

# A Newsletter for the People of Parkwoods United Church

June 2025



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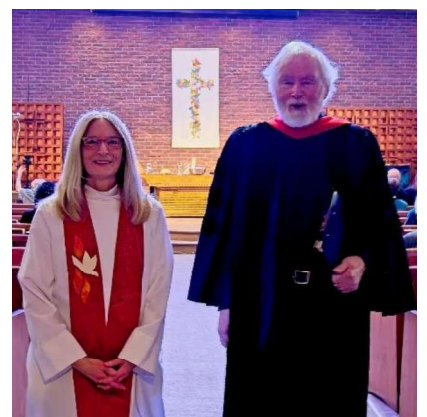
[www.parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca](http://www.parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca)

## **From the Minister's Desk . . .**

I'm sure I speak for many when I say "welcome spring!" The last few months have been event-filled, weather-filled, and I hope spiritually-fulfilling for our community at Parkwoods United Church. I continue to be inspired and energized by our community of faith—your commitment to reaching out in service to the wider community, your faith-filled attendance at worship (in-person and online), and your welcoming and kind giving of your hearts, skills, and gifts to help Parkwoods United Church sustain itself as a lamp to the world. I'm so grateful to be your minister and to along with all of you, experience the living Christ with and through our faith journey, in service, fellowship, and spiritual growth.

We had an interesting (cold and snow-filled) winter here in Toronto and an unprecedented storm in February required us to pivot quickly, cancelling in-person worship February 17<sup>th</sup> with over 50 people joining in by Zoom. After the decision was made, it was only a matter of hours to make the needed changes to the service to move on line. This is only one example of the dedication and skill our staff and worship volunteers bring every Sunday. A special thanks to our director of music Ingrid Ziegler and one of our A/V 'experts' Sharon McKenzie-Bone for their contributions to help 'pivot' our service. There were many meaningful services over the past few months in particular during Lent and Easter which included special services on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, a deeply meaningful Good Friday Service, and of course a joy-filled celebration on Easter Sunday! Every Sunday brings an opportunity for faith formation and renewal, followed by a wonderful time of fellowship put on by friendly hosts (with many thanks!). It's heartening to see new faces almost every Sunday and we extend a very warm welcome to everyone. Please stay for fellowship and say 'hello'—all are welcome!

One of the highlights of the past few months for me was my covenanting service February 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is such a special day for a minister and their congregation as we acknowledge and celebrate our new relationship in a special time of worship. I was honoured that my former minister The Rev. Dr. Malcolm Sinclair agreed to preach and I know that many in attendance were also thrilled to hear him. All aspects of the service, including the special presentation of symbols came together to help create a lasting, special memory, and wonderful beginning for us as family.





As a 'hard core summer person' I relish the longer, warmer days, beginning and ending with bird song that somehow no matter how busy the day, in my hearing it, manages to settle my mind and heart, plunging both into a sea of gratitude for the gifts of nature and life itself. The changing weather corresponds with the change in the church calendar and the season of Pentecost begins June 8: the day the Holy Spirit came over the disciples and believers fulfilling Jesus' promise that they would not be alone in their journey, but would be empowered to witness to Jesus the Christ. As you read this newsletter I hope that you will see the work of the Spirit at Parkwoods United Church; and may God's Spirit continue to fill our church, hearts, and minds, guiding our worship and service so that we may live out our faith in faithful witness to the risen Christ.

With rich blessings to you and your families for a wonderful summer,  
Rev. Liz Kiff

## **Chair of Council: Barb McDermott**

The theme of my report is simply an expression of GRATITUDE. The act of recording moments, things, people, events, ideas, and thoughts we are grateful for is a mindful practice whose benefits have been espoused for years. So, as Council Chair I wish to acknowledge our outstanding staff who work tirelessly and faithfully to 'build community' in this place.

In Rev. Liz we have been so fortunate to have found a minister who truly lives the scripture reflected through both her thoughts and her actions. Worship at Parkwoods can best be described as dynamic, relatable and steeped in meaning and purpose. Rev. Liz offers 'pearls of wisdom' 'prayerful reflections' and 'grace filled meditations' enabling all of us to better navigate the week ahead.

Music makes worship come alive! Thanks to Ingrid's efforts our senior choir has continued to grow in numbers over the winter and springtime. The choir is able to once again sing pieces arranged for 4-part harmonies (SATB). Listening to our children's choir sing during worship services continues to be an absolute JOY!

Susan Ryman our office administrator continues to go 'above and beyond' ensuring that the people of Parkwoods remain connected. Special thanks to Susan for creating the power point presentation for the AGM, updating our contact information lists, supporting our photo directory project, sourcing beautiful 'visuals' to enhance our 'slides' during worship and solving a mystery or two along the way. There never seems to be a dull moment and Susan is always ready and willing to embrace any challenge with a smile and a laugh.

Rod Murphy our property manager and custodian does much behind the scenes to ensure that the property of our church is kept in 'ship shape'. Thanks to Rod, Ingrid now has better lighting by the piano, our sanctuary lights have been restored, a new person to do our seasonal lawn care maintenance has been secured and our tenants continue to be happy with their contracts to name but a few.

I also wish to express my deep-seated gratitude to the members of the Parkwoods Council. As Chair of Council it is my continued privilege to provide leadership to such a dedicated group of individuals. Every Council member works tirelessly to better our church. Their innovative and imaginative 'out of the box' thinking truly makes Parkwoods a special place to gather and to worship. Effective churches focus on building 3 strong foundational pillars: service, social and spiritual. With tremendous humility, clarity of vision and immense courage each member of the Council are true leaders in their respective roles, who know the way, go the way and show the way.

It was gratifying to be able to finally fill the role of Growing In Fellowship in the person of Liz McMulkin. She has already brought much to this role, diving right in, spearheading the Photo Directory Project in honour of our 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Change is inevitable and when our Council needed someone to fill the role of Chair of Trustees Mary Kishi said a resounding ‘YES’. Grateful beyond measure. We are now in the process of exploring some creative and different ways of managing the “Chair of Finance” position. Gratitude is expressed especially to Ron Wigle who is taking the lead to discover new more efficient ways to handle our financials.

Some of these changes were precipitated by the need for Cam Ferguson to step down from positions held on Council vis a vis Finance and Trustees. He brought an infectious enthusiasm and passion to his work. Cam’s diligence, thoroughness, and forward- thinking mindset, have all contributed to building a vibrancy within our church family. His contributions and dedication to Parkwoods is laudable.

And special thanks are extended to Lynda McCowan who graciously assumed the role of Sunday School teacher for the winter/spring terms. Our Sunday School is expanding and it is thrilling to see so many children eager to learn more about God.

Finally not wishing to repeat what other members have already shared I will close with a few highlights I am truly grateful for:

- Regular Coffee time/Fellowship after church
- Monday morning conversations (Coffee Time with Rev. Liz)
- Wednesday evening Bible Study sessions with Rev. Liz
- A successful and informative AGM
- Card Party (making beautiful greeting cards)
- Theme based Luncheons
- Rev. Liz’s Covenanting Service
- 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations for the United Church of Canada
- IPC Church Photo Directory Project
- Honouring the children in our midst
- Offering a helping hand to congregants in need
- Food Bank donations/Blessing Bags for the unhoused
- Collecting school supplies (new summer project)
- A beautiful sanctuary
- Our audio/tech. team
- THE PEOPLE OF PARKWOODS

“Alone we can do but little: Together we can do so much.”  
(Helen Keller)

## **Growing in Faith (Worship) – Coordinator: Marg Crew**

As we move into the summer months, we look back at an encouraging beginning to 2025. In February, we had the covenanting service for Rev. Liz Kiff. It was well attended and very meaningful. The guest speaker was The Rev. Dr. Malcolm Sinclair who was a long-time minister at Metropolitan United Church. We also celebrated Black History month. On two occasions, we had guest ministers as pulpit supply. We were very happy to have two previous ministers of Parkwoods available to fill in: Rev. Vivian Yarwood and Rev. Dr. Ellen Redcliffe. It was great to see them both again!

Communion will be celebrated on June 15<sup>th</sup> and all are invited to attend. As in past years, during July and August, we will be worshipping downstairs in George Connolly Hall where it is air-conditioned. Please join us.

## **Christian Development**

Our minister has been conducting weekly Bible Studies on Zoom throughout the last few months, based on the previous Sunday's Bible scriptures.

## **Pastoral Care**

Our pastoral care team has worked hard over the last few months keeping track of the health and well-being of our congregation. This involves continually updating our church directory as new people come to our services. Please call the office if you have a concern.

**We look forward to seeing you in church!**

## **Growing in Service (Outreach) – Coordinator: Barb McDermott**

Your Growing in Service Team has been hard at work, reaching out with 'grace' to lend support and faithful assistance to both our congregants and members of our wider community. In January, we were elated to hear the good news that Alexis Welch and her 3 daughters Jineva, Jollicia and Jasmine had secured an apartment in the neighbourhood. Her family would be moving from the 'shelter' where they had been living since arriving in Toronto. In true Parkwoodsian fashion we sourced household furnishings, arranged delivery of these items, helped unpack and set up their belongings, filled their pantry with food etc. thus transforming an empty apartment into a cozy, welcoming home for a most deserving family. Everyone is thriving in their new space. Christianity in Action!

The end of January also saw us assembling 60 Blessing Bags for the unhoused abiding in downtown Toronto. The bags' contents were: a pair of socks, a hat, a pair of gloves, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, deodorant, lip balm, soap, Band-Aids, disposable masks, Kleenex, disposable wipes and some food stuffs. The 60 Blessing Bags were delivered to Street Health on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025. They were most grateful for our donations. As a welcomed addition, some winter coats were also donated by a member of our congregation.

April, coincided with the glorious celebration of Easter and seemed a most fitting time for Parkwoods to consider ‘putting food on the table’ for others. We held a very successful food drive. Our bins were overflowing with food stuffs helping to fill the shelves at ACSA (Agincourt Community Services Association) Dorset Community Hub Food Bank. As we were unloading our 2-brimming car loads, some 10 clients who rely on the food bank so their families can eat, were already waiting in the que. It was humbling indeed to witness this disparity and reinforced that when we share the ‘gifts’ we have the world becomes a better place.



Over this past winter and springtime our ‘team’ has listened with faithful hearts to peoples’ stories. Where we could we have lent our aid in concrete and tangible ways but also have offered a safe space where folks can truly be ‘heard’. Building COMMUNITY is one of the many strengths of Parkwoods UC. If we can but share a smile, lend a hand, revitalize hope we are well on our way to fulfilling our mission.

Immense gratitude is extended to the Parkwoods UC family who ever mindful of our ‘call’ to BE the ‘hands and feet of Christ’ are faithfully mending and healing a troubled world.

### **Music & Choir – Director: Ingrid Ziegler**

After a lovely Christmas Season celebrated with our newly arrived Minister, Rev. Liz, Parkwoods musicians took a well-deserved break for a week and resumed as usual early in January.

The Children’s Choir also resumed after performing in a service for the first time at Christmas. Though the choir is still small in number, the kids are singing beautifully and add so much to our services. Thank you to the kids, and also to their parents for supporting the choir.

So far, the Children’s Choir has been open to any who have been present on Sundays. I do think encouraging them to come to the old church hall after Sunday worship to sing is a good idea, however it causes some issues with performing in the service as this requires good knowledge of the songs. Since many of the children do attend Sundays more sporadically, they are not always prepared enough to really enjoy singing in the service. Therefore, as I don’t wish to limit attendance, all will still be welcome, but only those who are prepared with enough practice will be invited to sing during a Sunday service. I feel this will work well as a win/win situation for everyone.

The Senior choir is enjoying an upswing in membership, and we are pleased to have welcomed

several new members in the past while. We have had to adjust our music to accommodate a lack of tenor and bass voices for most of the past several years, and this has worked very well. Accolades go to the Soprano and Altos and our one Tenor voice, for the ability to adjust and compromise so the anthems still sound wonderful even without all voices present. I am happy to say that there are several new men's voices that have arrived with the new membership, and I know we are all looking forward to a fuller sound they will result in.

### **Growing in Fellowship – Coordinator: Liz McMulkin**

I am happy to report that most of the appointments for the picture taking for the updated church directory have been filled. We are well on the way to having the directory ready in time for the 65th anniversary of Parkwoods United Church in November of 2025. Thank you to Dolores Samuels and Jeanne McMulkin for helping on the 26th of May with greeting, filling out forms, and chatting to church members as they arrived to have their picture taken.

Sandra Martin has taken on the lead for the coffee hour. She has provided a sign-up list for volunteers to host after church on Sundays. Training provided! Thanks Sandra for all your hard work at keeping this important social program thriving.

We will also be looking to collect emergency contact names for members of the congregation. Should there be an emergency during the Sunday services or at another program, this information could be of the utmost importance. A sheet will be provided in the main lobby each Sunday morning for the next little while. Please make your contact person known.

I am looking forward to finding ways of welcoming new members and to continue to build a sense of community through fellowship activities. As I cannot do this alone I welcome ideas which I can present to Council at our monthly meetings. Please contact me with any of your suggestions.

### **ACTIVITIES & LUNCHESES**

#### **Cardmaking Workshop**

On March 26<sup>th</sup> we were fortunate to have Joan Silcox-Smith with us to instruct a group of nine ladies the art of making greeting cards. It was an enjoyable afternoon, making two Easter cards and two birthday cards, along with refreshments and lots of laughter!



## Free Exercise Classes

### **WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT BETTER LIVING HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES WILL BE PROVIDING **FREE** EXERCISE CLASSES TO HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY, ACTIVE AND INDEPENDENT!**

These OHIP covered exercise programs will help improve your fitness level, increase muscle strength and reduce the risk of falls. The variety of classes being offered within your facility will also focus on improving your overall functional performance through strength and balance exercises, with a goal of improving physical health.

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#### **WHERE**

83 Parkwoods Village Drive (The apartment building – York Mills entrance)

#### **WHEN**

Wednesday & Friday

10:30am (Gentle Fitness)

11:30am (Healthy Heart)

#### **GENTLE FITNESS – LOW INTENSITY**

Suggested for individuals who are new to structured exercise classes, use an assistive device and/or prefer to follow at a beginners pace

#### **HEALTHY HEART – MEDIUM INTENSITY**

Exercise class is geared towards building a strong foundation and improve balance, strength and confidence in everyday activities.

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*Please bring your health card to the 1st class to Register.  
Pre-registration required– Come out and get fit!*

**PARTICIPANTS MUST BE 65+**

1 Overland Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 2C3  
416-447-7244 x731  
[www.mybetterliving.ca](http://www.mybetterliving.ca)  
[srodriguez@betterlivinghealth.org](mailto:srodriguez@betterlivinghealth.org)

 **BetterLiving**  
Health and Community Services



## **Burundi Drummers**

Burundi Drummers is offering Free Drop-In Drumming Fridays 6:30-7:30 p.m. Classes will be held in the Basement Level of Parkwoods United Church. No previous experience needed. All persons aged 8 years and over are welcome. Call 647-225-4162 to reserve your drum for our next practice.



## **Medical Ministry International**

Please continue to bring in old eye glasses. Medical Ministry International's Optometry Department takes in donated eyeglasses and sends them with medical missions teams that go around the world. Donation glasses can be placed in the "GLASSES" box or in the glass dish labeled "used Glasses Medical Ministry Inter." Thank you!



## **Milk Bags to Mattresses**

Please continue to bring the colourful washed outer milk bags to Parkwoods to support the project at St. Gabriel's Parish where the milk bags are transformed into waterproof sleeping mats.



## **Monday Morning Coffee and Conversation with Rev. Liz Kiff**

You are warmly invited to meet Rev. Liz Kiff for coffee at Parkwoods United Church on Monday's at 10:30am. Rev. Liz Kiff is looking forward to meeting with you. All are welcome.

**How to contact Rev Liz Kiff:** email: [Parkwoodsuc@gmail.com](mailto:Parkwoodsuc@gmail.com)



### **Name Tags**

We are encouraging everyone to wear name tags as we welcome old and new friends to Parkwoods United Church. Name tags are placed in the wall cupboard outside the main sanctuary. If you do not have a name tag, please let the office know and we will do our best to have one ready for you the next time you come.



### **Audio/Visual Team Volunteers – the more the merrier**

Ken McKenzie or Sharon McKenzie-Bone are willing and ready to show you how the audio/visual system at Parkwoods works. Get an exclusive behind the scenes look at what is involved. Simply reach out to the office and get their contact details to learn more today!



# ***In Memoriam***



## ***Dilmohan Chandi Singh***

*A long-time active member of Parkwoods United Church  
Husband of Merle & father of Sean*

## ***Robert (Bob) Thompson***

*Member of Parkwoods & past member of St. John's United Church  
Husband of the late Eleanor*

## ***Robert (Bob) McBain***

*Long-time, active adherent of Parkwoods United Church*

## ***Brenda Whalen***

*A long-time active member of Parkwoods & wife of the late Harry*

## ***Rena Winter***

*A long-time active member of Parkwoods & wife of the late Wally*

## ***Charmaine Gilhooley***

*Member of Parkwoods & past member of St. John's United Church*

## ***Delroy Saster***

*Partner of Parkwoods member Pamela Senior*

## ***Barbara Johnson***

*Member of Parkwoods & past member of St. John's United Church  
Wife of the late Murray & mother of Ken*

## ***Nehemiah (Miah) (Leo) Bailey***

*A longtime active member of Parkwoods United Church  
& Brookbanks Non-Profit Homes Inc.*

***Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.***

# *Wedding Bells!*



*Shyam BK & Shara*  
*Married December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 in Nepal*  
*Congratulations!!*



# *Happy Birthday!*



*Betty Hart*  
*Celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025*



*Susan Ryman*  
*Celebrated her birthday on March 24, 2025*



*Louise (Lou) Betts*  
*Celebrated her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025*



**Thank you:**

Thank you to Hugh Ashton, Nancy-Jean Nickel, Lynda McCowan, Rev. Liz, Barb McDermott and Shyam for submitting photos.

Carol Gurd,  
Chair, Communications

**---- PLEASE JOIN US ----**

for our In-Person or ZOOM E-Worship service every Sunday at  
10:30 a.m.

Call the Church Office at 416-447-5519 or email to register for ZOOM worship.  
We look forward to seeing you in church!!

**E-mail information from the Office:**

If you are sending an e-mail to the church office and you require a prompt reply from Susan Ryman our Office Administrator, use the e-mail address [officeparkwoodsuc@gmail.com](mailto:officeparkwoodsuc@gmail.com) Susan receives these e-mails from anywhere she gets phone and internet access.

The other e-mail address that has been in use for years, [office@parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca](mailto:office@parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca) is only picked up on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Susan is in the office.

**Donations by E-transfer available:**

The address for donations by E-transfer is the following: [donation@parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca](mailto:donation@parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca)

In the transfer message, please indicate the intended purpose of the donation such as Local, Mission & Service or Special Appeal. For further information, contact Ron Wigle, Treasurer, through the church office. Thank you for your generous support!

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# Some Fun World Play 😊

Check out these hilarious and clever word re-arrangements. Scrabble lovers will surely love this!

## **PRESBYTERIAN:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**BEST IN PRAYER**

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## **ASTRONOMER:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**MOON STARER**

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## **THE EYES:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**THEY SEE**

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## **THE MORSE CODE:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**HERE COME DOTS**

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## **DORMITORY:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**DIRTY ROOM**

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## **SLOT MACHINES:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**CASH LOST IN ME**

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## **ELECTION RESULTS:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**LIES - LET'S RECOUNT**

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## **SNOOZE ALARMS:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**ALAS! NO MORE Z 'S**

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## **A DECIMAL POINT:**

When you rearrange the letters:

**I'M A DOT IN PLACE**

