



First Press Newsletter

The Newsletter for First Presbyterian Church, Penetanguishene

Editor: Dee Palazzo Email: deannalilianpalazzo@gmail.com

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.

JULY/AUGUST 2026

Barry's Blog

Come to Me and Rest!



I'm exhausted ... I'm stressed to the limit ... I'm bone-tired ... I feel drained ... I'm running on fumes ... I'm on the edge of burnout. Have you ever heard yourself else say those words? At one time or another, most of us have been there. We live in a

fast-paced world, where we're often overachievers -- hurrying, rushing, working too hard, until our energies are depleted and our well-being is in tatters... and we're just done... And then we come to church -- the place for tired, weary people. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives a clear invitation and a promise: **"Come to me, you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."**

Jesus says, **"Come to me... all who are weary and carrying burdens..."** and then he says, **"And I will give you rest..."** "I" is the first person singular personal pronoun which again reminds us that our need is the person of Christ, and a personal relationship with Him. **"Rest"** here means "to refresh, rest up," but also "to cease from labor." But how could Christ give rest when he talks about burdens and yokes? His solution seems no solution at all. After all, a yoke is a yoke. Right? **"My yoke"** is of course the key phrase. Jesus did not say, "come to me and I will remove all yokes." So what does this mean? How is this not just another yoke and not a contradiction?

To take Christ's yoke means to submit to the person of Jesus Christ, as the one who is gentle and meek, as one who is gentle and caring and concerned for us. It means to put ourselves under His leading, to join ourselves together with Him, but the difference is, He is the one who is carrying our burdens, and this is how we can find rest.

We must recognize that following Christ is more about "being" than it is about "doing." Action follows being. Try to imagine a life in which you were really at rest, imagine the amount of good that could flow from that life, a life finally unburdened, imagine the stress of

your life floating away.... That's what Jesus is offering to us!

It is often difficult following Christ. Putting on his yoke is just like taking up your own cross to follow him; sometimes it will hurt and it will be hard. But, when Jesus calls us to come to him when we are weary with heavy burdens, he is not only calling us to Himself, but to the living community of his body, the church. When I say church here, I don't mean big steeples; I mean the people you are sitting next to each Sunday.

If you ask the burdened heavily laden ones who have come to Jesus down through the ages, they will probably testify, that those words changed everything! Maybe these words will do that for you today as well?

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matthew 11:28-30)

Blessings, Rev. Barry Doner



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

Church Picnic Recap



What a wonderful day of fellowship at our Church Picnic! We were blessed with beautiful sunshine, delicious food, and, most importantly, the opportunity to gather together as a church family.

It was a joy to welcome both familiar faces and new friends, sharing laughter, meaningful conversations, and the simple gift of being together. Events like

these remind us of the strength of our church community and the importance of making time to connect with one another.

A special thank you to our Sunday School children, teachers, and volunteers for the thoughtful Father's Day treats prepared for all the dads. Your kindness and generosity made the day even more meaningful and were a wonderful reflection of the love and care within our church family.



who attended and made it such a special day. We are grateful for the memories made and look forward to many more opportunities to gather in fellowship.

MISSION AWARENESS PROJECT

The Mission Team will be operating its summer food and toiletries drives again this year. Food items will be donated to the Georgian Bay Food Network and toiletries will be collected for distribution later in



the fall. A list of suggested items for donation will be posted in the foyer along with the boxes for collection. Information on the wide impact made by the Georgian Bay Food Network can also be found there. The food and toiletries drive will run during the months of June, July and August. Your donations are gratefully received. If you have any questions, please see a member of the Mission Team for further details.

CARING KITCHEN UPDATE:

Caring Kitchen has been presented with a wonderful problem... how to feed a growing number of participants. Since April, we have seen 32 new folks come through our door. Some come once. Some come sporadically. Some come regularly. Our "base" list or roster is currently 78.

In March the attendances were 18; 20; 23; 26; 27 adults.

In April the numbers wavered then rose: 11; 21; 24; 30 adults.

In May, numbers continued to rise: 23; 32; 24; 28 adults.

So far in June we have reached new monthly highs: 25, 24, 36; 35 adults.

As I write this article, we are planning for our June 30 – pre July 1st celebration and will have served "lazy lasagna", garlic toast, & Cream of Potato Soup as well as special desserts. Our guests have been VERY appreciative of the entrees, vegetables, fruit, juice, tea, coffee, and desserts. Special thanks for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank of Penetanguishene for sharing some of their bounty and to Robbie Newburn for doing door to door delivery service in this capacity.



Our guests have been very supportive of our monthly published menu which we started in April, and even filled out surveys on what they would like to see offered. Their ideas were helpful in meal planning for our kitchen staff.

I want to thank our volunteers for being caring and responsive to the needs of our community. We have two new volunteers in the kitchen – Judy and Dorothy – who already have their food handlers certificate and are receiving specific training from Laura and Heather, and the serving team. Jochebed has been busy developing job descriptions for the various volunteer positions ... Kitchen, Wait Staff, Facility charge person, Greeter,

Float, Blessing Table Co-ordinator, and Administration. These have been ever changing training sheets as we become aware of all that has to be considered for the safety of our guests.

I would like the congregation to also be aware of the wonderful community support that the Caring Kitchen has received. Covenant Church sponsored valentines from their Kids Programs (which our guests were truly touched by) and dessert for Feb 14. All Saints, Anglican decorated our hall for Easter and had dessert & take-home treats for the visitors. The food bank has been most responsive in assisting us keep our freezer topped up with desserts, and our pantry with potatoes, noodles, sauces, weiners, and breads whenever they have excess. A special note of thanks to the Chigamik Ambassador Program which connects local residents with free health care, holistic wellness programs, and basic community services. April and team work 1 on 1 with individuals to help them navigate connections with primary care physicians; link individuals to community resources, exercise groups, music and art; and advocate for daily needs (access, forms, documentation, connection). Brochures are available and an ambassador visits every 3 months (or more if requested). Simcoe County Public Health has inspected our facilities in May, and we “passed”!



A very special thanks go out to our sponsors, The Penetanguishene Lions, who have given us free coupons for our guests for a hot dog and pop at the Friday concerts – sponsored by Bayside Summer Soiree at the amphitheater at Rotary Park (beside the curling

club) at 6pm..

In the coming months, it is hoped that we will be able to continue to provide a nourishing meal every Monday from 11:30 to 11:45. Let the Holy Spirit provide willing hands, welcome guests, and kind donors. Your prayers for this mission are most appreciated.

Your servant in Christ, Mary Sheriff

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TEAM

The Congregational Life Team (previously the Vision Team) had two very motivational meetings on April 12, and May 30. The purpose of these meetings was to generate thoughtful ideas that will foster improved activities and social planning for our congregation, as well as promoting activities of other church groups. Here are some dates you can put on your calendar...

Upcoming EVENTS

at First Presbyterian Church

DATE	EVENT
July 29	Guest Minister – Rev Glynis Faith
August 5	No Communion – Rev Glynis Faith
August 12	Guest Minister – Angela Kirton
Aug. 28	Church Pot Luck
Sept. 6	Communion – Luncheon to follow
Sept. 10	Stitch & Chat Returns
Sept. 12	Pig Roast – Tickets available from Jean Hall but will go fast!
Sept. 19	Historical “Doors Open”
Sept. 27	Truth & Reconciliation Service & Guest Speaker
Sept. 27	Invitation to wear orange Congregational Life / Mary Existing Special Event

We look forward to worshipping, serving and growing together in faith and fellowship!

Watch for fall activities in the October newsletter ... or in the weekly bulletin.

PIG ROAST RETURNS!



This year our Annual Pig Roast is Sept 12th at Midland Golf and Country Club in the Event Centre.

Tickets are now on sale from Gerry Vrieswyk and Jean Hall. Tickets for

dinner are \$30 and children under 10 are free. (They do not need a ticket, but we need to know how many are coming).

Dinner should be served around 5:00 pm with cash bar open at 4:00 pm.



Jean will be available downstairs after Sunday Services for the month of July.

Also here is Gerry's contact information:



Email
glvrieswyk@rogers.com

Cell Phone 705-427-4222

Jean's Contact
information:

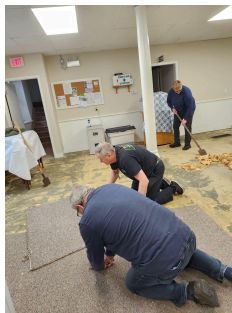
Email
bjpenetang@rogers.com

Phone: 705-355-0334

This event usually sells out so get your tickets early. This is a significant fund raiser and social outreach for our church and an excellent opportunity to get your friends and neighbours involved.

Be on the lookout for more announcements about Silent Auction news and items.

BOARD OF MANAGERS NOTE: The Board of Managers are pleased to report that the old hall renovations are complete. Many hours of dusty, dirty work went into this renovation when taking down the old dirty ceiling tiles and ripping up the old dusty carpet. The lights and ceiling tiles have now been replaced. Old carpet has been taken out and a new epoxy floor poured to match the new hall's floor. The walls and trim have been freshly painted. The old pillars have been sanded down and refreshed with filler and paint. Everything looks bright, fresh and welcoming. A huge thank you to our amazing volunteers Don Cox, Larry Fortier, Tamara Tigwell, Kevin Tigwell and to the Board members. All the furniture is now back in place and secured. The old room looks new again. So, therefore this old room needs and now has a new name, "Meeting Hall".



Thanks to everyone for their patience and support of this project.

CARING KITCHEN

Just before Canada Day, our amazing volunteers served up a delicious meal of **Lazy Lasagna, homemade potato soup, garlic bread, salad, fresh watermelon, ice cream bars, and the most**

delicious strawberry rhubarb tarts—a special thank you to **Elaine Cox** for the incredible dessert!

We prepared enough to serve approximately 35 guests and were delighted to welcome **27 community members**, all of whom enjoyed not only a wonderful meal but also the festive decorations and warm fellowship.



A special shout-out goes to our incredible **Caring Kitchen team**. Over the past several months, they have poured countless hours into planning, preparing, cooking, serving, and cleaning up. Their dedication, compassion, and servant hearts continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of so many. We are deeply grateful for each and every one of you. ❤️

Thank you as well to our congregation for your generous financial support. Your kindness makes this outreach ministry possible, and together we continue to build a caring and welcoming community.

We couldn't do it without you! 🙏

Welcome to our Newest Caring Kitchen volunteer... Rhonda Bailey is being trained by Mary Skinner as a Server. She joins other new recruits Dorothy and Judith who prefer the kitchen.



Events in our Community

FRIDAY FUN: On Friday, August 28, at 11:30 AM, you are invited to come to a potluck lunch at the church. There will be great food, lots of laughter, wonderful conversations, and an opportunity to play games or cards afterwards, or sing hymns, or just keep visiting with those in our family of faith with whom we never have enough time just to sit and enjoy their company. Everyone is invited. Bring a guest. Please come for some Friday fun. The party will end around 3:00 or whenever you have to leave.

FEED THE HUNGRY: If you would like to volunteer on a Monday (one time only or as often as you like), Caring Kitchen would love to have you join their happy roster. We all so enjoy our time not only with our appreciative guests, but also with each other as we work together to serve our local community. Acts 20: 35 quotes Paul as saying, "In everything I [Paul] did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Please speak to Mary Sheriff (705-526-7591) or Donna Drapkin (905-484-3727) for more information.

WE ARE SO PROUD: Thank you, Sylvia Westcott-Tigwell, for taking on the onerous task of chairing the Board of Managers. You are the "point man" to whom everyone turns with questions, requests, praise and criticism. It is a huge job which you perform with grace, patience and good humour. This group of men and women look after our church building and grounds all year long. They work tirelessly to keep everything in good order and they make sure everything is done properly and kept up to date. Our congregation also appreciates your husband Kevin Tigwell, your "right hand man", and the other workers who help out whenever they are needed: Gerry Vrieswyk, Larry Fortier, Ruby DeGenaar, Jim Hughes, Ken Hicks, Ross Spearn and Ruth Weldon. Together with Brenda Hicks, chair of the Decor committee, these fine folk maintain a church campus for which we can be extremely proud.

DELIGHTFUL DEE: It has been over a year since Deanna Palazzo and her husband James Dalzell took over the task of preparing not only our monthly newsletter and weekly paper & e-bulletins, but also our website and social media. They have added so much to our outreach with their positivity and creative ways of publicizing the activities of our congregation. Jamie has stepped back from these regular duties, and is now working in the live-streaming booth at the back of the church. Dee has continued on with her enthusiasm and initiative, using her excellent writing and computer skills each week on our behalf. We are so grateful for all they do for us.

DOORS OPEN: First Presbyterian has been invited to participate in "Doors Open Simcoe County" on Saturday, Sept 19, 2026. This is an Ontario Heritage Trust program geared towards allowing free public access to historical and culturally significant properties.

Although Presbyterians have worshiped in Penetanguishene since 1832, our present building dates from 1887. In addition to welcoming visitors to enjoy our beautiful edifice, we will also be selling lunch that day with all proceeds going to the Caring Kitchen. Even if you don't want to tour the various participating properties for Open Doors, do come and buy lunch here to support our community outreach. Please contact Donna Drapkin (905-484-3727) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help out that day.

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

BLANK CANVAS

The artist stood with brush in hand.
White canvas looking cold and bare.
Taking some paint and making a stroke
We can do this on a dare.

Paint goes on in blues and greens
First the sky and then the trees
Colors brought God's creation alive.
With wide eyed wonder for us to see.
Cora Nuspel