

EAST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH
Ninth Sunday After Pentecost
July 26, 2026

Gathering In Community

Prelude

Peace Greeting: As we wait and work to bring God's realm, let us share signs of our hope by sharing the peace of Christ with one another. As we are loved beyond our wildest imaginations by the God who formed us from dust, may we share this mysterious abundant love within this community of faith and beyond.

The peace of Christ be with you,

And also with you

Opening Hymn Tell Me the Stories of Jesus VU: 357

Territorial Acknowledgement Grace Boogers

Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator, who is both in creation and beyond it. All aspects of creation, animate and inanimate, are related. All creation is good.

*We sing of the Creator, who made humans to live and to move and to have our being in God. In and with God, we can direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God. We can discover our place as one strand of the web of life. **

We acknowledge that we live, work, pray, and play on the Indigenous territory of the Anishinaabe Peoples, the Haudenosaunee Peoples, the Huron-Wendat Peoples, and

the Mississaugas of the Credit Nation. With gratitude and respect for their stewardship of creation, we seek to live into right relationship with all.

**from A Song of Faith, The United Church of Canada, 2006.*

Announcements

Reverend Jan

Words of Welcome

Theme Introduction

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Call to Worship

Waiting and hoping, we gather together,
seeking God's presence and singing God's praise.
Waiting and hoping, we come now to worship,
Praying and listening for the Spirit's guidance.
Waiting and hoping, we gather together,
seeking God's presence and singing God's praise.
Come, let us worship together!

Opening Prayer

**Holy One, your kingdom always takes us by surprise---
like a mustard seed growing into a great shrub
where the birds of the air
can build their nests;
like a treasure hidden in a field,
or a pearl of great price.
May we desire your kingdom
more than we value worldly things,
through Christ who shows us the way.**

Amen

Hymn:

I See a New Heaven

VU: 713

Seeking to Grow Spiritually

Prayer for Illumination

Grace Boogers

Let us pray:

Holy One, fill our hearts with your Spirit.
Open our ears to hear your Word proclaimed.
Remind us that you are always with us,
guiding us to be your faithful disciples.
As we hear your Word and reflect upon it,
may we be like seeds that grow into trees;
may we be like treasures revealed.

Amen

Hebrew Testament Reading

New Revised Standard Version

Genesis 29: 15-28

Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah's eyes were weak, [\[a\]](#) but Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." ¹⁹ Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." ²² So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. ²³ But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. ²⁴ (Laban gave

his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.)

²⁵ When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?”

²⁶ Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” ²⁸ Jacob did so and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

Gospel Reading

New Revised Standard Version

Matthew 13: 31-33; 44-52

He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with [a](#) three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good

into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes."

⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

**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

Message

The Remembrance of God Past and the Reality
of God Present

Reverend Jan

Hymn

Teach Me, God, to Wonder

VU: 299

Responding In Care

Invitation to the Offering

Doxology

For the Gift of Creation

VU: 538

Offering Prayer

Giver of all good gifts,

help us to be kingdom builders

as we offer our gifts to the world.

May our gifts be like treasures in a field

for those waiting for new life.

May our offerings be like yeast

for those hungering for their daily bread.

Bless our lives and our giving,

that we might be part of the great mystery

of kingdom building,

in a world waiting to be remade.

Amen

Pastoral Prayers

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 May the God of Hope Go With Us VU: 424

Commissioning

Extinguishing the Christ Candle

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Postlude

Worship Resources: *Gathering Magazine Lent/Easter, 2026 Year A* (page 17 ,37-51); *Abingdon Worship Annual 2026* (pages 157-160); *Feasting On the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A, Volume 3* (pages 284-289); *Texts For Preaching: A Lectionary Commentary Based on the NRSV – Year A* (pages 416-424). 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

VISTA CARD ORDERS ARE DUE TODAY, JULY 26th. Please give them to Gayle Burnison after worship. Thank you for your continued support 😊

Crabgrass removal:

For those who are willing and able to dig up crabgrass at the church, please follow the plan listed below.

1. Focus area: **East end**; crabgrass on the small boulevard on the church side of the sidewalk in front of the parking lot; as well as around the serviceberry tree.

2. Mondays and Thursdays are best because the irrigation system comes on at 12am; each of the 5 valves is on for 2 hours; or any day it rains.
3. Tools needed: spade or shovel because the ground is hard, and gloves.
4. Bring your own yard waste bags and leave them on the sidewalk in front of the elevator.
5. Please email me your results: jrmcmaster@bell.net

Hope you can help. Thank you, Jim McMaster.



Jan's Journal

As we gather for worship on the last Sunday in July, we will continue to focus upon the story of Jacob and what the story can teach us about living in a covenant with God. This will be the final worship service until September. Worship is suspended during the month of August and Labour Day weekend. I will be back on Tuesday, September 8th. Worship services will resume on September 13th. Reverend Dr. Harold Wells has kindly agreed to look after any emergency pastoral care needs during my absence.

Barb and Sam will be taking some vacation time during August. Barb will be away from August 10 to August 28th. During that time, Grace Boogers, Carolyn Wilson, and Brenda McMaster will be monitoring phone calls and emails received through the church office. Thank you, Grace, Carolyn and Brenda!!

During this hiatus, you might like to visit neighbouring churches to experience worship in a different context. You also might watch a variety of worship services online. Most churches live-stream services, and then make them available on the church's website or YouTube channel for viewing at a later time.

Although worship is suspended during August, the cost of running the church and maintaining the building does not

change. Please consider making your regular offering donations through PAR (speak to Gayle Burnison), by e-transfer, by mailing a cheque to the church office, or by increasing your offerings in July. This would be greatly appreciated!!

When we return to regular worship in September, we will begin with "Creation Time" which lasts through to Thanksgiving Sunday.

A reminder that Barb is now working "Summer hours" in the office, which means that the church office is open on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. until August 7th, and then again during the week of August 31st to September 4th.

Gail Lorimer has shared information concerning the safety of migrant farm workers. An organization called Migrant Workers Alliance For Change is requesting signatures on an online petition. Apparently, this petition is in response to the recent death of a migrant worker from Mexico who was struck and killed while riding a bicycle on a rural road near Niagara -on-the-Lake. If you are interested in supporting this cause, please go to:

<https://migrantworkersalliance.org/sinhue/>

Wishing you all a wonderful month of August!!

If you have any questions or concerns about anything you have read here, you can reach me at:

revjanmcc@gmail.com or on my cell phone: 905-630-8202.

Blessings,

Reverend Jan