

Around the Cross

Spring 2026

Upcoming Events

Sunday School
Workshop
Saturday May 30th
More details coming soon.

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He's on the Move

I'm not a fan of 'Christian' movies. In fact, I find that the line is blurry between 'Christian' and Hallmark. However, there is a collection of movies where I appreciate the Christian parallels: the Lion, the Witch, and Wardrobe. There is a scene where the Beavers are talking with the Kings and Queens of Narnia. "There is hope! Aslan is on the move. In this Lent season, we have hope because Jesus is on the move: to the city, to the garden, to the cross, to the grave, to the disciples and to us. May we feel hope during this Holy Week.

Reminders

Collective Youth Conference
Wednesday August 12th – Saturday
August 15th 2026
Brock University
St. Catherine's, Ontario

Announcements:

Looking ahead: Calling ALL Sunday school teachers. You are invited to a learning and sharing opportunity on Saturday May 30th. More details to come.

To register, fill out the following form.

<https://forms.gle/k7wWLShvZpCs9nmCA>

Final Presbytery Youth Event: Our final youth event for 2025–2026 will take place on Thursday June 25th at 5pm. More details to come.

Youth Working Group: The Youth Working Group plans fun, Christ-centred events for youth aged 11–17 throughout the year. If you are interested in learning more or becoming a member, email Sunjay at prezminanimator@gmail.com

Collective 2026: Collective is a spirit-filled gathering for youth, young adults, and their leaders—a space to grow in faith, build community, and reflect on shared experiences. Throughout the event, there will be times for everyone to be together, as well as each group has dedicated programming designed to inspire, challenge, and equip them. Every day is filled with worship, recreation, discipleship groups, interactive workshops, and of course, delicious meals.

For more information, contact Jess Foy at jfoy@presbyterian.ca

Winterlude Event

On Saturday January 31, 2026, the Presbytery Youth gathered for a winterlude themed Scavenger Hunt hosted by St. Andrews on Kent Street. I had the pleasure of encouraging the youth with words from Isaiah 43:1-2. There were curling games, amazing snacks and an opportunity to come together for some winter fun. The groups had the opportunity to make their own mascots, which were quite creative. You will find some pictures from the event below. We look forward to our next opportunity to gather together.





Spring Into New Life

On Saturday April 11th, the Presbytery Youth gathered at St. Stephens for an event with the theme 'Spring Into New Life'. The goal was to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord with one another and celebrate all that spring has to offer. The youth decorated tulips, played games, planted seeds, and baked a tasty snack centred around the empty tomb. Worship music was led by Victoria and Sunjay Henry, and the resurrection story was presented by Rev. Meg Patterson, with youth in attendance taking on some of roles with enthusiasm and intrigue.



Interview with Jess Foy

Sunjay: Could you begin by telling us your name and your role in our presbytery/role at head office/PCC?

Jess: Jess Foy and I'm the Faith Formation with Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Program Coordinator for the PCC.

Sunjay: Can you tell us about your journey of faith?

Jess: I'm a Seventh generation member of the PCC. I was baptized in the denomination as an infant and spent my childhood and adolescence enjoying the faith family of Knox Presbyterian Church, Dundas. The faith formation programming and worship instilled a deep faith in me that was nurtured by my parents at home. I became a member in eighth grade on Easter Sunday and haven't been able to quit the PCC. Camp Kintail, Triee I'm '98, the Presbyterian young people's society, my congregation's youth group, and Glen Mhor camp were foundational pieces to taking on my faith as my own in late adolescence and early adulthood.

Attending and later, taking on leadership at Canada Youth enhanced my congregational work in child in youth ministry, that I'd done for 20ish years. The summer I led the worship drama team at Canada Youth, I felt the call to study towards an M.Div and I cherish the years I studied at Knox College. I didn't finish the program but gained a great deal from it and those learnings enhance my work with congregational leaders today. I could do on, but that's the story in a nutshell.

Sunjay: What drew you to working with young people?

Jess: Being a part of a faith community in my childhood and youth are true highlights of my life. The hope and joy I receive from a relationship with the Triune God, was modelled for me by my mentors of faith, and it has taken me through the most difficult times of my life. I was drawn to child and youth ministry because I felt called to offer them that same depth of faith and knowledge that they are never alone.

Sunjay: Why is the youth ministry still important in 2026? What are some building blocks for an effective youth ministry?

Jess: Youth ministry is still important because the Church or a Christian context is really the only place young people are intentionally introduced to God, as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. If we do not have folks doing this work and helping parents encourage the faith of their children, no one is going to do it for us. Offering a space where people are given radical hospitality, the unconditional love of God, and adults who care for them because they want to, and not because they must, is incredibly important in the faith walk of a teen. Relationships are a crucial building block for any youth ministry. It is what I come back to time and time again when supporting programs. Fostering connections between leadership, the youth, and God are what allow any faith formation to flourish and faith to grow. Keeping the cross in mind, with its horizontal piece encouraging our human relationships and the vertical pointing to our divine relationship, allows us to open ourselves up to the best options for programming for the people in our congregations and community.

Sunjay: I know you are involved in a youth conference that happens at Brock University. Can you tell us about the name of the conference, the recent name change, and what the conference is about?

Jess: I am the PCC Co-ordinator of Collective. It is the new name of our event for youth, young adults, and their leaders. This name change came about to unify our partnership with the United Church of Canada. Having two event names in 2024 was extremely confusing for leadership and attendees. This name change points to the fact that we are one body of Christ working together on this event and presenting it as a single Christian community. It also allows for growth if we discern a movement towards other denominational partners joining the flock.

2026 Theme: (em)brace for impact

Why (em)brace for impact? We live in a time of great change, challenge, and stress; it feels as if we live our lives bracing or braced for impact. When will the next punch, kick, crash hit us and where will it come from? The Collective team wants to recognize the stress that young people are experiencing, yet we also want to help them find creative and supportive ways to deal with the world. One way to deal with challenge is to gather a supportive group – to embrace each other, hold each other in care and authenticity. And so, we (em)brace one another. We also want to feel that we can create positive change in our lives and in our world – we want to leave an impact. And so, we (em)brace for impact.

We do all this only as we recognize that our Creating God breaks into our lives and into the world. We do this as we follow in the way of Jesus, who collected and embraced friends, followers, and even foes to create change and challenge systems of evil and destruction. We do this as we trust in the Holy Spirit to bring us comfort, courage, and power to make a difference in Christ's name.

During worship we will explore verses from John 20 & 21 to embrace community, embrace reality, embrace possibility, and embrace identity. All this focusing on the post-resurrection ministry of Jesus.

Sunjay: What would you say to parents/youth/churches that have questions about the purpose of the conference?

Jess: Collective is a spirit-filled gathering for youth, young adults, and their leaders—a space to grow in faith, build community, and reflect on shared experiences. Throughout the event, there will be times for everyone to be together, as well each group has dedicated programming designed to inspire, challenge, and equip them. Every day is filled with worship, recreation, discipleship groups, interactive workshops, delicious meals.

This gathering allows young people to see Christians being the church outside of its walls. It lets them see that there are many young people who love the Lord just like they do. Collective offers space where they can ask questions and have them explored with faithful leadership and peers asking the same things.

Sunjay: How would someone volunteer at the event?

Jess: We are currently looking for folks to register for the Youth Leader Stream. This dedicated stream equips youth leaders—whether clergy or lay, paid or volunteer, full-time or part-time—who are passionate about guiding young people in faith and life. It's a space for learning, renewal, and practical experience. Leaders will grow through a combination of discipleship group sessions featuring an inspiring speaker and hands-on leadership opportunities that put theory into practice.

Participants won't just listen—they'll lead. As youth residence floor leaders, they'll help create a welcoming environment for participants, offering care and connection throughout the event. They'll support recreation activities, foster community through being a supportive presence, and learn in real time as they engage with youth and young adults. These experiences, combined with keynotes, discipleship groups, and peer-to-peer conversations, provide a holistic approach to leadership development.

This stream is about more than gaining tools—it's about building confidence, deepening faith, and forming a supportive network of leaders who share the same calling. Through shared stories, collaborative problem-solving, and practical ministry experiences, leaders will leave equipped to serve boldly and (em)brace for impact in their communities.

Guest speaker: Lyle Griner, Executive Peer Ministry Leadership Director: A connoisseur of "Aha" moments as soulfully curious youth and families wrestle with the nuances of faith and life! A writer, teacher, youth minister, and spiritual director, working with multiple denominations to help congregations expand and deepen their abilities for youth and young adults to find purposeful ministry in everyday life.

Note: all registered Youth Leaders need to submit a VSS report still valid until August 15, 2026 and a signed Collective declaration form OR a new VSS that will obviously be in date for the event. This helps us ensure safe practices according to our Leading with Care policy.

Sunjay: A couple more questions: Outside of your role with the PCC, what occupies your time?

Jess: My husband and son, time with friends and family, reading, photography, gardening, and needle felting.

Sunjay: Do you have a favourite Bible story or verse?

Jess: Matthew 11:28-30 has long proven a crucial verse to remind me that I'm not living this life based on my own strength or abilities, but through the grace, mercy, and energy I receive from the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. Rest is a part of that life and discipleship. I was reminded recently, that this isn't a sprint but a marathon, so live and work according. Jesus gives an awesome example of how to live faithfully and stop to care for oneself.

Sunjay: Finally, if someone wanted to reach out to you directly, how would they do that?

Jess: Email: jfoy@presbyterian.ca
Call: 1-800-619-7301ext.255

