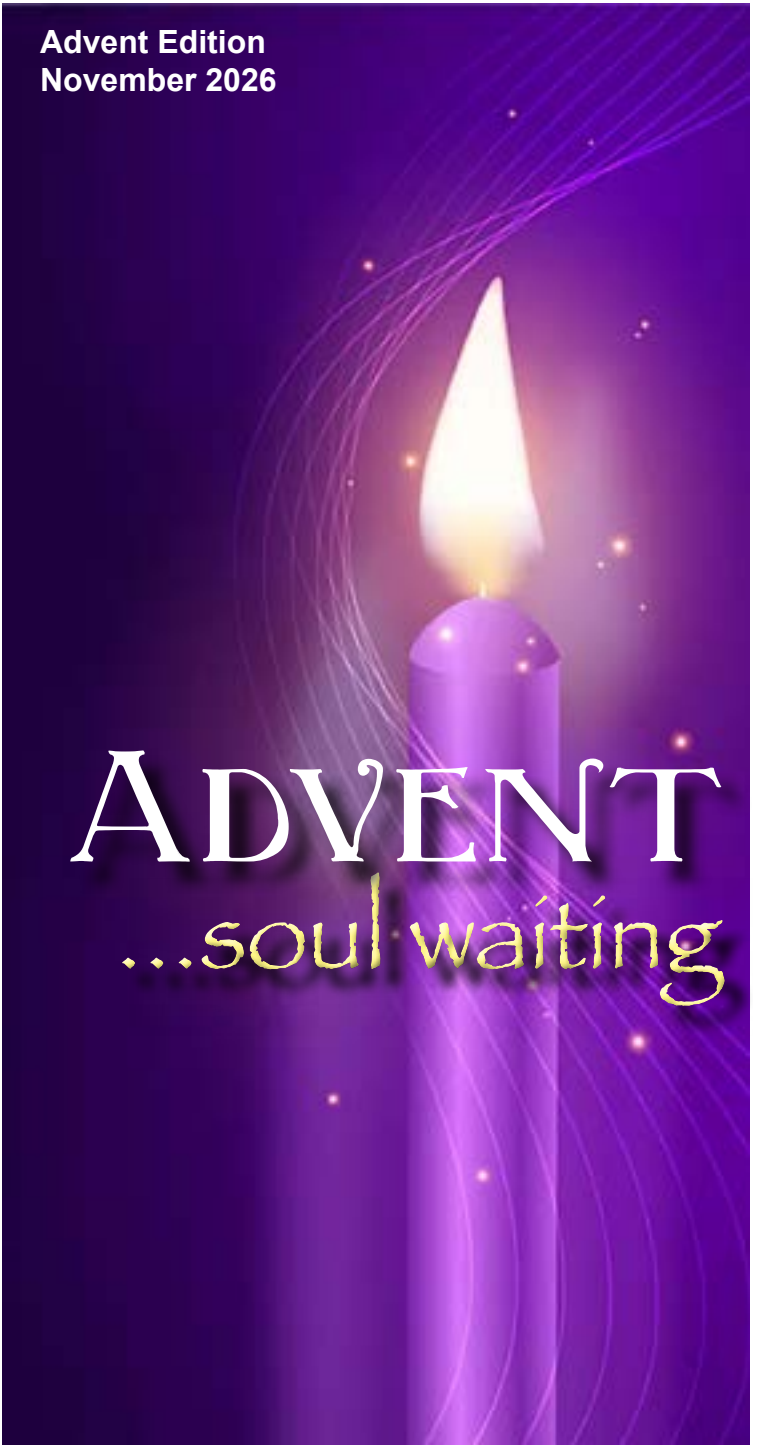
THE MISSENGER

Advent Edition
November 2026



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IMPORTANT: When submitting photos to the Messenger, please ensure you have asked permission of the individuals if their faces are clearly recognizable. They should know that an electronic PDF version of the Messenger is posted to the Parkdale website. See: http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/connections/photos/permissions

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Deadline for the next issue is January 18, 2027

Notes From Council

As we get ready to journey toward Advent this year we reflect on the concepts of "preparing" and "waiting".

Last year at this time we were all preparing and waiting for Rev. Bob to begin his ministry with us at Parkdale. He began on December 1st of last year….and what a year it has been! We are grateful for Rev. Bob's dedication to the life of our congregation and to the community beyond our four walls at the corner of Parkdale and Gladstone.

Under Rev. Bob's leadership we have undertaken a Strategic Planning process, entered into an agreement with Dominion Chalmers United Church to share a Supervised Ministry Education (SME) position, continued our In From the Cold (IFTC) ministry, and enjoyed worship services that are scripture-based and full of challenges to live as Christians beyond Sunday mornings. The focus on "Come, Grow, Serve" is setting us up to do great things as we discern where God is calling Parkdale to be in the community and in the world.

One of the vehicles guiding Council is our recent Strategic Plan. We received Rev. Darren Roorda's plan at the end of the summer and we have been working diligently to form a concrete Action Plan from his document. He provided a comprehensive tally of where we are and, thanks to your input, where we might be heading. As you can appreciate, we can't undertake dozens of projects at the same time. With that in mind, Council has been continuing Rev. Roorda's work by identifying a few top priorities. Our current task is creating a timeline for these projects, assigning leadership to oversee them, and developing indicators that will allow us to measure our success.

If you refer back to the beginning of this message, this is where the "preparing and waiting" come in. While we put the final preparations into our Strat Pan document, we are asking for your continued patience (or waiting). We are anxious to share the plan with you and want to do so very soon. It deserves more than a quick scan so we are hoping to organize a "Lunch & Learn" to provide you with details.

I, for one, am excited about the future at Parkdale and I am beyond blessed to be accompanied by dedicated Council members – my thanks to each of them.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Harrison, *Chair of Council*

ADVENT: Soul Waiting

Psalm 130:5 - *"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His Word I hope."*

Advent 2026 is very different from last year. That sounds obvious. Of course it is different this year from last year. Each of us is different. The world is different. How could our waiting, our Advent, be the same? And yet…

November 23, 2025, was my last Sunday in Prince George. The next day literally began an Advent journey across the country. It was filled with awe and wonder and a fair share of speculation and trepidation. Yes, we'd made the journey before. Several times, in fact. Yes, we'd been to Ottawa and bought a house that we hoped would become a home. Yes, we'd met some of the incredible members of Parkdale United and the staff team, yet we were still waiting. Waiting to see how things would turn out. Waiting to see what new relationships would form. Waiting to see how we'd fit in. Waiting to see if there would be room for us to share our gifts. Waiting. Waiting. Waiting. Now it is almost a year later. A new season of waiting and preparing is upon us once again.

Seasons of waiting never stop. I've often felt that just as one season of waiting comes to an end, two more start. Waiting is part of life. I know that. Our son, who is a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, regularly reminds me of the army's motto: "Hurry up and wait!" I've often chided him that it was the church's motto first. Yet I also think there is something different about the kind of waiting the psalmist is talking about. Waiting for a parking space, or finding out what kind of neighbours you'll have, or if your partner will like the new colour you painted the wall while they were away, isn't really soul-level waiting. Waiting to see how people will respond to changes you're proposing, or if an email gets the response you'd hoped for, or if it's a dry or snowy winter, isn't really soul-level waiting.

Advent, it seems to me, affords us a chance to get reacquainted with soul waiting, that deep experience of waiting for institutional and systemic

change. The real waiting that seeks to bear witness to the intersectional transformation of our realities and perhaps the inbreaking of the kindom in ways that affirm our belonging, inclusion, and participation in the reign of God as beloved children of God. That's part of the richness of the Hebrew word קָוָה (quavah). Quavah implies a degree of active expectation, a hope rooted in the Holy, and the possibility of binding oneself together with God so that we can co-participate with God in the new creation that is unfolding in our midst. Quavah is the stuff of discernment. It is deeply rooted in a forward-leaning, expectant waiting. Now that's some soul-level waiting. Notice also that waiting and hope, as with the psalmist's words, are closely connected. In waiting, there is hope, and in hope, there is waiting. This kind of waiting is definitely the stuff of the soul. It is hard. It is tiresome. It is not for the faint of heart or those who seek an easy and simple answer. It is also the kind of waiting that knows when to shift from anticipation to action.

Jan Richardson, in their work "While You Are Waiting," notes, "It's important to remember that there is holy waiting—patience that draws us deeper into the heart and the designs of God. And there is waiting that is something other than holy—those occasions when our waiting actually is resistance to taking a necessary action." For me, this distinction is quite profound. It is a balancing act. Spending time tending to the work of the soul while also knowing when it is time to shift from discernment to action. One of the things that Richardson helpfully points out is that we all too often confuse the two. Holy waiting can become a way of resisting and then eventually procrastinating the action we most often know is needed. We use all kinds of phrases: "there hasn't been enough consultation," "we need more data," "we can't afford it," "people will be upset," "we've never done that before," "we place a higher value on relationships"; the list could go on and on. Richardson reminds us that there are times when waiting can be manipulated into becoming the destination, or at least the holding pattern that prevents meaningful action. That isn't Advent waiting. That isn't soul-waiting. It definitely isn't quavah. And right there, that's why I think our culture has such a hard time with waiting.

We have developed a culture of instant gratification and a consumerist model that caters to the individual's whims, while also turning the spiritual discipline of waiting into a tool to manipulate and control systems, which in turn solidifies our cultural disdain for waiting in the first place because I

shouldn't have to wait. It's circular and it's soul numbing until we reach the place of indifferent capitulation. But there is a remedy to our societal apathy: hope.

I don't think it's a fluke that our spiritual ancestors rooted this season of waiting, this Advent, around the spiritual practices of hope, peace, joy, and love. For me, these aren't just themes. That makes them too small. They are spiritual practices for how and why we wait. They are ways we embody an attitude of quavah. They are the lenses that help us see what God is doing in our midst and the practices that help us shift from waiting into action. Wait. See. Act. Wait with an expectant and forward leaning soul that God will show us what hope, peace, joy, and love can look like. See with a soul observant enough to recognize God's ongoing engagement with creation. Act so that we too can embody what hope, peace, joy, and love can look like when faithful disciples shake free of their resistance to action.

My friends, there is still much waiting to be done, yet there is also much action to begin. I hope this Advent and Christmas season brings you time to engage the four spiritual disciplines with an attitude of quavah and the courage to shift from waiting to action.

Rev. Bob





Embrace the Waiting

A word for the Parents.

I didn't know about Advent as a kid. I grew up in a reformed church in Syria which had nothing on its walls except a big cross in the front of the church. This was the focal point. No stained glass, no artwork, no banners. Church seasons, including Advent, were not part of the liturgy. Nevertheless, I understood the anticipation for Christmas to arrive. Whether I was looking forward to the Christmas break, Christmas pageants, Christmas Choir, the arrival of Santa, or just the time to celebrate the birth of Jesus with my church family on Christmas Eve, I was intimately familiar with the anticipation that is being-a-kid-in-the-month-of-December.

I learned about the calendar of the church year at seminary. I attended an ecumenical seminary where I was introduced to different types of worship styles and liturgies. I learned how the church takes the seasons of the year and connects them to the seasons of Christ's life, and found that to be a powerfully profound tool of faith formation. It meets a primordial need in us to connect the profane and the sacred especially when it comes to the Incarnation. The theological meaning behind the preparation for the Christmas celebration through Advent taught me the value of embracing our humanity, even the waiting.

Waiting is a lost value in our times. We want everything fast and everything now. Parents know this very well as we run around playing a catch-up game with time. Yet we come to church and every time we celebrate communion we proclaim with anticipation: "Christ Will Come Again". Every time we proclaim it, we say it almost with defiance: "It has been long, but Christ WILL come again.", and we also say it with expectancy and with hope.

This is not just a permanent statement in the communion liturgy that conveys the futuristic hope, it is a fundamental believe behind the whole celebration of Advent too.

As my children grew up and studied the stories of the bible at Sunday school, they began to realize how long it has been since our Lord's Ascension. They asked me, "when will Jesus come again?', and I found that directing them to the other anticipation inherent in the season of Advent gave the perfect answer.

We know Christ will come again, not only because we are people of the resurrection hope, but also because we have seen and continue to see signs of hope, peace, joy and love all around us as we embrace the waiting.

Which is why I want to whisper this word into our young families' ear

about Advent: Embrace this time of waiting during Advent.

The Advent wreath, which marks the weeks of waiting, is the perfect way to help us visualize that seemingly endless wait of the weeks leading up to Christmas. It calls us to slow down and cherish the march of time, which nowadays seems faster than ever, and lean into the waiting.

I encourage you to build your own family's advent wreath. As you take branches, berries, pinecones and candles to decorate the wreath in a way that is unique and is your own family's wreath version, you will feel the importance of the fact that God took on flesh. God who made creation, heard the cries of the people over generations, and joined it in order to redeem it, is a God who cares. As you build the wreath and get your hands sticky whether with glue or with sap, you are reminded that the Incarnation itself is God's willingness to go down to the dirt and get messy with us. As you water the wreath to help the greenery make it all the way to Christmas, you are reminded of the many ways God has provided for us. When you light the candles as a family each week, you will be reminded of "The Light of Christ" that shines in the darkness.

In a world that yearns for salvation, waiting and expecting is what our children need. May you embrace the holy waiting this advent.

1. Global partners' visits:
On World Communion Sunday, we were honoured to welcome Mr. Mervin Toquero, longtime peace and human rights advocate from the Philippines and the Deputy General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, and on 27th of October 2026, Parkdale United Church's IGNITE young adult group hosted a dinner discussion with Fidelia Munyoki and Phyllis Kamau of the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK). Fidelia and Phyllis, both directors with the NCCK's food and agricultural development program, were visiting Canada at the invitation of the UCC in cooperation with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.





















2. Our celebration of the Reformation Sunday *included a decorated door of the Church of Martin Luther in Wittenberg where we learned about the 5 Solas of the Reformation.*



3. The Kids' Church:
At Kids' Church on Nov. 7, we planted garlic in the Parkdale Garden. We thank Ray for his help and hope that the garlic bulbs will bloom in the spring, and we will be able to enjoy them and share with our friends in the food bank.





4. Halloween Party:
On Oct. 30, Youth and Young families and friends from the community enjoyed a lovely time at Halloween carving and painting pumpkins, dancing, eating, playing games, and doing crafts. Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who made it happen. It was spooooooky fun!




















CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE
Dec.6th | 2pm
Join us in the chapel for a quiet moment of reflection and worship with a reception following



From The Student Minister's Desk

Julee Pauling, Ministry Candidate - Cooperative (SME) Ministries, Parkdale and Dominion-Chalmers United Churches

Greetings, from the latest new member of the ministry team here at Parkdale United Church!

Many of you know me as another regular member of this thriving community of faith, and some of you are starting to make the connection between that person you saw around the church and the new Student Minister.

This two-year SME appointment ("SME" stands for "Supervised Ministry Experience") fulfills the final major formational step in the Candidacy Pathway for UCC Candidates for Ordered Ministry. Mine is a half-time assignment, shared between Parkdale and Dominion-Chalmers United Churches, and is purposed to assess a new Collaborative Ministry Model. It has been funded by the General Council.

My role here at Parkdale therefore is to discern, explore, and develop collaborative ministry opportunities between Parkdale and Dominion-Chalmers United Churches by working to "design, implement, and support a Community Care Group model so that both congregations can collaborate in providing pastoral care to everyone connected with DCUC and PUC."



What that means is that you will start to see me participating in worship, attending PUC council and committee meetings, meeting with both staff and lay leaders of the community, and making connections to existing groups. I will also be offering and facilitating small group experiences open to both the Parkdale and Dominion-Chalmers' communities, including, potentially, Bible studies, discussion and prayer groups, and retreats, and looking for new partnerships with community groups. In addition, I will preach the last Sunday each month at Dominion-Chalmers and occasionally at Parkdale.

Throughout these two years, I will be attentive to hearing and learning from your personal and corporate histories of the churches, your current prayers and preoccupations, and your hopes for the future. I am most interested in your experience of faith and community. Your testimonies will inform the model as it develops, the tools and evaluation processes that are prepared, and they will guide the nature of the assessment of the Community Care Groups following the two-year project. By the end of my SME, I will prepare a Lessons Learned document.

Some of these background activities have already been underway. For instance, the strategic planning and visioning activities of the past year with the Rev. Dr. Darren Roorda and subsequent priority-setting of Council and the Strategic Planning Team are helping to focus Parkdale's new missional and ministry directions. The Community Care Group model is an expression of the visioning activities that have been imagined and prayed over as a novel form of discipleship in our parts of the city.



Ultimately, as we begin to see existing and new small groups as natural expressions of peer-to-peer pastoral care, I will be developing tools and training materials to support lay leaders facilitating Community Care Groups both at the church and at other sites.

My hope is that we will learn something about Collaborative Ministries that could suffuse the church as it transforms into the 21st century expression of itself, in this time and in this place.

As I sign off, please join with me in praying the following:

Bless us, O God, that we might hear the door when you stand at it and knock. When we hear your voice, may we open the door, blessing you as you come in to eat with us and us with you. Let this place be filled with feasting. Amen. **(Based on Rev. 3:20)**



ADVENT WORD SEARCH

A season of hope, peace, joy and love

Find the hidden words in the grid.

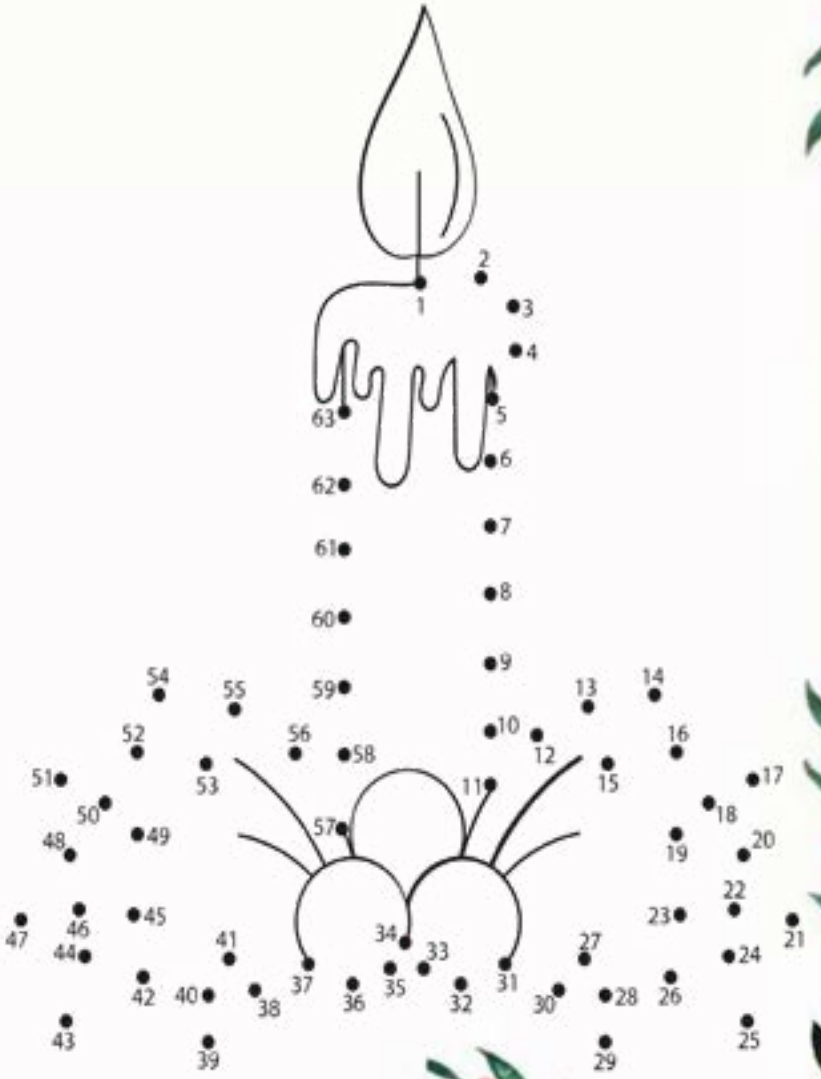
F A N X L L M B E L N P O N F I F
V C V L E G N A K U R L Q E V J R
I A K C U C K V R O G V U G D M Y
V R E D N O Y W M Y F L J Y B O T
D Z W W A I T I N G P V T F H Q A
T D S A M T S I R H C G H J L V K
K S K Y M E U W X T Y T N M D D A
K J O S E P H A P K Y I M A Z E C
F J R T L O V E R W T L E B K H H
X L Z W F H A U L O E Y N O C N H
H U E U Q C L I G H T S R T T B O
Z Q E Z E T P K M C T E N J M Y E
Z W Z C N G R E R A P E R P B P G
K W O Q C N Z Y R N V W B O D I K
L T Z V V A T Z G D E C F B Z P I
T H W M R V H V A L Z F O U D H D
A G W E L W X F S E M N H E S K R

WORDS TO FIND

Advent
Angel
Bethlehem
Candle
Christmas
Emmanuel
Hope
Joseph
Joy
Light
Love
Mary
Peace
Prepare
Promise
Star
Waiting
Yonder

CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Finish the dot-to-dot then bring the Christmas candle to life by colouring with festive Christmas colours.



From The Director of Music and Worship Arts,
Dr. Keith Hartshorn-Walton

Christmas Cantata: I Hear the Prophet Callin'
The Christmas Story from Prophecy to Fulfillment, by Pepper Choplin
Sunday, November 29

Join us on Sunday, November 29, for a special musical celebration as Parkdale's choir presents *I Hear the Prophet Callin'*, a Christmas cantata by Pepper Choplin.

Through music and storytelling, this beautiful work takes us on a journey from the words of the ancient prophets to the birth of Jesus, bringing the Christmas story to life through song.



We hope you'll join us as we share in the music and meaning of this special season.

Parkdale Presents: Ottawa Guitar Trio
Saturday, December 19

Get into the Christmas spirit with an afternoon of music from the Ottawa Guitar Trio! Featuring Nathan Bredeson, Alex Bougie, and François Lacelle, the trio is known for bringing together classical favourites, movie soundtracks, and video game music in their own unique arrangements.

This holiday season, they'll be sharing a wonderful mix of Christmas classics from the 1950s and '60s, winter-inspired video game tunes, and familiar melodies from festive films. Whether you're a lover of traditional Christmas music or something a little different, there's plenty to look forward to!



Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 27

The Christmas season continues at Parkdale with our Lessons & Carols service on December 27.

This year, we're especially pleased to welcome composer and arranger Gregory Alan Schneider, who will join our Senior Choir on guitar for a performance of *Six Traditional English Christmas Carols*. This collection brings together traditional carols in arrangements for voice and guitar.

With scripture readings, seasonal music, and the voices of our choir, Lessons & Carols offers a lovely opportunity to gather, reflect, and enjoy the Christmas story together.

We hope you'll join us!



rooted & rested

ANNUAL WOMEN'S RETREAT

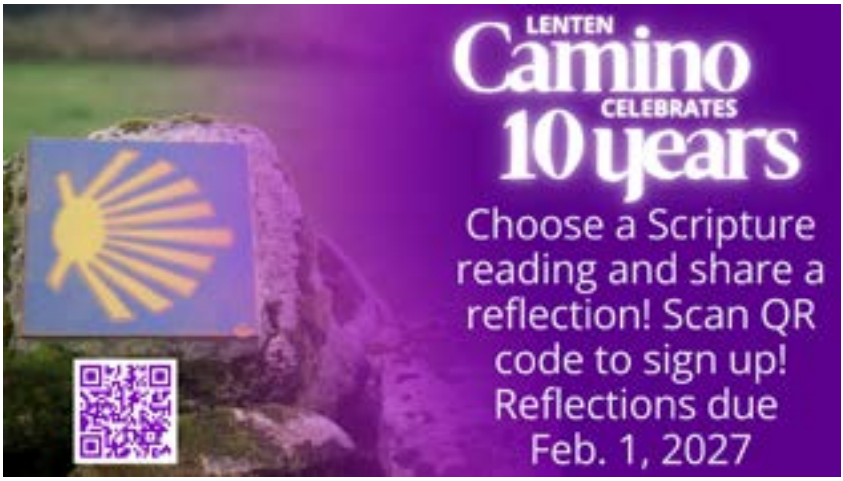
Join us at the women's retreat from January 22 – 24 at the Galilee Centre, Arnprior. Registration forms are available at the entrance. For more information, please check with Lauren Barbour.

Our Lenten Camino 2.0

This year, Our Lenten Camino turns 10! To mark this special milestone, we're adding a couple of twists. Inviting people to sign up during December and January isn't new. This year, we're extending the invitation to our collaborative ministry partners at Dominion-Chalmers United. Having readings to choose from each day isn't new either. This year, to keep things simple, we're having one deadline…**February 1, 2026.** Lent starts on February 10, so this will give us time to get things ready…because…we're adding a podcast version! What could be a better way of celebrating 10 years of Lenten reflections than to share it with more people? Now you'll be able to download or receive the full resource or a weekly series and listen to it on your favourite podcast app. Don't worry, if you don't want to do a voice recording, you don't have to. There's a plan in place to make sure the podcast includes everyone. The sign-up sheet will be available soon. Pick a date, provide your name and email and let us know if you want to record your own or have someone do it, then hit submit. Then all you have to do is write your reflection by **February 1, 2027** and email it to the office. Don't forget to include a photo.

Interested in helping everyone meet the deadline? Maybe you're good at calling people and inviting them to participate? Maybe you love organizing lists? We've got a way for you to serve! Contact Rev. Dr. Bob for more info.

Sign up for 'Our Lenten Camino 2027' on Clipform **https://clipform.com/b/s8uui6/** or scan the QR code below.



From the Finance Committee

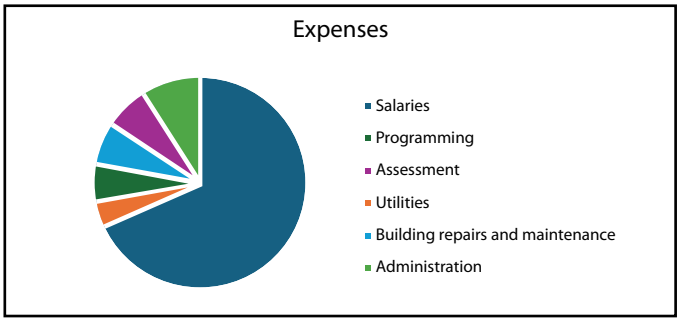
As we approach the end of 2026, we would like to give an update on our current financial situation.

We budgeted a deficit of about $171,000 for 2026. This budgeted deficit reflects the congregation's wish to continue with our staffing and programs, and we hope that donations will continue to support that mission.

As expected, we are currently in a deficit position. To the end of October there is a current operating deficit of approximately $112,000.

Any deficit at the end of the year will be taken from the Memorial Fund.

Our ministries continue to be strong as a result of your continuing involvement, prayers, and generosity. Thank you for your contributions and ongoing support.



If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at Treasurer@parkdaleunitedchurch.ca or Donations@parkdaleunitedchurch.ca

CALLING ON PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS!

To keep our Christmas tradition, Parkdale church would like to mail a gift card to students away at college and university.

Please provide names and coordinates by the end of the day of Sunday, November 29 to Danielle Gougeon at daniellegouged3@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Danielle Gougeon, *Chair of the Pastoral Care Committee*



IMAGES & STORIES

IMAGES & STORIES - Friday, November 27, 2026

Maxim Beaufort-Bradley is excited to tell you about his first trip to Europe. He went off, along with 16 Scouts, to his first ever Jamboree, and wants to thank all the people of Parkdale for their help in raising funds, over several months, to send him to Switzerland.

We then pause for the Christmas activities in December and return for another 3 months of exciting presentations on **January 29, February 26 & March 19, 2027.** If you are not on the list for these Zoom presentations, please contact the office at pdale@trytel.com. You will receive the Zoom link on Friday morning.

We look forward to seeing you in the new year. We wish you a Blessed Christmas with your families and friends. (Committee: Daunett Tucker, Marilyn Hahn, Helen Hayes, Faye Beaufort)

Rev Bob's Pastoral Journey and Newfoundland

Rev. Dr. Bob Fillier was born in LaScie, Newfoundland, to a family shaped by the church. His father was a minister in The United Church of Canada. Ministry was not his first plan: he began university in pre-engineering, aiming toward biomechanical engineering, and discovered a love of social-cultural anthropology along the way.

Rev. Dr. Bob's first pastoral charge was Grand Bank United Church. What began as a three-week invitation became a year-long pastoral ministry. While completing his undergraduate degree and with two small kids, he served a community of about 4,000 people, supporting 400 families, two nursing homes and a regional hospital.

Two moments helped him recognize his call: a quiet experience in the sanctuary at St. James, and a deeply personal moment at his mother's funeral. Alone with her casket, he felt her reassurance and found a sense of peace and clarity. A few

years later, this led to a meeting with the church's Clerk of Session to request a discernment committee be set up.

Bob and his family moved to eastern Ontario, where he served a two-point pastoral charge while studying at Queen's Theological College. His internship took them across the country to Port Alberni. There, a congregation's decision to apologize for the church's role in the residential school system became an early part of Rev. Dr. Bob's own journey of reconciliation. After ordination, he served rural congregations near Belleville, learning to drive a tractor and combine, amongst other skills.

Rev. Victoria, Rev. Dr. Bob's wife and ministry colleague, built her own path in ministry, including pastoral work and regional leadership that meant about 40,000 kilometres on the road in a year. Their shared dream of serving together came true in a team ministry. Later, Rev. Dr. Bob followed Rev. Victoria to British Columbia and served in Prince George, helping unite two congregations as Trinity United. Two highlights of his time in PG were growing community partnerships from 5 to 47 and establishing the Knox Performance Centre, a 300-seat professional live performance venue.

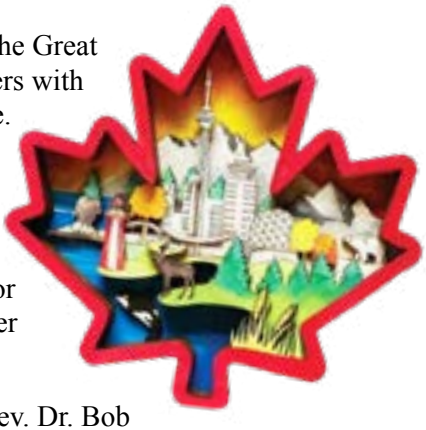
Their journey eventually brought Rev. Dr. Bob to Parkdale as Coordinating Minister and Rev. Victoria to the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council.

Newfoundland is more than the beginning of Rev. Dr. Bob's story. Its people, language, history and strong sense of community continue to shape how he sees the world. The island's English reflects generations of English, Irish, Scottish and French influence. Newfoundland once had its own currency, flag, stamps, anthem and a 400-page dictionary of local words and expressions.

Indigenous peoples lived in the region for thousands of years. The Beothuk people were driven to extinction through disease and conflict with settlers; archaeological evidence of their presence remains preserved on the island—Viking settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows dates to around 1000 CE. Later chapters include John Cabot's 1497 voyage, the French colony at Placentia, and St. John's becoming Britain's first overseas territory in 1583. Newfoundland became a Dominion in 1907 and joined Canada in 1949, a decision that remains part of the island's complex story.

The cod fishery sustained coastal communities for generations. Its collapse after the 1992 moratorium brought profound hardship. Another enduring

wound is the 1916 Battle of the Somme: at Beaumont-Hamel, 90 percent of the 801 Newfoundland Regiment soldiers were killed in the first half-hour. Only 68 returned. The morning of July 1 is still observed in Newfoundland as Memorial Day.



Rev. Dr. Bob's family home is Englee, on the Great Northern Peninsula, where he spent summers with his grandparents overlooking Fillier's Cove. He learned to fish, set cod traps, clean fish, weave a dog harness, hunt and seal boats. These summers taught him the skills and interdependence of community. Even the provincial flag carries its own story: blue for the ocean, white for snow, red for the former colony and gold pointing forward.

That deep connection stays with him. As Rev. Dr. Bob puts it, he is a Newfoundlander first, and a Canadian second.

John Harewood

09.11.26



https://tinyurl.com/parkdaleUC

NEWS FROM "IN FROM THE COLD 2026-2027"

The **IN FROM THE COLD** Ministry at Parkdale United Church started **Saturday, November 14, 2026.** As is customary, we pause on **Saturday, December 19, 2026,** start-up again on **January 9, 2027,** and close on **March 20, 2027.** We are delighted to have this year, four teams of Chefs & Sous Chefs preparing sumptuous 4-course sit down dinners served by members of various organizations as well as families and friends. Our guests are welcomed in prayer, treated to coffee, tea & beverages, reading material and live music during their meal, and sandwiches and fruit as they leave.

Do we need volunteers?
Yes, we do.

(1) Clean-Up Anchors. This person arrives at 4:00 PM and is responsible for cleaning up the hall with help from the volunteers. As well, the kitchen & surrounding areas are cleaned and all garbage taken out. You are invited to have a "dry-run" with the Clean-Up Anchor-in-the-House on a Saturday evening. You may just enjoy it! Contact: Faye Beaufort - fbeaufort@bell.net

(2) When our General Secretary of the United Church of Canada visited us, he spent the entire evening with our In From The Cold guests, and enjoyed a meal at their table. Rev. Bob thought it was a good compassionate thing to do and wondered if this is something that any of our members would be interested in doing. We have been blessed to have three volunteers. If this is something that would be of interest to you, please get in touch with Rev. Bob at revbob@parkdaleunitedchurch.ca.





PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Your Property Development Working Group (PDWG) continues to work away behind the scenes as a final review and clarification of the action items in the Strategic/Ministerial Action Plan take place.

Our vision of Parkdale United as a Community hub continues, but the reality of our current situation requires us to pursue a phased approach, with the first phase entailing improvements and renewal of the sanctuary, making changes that will adapt and enhance the building, especially Tape Hall. The result will be the creation of flexible, accessible, and highly relational community-oriented ministry environments, as mentioned in the Thanksgiving edition of the Messenger.

Programmatic requirements, with spatial and aesthetic clarification, continue to be a work in progress, and these will have to be finalised before a first design concept can be contracted. That said, as part of evaluating project viability, work has begun on collaborating with a mechanical consultant, a lighting consultant, an AV expert, a kitchen expert, and an organ expert to assess current systems and explore possibilities and costs. Construction issues and code requirements are also being assessed. All of this information will be invaluable in deciding the extent of the required work and associated cost and in estimating our budget requirements for 2027. We are deeply grateful to Barry Hobin for sharing his expertise in many of these areas.

Accessibility is a big challenge for Parkdale United, as you know, and it has always been one of the PDWG's motivating factors. It will necessarily take longer to develop workable options for enhanced accessibility, but this will be a non-negotiable in any new design options.

On the housing front, and as noted last month, conversations with Abbeyfield continue in the hope of finding a mutually satisfactory solution to our redevelopment discussions. As we as a congregation become clearer about our priorities and the views of our Abbeyfield neighbours are clarified, conversations about housing as an expression

of Parkdale United's ministry will continue to evolve. In the meantime, we are exploring the process of incorporating a non-profit organization which will be 100% owned and operated by Parkdale United members as the board of directors.

Please continue to pray for the work of your Property Development Group as our journey continues.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Hayes *Coordinator, PDWG*



News from the Pews...

Congratulations to Kathleen Stephenson who has been awarded a Bachelor of Theology from St. Paul University. The graduation ceremony, in front of three generations of family, was held on June 19, 2026.

Congratulations to Susan Bailey who is now a proud grandmother to a beautiful grandson, born September 9th in Victoria BC.

MOVING IN SPIRIT

Hi Everyone!

Do you enjoy moving your body, expressing yourself creatively, or finding new ways to connect with God? If so, please consider joining Moving In Spirit (MIS), Parkdale's liturgical movement choir.

Liturgical movement is a form of prayer that uses movement, gesture, and visual expression to help us connect with the Creator. It offers another way of experiencing and sharing our faith, particularly for those of us who learn and absorb information best through seeing and moving (visual and kinesthetic learning).

By incorporating movement into our worship services, we create opportunities for more people to participate meaningfully and help make our church community more inclusive.

But what exactly is liturgical movement?

Unlike dance performed for an audience, liturgical movement is not about performance and getting the steps right. It is about expressing our prayers, hopes, gratitude, and connection with God through movement.

Just as we can pray through spoken words, music, or silence, we can also pray through movement. It is a way of opening ourselves to the Creator and sharing our faith with others.

And the wonderful thing is that everyone can participate!

You do not need dance experience, a particular level of mobility, or any special physical ability. Whether you enjoy moving, are curious about trying something new, or simply want to explore another way of praying, there is a place for you in MIS.

If you are interested in helping make our church community more inclusive through this beautiful form of prayer, please reach out to a member of the MIS liturgical movement choir. We would be delighted to answer your questions and share more about liturgical movement. We are planning to hold a workshop on liturgical movement in the new year that we hope will help you discover if participating in MIS is right for you.

Everyone is welcome, regardless of age, gender, mobility, dance experience, or other differences. Please consider joining us!

With joy and blessings,

MIS – Parkdale's Liturgical Movement Choir



Why Memorial Hall Is "MEMORIAL HALL"



"I wondered what some of the ways we have to honour these amazing people would be, so I did a little search around Parkdale United Church. I always wondered why we call Memorial Hall "Memorial Hall" and I learned from Beth Gutsell, one of our beloved historians, that Memorial Hall itself was built in the memory of Parkdale United Church's war dead. It was dedicated in 1950. 393 young men from Parkdale enlisted or were called up for military service during World War Two, from 1939-1945, and 20 of those lost their lives. Their names, along with those of the nineteen who lost their lives in the First World War, are read each year in our Remembrance Sunday service.

If you look in the hall where we have refreshments after our church services, you will see a very large framed piece that has on it the names of every person from Parkdale United Church who served Canada in World War Two. Have a look at that sometime. It is a way of keeping our memory of these wonderful people alive in our hearts.

There are other ways that Parkdale has visual and most moving reminders of those from our congregation who served in times of war. We encourage you to check these out throughout our sanctuary."

Eleanor Creasey



photos to the **editor**

Remembrance Day







Smart Aging







Flooding in Gaza: Ways to Help



Credit: Pexels/Hosny Salah

Heavy rainfall has caused widespread flooding across displacement sites in Gaza, damaging temporary shelters and putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk. The flooding adds to an already severe humanitarian crisis.

Through ACT Alliance, the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) continues to support vulnerable communities with emergency assistance, healthcare, food security and other essential services.

Read the full news story (https://shorturl.at/8pjkQ) to learn more about the situation and the humanitarian response.

You can also support humanitarian relief efforts through the United Church's Emergency Relief Fund (https://shorturl.at/6dkX4).

United Church Welcomes Renewed Federal Investment in 2S and LGBTQIA+ Communities

The United Church of Canada welcomes the federal government's commitment in Budget 2026 of $60 million over four years, beginning in 2027–28, and an additional $15 million in ongoing annual funding to support 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities through the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan.

Combined with previous commitments, federal support will now reach $25.9 million annually, providing greater stability for organizations working to advance safety, inclusion, and equality.

"This is a significant and welcome step forward," says Jane Thirikwa, Program Coordinator, Global Advocacy 2S and LGBTQIA+. "Community organizations have consistently called for stable and sustainable funding to support their work and the communities they serve."



Image credit: BrutallyHonest from Pixabay]

As hate and discrimination continue to rise, this investment is an important step toward building more inclusive communities. Learn more and read the full news story (https://shorturl.at/e2oCN).



THE MESSENGER is a publication of

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