



**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF
STRATFORD
SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2026**

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Access to the live stream is available through www.stratfordcrc.org.

The service is available by telephone: 888-704-3708

Shalem Mental Health Network [CAP]: 866-347-0041

Bulletin Announcements: Thursday 12:00 pm

Email: office@stratfordcrc.org Website: stratfordcrc.org PH: 519-273-1292

“He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.” Psalm 107:29.
 Gracious God, we come together to offer You our praise and thanksgiving for Your unfailing love and faithfulness. Today is GEMS Sunday and we welcome the women and the girls of our GEMS program as they share in the service today. Through Your Holy Spirit, may we have the faith to meet You here, and the confidence to follow where You lead, even if we need to “Walk On Water.” Please join us after the service for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

ORDER OF SERVICE

10:00 am – Pastor Nick Bierma

Preservice: “O Come to the Altar”

God Calls Us to Worship

Welcome & Call to Worship

Silent Prayer & Song of Response: “Here I Am to Worship”

*God’s Greeting

*Mutual Greeting

*Opening Praise: “Goodness of God”

We Celebrate the GEMS Ministry

GEMS Aim & Theme Verse

Theme Song: “Step Out”

“Your Way’s Better”

GEMS Litany

Time of Sharing

We Confess our Sins to God

Time of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

God Speaks His Word to Us

Children’s Message

Hymn of Approach: “The Heart of Worship”

(During the Hymn of Approach children aged 3 to Grade 3 leave for Sunday school.)

Prayer of Illumination

Text: Matthew 14:22-36

Sermon: Right Here. Right Now.

*Hymn of Response: “O Praise the Name”

We Bring our Prayers and Offerings to God

Congregational Prayer

Offerings: 1. General Fund / Ministry Shares 2. GEMS Girls' Clubs
 Offertory: "Hallé Hallé (Psalm 8)"

We Go with God's Blessing

Benediction

*Closing Song: "Gratitude"

**means stand if you are able*

Elder: Barry Horensma

Hall Monitor: Kyle Egberts

Ushers: GEMS

Greeters: GEMS

Music: Praise Team – Nathaniel DeWeerd, Shauna DeWeerd, Geena DeWeerd, Jonathan Deweerd, Kierra Mosterd, Maggie Tracy, Emma Speelman

Sound: Justin Otten

Projection: Jason DeWitt

Streaming: Adam VanderHeide

TODAY'S OFFERING: GEMS – GEMS is an acronym for *Girls Everywhere Meeting the Saviour*. GEMS is a ministry devoted to bringing the Good News of Jesus to girls around the world. The mission of GEMS Girls' Clubs is to help bring girls into a living, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. Their vision is to see girls around the world actively and enthusiastically expressing love for God and others—girls equipped, motivated, and passionately engaged in living out their faith."

NEXT WEEK'S OFFERING: **Ramoth House** is a nonprofit, inter-denominational agency based in Mount Forest, Ontario dedicated to providing practical support and encouragement to young women between the ages of 16-25 who are either pregnant or parenting an infant. Young women are given the opportunity to realize their parenting potential while acquiring valuable life skills in hopes that the cycle of hurt and poverty may be ended for the next generation. For more information visit their website at www.ramoth.ca

OFFERING SCHEDULE

Apr 19: Ramoth House

Apr 26: SERVE

May 3: Christian Education Fund

May 10: World Renew

UPCOMING SERVICES

Apr 19: 10:00 am & 6:30 pm

Apr 26: 10:00 am

May 3: 10:00 am & 6:30 pm

May 10: 10:00 am

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY: Please hold in prayer those in our congregation who continue to need our encouragement and God's healing: Ann Berg, Darryl Berg, MaryAnn Frankruyter, Jeff Geleynse, Trix Heida, Maria Post, David Scheele, Gwen Soepboer, Henk Vanmeurs, and Theresa Wesseling.

CONGRATULATIONS: We rejoice with John & Janece Koolhaas with the arrival of their daughter, Marielle Hilje, on Thursday, April 8th. May God bless John & Janece with wisdom and patience as they begin this journey of parenthood.

CONGRATULATIONS: We rejoice with Wes and Jillian Balfour as they welcome their son, Ethan Richard, on March 30th. Ethan is a brother for Avery and Cohen and a grandson for Marjorie and Rick Vanmeurs. May God bless Wes & Jillian with all they stand in need of in the coming weeks and months.

PRAYERS FOR OUR MISSIONARIES: Please remember in prayer those missionaries that we as a congregation are encouraging and supporting – John and Marion Vandermeer, Benj & Brie Gillen, Stephanie Ten Hove, Tom & Beth Scott and Makayla Meinen.

RESONATE GLOBAL MISSIONS - Don't miss out on the opportunity to double your gift to God's mission! Resonate Global Mission is working to help our church spread the gospel. We can help provide hope and transform lives – and double our gift – by giving to Resonate's special campaign at www.resonateglobalmission.org/Double. Any amount we give will be matched dollar for dollar!

COUNCIL NOTES

- Reviewed the switch back to a single Sunday morning worship service and highlighted some key areas to monitor including intentional ushering, after church coffee, attendance and parking in the church lot and surrounding area.
- Received an update from the Discernment Team regarding the process they have gone through which will include a period of fasting as they finalize their proposal. Council was asked to join them in prayer and fasting April 14 to 15.
- A motion was made and carried to hold a prayer service in 2027 in conjunction with the CRC annual day of prayer.
- Received and approved the audited 2025 financial statement drafts from DBK Accounting.
- Spent considerable time discerning a list of potential candidates for the upcoming office bearer elections.
- Set tentative dates for the election of office bearers on Sunday May 24th and installation on Sunday May 31st.
- Received committee reports.

Message from Council: As we transition back to a single Sunday morning service routine, Council would like to bring a couple things to the attention of the congregation. **First**, as we are all aware of the current restrictions to the parking lot, we are asking for everyone to be mindful of how they park on Church property and the surrounding streets. We appreciate and

encourage anyone who is willing and able to come a little early on Sunday mornings and park offsite. This would assist in keeping some spaces closer to the Church open for seniors, families with young children and guests who may find it more difficult to park at a distance. Second, with one service this means there will be more people downstairs after to enjoy coffee and fellowship with their Church family. Everyone is encouraged to join in this activity and in order to do that, we will need to better utilize the current space we have including the gym and double classroom. Parents, you are reminded to please supervise your children during this time. To our young children and youth who play in the gym after church, would you please be mindful of how you use this space and the balls provided, remembering that there are others using this space as well. It is a tremendous blessing and testament to God's faithfulness to have this building full of life on Sunday mornings and we trust that with these gentle reminders it will help to foster community and fellowship among the saints.

the KINGDOM has come... join other youth from our congregation and across Ontario as we attend The Gospel Coalition Youth Conference again this year June 5-6 at Redeemer University. Only \$99 until April 30th. Explore what it really means to follow Jesus in a world that doesn't understand Him. You're not in this alone! Come for teaching that points straight to Jesus, worship with other teens, and engage in honest conversations about living for His Kingdom. With humility, we'll explore how to rely on God as you step out in faith at school, online, and with your friends. Come ready to be inspired, challenged, and encouraged to follow Jesus boldly every day. For more information check out the event website at tgccy26.ca and register today!

PROFESSION OF FAITH CLASSES: We will be meeting this Wednesday, April 15th, at 8:00 pm in the Library.

SENIOR LUNCHEON: Hello Seniors! Join us for Senior's Lunch on April 15th at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall at our church. We are looking forward to seeing you and enjoying lunch together! Please take your friends or neighbours along that you think might like to join in! If you have any questions, please talk to Ida de Bruin or Lydia de Freese!

COFFEE BREAK: Another year of Coffee Break has come to an end. We had a blessed year studying the first half of the book of Genesis. We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to all of our nursery & Little Lamb volunteers. Without you this program could not run as smoothly and we are very grateful & appreciative of the time you gave :)

ATTENTION SENIORS: The youth group would love to invite the seniors of our church to join us on **Wednesday, April 29 from 7:00–9:00 pm** for a special youth night. Come

enjoy a time of worship, fellowship, games, and snacks with us, and see what our youth group is all about. We would love to have you join us!

MANDATORY VOLUNTEER TRAINING: The Safe Church Committee is hosting a mandatory 10-minute volunteer training session for everyone serving in any position involving work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults. The purpose of this training is to help ensure a safe environment for all, to educate volunteers on Safe Church policy, and to comply with our insurance. Please join us in the sanctuary right after the morning service for 10 minutes on either April 26 or May 3. Thank you for serving the church, and for your willingness to participate in this training. Please get in contact with someone from the safe church committee (Tom Scott, Bonnie DeWeerd, Adrianna Borgdorff, Kristen Parker) if you cannot make one of the dates or have any questions.

ALPHA UPDATE: Hi everyone, thank you for your prayers. Alpha is on its 4th week now and going well. There are 22 people regularly coming out. This Monday the topic is, "How Can I Have Faith?" We ask for your continued prayer. Thank you.

PARENTS WITH SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN: Parents sending children to a Christian elementary or secondary school for the upcoming 2026/2027 school year are encouraged to apply for grant assistance through our church. This grant is available to all members. The form is available online at <https://crc.mosterd.ca>. We are asking that this form is completed before May 30, 2026. For more information, please contact a committee representative: Kirby Pol, Anthony Deweerdt, Henry Olbach, Joe Timmermans or Heidi Flikkema.

NOMINATIONS FOR DEACONESS: Consistory is seeking faithful women to serve our church community as Deaconess. The Deaconess fulfill a significant role, serving women and children inside and outside the church and therefore building up the Body of Christ. We believe that a significant part of the process of seeking God's will for our congregation is to have members of our church prayerfully nominate women to serve as Deaconesses. The names of those nominated will be considered by Consistory at the next meeting. Please contact your district Elder or the Clerk with your nominations. As you prayerfully consider those you nominate for such service in our congregation, you may find the following helpful.

Qualifications: Think of individuals who have demonstrated that they have been given gifts by God in mercy and have the willingness and the time to use these gifts. The tasks of a deaconess call for believers who are Christ-like, who are mature in faith and who will exercise their position with prayer, patience, and humility.

Character: The above gift set and tasks may seem overwhelming, yet what is vital is their dedication to Jesus Christ. What a person does needs to flow out of who that person is on the inside. Think of people who right now are demonstrating that they have a sincere love for

Christ, someone who has a servant attitude towards others, and who has a willingness to keep on growing and learning.

Happy Birthday!

*Seniors

Sun Apr 12 – Joanne Horensma*, Liam DeWitt, Henk Koskamp, Josiah Bakker

Tues Apr 14 – Thirza VanRavenhorst, Parker Feltz

Wed Apr 15 – Andy DeWeerd*

Thurs Apr 16 – Colin de Freese, Andrew DeWitt

Fri Apr 17 – Tyler Meinen

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT WORSHIP NIGHT @ Maranatha CRC Woodstock. Join us on Sunday, April 26 for a great night of fellowship and praise! At 5:30pm we will begin with a Meal & Games in the gym. At 7:00pm we will gather in the Sanctuary for Worship with Pastor Gareth Harker. Please plan to attend this great night connecting youth and young adults in our area with food, fun and worship!

SERVE PRAYER PARTNERS NEEDED: The servants are on their way to Stratford this summer once again and we would love to match them up with members of our congregation who will commit to upholding them in prayer each and every day. You'll be matched with a student or leader, be asked to provide daily notes of encouragement for their mailboxes, have the opportunity to meet them in person and be an integral part of a transformative week. Please message Amy Van de Kemp **519-508-9887** or jordamvvdk@hotmail.com if you're able to help in this way. Thanks for considering!

WORKSITE COORDINATOR NEEDED: We are looking for a volunteer to serve as a Worksite Coordinator for Emily Murphy Centre or Festival City Homes as part of our SERVE project. The Emily Murphy Centre is a second-stage housing facility that supports women and children by providing a safe alternative to living with violence. Festival City Homes (located across the road from our church): this is a non-profit facility that provides 13 market value units and 32 subsidized rental units. We are seeking someone who would be willing to help organize and facilitate SERVE worksites at these locations. This role would involve coordinating with the centre, helping plan projects, and supporting volunteers as they serve in a meaningful and respectful way. If you are interested or would like more information, please connect with Tanya Duiker by email rtduiker@gmail.com or text 226-921-4776

FRIENDSHIP CLUB is looking for someone to take over the role of **coordinator/organizer** for this coming September. We are also looking for more helpers so we can keep this awesome program running! If you are interested or have any questions on

how Friendship runs, please reach out to Stacy Armstrong. Thanks! 519-274-4764 or stacytimms.rmt@hotmail.com

YOU ARE INVITED: Exeter CRC is celebrating 75 years this year and on April 26 @ 10:00 am we are having a special service celebrating God's Faithfulness. All are welcome and please join us after the service for lunch.

STRATFORD AND DISTRICT RIGHT TO LIFE invites you to participate in the **Toronto March for Life** on Saturday May 23, 2026. There is a bus sponsored for this event and we hope to leave Stratford around 7:30 am. Last year 2000 participated in this March. A poster about this and upcoming events are posted on the Community board in fellowship hall. If you have any questions or would like to book a seat call Bonnie DeWeerd

SDCS ANNUAL AUCTION: It's the time of the year that you have been waiting for: The SDCS Annual Auction! We are well on our way to providing you with an online auction full of exciting goods and services that you may bid on. Our auction this year will run online from **Wednesday, April 29th to Friday, May 1st, ending at 8:00 p.m.** Don't forget to save the date on your calendar!! Interested in donating goods or services to our auction? We'd love to hear from you! Send us an email at auktion@sdcs.on.ca.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON MAY 2nd AT 7:00 pm? Stratford CRC Young Adults would you to invite you to join them for a fun and lively Square Dance Night hosted by the Y.A. Dancing, laughter, and community—no experience needed! We will have a caller to guide you, live music to keep things moving, and a photo booth to capture the memories. Open to all ages 18+, food and drinks provided, and it's all by donation! Bring friends. We can't wait to see you there!"

FAMILY OUTREACH ONTARIO: SPECIAL EVENT: Family Outreach Ontario invites you to an information evening on Friday, April 24 at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, 735 Frontenac Crescent, Woodstock, ON N4V 0B1. Our Executive Director, John Kowtecky, will present An Overview of Addiction. Please plan to attend and tell others about it as well. It will be an evening you will be sure to remember. A collection will be taken to cover our costs. 7:00 pm - Doors open, Refreshments/Meet & Greet; 7:30 - 9:00 - Presentation and Q&A period followed by refreshments and opportunity for talk with Mr. Kowtecky or other Family Outreach members.

COFFEE SERVERS:

Apr 12: J & Angela Oosterom, Ken & Michelle VanderWal, Fred & Irene Koskamp

Apr 19: Gary & Tamara vanZandwijk, Dave Mabee, Hans & Jantje Scheele, Eleanor VanderStelt

Apr 26: Andrew & Josie Koskamp, Cirema Gutierrez, Kyle & Laura Egberts, Carolyn Regan

COFFEE PREP

Apr 12: Christa Dennis & Family

Apr 19: Ralph & Heather DeWitt

USHERS

Apr 19: Dave & Karen Brouwer

Apr 26: de Bruin Family

PROJECTION

April 19: Luke Olbach/Dibora Roth

Apr 26: Angelina VanderWal

STREAMING

Apr 19: Geena DeWeerd/Jonathan DeWeerd

LIBRARY

Apr 12: Claire Tiemens

Apr 19: Rose Heida

GREETER

Apr 19: Wilma de Young

SOUND

Apr 19: Eric Olbach/Shawn Hummel

Apr 26: Luca Pol

STREAMING

Apr 26: John DeWeerd

SUNDAY SCHOOL: To follow our Safe Church Policy, a **parent** needs to sign in/sign out their child. **Parents** will need to bring their child to their ***classroom*** to sign them in and pick them up from their ***classroom*** at the end of the service to sign them out.

SUNDAY SCHOOL – AGE 3 TO GRADE 3

- 3-year-old: Apr 12: Teresa Peachey, Ellie Van de Kemp
Apr 19: Tracy Sumner, Avery DeWitt
Apr 26: Haley Hummel, Jenn Hummel
- 4-year-old Apr 12: Anna Tiemens, Nyah Puklicz
Apr 19: Claire Tiemens, Renae Olbach
Apr 26: Bradshaw Family
- 5-year-old Apr 12: Grace vanZandwijk, Tamara vanZandwijk
Apr 19: Bryanna Fischer, Josh Mosterd
Apr 26: Laura Egberts, Sydney Hummel
- 6-year-old Apr 12: Lori Tiemens, Alyda Tiemens
Apr 19: Yvonne de Bruin, Brooklyn Otten
Apr 26: Micah Dam, Paul vanZandwijk
- 7-year-old Apr 12: Jayme Koskamp, Noah Puklicz
Apr 19: Brayden Fischer, Kierra Mosterd
Apr 26: Carly Timmermans, Cheyanne Dennis
- 8-year-old Apr 12: Rita Weima
Apr 19: Chris Huizinga, Jeriah Van de Kemp
Apr 26: Lisa Poortinga, Gideon de Lange

APRIL NURSERY SCHEDULE

Mothers of the Month: Laura Sjaarda & Bryanna Fischer

*I – Infants C – Crawlers****Arrives 15 minutes early to welcome parents and children**

- 12 I/C – **Brayden Fischer***, Rebecca Olbach, Gideon DeLange, Naomi Puklicz
 NC – **Elaine de Freese***, Noah Puklicz
- 19 I/C – **Jenna DeWitt***, Brittany DeLange, Cheyanne Dennis, Peyton Pennings
 NC – **Jayne Koskamp***, Theodore Olbach
 PM – Lydia Dam
- 26 I/C – **Tracy Sumner***, Rachel Sikma, Michelle VanderWal, Jocelyn Sikma, Renae Olbach
 NC – **Sara McDonnell***, Nadine Sikma

Sunday April 12 to Saturday April 18

Mon 13-Apr	9:15 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM	One Care Exercise Program Friendship Alpha Program	Gym Fellowship Hall Library
Tues 14-Apr	9:15 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM	One Care Exercise Program Youth Board Meeting Cadets	Gym Library Lower Level
Wed 15-Apr	9:00 AM 11:30 AM 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Pickleball Senior Lunch Youth Profession of Faith Class	Gym Fellowship Hall Lower Level Library
Thurs 16-Apr	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	One Care Exercise Program Cub Care Races	Gym Lower Level
Fri 17-Apr	9:00 AM 10:00 AM 7:00 PM	Pilates Women's Ministry Rented	Gym Double Classroom Gym