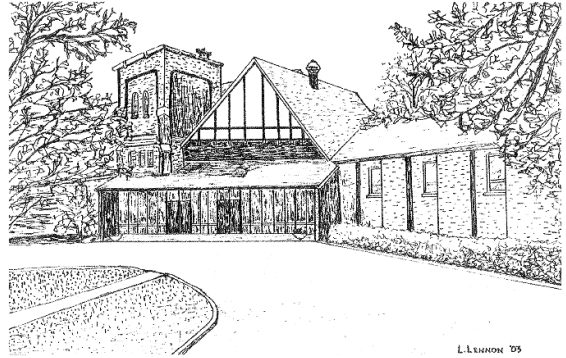


West Plains United Church

March 2017



549 Plains Road West, Burlington, ON
www.westplains.ca info@westplains.ca (905) 529-4871



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Ashes of death on our foreheads, seeds of hope in our hearts.
As we begin the journey, beyond the cross, let us remember –
God prepares us for life and not for death,
for resurrection and not for crucifixion,
for love and not for hate.
In a world where death holds us bound,
and violence seems to reign in thought and deed,
May this journey of Lent get us ready
to be God's good news of hope and wholeness and resurrection life
(by Christine Sine <http://godspace-sa.com>)

I adapted this poem by Christine Sine for the Call to Worship for our Ash Wednesday joint service with East Plains United Church on March 1st. Lent is often thought of as a somber time, a time of fasting and of giving up some of our favourite things or not so favourite habits.

Therefore I like the positive aspect of this poem: that God prepares us for life, love and resurrection!

I'm struck by the phrase in the first line: "seeds of hope in our hearts." This is a lovely image to carry with us during Lent. During our Ash Wednesday service, after we had been anointed with ashes, we each received a small origami heart made from an old map! Tucked inside the heart was a paper packet and inside it were some pea seeds. (Rev. Alison Nicholson, in ministry at East Plains, brought them to the service. A friend of hers had made them for us.) I love to plant seeds in little pots in the early spring to give them a head-start so that they've become sturdy little sprouts by the time it's safe to plant them in the garden. This spring these pea seeds will be among the seeds I plant. Just looking at little green sprouts gives me hope!

Do you recall the story of hope we heard Linnea Good tell on our anniversary Sunday last October? Found in Jeremiah, chapter 32, it describes what the prophet Jeremiah does during a troubling time when the Babylonian army is laying siege to Jerusalem. In the midst of this chaos, Jeremiah hears a message from God that he is to buy a plot of land. Yes! Buy a plot of land in a country that is being besieged! He obeys, buys the plot, then asks a trustworthy acquaintance to take the deed and put it in an earthenware jar so that it "may last for a long time." For the Creator God has told the prophet, "Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land." Although the city of Jerusalem will be destroyed and many citizens will be taken into exile in Babylon, God will not forget them. The people are not to lose hope for they will return from exile and they will experience shalom once again. This story reminds me that hope is a precious, God-given gift and that it is something we carry within our hearts.

The word *Lent* comes from an old English word meaning *spring* or *lengthening of the hours of daylight* and therefore I believe it contains hope. It's the last day in February as I write this and along with many others, I marvel that the sun is up before 7:00 a.m. and sets after 6:00 p.m.! The growing daylight lifts our spirits.

Lent is a time to prepare ourselves not only for the sorrowful days of Holy Week but also for the joyful news of Easter. It is a time to reflect on how the way we live our life answers Jesus' call to work for peace and justice in the world.

May God's word of hope renew and encourage us, so that, as the last line of the poem says, we may be "God's good news of hope and wholeness and of resurrection life."

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Martha Reynolds



Upcoming Worship!

2017 Lenten and Easter Worship Services

*Regular Sunday Worship Services
at West Plains United Church begin at 10:30 a.m.*

SUNDAY, March 19th: Lent 3 – Hymn-sing Worship Service
Wesley Urban Ministries Dinner in the afternoon.

SUNDAY, March 26th: Lent 4
Cheer on “Around the Bay Road Race” runners after worship!
Book Study at 12:00 p.m. – Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers
by Anne Lamott

SUNDAY, April 2nd: Lent 5 – Baptism

SUNDAY, April 9th: Palm Sunday

THURSDAY, April 13th: 7:30 p.m. – Maundy Thursday with Taize Worship
Joint service here at West Plains with East Plains United Church

FRIDAY, April 14th: 11:00 a.m. – Good Friday
Joint service at East Plains United Church, 375 Plains Road East

SUNDAY, April 16th – Easter Sunday! Celebrate the Risen Christ at West Plains!

Early Service at 8:30 a.m. - an informal gathering in the parking lot
with communion.

Easter Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. - come and enjoy Easter Breakfast Feast –
no tickets required, donations welcomed.
Thank you to our Property Committee.

Easter Worship at 10:30 a.m. – Hallelujah! Celebrate that Christ is Risen!

SUNDAY, April 23th – Easter Communion Service
Rev. Martha Reynolds is on vacation. Rev. Karen Inkster leads worship.

*We invite you to join us for worship
and bring a friend or neighbour with you to West Plains!*

Music

EARLY MORNING RAIN
concert

THE MUSIC OF:
GORDON LIGHTFOOT
JONI MITCHELL
JOAN BAEZ
BOB DYLAN
JOHN DENVER
and more!

performed by
Canada's Songbird Nicole Coward
WITH Juno award winner
and co-founder of April Wine
David Henman

SUN April 23rd 2:30pm
West Plains United Church
549 Plains Road West, Burlington ON
Tickets: \$20, 2 for \$35 includes refreshments
905-529-4871 email info@westplains.ca
www.westplains.ca

facebook

Early Morning Rain Concert

By Canada's
Songbird
Nicole Coward
with David
Henman

2:30 p.m.
Sunday, April
23rd, 2017
All welcome!

The **Early Morning Rain Concert** will take you back to the time of the 50's, 60's and 70's. Canadian singer and songwriter **Nicole Coward** with special guests **Harpin Norm Lucien** (harmonica) and **David Henman** (Juno award winner and co-founder of *April Wine*) will perform songs by popular artists of that time like Joni Mitchell,

Gordon Lightfoot, John Denver, Joan Baez, Leonard Cohen and Ian Tyson to name a few. The Early Morning Rain Concert will get you singing and reminiscing.

BRING FRIENDS AND FAMILY!

Tickets \$20 (\$35 for two) include refreshments at intermission.
General seating in our church sanctuary.
Doors open at 2 p.m. All welcome!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1830148293893169/>

Calling all Men of West Plains!
The **MOWP Choir** reconvenes for Mother's Day 2017
To sing at Sunday Service, May 14th, 2017.



Practices will be Sundays after church: 11:50 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
on April 16th, 23rd and 30th

and 7:15-9:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 11th.
Sign-up on the Sheet on the Bulletin Board!

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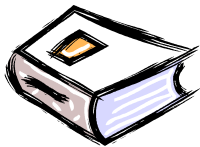
Calling all who like to sing!

From May 18 - June 22nd, you are invited to join the West Plains Choirs in preparing Canadian folk songs to present at the Canada 150 Celebration Dinner on June 23rd, a fundraiser for our church. If this sounds like it tweaks your singing bone, please talk to Lianne or email her at tan_lianne@yahoo.ca for more details!





**Canada's 150th Celebration
at West Plains
June 23rd at 6:00 p.m.
Congregational Dinner and Entertainment
Tickets available soon!
Come and enjoy this event to support the
ministries of our congregation!**



Faith Formation

Hello All,

We will review and discuss the book- Help Thanks Wow by Anne Lamont after worship March 26th. There is a copy in the library to borrow. Snacks will be provided.

There will be a sermon series on the book Prayers to the Cosmos by Neil Douglas Klotz. The sermon series will be a lenten study for this year, presented by Reverend Reynolds.

We plan to continue the presentations of the DVD The Bible after Easter; times and dates in the bulletin closer to the presentation date. Also, another portion of the lenten study, Mary had a Baby - once again dates to be announced.

A book suggestion for reading - possible study- All my puny Sorrows by Miriam Toews. Other suggestions for reading in February's copy of the

Observer page 15. Excellent reading!

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Watson,
Faith Formation Committee Member

UCW News

A special thank you to our Joan Fox for her fantastic speakers for January and February meetings, held at Burlington Gardens. In January, Leslie Jack and her canine friend “Tinker”, from Therapy Dogs, gave insight into this wonderful service to those in need. In February, Maria Fitton and her special canine “Parsnip”, from Guide Dogs for the Blind, told her story with humour and personal memories of her special bonds with her four legged partners. Can you imagine living in China town in Toronto and coming by public transit, to speak with us here in Burlington. Wonderful speakers. Those who attended have a greater knowledge of these two organizations.

We have changed up a few of this year’s fund raising activities. Rather than the Tea in May we are having a “Bake Sale and Trunk Sale” on Saturday, May 13th. You might ask, what is a trunk sale? Details are in the works!!

Tuesday, June 6th will be our West Plains Ladies “Spring Fling” Luncheon. Location to come!

Friday, June 23rd will be our Canada Day celebration. Dinner and celebratory entertainment for our church and community. More information to follow, but mark this date on your calendar.

We look forward to seeing you for devotion and fellowship lead by Linda Sanderson, president and our spiritual leader Rev. Martha. Location Stokes Parlour, West Plains. **Dates April 4th and May 2nd at 10:00 a.m.** **Note new time!** All women are welcome. Meat Pies dates are April 12th, May 10th and June 14th. Contact Marj at (905)522-2569.

We can trust God to handle the things that overwhelm us!

Submitted by Secretary,
Judie Langford

Mission and Service/Outreach

On Sunday, March 19th, West Plains United Church is hosting the Sunday Dinner at Wesley's Day Centre at 195 Ferguson Street in Hamilton. Twelve volunteers from our congregation will be there from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. to serve dinner to about 180 people. Thanks to all the people who are contributing to this event. Serving this meal each year is one of several ways we help others in our local community.

This is a note from Rebecca Young, Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator, at Wesley Urban Ministries. It contains other news about Wesley and describes some of the challenges they face and some of the ways they serve marginalized people in the Hamilton area:

“In other Wesley news, in December 2015, we learned that our annual grant from The United Church of Canada grant would be reduced by almost half in 2016. This grant made up a critical 24% of Wesley Day Centre’s budget in 2015/2016. As a result, Wesley Day Centre hours have decreased to 35 hours.

The Day Centre is now open Monday - Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and Sundays from 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.

I am pleased to share that this reduction has not impacted our critical meal program. We continue to serve hot meals seven days a week, including our Sunday dinner program.

We also continue to offer our current range of supports to the individuals who come to Wesley Day Centre such as shower and laundry services, housing support, health clinic and recreational activities.

All other programs offered by Wesley’s Housing & Homelessness team, including Special Care Unit, Transitions to Home, community outreach and housing workers, have continued unchanged.

Thank you again for your tremendous support!”
Best regards,

Rebecca Young
Special Events & Volunteer Coordinator
Wesley Urban Ministries Inc.



Property Committee

Our goal is to continue in the new year with ongoing maintenance of the Church and grounds as well as assisting with event parking, table set up and take down and anything else that will keep West Plains as a place for people to visit and worship.

At our February meeting the contracts for grass cutting and fertilization were voted on and approved.

The Ministry and Personnel Committee decided, with approval from the Board, that since our janitorial work (by Jim Oliver) is contracted to an outside company, that this should be under the control of Property, as they look after all outside contract work for the Church. The only change is that Jim will now report and be managed by Property members instead of Ministry and Personnel (M & P).

We don't have any major projects planned for this year, just trying to catch our breath after last year's spending spree (all of which was more than needed).

Fair warning, some Sunday before the end of June, there will be a surprise **Fire Drill**.

Murray Biggley, Secretary

Sunday School

Exciting news!

The Sunday School and Ministry and Personnel Committee are pleased to announce that we have hired a Sunday School Coordinator/Teacher. We welcome Mackenzie Curran to our West Plains team. She will be starting on Sunday, March 26th and we hope that all families will be at church to meet her. Kenzie presently is attending Brock University where she is completing her degree in Child and Youth studies. She will be receiving her BA and graduating in 6 weeks. She works as a supply teacher at the Pumpkin Patch Day Care during the week. Kenzie is young, energetic, warm, enthusiastic and excited to be a part of our West Plains family. A

very warm welcome to Kenzie! We all look forward to getting to know her and working with her.

As per the Sunday School Coordinator/Teacher's contract, Kenzie will only be working 3 Sundays a month. This leaves 1 Sunday still requiring volunteers. Please read the request below to show how you can share your faith with our younger members here at West Plains as we will need volunteers to teach on the Sundays that Kenzie has off.

Sharing your faith

Have you had an occasion recently to share your faith? There is such an opportunity right here at West Plains! Darlene, Pat and Bev have been teaching Sunday school this year and they are willing to keep doing so, yet they need your help. It would be very helpful and gratifying if you would teach Sunday School on one or two Sundays between now and June. This opportunity to share your faith is available to everyone. If you are a parent, grandparent or great grandparent, an aunt or uncle, coach or teacher, you've most likely had experience working and playing with children. If you've not had such an opportunity, here it is now! This is a wonderful chance to share your faith and to get to know the children and youth in the congregation.

As you've likely noticed, attendance varies from week to week: there can be anywhere from no children to 9 on a Sunday. If you've never been a Sunday School teacher or it's been a long time since you were, this might sound somewhat intimidating. But fear not! It would be fine if you shared the duties with another person.

The Sunday School curriculum that we use at West Plains is called Sermons4Kids and it's found on line. Not computer savvy? Fear not! Someone can print off the lesson for you. And if you're worried about the craft side of teaching Sunday School, fear not! There are people who are "crafty" and can help with preparing them. Kenzie will be here as well as Darlene and Pat who are willing to be a resource for whatever it is you need help with.

Are you still unsure? Please don't say "no" right away, but give it some prayerful consideration over the next while. Thank you.

As with all organizations now, a police records check would be required for anyone volunteering to work with the Sunday School. Meanwhile, please accept this opportunity to share your faith with the young people in our congregation. The children and you will find this to be an enriching experience!



The Aldershot Players

Rehearsals are underway for the Spring Production of "The Cemetery Club" by Ivan Menchell.

Dinner show dates are: April 21st, 22nd, 28th, 29th, May 5th and 6th. This year there are two "**show only**" nights on April 27th and May 4th. The dinner theatre tickets are \$40. and the show only nights are \$20. To reserve tickets please call the TAP box office at (905) 381-1441.

Around the Bay Road Race

Around the Bay Road Race will celebrate its 123rd anniversary this year and will take place on Sunday, March 26, 2017. This historic race expects over 9,000 participants running through Hamilton and Burlington and is a great opportunity to showcase our great communities.

Come out and cheer on the participants. Race officials would greatly appreciate West Plain's choir's participation and support again this year!

The race will be passing through our area between 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 26, 2017 and may cause some minor traffic delays.

PAR

You can make your church offering even easier by signing up for Pre-authorized Remittance (called the PAR program)! All you have to do is decide how much you would like to contribute each week or month and fill out a simple form - the rest is automatic! There are offering cards at the back of the church for you to put in the offering plate as symbol of your contribution. Speak with a member of Finance.