

First News & Notes

February—March 2026



A Devotion for Family Day ~ Joshua 24:15

by Pastor Alex

As we approach our Family Day Sunday, it invites us to pause and give thanks for the gift of family—and our wider church family.

In Joshua 24, we find the great leader of Israel at the end of his life. He is standing before a generation that has seen miracles, and presents to them a clear, urgent choice. He looks at the people and says, in essence: "Decide today who defines your life. Is it the gods of your past? Is it the gods of the culture around you? Or is it the One who brought you here?"

Joshua makes a bold declaration: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

"But As For Me..." The power of Joshua's declaration starts with individual conviction. He doesn't wait for a public opinion poll or a majority vote. He starts with "Me." For our families today, spiritual leadership begins with personal devotion. We cannot lead our households to a place we aren't willing to go ourselves. Joshua's "Me" is a reminder that faith isn't inherited. It is personal trust in the saving work of Christ on the Cross, and it is lived out by choice. In 2026, that challenge remains as urgent as ever.

"...And My House..." Joshua's vision of "house" wasn't just a physical building; it was his legacy, his children, and his community. When he makes this pledge, he is claiming the atmosphere of his home.

Serving the Lord in our "house" means:

Defining our Values: Making the Word of God the final authority in our decisions.

Defining our Time: Prioritizing worship and prayer over the frantic pace of modern life.

Defining our Love: Modeling the grace and forgiveness of Christ within our four walls.

"We Will Serve the Lord" The word "serve" used here implies more than just attending a service. It means to work for, to honour, and to give one's life to. To serve the Lord as a family is to recognize that our household has a mission.

We aren't just a group of people sharing a building; we are a small outpost of the Kingdom of God. Our "service" is found in how we treat each other when the world isn't watching, and how we reach out to our neighbours with a united front for the Gospel.

Joshua's words remind us that serving the Lord is ultimately a choice—one that must be made again and again. As we celebrate Family Day together, may our prayer be that God would strengthen our homes, renew our commitment, and empower us to say with confidence and humility:

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

February

15 Leone Mather
24 Daniel Rust
28 Helen McDonald



March

19 Anne Gelinas
21 Bev Woolaver
22 Joyce Finlayson



**BROTHERS AND SISTERS
IN CHRIST**

Our service will feature some of our congregation's talents and testimony, followed by a pot luck lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dish to share!

Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary.



Seniors Lunch & Hymn Sing

February 19

March 12 (NOTE: date change; one week early)

Sign up sheet on the bulletin board at the back

FBC Annual Business Meeting

Tuesday, February 24 at 2 pm - please note the earlier start time!

Committee chairs are asked to have their written reports in to Jan by February 17th — please send to jan.white@live.ca or leave a copy in her mail slot.



FOR I AM PERSUADED,
that neither death, nor life,
NOR ANGELS, NOR PRINCIPALITIES,
nor powers,
nor things present,
NOR THINGS TO COME,
nor height, nor depth,
NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE,
shall be able to separate us
FROM THE LOVE OF GOD,
WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS
OUR LORD.

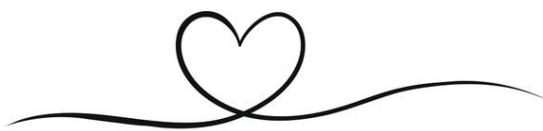
Romans 8:38-39

Unconditional love is a gift from God that surpasses our understanding. It is a love that knows no bounds, that remains steadfast and never-ending. Nothing can change it or diminish it. With unequivocal love, our heavenly Father lavishes us with His unmerited favour and mercy.

Human love often comes with constraints and limitations. God's love is different. God's love embraces our brokenness, forgives our failures, offers redemption and restoration. God's love is unwavering, extending to every corner of our existence.

In a world that craves acceptance and belonging, unconditional love provides support and affirmation. It reminds us that we are valued and cherished—not because of our performance or worthiness—but simply because we are God's beloved children.

God calls us to love others as he has loved us, extending grace and forgiveness in all our relationships. Through our words and actions, we have the privilege of sharing God's boundless love with a hurting world.





Men's Bible Study

Every second Tuesday at 10 am starting February 3

Led by Pastor Kevin at his home (4047 Mulberry Place, Petrolia)

Our study guide will be John MacArthur's Twelve Ordinary Men

Save
the
Date

FBC 154th Anniversary Service

Sunday, May 3rd

Details to come.

SPOILER ALERT! There will be food!



Friday, March 6—1 pm

Hosted by St. Phillips

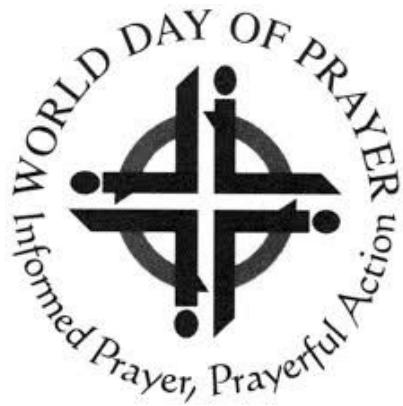
This year's theme is "I Will Give You Rest: Come"

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11: 28-30



A Note from the Deacons...

2026 is underway and your Deacons look forward to another year of faith and fellowship.

Serving on the Deacons Board are myself, Donna McAuslan, Larry Ainsworth and Pastor Alex, with John Lorantfy coming on as a new member and Janice re-joining us.

Over the next few months, we will be reviewing our church constitution as it has been 10 years since the last revisions were made. Where does the time go?!

As per the constitution, each Deacon has an added responsibility to serve as a member of our various committees to assist and encourage each other:

Outreach – Harald
Finance – Larry
Property - Harald
Nominating – Donna
Fellowship – Janice
Trustee - John



We are also preparing for a number of special events, including Family Sunday, a combined Good Friday service, Easter and our 154th anniversary. We pray these will be well attended and a blessing to all who join us.

We'd also like to remind you that Pastor Alex and the Deacons are available at any time for prayer or spiritual support.

Submitted by Harald Rust, Chair



Friday, April 3 at 10:30 am

We will have the privilege of hosting this year's combined service with fellow believers joining us from St. Paul's United, St. Andrews Presbyterian and Christ Anglican.

The cross walk will begin at 10:30 at St. Andrews and make its way to First Baptist.

Cheryl is hoping to direct a joint choir.

More details on this special service to come.



The Fellowship Room was full of laughter, fun and fellowship on December 3rd at our Ladies Christmas Party.

Each table was decorated by a table hostess with vintage items ranging from cookware to fancy dishes. Each hostess described their theme choices, giving us a good chance to get to each other better.

And of course, we enjoyed “vintage” treats with tea and coffee.



The Fellowship Hall was full to overflowing for our annual church family Christmas Dinner December 14th. It was wonderful to see extended family and old friends who joined us for the celebration of our Saviour's birth. We also enjoyed special music throughout the Advent season. Kudos to the Fellowship Committee for a delicious meal and to all the volunteers who decorated the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall so beautifully!



A wee bit 'o Irish fun to brighten your day!

(Sorry Alex and Wyn, we couldn't resist!)



Waiting for it to warm up so we can put out the “Paddy O’Furniture”!



**How can you tell an Irishman
is having a good time?**

*He's Dublin-over
with laughter!*



What do you call a fake diamond?

A sham-rock!



**Did you hear about the leprechaun
that opened a store?**

He's a small business owner now.

**NEVER iron a four-leaf clover
because you don't want to press your luck!**



Happy St. Patrick's Day