

## Jan's Journal



Unfortunately, the Ash Wednesday service had to be cancelled due to the inclement weather on February 18th. I feel as though I am watching a play and I have missed the opening act! Without an Ash Wednesday service and the experience of the marking of a cross on my forehead, it feels to me as though a very important grounding for my journey through Lent is missing.

As we begin Lent, we come prepared to cleanse our souls and purge our spirits of all impurities. We ask for God's blessing, and God's gift of love and mercy, a sign of as we commit to our willingness to walk with Christ through difficulties and challenges, pain and suffering.

Our journey through Lent is not intended as a time of guilt. It is intended as an opportunity to examine our lives in terms of our relationship with God. What might I change in my life in order to walk more closely with God?

As I burned the palm fronds from last Palm Sunday on the weekend, I thought of the symbolism of my action. Through God's love and guidance, the errors I have made during the past year have been turned to ashes and blown away in the breeze. I am free to begin again, implementing the changes I need to make, as a result of my indiscretions.

Rather than focusing on self-denial, let's focus on what we might gain through our Lenten journey.

Lent is not a season of penitence. It is a season of growing.

Lent is not a season of guilt. It is a season of invitation.

Lent is a journey of interior change during which we ask ourselves: "How then shall I live?"

I encourage you to reflect on this as you embark on your personal journey through Lent this year.

### News for this week:

- The **Valentine's Lunch and Bake Sale** was a great success last Sunday! Thank you to Pat Vollick, members of the Support Group, and all others who helped to make this event happen!

- The Community Connections Team has been very busy since last July exploring the goal of making the church building an asset in the Aldershot community. East Plains has partnered with Community Development Halton to plan and implement a community discussion, which we hope will help to identify the needs of the community and possible ways in which space at East Plains might be available to fulfill some of those needs. A Community “Round Table” discussion is planned for **Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 p.m. in Peart Hall**. Representatives of community -based organizations and programs will be invited to attend, but more importantly, you are invited to attend. In order for the congregation of East Plains to decide on a path forward, everyone needs to be involved. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this very important event.
- As a preparation for this event, you are invited to stay following worship this Sunday (**February 22<sup>nd</sup>**) for refreshments in the Gathering Place. While you are enjoying the refreshments, the Community Connections Group will show a PowerPoint presentation, and explain the work that has been accomplished to date. Please plan to stay and bring your questions!!
- The church has been buzzing this week with plumbers, and representatives of the HVAC company, as well as insurance appraisers and a team of assessors for asbestos abatement. Gayle Burnison will have an update report for us soon.
- I will be away on **Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**. I am the Pastoral Charge Supervisor for Palermo United Church. The congregation will be holding their Annual Meeting for 2025 on March 1<sup>st</sup>. I must attend that meeting. Since I have not yet mastered the ability to be in two places at the same time, we were in need of someone to lead worship at East Plains that Sunday. As it happened, Dave Howard and Barbara Masefield contacted me to ask whether there could be **a special service to celebrate sixty-five years of Scouting in Aldershot**. They were hoping that the service could take place on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Consequently, plans are being made for this special service, which will be led by Reverend Bruce Dickson. I am sorry that I will miss it!

When I refer to 7<sup>th</sup> Aldershot Scouting, this includes Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Venturers. The Girl Guides of Canada have also had groups of Sparks, Embers, Guides, and Pathfinders who have met at East Plains. If you know of anyone who has been a

leader or a participant in any of these groups over the years, please invite them to come to worship on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The service will be followed by a lunch, which will be prepared and served by the East Plains Support Group.

- World Day of Prayer always takes place on the first Friday of March. This year, that is **March 6<sup>th</sup>**. The service for 2026 has been written by women of Nigeria. The service is celebrated all across the world. The service will take place at St. Matthew on the Plain Anglican Church, Burlington at 1:30 p.m.
- Would you be interested in learning more about Dementia? Horseshoe Falls Regional Council is offering a workshop on Dementia on **Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>** 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: [hfcucc.ca](http://hfcucc.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. Please mark your calendars with this date and plan to attend the Annual Meeting following worship on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

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

Blessings,

Pastor Jan