

# St. Andrew's United Church April Newsletter

Welcome Spring 2026!

Embracing the sunshine and fresh beginnings that Spring brings to our community!



St. Andrew's Walking Group - see more on page 10

## Featuring...

Rev. Dave P.2 & 3

Easter Season P.6& 7

Walking Group P.10

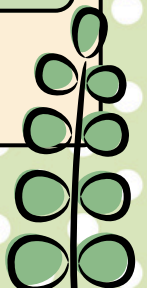
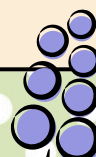
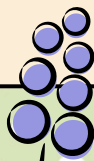
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## Taste of Spring! -Reverend Dave-

Well, it looks like Spring might come our way after all; the birds are returning even if the snow and ice is not quite yet all gone! Miracles don't seem to come on schedule, but I trust this one will come.



I find myself thinking about the conversation that began at the end of our annual meeting, when Jim stood up and referenced a discussion that has been started by the United Church's General Council: *Toward 2035*. (For more information, see [\*Toward 2035: Envisioning the Future of the United Church\* | \*The United Church of Canada\*](#))

Part of that discussion involves a set of rather bleak statistics and trend lines for the United Church of Canada – trends with which most of us are pretty familiar. They show dropping numbers: fewer members, fewer givers, fewer churches, fewer children. If we continue the trend lines as they have been for the past 20-30 years into the future – to 2035 – they project a national church that is very very small indeed. While this particular church, St. Andrew's, remains a very vibrant congregation, we have also noticed the trends. We are fewer and older than we were 20 years ago. I remember Jim saying, essentially (and I hope I got this right), that if we value this United Church, now is probably a good time to address this issue. That, of course, is what the "Toward 2035" discussion is all about. Denominationally (and personally!) we agree with Jim.

All I'd like to do at this point is think about the way we frame our discussion. If you watch the Moderator's brief video introducing *Toward 2035*, you'll notice Kim doesn't spend much time on the statistics and trends – and I don't think we ought to, either. Instead, I think our Moderator is encouraging us to see this exploration as a matter of trust, discernment, and prayer. (Continued on page 3...)



**Deep • Bold • Daring  
Toward 2035**

## Continued...

# T R U S T

**First: trust.** Lots of us seem to look at the trend lines and see failure. I understand the emotional reaction, but I don't think this is failure. To some extent, the United Church has just been punished by general societal trends. But our history of decline has not been a history of failure; it has been a history of learning, of repentance, of facing some very difficult truths with courage and faithfulness. I believe God has been doing some very significant work in this denomination! So following our Moderator, I want us first of all to trust God as we have these conversations. I want us to trust that we are where we are because this is where God has led us. The question is not, "where have we gone wrong?" but "for what has God been preparing us?"



**Second: discernment.** The conversation into which we are entering is a process of listening and discovery. Trusting that God has brought us here for a reason, we now listen and look for what God is doing among us and around us. Kim quoted Isaiah: "behold, I am doing a new thing." What new thing is God doing in us, among us, around us?



**And third: prayer.** Let's not panic – that just robs us of our humour and creativity. Instead let's pray – let's use this as motivation to deepen our connection with God, which after all is the only way we're going to figure out what it is God is doing, and what God is calling for us to be and do in this moment. Even if we never figure things out, grounding ourselves more deeply in God surely can't do any harm!

I find it's fairly easy for me to trust that God is, in fact, doing something new among us. It may be that the trend lines are already changing, even before we do much of anything with "Toward 2035." I sit on the Chinook Winds Regional Executive, and at our most recent meeting we had a conversation with several congregations in the Bow Valley. There is something happening, some significant growth and development, in every one of the congregations with whom we spoke. One congregation is even experiencing such growth that it has become a problem – they're running out of space! I think I see it happening here in Lacombe, and evidently we're not alone.

So I welcome the conversation to come! But please, don't enter into this process with a sense of desperation or impending doom. Step in with trust, curiosity, and prayer. God is still with us, and has been all along. Winter's been persistent, we might say – but it may well be that spring is upon us.

## Garage Sale!

**THERE ARE STILL MANY SPOTS TO BE FILLED, PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING OUT IF YOU ARE ABLE!**

The garage sale will be held June 5 & 6. A sign-up sheet can be found on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please consider signing up for one or more shifts:

### Set Up Days:

Tuesday June 2: 1-4

Wednesday June 3: 9-12, 1-4

Thursday June 4: 9-12, 1-4

Friday June 5: 9-12

### Selling Days:

Friday June 5: 12-7, 10 volunteers including 2 people to do cash

Saturday June 6: 9-2, 10 volunteers including 2 people to do cash

### Clean Up:

Saturday June 6: 2-4

### Lunch and Supper Volunteers (to bring a meal) 2 volunteers:

Wednesday lunch

Thursday Lunch

Friday Lunch and Supper

Saturday Lunch



# JUNE 5 & 6, 2026!!



## Calling All Graduates!

June is just around the corner, and with it comes graduation season! We love celebrating every milestone – and while we have a special gift and card set aside for high school graduates, we're excited to honour anyone crossing the finish line on a major academic chapter. If you or someone close to your family is graduating, let the office or Dave Hnatiuk know so they can be celebrated – just mention what they're graduating from!



## Happy Birthday!

A birthday celebration was held on the 3rd Sunday in April. Included was Delores MacIntyre who turned 94 on April 28, 2026.

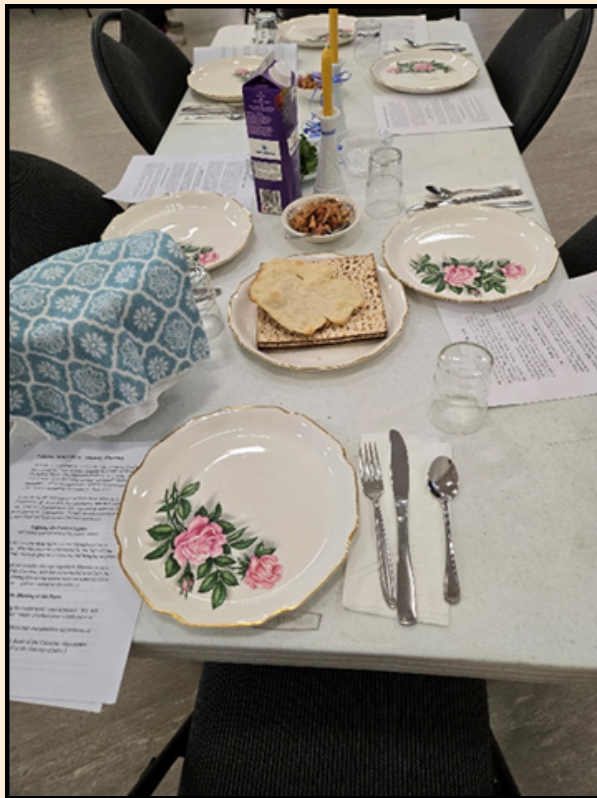
The UCW1 puts on a birthday table with a cake once a month during Sunday coffee for all those who celebrate a Birthday that month.





## Easter at St. Andrew's Maundy Thursday Passover Seder Meal

The seder is a celebration of the 7-day Passover Festival. It is the story of Moses leading the escape of the Israelite slaves from Egypt. Participants relive the experiences of their ancestors and how God saves by reenacting the events for themselves.



The story is told through explaining the significance of the lamb bone, unleavened bread, bitter herbs, haroset, and hard-boiled eggs.

Each year St. Andrew's congregation members take part in a Seder Meal. Everyone is welcome. An abundance of food is always made available.



# CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

To discuss changes to the Legacy Fund  
Sunday June 7, following the service!



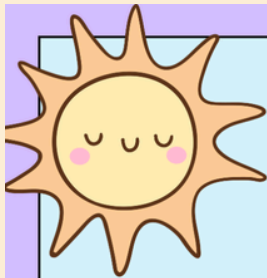
## Easter at St. Andrew's Good Friday

The Good Friday service is a solemn occasion, followed by the Easter Sunday service.



## Easter Sunday

This year, 142 people attended the service on Easter Sunday.



**CALLING ALL  
SUMMER CAMP  
VOLUNTEERS!**

**AUGUST 4-7, 9AM - 12PM  
PLEASE CONTACT BRENNNA**





## Woodland Sanctuary Work Bee! Sunday, April 19

What a busy, exciting afternoon! On Sunday, April 19, the first day of Earth Week, thirty-eight people of all generations came out to the Woodland Sanctuary for a Work Bee! With the expertise and guidance of Cynthia Pohl from Living Lands Landscape and Design we created several different habitat structures to add to our biodiverse ecosystem.

These structures will provide homes and safety for small animals and insects. Horizontal snags, rock piles and a butterfly hibernaculum were built with the muscle and enthusiasm of participants. Some new name plaques were added as well.

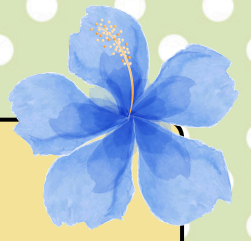
Thank you. Thank you to all who attended. A special thank you to David Delafield who brought deadfall trees, branches and saws, the Kassies and Dunnewind families who brought rocks and wheelbarrows, Frank VandeKraats who donated the rubber mat for the hibernaculum, and the people who brought snacks and cookies for all to enjoy.

And thank you to Delano Lewis who taught us so much during the morning church service and again in the afternoon while building the hibernaculum. Dr. Lewis, a Professor of Biology (Entomology) at Burman University, has hired a student to assist in research based in the Woodland Sanctuary!



Pray. Learn. Act. We did it all that day!  
It was an inspiration to see people working together "for the love of creation!"  
-Green Team-





## Happy Anniversary!

Ed and Carol celebrated their 60th Anniversary on June 5, 2025. St Andrew's would like to give their congratulations for their now 61 years of marriage!



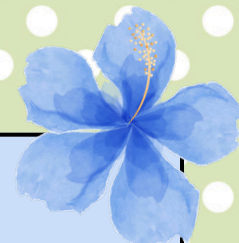
### Bible Study

Please note a change of venue for this week's Bible Study. We will meet at the Lacombe Golf & Country Club!



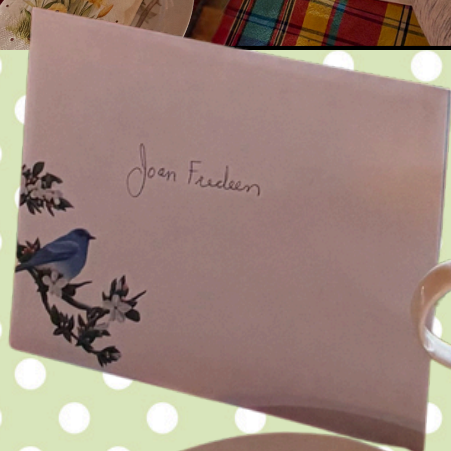
**DROP-IN BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK AT THE LACOMBE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB TUESDAY 4:45**

**BIBLE STUDY!**  
**LACOMBE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB**



## Walking Group

Our Walking Group meets Monday mornings at various locations. Pictured below we are having coffee/tea at Joan Fredeen's place following our walk! Everyone is welcome to join. For more information message/phone: Carol Cornwell 403-357-9257 or Anneke Kassies 403-302-0829.



# CENTRAL ALBERTA



Now in YEAR 31, the growing project based out of Lacombe has secured 140 acres of land, west of Blackfalds for 2026 to grow a crop.

Last year, \$57,000 was raised from a canola crop, and forwarded to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFB) in Winnipeg to help hungry people internationally. The CFB is a registered Canadian charity established in 1983. Last year, it helped 1,176,111 people in 37 countries.

Started in 1996, the local project has had excellent support from farmers, agri-businesses, other businesses, churches, donors, supporters and the media, in raising funds for international food aid.

“In the previous 30 years, we have locally raised over \$2,000,000 with our fundraising efforts,” says committee member Doug Maas. “We could not have done it without all the wonderful assistance we have received.”

This year, the group will grow peas on the land made available to it. Some inputs are donated, but some expenses such as crop insurance and additional inputs are purchased. To help offset these costs, individuals, churches and businesses may wish to donate funds to the group to assist with these expenses. Cash donations of \$10.00 or more are eligible for a charitable tax receipt.

To reach the field, from the Blackfalds overpass on Highway 2, proceed west on the Aspelund Road to Range Road 27-5, then turn north for ½ mile. The field is on the east side of the road. Legal description is NW 29-39-27 W4th.

For more information on the project, please contact Doug Maas at 403-318-5733.

Donations can be forwarded by cheque, and please make cheques payable to the Central Alberta Foodgrains Project.

Forward donations to:

Chris Dyck  
Site 13, Comp 21, RR 1, Lacombe, AB, T4L 2N1  
**Thank you for caring and helping those less fortunate.**



## FOODGRAINS BANK COUNTRY HIGHLIGHT

**SOMALIA:** Farmers in Siraha, Nepal face significant barriers to accessing seeds, fertilizers, and other agricultural inputs due to high costs and market inefficiencies. Many marginalized families rely on informal daily wage labour and often earn below the minimum wage. In response, Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC) is partnering with Dalit Janakalyan Yuba Club (DJKYC) to implement an agriculture and livelihoods project aimed at improving food security.

Project activities will include agricultural training and input support, income-generating initiatives, nutrition and hygiene awareness campaigns, and institutional capacity building. The project will reach 3,900 unique participants across 2,500 households, representing a total population of approximately 12,550 people.

**CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK** is a partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies working together to end world hunger by: providing emergency food in times of crisis, helping people improve their access to food in the longer-term, and engaging Canadians and governments toward meaningful change.