

EAST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH

Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 28, 2024

We Gather

Prelude

Introit

Opening Hymn All the Way My Saviour Leads Me VU:635

Territorial Acknowledgement

Callie Archer

We begin by acknowledging the traditional territory upon which we gather. For many thousands of years, the Original Peoples sought to walk gently on this land. They offered assistance to the first European travellers to this territory and shared their knowledge of survival in what was at times a harsh climate. We seek a new relationship with the First Peoples of this land, one based in honour and deep respect.

We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Mississaugas of the Credit, and we acknowledge these peoples' stewardship of the land throughout the ages.

Today we focus upon Call to Action #74 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of 2015.

Announcements

Reverend Jan

Words of Welcome

Reverend Jan

Theme Introduction

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Reverend Jan

Call to Worship

Come to Christ, the true vine,
and bear much fruit.

Come to love one another,
for love is of God.

Come to set aside your fears,
for perfect love drives out fear.

Come, let us worship the God who loves us
and teaches us to love.

Opening Prayer

Reverend Jan

God of Love, we are a work in progress.

**God of Jesus, the true vine,
water us and feed our hungry souls,
so that we may be a productive branch.**

Bring us the light we need to bear fruit.

We are a branch of the one vine.

**Bend us, shape us and prune us,
for we would wither without you.**

**Strengthen us in our faithfulness,
and help us to love as you have loved us.**

**May our lives be intertwined with your presence
within us and among us.**

Amen

Hymn

It Only Takes a Spark

VU: 289

We Listen

A Time For All Ages

Prayer for Illumination

Callie Archer

Let us pray:

Eternal Vinegrower,
in the reading of the scriptures, may your Word be heard;
in the meditations of our hearts, may your Word be known;
and in the faithfulness of our lives, may your Word be
shown.

Amen

Hebrew Testament Reading

New Revised Standard Version

Isaiah 5: 1-4

5 Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

²He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.

⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

Gospel Reading

New Revised Standard Version

John 15: 1-8

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes^[a] to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed^[b] by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in

the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become [\[c\]](#) my disciples.

May God bless this reading of the Holy Word to our insight and our understanding. Thanks be to God.

Amen

Gift of Music Sam Vacca and the East Plains Choir

Message Bearing Good Fruit Reverend Jan

Hymn Many Are the Lightbeams VU: 588

We Respond

Invitation to the Offering Reverend Jan

Doxology In Gratitude and Humble Trust VU: 544

Offering Prayer

**Bountiful God,
you fill the poor with good things
and cause the hungry to be satisfied.
May the gifts we give be instruments of your grace
and may our lives be the means
of spreading your blessings.
May our gifts be for the world
a sign of your love
and overflowing abundance.**

Amen

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer by David Sorril

O God, you love us like a good parent,
and are present in every aspect of our existence.
May your nature become known and respected by all.
May your joy, peace, wholeness and justice be the reality
for everyone as we live by Jesus Way.

Give us all that we really need to live every day for you.
And forgive us our failures as we forgive others for their
failures.

Keep us from doing those things that are not of you,
and cause us always to be centered on your love.
For you are the true reality in this our now,
and in all our future.

In the Jesus Way we pray.
Amen

We Leave To Serve

Closing Hymn

Commissioning

Extinguishing the Christ Candle

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Postlude

Worship Resources: *Gathering Magazine* Lent/Easter 2024 Year B (page 23, 41-50); *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2024* (pages 104-107); *Feasting on the Word: Year B, Volume 2* (pages 454-477); *Texts For Preaching: A Lectionary Commentary: Year B* (pages 307-316). Used with permission.

Truth and Reconciliation Report 2015 Call to Action # 74

This week we consider the fourth of six Calls to Action which pertains to **Missing Children and Burial Information**.

74. We call upon the federal government to work with the churches and Aboriginal community leaders to inform the families of children who died at residential schools of the child's burial location, and to respond to families' wishes for appropriate commemoration ceremonies and markers, and reburial in home communities where requested.

According to the website [Indigenous Watchdog](#), this Call to Action is considered to be "In Progress." The most recent update was posted on July 20, 2022.

The website states:

“July 20, 2022: The Govt. of Canada and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation announce the new National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials

June 1, 2021: The federal government released \$27M in unused funding from a \$33.8M budget allocations for Calls to Action # 72 and 73 in Budget 2019 to assist communities in the search for additional graves. There are no specifics identifying what the government is doing, with whom, by when, or any details on how the \$27M will be disbursed and applied.

August 11, 2021: The federal government committed \$321M in new funding for Indigenous communities and appointing a special interlocutor to propose law and policy changes to better responds to the findings of unmarked graves at former residential school sites, including:

- \$83M added to the existing \$27M program to fund searches of burial sites and commemorate the children who died at residential schools
- \$100M over two years to help Indigenous communities manage residential school buildings. To access this support, as well as support for the location, commemoration and memorialization of remains, communities can apply through the Residential Schools Missing Children – Community Support Funding Program.”

<https://www.indigenouwatchdog.org/cta/call-to-action-74/>

The website TRCTalk states:

“This call to action is necessary to make amends for the past treatment of Canada's aboriginal school children. The scale of cultural genocide is not yet known and this recommendation is imperative to understand the effect colonialism had on the First Nations in the 20th century. This is important for all Canadians because it would show grieving aboriginal families that we care about their history, we care about the quality of their lives, and respect their cultural traditions.”

Further Readings:

National Post – “This is somebody's young kid”: The unmarked graves of Brandon's residential school”
<<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/the-secret-graves-of-brandon-residential-school-773123>

The Star – Finding Canada's lost residential school children
<<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/06/07/finding-canadas-lost-residential-schoolchildren.html>>

<http://courseware.acadiau.ca/trctalk/call-to-action-74/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vision for Becoming Affirming

As a community of faith on a path to becoming an Affirming Ministry, we seek to better understand and celebrate the diversity of God's creation. We celebrate the richness of our community when we have diversity in age, ability, gender identity, racial/cultural backgrounds, economics, class, sexual orientation, and family configurations. We seek to create a brave space with an open invitation to bring every aspect of your whole self into your participation within the East Plains United Church faith community.

While Rev. Jan is on Study Leave Apr 30-May 6, please contact Rev. Harold Wells at 905-639-4125 for any Emergency Pastoral Care needs.

Coffee & Conversation—will resume May 14 at 10:00 in the Cambell Room

Lunch & Lectionary—will resume May 9 at 12:30 on Zoom

LAWN & GARDEN SPRING CLEAN-UP

Please mark Saturday May 4, 2024, 9am-noon, on your calendar for our lawn and garden work bee. Areas to be covered include the west parking lot, the lawn and gardens at the front of the church, the Memorial Garden, the garden beside the garbage bins, and the Cemetery grass at the north end (lots of leaves.) Please bring your own tools (rake, spade, clippers, trimmer etc.)

Yard waste bags will be provided and the host will provide goodies from Tim Hortons.

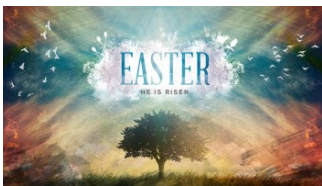
Hope to see you there. Thank you, Jim McMaster.

Out-4-Lunch Aldershot

Returning to St. Matthew's on the Plains Anglican Church and served at 12 Noon: **Mondays, May 6, June 3.** Especially for seniors, but open to everyone! Entry off REAR parking lot.



Jan's Journal



Welcome to the fifth Sunday of the Season of Easter as we continue to explore the “I Am” statements of Jesus.

This Sunday, you are invited to come to the Library following worship for “Going Deeper.” This is an opportunity to discuss worship themes, scripture passages and sermons which you have heard during the month of April. Bring your questions or your “Aha” moments!

I hope that you have enjoyed Earth Day and Earth Week, and perhaps have spent some time pondering the overwhelming amount of harmful plastics which are

accumulating in our landfills and the alarming presence of micro plastic fibres which are accumulating in our air, waterways, and indeed, in our own bodies. This week, global representatives have been meeting in Ottawa to discuss a United Nations agreement to address the world's plastic pollution crisis. The delegates are working to develop a legally binding treaty agreement that would curb the use of plastics and limit the use of toxic chemicals in plastic production. They have committed to reaching an agreement before the end of 2024. Let us pray that they will be successful!

The Fresh Start Session on Tuesday evening was interesting and thought provoking. Thank you to all those who attended. As we plan a vision of the future for East Plains, we were asked to prioritize these questions:

Who are we?

Who is our neighbour?

What is God calling us to do?

I invite you to spend some time considering those questions. I am interested in hearing your thoughts!

I will be away between April 30th and May 6th. I am going to Halifax to attend Convocation. I will receive a Master of Arts in Theology and Religious Studies on Saturday, May 4th at 11 am, Atlantic time, which is 10 am in Burlington. The Convocation service will be live-streamed. In case you are interested in watching, I will ask Kent to send the link to you, as soon as it is posted; however, I do understand if you are busy assisting with garden clean-up on the church property at that time!

The Affirm Team will lead the worship service on May 5th. Please try to attend, as there will be several guests from

Grace United, Burlington, who will reflect upon their congregation's experiences after becoming an Affirming community of faith earlier this year. The Affirm Team will also provide refreshments (recognising May birthdays and Anniversaries) following worship. This will give you an opportunity to speak to the representatives of the Grace United Affirm Team.

During my absence, Reverend Harold Wells has very kindly agreed to be available for any *urgent pastoral care* needs. Please see the announcement in the Bulletin for contact information.

You can reach me at: revjanmcc@gmail.com or on my cell phone: 905-630-8202.

Blessings,

Pastor Jan