters—  
To make music in the heart.  
And to radiate the Light of Christ,  
Every day, in every way,  
In all that we do and in all that we say.  
The work of Christmas lies before us.

by Howard Thurman

Submitted by Shari N.



**LABYRINTH LENTEN RETREAT DAY  
WITH REV. MARILYN METCALFE  
SATURDAY, MARCH 7  
10.00 am – 2.30 pm (Lunch Included\*)**

### LIVING WATER & HEALING DURING LENT

Are you seeking peace and tranquility?  
Do you find it difficult to sit still and just be?  
Maybe a meditative labyrinth walk will help.  
Come and explore this ancient spiritual practice.  
Find ways to open creativity  
and see life in a new and healing way.  
Consider making a free-will offering of \$10 to St. George's  
as part of Lenten almsgiving.

Register by email: [deacon.marilyn@stgeorgeschurch.ca](mailto:deacon.marilyn@stgeorgeschurch.ca)  
or by phone (905) 683-7981 Ext 3.

\*If you have special dietary needs, please bring your own lunch

## TOBFC — 2026 Gala

### The Olive Branch for Children

**2026 Annual Gala: Kujenga Mustakabali Mwema –  
Building Brighter Futures**

**on Saturday, May 2nd, 2026.**

**This year we welcome you to a new location –**

**Paradise Banquet Hall in Vaughan, Ontario, Canada.**

**Visit our website for all the details about this fun-filled event featuring good food, great company, and much more. Spoiler alert – last year's live band Switchbeat will be back for another unforgettable evening!**

**<https://www.theolivebranchforchildren.org>**

## Congratulations Tapio & Fiona!



**CONGRATULATIONS TAPIO AND FIONA  
ON YOUR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY!**

**They were married at Agricola Finnish Lutheran Church  
on a snowy March 6, 1976.**

**We congratulate you and wish you all the best, good health,  
happiness and many blessings always!**



## Easter Food Drive — for PLC Outreach

This year, Rosie and Elizabeth are organizing an Easter food drive for the PLC Outreach pantry! These items we plan on displaying in front of the altar along with Rosie’s Easter decorations!

The items that PLC Outreach could really use are listed below.

Please bring these items to Peace on Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week until latest by Saturday, April 4th (between 11 to 12 noon). Rosie plans to set up the display. Anyone who wishes to help, that would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for all your support for this worthy cause.

### **Food Items Needed:**

- Zip top canned meat and tuna
- Kraft dinner
- Peanut butter
- Tinned fruit, puddings
- Tinned peas or mixed vegetables
- Tinned Campbell type soup  
(Condensed OR ready to serve)
- Mr. Noodle ramen noodle type soup,
- Boxes of cereal
- Juice boxes
- Nutri-grain bars
- Healthy crackers
- Small packages of gold fish crackers
- Oatmeal (instant packages)
- Pasta sauce and pasta

### **Other Items Needed:**

- 2 in 1 shampoo and conditioner
- Body wash
- Tooth brushes
- Disposable razors
- Combs
- Hair brushes
- New socks
- Dish detergent.

### **Note:**

Warm Coats are still needed  
Hoodies and track pants  
(these will be needed until end of June)

## **RETREAT FOR LAY PERSONS**

**On: April 10-12, 2026**

**At: Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, Niagara Falls**

**Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Anne Anderson**

**Theme: HOLY SHIFT—Unearthing, Context and Possibility**

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH**

**To register, visit: <https://form.jotform.com/252224519470252>**

**Some PLC members are going and highly recommend this wonderful opportunity. If you wish further information, it is available in the Narthex.**



# Shrove Tuesday—Pancake dinner highlights



Thank you to everyone who came to PLC's pancakes and sausages dinner on Feb. 17th. It was especially meaningful since we had to cancel Ash Wednesday service due to severe weather conditions. It was delicious. Thank you to all who helped with cooking, set up and clean up.





# PLC Community Lunch — February 25th



Thank you Sirkka for organizing the Community lunches and thank you to everyone who contributed and helped with set up and clean up! We had delicious soup prepared by Lena, egg salad sandwiches made by Lynne, tuna sandwiches by Shakura, two different salads by Lynne and Rosie and two desserts by Jemina and Sirkka.

Thank you to Katerina for teaching us about the 7 main Chakras. It was very interesting, relaxing and informative.





# Worship Services—February





# Worship Services and other pic's



Meaningful moments in February including readers, leaders, tech booth , organists, choir and all the volunteers who help in our services. Hiding the Alleluia banner on Transfiguration Sunday, an appreciation gift to Lena from Council, the AGM potluck and several Coffee Hour pictures.



# PLC Volunteers



Thank you Elizabeth for doing the Lent bulletin board in the Narthex

Thank you Jeremy for supervising the painting crew. Thank you Karen and the Property Team for making our church beautiful!

## PLC Outreach—Mansora's Speech, March 1st

Good morning everyone,

I want to begin by saying thank you. Thank you to each and every one of you for your prayers, your support, and your love throughout this journey.

I would especially like to thank Shari, who has been by my side and advocating for my family since before their applications began. I am also deeply grateful to Elizabeth, who has been actively involved and supportive since January 10. I truly could not have done this without them.

Some of you may remember the last time I stood here. At that time, we had just begun working together to sponsor my family who were waiting as Afghan refugees in Pakistan to be settled into Canada. Back then, we believed the process would move much faster. We thought that by now they would already be here, and we would be celebrating their arrival together.

Unfortunately, that did not happen.

Instead, the situation became even worse. The Pakistani government made the decision to deport millions of Afghan refugees. My family, who had been living legally in Pakistan and maintaining their legal status by holding valid Pakistani visas at all times, were suddenly affected when policies changed and visas were no longer issued to Afghans.

After two months without legal status, on January 10, they were detained by police and deported back to Afghanistan.

Since then, we have been working tirelessly to bring them back to safety. By God's grace, we were able to obtain a medical visa for my mom, and she returned to Pakistan on February 7. However, it was much harder to get a visa for my brother. His application was denied several times. Finally, we received approval, and he is scheduled to fly back to Pakistan on March 4. With the current tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, we are praying that he will be able to travel safely and be reunited with my mom.

Their sponsorship application has not moved forward. The last update we received was in 2024, and since then there has been no progress. Shari and Elizabeth have prepared a letter to the Minister of Immigration and Refugees requesting that their case be reviewed and expedited. I warmly invite anyone who feels comfortable and willing to add their signature as a sign of support. We are deeply thankful for your continued care, your interest, and the many ways you already stand with us.

Thank you for standing with us. Please continue to keep my family in your prayers. We hold onto hope for the day when I can stand here again, not asking for help, but celebrating their safe arrival in Canada.

Thank you, and God bless you all.



If you wish to help Mansora by adding your signature to the letter for the Minister of Immigration and Refugees, the letter will be in the Narthex until Sunday, March 8th.

**ATTENTION: We need someone to volunteer as soon as possible for short term assistance to do list research, email and phoning advocacy (timeline: 3 weeks max.).**

**Janet V. already volunteered but the more the merrier! Thank you so much, Janet!**

## Peace Care Team

The Care team is delighted to announce our newest members to the Care Team – Shelby and Rosie Lasinskas (miniature schnauzers pictured here). Shelby is a registered therapy dog, and Rosie is in training. They persuaded Karen Lasinskas to join as their companion. This is an exciting dimension to our care team.

“..Everyone who asks shall receive..” – Matt 7:7-8 (NIV) – at the AGM, I asked counsel to provide the Care Team with a liaison on counsel, and lo and behold, the very next day, we want to give a big thank you to Shakura Persaud, counsel member for agreeing to liaise for us. This is a tremendous relief and help.

Also, at the AGM, it occurred to me that I had not provided a list of care team members. There were a number of reasons for that – not an oversight. Since fall, we have grown rapidly, people of Peace have generously offered their services, and no sooner did I have a list of members than it changed. There is also the matter that some individuals prefer not to have their names shared publicly. I want to honour that sensitivity.

However, I believe we are now in a position to gently lay aside any mystery and offer our wholehearted thanks. It is my joy to welcome and acknowledge our Care Team members — listed in alphabetical order — with deep gratitude for their quiet and faithful service: Angelina Sievers, Arnold Persaud, Elizabeth Johns, Frances Dossen, Jan Van der Wees, Jemina Lal, Jeremy West, Karen Lasinskas (Shelby and Rosie dog-Lasinskas), Lena Sievers, Rosie Lantzsch, Ruth Hern, Shakura Persaud, Shari Nelson, and Sirkka Taylor.

Everyone: please join this wonderful and heartwarming ministry – there is a role to be played by everyone – administration, socializing, phoning, social media, writing cards, devotion, providing comfort and encouragement, distributing donations, and meeting new people. Time commitments range from 3 hours a month to as much time as you want. Please let Lena Sievers, Elizabeth Johns, or Ruth Hern know. Lena can be reached at the church office, Elizabeth at [ehmjohns@gmail.com](mailto:ehmjohns@gmail.com) or 905-626-0088, Ruth at [ruthhern@sympatico.ca](mailto:ruthhern@sympatico.ca).

Our mission statement is:

**The Peace Care Team is called to share Christ’s love through compassionate presence, prayerful support, and practical assistance for members of our congregation and community.**

Rooted in our Lutheran faith, we seek to embody God’s grace by reaching out to those who are homebound, ill, grieving, caregiving, or temporarily in need of additional support. Through our ministry, we affirm the dignity and belonging of every person as a valued member of the Body of Christ.

Submitted by Elizabeth Johns





# PLC & Durham Youth - Coldest Night of the Year



## Bible Fun Time



Thank you Joel and Elizabeth for putting the "Fun" in Bible Fun Time. Helping the children learn while having fun.



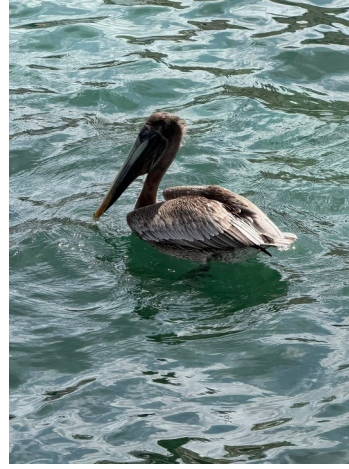
# God's Creation



By: Elizabeth J.



By: Rosie FB friend



By: Elizabeth J.



By: Elizabeth J.



By: Elizabeth J.



By: Elizabeth J.



By Rosie L



By: Elizabeth J.



By Elizabeth J



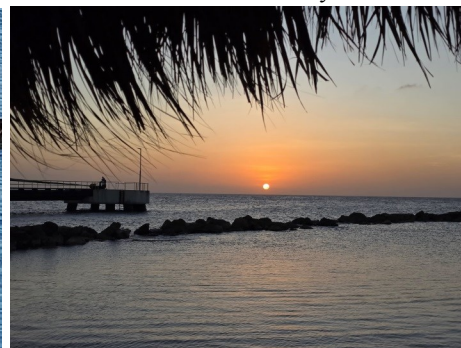
By: Rosie L



By: Jeremy W



By: Rosie L



By: Jeremy W



By: Jeremy W.



# Gratitude Corner



## Gratitude Corner

Every month, we celebrate the work  
 Different people do here at Peace!

### Cameron Ylimaki!

The people of Peace sincerely thank Cameron for the many ways he enriches our lives here at Peace!

Cameron uplifts us with his beautiful smile and gives great big “Bear Hugs”. His warm personality, Christian love and dedication shines through in all he does.

Cameron sees a need and helps out! He does a wonderful job on Council, he works in the Tech Booth, and makes sure that the services are on livestream and are available through YouTube. Cameron is on the Call Committee, is a Reader and sometimes sings in the choir and he helped with the Holden service. He does so many other things behind the scene that most of us are not aware of, like updating the Digital sign, PLC’s brochure and more..

We sincerely thank you, Cameron, for all you do for Peace and in the greater community.

# Worship Assistants for March 2026

MAR 2026	A/M	READER	GREETERS	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTERS	SERVERS	SERMON/ SERVICE	COFFEE HOUR
1	Giselle	Jemina	Gene H	Rosie/Lynne	--	Rosie/Shakura	Pastor Dennis	Steven & Kavita
8	Sirkka	Fiona	Janet V	--	Janet/Tapio	--	Rosie/Shari	Colleen & Rainer
15	Rosie	Cameron	Rosie L.	Fiona/Sirkka	--	Rosie/Sirkka	Pastor Lowell	Tabatha
22	Elizabeth	Shari N.	Lynne H	--	--	--	Liz/Arnold (Healing S.)	Francis & Precious
29	Karen	Paige P.	Tapio H.	Janet/Claire	Rainer/Rosie	Karen/Janet	Pastor Rasma (Palm Sun.)	Sirkka & ?

# Canadian Blood Services in March



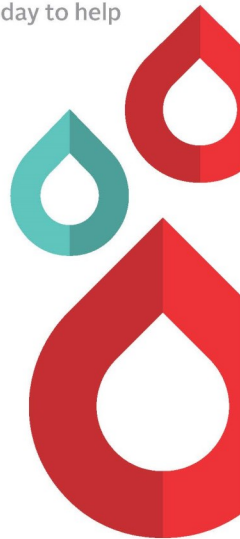
## Your donation matters

It matters to every patient across Canada. Because it's something we can do today to help others wake up healthier tomorrow.

### Upcoming blood donation events

**Forest Brook Community Church**  
60 Kearney Dr. Ajax

**Monday, March 9**  
1:00 pm to 7:00 pm



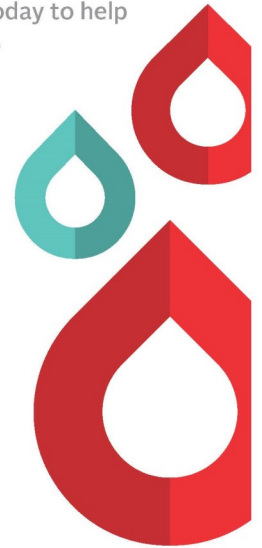
## Your donation matters

It matters to every patient across Canada. Because it's something we can do today to help others wake up healthier tomorrow.

### Upcoming blood donation events

**Ajax Convention Centre**  
550 Beck Crescent

**Monday, March 16**  
1:00 pm to 7:00 pm



Join **Canada's Lifeline**  
Book now at [blood.ca](http://blood.ca) or call **1 888 2 DONATE**

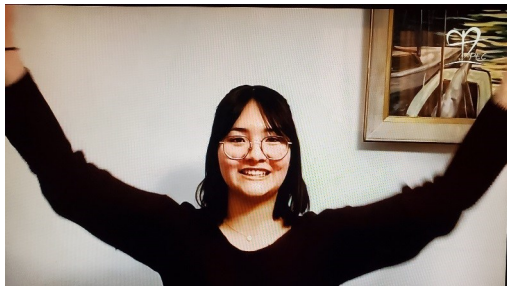
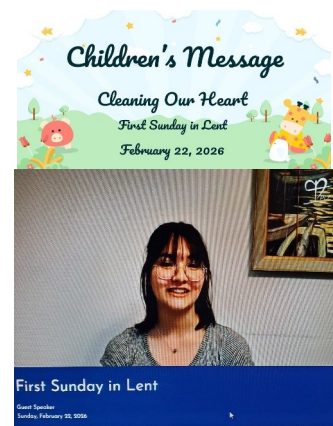
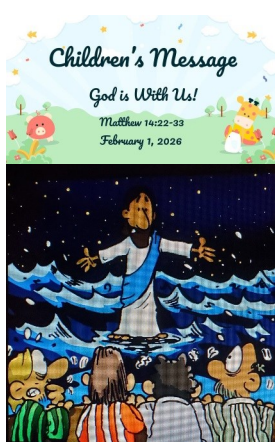
Join **Canada's Lifeline**  
Book now at [blood.ca](http://blood.ca) or call **1 888 2 DONATE**

## COMEDY CORNER





# Children's Message - Feb. 2026



Create in me a clean heart, oh God  
And renew a right spirit within me  
Create in me a clean heart, oh God  
And renew a right spirit within me

## Coffee Hour

Thank you to all who volunteer to make coffee after service on Sundays. Just a reminder, please come at 10 am to set up, make the coffee and set out your "treats". Remember to bring the cream and milk.

Again, thank you for your faithful service!

Lena, Sirkka and Colleen

## Next Month:

If you have any articles, upcoming church events, pictures, jokes, poems, inspirational messages, Peace History, special events or a personal celebration that you would like included in our PLC newsletter for the month of **April 2026**, please submit them to Rosie (rosielanch@hotmail.com) by **March 25th**.

Peace and blessings, Rosie

