

## KNOX STRATFORD

A place where friendships  
begin!

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter  
April 4, 2024

Guest Minister:

Rev. Charles Swartwood



### PRELUDE

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### INTROIT

Bev Dougall, Heather Hislop, Suzanne Strahan, Peter Dougall.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We gather with joy, for Easter brings us new life.

**MANY: The Risen Christ is with us wherever we go.**

One: Love breaks all bonds and unites us in hope.

**MANY: Christ has defeated death. Let us rejoice and be glad!**

One: Come and worship with hearts full of praise.

**MANY: O God, receive our grateful Hallelujahs!**

**PRAYERS OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION:** Leader: God our Maker, we praise You for all the wonders in Your creation: for the detailed perfection revealed in a baby's tiny fingers, in pussy willows unzipping their jackets to greet the spring, in each rock face worn by wind and water, witnessing to Your ancient design like wrinkles around an aging smile. Such details lift our hearts to praise You. Let the life, teaching and resurrection of the Risen Christ lift and instruct our hearts this day, that we may greet a new week as an occasion to discover Him in our midst, making all things new in the springtime of Your Holy Spirit.

**Congregation:** God our Redeemer, in raising Jesus from the dead, You showed us your power to defeat all that brings fear and sorrow to our lives. Yet we confess we are sometimes uncertain if we can trust the promise of resurrection for ourselves. Forgive us when we struggle to trust Your goodness for us. Forgive us when we miss the signs of Your love in our midst.

**HYMN:** #315 A Mighty Fortress Verses 1 and 4

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE:**

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you

**Congregation: And also, with you.** Please greet one another.

### **CHOIR ANTHEM**

**HYMN:** #328 This Is My Father's World - All verses.

### **SERMON: "Keep Knocking!"**

Rev. Charles Swartwood

### **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING (Together):**

Our lives overflow with blessing and goodness in Christ and in creation. Out of the bounty with which God has blessed us, let us present to God our offering with gratitude that overflows.

**OFFERING - DOXOLOGY #306** Offering is brought forward. The offering can be placed on the offering plates at the back of the church before or during the service, or at the front after the service.

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Together):**

**God our Maker, You have filled the world with so much abundance. We offer our gifts to You, knowing they are part of Your abundance. Bless them and use them to bring hope and new life in Christ's name to a world that so badly needs these gifts. Amen**

### **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION**

God our Maker, Source of Easter power and hope, You have walked with your faithful people through many generations, people facing challenge and uncertainty, people seeking Your purpose and promise. We still face challenges and uncertainty, even with Easter in our hearts. Walk with us and with those for whom we pray for this day, so that Your resurrecting power may lead us in lives of faithfulness.

In the name of Christ our Risen Lord,

**Congregation:** Hear our prayer.

We pray for people for whom age or experience, illness or disability create barriers to full participation in Your world. Surround each one in pain or despair with Your comfort and renew in each one a sense of dignity and purpose. Show them how much they matter to You and to us. In the name of Christ our Risen Lord,  
**Congregation: Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those facing grief and any kind of loss. Give them strength and comfort. We pray for communities challenged by forces beyond their control: natural disaster and environmental threats, conflict and violence, economic hardship. Give courage to those facing these challenges, and wisdom to those who lead, so that wellbeing may be restored and hope for the future prevail. In the name of Christ our Risen Lord,  
**Congregation: Hear our prayer.**

As signs of spring emerge, we pray for Your creation, for creatures losing habitat and unique species at risk, for oceans clogged with plastic, and the earth aching for moisture as the climate warms. Jesus, You are the firstborn of all creation; Help us to honour You by caring for the earth and its fragile balances in the ways we live and the priorities we set. In these ways, too, we would be Your disciples and so we pray together the words you taught us: **The Lord's Prayer (Trespases)**

**HYMN: #687 Blessed Assurance - All Verses.**

**BENEDICTION  
POSTLUDE**

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The **KNOX HANDCRAFTERS GROUP** meets on  
**Tuesday, April 16 at 10:30am** on the Main Floor (accessible).

**JOIN us for CAFÉ CHURCH on Sunday, April 21 at 10:30am in the Banquet Hall. Guest Speakers from Change Her World.**

**NOTE:** The **Life Study Group** focusing on the sermon and scriptures has paused for two weeks as Dr. Thompson is on vacation.

**APRIL OUTREACH**

**For The Emily Murphy Centre** which provides transitional housing for women and children.

The following are items they are in need of:

- ✓ Toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, conditioner ,
- ✓ Paper products; Kleenex, paper towels, toilet tissue.
- ✓ Cleaning products
- ✓ Sink and tub cleaners, floor cleaners, etc.
- ✓ Snacks for school lunches

**Let's help fill those pantry shelves.**

**SAVE THE DATE for a HIKE - Sunday, May 5**

Plan to meet around 2:30pm and the hike will start around 3:00pm - starting across from Gail Smith's farm near Fairview on Line 35 (address will be shared). The terrain is moderate, some small hills through a bush, and scenic. Sturdy footwear should be worn; bring a hiking pole if desired. We plan to join at Gail's pond directly across from the trail afterward for some snacks and coffee, tea, juice etc. The hike is open to anyone even if they don't want to hike, they can wait at the gazebo near the pond and visit until the hikers return. Please feel free to invite friends and you can also bring a lawn chair. Any questions contact Tom Hislop.

**"WE LOVE KNOX" Cups:** Simply bring coins - loonies or toonies, dimes, nickels or quarters or folding money and put them into the **"WE LOVE KNOX" Cup** that it is the middle of the offering plate. And you will have no idea how much you have given. Over a period of a year this can mount up. In St. Paul's Ingersoll and New St. James, London, both congregations found that they were able to raise in this way - over \$10,000 for the budget. At Knox, this will go to the Operating Fund, which makes all the others work. **THANK YOU!**

**Interim Minister:** The Reverend Dr. David Thompson

**Music Director:** Suzanne Strahan

**Treasurer:** Shannon Archer

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