



First Press Newsletter

The Newsletter for First Presbyterian Church, Penetanguishene

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we meet on traditional lands that have significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon them, and whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

April 2026

Barry's Blog SPRING CLEANING



“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.” –

Matt.6:34

Spring is here... although, it would seem that someone forgot to tell the weathermen. I don't know about you, but it still doesn't quite feel like Spring yet. Nevertheless, according to the calendar, it is indeed Spring time. Time to open up the house and let the sunshine in. Grab a few dozen trash bags, go through all the closets and the attic, and throw away everything that has cluttered up the house.

I decided this spring I need to clear the clutter out of my mind first. Only a few months into the New Year, and I already have too much on my mind. I still had a lot of questions built up from last year, that were not answered. **“God, why did this happen?”**, **“Why did I pray for this, and it still fell apart?”**, **“Why, God, why?”** The questions were piling up, and no answers were in sight to help with the mess cluttering my mind.

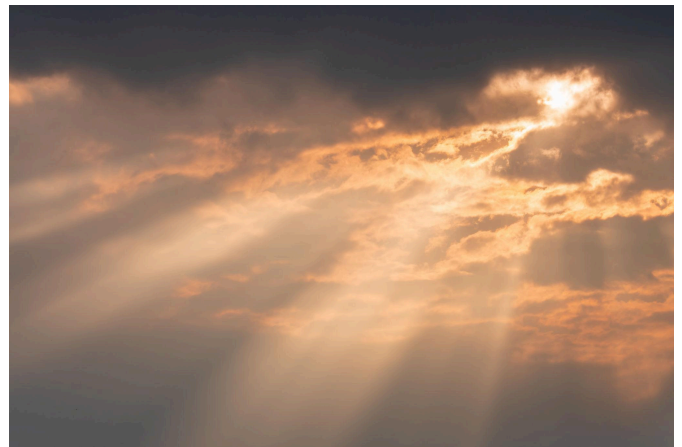
I am a worrier, and I come from a long line of worriers, so I come by it naturally.... Just give me one problem, and I'll worry about it all day. I could feel myself going there one morning a few years ago and suddenly realized I needed to do something about it. Thankfully, God sent me a gentle reminder that day that put things into perspective. While talking to a family who had just lost their brother to cancer 2 weeks prior to my visit at age 52, and also their mother died of cancer a month before that... They told me that they came to the beach every day to talk to them... While they are sad that they are gone, they told me that they now live every moment of every day as if it were their last.

Walking away that day, that encounter started unraveling in my head. Here I was with the weight of my imaginary world on my shoulders, yet I was walking on both feet with breath in my lungs, doing a job that I enjoy. I started to pray, **“God, help me get rid of this annoying habit of feeling sorry for myself when the**

most miniscule thing goes wrong in my day.” I have so much to be thankful for, I should be grateful. But how do I do this? Where do I begin?”

As I left the office that day, I heard that still small voice say, **“You can start with every Moment.”** I had to pause and laugh at myself. Of course! The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, as does any big spring-cleaning job. If I could take every moment and enjoy it to its fullest, letting tomorrow take care of itself, in no time I would see a difference. So I got in my van, turned on some music, and let a smile creep across my face as I began the work God has called me to... The day looked better already. I can't say that I completely understand how or why my life got so cluttered, but at least I know how to clean it up. And it may never be finished but as God continues to perfect the work He started, I can at least enjoy the journey.

Blessings, Rev. Barry Doner



Thank you for your continued giving to the church and its mission in the community and world.

BIRTHDAY WISHES:



In March, we were lucky enough to have Rev. Barry spend his birthday with us! So led by Vicki and Ross, the congregation serenaded him to a

rendition of Happy Birthday and a little special birthday treat following the service! Thanks to all who made it possible!



AGM AND POTLUCK:



THANK YOU to Dee Palazzo for her hard work preparing our Annual Report. Great job! Please take one per family. Special

thanks to Jean Hall for preparing her annual "A Year in the Life of First Presbyterian Church" video. It is always a fun way to begin the Annual Congregational Meeting.



REBRANDING THE VISION TEAM: The Vision Team was "born" in the winter of 2023-24, to fill a recommendation as part of our Search Committee's need to define First Church congregation's perception of future continued growth.

With the assistance of our interim moderator, Rev Tom Mason, a number of initial conversations resulted in guest speakers and a "Vision" Team creation. A survey was completed, and recommendations were put forward. Gradually a Vision was revealed and practical pathways were considered.



Our "new" minister, Rev Barry Doner took the reins and guided the congregation's examination of our Mission Statement, our

Values, and our Motto. (see annual report page 2). New projects were envisioned, and trialed. (see annual report pages 7-10). The VisionTeam's mandate has been successfully embraced.

So how do we go forward? Following the examples set by many congregations in Presbytery, our Vision Team will mature into a Congregational Life Team. This "rebranding" was approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 22, 2026.

The first meeting of the Congregational Life Team will be held Sunday, April 12, 2026 following the church service. ALL are welcome. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm.

Hope to see there.

Rev. Barry Doner / Mary Sheriff (co-chairs)

MISSION TEAM THANKS:



In no particular order, Ruth Weldon, Charlotte Fortier, Mary Skinner, Wilma Kolter, Jean Hall, Mary Sheriff and Barbara Bain. Missing is Ann Corbeau, Jan Anderson, Amanda Howe, and Avela Robitaille.

The Mission Team has been busy planning our Mission Awareness Sunday service and fundraising luncheon on April 26th. This year's project is for the PWS&D Respond to Emergencies fund. The service will include a presentation about PWS&D's work on the international stage as well as our inspiring prayers and music. The Luncheon will be after the service at 12:00. It will include cold ham, a variety of salads, dessert, tea and coffee at a cost of \$20.00 per person. Children under 12 years are free. Tickets are required and available from Jean Hall starting on April 5th.

Have you got old phones at home that you're no longer using? You can exchange them for cash at Dr. Gadget on Main Street, Penetanguishene. One of our Mission Team members did this and was able to contribute \$120 to Mission funds. Just something to consider.



Friendly reminder to return any outstanding Lenten mugs by Easter Sunday. Thank you again for all that participated. We are so grateful.

CARING KITCHEN FAMILY GROWING: Caring Kitchen is extremely happy to welcome Vicky Henderson to our Kitchen volunteers. Vicky comes with many years of experience in food services, and is dedicated to providing healthy basic nutritional meals for our Monday "soup" kitchen. She has been a blessing to our team with her confidence, knowledge, and affability.



She joins Laura Laird, Ruby Degenaar, Marg Allan, and Sue Savage as our Monday kitchen "chefs".

Pictured here...Vicky and Ruby preparing for the March 23rd meal of hamburger and veggie pasta casserole, which was served with hearty homemade chicken soup, garlic bread, fresh fruit and desserts...note desserts

provided by Penetang Food Bank (thanks to Rob Newburn)



SUNDAY SCHOOL JOIN PALM SUNDAY SERVICE:



A heartfelt thank you to our wonderful Sunday School students who took part in our Palm Sunday service. Your smiles, creativity, and enthusiasm brought so much joy to our church community!

We are so

proud of each of you and grateful for the energy and spirit you shared on this special day.



LENTEN THOUGHT...

I am not perfect. I still stumble, struggle, and sometimes fall short.
But grace picks me up. Love dusts me off.
And God says, "You are still mine!"

I am not perfect...just forgiven.
And that changes everything.

Author unknown

Events in our Community



**GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
APRIL 3, 2026 - 10:30 AM**

A joint worship gathering with First Presbyterian Church, the Anglican Parish of the Town of Penetanguishene, and Covenant Christian Community Church. Everyone is welcome.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE: *Friday April 3rd 10:30am at Covenant Community Church:* "Our joint Good Friday Service is a gathering with First Presbyterian Church, the Anglican Parish of the Town of Penetanguishene, and Covenant Christian Community Church. We are privileged to host our time of remembrance together this year. We will receive communion together as a part of our gathering. Everyone is welcome!"

EASTER SUNDAY: Please join us this Easter Sunday, April 5, at 10:25. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated on this most special day in the liturgical calendar. A special time of hospitality will follow with hot cross buns to enjoy.

A CRAZY WORLD!: If you want to find some sense of direction in this crazy world, come join the Bible study group each Wed afternoon from 1:15-3:00. No previous experience necessary. Warm welcomes are guaranteed. Please speak to Rev Barry or Donna Drapkin (905-484-3727) if you would like more information.

STITCH & CHAT UPDATE: Our Stitch & Chat group has been hard at work throughout the winter, creating a variety of individual and collaborative projects—many of which will be featured at our Annual Bazaar this November.

We've been thoroughly enjoying our time together in the bright, newly updated auditorium, which has provided a

welcoming and inspiring space to gather and create.



Pictured here are Corrie and Charlotte busily assembling a dignity blanket, made from generously donated squares.

Once completed, the blanket will be donated to the Georgian Retirement Home.

Stitch & Chat meets Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and new members are always welcome. If you are interested in joining, please contact Lorrie Ritchie at 705-526-7137 for more information. Whether you're experienced or just getting started, we would love to have you join us as we connect, create, and share in the joy of crafting together.

CARING KITCHEN



If you would like to help some of the members of our town who are having trouble affording the necessities of life, please consider signing up for the Caring Kitchen. Please speak to Mary Sheriff (705

526 7591) if you would like to volunteer once in a while, or if you have any questions.

ONLINE DONATIONS Thanks to Gerry Vrieswyk's persistence through months of patient work, we finally are able to e-transfer money to our church. All you have to do is on your banking website, go to money transfers, add our church to your contact list - gifts4firstchurchpenetang@gmail.com . Then make your donation. In the message section please include your envelope # (if you have one) if not, please include your name, address, phone number and email address, as per CRA rules, to enable a tax receipt to be issued at the end of the year. All funds will go to the General Budget unless otherwise designated.

IN-PERSON & LIVESTREAM SERVICES

In-Person Services are Sundays at 10:25AM. Our services are also streamed on our YouTube channel @firstchurchpenetang



Remember that children participating in our service may be shown online as the service is live-streamed.

WEBSITE UPDATE & PHOTO REQUEST: We are currently in the midst of transitioning to a new website. During this time, you may notice some temporary

disruptions or changes as we work behind the scenes to improve your experience. We appreciate your patience and understanding



throughout this process.

As we build and grow a more welcoming and engaging online presence, we would love your help! If you have any photos—whether candid moments, special events, or snapshots of our beautiful church—we warmly invite you to share them with us.



Please send your photos to Dee at

firstchurchpenetang@gmail.com. Your contributions will help us create a vibrant and inviting website for all to enjoy.



Thank you for being part of our church community!

Cora's Corner



Cora Nuspel

EASTER GIFT

*How many times have we disobeyed God?
How many times did we carry on?
God was watching with tears in his eyes.
Until we realized we had done wrong.*

*We fell onto our knees.
Asking God to forgive.
Christ, died on the cross.
So we could live.*

Cora Nuspel

