

# CHURCH CHAT

## THORNDALE UNITED CHURCH NEWS

Mission Statement: *"We are a Church that is a place for spiritual renewal and growth and a place in which we learn about and engage in Christ's work of peace, love and justice. The Church as the body of Christ is a fellowship of hope, a family where all are welcomed, valued, needed and nurtured."*

Image: Alphaorg



### MINISTER'S MESSAGE:

#### Minister's Message

As we continue our sermon series *Spirit and Life* through to the end of June, I've been reflecting on Jesus' words in the Gospel of John 6:63: **"The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life."** What a gift it is to know that when we open Scripture, we are not just reading ancient words on a page — we are encountering words that still breathe life into us today.

In a world full of scrolling, swiping, and endless notifications, carving out time to read the Bible can feel like one more thing on the to-do list. But it doesn't have to be. Reading Scripture is not homework; it's an invitation. It's a chance to pause, listen, laugh, wonder, and be surprised by God. Sometimes a single verse can stay with us all day, offering comfort, challenge, or even a much-needed smile.

This summer, I encourage you to pick up your Bible simply for the joy of it. Read a few verses with your morning coffee, before bed, or while sitting in the sunshine. No pressure to finish a whole book — just start. God has a way of meeting us in those small, ordinary moments, and those words truly are spirit and life.

Pastor Pam

Church Chat Issue:  
June July 2026

Sunday Worship for people of all ages  
11:00 am at Thorndale

Office: 519-609-6132  
office@tzuc.ca  
www.tzuc.ca

## THORNDALE CHURCH SERVICES

Church services are held at 11am on Sundays. Lighthouse Sunday School is available during services.

July and August church services will be outdoors at 11am (July 26th service will be at 9:30am).  
Lighthouse Sunday school is not offered during outdoor services.

**June 7.** Thorndale United Church Annual Picnic at ECO Park. Service begins at 11:00 am, followed by pot luck lunch. Beverages will be provided. Bring your favourite dish to share along with dishes, cutlery, lawn chair, etc. Fishing with John Elliott will follow lunch. Bring your pole or some will be available to borrow, worms are provided.

**June 9.** Thorndale UCW are going to the Walter Family Theatre to see Rhinstone Cowgirl. All those who have purchased tickets please meet at the church at 12:30 to car pool. After the show we will be going to Quehl's in Tavistock for supper.

**June 14.** Donations for St. Marys Food Bank gratefully accepted. Suggestions: Canned Pasta, Canned Fruit, Canned Meat, Juice, Rice, Crackers, Pancake Mix, Oatmeal, Ketchup/Mustard/Relish.

**June 17.** Thorndale Council meeting in the Fellowship Hall at 7:30pm.

Save the Date! Sun. Nov. 8 – We are having a fundraiser to help cover some of the costs of the church renovations. The entertainment is "Frankie and the Fairlanes", they play 50's & 60's music. First show will be a 3 pm at Thorndale United Church and possibly a 2nd show later in the day.

**August 16.** Good Neighbour BBQ. Brown' United Church. Bring a potluck dish, plates, cups and cutlery, plus a lawn chair. Entertainment starts at 5:30 and supper will start at 6:00pm. Everyone is welcome.



In the spirit of Easter, our youth group recently gathered for a special craft activity. Ten students created clay tombs to celebrate the risen Christ.

"It was a little crazy, but a lot of fun!"

Marilyn Flanigan



# Ham and Strawberry Supper



These are the committee members who make it possible to pull together our Annual Strawberry/Ham Supper. I (Charlene) am also part of this committee, but I was behind the camera taking the picture!

Bob Graham is the backbone of this whole group. Without his dedication and commitment, we simply would not be having this supper. Thank you, Bob, for everything you do.

Bob Graham and Diane Vanden Boomen take care of picking up all the supplies for the supper and delivering them where needed. As always, there are many pieces to the puzzle that must come together to make this event a success. Pat Jones was busy organizing workers for the dining room and volunteers for the takeout area. I made many calls requesting donations of cakes and jello, and I would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed. My husband Keith and I look after managing the takeout area. Yvonne Elliott keeps the kitchen crew working together smoothly. Diane oversees the dining room to ensure everything runs as it should.

Then there are the dozens of ladies and men who arrive early on the morning of the supper to hull strawberries, bake beans, and prepare the hundreds of containers of coleslaw and baked beans that will be enjoyed by so many hungry families. And let's not forget the students who volunteer their time and help wherever needed—your assistance is so greatly appreciated!

We are grateful for every person who plays a part in making this event happen.

We hope you enjoyed your dinner on May 19th, and thank you all so very much!!

Charlene Kuepfer



STRAWBERRY & HAM SUPPER report from Bob and Darlene.  
We fed approximately 734 people & made approximately \$9,600.00.  
Thank you to everyone for such a successful event.



Well, yet once again, our team of faithful workers has just put on the annual Strawberry/Ham Supper.

There are so many components to putting this all together. There are countless details behind the scenes that go into making this happen... from picking up all of the supplies, to having the strawberries delivered, and the many volunteer hands that came to hull the strawberries... setting up the tables, cutting the cakes, and the tireless volunteer staff who work in the kitchen to keep things running. The guys and gals who bake the beans for a delicious treat to add to our meals. The many runners who put in more than their 10,000 steps for the day, bringing potato salad, jello, and ham when needed in the takeout section... to the students who show up to help wherever they can—their help is so appreciated... thanks to all!!

Thank you to all the ladies who donate their delicious cakes and Jello... there wouldn't be a supper without these goodies!

To all those who stay to clean up... this year was, and will continue to be, more of a challenge due to the storm and tornado warnings that came through our area while we were serving our meals to everyone.

We lost power at the community hall, so we continued to prepare takeout dinners as best we could, and everyone continued to do the same in the dining room. The clean-up continued to the day after the dinner as the power was not restored. This left an explosion of dirty dishes in the kitchen since the dishwasher could not be run. So many of the dedicated workers returned the following day to clean everything up!

Again, I could name names, but I'm sure I would miss someone... thank you to all who make this happen every year. You are all so appreciated!!

Charlene Kuepfer





@519Pursuit

### **Mission Sunday**

On May 3rd, Thorndale United Church held its Mission Sunday service, which was prepared by Mary Shoebottom. We were very pleased to welcome Michele Boissonneault from 519 Pursuit in London, Ontario, as our guest speaker.

Michele, an outreach worker and donation day coordinator with 519 Pursuit, shared her powerful story of overcoming addiction and homelessness. She spoke openly about her personal struggles while living on the streets and how the support she received through 519 Pursuit helped transform her life. Now drug-free for four years, Michele's journey is a remarkable example of perseverance, determination, and hope.

Her message gave us all much food for thought and reminded us that positive change is possible, even in the most difficult circumstances. Today, Michele uses her experiences to help others facing similar challenges, offering encouragement and hope for a brighter future.

The choir, under the leadership of Rose Duffin, beautifully presented "Try a Little Kindness," a fitting message that complemented the theme of the service.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the service and to those who generously donated items for Michele to take back to support members of the homeless community. Your kindness and generosity are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Michele, for sharing your inspiring story with us and for the important work you continue to do through 519 Pursuit.

Article created through submissions by Elaine Clays and Charlene Kuepfer





Another successful Spring Luncheon was put on by the ladies of the UCW at Thorndale United Church.

From the cutting of vegetables for the salads, to rolling the meats, and preparing and plating the delicious desserts to satisfy everyone's sweet tooth, many hands came together to make this event a success. Beautiful flowers were cut and arranged in vases to brighten our tables, and the faithful efforts of our members working together certainly made the work lighter.

We thank everyone who helped pull this event together, as well as those who stayed behind for the major clean-up (namely Pastor Pam and a few others who remained downstairs during the entertainment). You are all very much appreciated!

This event did not come without its challenges. On the morning of the luncheon, Elaine Clays received a phone call from the guest speaker who had been booked for the event. Unfortunately, he was ill and unable to attend.

In situations like this, it certainly helps to know talented and generous people in the community who are willing and available to step in at the last minute. Elaine contacted local performer Neala Lawson, who graciously agreed to come and fill in.

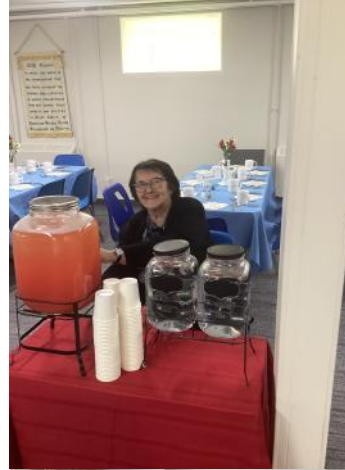
How grateful we were to welcome this lovely lady and enjoy her many talents! Neala sang and played a variety of fun and familiar songs, had everyone singing along, and shared some great jokes. She certainly brought some much-needed sunshine to our day!

Thank you so much, Neala!

Giving Neala a break between songs, Elaine also raffled off some beautiful surprise bags filled with goodies.

Thank you again, Elaine, for saving the day! We truly appreciate all that you do.

Charlene Kuepfer





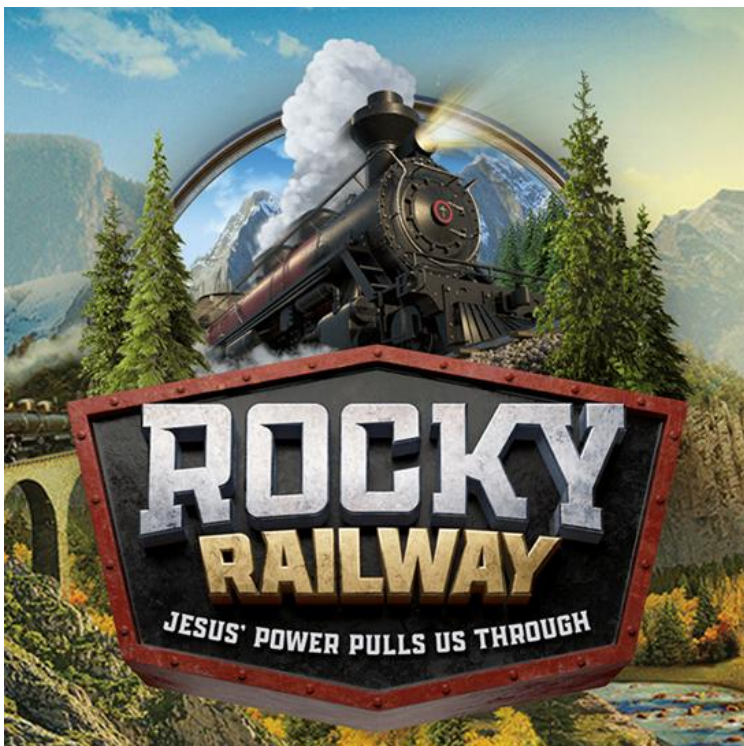
# A Musical Mother's Day



Wow!! Look at this group of handsome guys! What a treat it was for all the ladies in the congregation to sit back and enjoy being entertained. Led by our wonderful Rose Duffin, they performed a flawless song in honor of all the mothers on their special day. Thank you again to all the guys, and to Rose, for bringing it all together!

Charlene Kuepfer





### THORNDALE KIDS BIBLE CAMP (formerly VBS)

Camp will be the week of July 13 - 17 - 9:00 a.m. - noon - at Thorndale United Church.

Theme for the week is "Rocky Railroad".

Children - SK to Gr. 6 are invited to attend for Bible stories, songs, games, snacks and fun with friends new and old.

We welcome student volunteers as Crew Leaders to help out and will be credited with their volunteer hours.

Registration fee - \$30.00/camper or \$90.00/family of 3 or more.

To register or for more information - email: Yvonne Elliott - [elliottjy@bell.net](mailto:elliottjy@bell.net) or Pam Wilcox - [pamwilcox@hotmail.ca](mailto:pamwilcox@hotmail.ca)

Registration due by: June 22, 2026

Each week Pastor Pam sends out an AI generated summary of her sermon plus 5 short, related devotions to consider through the week. If you would like to receive this email, please send Pam your email address and she will add you to the group: [pamwilcox@hotmail.ca](mailto:pamwilcox@hotmail.ca)



### JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 in the Zion Room—until Mid June.

If you are looking for a place to talk about faith and explore the treasures of God's Word, look no further. Every week we gather and plunge ourselves into the stories of God's word. Every week we come out richer in faith and in Spirit.

Our current study is focused on 1 Kings, the stories of Solomon and the Temple, plus a barrage of evil kings that followed him. Join us for chapter-by-chapter study and let the Holy Spirit wow you!

No experience necessary! We are all learning together.

For more information contact Pastor Pam [pamwilcox@hotmail.ca](mailto:pamwilcox@hotmail.ca)



Audio sermons are available on our website:

[www.tzuc.ca](http://www.tzuc.ca)





# SUMMER BOOK CLUB

Last years summer Book Club was so well received that I decided to offer another. I have 10 copies of the book “Mere Christianity” by C.S. Lewis. It was first published in 1952 and is available on Amazon (There are many different cover designs) If you would like to join me, please pick up a copy at the church. If you wish, you may purchase the book for \$10 from me or I can loan you a copy.

Audio and Kindle versions are available online. Please let me know if you are reading along with us This is a great opportunity to invite your friends. We will meet together over pot luck charcuterie to discuss the book on Aug 15th at 7:30 pm at Browns UC.

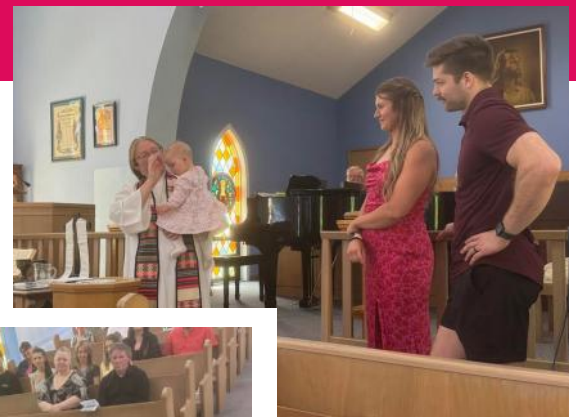
Pastor Pam

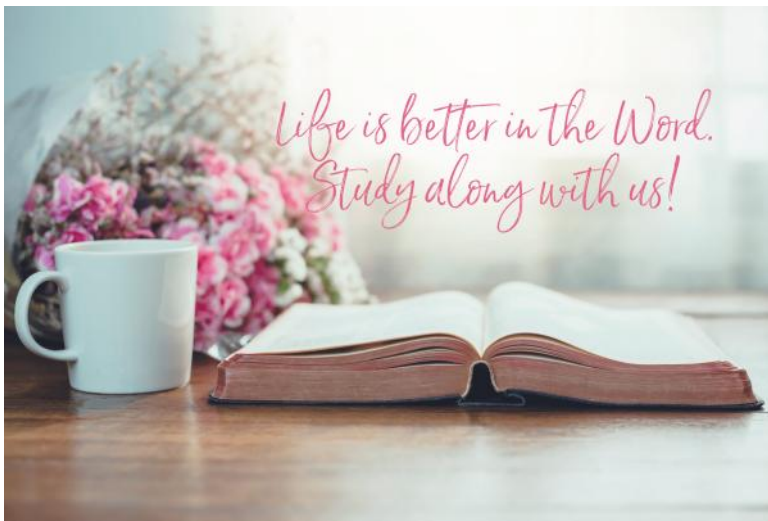
## *About the Book*

In the classic Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis, the most important writer of the 20th century, explores the common ground upon which all of those of Christian faith stand together. Bringing together Lewis’ legendary broadcast talks during World War Two from his three previous books The Case for Christianity, Christian Behavior, and Beyond Personality, Mere Christianity provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and nonbelievers alike to hear this powerful apologetic for the Christian faith.

# BAPTISM

On May 31, 2026, Payton Anna Taylor was baptized, marking a special step in her faith journey. Payton is the daughter of Keeley and Wyatt Taylor. This joyful occasion was celebrated with love, faith, and gratitude.





## **Bible Study**

Studying the Bible matters because it is God's written word to us and a primary way God speaks to us. Studying the Bible helps us grow in wisdom and discernment and deepens our love for God and for others.

Our regular Bible Study group has been meeting for 9 years now. We have grown so much in our faith and in our general understanding of Scripture. We have wrestled with hard passages and time and time again have found ourselves in the story.

We are currently reading the book of 1 Kings. This will wrap up mid June and we will take a break over the summer. Our sessions will begin again October 6 when we will start a new book tbd. If you have been curious about Bible study October is a great time to join us. We meet every Tuesday at 7 pm our nights always end by 9pm often earlier, never later.

In addition, I would like to offer a beginner friendly day time Bible study this coming year. If you are interested please message me and together we will determine a time and place (could be held at the Manor).

In the meantime, just open your Bibles and begin to read!

Pastor Pam (pamwilcox@hotmail.ca )



Our weekly gathering was concluded the last Wednesday of May. We had a wonderful time teaching these 14 young people more about Jesus and our faith. We look forward to the fall when we will start again. The kids have been enthusiastic and loads of fun! Thank you to the parents who entrusted your child(ren) to us each week. Thank you for making this ministry important in your child's life. May God grow the seeds we have sown.

A huge special thank you from all the kids and leaders to Pat Jones for feeding us every week! Your meals were perfect and the time we sat and ate together with the casual conversation felt like family. Thank you for your faithful service.

I would also like to give Marilyn Flanigan a shout out for her amazing leadership. This program was her brainchild as she was obedient to the word God put on her heart. Thank you for the invitation to be a part of it. Thank you also to Alesia Tafaj for your support in this ministry. I personally have enjoyed learning from you and I know the kids loved when you led them. Your passion for Jesus is very apparent!

A final thank you to our clutch man Stu McCutcheon. He stepped up anytime we needed an extra leader when one of us was going to be away. Thanks for valuing what we do and doing your faithful part to support it!!

Overall, we were delighted God chose us to sow into the lives of these young people. I know God will do amazing things in their lives.

Pastor Pam

### *Take a Chance - Pat Jones*

Over the years I have helped with Sunday School, Nursery, Youth Group and Vacation Bible School. I must say, it is very gratifying to watch the children grow and mature physically and cognitively, but the greatest gift is seeing them mature in their faith! It is seen in a story they tell, an answer that they express, the offer of saying a personal grace before we eat. Take a chance. Come and join the group that supports the growth of our youth. It will be more than the kids that grow in faith if you do so.

### *Mount Olivet Divine Service - Elaine Clays*

On April 26th we were happy to have over twenty Mount Olivet 300 Lodge members at our church service. Worshipful Master Jack Nichol told us of his time when younger attending this church. He also commented on Pastor Pam's sermon of a couple of years ago on "Brotherly Love" and how it had moved him to take action. Pastor Pam's message this year was "Harmony in Community" which was well received. The Choir sang "I Will Teach the World to Sing". Lunch was served after in the Friendship Hall.

### *Thorndale Fair Church Float - Elaine Clays*

The theme for the 2026 Fair is "Tractors, Tailgates & Tunes". I think this will be a fun float to get ready. Does anybody have a tractor that they transport on a trailer that we could use and maybe a Tractor to pull it with. Also if you have any Tailgates we could borrow for the parade that would be awesome! We will also need a singer or maybe a few to ride and sing "Tunes". Let's show the community we are alive and growing!!! If you are able to help with any of these requests please let Elaine know (519-461-1065). The Parade is Saturday, September 26th.



*Happy*  
**BIRTHDAY**

Congratulations to Dorothy Jones  
on celebrating her 90th Birthday  
on April 29th!!



This happy group of ladies were busy cooking and mingling at the recent freezer meal prep session.

Thank you Marilyn Flannigan for organizing this event.

# Kindness



God commands us to be kind throughout the Bible, spanning from Old Testament laws to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, as a reflection of His own character and grace. A few examples are being "kind and tenderhearted" (Ephesians 4:32), loving neighbors (Mark 12:31), and doing justice and kindness (Micah 6:8). It turns out that kindness has a profound impact on our own well-being.

Kindness matters because it strengthens human connection, builds more resilient communities, and supports both mental and physical health. It can boost happiness by stimulating feel-good chemicals, reduce anxiety by shifting attention away from personal worries, and ease loneliness by building trust and social connection. Kindness is also linked to lower stress, reduced blood pressure, and healthier aging. In addition, it often inspires others to pay it forward and helps strengthen relationships in families, workplaces, and friendships by encouraging trust, safety, and mutual respect.

God asks us to be kind and God equips us to do so as He made kindness one of the Fruits of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23). So go be kind and celebrate with God when others are kind to you.

As many of you know I broke my wrist on July 1st and had a cast and splint on until September 10th. The outpouring of Love was unbelievable. The flowers, plants, gifts, food, cards, email, visits, phone calls, rides to hospital and Doctor's appointments I received were greatly appreciated. I am so lucky and fortunate to live in such a loving community. Then to top it off my surgeon Dr. Fabar ordered Pies from our church and wants more this year. All is Good!!!!

Elaine Clays

My Dear Departed Grandmother was always kind to me. Not just once in a while but always. She never laid on me lavish gifts and she never took me to wonderful places - but she did once take me to the movies. My Grandmother was a stoic Scot and hugs never happened, but I always felt a very strong emotional connection with her. I often wondered what was the attraction - why did I feel so close to her. This curiosity was always with me and I finally came to the conclusion that I admired her and loved her so much was because she was the only person in my young life who was always kind to me. She never had any negative comments for me and that was important for me because I was a very thin skinned youngster (I'm worse now). I was 21 when she passed and I was devastated.

John Hopkins

This past winter my daughter, Julie, was driving home from work in a snow storm. Her usual route would find her on Highway 8 and 23 but both were closed because of the strong winds and poor visibility. She was forced to take the back roads and while almost home she hit a snow drift that lifted her car, raising the tires off the roadway. She was stranded on top of this snow pile on a roadway with poor visibility and a 3 year old in the back seat.

Julie called her workplace to warn anyone who hadn't left yet that maybe they should stay put. Her boss realized she knew someone who lived near where Julie was stranded. He owned a big truck. Within minutes this man left his warm house and went out into the storm to find Julie. He pulled her out of the snow and then led her all the way to her house, driving in front of her breaking a path through the snow drifts for her car.

Pam Wilcox

# Make Kindness your Habit

I could name so many wonderful moments of kindness over the years, but one stands out that meant the world to Keith and me.

During COVID, we were celebrating our 50th anniversary. With gatherings off the table, we accepted that we'd just be receiving calls and messages - and that was fine, as long as everyone stayed healthy.

On the day of our anniversary, however, there was a knock at the door - a large box had been delivered. Inside was essentially an entire anniversary party in a box: cards, gift cards, flower arrangements, a dinner from Swiss Chalet with special napkins and chocolates, and - most touching of all - a recorded song from our granddaughter, made just for us.

Our dear friends Susan and Gerry had organized it all, collecting greetings and gifts from family and friends. Though we couldn't be together in person, this thoughtful surprise made us feel incredibly loved and connected.

Keith & Charlene Kuepfer

At the start of typing this blurb, I very flippantly thought "Yes! I've received all sorts of kindness from our church family, from friends and from our community. This will be a piece of cake to write up!" And then... I started to list all the large and small kindnesses that my family and I have received recently and that list quickly became overwhelming! Most recently when I was having a large amount of anxiety about surgery this past December, our family was blessed with many meals, loving messages from all sorts of people and a beautiful prayer scarf. It made facing the surgery and recovering from it so much easier. I was no longer focused on the negative "what ifs" but instead full of gratitude for every act of kindness we all received. In our own family, when things are chaotic, we often will buy a coffee or a sweet treat for each other to show each other that we see their struggle.

Our Youth Group talks about "God Sightings". A God Sighting is when you notice something wonderful and recognize that Jesus was a part of it. The kids are quickly coming to realize that when you look for God's Helping Hands and express gratitude for Him, it's easy to see Him in action all the time!

Keep on being Kind TUC – You're excellent at it!

Marilyn Flannigan

When I first came to Canada, everything felt unfamiliar. From the climate to food everything had changed for me. I had arrived without my parents, carrying only a few belongings and the hope that somehow life would work out.

The school became the first place that truly felt safe. At first, I was nervous to speak. My English stumbled, and I worried constantly about fitting in. But my teachers noticed and never made me feel like a burden or an outsider. Instead, they welcomed me with patience and kindness that I will never forget.

What touched me most was how their care went far beyond school walls. Some teachers used their own time to take me to appointments because they knew I had no family nearby. One of them Mr. DiLoretto even took me out for dinner. They were teachers, but they also became guides, protectors, and reminders that kindness can change someone's life.

Years later, I may forget the exact lessons taught in class, but I will never forget the people who taught me compassion through their actions.

Eris Tafaj

**God calls us to be kind. No one should be stepped over as though they were a part of the sidewalk.  
Pray that God helps you see the "invisible" ones with a generous heart full of compassion.**

As a reminder, all women are welcome to attend our UCW meetings, and we would love to have you join us!

We always enjoy great fellowship, lots of laughter, and, of course, delicious snacks.

At our recent meeting, Yvonne Meaghan, with the help of our talented ladies, led a fun Easter hat-making project. Using paper plates, feathers, birds, stickers, and plenty of creativity, we designed some truly unique and interesting hats.

A special thank you to everyone who brought snacks to enjoy along with coffee and tea. Your contributions helped make the afternoon even more enjoyable.

Thank you all for another wonderful time together.

Charlene Kuepfer

