



# East Plains United Church



## Summer Newsletter 2021



The Good Word with Rev. Barbara Fullerton



*Faith~HOPE~Love*



Spring and Summer are seasons of hope!

After a beautiful 12-verse ode to love often used in weddings and funerals, I Corinthians 13:13 tells us faith, hope, and love abide, but the greatest is love. So, we often focus on love alone. COVID-19 has taught us the importance of all three. And EPUC is a community of faith that *lives* all three.

In this growing season, **HOPE** blooms eternal!

- ✦ With second vaccinations in arms, we hope.
- ✦ With the Childcare Centre finished, we hope.
- ✦ With our transitional ministry in final stages, we hope.

With hope blossoming at its core, faith and love grow as well.

Faith sprouting:

- ✦ We welcomed a new member into EPUC through adult baptism in June.
- ✦ A group of faithful women met on Zoom on Tuesday mornings in June to prayerfully listen for God's guidance of our transitional outcomes.
- ✦ Faith grows as we engage in challenging discussions about racism and discrimination and work toward justice for all, to live in God's Kin-dom NOW.
- ✦ How has your faith grown through the pandemic experience?

Love multiplying:

- ✦ Through our process to become an Affirming Community of Faith
- ✦ Through continued outreach through such initiatives as the Agape group and support of Wesley Centre and the Mission and Service of the United Church
- ✦ Through care of each other through the pandemic with phone calls, emails, rides to medical appointments, food and medicine deliveries, and other errands

Enjoy reading about all of this and much more in the pages of this newsletter! Enjoy your summer, stay safe, and HOPE we will be able to gather again in the fall!

Rev. Barb

## OFFICIAL BOARD

The 2020 Annual Report was produced and distributed by email on March 28th. If you would like a hard copy please contact the church office.

The 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting was held virtually on Sunday April 11th. The new slate of officers is printed on pages 40 and 41 in the 2020 annual report. I thank all of you who have offered your services to the Board for 2021. We are still in need of a Vice Chair, a Recording Secretary and a second representative to Horseshoe Falls Regional Council. Please consider volunteering for one of these positions.

The Board met virtually on May 17th to conduct the business of the church. I am pleased to announce that HFRC has approved the contract extension to June 30, 2022 for Rev. Barbara Fullerton, our Intentional Interim minister. Our finance ministry has worked diligently to secure revenue from government and other sources, to allow us to keep all our staff on full pay during this COVID-19 pandemic. This includes several large loans which will need your financial support to pay down in the coming months. Please consider increasing your contributions. An easy way is by enrolling in the church Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) monthly giving programme.

Our church building has been closed to all activities since mid March 2020. This has forced all Sunday worship services and other ministry meetings to be held virtually on ZOOM. I thank Rev. Barb and Kent Burnison for their computer skills to provide us with this service, and Sam Vacca, our music director, for providing wonderful music and talented musicians each Sunday. Even though we can't yet meet in person, it is heartwarming to see your smiling face on the computer screen and chat with each other every Sunday morning.

During this closure many upgrades have been made to Peart Hall, the main kitchen and the flooring. The basement has been completely renovated to create the East Plains Child Care Centre, which is scheduled to open in July. This facility will provide a much needed service to the Aldershot community and become a major source of rental income for our church.

Our Re-entry Ad-Hoc committee of eleven members of the Board have created a detailed plan for the safe return to our church building by staff, rental groups, programme groups and worship services. This will happen only when there is government approval and most people have been fully vaccinated. This may take until early fall 2021 and may occur in stages.

Morgan Perigo, Chair



### *When this is over*

by LAURA KELLY FANUCCI

"May we never again take for granted;

A handshake with a stranger,

Full shelves at the store,

Conversations with neighbors,

A crowded theater, Friday night out,

The taste of Communion, A routine

checkup, The school rush each morning.

Coffee with a friend, The stadium

roaring, Each deep breath!

A boring Tuesday. Life itself.

When this ends, may we find that we

have become more like the people we

wanted to be, we were called to be, we

hope to be, and may stay that way -

better for each other because of the

worst."



## FINANCE

The future is looking much brighter for EPUC as we receive our second COVID vaccinations and as the virus case numbers decrease significantly. The opening of the EPUC Child Care Centre (CCC) is imminent now that final inspections are happening. There have been five months of construction delays as unforeseen repairs were needed and funding shortfalls were managed by obtaining two mortgages and other subsidized loans, cumulating in a \$1,700,000 facility. Losing a federal grant and later our rental and fundraising income due to the pandemic was not part of our plan! To date, we are approximately \$85,000 short of our goal. For this we will still need support from the church and the community at large.

East Plains United is the landlord for this not-for-profit child care for 73-83 children, ages six months to six years. The child care will be managed by a Board of Directors composed of three EPUC members and two community members. The financial success of the Child Care Center once open is not in question. Parents are calling wanting to know when and how they can sign up their children. The impact of this centre means the ultimate financial solvency of the church and as a result, the Aldershot Community will have retained a vibrant community hub in the church and the child care centre.

EPUC is grateful for our congregation maintaining their regular offerings during 2020 and 2021. The Official Board has been committed to keeping our staff and cleaners fully employed during these challenging times. We have qualified for the federal Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) periods in 2021 which assists with meeting our payroll and other specific operating expenses. Similarly the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) Loan has helped us, especially knowing that we will have one third forgiven (\$20,000) when we pay back two thirds by Dec. 31, 2022.

I remain VERY POSITIVE on the final outcome of these financial trials and tribulations. We at East Plains United Church can be very proud of the commitment made to future generations with the development of the Child Care Centre.

Bob Moulton, Chair & EPUC Treasurer

## EPUC Child Care Centre

<https://epucchildcare.com>

Contact: (905) 681-5198



## WIDER WORK

Despite Covid lockdown, your **Wider Work Committee** has stayed active in all areas of concern.

The year-end financial report of the **Burlington Food Bank** shows they are in good health for 2021. They are grateful for your donations.

Harold Wells and the Wider Work Committee received beautiful thank you letters from four students of the **Tekera Foundation** in Uganda. The school has been supported for the past fourteen years.

Callie Archer sold pussy willows as a fundraiser.

Once a month, committee members highlighted worthy United Church missions, during regular church services. ("Minute for Mission")

Three members of the committee attended the Online Rally for the **Grassy Nations First Nation**. This was to raise awareness and funds for mercury justice from the poisoning of the river causing the deteriorating health of their population. We received posters for distribution in our area.

Four members attended the **Wesley Church Online Contact Network** meeting. Wesley now has extended their outreach to Burlington, Oakville and Milton. They are giving out more meals than ever. Due to their relocation, they had to rent trailers for clients to shower.

Representatives of the committee attended 4 meetings on the issue of EPUC becoming an **Affirming Faith Committee** and joined with other faith communities in a zoom event featuring the Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary UCC.

Committee members, and **Climate Study** participants mailed letters to CEOs of Canada's major banks protesting that all five banks are loaning billions of dollars to the development of oil and gas pipelines. In response, two Committee members received replies defending the banks policies.

The UCC advocates for a **Guaranteed Livable Income** for all Canadians. A letter was made available for sending to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance.

Another letter was prepared regarding the **Provincial Government's policies** on wetlands, farm lands etc., that seems to disregard environmental concerns and overrides local conservation and municipal authorities through the imposition of Ministerial Zoning Orders.

We thank everyone who participated in these letter campaigns.

Please keep in mind donating to Case for Kids in June, even though there will, again, be no Bayfront Walk.

We appreciate the response of the congregation to the various requests for donations.

Garth Smith, Chair



## PASTORAL CARE

Our ministry would like to thank the church Visitors who are making an extra effort to keep in touch with the families in their visitation district while we continue to follow provincial Stay-at-Home guidelines.

We are grateful for the wonderful acts of kindness shared by many in the congregation, such as those providing grocery deliveries; those drivers assisting people with medical and personal needs; and to the many members who randomly phone others simply to say "Hello".

### Happiness Grows in Hearts That Care

**Kind hearts are the gardens  
Kind thoughts are the roots  
Kind words are the flowers  
Kind deeds are the fruits**

For emergency pastoral care,  
Rev. Barbara Fullerton is available at  
[revbarbarafullerton@gmail.com](mailto:revbarbarafullerton@gmail.com) or  
telephone 1-416-540-8498.

Morgan Perigo & Mary Willard, Co-Chairs

## SUPPORT GROUP

After 15 months of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is light on the horizon after many people have had their 1st vaccination and for some their 2nd vaccination. With the church being closed all these many months, we have missed the fellowship and joy of our many Support Group activities.

It is hoped with vaccinations and adhering to Halton health protocols like wearing masks and social distancing, that this fall we can look forward to being allowed back in the church once again. Our Meat Pie team is eager to return to make our very popular meat pies, as there have been many requests.

We will enjoy working in our newly painted kitchen with new flooring, viewing the renovated Peart Hall, also with new paint, flooring and freshly cleaned and repaired drapes. Soon we hope to be able to put the kitchen back together after storing many items in the Campbell Room during these renovations. We extend appreciation to our Flower Committee who have kept our front urns seasonally decorated. They along with the gardens showed our loving care for EPUC.



Our Vista gift card fundraiser will have two more order dates in 2021: Friday, September 10 and again in November for Christmas and Wesley Christmas Store purchases. There were three orders this year with YTD earning of \$530.63 in Rebates.

We have had to cancel our fabulous **Arts and Crafts Show and Sale** again this year with so much uncertainty caused by COVID variants. Our first priority is to keep everyone safe, be they congregants, artisans or shoppers. Next year we will need to explore possibilities for another fundraiser.

If we all do our part, we can look forward to greeting one another in person later this year. What a blessing it will be!

Pat Vollick, Chair

## BUILDING & PROPERTY

### Lawn and Gardens

Many thanks to the members of our lawn and garden team who work diligently to keep our property looking beautiful. Some volunteer their time on a monthly basis, others are on call whenever needed. With the construction of the Child Care Centre we have altered the landscaping by planting new plants and trees at the front and rear of the property. We think this new landscaping will add interest not only to our own property but also to the Aldershot community along Plains Road.

Our Lawn and Gardens Team: Conrad Coles, David Howard, Larry Code, Jim and Barb Matthews, Robert Terry, Karen Maerz, David Craig, Frank and Jan Barretto, Glenys Kirkpatrick, Stan Burnip, Warren McCrea, Bob Moulton, Bob Panabaker, Diane Saunders, Morgan Perigo, and Linda Kennedy.

Jim McMaster, Chair

## WORSHIP & SACRAMENTS

### Worship in July

West Plains United Church has invited us to worship with them online during the month of July while Rev. Barb and Sam are on vacation. [www.westplains.ca](http://www.westplains.ca) . EPUC worship on Zoom will start up again on August 1st.

For July Emergency Pastoral Care, please call:  
**Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner (WPUC)**  
**(905) 523-6786**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Tekera Resource Centre (TRC) in Masaka Uganda. Pat Vollick, our church liaison with the TRC in Uganda, received a letter from Joseph Wasswa dated May 22, 2021. Joseph is now in primary seven and happily reports that he was "the best student in the examinations." Joseph is the younger brother of Agnes whom our church also sponsored until her graduation.

Jim McMaster, Chair



# East Plains United Church

## MINISTRY & PERSONNEL

Although COVID has kept us from meeting in our church sanctuary on Sunday mornings, our congregation has continued to remain active through our weekly Zoom services. Our minister, Rev. Barbara Fullerton has been incredibly busy and inventive during the time we have been exiled from our building, making sure that the life, work and enthusiasm at East Plains remains strong. Her Intentional Interim Minister's Report to the Official Board of East Plains United Church attests to the optimism and enthusiasm in which she addresses the various facts of her role: Worship, Christian Education, Wider Work, Transition, Congregational Life, Administration and Wider Church as well as personal growth through continuing education.

During our Sunday Services, Rev. Barb has consistently provided us with inspirational thought-provoking messages, offered time for reflection and a forum for small group conversations during "coffee time" following the service.

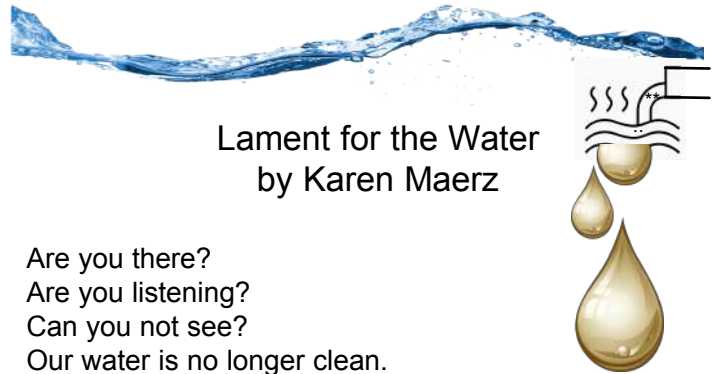
The Ministry and Personnel Committee is so pleased that Rev. Fullerton will be taking her well-deserved vacation this year during the month of July. The congregation of East Plains will be invited to worship with the congregation of West Plains and Rev. Phillip Gardner on the Zoom platform during Sunday mornings in July.

Sabatino Vacca, our music director, has faithfully offered us accompaniment to our hymns and beautiful musical arrangements as gifts of music each week. We so enjoy these wonderful offerings during our services. Thank you Sam for sharing your talents with us. Sabatino will take his well-deserved summer holiday vacation also during the month of July as we worship at West Plains. Thank you for your gifts, Sam!

Our office administrator, Barbara Matthews, has continued to work diligently, providing support through phone calls and e-mails to our East Plains personnel as well as to our church community. She always maintains a cheerful and efficient manner to ensure that our congregational needs are met in a pleasant and efficient manner...sometimes requiring a little ingenuity in these unusual times! Barb will also enjoy holiday time this summer at a time to be determined.

We all at East Plains offer thanks to our staff for their dedication and ingenuity, particularly in helping us all to normalize these very unusual times and for continuing to bless us with their time and talents.

Brenda McMaster, Chair



### Lament for the Water by Karen Maerz

Are you there?  
Are you listening?  
Can you not see?  
Our water is no longer clean.  
My heart is broken. My spirit is overwhelmed.  
I lie awake at night, worry, then weep.  
Indigenous communities with no drinking water.  
Invasive species in our lakes, contamination in our  
rivers, oil spills that harm wildlife, industries that use  
pesticides, coastal erosion and too much development.  
I am weary.  
What about our children and grandchildren, the  
generations that are to come? How will they survive?  
What kind of world are we leaving them?  
Hear me. Hear my prayer.  
In You I seek refuge.  
You have given us water, this water of life.  
Water is plentiful, renewable, a precious resource.  
I am awestruck when I see the sun rise over the lake.  
I am comforted when I hear the birds sing by the river.  
I am inspired as I hear the water crash over a waterfall.  
I feel its spray on my face.  
Bless us with living water.  
Bless us with courage.  
Turn our lament into hope,  
Our complacency into commitment,  
Our avoidance into action.  
Stay close.  
For You alone are my strength.

Written as an assignment in Judy Jefferson's Women's Bible Study group in Lent, to write a Lament for today.

It is written in the style of a Hebrew Scripture Psalm of Lament, which follows a pattern of Protest - Petition - Praise.

## The Affirming Process

At our May 30, 2021, Sunday Service on Zoom we listened with great interest to Jordan Sullivan as he described the difficulties he faced during his life on becoming a trans man. In 2000 Jordan got a job with General Council of the United Church of Canada and has since given many talks to united church members. When our building opens (hopefully September) our plan is to engage our members with in-person discussions about our church becoming an Affirming Ministry. Our goal is to end the Affirming Process early in the New Year and ask the congregation to vote at our Annual Congregational Meeting early in March 2022.

Jim McMaster, Chair  
A-Team Committee



## STEWARDSHIP



On June 14, fifty people helped to raise over \$930 to support the church. Kim Echlin and local author Doug Cockell read from their current books, *Speak, Silence* and *Requiem for Noah*. They both had videos related to their books and answered questions from viewers. We enjoyed having some of Kim's students attend. A promo code was given to students so they could afford to take part in the event.

The Stewardship Committee thanks all of you who took part in this evening. Gayle Burnison has become our local expert on Canada Helps. Together they arranged for the way we paid for the tickets and the virtual magic of generating tax receipts so quickly. Thanks, Gayle for all your time on this event. Stay tuned for our autumn programme.

Callie Archer, Chair  
Stewardship Committee

Happy 60th Anniversary Wishes to Susan & Paul Preston on June 3, 2021



## Intentional Intercession Prayer Meetings June, 2021

During the month of June, the Transition Team invited us all to pray, either privately or in a special prayer group that met for four weeks on Tuesday mornings on Zoom. A group of faithful women led by Judy Jefferson, Karen Maerz, and Rev. Barb met for half-hour sessions of prayerful listening for God's guidance of our discernment for the future of EPUC. Prayer is powerful, done in community. Please share with Rev. Barb and/or the Transition Team any "ahas" that come to you in these prayer times.

Below is the last session, prepared by Judy Jefferson, which you are invited to use in your private prayers. You could use a different section each day, followed by 15-20 minutes of silence. Or use the whole thing each day, with 5 minutes of silence to listen for God between each section.

**Section 1:** God speaks to us: Come to Me, Beloved. I continually invite you to draw near to Me. Be still in My Presence, and fix your thoughts on Me. Relax and listen to My Love whispering in your heart: "I have loved you with an everlasting Love." Meditate on the glorious truth that I am with you always.

I invite you to remain aware of Me as you go about your day. You won't be able to do this perfectly, but I'll help you when you ask. You can pray: "Keep me aware of Your Presence." Let these words echo through your heart and mind frequently. Though your thoughts will sometimes go elsewhere, this simple prayer can draw you back to Me.

The more of Me you have in your life—through staying close to Me—the more joyful you will be and the more I can bless others through you. (*Silence; listen for God*)

**Section 2:** I stand between the years. The Light of My Presence is flung across the years to come. Backward, over the past years is My Shadow thrown, hiding trouble and sorrow and disappointment.

Dwell not on the past, only on the present. Only use the past as the trees use My Sunlight to absorb it. So store only the blessings from Me, the Light of the World. Encourage yourselves by the thought of these.

Bury every fear of the future, of poverty for those dear to you, of suffering, of loss. Bury all thought of unkindness and bitterness, all your dislikes, your resentments, your sense of failure, your disappointment in others and in yourselves, your gloom, your despondency, and let us leave them all, buried, and go forward to a new and risen life.

Remember that you must not see as the world sees. I hold the years in My Hands, in trust for you. But I shall guide you one day at a time. Leave the rest with Me. Do not anticipate the gift by fears or thoughts of the days ahead. And for each day, I shall supply the wisdom and Strength. (*Silence; listen for God*)

**Section 3:** Remember also, the lesson of the seed in its sending a shoot down so that it may be rooted and grounded, while at the same time it sends a shoot up to be the plant and flower that shall gladden the world. The two growths are necessary. Without the strong root it would soon wither, as much activity fails for lack of growth in Me. The higher the growth up, the deeper must be the enrooting. Many forget this, and thus their work ceases to be permanent for Me. Beware of the leaves and flowers without the strong root. (*Silence; listen for God*)

**Section 4:** If I am for you, who can be against you? Beloved, I most assuredly am for you, since you are My follower. Of course, this doesn't mean that no one will ever oppose you. It means that having Me on your side is the most important fact of your existence. Regardless of what happens in your life, I am with you, no matter how much adversity you encounter on your journey. Ultimately, nothing and no one can prevail against you because you belong to Me forever.

Knowing that your future is utterly secure can change your perspective dramatically. Instead of living in defensive mode, you learn to follow Me boldly, wherever I lead. I am training you not only to seek My Face and follow My lead, but to enjoy this adventure of abandoning yourself to Me. I am your ever-present Help in trouble. (*Silence; listen for God*)

**Section 5:** My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. Wherever you are, wherever you go, I am with you! This is an astonishing statement, yet it is true. My unseen Presence is more real than the flesh-and-blood people around you. Look for Me with the eyes of your heart and communicate with Me through prayer, trusting that I really do hear and do care. I assure you that your prayers make a difference, though not always in ways you can see or in the time-frame you desire. I factor the prayers of believers into My sovereign governing of your world—in ways far too complex for finite minds to grasp. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways and thoughts higher than yours. Isaiah 55: 8-9

Since My methods of working in the world are often mysterious, it's important to take time to be still and know that I am God. Sit quietly in My Presence, breathing in My Peace, and I will give you rest. (*Silence; listen for God*)