

EAST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH
Fifth Sunday After Epiphany
February 8, 2026

Gathering In Community

Prelude

Choir Introit Lord, Lift Up Our Hearts by W. M. Harris

Peace Greeting: Generations before us have shared the peace of Christ with one another.

The Peace of Christ be with you

And also with you

Opening Hymn Come All You People MV: 2

Territorial Acknowledgement Grace Boogers

We gather today on this sacred soil of the Anishinaabe Peoples, the Haudenosaunee Peoples, the Huron-Wendat Peoples, and the Mississaugas of the Credit Nation. For thousands of years these people lived on this land, honouring the Creator and living in harmony with creation. We acknowledge their stewardship and relationship with the land, its plants and animals, the lakes and streams and their life forms throughout the ages. We accept the responsibility we have to nurture and protect this legacy. We seek to live in right relations with all.

Announcements

Reverend Jan

Words of Welcome

Theme Introduction

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Call to Worship

Come and see! God's light is shining brightly.

God's light shines in us.

When we honour God's commandments,

God's light shines in us.

When we feed the hungry and give to those in need,

God's light shines in us.

When we show mercy and compassion,

God's light shines in us.

We are the light of the world!

Let us worship together!

Opening Prayer

Loving God, we have gathered this morning
in this familiar and sacred space.

We are here because we need to be spiritually re-charged.

It has been a challenging week,

and even though we know that you call us to be
the salt of the earth and the light of the world,
sometimes we don't know how, or we're afraid,
or we are just too tired.

Touch us now in this time of worship

and remind us whose light we carry, whose salt we are.

May our eyes be opened to places that need healing.

May our hands be opened to do your good works.

May our hearts be opened to your Holy Spirit,
who gifts us and guides us.

Shine on us, shine in us,

and shine through us,

that we may brighten your world.

Amen

Seeking to Grow Spiritually

Prayer for Illumination

Grace Boogers

Like a spring that never runs dry,
you water the gardens of our souls.
Like a lamp on a stand,
you illuminate our hearts.
Holy One, may your light shine
through the words of scripture
we hear this morning.
May your Spirit help us
to truly comprehend
your message for us today.

Amen

Hebrew Testament Reading

Isaiah 58: 1-9a

Shout out; do not hold back!
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
2 Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they want God on their side.^[a]
3 “Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day
and oppress all your workers.
4 You fast only to quarrel and to fight

New Revised Standard Version

and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
 will not make your voice heard on high.
⁵ Is such the fast that I choose,
 a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush
 and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
 a day acceptable to the Lord?
Is not this the fast that I choose:
 to loose the bonds of injustice,
 to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
 and to break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
 and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
 and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
 and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator^b shall go before you;
 the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
 you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

Gospel Reading

Matthew 5: 13-20

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.
¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the

New Revised Standard Version

bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, [a] not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore, whoever breaks [b] one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

**May God bless this reading of the Holy Word to our insight
and understanding. Herein is Wisdom.**

Thanks be to God. Amen

Message Let Your Light Shine Reverend Jan

Hymn Jesus Bids Us Shine VU: 585

Responding In Care

Invitation to the Offering

Doxology Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands VU: 537

Offering Prayer

When we share food with the hungry----
we are the light of the world!

When we care for those who are homeless----

we are the light of the world!

When we offer compassion to the lonely----

we are the light of the world!

When we speak up for justice----

we are the light of the world!

When we do such things in a weary world----

we are the light of the light!

**Generous God, you shower us with blessings,
and call on us to share.**

**May these gifts help to heal and restore our community,
so that all will flourish like a well-watered garden.**

**Thank you for this opportunity
to shine your light into the world
through the gifts we give.**

Amen

Pastoral Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil;
for thine is the Kingdom, and the power,
and the glory,
forever and ever.**

Amen

Reaching Out In Love

Closing Hymn Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation VU: 325

Commissioning

Extinguishing the Christ Candle

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Postlude

Worship Resources: Gathering Magazine

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2025-2026 Year A (page 22, 42-47);
Abingdon Worship Annual 2026 (pages 26-30); Feasting On the Word: Year A, Volume 1, (pages 314-337); Texts For Preaching: A Lectionary Commentary Based on the NRSV – Year A (pages 127-136). Used with Permission.

EAST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH AFFIRM STATEMENT

We celebrate the richness of our community when we have diversity in age, gender identity, racial/cultural backgrounds, economics, class, sexual orientation, and family configurations fully participating in all aspects of the life and work at East Plains United Church. We commit to continuing education to promote understanding and create a safe environment for all.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sincere condolences from the congregation go out to the family of Donny MacMillan who died on January 31st.

Also, our condolences go out to Chris and Gary Nelson on the death of Chris's sister.

NOTE—The printed Partnering Aldershot newsletters in the Gathering Place have very helpful TIPS and EVENTS, which are from “What’s Up Aldershot Seniors.”

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER—On Friday, March 6th at 1:30 pm, St. Matthew On-The-Plains will be hosting this annual event. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

Jan's Journal



On this fifth Sunday after Epiphany, we explore the question: “How does Jesus teach us to live?”

The scripture passages chosen for this week, call for and celebrate a life of faithfulness in the world, in the public arena, where faith functions openly and social injustices are addressed.

Please plan to stay following worship this Sunday. The Support Group will be hosting a **Valentines Lunch and Bake Sale**. Proceeds from this annual event support a student, Joseph, in Tekera, Uganda, to continue his education.

February is Black History month. You will see that theme woven throughout our February worship services.

Lent is fast approaching! As usual, the **Ash Wednesday** service will be a joint service with West Plains United Church, **held here at East Plains**. February 18th is Ash Wednesday. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the service

at 1:30 p.m. There will be refreshments following the service, provided by the Support Group.

If you are interested in the issue of affordable housing, Community Development Halton is inviting you to attend **"Thinking Beyond the Market."** This is the screening of a film of the same title, by Dr. Brian Doucet, University of Waterloo, School of Planning, Faculty of Environmental Studies. The film will be shown at Film.ca, 171 Speers Road, Oakville, on **Thursday February 19th, at 6 p.m.** The film will be followed by a period of Q&A with Dr. Doucet. Pre-registration is required. If you are interested, please let me know and I can send you the registration details.

Would you be interested in learning more about Dementia? Horseshoe Falls Regional Council is offering a workshop on Dementia on **Thursday, February 26th** between 7-8:30 p.m. The presenter is Janet Kennedy. It is a Zoom presentation. If you are interested, you need to register to receive the Zoom link. You can do that on the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council website: hfrcucc.ca

The Annual Meeting for 2025 will be held following worship on April 19, 2026. If you are the Chair of a Ministry Team, please submit a report for the Annual Report to the church office by the end of March.

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

Blessings,

Pastor Jan