



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

No Sunday School until January 11

10:30 AM Worship Service

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

SERMON

Scripture: 1 Cor. 2:6-12

Speaker: Pastor Peter Erratt

Part One: Spiritual Wisdom and the Mind of Christ

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

GET TO KNOW US

✉ office@bethanybaptist.ab.ca

🌐 www.bethanybaptist.ab.ca

📞 403-347-7900

📍 3901 44 St. Red Deer, AB T4N 1G7

Lead Pastor:

Peter Erratt

peter@bethanybaptist.ab.ca

Assistant Pastor

Daniel Lara

daniel@bethanybaptist.ab.ca

Church Admin & Children's Ministry Coord:

Lilian Lara

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

Staff

This year marks Pastor Peter's 26th year of serving at Bethany. Last May, we welcomed Lilian to our staff as Church Administrator and Children's Ministry Coordinator. This month, we welcomed Daniel as our part-time Assistant Pastor, with a focus on youth and young adults. As this is a new team, we ask for your prayers as they work together for the good of the body of Christ and the advancement of God's kingdom. May God grant Pastor Peter wisdom and strength as he continues to lead and guide our church and to train our new pastor. May God give Pastor Daniel wisdom to understand our church and to use his spiritual gifts effectively. May God give Lilian wisdom as she supports church communication and coordinates the children's ministry. May we all use our gifts to equip God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

"There is ONE body and ONE Spirit, just as you were called to the ONE hope that belongs to your call; ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism; ONE God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY JANUARY 6

6:30 pm Adventure Club

6:30 pm Youth Group

SATURDAY JANUARY 10

7:00 pm SingPlus at Bethany

SUNDAY JANUARY 11

9:00 am Sunday School

10:30 am Baby Dedication(Lai Fong)

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 14

06:30 am Men's Breakfast

09:30 am Seniors' Ministry

SUNDAY JANUARY 18

10:30 am Baptism

12:00 pm Newcomers' Lunch

MONDAY JANUARY 19

7:00 PM SLB Meeting

SUNDAY JANUARY 21

6:30 pm Baptism Class

7:30 pm Membership Class

SUNDAY JANUARY 25

10:30 am Baby Dedication(Oceana)

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 8

10:30 am Mission Sunday

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

November Financial Report

General Fund Donation	Monthly Budget	Received
	\$32,829	\$28,798.26

OFFERING

E-TRANSFER: 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.

What is the biblical doctrine of illumination?

Simply put, illumination in the spiritual sense is “turning on the light” of understanding in some area. Throughout the ages, people in every culture and religion have claimed some kind of revelation or enlightenment from God (whether true or not). When that enlightenment deals with new knowledge or future things, we call it prophecy. When that enlightenment deals with understanding and applying knowledge already given, we call it illumination. Regarding illumination of the latter type, the question arises, “How does God do it?”

The most basic level of enlightenment is the knowledge of sin, and without that knowledge, everything else is pointless. [Psalm 18:28](#) says, “You, O LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.” [Psalm 119](#), which is the longest chapter in the Bible, is a song about God’s Word. In verse 130, it says “The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” This verse establishes the basic method of God’s illumination. When God’s Word enters the heart of a person, it gives light and understanding to them. For this reason, we are repeatedly told to study the Word of God. [Psalm 119:11](#) says “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” Verses 98 and 99 say “Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.”

Regular study of the Word of God will give direction and understanding in the issues of life. This is the first method of God’s illumination and the starting point for us all. In [Psalm 119](#) we also find another type of God’s illumination. Verse 18 says, “Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.” These are not new revelations, but things which have been written and revealed long before, and just now understood by the reader (one of those “aha!” moments). Similarly, verse 73 says, “Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.” The plea is for personal understanding and application of God’s laws as they are studied by the individual. Fifteen times in this psalm, God is asked to teach or give understanding regarding His laws.

One passage that sometimes stirs controversy regarding illumination is [John 14:26](#), “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” Jesus was speaking to His disciples in the upper room, giving them last instructions before His death. This special group of men was to be responsible for spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the whole world. They had spent three and a half years with Him, watching His miracles and hearing His teachings. They would relay those things to the rest of the world, and would need God’s special help remembering those things accurately. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would teach them and remind them of what had been said, so they could give it to others (including the writing of the Gospels). This verse does not teach that the Spirit will do so with all believers (though there are other verses that speak of the Spirit’s illuminating work).

What is the Holy Spirit’s illuminating work in believers? [Ephesians 1:17-18](#) tells us that the Spirit gives wisdom and revelation concerning Jesus Christ, and opens the eyes of understanding so we can know God’s purposes in our lives. In [1 Corinthians 2:10-13](#), God has revealed His plans for us by His Spirit, who teaches us spiritual things. The context here points to the Word of God as that which has been revealed. The Spirit of God will always point us to the Word of God for our instruction. As Jesus told His disciples in [John 16:12-15](#), the Spirit simply repeats what the Father and the Son have already said. This repetition helps us remember and fully hear what God has already told us. Sometimes we have to hear things several times before we actually hear them. That’s where the Spirit comes in.

One thing that is sometimes overlooked in the discussion of illumination is the purpose of it. To hear some arguments, it would seem that the whole purpose of illumination is an accurate and academic understanding of God’s Word. There is no question that God desires us to accurately understand what He has given us. Words have meaning, and we must pay attention to the details in those words. If, however, we stop there, we simply have an academic understanding of facts or philosophies, which do no one any good.

Going back to [Psalm 119](#), we find purpose statements connected with the illumination verses. “I will meditate on your wonders” (v. 27), “I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart” (v. 34), “that I may understand your statutes” (v. 125), “that I may live” (v. 144). The illumination always points to action. Why does God help us understand His Word? So we are able to live in its light. [First John 1:6](#) challenges us, “If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.” We could paraphrase it to say, “If we say we’ve been enlightened, but still walk in the dark, we lie about understanding God’s Word.” The Spirit of God, who enlightens us to hear and understand God’s Word, then takes that knowledge and guides us in living it. [Romans 8:14](#) says “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” The illuminating and leading work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is a confirmation that we are indeed children of God.

Dear Friends,

“For behold I bring you good news of Great Joy.” (Luke 2:10) I feel privileged to have seen this news of great joy become a reality in many hearts. It has been an enjoyable fall and an encouraging one with beautiful weather. As you know, we have been helping with the re-plant of Calvary Baptist Church, Edmonton, over the last 4 and a half years. It never occurred to me that we would be doing this in Canada. Especially at this time in our lives, but it has been a joy. And it is so good to see renewal and excitement grow in the people who are making Calvary their church family. We have finally finished the full exterior renovation of the building. (Other than a few minor adjustments.) We are excited to be interviewing for the pastoral position and hope to have that filled early 2026. To start the new year, we plan to have the whole church involved in Alpha for three months. The purpose being to move the church forward in evangelism.

I look ahead to when we get a pastor, and I have more time to disciple and train leaders. Deene continues to lead and write curriculum for our Children’s Ministry. I have just returned from Colombia, where I enjoyed two and a half weeks focused on our 6 new church plants. The first week was with a group of Canadian pastors and leaders who are interested in partnering with the new church plants. I was so encouraged to see how well the younger generation of Colombian leaders have picked up the Church Culture.

The Redil church movement has sought to foster a culture which is biblically strong, with a deep appreciation for the body of Christ and strong relational teamwork. Vulnerability is not usual in Colombian leadership, but something we have modelled and greatly encouraged. With great joy, we continue to see the fruit of this work. One evening, the Canadian group had the privilege of observing the leaders from a church plant. These leaders were having their regular meeting. What the Canadians were most surprised with was their brutal honesty, even though we strangers were present. I am deeply thankful for this reality because it demonstrates that the pastors have learned to invest in other men. This investment yields ministry partners with whom they can be honest, therefore dispelling isolation. They truly work as a team. The El Redil church movement has begun to start churches in other cities in Colombia. I had the joy of visiting our church in Armenia which began services a year ago. What a joy to be with them for a weekend, meeting in a Mall. The church offices are in one of the Mall’s shops, so there is plenty of visibility and influence.

I’m also excited to share with you a project that I will be a part of, God willing, in March. You have heard me talk about Freedom Session, which we use at Calvary Baptist as part of healing discipleship. This material, written by Ken Dyck, has been translated into Spanish. I have wanted to train pastors and leaders in Colombia so that they can use it. There have been many complications for me to work out. The Spanish trainers live in Mexico (the material is too expensive to ship from Mexico); therefore, printing in Colombia and the logistics of getting 100 to 150 pastors and leaders in one city for 2 ½ days of training. I am so thankful Ken Dyck has given us the green light to print the first two manuals in Colombia and sell them at cost for this event in March, 2026.

One of the Redil Churches will host the event. Christ for the City, a Christian organization, will do the advertising amongst the many denominations. Please pray: I find the best option for the printing of 1000 copies of each of the two manuals. (As of this week, I have found a great option for this in Bogota, Colombia.) I raise 6000 dollars to cover the costs for the two trainers from Mexico, [Abner & Jesasica Galvan], initial costs of manuals, administration, and the workers at the site of the event. If you would like to contribute, please earmark gifts to Fellowship International, “Freedom Session, Medellin.” You can probably tell, I am excited! Please pray that God will provide someone to take on the responsibility of the distribution of future materials, and how that will play out as they work under Ken Dyck and Freedom Session.

Family Matters: We are so glad all our children and grandchildren will be in Edmonton at Christmas. YEAH!! We also hope that the final adoption papers will be done for Georgia, our three-year-old granddaughter (Ben and Laura). This Christmas, I hope we can, with our loved ones, recognize the privilege it is to be one of those to whom the good news has come.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Most of us have made decisions that seemed right at the time, only to later realize we were “in the dark” about something important. Can you think of a time when you felt spiritually or practically “in the dark,” and how does that experience help you understand why Paul says we need God’s wisdom and the Spirit’s guidance to truly see and make wise decisions?

2. Verse 6 contrasts the wisdom of this age with the wisdom of God given to the mature. In what areas of your life do you notice yourself leaning on what seems smart, clever, or impressive instead of asking God for His perspective, and how could seeking His wisdom change the way you think or act?

3. Paul says the rulers of this age missed what God was doing because they relied on the wisdom around them. Where do you notice yourself leaning on what seems smart or reasonable in the moment instead of slowing down to ask for God’s perspective, and what is one simple way you could invite Him into that area this week?

4. Paul emphasizes that understanding God’s wisdom comes only through the Spirit. How does knowing the difference between revelation (God making truth known), inspiration (God guiding the authors of Scripture), and illumination (the Spirit opening our hearts to understand that truth) help you see why we cannot grasp God’s plans on our own and why we must depend on Him for wisdom?

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

5. Verses 9–10 say that God has prepared things for us that no eye has seen or ear heard, and that the Spirit reveals these deep things. What do these verses teach us about the role of the Holy Spirit in helping us understand God’s wisdom, and how does that shape the way we approach the mysteries of God’s plan in our lives?

6. Read Psalm 119:18 and 119:33–34. How do these verses help us connect with Paul’s point in 1 Corinthians 2:6–12 that true wisdom comes only through the Spirit, and how might they shape the way you seek God’s guidance and understanding in your daily life?

7. If gospel fluency means seeing life through Christ’s perspective, how might practicing it change the way you make decisions or respond to challenges, especially when worldly wisdom seems convincing? What is one practical step you could take this week... through Scripture, prayer, reflection, or a conversation...to help the gospel shape the way you think and respond in your everyday life?
