Jan's Journal

Creation 5

Wishing you all a lovely Thanksgiving! I hope that you will have the opportunity to enjoy some time with family and friends as we celebrate the bountiful harvest of orchards, vineyards, fields and gardens in the 2026 growing season.

I am sad to think of emptying planters and pots and preparing my perennial patch for winter. It won't be nearly as onerous a task as it has been in previous years, but still, I am sorry to see the brightly coloured blooms disappear. My brother visited recently and brought me several boxes and bags of vegetables from his garden. Peppers, green beans, tomatoes, beets, carrots, and garlic. All delicious!

Since I am mentioning food, may I remind you of the **Thanksgiving Food Drive**? Please bring your donations of non-perishable food items or personal hygiene products to the grocery cart in the Gathering Place or place a cash donation or a cheque in the envelopes in the pew pockets. All donations will go to the Compassion Society.

Both the **Coffee and Conversation Group** and the **Lunch and Lectionary Group** will resume meeting this week.

The Coffee and Conversation Group gathers in the Campbell Room on Tuesday mornings from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Please bring your own coffee, tea, etc. This is a faith formation group. Discussion is focused on deepening our personal relationship with God. Topics for discussion change. Typically, the group follows a particular theme for several weeks. We try to choose topics which are relevant in our lives and our world. Some previous topics have been: A Stroll for the Soul, Praying the News, Storytelling, The Spirituality of Aging, and various Spiritual Practices. New participants are always welcome. We will meet on **October 13, 2026**.

The Lunch and Lectionary Group is a Bible Study Group. This group meets on Zoom on Thursdays between 12:30 and 2 p.m. Derived from the Latin word *lectio*, meaning "to read," the Lectionary provides assigned biblical texts for use in Christian worship. The Lectionary includes a Hebrew Testament reading, a Psalm, a New Testament Epistle reading, and a Gospel reading. The United Church of Canada follows the Revised Common Lectionary. Each Thursday, the Lunch and Lectionary Group read and discuss the scriptures listed for the following Sunday. New participants are always welcome. We will meet on **October 15, 2026**. Please let me know that you would like to join the Group, so that I can send you the Zoom link in advance of the meeting.

Last Sunday, an announcement was made about a letter, drafted by members of the Wider Work Team, and approved by the Official Board, which was being sent to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anita Anand with a copy to the Prime Minister. This letter expresses support for the United Church of Canada's position concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict, from March of 2026. It also raises some concerns.

Copies of this letter will be available on a table in the Gathering Place this Sunday. The letter will be accompanied by a copy of the United Church of Canada position statement.

In addition, you will find a copy of an **Apartheid Free Pledge**. A proposal has been submitted to the HFRC that the Regional Council sign and adopt this pledge. The sponsoring group is also asking congregations to consider signing this pledge. The Wider Work Team discussed this possibility at their September meeting and decided to table it for future discussion. There is a Fall Meeting of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council on October 15th and 16th (next Thursday and Friday). Your Regional Council Reps, Callie Archer and Gail Lorimer, and myself will be attending this meeting. The Proposal concerning the Apartheid-Free Pledge will be discussed and a vote taken at this meeting. As Callie, Gail, and I will be representing the members of East Plains at this meeting, we ask that you read this pledge and let us know your response to it, in order that we may accurately represent you in this matter.

Copies of a summary of the key points of the United Church of Canada position, titled: "United Church Urges Advocacy to Move Condemnation to Consequences, issued in March of 2026, will be available on a table in the Gathering Place on Sunday, also. If you are interested in reading the whole document, you will find it on the United Church of Canada website at:

united-church.ca/news/united-church-urges-advocacy-move-canada-condemnation-consequences

Copies of the Proposal to be considered at the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council Fall Meeting, will also be available on the table in the Gathering Place on Sunday.

In order to educate ourselves about the conflict between Israel and Palestine, I would like to suggest two book study sessions in the coming months. First of all, I will offer a discussion of the book *Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* by Walter Brueggemann. Walter Brueggemann was a renowned Hebrew Testament scholar and author. He was a minister in the United Church of Christ in the United States. He also taught Hebrew Testament Studies at Columbia Theological School. This is a short book—just 58 pages, in which Brueggemann presents his perspective on Biblical texts and interpretations which have led to the belief that land was given to the Hebrew people by God. There will be five discussion sessions, which will take place following worship on five Sundays: October 18th, October 25th, November 1st, November 15th and November 22nd. Please let me know if you are interested in participating in this study.

I have a second book, which is longer, which I propose to offer as a Lenten/Easter study in February and March. More information about that will be available in the New Year.

After a seven-month long search process, the United Church of Canada has announced the appointment of a new General Secretary. Reverend Éric Hébert-Daly will replace Reverend Michael Blair, who has served as General Secretary for the past six years. Reverend Hébert-Daly will begin his new role on January 1, 2027. There will be a one-month overlap for transition

before Reverend Blair retires. Reverend Hébert-Daly will be the first Francophone to serve as General Secretary of the United Church of Canada.

Mark your Calendars

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Sunday, October 11, 2026: Thanksgiving Sunday

Sunday October 18, 2026: World Food Sunday

Sunday October 25, 2026 : Reverend Dr. Harold Wells will lead worship with a focus on climate change. October 24th is the "International Day of Climate Action"

Monday, October 26, 2026: Municipal Election Day ---- be sure to vote for Mayor, City Councillor and School Board Trustees.

Sunday, November 1st, 2026: All Saints/ Reformation Sunday

Saturday, November 7, 2026 The 51st Annual Arts and Crafts Show and Sale

Sunday, November 8, 2026: Remembrance/Peace Sunday

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