



**The purpose of Bethany Baptist Church is to bring glory to God by making disciples who reflect the character and priorities of Jesus Christ.**

#### SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

**9:00 AM** Sunday School

**10:30 AM** Worship Service & Children's Church during sermon

**6:00 PM** Prayer Meeting

Nursery is available in the supervised room downstairs or the unsupervised room in the back of the sanctuary with audio

#### SERMON

**Scripture:** 1 Cor. 3:1-9

**Speaker:** Pastor Peter Erratt

God gives the growth

#### OUR ELDER SHEPHERDING GROUP

A-B → Lyndon Unger

C-D → Tim Archibald

E-H → David Street

I-M → Pastor Peter Erratt

N-R → Tom Smith

S → Cory Leniuk

T-Z → Dennis Burris

According to the first letter of your last name, feel free to bring any questions or concerns to your assigned elder or email them at [elders@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:elders@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

#### GET TO KNOW US

✉ [office@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:office@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

🌐 [www.bethanybaptist.ab.ca](http://www.bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

📞 403-347-7900

📍 3901 44 St. Red Deer, AB T4N 1G7

#### **Lead Pastor:**

Peter Erratt

[peter@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:peter@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

#### **Assistant Pastor**

Daniel Lara

[daniel@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:daniel@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

#### **Church Admin & Children's Ministry Coord:**

Lilian Lara

[lilian@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:lilian@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

#### PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

- Health Needs: Lorraine Hort, Gord Rue
- Email us your prayer requests or to join the Prayer Line!

#### MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

##### Greeters

Greeters are often the first impression of our church. They arrive early, greet everyone with a smile, and offer genuine hospitality. Greeters engage in conversation, ask thoughtful questions, and help connect visitors with the right people in the church. They make guests feel seen, known, and welcomed—both on their first visit and when they return.

Please pray for Barb Marian who schedules the greeters. Pray for the greeters that as they greet, they are reminded of our hospitable God.

If you would like to join our team, please let Lilian know. All ages are welcome!

#### JOIN OUR LIFE GROUP

EVERY SUNDAY AFTERNOON

• Tim & Michelle Archibald

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY

• Martin & Lorna Scholz

• Tom & Tina Smith

• Peter & Nancy Erratt

EVERY WEDNESDAY

• Don & Jan Collier

• David & Laurel Street

EVERY THURSDAY

• Mark & Shannia Guenther

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY

• Lyndon & Leah Unger

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

##### **FRIDAY JANUARY 16**

6:30 pm Ladies' Night

##### **SUNDAY JANUARY 18**

10:30 am Baptism Sunday

12:00 pm Newcomers' Lunch

##### **MONDAY JANUARY 19**

7:00 PM SLB Meeting

##### **TUESDAY JANUARY 20**

6:30 pm Adventure Club

6:30 pm Youth Group

##### **WEDNESDAY JANUARY 21**

6:30 am Men's Breakfast

9:30 am Seniors' Ministry

6:30 pm Baptism Class

7:30 pm Membership Class

##### **FRIDAY JANUARY 23**

6:30 pm Men's Night

##### **SATURDAY JANUARY 24**

3:00 pm Baby Shower (Liam)

##### **SUNDAY JANUARY 25**

10:30 am Baby Dedication(Oceana)

##### **FEBRUARY 6 - 8**

Ministry Leader Retreat

##### **SUNDAY FEBRUARY 8**

10:30 am Mission Sunday

*Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.*  
- Ephesians 4:29

#### December Financial Report

General Fund Donation	Monthly Budget	Received
	\$32,829	\$79,144

#### OFFERING

E-TRANSFER: [treasurer@bethanybaptist.ab.ca](mailto:treasurer@bethanybaptist.ab.ca)

OR DROP OFF YOUR EVELOPE AT THE OFFICE

##### Donation Policy

The spending of funds received by Bethany Baptist Church is confined to Church approved programs and projects. Each gift designated toward an approved program or project will be used as designated with the understanding that when any given need has been met, or the specified program or project cannot be reasonably carried out or has not been approved, designated gifts will be used where needed most. Where appropriate, an official receipt for tax purposes will be issued as soon as possible after the year end.

As we reach the end of 2025, we pray that this letter finds you anticipating all that the Holy Spirit will do in and through you this coming year. We trust that you had a wonder-filled Christmas as you pondered the miracle of the incarnation of Christ. Admittedly, celebrating Christmas in a foreign land was lonely, but we are thankful to have had time to consider how we might best celebrate Christmas in a land where Christ is unknown.

December was a busy month filled with outreach. In Japan, there are no longstanding Christmas traditions. Of course you can find light displays, and many eat a KFC feast with Christmas cake (strawberry shortcake) on Christmas Day, but most people do not seem to know that Christmas is related to Christianity. Thankfully, many Japanese are curious about "foreign" things, so we had several opportunities to talk about the birth of Christ.

Tanja spent many hours preparing bookmarks with the story of the candy cane, each with a sweet treat affixed to the backside. She included them in a package with a Gospel tract and distributed them to about 50 people including moms from the kindergarten, people in our neighbourhood, and even the local courier. The highlight of the season was our neighbourhood Christmas party where we served homemade apple cider, learned more about our neighbours, and Andrew read Luke 2:1-14 and John 3:16-17 in Japanese (after hours of practice). Six of the nine neighbours who attended heard the Christmas story for the first time! We received kind messages of thanks for our efforts from those who attended.

In the coming month, we hope to have a bit more clarity on our future ministry placement. January 11, we will attend a church in Yokohama to worship with the congregation and meet with the elders afterwards. We are interested to hear more about the ministry of the church and discuss an internship where we can learn how we can be more useful for God's service here in Japan. At times, it can feel like things take a long time in Japan, but we are thankful that God has given us this time to ensure that we end up at the right church. Please continue to pray for us as we seek the Lord's leading for our ministry placement.

#### Prayers and Praises

1. In December, we handed out many tracts and had conversations about the meaning of Christmas. Please pray that we would be able to build on these conversations in the new year.
2. We have been invited to attend a church in Yokohama on January 11 to worship with the congregation and meet with the elders after the service to discuss joining their church for an internship. Please pray for a fruitful meeting with the elders and continued wisdom to discern if we should serve at this church.
3. Last month, we asked you to pray for Tanja as we awaited the results of the testing related to a medical issue flagged on her annual checkup. Praise the Lord, the doctor said that the problem is minor and should resolve on its own over time.

Spiritual maturity is achieved through becoming more like Jesus Christ. After salvation, every Christian begins the process of spiritual growth, with the intent to become spiritually mature. According to the apostle Paul, it's an ongoing process that will never end in this life. In [Philippians 3:12-14](#), speaking of full knowledge of Christ, he tells his readers that he himself has not "already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Like Paul, we have to press continually toward deeper knowledge of God in Christ.

Christian maturity requires a radical reordering of one's priorities, changing over from pleasing self to pleasing God and learning to obey God. The key to maturity is consistency, perseverance in doing those things we know will bring us closer to God. These practices are referred to as the spiritual disciplines and include things such as Bible reading/study, prayer, fellowship, service, and stewardship. No matter how hard we might work on those things, however, none of this is possible without the enabling of the Holy Spirit within us. [Galatians 5:16](#) tells us that we're to "walk by the Spirit." The Greek word used here for "walk" actually means "to walk with a purpose in view." Later in the same chapter, Paul tells us again that we're to "walk by the Spirit." Here, the word translated "walk" has the idea of taking things "step by step, one step at a time." It is learning to walk under the instruction of another—the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit means we walk under the Spirit's control. As we submit more and more to the Spirit's control, we will also see an increase in the fruit of the Spirit in our lives ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)). This is characteristic of spiritual maturity.

When we become Christians, we are given all we need for spiritual maturity. Peter tells us that "[God's] divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence" ([2 Peter 1:3](#)). God alone is our resource, and all growth comes by grace through Him, but we are responsible to make the choice to obey. Peter again helps us in this area: "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([2 Peter 1:5-8](#)). Being effective and fruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus is the essence of spiritual maturity.

## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How does Paul's contrast between milk and solid food help us evaluate whether our faith is actually growing or simply remaining comfortable and basic?

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2. In what ways do jealousy, strife, or division reveal that we are still responding out of the flesh rather than living out the gospel?

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3. How can admiration for Christian leaders become a source of division, and what helps us keep Christ as the true center of our loyalty?

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4. What does the image of planting, watering, and God giving the growth teach us about our role and God's role in spiritual growth and ministry?

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## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

5. How does remembering that all servants are accountable to God help us resist comparison, competition, and personality-driven division in the church? What do the images of God's field and God's building teach us about our responsibility and God's sovereignty in the life and growth of the church?

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6. In what practical ways do our default instincts drift toward personalities or preferences, and how does remembering that we belong to God help reset those patterns?

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7. What do your default reactions in moments of conflict reveal about where the gospel has, or has not yet, reshaped your heart?

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8. In what ways might spiritual comfort or familiarity be keeping you on "milk" instead of moving toward maturity through obedience and repentance?

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