

GROWING, CARING, MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

IN ELGIN AND PORTLAND

*Leader: Liz Church*

*Pianist: Janet McKeage*

Ministers: All of God's People

**JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**

Welcome

O Canada

Announcements/Birthdays & Anniversaries

*The Shared Breath*

*Territorial Land Acknowledgment*

We acknowledge that we gather on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

They were the first to receive the divine breath on this soil. For generations, they lived in perfect harmony with the land, recognizing that the breath of the Creator flows through the soil, the animals, the wind, and all humanity. They have loved, protected, and stewarded these sacred spaces since time immemorial.

We confess that human greed has often choked the breath of justice and harmed both the land and its original caretakers.

As we breathe in the peace of this space today, we commit to a shared future of reconciliation. May the Breath of God clear away our divisions. May it inspire us to protect this earth and walk softly alongside our Indigenous neighbours in truth, respect, and unity.

**Spiritual Focus:** "Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ... And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" — John 20:19b, 22

Hymn - MV # 135 "Called By Earth and Sky"

Opening Prayer:

"O Creator, the Breathing Life of All, You sustain every heartbeat and expand every lung. We open our minds to Your creative presence. Clear away our distractions. Fill this space with Your peace. Amen."

Call to Worship:

**Leader: In the beginning, the Spirit moved over the waters.**

**People: God breathed into us the breath of life.**

**Leader: We gather today as those who share this one holy breath, the refreshing breath of God.**

**People: O Creator, the Breathing Life of All, wake us to Your presence, and bring new life into our souls.**

Hymn – VU # 382 "Breathe on me, Breath of God"

Lighting the Christ Candle

**Leader: We light the Christ Candle, celebrating the Holy One who gives us breath.**

**People: O Thou Life-Giving Breath of all, fill this place with your presence.**

**Leader: Holy God, you are the breath that sustains every living creature. As we look upon this flame, clear away the stagnant air of our fears, doubts, and worries. Breathe your peace, your joy, and your love into our hearts today. May our lives catch fire with your grace, reflecting the light of Christ to the world. Amen.**

Scripture: VU - Page 840 – Refrain 5

**Psalm 119:105-112 The Message**

**REFRAIN: YOUR WORD IS A LAMP FOR MY FEET  
AND A LIGHT FOR MY PATH.**

**Leader: By your words I can see where I'm going;  
they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**

**All: I've committed myself and I'll never turn back  
from living by your righteous order.**

**Leader:** Everything's falling apart on me, God;  
put me together again with your Word.  
**All:** Adorn me with your finest sayings, God;  
teach me your holy rules.

**REFRAIN:** YOUR WORD IS A LAMP FOR MY FEET  
AND A LIGHT FOR MY PATH.

**Leader:** My life is as close as my own hands,  
but I don't forget what you have revealed.

**ALL:** The wicked do their best to throw me off track,  
but I don't swerve an inch from your course.

**Leader:** I inherited your book on living; it's mine forever -  
what a gift! And how happy it makes me!

**All:** I concentrate on doing exactly what you say -  
I always have and always will.

**REFRAIN:** YOUR WORD IS A LAMP FOR MY FEET  
AND A LIGHT FOR MY PATH.

**Ministry of Music:**

**Reflection: " The Sacred Respiration - God's Breath "**

**The Lord's Prayer**

O Thou, the Breathing Life of All,  
Creator of the cosmos, focused in our hearts.

May Your name be kept holy in us,  
as a light shining through our lives.

Let Your peaceful unity guide our days,  
and Your loving will be done on earth,  
as it moves through stars and sky.

Give us each day our daily bread—  
the nourishment our bodies and spirits need.

Forgive our failures and debts,  
as we release the wrongs done to us.

Do not let us walk into temptation,  
but deliver us from the traps of forgetfulness.

For You are the source of all power,  
the beautiful song of creation, from age to age. Amen.



**OUR  
CHURCHES  
UNITED**



**Elgin-Portland  
Pastoral Charge  
June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026**



Offertory Hymn – MV # 191 “What Can I Do?”

**Offertory Prayer**

God of All Goodness, as we bring forward our gifts today, we ask ourselves: *What can I do? What can I bring? What can I say? What can I sing?*

We offer these tokens of our money, but also the breath in our lungs, the love in our hearts, and our willingness to do our share. Take these offerings and use them to feed the hungry, comfort the lonely, and heal your creation. Turn our prayers into action and our songs into justice. Amen

Closing Hymn: VU # 664 “What A Friend We Have In Jesus”

**Commissioning/ Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all".

Choral Blessing MV # 215 “Peace Be With You”

**Strawberry Social FORFAR Sunday, June 28 Forfar Community Hall 1544 County Rd. 42.** Dinner includes ham, scalloped potatoes, salad, corn and roll with berries and ice cream for dessert. Advance ticket sales by calling Tammy or Doris Day at 613-272-2474. Tickets available by chance at the door after the 5 pm seating. Take outs are available - please call in advance to arrange a pickup time.

UCW - We will be making strawberry/rhubarb pies July 2 and 3. Please let Connie or MJ know if you are available to help. Connie 613-220-7914 MJ 613-222-9070

Elgin Portland Pastoral Charge

PO Box 251, Portland ON K0G 1V0

Web site: [www.eppc-ucc.com](http://www.eppc-ucc.com) (or.ca)

Church Office: (613) 272-2002

Office Hours: Wednesday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Secretary: Annette Clarke, E-mail: [office@eppc-ucc.com](mailto:office@eppc-ucc.com)

Chair of the Official Board – Clint Halladay

Church Council Chairs:

Elgin: Clint Halladay (613) 359-5607

Portland: Will French (613) 803-4684

Pastoral Care Director: Liz Church (902) 441-5357

[lizchurch1@hotmail.com](mailto:lizchurch1@hotmail.com)

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## O' CANADA

Clinton Halladay

*The icy spray stung her face like a thousand wasps. A thirty-foot wall of water hovered over her, ready to crush down like a boot on a bug. She reefed the wheel hard to starboard and caught the uprising of a forming wave just in time to miss the downward crush of the previous swell. The sky and water formed a*

*united front, black and ominous with a total absence of horizon. The Naabikwaanens shuddered as the bloated swell tossed her feverishly upward.*

*Without warning the mounting plume split off, a tentacle soundly grabbing the bow and pulling it mercilessly downward. The second curl smashed through the wheelhouse. The tandem attack strained the small craft and captain beyond their limits.*

*It is a ghostly fact, that poetic phrase of Gordon Lightfoot: "Gichigami, it's said, never gives up her dead when the skies of November turn gloomy."*

Yet within that haunting image lies a powerful truth about Canada. Canada is a nation shaped by vast waters, towering mountains, endless forests, and winters that test the limits of human endurance. From the raging storms of Lake Superior to the windswept shores of the Atlantic and the rugged peaks of the Rockies, Canadians have learned to respect nature, adapt to its challenges, and draw strength from its beauty.

Our history is one of perseverance and without question, we, the colonials, believing we were superior, inflicted great harm on the keepers of the land. Indigenous peoples thrived on this land for thousands of years, developing deep knowledge of its rhythms and seasons. Explorers, settlers, and immigrants followed, each adding their stories to the rich tapestry of the nation, not perfectly, but we're working on it. Together they built communities in places where survival itself demanded courage and cooperation.

Canada's greatness is not measured by conquest or power but by character. It is found in neighbours helping neighbours after floods and fires, in volunteers strengthening communities, and in the quiet determination of people who face adversity with hope. It is reflected in our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and respect for one another.

Like the captain battling the storm on Lake Superior, Canada has faced challenges that seemed overwhelming. Yet time and again, the nation has endured, adapting and moving forward while remaining true to its values.

Like the Naabikwaanens, our sailing is not always serene. Yes, we have people and politicians who want to take their ball and leave, break up our unity over pet peeves, or gather under the suppressing umbrella of a grifter, or curate the communal strength of both local and world diversity. We are a nation forged in adversity, courage and civility.



As we celebrate Canada this July 1<sup>st</sup> Canada Day, we honour not only the breathtaking landscapes that define our homeland but also the resilient spirit of its people. Ours is a country forged by wind, water, and wilderness—a nation that stands strong because its people do.

From sea to sea to sea, Canada remains a beacon of courage, compassion, and possibility. O' Canada, the true North strong and FREE.



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