

st. christopher's

# Messenger

March 2026

Issue 282



# FROM THE RECTOR'S STUDY



**T**hank you to everyone who helped make this year's Coldest Night of the Year walk such a success - I am proud of the whole big team! Thank you to walkers and sponsors. Thank you to greeters and safety marshals and furniture movers and photographers and cooks and admin desk people and parking lot supervisors and cheerleaders and food servers and musicians. Coldest Night is a big event. It's a really important fundraiser for our outreach ministries. Thank you to Shannon Shuell and the leadership team. Great work everyone!

Lent has been underway for a couple weeks, but it's not too late to check out our Lent series, Finding Ourselves in the Story. The series is non-cumulative, so you can definitely drop-in at any point. We are talking about familiar Gospel stories from a point of view where there are no answers, and where everyone's responses to Jesus' stories are valued.

Sessions happen on Wednesdays (March 4, 11, 18, 25) at 7pm over Zoom, and Thursdays (March 5, 12, 19, 26) at the church at 10:30am.

Looking ahead, I want to tell you what to expect in our Holy Week services. We're planning a conversation over the course of the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday services (March 30 - April 1) where we dig in to the ways the author of Luke edits material he draws from Mark's Gospel. In particular, Luke changes passages where Mark talks about Jesus' death on the cross as an atoning sacrifice. I'm excited! I love this stuff, and I can't wait to set up the conversation so there's a place for everyone to engage. It's a topic that goes in many directions: how we interpret the Bible, recognizing ways people use the Bible to justify violence, finding ways to remain faithful when things seem to be going very wrong in our world. I hope you will participate!

I also want to invite you to check out this year's Easter Vigil (April 4). We are planning a Vigil that is rich in symbolism. We'll reflect on darkness and light. We'll hear readings that tell the story of God's work in the world in times past, and our hope for God's new order to be revealed. We'll hold candles and sing music that creates an atmosphere of stillness and timelessness and mystery. We will renew our baptismal vows. And we'll celebrate the first Eucharist of Easter. It will be dramatic and engaging. I hope you will participate!

A full schedule of Holy Week services appears on the cover of this Messenger.

Andy and I have been talking about what to do about the Yellow Song Books. The books are showing their age! Our proposal is that we print the words for Yellow Book songs in the service booklets. We already do this occasionally. So, we preserve the central place of the songs from the Yellow Books in our

worship, and we remove the books that are on their last legs from the church. I prefer this solution to printing a replacement set of 250 new Yellow Books. I'd love to hear what you think. Please speak to Andy or to me about this idea.

Congratulations to the parish officers we elected and appointed at last month's Annual Congregational Meeting. This includes a number of people who were elected as delegates to Diocesan Synod, and members of Parish Council. I'm also thrilled to welcome Bill Hewlett and Jasmin Dorsett to the Corporation table. Bill was elected as Deputy People's Warden, and I appointed Jasmin as our new Treasurer. Welcome aboard!

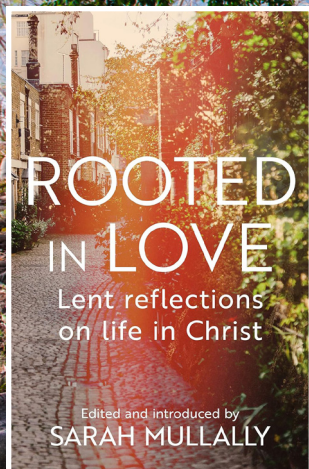
Speaking of the Annual meeting, I want to thank the people who increased

their pre-authorized gifts to St. Christopher's in response to our conversation about our budgeted plans for income from donations in 2026. That conversation included a challenge to increase our gifts to the church by 4% this year. I'm going to join the people who made this commitment at the annual meeting. If you'd like to do the same, you can find the form at [https://niagaraanglican.ca/docs/PAP\\_Authorization\\_Form.pdf](https://niagaraanglican.ca/docs/PAP_Authorization_Form.pdf), or by reaching out to the church office. Thank you!



REV. CANON DR.  
PENNY ANDERSON  
RECTOR

# WARDENS' REPORT



**A** big thank you to everyone who joined us for our Annual Congregational Meeting on February 22nd! We know that not everyone loves talking about finances, but sharing our needs and goals openly is how we all work together to fulfill our mission of building God's new society.

A special welcome to the new members of our Parish Council and to our incoming People's Warden, Bill Hewlett. We're so grateful for your willingness to share your time and talents with our St. Christopher's family and the wider community.

At Sunday service, the Rector's charge shared how our church is undertaking so many events to meet the needs of many different

people in our community. At the Annual Meeting, Shannon Shuell gave us some amazing examples of how St. Christopher's is showing up for our neighbours. Our outreach programs provide meals on Tuesdays and Thursdays, groceries at our community market, Christmas gift cards, school backpacks, and always extend a kind word. These meaningful actions are a true reflection of God's love, and we're pleased to be a beacon of hope for so many.

As we step into the season of Lent, Bishop Susan Bell has recommended a wonderful book called *Rooted in Love: Lent Reflections on Life in Christ*. This collection of thoughts from London-area bishops invites us to incorporate

faith into our daily lives. Edited by the incoming Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mulally, the book encourages us to bring our faith into our everyday lives.

Lent begins with repentance, symbolized by the ashes, which reminds us of our humanity and mortality. It's a time for reflection and finding focus on what really matters and what distracts us. This reflection often leads to acts of charity or outreach, living God's love for the world. Our Lenten journey culminates with Holy Week from March 29 to April 5, when we remember the story of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, bringing us hope in a troubled world.

Wherever you are on your Lenten journey,

know that your friends at St. Christopher's are here for you every step of the way. Faith isn't just something we

believe; it's something we do. Love must always reach others.

*Lisa Kruitwagen is one of the four wardens (Bill Hewlett, Shannon Mac, Mike Ravenscroft Lisa Kruitwagen) who, along with our Rector, Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson, make up St. Christopher's Corporation*

Lisa Kruitwagen  
WARDEN



# MUSIC & THE PERFORMING ARTS



I usually strive to write an entertaining Messenger article with coherent prose and an overarching theme. Sometimes I fail and sometimes I don't even try. This is an example of the latter. There is such a diversity of Music and the Performing Arts news that it is simplest and clearest to relay the information in point form.

- To my surprise, I have not yet shared in the Messenger a report on the success of Daniel Lu's piano concert which was performed on January 9th. Daniel played a selection of advanced piano repertoire that he learned in pursuit of his Licentiate diploma from the Royal Conservatory of Music. The examiners gave this sixteen-year-old first-class honours and attendees at St. Christopher's could hear why. Daniel volunteered his talent and time to St. Christopher's and raised over \$900 for our Open Doors programs. Thank you,

Daniel.

- Later in the month of January, our MAP committee hosted a Robbie Burns night. Though I regret missing the event, I was in a warmer place. Please see John Steven's article in this Messenger for details on Robbie Burns and the upcoming Swingtet performance in March.
- Throughout February, the choir, band, guitar group, Audrey Chan and myself, presented at least one piece of music written by a Black composer at all three services every Sunday. One takeaway from this observance of Black History Month was how easy it was to do. Black music has such a rich tradition, particularly in the church, that it was never difficult to find great music to perform.
- March is Women's History Month. Each Sunday in March we will play or sing a piece of music written by a woman composer.
- As part of my personal

pursuit of a Licentiate Diploma in Piano Performance (like Daniel's) I will be performing two concerts in the month of March. On Wednesday March 5th at 12pm, I will be performing a 45-minute recital at St. Jude's Anglican Church in Oakville. On Friday March 27th at 7pm, I will be presenting a full-length concert (roughly 90 minutes including intermission) at St. James Anglican Church in Dundas. My hosts and I would appreciate your support and/or presence. Both programs contain multiple pieces by contemporary women composers.

- On Sunday, March 22nd the choir will present an anthem that was purchased with funds from the Janet Gadeski Memorial fund (another woman composer). The piece is "Create in Me" by Michael Larkin and it has quickly become one of my favourite pieces in

our repertoire.

- On Saturday, April 4th at 8pm, the choir and band will lead the music during our Easter Vigil Service. Unfortunately, one of the defining and most loved features of this service will be missing in 2026. The Liturgical Dancers were unable to get enough participants to perform. Since this is the second term in a row that Liturgical Dance has been unable to run, it is likely that the 30+ year-old program has reached a natural end. There will be a celebration of liturgical dance and all it has given to its participants and this parish. More details to come in future Messenger articles.
- On a happier note, the choir is performing well in the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser. Thank you to Gill Jones and Clair Macaulay-Newcombe for their leadership as team

captains. I look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday night.

- It was announced at the Vestry Meeting that we are considering removing the so-called yellow books from the so-called pews. Most of the books are missing their cover(s) or are otherwise decrepit. Personally, I don't believe that they are worth replacing when it is a simple matter to print the words of the songs they contain in the weekly bulletin. The yellow book will remain a primary source for music selection for a long time to come. I welcome your feedback on this approach.

ANDY ELMHIRST  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC



# NIGHT ON THE TOWN



**Peter Banting Swingtet**

Every 25th of January there are celebrations in honour of the immortal bard of Scotland, Robbie Burns. This year was no exception. After the dinner, it is time to bring out the songs and stories of Scotland, and

at this time of year any excuse for a bit of a party is welcome. I am always happy to sing some of the old songs. It was also great to have some songs sung by Gail Grant and Mike Gamble. Kevin Beeby gave us a real treat by inviting

Joy Thomson to play the pipes in the singing of Mull of Kintyre. Several people had fun dancing to the Gay Gordons. Les Kerr delighted us with his poetic tribute to the wonderful people who toil in the kitchen. Of course, we had to finish

with Robbie Burns tribute to "Auld Lang Syne".

Another musical evening is coming on March 20. Following the potluck, music will be provided by the Peter Banting Swingtet. Many years ago, Peter was my next-door neighbour and I have been playing guitar and singing with this band for the last 25

years. During that time, we have played at festivals, at weddings, at summer outdoor concert venues and recently for the swing dance group, "Steel City Swingers". We play lively swing music, some latin tunes and bossa novas along with some slow ballads. I hope you will all come with your dancing shoes on.



**Kevin & Joy @ Robbie Burns Night**



JOHN STEPHEN

# CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES



**F**or such a short month, we have managed to pack a lot into February!

Joyful Noise Studio has been bustling on Sunday mornings. I have no doubt you've heard us in the hallways. We have welcomed a lot of new young faces this month and it has been a joy to connect with new families. I was reminded of a certain Bible story when we prepared a pancake breakfast the Sunday before Lent and were surprised with twice as many children as we were expecting! Somehow we had more than enough for everyone – God always provides! And special thanks to two of our youth who enthusiastically took on the shared role of cooking all the pancakes!

One particular Sunday morning, I faced a dilemma. How to plan a Sunday School lesson in the middle of the Olympic Gold Medal Hockey game? Was there a Psalm that I could somehow

tie into the theme AND make sure the kids could watch the hockey game if they wanted to? Turns out there was. Psalm 133. Do you know it? "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" What better example than that of people setting aside all their other differences to come together in a show of support for their team and their country. I'll admit I had to take a moment to gather myself when the winning goal was scored, but we took the opportunity to talk about all the happy fans sharing in the joy of their winning team, and the not-so-happy fans comforting each other, offering hugs, and such positive words for the players and for each other. What if we went through all of life showing such wildly unconditional support and encouragement for one another? How good and pleasant that would be.

Speaking of teamwork – Kids Club and Youth Group

were all about teamwork this month. Kids Club set to work in the kitchen making pizzas and brownies, sharing the work of food prep and clean-up and enjoying a meal together (with the traditional 'hide-and-peek-in-the-dark' that ends every gathering!) Youth Group took on a bigger challenge at Confundrum Escape Rooms. It takes a lot of teamwork and thinking outside the box to solve these puzzles and the sense of accomplishment is huge when you solve even a few of the riddles. If you haven't tried one of these, I highly recommend it! Fun for all ages.

Plans for Fun In The Sun summer camp are moving right along. We have a strong team of leaders registered already, and campers, new and returning, have begun to submit registrations. I'm getting excited for this 'under the ocean' themed camp. If you would like to take part as a snack volunteer or a half-day adult volunteer

offering supervision and an extra pair of hands, now is the time to get your calendars out! I'd be happy to chat with you more if you have any questions.

To all our families with

young ones, I wish you a safe and blessed March Break and can't wait to see you back for Kids Club and Youth Group at the end of the month to hear about all your adventures!



CARRIE FORD-JONES  
CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATOR

*Youth Group*  
**Baking Challenge**  
 Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm  
 ♥♥♥♥♥

**JOYFUL NOISE STUDIO**  
 EXPLORING THE PSALMS THROUGH ART AND MOVEMENT  
 SUNDAYS 9:30AM  
 AGES 4 AND UP

MARIO KART  
 JUST DANCE

**KIDS CLUB GAME NIGHT**  
 SUNDAY MARCH 22ND  
 6:00 - 7:30 PM  
 START AGES 8-11

CONTACT [CARRIE@STCB.CA](mailto:CARRIE@STCB.CA) FOR MORE INFORMATION

FUN IN THE SUN  
 SUMMER CAMP  
 AGES 4-11

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!  
 JULY 20 - 24  
 2026

**SUMMER**  
 diving into friendship with god

LEADER TRAINING WEEK  
 AGES 12+  
 JULY 13-17

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!  
 CONTACT [CARRIE@STCB.CA](mailto:CARRIE@STCB.CA)

# COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR 2026



The Coldest Night of the Year is so much more than a single winter evening walk, it is a powerful, compassionate, nationwide movement bringing hope, dignity, and practical support to people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness. Each step taken is a statement that no one should feel alone or unseen in our community.

As our 12th year has come to a close, we find ourselves filled with gratitude and pride as we reflect on what an incredible day it has been. What a night! What a community! With 172 dedicated walkers, 53 generous volunteers, and the tireless efforts of our small-but-mighty Open Doors staff and supporters, we did more than just reach our goal ...we surpassed it! Together, we raised \$76,109

in support of our programs that provide warmth, meals, connection, and hope to those who need it most. It wasn't just about fundraising; it was about standing together. It was about compassion in action. It was about community.

And while we celebrate what has been accomplished, we are already looking ahead with excitement and renewed energy for what's next.

Spring is around the corner, and with it comes fresh opportunities to gather, serve, and grow together. We are thrilled to offer another chance to support Open Doors by selling soup on Soup-er Sunday, March 22nd between the services. This is a simple and delicious way to warm hearts and bellies while continuing to fund the work that happens

every single day behind the scenes.

If you've ever thought about volunteering but felt unsure about where to begin, or if our Better Impact software has felt like a hurdle, we've got you covered. On March 27th, we're hosting a relaxed, supportive learning session designed to walk you through it step-by-step. Whether you prefer one-on-one help or learning in a small group setting, we'll sit together, answer questions, troubleshoot challenges, and make sure you feel confident navigating the system. No stress. No pressure. Just support.

We also invite you to save the date for our Volunteer Appreciation Event on April 24th. This evening will be dedicated to celebrating YOU, the hands and hearts that make everything

possible. More details will be shared soon, but please mark your calendars. We cannot wait to honour the amazing people who support our programs.

As we step into this new season, we are also looking forward to launching some

new spring initiatives. These are opportunities to expand our impact, strengthen community connections, and partner with greater intention. There is fresh momentum in the air, and we are excited about the possibilities ahead.



SHANNON SHUELL  
GOOD FOOD COORDINATOR

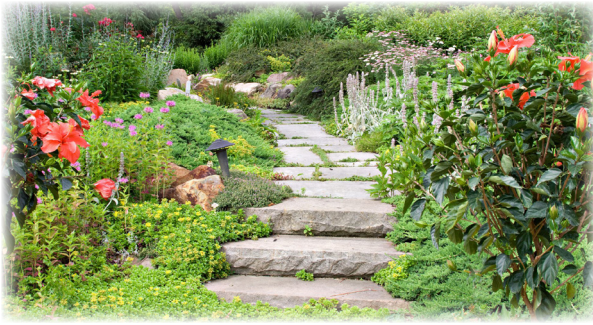


# CNOY 2026





# Music in the Garden



**Friday | 22 May | 6.00pm**

Potluck dinner &  
beautiful music from the St. Christopher's Choir



## Night on the Town

Friday | 20 March | 6pm

Potluck Dinner

Featuring Peter Banting Swingtet | Bring your dancing shoes!

## FROM THE REGISTRY

### Funerals

Jan 17, 2026 Eunice Doris Matheson

Jan 22, 2026 Christine Ann MacDonald

Jan 30, 2026 Kathleen Coats



## Burlington Mindfulness Meeting

Wednesday | 11 & 25 March | 7.00pm



The Accessibility Committee brings you the next event in their occasional education series featuring guest speaker, Memoona Saeed, from the Alzheimer Society of Hamilton Halton. This presentation is designed for those supporting people with an Alzheimer's diagnosis, and anyone who is committed to making St. Christopher's a more accessible and inclusive congregation. Join us in the Great Hall!

Saturday | 25 April | 1.30pm



## Mental Health Care Support

Providing care to loved ones experiencing mental health challenges can be overwhelming. Come join a safe and confidential space with others on a caregiving journey to share experiences, discuss concerns, and be supported by others confronted with similar situations. Facilitated by community experts, this group meets in-person in the Family Room. Next dates: Monday, 13 April at 7pm.



## Finding Ourselves in the Story – Lenten Series

Wednesday | Mar 4, 11, 18, 25 | 7.00pm on Zoom

Thursday | Mar 5, 12, 19, 26 | 10.30am in person

Please contact the church office to sign up



## Volunteer Appreciation

Thank you to all of you who help to make St. Christopher's  
a vibrant and hope-filled place.

*You are invited to our Volunteer Appreciation Evening!*

Friday, 24 April | 6.00pm

# CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMITTEE



**T**his past November St. Christopher's embarked on a new fundraising adventure, namely, offering fresh Christmas trees for sale. This was a good first endeavour, one we will be able to build upon next winter. Christmas day found us with unsold trees and you may have wondered where they went.

We were anxious to find an environmentally helpful way to dispose of the trees and so our Facilities Coordinator Chris Jones, ably assisted by Michael Peroune and Eric Henley, transported the leftover trees to the Royal Botanical

Gardens (RBG). There, the trees will be used in various wetland restoration projects and they were grateful to receive them.

Wetlands are land areas that are saturated or flooded with water either permanently or seasonally and World Wetlands day is celebrated each year on February 2nd. Wetlands are essential because they provide habitat for plants and animals, act as a "biological supermarket" providing huge amounts of food for animals, improve water quality by cleaning our water of pollutants, reduce flooding by storing

excess water and acting as a buffer against shoreline erosion, and store large amounts of carbon. They also provide us with opportunities for recreation and nature appreciation!

St. Christopher's trees will be used in various stream-restoration projects around aquatic ecosystems on RBG property. Since this work began, over 175,000 trees have been repurposed and placed into the banks of the Chedoke and Grindstone Creeks. Once placed, their branches begin to collect and retain suspended sediment which helps form a riverbank, something previously demolished by invasive Common Carp. As the years go by and more trees are added, the riverbanks become fortified and stabilized, which help channel the flow of water during high-water events.

The placement of trees also helps by creating essential habitat for birds, mammals, insects, reptiles, amphibians and most importantly a strong soil bed where native plants can take root and begin to sprout. All of this work supports biodiversity here in our community and we are so grateful to be able to contribute to this good work. Look for the berms that have been built by the trees over the years the next

time you are walking along the shore on RBG property!

Next year we hope to sell all of our trees but we will let our customers know, as we did this past December, that they can register with the RBG to donate their tree following the holiday season to this important work.

Sources: [rbg.ca](http://rbg.ca), [worldwetlandsday.org](http://worldwetlandsday.org), Hamilton Naturalists' Club Facebook

## Upcoming:

Pollination Invitation

*Don't let the butterfly flutter by!*

Sunday, April 26th between the services

Why pollinators are important and how you can help them thrive!



CAROL HENLEY



# POLLINATORS

DON'T LET THE BUTTERFLY FLUTTER BY

**Sunday | 26 April | between the services**

Why pollinators are important and how you can help them thrive!

# JAZZ VESPERS



## JUST HOLD ON



Rebecca Hennessy  
Trumpet and Vocals



Matt Newton  
Piano



Tim Shia  
Drums



Jim Sandilands.  
Bass



Rob Somerville  
Trombone

Sunday  
15 March  
2026

St. Christopher's  
662 Guelph Line  
Burlington

4.00pm  
Free Will  
Offering



## Climate Justice

Pray • Learn • Act • Advocate

### Next Meeting

Tuesday | 17 March | 7.00pm

# REPAIR CAFÉ

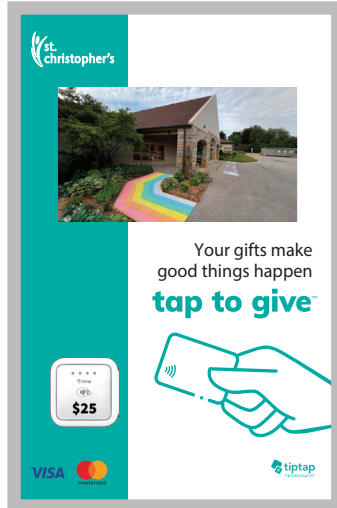
## Bring It | Fix It | for Free

Volunteers help you fix broken household items  
(there may be a small charge if parts are needed)

Please send an email to explain what you'd like to get fixed,  
and to reserve a time slot: [burlingtonrepaircafe@cogeco.ca](mailto:burlingtonrepaircafe@cogeco.ca).

**Saturday | 21 March | 10am - 2pm**

St. Christopher's | 662 Guelph line | Burlington ON



Find our new silent cashier in the Atrium!

Tap to pay and then scan QR code to record donation receipt details.

Try it!



## Mondays - Dance with Candace

**Line Dance**

5.30pm beginner | 6.30pm advanced

**Partner Dance**

7.30pm



## Ginger Group

Calling everyone 55+ or retired! Our next gathering will be Monday, 16 March at 11.30am. The topic will be Hearing Loss in Seniors. Contact Winston or John at [staff@stcb.ca](mailto:staff@stcb.ca) for more information.



## Tai Chi

Wednesdays 7.00pm



## Watercolour Wednesdays

with Cheryl Goldring

Wednesday, 4 March at 12 noon

\$35 per session. All materials are provided, including professional instruction. Gather with others in a warm and encouraging space. Light beverages are included. Registration required at [staff@stcb.ca](mailto:staff@stcb.ca).

## MAP

### Reshaping Parish Culture

On Zoom with Gail Grant

Tuesday | 3 March | 7pm



## Seniors' Social

Tricia Clarke and this warm and wonderful group of seniors meets Tuesday afternoons in the Family Room at 1pm. Enjoy a time of refreshment, games and conversation. Bring your special energy to build some new relationships. Please contact [staff@stcb.ca](mailto:staff@stcb.ca) for details. (On the last Tuesday of the month, this group meets offsite at 1pm.)



## Bridge Group

Welcome to those wishing to join us for a game of Bridge! All are welcome but previous experience is appreciated. Light refreshments will be provided. You don't need to be a regular at St. Christopher's to join this group. Please contact Liz at [staff@stcb.ca](mailto:staff@stcb.ca) for more information. Upcoming meetings are: 9 and 23 March at 2pm.



## Prayer Shawl Group

Plan to join this passionate and caring group at their next meeting: 26 March at 1pm. If you have never knitted before, come and learn. Meet friends over shared creative skills.



## Men's Cooking Groups

Men's Cooking Combined will meet on Monday, 9 March at 9.30am. Come and learn how to be a proficient cook. Share your skills and knowledge if you are already experienced in the kitchen. Please contact Bob or Gerry at [staff@stcb.ca](mailto:staff@stcb.ca) if you are interested.

# APRIL RUMMAGE



**FRIDAY 10 4.00 - 7.00PM**  
**SATURDAY 11 9.00 - 12.00NOON**

Gently used, working, and clean items may be dropped off at the church.

Wed. 8 Apr. – noon to 4.30pm or Thur. 9 Apr. 9.30am to 4.30pm

**Please no large furniture!**

Volunteers may sign up for shifts for the Rummage Sale through Better Impact or call the church office (905.634.1809) to leave a message.

A coordinator will return your call.

# EASTER AND HOLY WEEK

**Palm Sunday 8.00am | 9.30am | 11.30am**

**March 29 Holy Eucharist**

**Mon | Tues | Wed 7.30pm**

**March 30 – April 1 Holy Eucharist**

**Conversation around how biblical authors changed the Bible!**

**Maundy Thursday 7.30pm**

**April 2 Holy Eucharist**

**Hand Washing**

**Stripping of the Altar**

**Good Friday 10.00am**

**April 3 Meditation on the Cross**

**(Children's programs available)**

**Easter Vigil 8.00pm**

**April 4 Vigil and Choral Eucharist**

**Easter Sunday 9.00am**

**April 5 Choral Eucharist featuring the Choir**

**(Children's programs available)**

**11.00am**

**Choral Eucharist featuring the Band**

**(Children's programs available)**

