

# **ERAMOSA PASTORAL CHARGE**

**Barrie Hill & Speedside  
United Churches**

**Winter 2026  
NEWSLETTER**



## *From the minister's desk -*

A number of years ago there was a commercial on television for IBM. The commercial closed with the words that what we needed was a “smarter planet”. Every time I saw the commercial it would irritate me because it is our “smarts” coupled with pride that has placed us in a difficult position regarding the very future of our planet. I read this week on the BBC website that the “Domesday Clock” now stands at 85 seconds to midnight. This is the closest the “Domesday Clock” has been to a catastrophe since its debut nearly 80 years ago. A combination of the risk of nuclear weapons, climate change and disruptive technologies led the scientists to offer their warning this week.

Now this sobering news brings me back to the IBM commercial. We do not need a “smarter planet”. What we need is a “wiser planet” that fosters the thriving and well-being of all of its inhabitants. I believe this is where the great religious traditions of the world have something to offer in these difficult and perilous times. The religious traditions outline a way of being in the world that offers wisdom for living, harmony, peace, humility etc. This includes our own Christian tradition as well. There is a great deal of wisdom for living found in the Way of the Christ.

However, I think many people including those of us who still go to church would be surprised to learn that Christianity is not simply about “believing” but it also offers a way of life, a spiritual path that one can follow. At the center of Jesus' own teaching is way or path for living and the first name of the early Christian movement was "the Way". Take a look at the "Sermon on the Mount" for example. Christianity is a way or path that is marked by "letting go" and "putting on". Christianity offers rituals and practices that encourage personal transformation as a way of "putting on Christ". These practices include community worship, scripture, sacraments, making pilgrimage, various styles of prayer and works of mercy. By engaging in these practices, one is seeking to live a life that is marked by the fruits of the Holy Spirit, a life that is marked by the qualities of love, joy, patience, gentleness etc.

When I came to understand that my Christian faith was not "all about believing" but was a spiritual path leading to personal transformation, Christianity was forever changed for me. The Christian understanding of "letting go" as shown in the life of Jesus the Christ spoke to me at a deep level. It offered to me a way of living my life and sharing relationships that allowed me to experience the "fruits of the Holy Spirit" in those ordinary moments of my life. The various practices and rituals of Christianity took a new and deeper meaning for me when I saw them as practices for the Way. They became little ways of "letting go" for the sake of a deeper relationship with God through Christ.

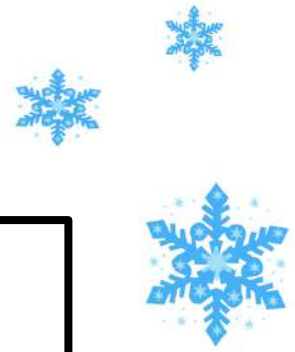
There was one practice that was deeply formative as I came to this new understanding of Christianity, namely Centering Prayer. It remains my primary prayer practice even after many years. Centering Prayer has its roots in the earliest centuries of the Church. It is an ancient contemplative style of prayer that "lets go" of word, thought and image so that the practitioner is simply "resting in God". The twice daily periods of centering prayer help me to bring my whole self to prayer and to practice "letting go" and "putting on" Christ in an intentional manner.

We all need a path for we are lost without one. Certainly, there are many paths offered in our culture. There are paths that focus on appearance, achievement or affluence to the detriment of our planetary home. But I follow the path that is rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. It is a way of "letting go" and "putting on" that transforms us at the deepest level of our being for the sake of the very survival and transformation of God's world. It is the Way of love, gentleness, peace and self-control that participates in the very being of God and contributes to a “wiser planet”.

Peace of Christ,

Rev. Kevin

# Eramosa Pastoral Charge



## Eramosa Pastoral Charge Church Office

### Office Administrator:

Cassie Hatch

5702 Wellington Rd. 29,  
Rockwood, ON NOB 2K0  
519-763-0299  
eramosapc@gmail.com  
www.eramosapc.com  
www.facebook.com/barriehillunited  
www.barriehillunitedchurch.com

**Minister:** Rev. Kevin Steeper  
revkeveramosa@gmail.com  
226-501-0860  
**Office Hours:**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9 a.m.- noon

**Children/ Youth Co-ordinator:**  
Autumn Kent / kentautumn259@gmail.com

**Music:**  
Speedside: Alyson Arsenault, Sue Spicer, Brad Halls  
Barrie Hill: Shirley McFarlane, Sue Spicer, Brad Halls

**EPC Treasurer:**  
Barb Valentine  
4epctreasurer@gmail.com



If you wish to submit bulletin announcements please send to Cassie by Wednesday evenings each week. eramosapc@gmail.com

**Church Bookings:**  
Speedside: Bruce Miller 519-822-1731  
Barrie Hill: Shirley McFarlane 519-822-4997  
jsmcfarlane72@gmail.com



If you wish to submit family news or announcements to the newsletter please send to Shirley at jsmcfarlane72@gmail.com



Info from Barrie Hill and Speedside to include on Facebook, please send to Martha at martha.amidon@gmail.com



**Mission Statement**  
Arising from a deeply rooted faith in God, known to us through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, we, the people of Eramosa Pastoral Charge, celebrate that we are a Christian community striving to share our faith, friendship, fun, music and other talents. We do this through our unique rural approach to worship, Christian education, stewardship and pastoral care.



## Eramosa Pastoral Charge

COME  
*Worship*  
WITH US

Speedside 9:30 a.m.

Barrie Hill 11:00 a.m.



The services will be recorded and posted on Sunday afternoons for those who wish to watch the service from the comfort of your home. Watch the services on our facebook page [www.facebook.com/barriehillunited](http://www.facebook.com/barriehillunited) or our website: [www.erasosapc.com](http://www.erasosapc.com)

### UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

**Sun. Feb. 8** at 9:30 a.m. Barrie Hill UCW meeting.

**Sun. Feb. 8** One hour Sunday School at Barrie Hill from 11:00 a.m-12:00 p.m.

**Sun. Feb. 15** at 2:00 p.m. at Speedside, Winter Music Show.

**Sat. March 28** Barrie Hill UCW meat pie pick up.

**Sun. March 29** Palm Sunday - Communion celebrated at both churches.



**Fri. April 3** Good Friday Service hosted by Speedside UC at 10:00 a.m.

**Sun. April 5** Easter Sunday services at both churches.

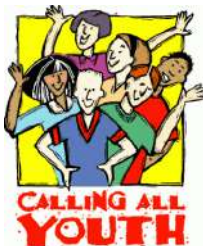
Easter Sunday Breakfast at Barrie Hill Church 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.



**CONNECT29** will be hosting euchre games at Barrie Hill Church on the first Monday of every month from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. and also on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

*All are welcome to join in the fun and fellowship.*





## Eramosa Pastoral Charge

In the Eramosa Pastoral Charge (Barrie Hill and Speedside Churches) we are planning some exciting child/youth programming for 2026

**Special Sunday School** - Sunday, February 8th, at Barrie Hill, a one hour Sunday School program will be offered from 11:00 am-12:00 pm, no registration necessary.

**Youth Weekend Camp** - Friday March 13-Sunday March 15. Blue Springs Scout Reserve. See flyer below for details and registration. We have transitioned to a google form for registration. Please email [eramosapc@gmail.com](mailto:eramosapc@gmail.com) for the link.

**VBS Summer Camp** - July 20-24th, at Barrie Hill, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. **FULL** but **volunteers** still needed. Contact Terry if you are interested in volunteering [p.t.knierim@gmail.com](mailto:p.t.knierim@gmail.com)

Looking forward to seeing you in 2026!

Theresa Knierim



Youth born 2014  
and after...come  
join us at camp.

## Eramosa Youth Camp



**Blue Springs Scout Reserve**  
14175 Sixth Line Nassagaweya, Milton  
**Friday, March 13, 7pm to**  
**Sunday, March 15, 10am, 2026**

For youth born 2014 and after

### Theme - Becoming a Great Leader

We will participate in traditional camp experiences: hikes, campfires, archery, and leadership building activities. There is no cost to attend camp. Campers will be asked to contribute specific food. The camp will be held in a heated indoor cabin ([Station Hotel and Acton Hut - Blue Springs Scout Reserve](#)) with bunk beds, kitchen and indoor washrooms. Campers will bring sleeping bags, pillows, mattresses (optional), clothes and toiletries. All are welcome, please invite a friend. Campers are invited to volunteer at our children's camp at Barrie Hill United Church, July 20 -24, 2026.

A project of Speedside and Barrie Hill United  
Churches

To register complete this google form:

<https://bit.ly/EPC-YouthCamp-March2026>



## ERAMOSIA PASTORAL CHARGE

### *Manse Dedication*

In April 2025, Eramosa Pastoral Charge welcomed to the manse our new minister, Rev. Kevin Steeper and his wife, Rev. Kate Ballagh-Steeper. On a beautiful sunny October day, members of Speedside and Barrie Hill gathered after the joint service to rededicate the manse, built in 1960, and to celebrate the nearly two years of renovations and upgrades, much of which were undertaken by the volunteers from both communities of faith.

The dedication service was led by Rev. Kevin Steeper and representatives of the Boards of Trustees of Speedside and Barrie Hill. Following the dedication we enjoyed a tour of the home and refreshments on the backyard patio. Bless this house!



Dedication of the Eramosa Pastoral Charge manse, October 26, 2025

Rev Kevin Steeper, Lynn Parkinson, Susan Dunlop and Pam Pletsch



# ERAMOSA PASTORAL CHARGE

Refreshments in the manse backyard on Dedication Day.



## **EPC Manse Fundraising Campaign: We Made It!**

The Manse Fundraising Campaign was instigated to oversee the donations to Eramosa Pastoral Charge for the manse renovations and upgrades, begun in January 2024 and completed at the end of 2025. The target was \$50,000 and, thanks to the generosity of Speedside and Barrie Hill members and the wider community, this target has been reached.

With the capital raised, we have been able to pay all expenses for manse renovations and will be able to return the full \$32,238 that was initially advanced by the Speedside and Barrie Hill Boards.

Your support for the campaign was amazing and genuinely appreciated.

Our sincere thanks,

Alex Gilchrist, Morris Lavigne, Susan Dunlop  
EPC Manse Fundraising Campaign Committee

# Eramosa Pastoral Charge



Last Fall when the Ecumenical students at the University of Guelph were starting into midterm season, a little break with some good food was most welcome. Special thanks to Ted Kent for delivering the crockpots and to those folks for coming through on such short notice. It was a real blessing to the students. *Andrew Hyde*

**EPC Pastoral Charge Mission & Outreach Team.**



**Communion** will be offered at both churches on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

All are welcome!



## MID DAY MUSIC AT MELVILLE

Presented and performed by pianist and singer **BRAD HALLS** on Wednesdays. Each concert is held at Melville United Church in Fergus beginning at 12 noon and continues until about 1:00 p.m.

*All are welcome.*



## ERAMOSA PASTORAL CHARGE



**Helen Scott (Gordon) Cleghorn** passed peacefully after a long illness on December 22, 2025. A service of remembrance was held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kitchener on Saturday January 3, 2026. Internment of ashes will be in warmer weather at Johnston Cemetery Eramosa.

Helen was the last surviving member of the family of Charles and Margaret Gordon. Sister of Edward, Walter and Janet. She is survived by husband Alan Cleghorn, 3 daughters and their husbands, and five grown grandchildren.

### Great Truths About Life That Little Children Have Learned

1. When your mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
2. You can't trust a dog to watch your food.
3. Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic Tac.
4. You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
5. Don't wear polka dot underwear under white shorts.

### Great Truths About Life That Adults Have Learned

1. Families are like fudge....mostly sweet with a few nuts.
2. Growing old is mandatory. Growing up is optional.
3. If you can remain calm, you don't have all the facts.
4. One reason to smile is that every seven minutes of every day, someone in an aerobics class pulls a hamstring.
5. God put me on earth to accomplish a certain number of things. Right now I am so far behind, I will live forever.

Submitted by Doris Carney

# Eramosa Pastoral Charge

## Agricultural Anecdote from Farmer Tim

### Farm Feelings

There's a special kind of feeling that comes from living this life - one that words can never quite capture. As I milked my cows tonight with the cold winter rain coming down outside, I tried to put that feeling into words.....

It's standing in the same field where I once dropped a single seed into the soil, watching it grow strong under the sun, fighting through drought, frost, wind and rain to finally mature into a crop ready for harvest. It's the quiet satisfaction that only comes from knowing you helped life happen.

It's the middle of the night in the barn, kneeling beside a cow as she brings a newborn calf into the world. Your day was long and exhausting, but you had a heart full of gratitude when you saw that little one take it's first breath and wobble to it's feet.

It's the smell of fresh-cut hay drying under perfect skies after weeks of waiting and worrying. It's the rush of relief when the last load of grain beats the rain home.

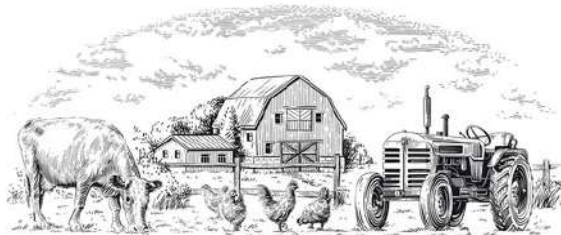
It's the pride that fills your chest when a cow you raised from a baby, one you poured years of care and patience into, stands in the show ring and earns that red ribbon -not because of the prize, but because you know the story behind her.

And when winter settles over the farm, it's the deep peace of hearing the cows chew their cud in a warm barn while the wind howls outside. It's knowing they're safe, the harvest is in, and you've done your part for another season.

Farming isn't just work. It's a way of life, a test of faith, and a love story between people, animals and the land. There are days it breaks you and others that fill you right back up. But through it all, there's no place I'd rather be.

*Farmer Tim operates a family dairy farm near Rockwood Ontario and shares his stories on social media.*

Submitted by Lynn Parkinson



# News from *Speedside*.....

Artists Asake Gordon and Suzanne Oiumet Fernandez exhibited at a show in Kloepfer Gallery, Guelph last August. The painting on the wall directly behind them was done by Asake Gordon, and the others are by Fernandez.



By Asake Gordon

Marg Manderson & Gordon Burnett. Gordon, who's mom, Betty Burnett was Speedside Church organist a number of years ago. He was the guest soloist for the 180th church anniversary last Fall.

Irene Beitz had a hip replacement January 25. We wish her a speedy recovery.



## WITH DEEPEST *Sympathy*

Sympathies to Alleda Martin, Wendy, Judy, John, Martin and all of their families on the passing of Ronald Clair Martin on Dec. 31, 2025 at the age of 91. Ron was a long time Speedside member. He will be missed.

A celebration of Ron's life was held on Sat. Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> at Speedside United Church.



Speedside news...

## Trip to Egypt

Wendy & Neil Whittaker enjoyed the history experiences of Egypt in November 2025 with friends.



Speedside news...



Speedside United Church  
**Winter Music Show**

Sun. Feb. 15 at 2:00 p.m.

Featuring Luke Rogerson

Lead for Settlers Creek Band

All welcome.

*free will offering*

**Luke Rogerson** is from the Drayton area. He is the lead singer in Settlers Creek Band and has written several country/folk tunes that have garnered him a local following. Plan to come out to break up the winter.



Our **Christmas sing-along** was well attended last year, presented by **Gary Faris and the 25th Line Singers**. They will be back at Speedside to entertain on **December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026** so mark that one on your calendar. It's always a fun event to get the Christmas season revved up.

*a bit of fun*

- Take your age and multiply by 2
- Add 5
- Multiply by 50
- Subtract 365
- Add the loose change in your pocket under one dollar (0 if none)
- Add 115



The first 2 figures are your age and the last 2 are the change in your pocket.

**Speedside Members:**

We thank you for your continued monetary contributions. You may want to consider PAR (pre-authorized remittance) –if you are interested, email Glenda Rose at [gdrose0550@gmail.com](mailto:gdrose0550@gmail.com) or phone at 519-843-3425



# HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



The holiday is named after St. Valentine, a somewhat mysterious historical figure. Though there are several legends about him, one of the most popular theories is that he was a priest who officiated the weddings of soldiers in the third century A.D. During this time, Roman emperor Claudius II forbade young men from marrying, aiming to strengthen Rome's soldiers. Legend has it that Claudius figured out what St. Valentine was up to and put him to death, making the saint a martyr for love.



**Question:** Who are Cupid's parents, according to Roman mythology?

**Answer:** Venus and Mercury



**Question:** In what year were the sweetheart candy messages "Be Mine" and "Kiss Me" first rolled out?

**Answer:** 1902



**Question:** What country has a tradition in which women give men chocolate on Valentine's Day?

**Answer:** Japan

## Valentines Recipe

4 small kisses  
6 giant hugs  
1 cup of kindness  
3 cups of love  
5 tsp of happiness  
2+ caring hearts

© artsymomma.com

Mix together and  
spread the love

if we love  
one another,  
God lives in us,  
and his love  
is perfected  
in us.

1 JOHN 4:12



# News from *Barrie Hill*...



**The Annual Christmas Tea Fundraiser** was held at Barrie Hill on Sat. Nov. 22, 2025. A great afternoon of tea/fancy sandwiches/festive cookies & squares, music and fellowship.



*Left* - our fabulous tea maker Kelly Somerville.  
*Right* - Shirley McFarlane and Sandra Howatt.

Some of our talented kitchen workers left to right:

Olivia Guenther

Martha Amidon

Kris Guenther

Jane Shaw

Jean Van Wyck



## Barrie Hill news...

### Tea Attendees:

Lillian Ingram (right) and her twin sister Marian Ferguson.

Bonny Parkinson, Lynn Parkinson ...Lynns grandchildren Flora and Hazel Benham

Brad Halls provided festive background music on the piano for the afternoon.

Victoria and Shirley McFarlane

Bottom: Kris Guenther pouring tea for the guests.



**Barrie Hill news...**

**Tea Cont'd**

Thankful for the many beautiful gifts donated by our members and community businesses.



Olivia  
Guenther  
and Jean  
Van Wyck



Martha Amidon announcing the winners with Victoria McFarlane.

Barrie Hill news...



Lynn Parkinson with daughters Jill and Mary and some of Lynn's grandchildren.

Shirley McFarlane, Martha Amidon, Victoria McFarlane

Karen Smith and her sister.

Bonny Parkinson.



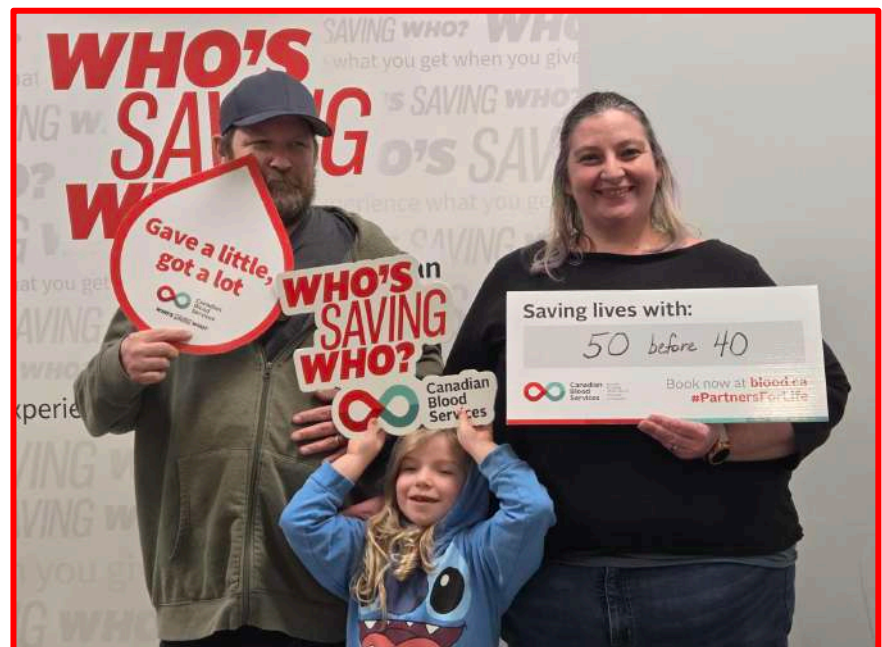
## Barrie Hill news...

We enjoyed some festive selections from the **Barrie Hill Band** during the December 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 Sunday morning service. Pictured from left to right are Susan Dunlop, Ross Ealey, Terry Knierim, Lynn Parkinson, Pat Weir, Barb Corbett and Mark Knierim.



Congratulations to **Alex and Linda Lush** on celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary October 30, 2025.

Shannon (Somerville) Barnes, daughter of Bill and Kelly Somerville has reached her milestone of donating blood. Her goal and saying was to have 50 donations before turning 40 and she accomplished that with 3 months to go. Pictured are Bill Barnes, Shannon and daughter Isobelle. Congratulations Shannon!



Barrie Hill news...



Bill Ingram celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with family at Barrie Hill Church in November 2025.

Congratulations Bill, on your milestone birthday!



Bill and Lillian Ingram



The 'Ingram Girls' making macaron cookies in the Barrie Hill Kitchen.

Lill with her daughters, daughters in law and granddaughters.

November 2025



## You can support Barrie Hill Financially

### We Offer 4 Ways

1. E-transfer is now available to those who have online banking. Send donation to barriehillfinance@gmail.com No password needed.

2. You can now donate through **Canada Helps**.

Canada Helps is a registered charity which will receive donations for any registered charity in Canada. You can use a credit card or Pay Pal and your donation will be forwarded directly to Barrie Hill bank account. A charitable tax receipt is sent immediately from Canada Helps.

3. PAR – Pre-authorized payment.

PAR donations are debited to your bank or credit card on the 20th of each month.

To sign up for monthly PAR or for more information contact Brenda Auger at 519-830-0496 or mbauger1950@gmail.com PAR can be cancelled at any time.

4. Cheque – no cash

Mail to Barrie Hill Church – 5702 County Road 29, Rockwood, NOB 2KO or Brenda Auger 7847 Mill Road, Guelph, N1H 6J1

**Thank you for your support**



**Each month we are collecting items for the Centre Wellington Food Bank.**

**February** – Canned meat – salmon, tuna, chicken, ham

**March** – canned soup

**April** – peanut butter or alternate butters

**May** – cold boxed cereals

*Drop off box in the foyer by the back door.*



## Barrie Hill news...



**All women** are welcome to attend our UCW (United Church Women) meetings at Barrie Hill Church. There is no membership fee. Come and enjoy our fellowship coffee hour and be a part of our faith community. Check the weekly bulletin for dates and times. Next meeting will be Sun. Feb. 8 at 9:30 a.m. in the Dryden Room.

### Meat Pies



The UCW catering committee is once again offering 5" beef and chicken meat pies/ \$7.00 each

**Saturday, March 28, 2026**

pick up at Barrie Hill Church 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

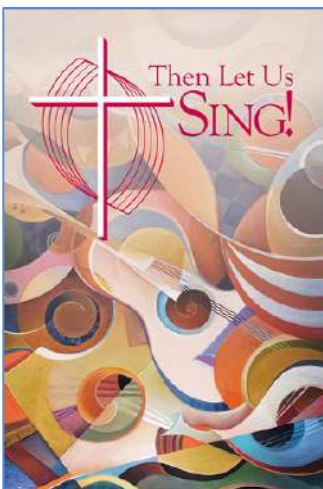
**Pre order only**

Contact Brenda Auger

Email [mbauger1950@gmail.com](mailto:mbauger1950@gmail.com)

cell 519-830-0496

**\*Order Early...Meat pies Sell Out Quickly**



***Then Let Us SING!*** is a new hymnal from The United Church of Canada.

It was released as part of the United Church's centennial celebrations in 2025.

" Singing our way into a second century of being United Church."

As a supplement hymn book it is intended to fill gaps in our current song book repertoire.

*The Barrie Hill UCW purchased 15 copies for the choir to add to their current United Church music.*



**UCW of Western Ontario Waterways**

Invites you to:

**“Walk With Me”**

**Tuesday February 10, 2026**

An ONLINE gathering

- 11:00 a.m. Link opens**
- 11:15 a.m. Gathering Music with Dan Van Winden**
- 11:30 a.m. Welcome – Anne Reuber**  
**Presentation by Rev. Kathy Douglas:**  
**“What’s a Region?”**
- 12:45 p.m. Lunch and chat with other women across Canada**
- 1:30 p.m. Gathering Music with Dan Van Winden**
- 1:45 p.m. Meet Women from four Regions**
- 2:30 p.m. Closing Worship led by Barbara DeJeet,**  
**President, National UCW**



Here is the link if you are interested in joining in on the online gathering:

**Zoom link: <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/81096309097>**

## The Blessed Baker's Corner...

### Valentine Sugar Cookies

Sweet buttery cookies to make for your family to enjoy!

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 cup butter softened  | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white sugar |
| 1 large egg            | 1 tbsp vanilla                |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt | 2 cups flour                  |



Beat all but flour in electric mixer till fluffy. Beat in flour. Refrigerate dough tightly wrapped in saran for an hour. Roll out dough to  $\frac{1}{4}$  " thickness. Cut shapes with cookie cutters. Place cookies  $\frac{1}{2}$  " apart on parchment paper lined cookie sheets. Decorate with sprinkles. *(or wait till cookies are baked and cooled then ice them and put sprinkles on the icing.)*

Bake at 325\* for 12-15 mins. or until edges just start to turn brown. Makes about 3 dozen 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  " hearts.

*If desired, dough can be colored with a few drops of red/pink food coloring before rolling out.*

