

# A Newsletter for the People of Parkwoods United Church

March 2018



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## From the Pastor's Desk...

One of our Lenten hymns is titled: Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes. Its suggestion sounds so simple—Sunday to Wednesday. Yet it represents the journey of a year from Palm Sunday a year ago, through the joy of Easter, the enthusiasm of Pentecost, the anticipation found in Advent, the celebration of the birth of the Messiah and then, then we hit Ash Wednesday. Figuratively, we take the Palm branches from the previous year, burn them, and remembering our journey through that year mark our foreheads with a black cross. We carry the awareness of that cross throughout Lent knowing in our heart of hearts that once again we need renewal, once again we need re-birth, once again we need to hear the promise and experience of God's love. When that happens we call that glorious day Easter—and we are almost there...April 1st, 2018.

Our history as God's people is that we are people on a journey. Our faith life recycles just as the life of the environment recycles and the experience of human life recycles within that journey. What we learn along this journey is best expressed in our United Church Creed: We are not alone. We live in God's world.

I have been struck this year by the number of news stories which reference the considerably large number of people who are "lonely". As people spend more time with technology they have less time, and less inclination, to spend quality time with people. As people travel greater distances for employment, education, and even retirement, the natural groupings of family and friends become more fragile. Many people have even lost the skills necessary to take the initiative to address their loneliness. Symptomatic of all this, the United Kingdom recently established a cabinet position related to loneliness.

Loneliness may exist even within community but I have to think that much of the loneliness in our world exists because people simply do not have a community where they can feel at home, where they can share their hopes and dreams, perhaps even share their worst fears. Surely one such community that is defined by these very needs is the Church, that local community of faith which in our case is called Parkwoods.

Sometimes the journey from Sunday's Palms to Wednesday's Ashes may indeed be terribly lonely. All the more reason then for our community of faith to be an open and welcoming place where people, all God's people, may feel a sense of having met fellow travellers also on a journey. What joy that might bring to their lives. The same joy that we experience at Easter when we are dramatically reminded of the new life made possible through Jesus, our Christ.

A most blessed Easter,

Randy

## Council Co-Chair

It is a pleasure to be serving as the Senior Co-Chair of Council for the coming year. I look forward to sharing the Co-Chair responsibilities with Diane Sepa-Kishi. On behalf of the congregation, I would like to thank all the Council Committee Chairs who have agreed to continue in their capacities for another year. We welcome Norma Evans as Chair of Ministry and Personnel (M&P), replacing Jock Lumsdsen. Many thanks to Jock for the support he provided to the M&P Committee over the past year. I recognize and value the wisdom and support of Council and the congregation as we move into a new church year. The coming year will be an exciting one no doubt, full of opportunities and challenges. Our Syrian Refugee project is gaining some momentum and we look forward to welcoming a family to Canada. Fingers crossed it will be this year!

As the temperatures are getting warmer and the days are getting longer, we continue our individual and collective faith journeys as we move through the Lenten Season. Easter brings with it a sense of new growth and renewal, making it a truly wonderful time to be a part of the Parkwoods Community.

Please note the names of the Parkwoods Council for 2018 listed below. Additional volunteers are always welcome.

Easter Blessings,

Juanita Hogg-Devine,  
Senior Co-Chair

### 2018 Council Members

Senior Co-Chair	Juanita Hogg-Devine
Junior Co-Chair	Diane Sepa-Kishi
Minister	Rev. Dr. Randy Naylor
Voluntary Associate Ministers	Rev. Robert (Bob) Wright Rev. Dr. Ian Manson
Secretary	Tianna Forde
Treasurer	Ron Wigle
Christian Development	<b>Vacant</b>
Communications	Carol Gurd
Finance	Cam Ferguson
Membership	Carolyn Horton/Donna Leistner
M&P	Norma Evans
Mission & Services	Marilyn Manners
Outreach	John Horton
Pastoral Care	<b>Vacant</b>
Presbytery	Ron Wigle
Property	Cam Ferguson/David Gurd
UCW	Rita Kent
Trustees	David Griffin/Rev. Dr. Randy Naylor
Worship	Marg Crew

## Outreach

**The winter clothing drive for 40 Oaks (CDC)** yielded four crammed carloads of winter clothing for use by 'street folk' throughout the perishingly cold January nights with record lows. The generosity of the congregation was overwhelming. 40 Oaks is located in the Regent Park area -- Parliament and Gerrard. It is a new, modern, well-equipped facility that offers meals, accommodation, plus lounges and meeting rooms in addition to a clothing distribution area. They welcome volunteers, and also people who would like to visit their facility. Parkwoods supports 40 Oaks through the Linkert Memorial Fund.

**Milk-bags to Mattresses.** Our congregation's donations of their outer milk-bags are recycled in a very special way. The bags are cut into strips and crocheted into mattresses for children and their parents who are forced to sleep on the ground for want of beds, box springs and mattresses. The crocheted product is multi-coloured, durable and, most importantly, moisture proof. The bonus for donors is that you are recycling an otherwise useless throwaway for a great cause! Carol Gurd is our Co-ordinator and contact person who helps to facilitate overseas delivery.

**The Mitten Tree** was an attractive addition to the main hallway again this year. Rita Kent and friends decorate the tree with mittens, toques and scarves as ornaments. These are then given to the neighbouring schools in January to keep little hands warm at recess and replacements for losses to and from school. Rita is greeted most warmly by the school secretaries and school administrative staff who love our gifts for the children.

**Special Feature---****The Syrian Refugee Family**, now in Lebanon, and waiting for final clearance (we hope) to come to Canada, is the cause for making a special request of you. Please see the Special Feature on the Refugee Family in this Newsletter by Barbara McDermott, Chair of the Refugee Steering Committee who brings you the latest word on the progress of our Family's heartfelt attempt for asylum.

**The Young at Heart Social Club** is having a good year! Open to the community, it is a group of seniors who hold weekly meetings in the Parkwoods United Church hall on Fridays at noon. Bridge and Euchre are high on the agenda. From time to time they have catered events, and a spring and fall luncheon. Friday Sandwich lunches are part of the festivities. New members are always welcome. This year's President is John Logan. Secretary Treasurer is Garry Dusome who is also the contact person at 416-519-9281.

**Quilting and Crafting:** A very creative group that starts your week right is the 'Quilters and Crafters', from 9:30 to 11:30, on Mondays. A friendly social gathering, they make quilts and other crafts. If you have never quilted before, they suggest you come and give it try. Lots of help available if you want it. Lois Keir and Brenda McLeod are the contact people.

John Horton

## Refugee Sponsorship Project

We as a community of faith have agreed to sponsor Mohammad Al Khatib, his wife Shaimia and their two children Ghassan and Batool who fled from Homs Syria back in 2013 due to the political uprisings and civil war. They have been languishing ever since in Tripoli, Lebanon existing in what Mohammad refers to as a “warehouse for human life”. The family has been struggling to survive amidst these deplorable conditions. We are in regular email communication with Mohammad and he paints a bleak and somewhat disturbing picture of their life in this “refugee camp-like setting”. However, to his credit there are always expressions of gratitude for “us” and what we are doing and his eternal hope that soon his family can reside in Canada to lead safe and productive lives.

After some intervention and tenacity on our part the Al Khatib’s file is progressing well through the proper channels at the Canadian Embassy in Beirut. February 14th, 2018 saw Mohammad (our principal applicant) attending his second interview with Immigration and Citizenship officials. By all accounts things went very well indeed.

Immediately following this interview the family received information from the Government of Canada indicating that they are now eligible for some free pre-arrival services. Mohammad was also notified that he can initiate the medicals for all members of his family and submit this documentation to add to his file. One more “step” to be crossed off on the extensive checklist of requirements.

Based on these most recent developments we are confident that our family will arrive sometime during this calendar year. However, it could be in the not so distant future, possibly even as early as the spring.

In response the Refugee Committee is moving into “high gear”...actively exploring options for permanent housing in the vicinity of the Parkwoods community, scouting out the “best fit” for schooling for the children ages 10 and 8, and locating appropriate adult ESL programmes to name but a few.

Timing “housing” is most challenging. Securing too early, results in unnecessary expenditures and having to “house” them temporarily in a hotel setting or renting an Air B&B upon their arrival is less than ideal. To that end we are asking the congregation to consider if you or someone you might know would be interested in the possibility of providing temporary short term accommodation (financial reimbursement arranged by the Refugee Committee) for our family of 4 should the need arise. If this is an “outreach endeavour” that speaks to you we ask that you contact John Horton (416 449-1142), Barb McDermott (416 490-9022) or Glory Wigle (416 447-5519) at the church office to discuss the particulars. We thank you in advance for giving prayerful thought to our request.

We are in “good shape” with respect to the furnishings we have amassed thus far. Once we know the projected arrival date of our family we will launch a special appeal to “stock their shelves” and collect any outstanding items to make their home complete. We will also need to gather a crew of volunteers to do “set up” of course and the list goes on. There will be countless opportunities to become involved as time moves forward.

The success of this endeavour rests with all of us investing some of our time and sharing our God-given talents, fostering relationships of goodwill to the family we will welcome. On behalf of your Refugee Steering Committee we offer thanks in advance for what has been accomplished thus far and for all that will be done in the future.

Barb McDermott,  
Co-Chair of Refugee Steering Committee

## Communications

**Website:** In early February it was necessary to hire a new webmaster to look after the Parkwoods website. Jay Lumsden has been contracted to take on this task. He will be responsible for maintenance of the website and to keep the information current and up to date.

My thanks to Ryan Swedlo, for his work and dedication taking care of the Parkwoods website over the past two years. It was Ryan who designed our website and made the conversion to 'WordPress' software!

**Advertising:** Advertising has been placed in Don Mills Residents Inc. (DMRI) newsletters and on the North York Mirror website noting the availability of exercise classes, Art Classes, Christmas and Easter services plus any other special events.

**Newsletter:** If you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail, send your e-mail address to [dcgurd@rogers.com](mailto:dcgurd@rogers.com) It will help reduce printing costs and the photos are in colour for your added enjoyment!

**Scent-free Environment:** Just a reminder that Parkwoods is considered a 'scent-sensitive zone'. We ask that you do not wear scented products when attending any functions in the church building.

Carol Gurd



## Better Living Exercise Classes

There will be a break over Easter Holy Week.

**NO CLASSES MARCH 27TH OR MARCH 29TH  
CLASSES RESUME ON APRIL 3RD**

You are welcome to join anytime, Tuesdays and Thursdays

## Christian Development

Christian Development focuses on the development of and support of Christian and spiritual growth of the children and youth within the Parkwoods congregation. Sunday school activities will continue through the spring. Our goal is to provide a rich Christian development experience for the children who attend Sunday school.

While we are fortunate that our youth support the children in their Sunday school activities, we would like more volunteers to assist with baby-care and/or support the faith journey of our children. Please consider volunteering for a few weeks over the coming months. Mentoring and resources are available to assist you in this role.

Juanita Hogg-Devine



## Choir & Music

**CHOIR MEMBERSHIP:** Several new members have been gratefully welcomed by the Choir since the start of this year: Barb McDermott, Elizabeth Scarlett, Carol Jones and Liz McMulkin. We are so happy to have you with us to join in our beautiful choral presentations for Worship each Sunday. We would like to invite more Tenor and Bass voices to think about joining us as well and if you are so inclined please know you will be welcomed and appreciated. Please speak to myself (after any Service is a great time to do this) or any of the choir if you are interested in figuring out just how to join this fantastic group of people! Just a side note...I've heard our choir practice described quite a number of times as 'fun' as well as gratifying and spiritually uplifting.

**FALL EVENTS:** The main event in the Fall season was getting used to a new Music Director, well, that would be me... and I have had a great time getting used to Parkwoods as well. Secondly, we presented a full length Christmas Cantata during the Christmas Eve service and I am sure that God Himself and all the Angels too would agree that the choir, with the help of Guest Pianist Christian Golding, did a phenomenal job in marking this wonderful occasion.

### **EVENTS COMING UP:**

**EASTER WEEK:** Wonderful new as well as traditional choral and solo music is planned for the almost-up-on-us Easter Season. I have been asked if the famous Widor Toccata could be played on our organ, and it certainly can, so I am happy to present this as a Postlude for the Easter Sunday Service; time to dust off any remaining cobwebs in the organ pipes!

### **SATURDAY, APRIL 14 @ 7 PM in CONNOLLY HALL: "PARKWOODS GOT TALENT" NIGHT.**

Our annual fundraising event will be including a Community Talent Show, Silent Auction and of course Refreshments. Please let Marg Crew know if you would like to come and share any talent you have that you would like to present in the program. We would love to have a lot of variety and everyone is very welcome. Also, we are seeking donations of items or services for the Silent Auction; please let Lynda McCowan or Glory Wigle know if you have anything you can donate. All are invited and the theme is fun and fellowship!

### **SUNDAY, MAY 6 @ 10:30 AM: "PRAISE SERVICE"**

This week's Service will be a bit different, with my good friend and fabulous drummer, Rolf Fiesel, coming in with a drum kit to play percussion for us and we will be singing Contemporary Praise songs, some of which we have actually already presented during the regular Sunday services. It would be great to have some guitar (electric or acoustic) support as well and if anyone can help with this please contact me!

**SUNDAY, JUNE 24 @ 10:30 A.M.:** This is the last Sunday Service for the choir, before taking a well-deserved summer break. I will be looking for soloists etc. for the summer months and anyone who would like to offer a Gift of Music during July/August, please contact me anytime to make arrangements.

Ingrid Ziegler, Music Director





## Loaves and Fishes

The Loaves and Fishes had their luncheon in January. In February we had a break and a wonderful lunch was prepared by the Caribbean ladies of the church. There will be a lunch the last Sunday in March but not again until the end of September, as the church is being used for the Provincial elections.

Thank you for all your support.

Muriel Voskuil



## Art Class

The Art Class at Parkwoods continues to thrive, providing an opportunity for budding artists to discover skills they didn't know they had!

Instructor, Melinda Calway, a professional artist, teaches weekly water colour classes in the lower hall on Wednesday morning between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. This is an opportunity for creative expression, learning and relaxing fellowship with friends. The cost is \$60 for each 5 week session.

This program provides a meaningful and enjoyable outreach program for members of our congregation and the community. All are welcome, from beginners to advanced. Please join us! All are welcome!

Loreen Naylor



## *Remembrance Day*



In November we recognized our Parkwoods veterans at a special service of Remembrance:  
Jack Lumley, Lorne Van Vliet, Ken Foley, Betty Hart and Murray Cutler.

## *Thanksgiving*



Or abundance gathered to share with others

# New HVAC Units Arrive

On November 23, 2017, we **JOYFULLY** welcomed the arrival of three new heating and cooling units (HVAC)! Now we would have heat in the link portion of the church building.



# Parkwoods 57th Anniversary

On Sunday November 26th, Parkwoods United Church celebrated 57 years of faithful service in the community. After the worship service a congregational lunch was served by the Loaves and Fishes in Connolly Hall.



## United Church Women

Andrea Gunraj of Eva's Place was the guest speaker at the U.C.W.'s annual Christmas Candlelight Service. Her slide presentation of the operations and facilities provided for homeless youth was both interesting and very informative. At the end of the service candles were lit and everyone sang 'Silent Night'.

Once again the Mitten Tree was full to over-flowing with hats, mitts and scarves that were later distributed to three schools in the area.

Rita Kent  
UCW President





## Pancake Supper

Shrove Tuesday found men in the kitchen!!! Bob McBain and Jack Lumley, with assistance from the men in the congregation, organized prepared and served the delicious meal of pancakes, maple syrup, sausages, coffee, tea and juice. An estimated 80 happy customers were served. Special thanks go to a number of ladies who were a great help to us too!

As always, a good time was had by all!



## *Come and join us for Easter Worship*

<b>Sunday March 25th</b>	Palm Sunday	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Thursday March 29th</b>	Maundy Thursday Service & Communion	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Friday March 30th</b>	Good Friday	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Sunday April 1st</b>	Easter Sunday Service & Communion	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>

*Everyone is Welcome!*



### *Memorial Easter Flowers*

Parkwoods would like to have a floral display in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 1st. This offers an opportunity for members of the congregation to purchase an Easter plant – lily, tulip, daffodil or mum – which can be taken home following the Service. The cost of these plants is \$12.00 each.

For those of you who wish to have their plants given in memory of a loved one, a notice will be placed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. I will be taking orders for plants in the lobby following our worship services starting Sunday, March 11th and continuing until Palm Sunday, March 25th.

Mary Kishi

# **Save The Date**

These important dates need to be noted on your calendar  
so you won't miss out being with us.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 14TH @ 7:00 P.M.**

**“PARKWOODS GOT TALENT”**

**Join the Senior Choir in Connolly Hall for an evening of Fun & Fellowship!**

**TALENT SHOW - SILENT AUCTION - REFRESHMENTS**

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**SUNDAY, MAY 6TH @ 10:30 A.M.**

**“PRAISE WORSHIP”**

**(See Ingrid's Music Report for more details.)**

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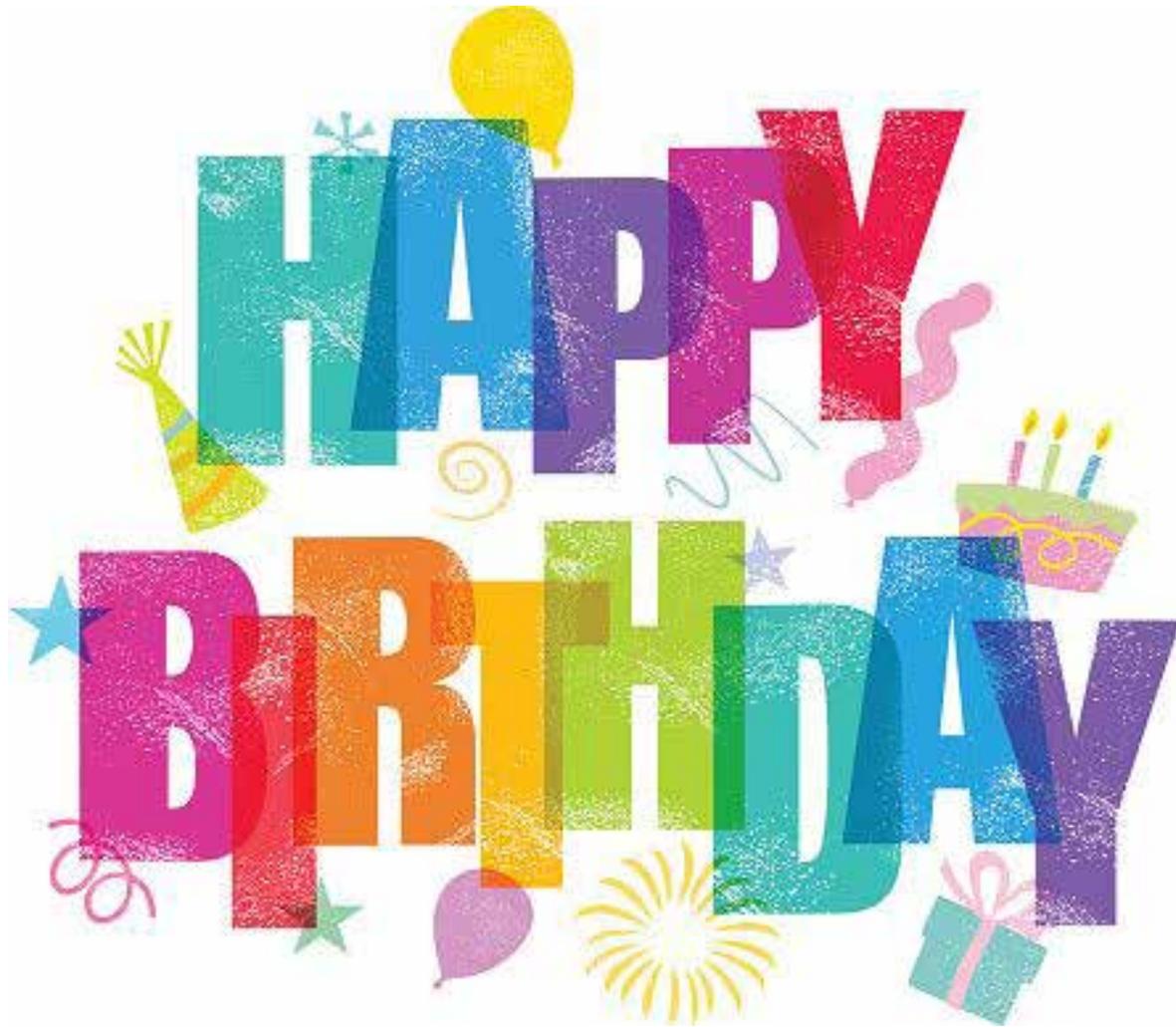
**SUNDAY, MAY 13TH @ 10:30 A.M.**

**“CHRISTIAN FAMILY SUNDAY  
& COMMUNION”**

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**SUNDAY, JUNE 24TH @ 10:30 A.M.**

**“COMMUNION SERVICE”**



**Congratulations to Jean Fraser  
who has celebrated her 105th Birthday!**



## **In Memoriam**

**Margaret Taylor**

A much loved longtime adherent and Newer member of Parkwoods

**Glynn Henry**

Longtime adherent of Parkwoods

**Dorothy Goyette**

Longtime member of Parkwoods

**Rita Crowther**

Longtime member of Parkwoods

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

