



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.

May 2026

Barry's Blog Small Gestures



In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says ***“and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple -- truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”***

What a little thing... to give a cup of cold water? Jesus emphasizes this by his use of the word “even.” We often imagine discipleship as requiring huge sacrifice or entailing great feats, and sometimes that is exactly what discipleship comes to. But at other times, Jesus seems to say, it’s nothing more than giving a cup of cold water to one in need. Or offering words of comfort to someone who is grieving. Or a listening ear to someone in need of a friend... or dare I say it... offering a hug to someone to show them you care... Or offering a ride to someone without a car. Or volunteering at the local foodbank. Or... well, you get the idea.

The life of faith is composed of a thousand small gestures. ***Except that, according to Jesus, there is no small gesture.*** Anything done in faith and love has cosmic significance for the ones involved. You probably know as well as I do, the story of “*The Star Fish Thrower*” -- the one about the little boy tossing starfish after starfish into the sea. When asked why, he replies that if they don’t get back in the water soon, they’ll dry out and die. Looking at a beach strewn with thousands of starfish, the man responds that he can’t possibly hope to make any difference. To which the boy responds by tossing another one into the ocean, and says, “*I bet it made a difference to that one!*”

What do we do in the meantime? Just do what we can... where we are... Because Jesus has promised to come in time to redeem the world, to fix all damage, to heal all hurts, and to wipe the tears from every eye... Our task is to devote ourselves to acts of mercy and acts of compassion... small and large, not trying to save the world -- Jesus has promised to do that! – but simply trying to care for the little corner of the world in which we have been placed. And so even a cup of cold water can make a huge and unexpected difference to those to

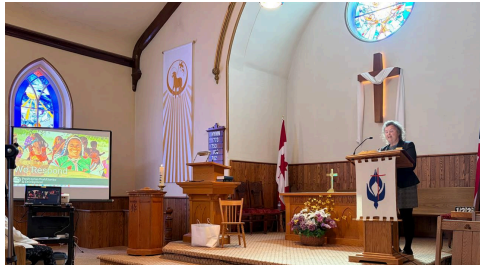
whom we give it and, according to Jesus, such acts have eternal and cosmic consequences! This is what true hospitality looks like... I believe that hospitality lies at the heart of Christian discipleship... and this is what Jesus was getting at... Looking for opportunities to welcome strangers, and show compassion to those in need... But how often do we walk by those kinds of opportunities? They’re all around us... if we would simply open our eyes and pay attention. A cup of cold water is a gift that everyone can give because it is the smallest of gifts. Even this, the smallest of gifts, is precious to the person receiving it, because it sometimes it is the gift of life itself.

Hospitality frees us to offer a cup of cold water to someone who might be in a situation completely foreign to our experience; someone in a world that is outside our limited understanding. And when we are brought into relationship with one another by the bond that hospitality creates, there is no more host and guest, no more insider and outsider; there is only a space in which we listen to, and learn from one another, valuing and honouring one another until all the uneven ground on which we stand... becomes level.

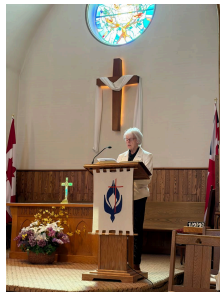
Blessings, Rev. Barry Doner



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



MISSION AWARENESS PROJECT: Thank you to the congregation from the Mission Team for your support of Mission Awareness Sunday and your gracious support for the luncheon that followed through your purchase of tickets. Thanks to your generosity, over \$1000 was raised for the PWS&D campaign “Respond to Emergencies (PWEMRF01)”. Special thanks to the continued support of Doug Rawson of Rawson’s Meat and Deli located at 27 Main St, Penetanguishene who generously donated the delicious



ham for our luncheon. Next time you see Doug be sure to thank him for his support and thank you for your support for his shop as well!



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TEAM:



The Congregational Life Team had an excellent brain storming session after the April 12th service. Thanks to all who came out.

On May 31st, we will meet again after the service to see if we can "flesh out" some activities for the coming year.

All are welcome. Please put that date on your calendar. Looking forward to seeing you and hearing your ideas.

DOORS OPEN! First Presbyterian Church has been invited to participate in Doors Open Simcoe County this Sept 19, 2026. This is an exciting opportunity for us to welcome new people into our beautiful building. More details will follow but first the application form! One of the questions relates to the architectural style of our church and I have absolutely no idea how to answer this. If any of you have some architectural knowledge or can make a suggestion, please speak to Donna Drapkin (905-484-3727 or donnadrapkin@bell.net). Thanks for any help you can give.

THE DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT FIRST PC FINANCIALLY

First of all, thank you for your support! All gifts to First PC are received gratefully and kept under the strictest confidence. Early each year, you will receive an income tax slip from our envelope secretary Jill St Amant. There are presently three options for donations.

1. We now accept funds by e-transfer. This is a very easy way for people to give their financial support to First PC. On your banking website, go to money transfers, add our church to your contact list - gifts4firstchurchpenetang@gmail.com - and then make your donation. There is a message line on the transfer form to use if you wish the donation be dedicated for a specific cause. Unmarked donations will go to our General Budget.
2. Pre-authorized donations (pre-authorized remittances or PAR) are the easiest way to make sure that you can support First PC, even when you are not able to attend regularly. You may make monthly donations using our Direct Debit facility, with the donations coming directly from your bank account. Please speak to Jill St Amant (705-529-3652) and she will help you get set up right away.
3. There are also offering envelopes available from Jill St Amant (705-529-3652). The personalized number on each envelope enables you to put cash or cheques made out to First Presbyterian Church, Penetang inside and then you put them on the offering plate when it is passed around during the service. Your generosity to First Presbyterian Church supports the vibrant community of faith that we all enjoy.

Events in our Community

HIKE FOR HOSPICE: First Church has a team participating in the upcoming Hike for Hospice. If you'd like to donate or join us, please check out the poster for details or speak with Gary or Mae Ronald. Your support means so much—thank you! Or check out our Facebook for the link for donation!



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 folks have extra grocery bags and can spare a few, anytime, the Blessing Table could use some to bundle up clothes for our guests. We also accept clothes in good condition, in small amounts to replenish our table. We can't store much, so spread your offerings over several weeks if you can. Track pants and casual clothes are very popular as are seasonal coats, shoes. Drop off under the long table at the back of the new hall. Thank you!



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**

May Rain

The morning is cool.
Fresh air to breathe in.
Tree leaves glisten
Raindrops waiting to spill.

Give the branches a shake.
A shower I'll have.
Makes me feel like a kid
To giggle and laugh.

A bunny hops by
It's quiet and still.
Up sits a chipmunk.
He knows I won't kill.

God has made all this
Give Him thanks and praise.
For us to enjoy
These beautiful days.
Cora Nuspel