

Job Description for Parkdale United Church's Music and Worship Arts Director

Summary

The Music and Worship Arts Director ("Director") is the overall director for Parkdale's Worship Arts program, consisting of music, dance and other creative arts offered in worship (see <https://parkdaleunitedchurch.ca/worship/>). The Director is an important member of a team ministry that includes the Coordinating Minister, the Minister of Pastoral Care, the Congregational Designated Minister for Youth & Families. He/she works with the ministers, volunteer & contracted worship arts leaders, and others to ensure excellence in artistic leadership for all worship services, weddings, funerals, and special events. The Director assists every member of the congregation in presenting an offering of praise, and provides training and fellowship for those who dedicate their time, talents, and service to the church's worship arts program. The Director is an accomplished musician and leads the congregation's singers and singing ensembles. Our Director is an experienced worship leader with a sense of humour, a can-do attitude, and enthusiasm for a diverse worship arts ministry at Parkdale United Church.

Parkdale's congregation

Parkdale United Church (<https://parkdaleunitedchurch.ca/>) is a diverse community, with a mix of longstanding members and newcomers, families of all sizes and ages and from a variety of cultural backgrounds, with a broad range of worship arts needs and interests. We strive to minister effectively and sensitively to all in our congregation and the community. A variety of genres is encouraged to appeal to the broad range of tastes and theological perspectives in the congregation. We are particularly interested in strengthening the worship arts program in a way that ministers to the needs and provides opportunities for our children and youth.

The role that art plays in the life of the church

Since its very inception in 1931, the congregation of Parkdale has expressed its love of God through music. Music has been an offering of praise and is an integral part of Sunday morning worship services and special services for seniors and others. Music at Parkdale welcomes people into our community and draws them into worship experiences: from contemplative to contemporary to traditional. Currently, Parkdale has a more traditional SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor & Bass) choir, a junior choir, and a contemporary praise music group named Dalesong which includes both singers and band musicians.

In addition to music, worship arts at Parkdale include a liturgical dance group, Moving in Spirit, and dramatic contributions, particularly from our children and youth members.

Because of the abundant gifts at Parkdale, new worship arts opportunities often materialize. The Director will be attentive to and steward these opportunities so that they may enrich our worship.

The team player model

The Director works creatively and closely with the ministers to coordinate all aspects of worship arts at Parkdale. The Director shares the vision of the place of worship arts, and particularly music, within the church and its importance for the congregation, and offers leadership in expanding and enhancing its significance.

The preaching minister of the week has primary responsibility for hymn selection with the support of the Director.

At Parkdale volunteers contribute significantly to worship arts: as choral/ensemble singers, soloists, instrumental musicians, liturgical dancers, and dramatic & tableaux presenters, as well as leading pre-church hymn singing, writing scripts, maintaining the music library. The Director acts as an overall director and point-of-contact for worship arts, and is responsible for leading, or ensuring that there is strong leadership for all three of the singing ensembles (senior choir, children's choir, Dalesong).

The Director is accountable to the Church Council through the Worship Committee and the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

Relationships beyond our congregation

Parkdale has several important relationships with outside music groups. The Parkdale Orchestra (<https://www.parkdaleorchestra.ca/>), which was established in 1945 by Parkdale's then organist and choir director, continues to call our church its home for rehearsals and concerts, and plays for two Sunday worship services each year. Solo musicians or small ensembles from the orchestra have also occasionally played during worship, either alone or together with Parkdale's senior choir. The Orchestra consists of approximately 60 amateur musicians from the community and has its own Conductor and executive committee.

For many years Montreal's Imani Gospel Singers (<http://www.imanigospelsingers.com/>) have been our guests and musical leaders for Parkdale's annual Martin Luther King Junior service in January. In addition, in 2018 and 2019, Parkdale offered a gospel singing workshop led by the director of the Imani Gospel Singers.

Over the years, other outside groups have also contributed to our worship, including community music groups and musicians and choirs from other churches.

The Director manages our existing relationships with outside musical groups, coordinates their participation, and explores ways that other groups may be invited to join our worship.

Our musical resources

Our hymns are selected primarily from the Voices United hymnbook. We have a library of choral sheet music and contemporary Christian music, and we have music licenses (including streaming licenses) from OneLicense and CCLI.

Instruments available to the Director include:

- A recently rebuilt Rodgers hybrid organ which consists of a combination of pipes and electronics including 3 manuals on the rebuilt Rodgers console, 75 stops, 800 pipes and a number of speakers and power amplifiers, all controlled by an Opus-Two control system and Hauptwerk software running on a dedicated computer system.
- Yamaha C7 Concert Grand Piano
- Yamaha P-115 Electric Piano
- Roland keyboard

In addition we have a set of hand chimes, four other pianos, a professional sound system, and video streaming and projection systems.

The range of responsibilities of the Director

Overarching

- planning, leading, and growing the worship arts ministry for the church, working closely with the ministry team, in ways that enhance worship and build Christian fellowship through the arts

- pro-actively seeking and stewarding opportunities to broaden the depth and scope of the worship arts program, with a focus on multi-generational and youth engagement
- supporting musical aspects and needs of the Sunday School program
- acting as the main point-of-contact for worship arts at Parkdale
- playing or ensuring that there is excellent and inspiring music for all worship services
- leading and directing, or ensuring that there is quality leadership for all three of the current singing ensembles (senior choir, children's choir, Dalesong)
- work to incorporate use of a broad range of instruments in the worship services (e.g. guitar, drums, horn, violin, chimes/bells, ugly sticks!)
- identifying creative gifts of members of the congregation and encouraging them to offer these gifts in worship and for the life of the church (by joining existing groups or otherwise)
- managing Parkdale's relationships with outside musical groups, coordinating their participation, and exploring ways that other arts groups may be invited to join our worship

Weekly (Sept-June)

- attend weekly staff meetings
- assist ministry team in the selection of liturgically appropriate hymns, and, in consultation with ministry team, research and select other appropriate music (e.g. anthems) for worship services; look up and provide copyright attributions for weekly bulletin and report copyright license usage
- provide musical leadership for congregation, singers and musicians during worship services, and either accompanying or ensuring that there is accompaniment on the organ and/or piano
- coordinate weekly participation in worship of choirs, small ensembles and soloists according to needs and resources available
- prepare selected music in readiness to teach to singing ensembles for rehearsal
- arrange and lead, or ensure that there is leadership for (both musical and spiritual, e.g. leading prayer at the beginning of rehearsals), singing ensemble rehearsals (traditionally Thursday evenings) and development of singers' individual and group vocal skills

As Needed/Occasional

- attend Worship Committee meetings
- provide support for the Moving in Spirit liturgical dance group and other worship arts endeavours, such as drama
- provide musical instruction (choral singing techniques, music reading) as needed and according to interest
- create and make audio recordings to support singing ensembles and congregation members involved in the worship arts program
- coordinate special musical/creative events on a regular basis, e.g., Advent, Christmas, Easter and Anniversary Sunday services, workshops, hymn sings, joint services with other local churches
- oversee the condition and maintenance of instruments, including organ, all pianos, hand chimes, keyboards etc.
- provide music for weddings and funerals, or make arrangements for supply musicians (on a fee-for-service basis)

- provide guidance in the preparation of the annual music budget and select, acquire, organize and maintain musical supplies and hire occasional paid musicians, as required, within the budget

The professional competencies of the ideal candidate

- Ability to play organ and piano, with proficiency in at least one, and ability to play and conduct different types of music (traditional choral to contemporary praise)
- Experience in the following areas:
 - management, leadership and/or teaching
 - choir training and choral conducting
 - providing music in a church/liturgical context
 - planning and/or providing fun youth programming
- Knowledge and familiarity with United Church, Christian and children's music, liturgy and resources
- Understanding of licensing and copyright requirements, competence with OneLicense and CCLI reporting (or willingness to learn)
- Competence with office and communication technology (email, file sharing, virtual meetings)

The personal competencies and characteristics of the ideal candidate

- An energetic and inspirational leader
- Enjoys working with children and skilled at connecting with children
- Enthusiasm for musical genres and programming that are children- and youth-friendly
- Interpersonal, teamwork and collaboration skills
- Problem-solving, decision-making, planning, organization, and communication (verbal and written) skills
- Motivated and flexible
- Ability to motivate musicians at all levels of proficiency
- Ability to encourage and develop the creative gifts, talents, and abilities of volunteers to enhance worship
- Commitment to building inclusivity and diversity, and to lifelong learning
- Comfort working in a Christian faith-based church context

Working Conditions

Hours: This position is expected to require between 15 and 20 hours per week, concentrated between September to June.

Salary range: Commensurate with professional competencies and experience.

Other opportunities:

- Teaching privileges – arrangements for available times to be negotiated
- Recitals
- Office space is provided