

St. Andrew's
United
Church

FEBRUARY 2026

NEWSLETTER

February's photos are courtesy of
St. Andrew's Christmas On The Farm!



FEATURING...

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REVEREND DAVE

**SABBATH IS THAT UNCLUTTERED TIME AND SPACE IN WHICH WE CAN DISTANCE OURSELVES FORM OUR OWN ACTIVITIES ENOUGH TO SEE WHAT GOD IS DOING.
EUGENE H. PETERSON**

Greetings to the St. Andrew's community! I've been a bit remiss in the last months, getting a note into these newsletters – thanks to you who have encouraged me to get writing!

This church continues to be quite active; I am very pleased and (if the truth be told) somewhat surprised to be part of a church that is ramping up, rather than facing decline – we are in a hiring process for a pastoral care minister, preparing for further growth in our Sunday School, and starting up a youth group – in addition to regular events, ministries, and programs.

After a couple of years of rather intense activity, I'd say that what I'm seeing is that we are healthy, active... and at least a bit tired. Some folks are stepping away from active work and leadership, and when we are searching for leaders, it takes a while to find them! This feels entirely understandable to me, after the activities of the last years, and a natural part of the rhythms of faith and life.

Sabbath is a significant part of our spiritual heritage, both Jewish and Christian. We are meant to live in a rhythm of work and rest, giving and receiving, action and contemplation. It's natural to be tired after a period of activity! So we are called to take a regular rest.

Actually, we have a rather intentional rest coming up – I have been granted a sabbatical leave later this year, from about mid-July to near the end of October. United Church policy is for a sabbatical leave of three months after five years of service – and amazingly, that's where we are now! I'm very grateful for my time here at St. Andrew's, and very grateful for the chance to take a sabbatical.

Four words will provide the shape to my own time of sabbatical: rest, discovery, creativity, and health. I am finding myself tired these days, too, and so rest will be on my agenda! Discovery refers to my desire to discover anew what my identity, my calling is, underneath this role of minister that I've filled these past 37 years or so. Creativity will be about music and writing – exploring at least a part of that sense of identity I am hoping to discover anew. And health: I have some "inner work" to do as I hope I finally have the maturity and support to heal some of those inner burdens and wounds that I've carried with me all these years.

**REST
DISCOVERY
CREATIVITY
HEALTH**

CONTINUED...

OUR "WORK" ON SABBATH IS TO REST, TO APPRECIATE, TO LIVE IN GRATITUDE

We're still at the beginning of the discussion of what St. Andrew's will do with its own sabbatical, while I am on mine! But the early indications are that we might look at similar themes as a congregation, maybe particularly rest. How can we rest as a congregation, without disengaging, without letting go of the momentum towards growth that we are experiencing?

It so happens that my doctoral thesis is about Sabbath – so I find this discussion exciting, actually! Sabbath, in the Jewish tradition, is the crown of the week, a day to practice Heaven, a day to live, in this real world, as if the Kingdom of God has already arrived. Our "work" on Sabbath is to rest, to appreciate, to live in gratitude. We spend this day as if nothing needs to be changed, fixed, improved. Questions the rabbis asked me to think about for Sabbath were questions like these: ***What most feeds your soul? What would be, for you, a perfect day? With whom would you like to spend your ideal day? Who are the people who make you feel most alive? And... what do you need to say "no" to in order to truly rest?***

Rest and restoration are important parts of our spiritual life, as they are in our day to day work and family lives. I look forward to listening in as you switch gears for a while, perhaps, to consider what delights you rather than what obligation calls you. How might St. Andrew's rest and revive, as a community, so that we might come together after the sabbatical rested and with a renewed sense of joy and grace? I hope that the time ahead will be restorative and full of grace and healing for all of us.

WHAT MOST FEEDS YOUR SOUL? WHAT WOULD BE, FOR YOU, A PERFECT DAY? WITH WHOM WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR IDEAL DAY? WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU FEEL MOST ALIVE? AND... WHAT DO YOU NEED TO SAY "NO" TO IN ORDER TO TRULY REST?



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2026



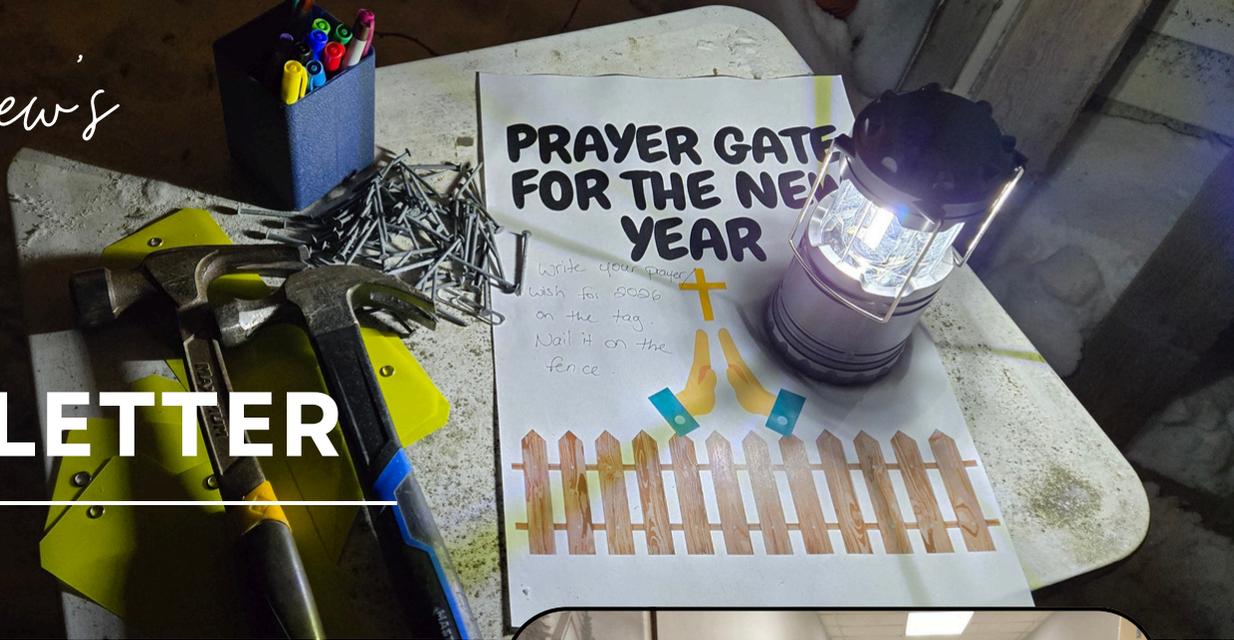
agm **FINGER-FOOD POTLUCK**

→ **BEFORE OUR AGM!**

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CHURCH SERVICES

Reverend Dave Holmes held Church services on Feb 2nd at Royal Oak, Lacombe Lodge, and Long term care. Many seniors enjoyed his message. Joan Graves, member of St. Andrew's, is pictured with her granddaughter. Also attending from Circles of Care was Doris, Don, Tilly, and Carol on piano.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Our next men's breakfast will take place on Saturday, March 21 at 9 AM, see you here!



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LEGACY FUND

The Legacy Fund

Funds available for distribution and subject to a vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 12, 2026 are as follows:

- \$1,175.00 for use of our Community of Faith for item(s) of a non-administrative nature.
- \$885.00 for a Lacombe and area community organization or charity.
- \$885.00 for a World community organization or charity.

For 1), please submit ideas/requests to Doug Maas via e-mail by March 23.

Email address is dgmaas52@gmail.com

For 2) and 3), Outreach Team makes recommendation/motion at AGM for use of funds.

YOUTH GROUP!

@Home Escape Rooms

On March 20th, we are hosting an Escape Room Night at the church and will be planning our Youth-hosted Church Service! Stay tuned for more details!

On Friday February 20th, our Youth Group met at the church and used the SAUCY (St Andrews United Church Youth) room for the first time! We had Taco-in-a-Bag before walking to the pool for Friday night swimming! The pool had the WIBIT course set up, and everyone (even Brenna) had fun trying to make it across the floating obstacle course!



BRIEF NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

Thanks to the extreme generosity of our congregation, we ended the year in the black. Final numbers will be available in the annual reports.

We are seeking an internal reviewer to complete the 2025 review of the books. If you are interested, or know of someone with accounting background, please contact Karen at 403-782-7252.



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Circles of Care

If you know of anyone in the hospital or needing a visit, please contact the office: 403-782-3148 or Tilly with Circles of Care: 403-896-6767.



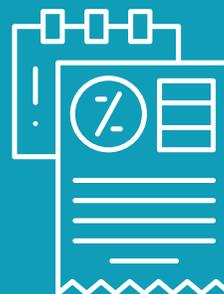
MESSY CHURCH

Join us for our next Messy Church on Friday, March 6 at 5 PM. Our theme will be the Last Supper!



TAX RECEIPTS

Tax Receipts are ready and may be picked up over the next few Sundays, or from the office. If you would like yours to be mailed out, please contact the office 403-782-3148.



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CHURCH EASTER EGG HUNT!



You're Invited to Our Annual Church Easter Egg Hunt!

Hop on over and join us for a joyful, laughter-filled morning at our Annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 6, 2026! This is a fun and welcoming event for kids and families in our church and community – everyone is invited.

We'll have lots of colorful eggs to find, exciting prizes to win, and plenty of smiles to go around as we celebrate the joy and hope of Easter together.

Bring your baskets, invite a friend, and come celebrate with us – we can't wait to see you there!

GARAGE SALE!

Your favourite event of the year is BACK!

So many of you have been asking – and we finally have the details! Our annual Garage Sale is happening again this year, with TWO full days of selling on June 5 & 6.

Set-up will begin June 2, and we would love your help. If you're able to join in the fun, laughter, and teamwork, please let Annerie know!

As always, there will be delicious treats, great company, and more fun than you can imagine. Come be part of something special – it wouldn't be the same without our amazing volunteers!





EMAIL/PHONE/MAIL SCAMS

PLEASE REMEMBER:

- Hover over email addresses: If an email appears suspicious, hover over or tap on the sender's name (depending on the device) to reveal the actual email address. Does the email address match the name of the sender?
- Matching email addresses: Look at the email address carefully. Even if the name looks familiar, scammers often create fake addresses that appear similar to the real ones.
- Call the alleged sender. Use a phone number you already have on file, not one from the email.
- Do not reply or click on links. If you suspect a scam, do not engage. Delete it. Clicking links can expose you to phishing attempts.

Here is an example of recent scam email:

From: David Holmes <rev.dave.st.andrewslacombe@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 25, 2026, 5:45 p.m.
Subject: (Your Name)
To: (your email address)

*****Scammers are crafty...this looks like Dave's email, but isn't - can you spot the difference? This is Dave's email: dave.st.andrewslacombe@gmail.com**

Dear (Name),

I hope this note finds you well and embraced by God's love. I wanted to reach out because there's something uplifting on my heart that I feel called to share with you, and I believe your input will be invaluable. If you could send me a quick email when you have a moment, it would mean so much.

May the Lord bless you and keep you always in His peace.

In Christ's love,
Rev. Dave Holmes

Lead Pastor
ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
Love Jesus, live like Jesus, lead others



*****Please remember that St. Andrew's staff, members of the board, and congregational leaders will not be emailing/texting you to request gift cards or cash. Scammers like to use emotional manipulation and a sense of urgency. When in doubt call the office or contact someone from the church using a trusted number - not one from the email/text you received!**

More information on fraud and fraud prevention may be found here:
<https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm>