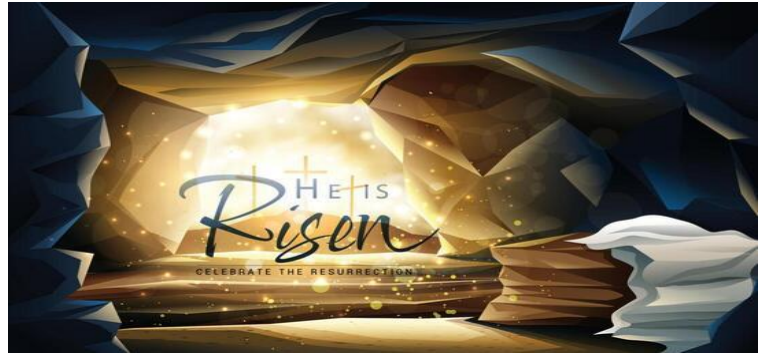


# Rowntree Acorn

Easter 2026 \_\_\_\_\_



## From the Minister's desk:

I have been thinking about the wonder of renewal in recent days. In spite of the never-ending winter, I have witnessed encouraging sightings that announce that spring is bursting out. The words of the hymn, "Now the green blade rises", echo in my head like a sound worm.

"Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
love is come again, like wheat arising green."

My crocuses are up, some in my flower bed and some out on the lawn. They are always a surprise that my squirrel helpers spring on me each year. I've not sighted any of my tulips. They may have left my yard completely. I will have to plant some again next fall.



My heart is lifted by my ability to keep two house plants alive and blooming over the last few weeks. (Don't laugh, I usually don't have good luck with plants.) The plants in my kitchen seem to do well and I have kept a peace lily going in my office at Rowntree. But what truly amazes me is the shamrock growing and flowering that I have been nursing since last

March. It actually has flowered! That warmed my heart!

This shamrock has special meaning for me as it was one of many that decorated the room for my son Kevin's Celebration of Life last May 15<sup>th</sup>. Kevin was very proud of his Irish heritage. And this flower felt like a smile or nod that Kevin would have given.

As we are in the midst of the Season of Easter, it is only natural that thoughts may go to the cycle of life: life / death / new life. We see this in nature and it speaks to our belief in resurrection or life after death. But it is the hope that new life in nature brings us that can be a light for the heaviness and darkness of the world we encounter each and every day.

We are a people loved by God.

May we live as signs of this love.

We are a people blessed with hope.

May we live in light of this hope.

May the love of God, the grace of Christ,

and the courage of the Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith and set us loose to share God's love with all. Amen. Easter blessings, Rev. Wendy Noble

## **Thursdays in Black**

Thursdays in black is about standing in solidarity with all people who bear the scars of violence

Thursdays in Black are observed by The United Church of Canada:

God cares for those who suffer and calls on us to work with each other for the healing of the world. The United Church's Song of Faith (2006) lifts up the church's purpose, including "fierce love in the face of violence, [and] human dignity. Gender based violence is deeply rooted in our cultures, institutions, and religions. It affects ourselves, those we love, and our communities, country, and world. In every country, gender-based violence is a tragic reality. This violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent, fearing stigma and further violence.



We all have a responsibility to speak out against violence and to ensure that all are safe from gender-based violence in homes, schools, work, streets—in all places in our societies. As a member of the World Council of churches., (WCC, a worldwide fellowship of Christian



churches), the United Church takes part in the Thursdays in Black campaign against rape and violence. Through the simple gesture of collectively wearing black, participants create an international public witness for a global movement urging an end to gender-based violence.

Every Thursday, people of faith are encouraged to stand in solidarity with all people who bear the scars of violence and demand an end to gender-based violence. Thursdays in Black has its roots in the 1970s and 1980s Argentinian movement “Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo,” referring to mothers who protested against the policy of having dissidents “disappeared” (a term used to describe people killed during political violence). These mothers assembled in the Plazo de Mayo in Buenos Aires every Thursday to register their protest with the authorities.

Thursdays in Black was started by the World Council of Churches in the 1980s as a form of peaceful protest against rape and violence, especially that which takes place during wars and conflicts. The campaign was revived, largely as a social media initiative, by the WCC in 2013.

The United Church stands in solidarity with all victims of gender-based violence, and celebrates initiatives (such as Thursdays in Black) that foster awareness and enable more voices to be heard.

I would like to share with you a prayer written for International Women’s Day with the hope of ending gender-based violence.

*Creating God, Mother of us all. We are your beloved, formed in your image and nurtured in the depth of your dark womb.*

*You breathed life into our flesh and sent us to do your work in the world,  
to care for each other and for all of creation as we would care for you:  
our life and our breath.*

*Wherever we are in your world there are survivors, victims, bystanders, and perpetrators of  
gender-based violence.*

*This violence is destroying your sacred creation,  
breaking and mutilating bodies, crushing spirits, stealing dignity, abusing trust,  
seizing power, and violating your beloved.*

*As long as violence exists among your people, anywhere, we will not be whole.*

*Until your creation is healed, we will wear black in solidarity with people around the world to  
honour the courage and resilience of the victims and survivors of gender-based violence while  
committing to work toward an end to such violence.*

*May the colour black remind us of the unimaginably deep love that you have for us and the  
cavernous well of tears shed by communities broken by violence.*

*And may black remind us of the hope for transformation that you have planted within the dark  
belly of the earth.*

*A hope that grows stronger every time a cycle of violence is broken and nurtured by each  
action against violence and rape.*

*Creating God, as long as we have breath,  
may we work with perseverance toward restoring your creation.  
Amen.*

## **Knit Happens!**

Knit Happens continues over Zoom on Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm. The crafters gather for shared enjoyment of the craft as well as to catch up with one another and to talk about the world around us. It could be just as easily called “Coffee and Conversation” except that most of the time folks are working on some project or another.

We celebrate the joy of new life and the ministry of knitters and crocheters in our



communities of faith and beyond that provide little hats for Victoria Hospital's Family Birthing Centre, the NICU and the PCCU. Thus far in 2026 we have donated over 60 hats! And we need to keep on knitting or crocheting! The Obstetrical Unit shared that they had over 6000 births in 2025.

### **Craft- Activists**



The "red hat protest" involves knitting and wearing red pointed caps to protest U.S. immigration enforcement (ICE), inspired by Norwegian resistance against Nazi occupation during WWII. Initiated by a Minnesota yarn shop, the "Melt the Ice" campaign has raised over \$600,000 for immigrant aid through pattern sales that cost \$5.00. Thanks to these efforts red yarn is in short supply in many states! People around the world have been wearing red hats to show support for the Minnesota initiative. People have been wearing the hats in the protest and protect efforts as well as at the "No Kings" peaceful protest marches.

Many thanks to our community of crafters who continue to provide items for our outreach projects like hearts for

the Pride Parade and dish clothes for the Good Samaritan Cupboard.

Submitted by Rev. Wendy

Contact Rev. Wendy or Laura in the Office for directions for the hearts,

Contact Rev. Wendy for the Zoom link ([revwlnoble@gmail.com](mailto:revwlnoble@gmail.com))

### **Doggie Tales from Ilka:**

It has been a long cold and snowy winter! I have loved it!

Snow is so much fun! I made my own trails in the back yard so I could make my perimeter checks several times per day. There wasn't a whole lot of action except from the pesky squirrels who ventured out and managed to chew up some of my Mommy's recycling. I sure let them know that wasn't allowed!

Now that the weather is starting to look like spring I am enjoying more walks in the neighbourhood. The Dog Association hold regular meetings out on the street and those that can't attend leave "pee mails" to let us know how they are doing. Going to the dog groomer

has also been an adventure. The “Hairy Barkers” are on Dundas Street almost at Lyle Street. There are always people to meet and greet. They are always very friendly and I like that they tell my Mommy how cute or pretty I am. That’s even before I go to the groomers! There are also fun dogs at the groomers and we like to take turns barking every time someone comes to the door, thinking it might be our own people come to take us home.

I keep hearing about this “Easter Bunny” that shows up for Easter and brings treats for the humans, I hope the “Easter Bunny” brings me some treats as well but not real chicks, bunnies or lambs. I would like to chase them but I would rather have some biscuits. Maybe some fresh Lamb Chop squeaky toys as I have “loved” them into a bit of a sorry state. They still squeak though!

Hope to see you all soon at church.

Doggy hugs and kisses,

Ilka the Westie ^..^



## **News from the RUC Trustees about Finances**

The Trustees are responsible for managing the church's investments.

In February, Freda, Brian and Phyllis met by Zoom with our financial advisors from the United Church of Canada recommended investment company - Frontier Capital Funds, to discuss monthly withdrawals from RUC’s investments. The information gained was provided to the Trustees who voted in favour of withdrawing \$3000 per month from the investments beginning in March 2026. The Board was informed of the plan for monthly transfers at the March Board Meeting.

In past years, the Trustees approved larger transfers from the investments a few times per year to augment the General Fund (and keep the bills paid) and avoid being in a deficit situation. In 2025, \$43,000 was transferred from our BMO investments. Monthly transfers from the investment will improve our ability to budget and meet monthly financial obligations.

As of February 17, our investments with Frontier Capital/Canoe and BMO total \$195,000 approximately (or about 65 months at \$3000 per month unless there are extraordinary expenses or a reduced income). We must begin to plan for the future of RUC because 5 years will go quickly. Freda, Brian, Kathy Barber, Bob Brown, Phyllis & Rev Wendy



## ELUCO (East London United Church Outreach) News

Nancy Howard, our community worker, continues to work 24 hours a week. She is kept busy in the Marconi area helping people with depression and anxiety problems. Also attending appointments with them when needed to help with forms or explanations. She has less time for just checking in with folks.

### Welcome Wednesday

People continue to receive a nutritious meal at Rowntree at noon every Wednesday. Program does not run in the summer. The volunteer groups have changed. Salvation Army does the first week. Siloam and ELUCO the second week. Rowntree the third week. Valleyview the fourth week. When there are five weeks, different people offer to help.

### ELUCO Food Cupboard

We continue to be open Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:30 am to noon. We are located at 1461 Huron St. We continue to have more people coming for food. We have more large families. It is a vicious circle. The prices go up and the need gets greater. We appreciate all the support that we receive from the Rowntree family. Our clients appreciate it too!

In February, I attended the North East Basic Needs Community Group It is always interesting to see what other groups are doing to assist our area.

This time someone came from Life Spin.

I was not aware of all the different programs that they have.

Anyone who lives in London can get an appointment, depending on your income.

They have a Community Food Box, an Income Tax Program and Pocket- Sized Farms and Prom Shopping Day at the Free Store just to name a few.

Rebecca from Life Spin, will be guest speaker at our next meeting on April 14 th at 335 Belfield St at 1:30 pm. She has lots of good information!

Anyone is welcome to attend.

Submitted by Judy White

## Did You Know?

Last Christmas, Rowntree distributed **food hampers to 32 families**. Thank You to everyone who donated money and time to support this.

For 2025, Rowntree supported the **United Church Mission and Service fund** to the tune of \$9695. This fund works in partnership with people and organizations and never imposes our solutions, ways of doing things, or belief systems. We aim for long-term solutions over quick fixes because we want to make a lasting difference. Thanks to donors like you and **Mission and Service partnerships**, we have;

*Partnered with 80+ organizations to provide education for women and children.*

*Raised over \$1 million for emergency relief in war-torn areas.*

*Sponsored 5,139 refugees over 10 years.*

*Supported nearly 10,000 full COVID-19 vaccinations.*

*Empowered 45 youth projects on social justice and anti-racism.*

*Raised over \$20 million annually for vital programs in Canada and abroad.*

## **SAVE THE DATES!!**

### **Rowntree Fundraising 2026**

**Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.** Forest City Singers Spring Concert – “Be Our Guest: A Disney Celebration” see poster below

**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> 5:00 p.m.** Ham & Strawberry Dinner – Stay tuned for more details.

**Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 9 a.m. – Noon** Fall Fling Yard & Bake Sale (in conjunction with Carling Neighbourhood Yard Sale)

**Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>** Fall Dinner - Tentative

**Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup> 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.** Christmas Bazaar

**Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.** Forest City Singers Christmas Concert – Details to follow at later date

*Forest City Singers*  
invite you to  
*Be Our Guest:*  
*A Disney Celebration*

**Friday, April 24 at 7:00 PM**  
**Rowntree United Church**  
**156 Elliott St**  
**519 432-8075**

**Advance Tickets \$20**  
**at Church or Long & McQuade North**  
Children 12 and under FREE  
Tickets may be available at the door

forestcitysingers@outlook.com  
<https://forestcitysingers.ca>



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*The benefits of being an active church member.....*

From an article in **Harvard – Chan School of Public Health**, Boston MA. Feb 2026

Individuals who engaged in spirituality were significantly less likely to exhibit hazardous use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and illicit drugs, according to a new meta-analysis led by researchers at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The meta-analysis is the first of its kind to synthesize and comprehensively estimate associations between harmful or hazardous substance use and spirituality—considered any practice, religious or otherwise, through which an individual finds ultimate meaning, purpose, and connection to something greater than themselves. Full article in <https://hsph.harvard.edu/news/spiritual-practices-strongly-associated-with-reduced-risk-for-hazardous-alcohol-and-drug-use/>

Word Search submitted by Marg Thompson – Thank You

# EASTER WORD SEARCH

E Y O Y O P E N T E C O S T A J N P O U  
G A R D E N S N O I T C E R R U S E R B  
C M M F F C U Y R D E T N I A P N G F R E  
Y Y N N U B P D C K X N K F K T O O S E A  
E Y P S I A P D S R O M K T B M A L W A  
C X A E Y D E Y U I U F M I R A C L E D  
L X S C C C R H S E J C E S I R P R U S  
E W C L O H T N E G N X I N W W H T T V  
N B H R Y I E U J B K C V F E F R D W M  
T R A U A C O S A R C P H A I G W B H W  
C T L F S K V P X V A K S I C X G J U I  
E U X A Y E B O B N B T E R C Y I S N N  
J Y M A A R T H S R E W O L F K E O T E  
G N I R E H T A G R H S U T Y N S H N P  
N P I K E C R B L X S T E M I K N U F H  
B Y H J W D R N A O C T H H Y D N U A M  
D M X Y A D N U S S C U S V S W E Y C C  
H N O I S S A P G D K O U A D A Y A D E R  
F A O T P A L M L U C E H H T R I B E R  
M T K E V O R H S F G J T C U X S T F V

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

## WORDS

ASCENSION  
ASHES  
BASKET  
BREAD  
BUNNY  
CHICK  
CHOCOLATE  
CROSS  
CRUCIFIXION  
DECORATE  
DYE  
EASTER  
EGGS  
FAITH  
FLOWERS  
GARDEN  
GATHERING  
HUNT  
JESUS  
LAMB  
LENT  
MAUNDY  
MIRACLE  
PAINTED  
PALM  
PASCHAL  
PASSION  
PENTECOST  
REBIRTH  
RESURRECTION  
SHROVE  
SUNDAY  
SUPPER  
SURPRISE  
TOMB  
WINE

*from Broadview Magazine, March 20, 2026*

## **How Ontario laws are ‘punishing the homeless’ amid growing crises**



Advocates say legislation passed under Premier Doug Ford’s government has marginalized the unhoused and made nonprofits’ work harder by [Sherwood Hines](#)

In September 2024, Ontario Premier Doug Ford stood before the cameras at a new housing construction site in Cobourg, Ont., and said that the homeless needed to get off their “[A-S-S and start working.](#)” Advocates saw the remark as a clear statement of where Ford — then six years in office — stood on the province’s [worsening homelessness](#) and overdose crisis....

Greg Cook, a longtime outreach worker at [Sanctuary Toronto](#), a homeless drop-in centre, says that the Ford government is trying to reframe addictions and mental health as an individual responsibility, rather than a community one. “It takes the responsibility off the government,” Cook says. “Control the narrative, stay responsible to property owners. Make it about property owners versus non-property owners. The homeless are seen as the ‘bad guys’ rather than as the most harmed people in our community.”

Another piece of legislation passed last June makes the work of nonprofits like TNG ( Toronto Neighbourhood Group) more difficult. The [Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act](#), or Bill 10, makes landlords and nonprofits legally responsible for monitoring any drug trafficking that might occur on their properties. Nonprofits who fail to comply would potentially lose provincial funding.

Soon after the bill was passed, the [Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association](#) criticized it as an unreasonable demand on nonprofits, which already operate under tight budgets and often rely on volunteer leadership.

Read full article in <https://broadview.org/doug-ford-homeless-legislation/>

### **Other notes**

**Yard cleanup – April 25, Earth Week, 10-12.** Rake up leaves, clean up clutter, etc Please bring gloves and a yard waste bag.

**Upcoming fund-raiser for Ark-Aid in June....** We are in the planning stages for this.... Stay tuned. Ark Aid ( Mission) provides essential care for Londoners living in deep poverty.



Lynn's twin grandson's celebrating St Patty's Day

We Still have some jams for sale; Hot Pepper, Strawberry & Peach, 125ml - \$3, 250ml - \$5. Contact Maryjane @ 519-878-0340



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The Acorn is published 3x a year by the Communications Committee of Rowntree Memorial United Church and edited by Brad McMurray. Articles for the next edition are due August 24 2026. Comments or articles can be emailed to [wbmcmurray55@hotmail.com](mailto:wbmcmurray55@hotmail.com) or left in the Communications mail slot at Rowntree. Stories are much more effective with pictures, as 'a picture is worth a thousand words.

Visit our web site at [rowntreechurch.ca](http://rowntreechurch.ca) to find the main parts of the past 4 Sunday services, more info on who we are, what we do, what we believe in and how you can support us. And look for us on Facebook.

Rowntree Memorial United Church is located at 156 Elliott St, London,