

# EAST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH

May 2, 2021—Fifth Sunday of Easter

Easter Communion

Intimate, informal, inclusive, and interactive worship at  
10:30 a.m. on ZOOM

*A time to renew our lives for living in this pandemic time*

**Click link for worship: (Turn up the sound on your device!)**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83661502385?pwd=Mld1ckp6cVRiSWxvNzVCMGxYS2RzZz09>

**If asked for Meeting ID: 836 6150 2385 Password: 958258**

**To phone instead: 647-374-4685 & 647-558-0588**

## Land Acknowledgment

EPUC is on traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg, and Neutral peoples, which is part of the Upper Canada Treaties.

## Affirming Process

As a community of faith learning about the Affirming Ministry process, we seek to better understand and celebrate the diversity of God's creation. We are living into celebrating the richness of our community when we have diversity in age, ability, gender identity, racial/cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation, and family configurations. We seek to create a safe space with an open invitation to bring every aspect of your whole self into your participation within the East Plains United Church faith community.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome and Celebrate May Birthdays

Prelude

S. Vacca

**Light a candle as your Christ Candle**

Jacob Lee

**Call to Worship (Responses muted)**

Callie Archer

As we worship with our faithful church family,

**We lay down our fears, to boldly sing God's praise.**

Here in God's vineyard, with sisters and brothers in Christ,  
branches on the same Vine,

**Gnarled grey branches tell stories of faith**

**to little green buds on their laps. (Cont. next page) →**

Here God nourishes us through ancient wisdom from the Vine and waits to serve us fruit of the vine at the Table.

**We shall be filled with love to serve others.**

Let's worship!

**Opening Prayer (Muted please)** Callie Archer  
**Divine Vine-Grower, You nurture and water us; and we continue to grow. May we experience and grow in You here this morning. We celebrate Your Presence among us as we sing. Amen**

**Sing (Muted): VU #395 Come in, come in and sit down**

Invitation to Confession Rev. Barb

**Unison Prayer for Forgiveness (Muted)** Callie Archer  
Mother of Compassion:

called to be one body, related as part of one Vine,  
we fragment ourselves into a million selfish pieces.

**Your children of love, we insist on the right to cut ourselves off from others, sisters and brothers in Creation.**

Your Perfect Love was broken for us,

and you reconnected that Vine through the resurrection,  
yet sometimes we are afraid to give of ourselves in  
reconnection to the world.

**Abide in us, Vine Grower.**

**Forgive us our sins,  
so we may live boldly and love fearlessly. (silent prayer)**

Words of Assurance and Grace Rev. Barb

**Prayer before Scripture** Callie Archer  
Vine-Grower, as we hear these words, may we be  
connected to Jesus, our Vine who connects us to You.  
Amen.

**Scripture Readings**

John 15:1-8 Jesus the Vine connects us to God.  
I John 4:7-21 God is Love.

## Reflection

Rev. Barb with ALL

**On Zoom, we discuss today's scripture readings together.**

Click on "Chat." It will open at right so you can type.

**(IF you want to speak, please unmute yourself.)**

## The Gift of Music

**Invitation to the Offering:** Our financial gifts make possible the many ministries of EPUC. People give in various ways:

- Mail or drop off cheques, often post-dated
- PAR (Pre-authorized monthly remittance)
- Online: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/48926> or <https://www.eastplainsunitedchurch.com>.
- E-Transfer, payable to "East Plains United Church," to this email: [treasurer@eastplainsunitedchurch.com](mailto:treasurer@eastplainsunitedchurch.com).

Your gifts make good things happen. *Thank you!*

## Offering Dedication Prayer **(Muted please)**

**God our Vine-dresser, you give us every gift we need, every blessing we have. We are the branches through which those gifts are passed on, that new branches might grow, the poor might be fed, the lonely befriended, and the despairing be filled with hope. Bless our gifts to do those things! Amen**

Minute for Mission/Announcements not printed in bulletin

Invitation to God's Table

## Sharing Greetings of Peace **(Muted please)**

May the God who is Love be with you.

**And also with you.**

Bring your hearts to the One who loves you.

**We offer them to God to plant fruit-bearing seeds in us.**

Lift songs of praise to the One who fertilizes and feeds us.

**We join our hearts and voices in proclaiming,**

**"Thanks be to God!"**

**Prayer of Great Thanksgiving (Responses muted)**

“Get up,” you cried to your Word and Spirit,  
“and go down the wilderness road to chaos.”

**And so they went,  
calling forth life out of nothingness,  
planting seeds that branched into vines,  
pouring clear water into earth’s hollows,  
crafting us in your imaginative image.**

You showed all of this to us, with delight in your heart,  
but we did not understand what we were seeing,

**and so chose death and sin to be our guides in this life.**

Though we loved you last, you loved us first,  
sending your prophets to declare all you had done,

**but we continued to abide  
in the tangled briars of temptation.**

Then Jesus came, One who would bear your fruit  
of love and hope for all your children.

**With those who seem to intuit your heart,  
with those who seek to understand your hopes,  
we open our hearts to join our praise  
with the faithful of every time and place,  
saying to the glory of your name: Holy, Holy, Holy,  
God of Earth and Heaven.**

Love is your language of holiness, Branch weaving God,  
And Jesus Christ, is the Vine of your heart.

**When we were wandering lost and alone,  
trying to understand what we were doing,  
in this journey we know as life,  
he was the vine that connected us back to you.**

When we could not learn how to live connected with  
others, let alone with you,

**he led the way, down the wilderness road,  
preaching your kin-dom, living your love.**

His message, his life, so threatened old ways of being  
that he was crucified to end his life, his influence.

## **Eucharistic (Thanksgiving) Prayer continues**

**Instead, You raised him to new life,  
your “YES!” to all he had done.**

**And he proclaimed to us, “GOD has done it!”**

As we seek to abide in Jesus, as we long to bear fruit in the kin-dom, we speak of the mystery known as faith:

**Christ died, was raised, and will come again.**

## **Pastoral Prayer**

In that long ago Holy Week, eating a last meal with his friends, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and shared it, saying “This is the bread of new life.” (Bread is fractured.)

**Likewise, he poured wine, the gift of the grapevine, gave thanks and shared it. Sensing that he had crossed lines that had put a price on his head, he requested of his friends: “If I am taken from you, remember me when you share this meal in the future.”** (Grapejuice is poured.)

And now we gather in community, remembering.

**We gather as a community with cares and concerns for those in this faith community struggling with loss of many kinds, struggling with decisions and discernment, struggling with grief, with health concerns. We pray for comfort, wisdom, and healing.**

## **Prayers of the People (Use the chat window or unmute yourself to offer prayer requests.)**

We pray for our world in the grips of this pandemic.

For all who are grieving the death of loved ones...

For all who are in need of healing...

For all who are troubled with confusion or pain...

For all who have lost income, food or shelter...

And for all who are supporting medical efforts in this pandemic, the doctors and nurses, support workers, and emergency responders; to all who minister to human need in our time of distress.... Gracious God, hear our prayers.

In the midst of it all, we give thanks for moments of generosity and human kindness...and for vaccines.

**Abide in us now at this Table, as you pour out your Spirit on the gifts of the bread and cup, and on your children gathered in this place.** (Table is blessed.)

The broken bread reminds us that You loved us first so that, as we eat of it, we might put the needs of the hungry, the searching, the hurting, the lonely before our own.

**The cup of grace nourishes us so we can go over and join the oppressed and the outcasts, intertwining our branches with theirs,  
so we may become part of Your Vine of justice and hope.**

Then, when we no longer sleep in death, but are gathered around your Table with our sisters and brothers of all time and places, we will join in singing with one voice and heart, "You have done it, God in Community, Holy in One. Amen."

**Prayer of Jesus (The Lord's Prayer)**

Callie Archer

**The Communion—Together at home**

We eat the Bread of Life.

We drink the Cup of Hope.

**Prayer after Communion (Muted please)**

**God of Jesus, our Vine connecting us to You, we have been tended, watered and fed here at Your Table. May this symbolic meal strengthen and nourish us as branches through which Your love can flow like sap to all we meet this week. Amen**

**Sing Muted: "Abide with Me"**

New words by Elaine Bidgood Sweet, to tune of Eventide.

**Blessing**

**VIRTUAL CHAT TIME: Please unmute your mics!**

Acknowledgments: Our hymn use is with permission through our licence with CCLI. Confession and Communion liturgy adapted from liturgy by Thom Shuman, shared on Midrash, April 2015. Used with permission.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

### **Men's Coffee—Join the Zoom Meetings Mondays at 9 am:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85405381593?pwd=T3RuNkI4bm9jc0wrU3NmRzdhbFNMUT09>

**Meeting ID: 854 0538 1593 Passcode: 737756**

**To phone instead: 647-374-4685 & 647-558-0588**

**Same passwords and ID**

**Women's Bible Study**—led by Judy Jefferson on "Women of the New Testament" Tues, May 4 at 10:30 am.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81402927093?pwd=WmJkMHJYcURrbVVtUUhYZUFxOXhCdz09>

**Meeting ID: 814 0292 7093 Passcode: 018240**

**To phone instead: 647-374-4685 & 647-558-0588**

**Same passwords and ID**

**Wider Work Committee**—We invite you to 1) read, 2) download the Bulletin's 'Land-Use Concerns' attachment, 3) print, 4) sign, and 5) surface-mail a letter (with your postage stamp) to our Premier. Alternatively, you can download, attach, and email the entire text of that 'Recent Land-Use Concerns' attachment. Use this electronic contact-the-Premier site: (Just click the link.)  
<https://correspondence.premier.gov.on.ca/EN/feedback/default.aspx>

### **Questions for our A-Team?**

Members with questions or comments about our process of becoming an Affirming Ministry are asked to contact any of our A-Team members at the following phone numbers:

Callie Archer	905-634-5858
Gayle Lorimer	905-522-3330
Jim McMaster	905-632-0268
Morgan Perigo	905-632-4241
Joyce & Garth Smith	1-519-751-2647
Rev. Barb	1-416-540-8498

**Film to see and discuss**—You will find information about “The Imitation Game,” a movie on the British mathematician who solved Enigma, on the church website. This brilliant film is about Alan Turing, who helped the Allies win WWII. Sadly, he died as an outcast, as being gay was illegal then. Turing is now on the £50 note. Please watch the film before May 14. On May 14, please plan to join a discussion of the film at 7pm at this Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86968037874?pwd=a3FXYlppV0FyY0NkQnZLMzBUWFbKZz09>

**Wanted—Short-term accommodation:** Young married man is looking for a short-term rental, ideally in the Brant Hills, Tyandaga, Palmer and Lakeshore neighbourhoods, within easy reach by public transit of Food For Life, on Mountainside Dr. He requires a single room with access to kitchen and bathroom from mid-May to end of August, for \$500-\$600 monthly. References available. If you or someone you know can help, please email:

[EstherYasemin@gmail.com](mailto:EstherYasemin@gmail.com).

**Wider Work Committee**—We have received several thank you notes from Ugandan students supported through our Tekera sponsorship, which will be posted in the Gathering Place upon returning to “in-church” worshipping. Below is one of these wonderful letters.

Hello, Wider Works and Herold Wells,

How are you and your siblings and families?

I am writing this letter to thank you for sponsoring me since I started schooling up to now, I have finished writing my primary Leaving Examinations.

I would face problems like being sent for school fees and I would miss lessons when sent back home for that but because of you<sup>you</sup> helped me I have been attending all the lessons.

Because of your help and me being attending all the lessons, I wish to make a first grade of six aggregates

I am very happy and may God bless you.

FROM ANITAH  
NALUGEMWA