

Grace's Chatter – Spring 2026

He has risen indeed!

By Tammy Fergusson

Easter Greetings from Grace United Church!

Psalm 118:24 says,

"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad."



Canadians certainly know the concept of Easter, especially this winter. Despite the months of being covered with ice and snow, there is the promise of spring. Despite the exertion of shoveling the driveway and avoiding the icy roads, there is hope that the warm sun will rise again. We know all about how the toughness of winter can lead to rest and how the dark short days of winter can bring us gratitude and renewal. There can be goodness in this time of winter.

For it is written, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Christ brings us hope in our time of suffering. We may not see him, but we know he is there. May this hope be evident not only in winter, but within our lives. Perhaps the loss in your life brings your family closer together. Maybe what seems like failure brings more clarity into your life. Perhaps the loneliness you experience brings to mind the good times you once had. May the hope of Easter also bring transformation in your life.

As it says in the Bible, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall have eternal life."

Like Jesus, may there be transformation, may we experience God's gift of mercy, forgiveness, grace and God's everlasting love.

Canadians certainly know what it's like to suffer, especially this winter. But let us now stop there. As we continue to develop a deeper relationship with God, may we be open to experience the joy that Christ is risen, the growth of this new life, and the sharing of this new beginning throughout our community.

Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!

Easter is right around the corner, but so are other Sunday services

By Colleen Harding, chair of Session

Spring has arrived, and we seem to have slipped quietly from Advent right into Lent! Session and the Worship team have some special services lined up as we head into this Holy Season.

Here is the list of services and Worship Leaders for the spring season:

March

- 1 Paul Whiteley
- 8 Rev. Stephen Shay
- 15 Rev. Erin Burns
- 22 Rev. Stephen Shay
- 29 Rev. Erin Burns (*Palm Sunday*)
(*Communion*)

May

- 3 UCW
- 10 Rev. Stephen Shay
- 17 Paul & Colleen Harding :
Celebration of Song in Worship
- 24 Tammy Fergusson
- 31 Tammy Fergusson

April

- 3 Tammy Fergusson (*Good Friday*)
- 5 Paul Whiteley (*Easter*) (*Brass & Organ*)
- 12 Elaine Farley
- 19 *A Musical Service with St. Andrews*
Tammy Fergusson
- 26 Tammy Fergusson

June

- 7 Paul Whiteley
- 14 Elaine Farley
- 21 Tammy Fergusson (*Pride*)
- 28 Tammy Fergusson (*Canada Day*)

We are heading into Holy Week by celebrating **Communion on Palm Sunday, March 29** with Rev. Erin Burns. On **Good Friday**, April 3, we will be joining with our brothers and sisters from the other churches in town for the annual ecumenical **Walk of the Cross**. The walk will begin at Christ Church Anglican Church at 10 a.m. and proceed across town stopping at the Town Hall for a reading and prayer, at St. John's and St. Andrew's and ending at Grace United for coffee, and a short time of worship and meditation around 11 a.m. Everyone is invited to join us as we process carrying the cross. If you cannot join us for the walk, you are welcome to gather with us at Grace United for the closing worship. Our celebration on **Easter Sunday**, April 5, will include the glorious music of Brass and Organ. Plan on joining us on this holy day!

As you can see from our schedule above, we have several other special services planned for the spring that you will definitely not want to miss! On **Sunday, April 19th at 10 a.m.**, the leaders and congregations of Grace United Church and St. Andrew's

Presbyterian Church are holding a joint worship service, **at St. Andrew's**. The theme is **Sing us one of the songs ... Faith Onstage**, worship through the medium of musical theatre, featuring music from Godspell, Sister Act, and Jesus Christ, Superstar. Worship leaders Rev. Erin Burns and Tammy Fergusson will join with music directors Robyn Ableson and Paul Harding and choirs to provide a memorable worship experience.



We are also planning a couple of special services in May. On **May 3, the ladies of our UCW will be leading us in worship**. On **May 17**, Paul & Colleen Harding with the help of the choir, will be leading us in another **Celebration of Song in Worship**. This special service will combine familiar hymns and songs with readings, scripture and prayers. Our friends at St. Andrews will be joining us for this service. Come and sing with us as we celebrate some of our favourite traditional and new hymns.

Mark you Calendars!

On Sunday, March 29, the Session is sponsoring a free movie matinee featuring the movie **The Fourth Wiseman**. Despite its name, this is not a Christmas movie! Everyone is invited, but children must be accompanied by an adult. Free popcorn and juice will be available. Join us in the auditorium downstairs at 2:00 p.m. on Palm Sunday for this special event.

One of the responsibilities of The Session is to organize the Ushers and Readers for services. We have a group of volunteers that we draw on for this, and a roster is prepared each month via email. We can always use more volunteers! If you would like to join this group, we would be delighted to add you to our list. Just let us know! Speak to Colleen Harding or email her at colleen.g.harding@gmail.com.

Let the Music add spice to your life

By Paul Harding, Director of Music

ORGAN REFURBISHMENTS UNDERWAY

The Official Board has approved the expenditure of \$6,114.20 for urgent repairs to two main air reservoirs which supply wind to the pipes of our organ. This apparatus can be likened to the lungs and diaphragm of the human body, supplying air and maintaining a constant wind pressure. Like an accordion, the reservoir is a leather-hinged component that stores wind from the blower and regulates pressure to the pipes, ensuring consistent tone and volume. It acts as a buffer between the high-pressure, fluctuating air from the blower and the stable, low-pressure air required for the pipes.



Pictured at left are the wooden frames of our reservoirs, packed for transport to the shop of Pumfrey Pipe Organs, Alexandria, Ontario, for refurbishment and re-leathering.

Once reinstalled, they will look like this (below)



(generic photo)

The quotation is for the following work

- Remove the two lower reservoirs and transport them to the shop
- Clean and sand all parts – Re-leather all parts and replace all gaskets
- Restore curtain valve, if necessary - Re-install and adjust pressures

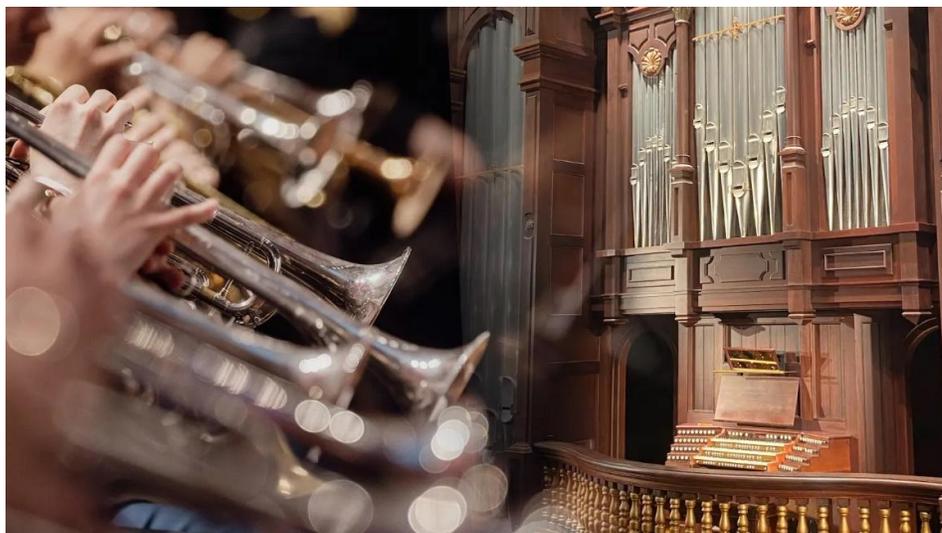
You can watch a video of the re-leathering of a pipe organ reservoir here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Aew4yR7vnY> (This is *not* in Grace United Church)

We are grateful to the family of Merna Price for providing an additional \$15,000, to be used to fund further repairs and maintenance of our fine pipe organ.

EASTER BRASS IN THE WORKS

Once again, this year, we are pleased to have a brass quintet join us for traditional



Easter music on April 5th. The service will be preceded by a 15-minute recital of music for brass and organ and brass. Come celebrate the Risen Lord with your favourite Easter hymns, accompanied by our pipe organ and brass quintet. Our worship leader for this service is Paul Whiteley.

If you would like to contribute to the cost of this special music, or any special aspect of our music program here at Grace United Church, please speak to our Director of Music, Paul Harding, or contact the Church Office.

CONCERTS CONTINUE TO PLEASE *and* RAISE MONEY

Enjoy the sounds of Celtic, Irish and Folk Music. The next concert in the Stewards' concert series is **Wednesday, March 25th** at 7:30, when they present a special St.



Patrick's treat, **SEVENTH TOWN**. This group is a four-piece Celtic folk band from Prince Edward County, Ontario. **SEVENTH TOWN** blends traditional Irish, Scottish and Canadian songs and fiddle tunes with fiddle, guitar, double bass and Irish whistles to back up four-part vocal harmonies.

The core members have been playing together for more than a decade. That musical chemistry shines through in **SEVENTH TOWN**'s thoughtful and harmony-driven arrangements of old and new Celtic and folk pieces.

Tickets are available at Beggars Banquet Books, The Gananoque Visitors' Centre and from Grace United Church Office (613-382-2161). Tickets are \$25 in advance, and \$30 at the door.

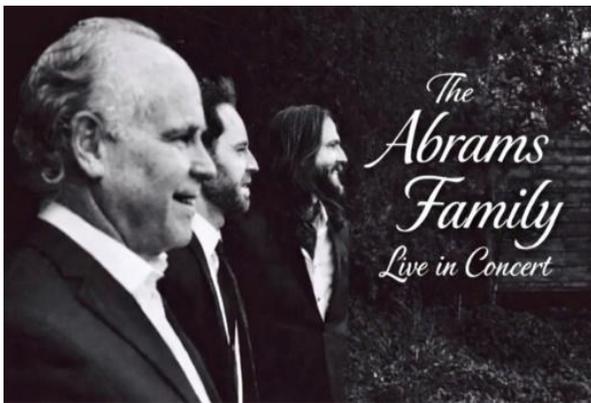
Wednesday, April 22nd, we present **"LET'S ALL SWING, SWING, SWING"** with **SUE BAKER AND THE RHYTHM MAKERS**. This 5-piece Jazz, Blues and R&B band, features the extraordinary vocalist, Sue Baker and her band, consisting of drums, piano, bass and saxophone. Formerly known as Sue Baker and the 1000 Islands Jazz Band, the group has been active for over 14 years. The band performs a versatile mix genres, including: Jazz and Blues, R&B and Soul, and Traditional Pop and Great



of

American Songbook standards (e.g., "Frim Fram Sauce", "On a Slow Boat to China"). To watch a clip of Sue Baker and the Rhythm Makers, click on this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rCobb152Us>

Our May concert, **Wednesday, May 20th** at 7:30 pm, **"A JOYFUL NOISE"**, an Evening of Old Fashioned Gospel Music, features the **ABRAMS FAMILY**. Come, hear your favourite gospel songs, performed by the legendary Abrams Family.



Wednesday, June 24th, we round out our concert season with **FEELIN' GROOVY**, a celebration of the music of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel. American musical duo, Simon and Garfunkel, consisting of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, achieved iconic status in the 1960s by wedding Everly Brothers-styled harmonies to themes of urban alienation and self-examination, which both matched and mirrored contemporary society's changes. With album sales in

Feelin' Groovy
 A Celebration
 of the music of
 Simon & Garfunkel

excess of 100 million and as the winners of a clutch of Grammy Awards, the duo defined their times while illustrating the pressures of huge success and the limitations of cooperation under media scrutiny. This show will feature the talents of our own Cliff Edwards and Paul Harding, along with bassist Bob Arlidge, keyboardist Ken Hall, and guitarist/vocalist Jamie Campbell.

WHY WEDNESDAYS? You may wonder why our concerts are on Wednesday nights. This choice is a deliberate attempt to avoid conflicting with other local presentations, which tend to be on weekends. We are sensitive to the needs of our audience as well as the other presenters and activities in town. Tickets are always available at Beggars Banquet Books, The Gananoque Visitors' Centre, and from our own Church Office 613-382-2161.

OUR OUTREACH MINISTRY continues at Carveth Care Centre and at Fox Run by the River. Monthly worship services are conducted by Tammy Fergusson, assisted by Joan Shaw, in the chapel at Carveth, while monthly sing-a-long sessions at Fox Run draw a sizeable number of residents to enjoy the fellowship of music. Director of Music, Paul Harding, along with present and former choir members lead in the singing of hymns and old favourites.

EDNA'S CAFÉ RETURNS

Our Grace United Church Women sponsor this community event, designed to unlock memories by reaching parts of the brain in ways other forms of communication cannot. Designed for persons living with dementia and their caregivers, please join us, even if you have not been touched personally by this debilitating condition. We sing songs guaranteed to bring back memories of campfires and hootenannys. Following the singing, the UCW serves tea and nibblies.

Come and support this important ministry of Grace United Church.



Edna's Musical Cafe

A Sing-along and Afternoon Tea

For everyone!
A special welcome to persons living with dementia, and their caregivers.

March 18, 2026
1:30 to 3:30pm



Music has the power to unlock memories by reaching parts of the brain in ways other forms of communication cannot.

Singing together in a social atmosphere is fun!
Please come and enjoy old familiar tunes.

**No experience necessary.
It's for everyone.**

Free Admission
Grace United Church, 120 Pine St.
(Corner of Stone and Pine Streets)
Gananoque

For more information, call 613-382-2161





Presented by Grace United Church Women (UCW)

Congratulations to Hall of Famer, Paul Harding

By Paul Scott

Our heartiest congratulations to Paul Harding who is being inducted into the Brockville and Area Music and Performing Arts Hall of Fame on Thursday, March 26th, at the Brockville Arts Centre. He was nominated in the category of teaching and is extremely pleased to receive this recognition.



In their comments, the committee noted Paul Harding as a well-established musician, accompanist and music director. For nearly 60 years, he has served as the organist and choirmaster at Grace United Church having developed his organist skills under the watchful eye of William Hawke; he taught music in local schools and has since continued to teach music privately. But there is more.

Paul Harding developed his guitar skills as part of the local Bilton Brothers Band which morphed into the very popular Coachmen Band. In addition to being a very popular live band at teen dances, over the years, this band raised thousands of charity dollars for the Gananoque community. He continues to take great pride in owning a rare Les Paul electric guitar.

In addition to teaching music at Gananoque Secondary School, Paul Harding gave generously of his time and talents providing leadership for the school band which provided a professional flair for the annual high school musicals. It wasn't long before the community noticed and he took over as music director of the Gananoque Citizens Band which held concerts each Thursday evening during the summer months in the Band Stand in the Town Park. He also formed a senior's singing group called the Swinging Sixties and later was one of the founders of the Gananoque Choral Society, a volunteer group with whom he continues to be involved. Further, in his spare time, one would often see his name in the Thousand Islands Playhouse programs where he provided his talents on keyboards.

Always willing to assist musically, one of his most recent endeavors is providing old time favourites for Edna's Musical Café, a monthly sing-along organized by Grace's UCW (United Church Women). This event is especially welcoming to persons with dementia and their care givers.

The Brockville and Area Music and Performing Arts Hall of Fame will welcome five new members at its annual induction. Lois Lorimer will be honoured in the Professional category, Mary Hughes as a Behind the Scenes inductee, Paul Harding in the Teacher category, Sue Barton under Actor/Performer, and Fiddlers Plus at this year's Band/Performing Group inductee.

Pick up your pies for Easter

By Elaine Davidson, Pie committee coordinator

Ed. She can run, but she can't hide! Thank you Elaine for sending your report from Portugal. Enjoy your vacation.

Our pie committee returned to the kitchen at Grace United in January as our freezers were nearly empty – an item which we were happy to report! We are currently re-stocking our freezers so we will be ready to sell pies for Easter.

We have Apple, Blueberry, Bumbleberry, Cherry, Peach, Rhubarb, Strawberry/Rhubarb, Raspberry and Mincemeat in our freezers now. You can order pies until March 26 by calling Carol Currie at 613-382- 4376 and pie pick up is on Thursday, March 26 from 3-6 p.m. in the church basement. Now for more good news - we had two new volunteers to help us make pies last month, which was great!

Grace United Church

 **Easter** 

PIE SALE

				
Apple	Blueberry	Bumbleberry	Cherry	Peach
Strawberry/Rhubarb	Rhubarb			

Cost \$18 each
Raspberry \$20 each

Giving and Sharing is our Strength

By Vicki Leakey, treasurer

Our church family has so much to be thankful for, we ended a successful year in 2025. Together we utilized our building to bring in rental revenue, enjoyed wonderful concerts, and the hard work of our pie ladies who have become well known in our community. Many members work to organize special events like the Christmas market and the Pancake Supper which are always a success.

Although numbers on Sunday morning might be small, those present have faith and work hard to keep Grace United Church known in the community for the many outreach programs that we encourage and for which we provide financial support. We still find visitors coming into worship on a Sunday as we welcome anyone that might wish to come in for a service. We encourage them to look at other programs available at Grace should they be looking for a new activity.

The first 2 months of 2026 have been stable for the receipts of \$25,984 brought in and expenses of \$35,016 required to be paid out. With a donation specific to repairs for the organ of \$3,313, we were able to have Pumfrey Pipe Organs complete some necessary repairs. Our church family has many talents and the success of the programs and annual financial balance is the reward for the time, effort and financial support each of us can provide.

We have several Offerings' options available for those that may not attend the Sunday Service but who wish to support the many programs at Grace United Church. Families can sign up for **Pre-Authorized Remittance** (PAR) forms which can be sent to you from our church office. **E-Transfer** from your on-line bank account is popular. Just look for "send an e-transfer" on your on- line banking website and send to grace.gan@outlook.com. Simply follow the instructions given. **Offerings by mail** is another option – send your contribution by mail to Grace Church at 120 Pine St. Gananoque, On K7G 1C7.

Thank you to all that provide the strength and direction to help us follow our mission of working hard to help those in need. Grace United Church has a wonderful community reputation and can be approached by community groups, for space for their programs, financial assistance etc. Hopefully many of you will find Spring 2026 a season of promise and new beginnings.

Celebrations for April, May, June – Happy Birthday or Anniversary to all those who celebrating over the next few months.

Happy Birthday to Jack H., Paul H., Dorothy M., David T., Betty Y., John C., Mackensie A., Maryfil H., Nicloe M., Max W., Angus F., Gloria P., Diane H., Betty M., Christina K., Shriley C., Alyn M., Tammy F., Mel W., Tom C., Doreen W., Nancy A., Eileen T., Laurie C., and Ann C.,

Happy Anniversary To Jim & Dianne W., Paul & Carolyn S., Brian & Cecile B., Steve & Connie T., Paul & Colleen H., Gerard & Laurie C., Bud & Betty W., Tammy & Angus F., and Brian & Susan T.

Congratulations Everyone!!

Contributors this month are:

Vicki Leakey, Chuck Galway, Colleen Harding, Paul Harding, Eliane Davidson, Tammy Fergusson, Laurie Cadue, Paul Scott.

Deadline for the Spring Edition of Grace's Chatter
June 12, 2026

Session: Chair: Colleen Harding 613-382-2405 colleen.g.harding@gmail.com

Board of Stewards: Chair: Vicki Leakey 613-382-4012 vickileakey@gmail.com

Official Board: Chair: Chuck Galway 613-387-2026 lyndwayhills@gmail.com

*At This Easter, May You Be Blessed With
Lots of Joy, Peace, Goodness, Happiness and Love.
Happy Easter to You and Your Family.*

