First News & Notes

October-November 2026

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
PETROLIA ONTARIO
1872-2022

Giving Thanks

"It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High. It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening." **Psalm 92:1–2 (NLT)**

In just a few weeks, we will again celebrate Thanksgiving. It's a special time of year when our thoughts naturally turn toward the blessings we enjoy.

For Christians, Thanksgiving is much more than a holiday on the calendar. For the believer, gratitude is a way of life…daily recognition that every good gift has its source in the goodness and faithfulness of God.

That's why the opening words of Psalm 92 are so fitting…there is something beautifully simple about them: *"It is good to give thanks to the LORD."*

We give thanks for our home and family…the people who share our lives, a familiar voice, a shared celebration, the laughter of children and grandchildren, and those who stand beside us on both joyful and difficult days.

We give thanks for our church family. What a gift it is to worship together, pray for one another, serve side by side, and rejoice together in God's answers to prayer. The church is more than a building or a Sunday service; it's a family of faith in which Christ has joined us together.

We give thanks for our daily blessings. Psalm 92 speaks of praising God "in the morning" and remembering His faithfulness "in the evening."

Every day gives us reasons to be thankful: food on the table, strength for the day, the beauty of autumn, the bounty of harvest, caring friends, work to do, moments of rest, and countless mercies we can easily overlook in the busyness of everyday life. Gratitude teaches us to notice the finger-prints of God in our lives.

Above all, we give thanks for salvation. The greatest blessing we have cannot be measured in pos-sessions, comfort or circumstances. It is the gift of Jesus Christ. We thank God that our sins are be forgiven, that Christ conquered death, and through faith in Him we have the sure hope of eternal life. Even when other blessings change, this one remains.

Let's make the words of Psalm 92 our own: begin the morning remembering God's unfailing love and end the day recalling His faithfulness. Look back and give thanks. Look around and give thanks. Look ahead and give thanks. And above all, look to Jesus and give thanks.

~ Pastor Alex

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
2—Brenda Elliott	1—Sue Smith
4—Scott Dillon	26—Helga Mursall

Seniors' Lunch & Hymn Sing

Thursday, October 15

Thursday, November 12

NOON—Fellowship Hall

NOTE: our November lunch will be held one week earlier than usual so make sure it's on your calendar

Sign up sheet will be at the rear of the sanctuary.

Be sure to stay after the service for Fellowship!

A great time to catch up with one another while enjoying some delightful nibblies!

Sunday, October 25

Sunday, November 29

C.O.F.F.E.E.

Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere

<u>A Thanksgiving Prayer</u>

Thank You, God, for everything … the big things and the small,
For "every good gift comes from God" … The Giver of them all.

And all too often we accept without any thanks or praise,
The gifts You send as blessings each day in many ways.

And so at this Thanksgiving time, we offer up a prayer;
To thank You, God, for giving us a lot more than our share.

First, thank You for the little things that often come our way;
The things we take for granted and don't mention when we pray.

The unexpected courtesy, the thoughtful, kindly deed,
A hand reached out to help us in the time of sudden need.

Oh, make us more aware, dear God, of little daily graces,
That come to us with "sweet surprise," from never-dreamed-of places.

Then, thank You for the "miracles" we are much too blind to see,
And give us new awareness of our many gifts from Thee.

And help us to remember that the "key" to "life" and "living,"
Is to make each prayer a "prayer of thanks," and every day THANKSGIVING.

Helen Steiner Rice

Blood Donor Clinic

Wednesday, October 7

1—7 p.m.

Petrolia YMCA

(new day and location)

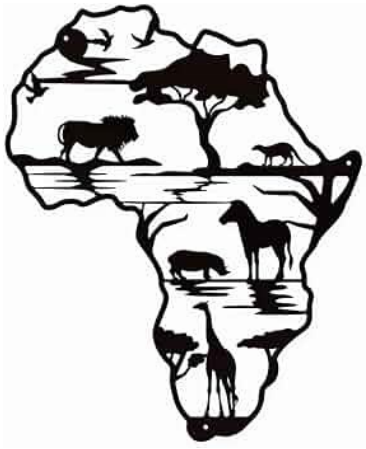
Register now at Canadian Blood Services.

Call 1-888-236-6283 or book online at www.blood.ca

MISSIONFEST 2026

"Taking the Gospel to the Heart of Africa"

This year, Missionfest will focus on 3 distinct but related areas.



1) **Supporting Jean-Marie and Hortense Atitso, new to CBM, and presently preparing at Laval University. They will be serving in Togo in French-speaking west Africa. The goal for this initiative is $18,000.**

2) **Pastor Psamuel Bibilari from Egerton Street Baptist Church in London to support ministry of discipleship and church planting and discipleship in Lagos, Nigeria. Goal: $6,000.**

3) **Pastor Eric Campbell of Arkona Baptist Church to support a sports component of current church work in Mzuzu, Malawi. Goal: $6,000.**

When giving, please mark MISSIONFEST on your offering envelope.

The Missionfest wrap-up will be Saturday, November 7 at Egerton Street Baptist Church in London.

See Harald if you'd like to attend.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:15

We're looking for a few helping hands!

We plan to decorate the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for the holidays on Thursday, November 26th.

We'll start at 10 a.m. so if you could join us, that'd be great!

There's always warm camaraderie and a few laughs!

FBC MITTEN TREE

Sunday, November 22 and 29

We'll be collecting new mittens, gloves, hats and socks—size infant to teenagers—to be distributed Petrolia's annual "Christmas for Everyone" program.

Last year, we collected 65 pairs of mitts/gloves, 68 hats, 39 pairs of socks, 2 pairs of earmuffs, 4 headbands and 2 neck warmers.

<u>Can we beat that this year?!</u>

God has given us two hands...one to receive with and the other to give with.

~ Billy Graham

WHAT A DAY! ***~ Cheryl Pierce Cassin***

I was blessed to attend SHE WILL RISE 2026: THE HARVEST in London on September 19th. After my first experience with this Christian Women's Conference (in April 2025), I immediately purchased two tickets for this year's event, giving one to my sister Laurie….it was THAT good!

From the second we drove into the parking lot we were welcomed by volunteers and directed to a spot right next to the venue. It just kept getting better! Every doorway, every hallway, every room was specifically designed to welcome and encourage women from all walks of life, cultures and ages. Babies-in-arms (and swaddled) were not only with their moms but afforded an atmosphere as Jesus instructed…welcoming the little ones. Each seat held a card saying "This seat has been prayed over" …and oh how that made a difference! Every detail was covered through planning and décor; every seat, volunteer, participant and presenter was bathed in prayer; every piece of music was God-breathed and full of glory. We were all sisters...prayed over, held, loved, supported and lifted.

The speakers were internationally recognized anointed preachers of The Word; each spoke from experiences, from their heart, and through the Holy Spirit. Dr. Alicia Britt Chole began by speaking of a 'Night Faith'; a powerful message including points such as 'From the very beginning, walking with God has always required a day faith and a night faith', and faith grows its depth in the dark.

The afternoon session started with the 'wow' presentation by Stephanie Harrison who was not scheduled to be there but SUPPOSED to be there. (She said 'yes' after another presenter was unable to come). She spoke of healing vs. wholeness, and told us that sometimes one has to return to the place you were broken to be restored. The Holy Spirit moved in a huge way, yes…just like a 'mighty rushing wind'…people were healed that day.

Our third speaker was Dr. Tara Jenkins who shared 'Here Comes The Bloom', beginning with the question…"Do you want to?" (Jesus says, 'Do you WANT to be well?') The four points made were:

1. You have been PURCHASED

2. You have been PLACED

3. You have been PLANTED

4. You have been PRUNED

5. We are all to PRODUCE

Attending such an event is truly life-changing. Not only was I 'filled' with the Spirit that day, but 'overflowing'. Conferences such as these are important for believers and yet-to-be-believers alike as they provide an atmosphere of worship, praise, education, fellowship, support and community.

It is truly TIME to RISE!!

Quarterly BUSINESS MEETING

Tuesday, November 3

2 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

ALL ARE WELCOME!

If you have any suggested revisions to the proposed updated Constitution, remember to bring them!

Think that God can't use you?

Jacob was a cheater, Peter had a temper, David had an affair, Noah got drunk. Jonah ran from God, Paul was a murderer, Gideon was insecure, Miriam was a gossiper, Martha was a worrier, Thomas was a doubter, Sara was impatient, Elijah was moody, Moses stuttered, Zaccheus was short, Abraham was old and Lazarus was dead.

God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called!

1 Peter 4:10

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

We are all a work in progress.

"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion." –Philippians 1:6

Since Satan can't change God's mind about you, he will try to change your mind about God.

Give Satan an inch...

...and he will become your ruler.

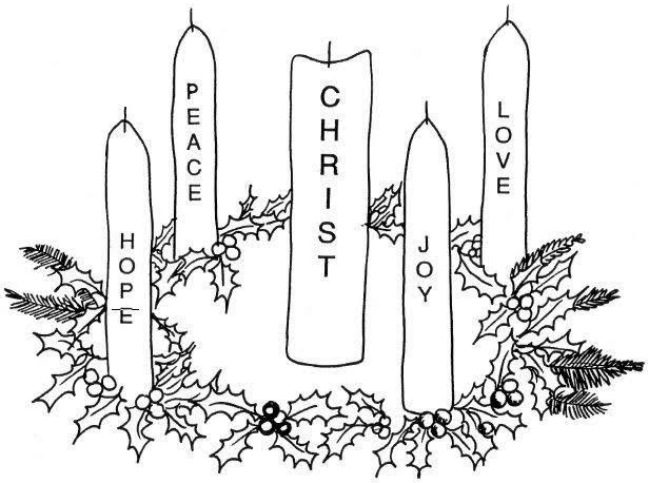
We will be supporting "Operation Christmas Child" again this year.

Administered by Samaritan's Purse, it spreads the gospel message to children around the world thru gift-filled 'shoeboxes'.

You can pick up the shoeboxes at the back of the church.

Instructions and gift ideas can be found in the pamphlets. Please bring your boxes back by Sunday, November 15th so we can get them to the collection depot for shipping.

Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child, the world's largest Christmas project of its kind, has collected and delivered more than 244 million shoebox gifts to children in more than 175 countries and territories.



- **First Sunday of Advent: November 29**
- **Second Sunday of Advent: December 6**
- **Third Sunday of Advent: December 13**
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent: December 20**

Annual Church Family Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, December 12 following the service

Turkey and all the trimmings

Each family is asked to bring a dessert to share

We'll be posting a sign-up sheet on the back bulletin board closer to the date.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing ~ John 15:5

Are You Still Connected?

I couldn't figure out why something I wanted to use was not working. Nothing appeared broken. I checked everything I could think of and tried everything I knew to try. Then I found the problem. It was the plug. The connection had been severed.

Jesus uses one of the most visual images in all of His teaching when he describes the relationship between Himself and the believer as a vine and its branches. Everyone who's ever watched something grow immediately understands. A branch connected to the vine is alive….drawing nourishment, producing leaves, bearing fruit. A branch separated from the vine cannot. The life that was flowing through it has stopped.

The word Jesus uses for what He is asking of us is *abide*….to remain, stay. And the result of that abiding is fruit. The natural overflow of a life that is genuinely connected to Christ. The branch does not strain to produce. It simply stays connected and the vine does what vines do: it pushes life through the connection and the fruit comes.

The last phrase of this verse is the most confronting. *"Without me ye can do nothing."* Nothing. Every effort made apart from genuine, abiding connection to Christ, no matter how impressive it looks from the outside, however active and productive it appears, ultimately produces nothing of lasting kingdom value.

That item in our house looked like it could work. It was in perfect condition. Nothing suggested a problem. But the connection was broken and appearance was all it had.

It's possible for a believer's life to look that way. Busy. Outwardly religious and engaged. And yet somewhere along the way the plug came out of the wall. The consistent time in prayer drifted. The Word became occasional. The abiding became sporadic. And what looks operational from the outside is running on nothing.

The good news is there's a fix. Find where the connection broke. Go back to it. Plug back in. The vine is still there. The life is still flowing. The fruit is still possible.

Everybody has a 'sunflower friend'...

that one person who has the unique ability to brighten our day, radiate joy and make us smile!

Are YOU that friend?

Here are some "sunflowers" from our September seniors lunch!

Thanks, Diane, for snapping these great photos!

Take nothing for granted, for whenever you do

The joy of enjoying is lessened for you.

For we rob our own lives much more than we know

When we fail to respond or in any way show,

Our thanks for the blessings that daily are ours

The warmth of the sun, the fragrance of flowers.

The beauty of twilight, the freshness of dawn,

The coolness of dew on a green velvet lawn.

The kind little deeds so thoughtfully done,

The favors of friends and love someone

Unselfishly gives in many ways

Expecting no payment and no words of praise.

Oh, great is our loss when we no longer find

A thankful response to things of this kind.

For the joy of enjoying and the fullness of living

Are found in the heart that is filled with thanksgiving.

~ Helen Steiner Rice

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

Be like a sunflower...

...always turn to the SON!

"Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing" ~ Psalm 100:2

The Dentist's Hymn.....Crown Him with Many Crowns
The Weatherman's Hymn..There Shall Be Showers of Blessings
The Contractor's Hymn.....How Firm a Foundation
The Tailor's Hymn.....Holy, Holy, Holy
The Politician's Hymn.....Standing on the Promises
The IRS Agent's Hymn.....I Surrender All
The Gossip's Hymn.....It Is No Secret
The Electrician's Hymn.....Send The Light
The Shopper's Hymn.....In the Sweet By and By
The Realtor's Hymn.....I've Got a Mansion Just Over the Hilltop
The Massage Therapist's Hymn.....He Touched Me
The Pilot's Hymn.....I'll Fly Away
The Paramedic's Hymn.....Revive Us Again
The Judge's Hymn.....Almost Persuaded
The Psychiatrist's Hymn.....Just A Little Talk With Jesus
The Waiter's Hymn.....Fill My Cup, Lord
The Baker's Hymn.....When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder
The Shoe Repairer's Hymn.....It Is Well With My Soul
The Geologist's Hymn.....Rock of Ages
The Librarian's Hymn.....Whispering Hope
The Mail Carrier's Hymn.....Deliverance Will Come
The Nurse's Hymn.....Rescue the Perishing
The Telephone Operator's Hymn.....Jesus on the Mainline
The Fisherman's Hymn.....Shall We Gather at the River?