



***Jubilation!*** is the newsletter of Jubilee United Church  
40 Underhill Drive \* 416-447-6846 \* [www.jubileeunited.ca](http://www.jubileeunited.ca)

Editor: Elda Scott

***February 2024***

## *Notes from Norm*

By the time you read this, I will have turned 62 and am about to celebrate 19 years at Jubilee. It is, for me, a time of reflection on life, on faith, on where I've been and where I'm going. (Just to be clear, unless you or God have other plans, I don't plan to be going anywhere in the foreseeable future. I love it here). This is a true time of Lent for me.

I recall talking with my immediate predecessor at Jubilee, just after I had been hired, but before I started. He told me not to get too comfortable: the congregation is old and most of them won't be around in five years. Well, here we are. I don't know where he is.



I love the people who hired me and dared me to lead a progressive church into a new millennium. I love the people who, a few years later, wanted time and space to talk about Jesus and God in more traditional terms. I love that our community values a

great diversity of expression, theology, Christology, faith, political perspective and passions, as together we help each other and the broader community come to love the world and be open to how God loves all of creation.

I can't say enough about our music and how proud I am to have worked for nine years with Dr. Art Wenk, almost the same amount of time with Dr. Daniel Rubinoff and for the past year and a half with my dear friend, Jeannie Wyse. I can hear the choirs of each iteration singing in my ears, unlocking my heart and inspiring people from all around.

I think back over youth groups and summer children's programs, wonderful, challenging and comforting Sunday worship, Ulterior worship, Supper Church, Open Doors, Definitely NOT Church, Something Like Church, and all the special services for special days. I reflect on community events and programs, including lecture series, garage sales, homework club, Art Craft, Community Market, Community Table, Tuesday Soup, food drives, diapers for the Massey Centre, support for Eva's Place for Youth, Toronto Urban Native Ministry and the Mission and Service funds.

I am always a little surprised, but proud, that Jubilee was the first affirming church in North York and remains an inclusive community for all people to this day.



I have had the privilege to be partnered with Rev. Lee-anne Ahlstrom, Rev. Anne Dioniso and Rev. Bri-anne Swan, while also supervising amazing students and interns like Rev. Etienne LeSage, Rev. Jason Meyers, Rev. Jim Harbell and also Anne Dionisio and Bri-anne Swan when they were interns and students as well. I have been in team with Barb Secord for as long as I've been here, and also with Anne-Mari Remmel, Wendy Miller, Pat Lansche and Dianne Clare. So many insightful, imaginative, compassionate, hardworking, faithful and loving people have shared leadership with me, it would be easy to overlook the incredible love and leadership from this community – people who are always willing to take a risk and love a little beyond our verifiable means.

I think of the stories and lives shared here at Jubilee, the hope and faith nurtured as we have hosted weddings, baptisms, funerals and other milestones in people's lives. It is an honour and privilege that I have never taken for granted. So many folks, no longer with us, live in my heart and echo in my ears as I start a prayer, lead a Bible Study, share communion, dare to preach or just imagine a new project.



Lately, we've been asking folks to share what it is about Jubilee that brought them here, kept them here and made it home. I have so many wonderful responses, but they have a common theme that emerges from one email that I received recently: **I am so grateful and so happy to be at Jubilee. I immediately felt welcome. I went to the Sunday service and knew that I had found a new home. I love the inclusivity and the many ways there are to contribute and be part of the Jubilee community.** I feel exactly the same way and I look forward to at least a few more years of sharing this with all of you.

As you read this, we are getting ready to vote on amalgamating with Forest Grove United Church. The United Church has already approved the budget and the vision. For some folks it seems like a simple decision, "Yes, let's do it! – there will be people and money coming to Jubilee, that's good enough for me". I don't quarrel with those who will decide like that. But I also appreciate those who have enjoyed what I have enjoyed at Jubilee for the past 19 years. We are a peculiar and wonderful family, who have weathered some storms and done some amazing things together and, whether we've been part of it for two decades or two weeks, we don't want to risk something that is so inviting and life-giving to us.

I remember talking with a gentleman who lived next door to Jubilee and had a balcony that looked down on our parking lot. He was a devoted follower of another faith, but had respect for Jubilee. He told me once that “People always seem so happy when they go into your church and they always seem so calm when they come out, it must be a very holy place.” (He also noted that we must a place of wisdom as well, as so many heads that went in and out had grey hair). Any time somebody joins Jubilee, we risk losing some of that joy and contentment, that feeling of the “holy”, but we get a chance to share and meet folks who will help us dig deeper into what it means to be holy. We risked an amalgamation with St. John’s United Church a little over six years ago and the people who came to shape Jubilee, bringing gifts and experience, have increased my joy and added to my calm and contentment. We grew, we changed, but we didn’t lose “Jubilee”. The eleven folk who joined us last November have added so much to who we are as a community and church, but they came with a risk as well. Everyone who comes through the door presents a risk and an opportunity so share and nurture love. And without exception, love has won out at Jubilee.

Personally, I like the idea of amalgamation with Forest Grove United Church because I know that we will have new people to help shape Jubilee as the future unfolds - people with gifts, experiences, expressions and opinions that we don’t have today. Sure, that means risk, but it also means that we will continue to grow. Yes, there will be a financial benefit, but it’s not money that we will sit on; it’s money that will enhance what we do at Jubilee and help us be of relevance and value to our community.

The biggest financial aspect of the amalgamation will be The Grove Music School. Currently, it has about 50 students receiving lessons in vocal, piano, guitar, bass, ukulele and drums. We expect the capacity to grow over the years with students taking lessons in an even greater variety of instruments. Imagine how many kids and young adults in our area could walk to Jubilee for music lessons! We have put together a 10-year plan to support the music school so that we can offer lessons to students at an affordable scale, rates that are geared to income or ability to pay – nobody has to be denied music lessons because they can’t afford them. Imagine how that might be received in our community.

I am excited about building this ministry with an amalgamated Jubilee United Church that includes the members, teachers, resources and experience of Forest Grove and creating an outreach ministry that can really be embraced and appreciated by our community. I know that my experience is not universal, but I am among the many who have had their lives shaped in the best ways by music. Music is a social and creative way of processing and expressing emotion and connecting to a deeper part of the self: it creates community and invites communication; it creates beauty and innovation. What a wonderful gift that we might share with the larger community – the gift of music, community and belonging.

This will also mean that we will not hesitate to bring in another full-time minister to engage with our community. Someone to connect with people of all ages, families and individuals, addressing pastoral needs and creating new programs and ways of being together. I would love to a full-time partner and this community will benefit from a creative staff team meeting folks where they are and leading us to a new, but very welcoming place.



As I look back over the past 19 years, I see all of the things that make me excited about the next 10 years. Loving people creating community, embracing one another, sharing deep spirituality, while loving boldly in the world. As I spent this reflective Lenten time, I am simply moved to say “Thank You” to all – thank you for letting me be your minister and continue to be your minister; thank you for shaping me and making me a better minister than I could ever have been elsewhere; thank for you the challenges and the patience, the freedom and the trust that allows us to share God with each other and the thank you for the enthusiasm that makes me very excited about what the next decade has in store for Jubilee.



*Norm*

### ***Greetings from the Music Ministry!***

***Jeannie Wyse, Music Director***

It looks like winter may finally make an appearance and it is ONLY February! The choir continues to be a living, breathing community. We said a heartfelt goodbye to our long-time tenor section lead, Lily May Vers, who has moved to Ottawa to explore new opportunities, and we thank her for her leadership and service for the past 6½ years.

Our Christmas concert, *A NOT So Silent Night*, was a huge success with 200 tickets sold! *Broadway* (and band) wowed us once again and the Jubilee choir was outstanding!! The Christmas choir was also augmented by several Randolph College students. I am so impressed by the commitment and musicianship of this amazing group and the performance videos of their work on YouTube, which have enjoyed hundreds of views! I would like to thank Allie Jeffery, Katie White, Lily May Vers, Patti Jamieson and Sean Overby for their featured performances. And thanks to Christopher Wilson for guiding the bass section. We raised \$1,157.00 for the music ministry, and the epic cookie sale also made \$900 for the church.

During Black Heritage Month the choir has honoured African-American composers Moses Hogan, Jester Hairston and Richard Smallwood. We look forward to celebrating an early Easter this year as we journey through the season of Lent. The music of this season ranges from reflective meditation to joyous proclamation!

I am thrilled to announce that Dianne Clare is our new tenor section lead and Christopher Wilson is our not-so-new bass section lead - you may remember Christopher from several years ago. We also welcome John Brooker to our bass section. John Wright and Timothy Oakes also join us on occasion.

All of these amazing people will be part of our Spring Concert on **Saturday, April 20**. Jubilee will be presenting *Up and Down the Dial*, featuring the radio play *Laura*. Mark your calendars because you won't want to miss this very special evening!! Ticket information will be forthcoming in early March.


Choir rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 7-9pm in the sanctuary (from September-June). You do not need to sight-read or have prior experience, just a love for singing and a willing spirit.

We continue to be a growing and thriving community! Blessings to all.

## Lent at Jubilee A journey of Questions

**A new question every week**

- February 18 - Communion  
Celebration of Community  
Rev. Marlene Britton is preaching  
*What Brought You Here?*
- February 25 - Celebration of Music  
*Why are you still at Jubilee?*
- March 3 - Intergenerational Service led by Rev. Anne  
*What makes Jubilee home?*
- March 10 - Celebrating the work of our hands  
*What is the Good News that you find at Jubilee?*
- March 17 - Celebration of our Digital Ministry  
*What is Jubilee's Good News for the world?*
- March 24 - Palm Sunday Communion and Parade



Sunday, March 3  
after Worship, we will have a  
Congregational Meeting  
**To approve Amalgamation  
with  
Forest Grove United Church**

Voting will be by closed ballot  
In person, by Zoom or by Phone

Zoom/Phone link will be on the  
Jubilee Website and  
in congregational email notice



### **Brookbanks for African Grannies** *Jeanne Kennedy*

We are presently working on three fundraiser events for the Grandmothers Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

On **April 27** we are having an afternoon fashion show at Jubilee. This event is always enjoyable and, once again, Lady Sophisticate, a women's store on Avenue Road, will be presenting spring and summer clothes. Our own members and friends will be models and delicious refreshments will be served. Save the date on your calendar!!

Another event, partnering with other Grannie groups in Toronto, will be a sale of paintings from African artists from Soweto. African life is depicted with energy and charm. Over 300 paintings have been donated and all proceeds will go to the SLF Grandmothers Campaign. Because of the huge number of paintings and art, we are in discussion with an Auction House/Gallery. No definite date for the show has been announced, so keep posted.

We are pleased to announce that we will have a table at the **Jubilee Marketplace** in April, and a small sample of the donated African art will be available to see and purchase at very affordable prices.

## **Property Committee Report**

***Brian Kalanda, Property Chair, and Barb Secord, Facilities Manager***

We are very pleased with the accomplishments in 2023, most notably:

- Securing and receiving \$19,000 funding grant for the LED program and the installation of the six new exterior doors. We are pleased to put that into the bank account!
- Progressing with the detailed work needed to get a wheelchair ramp built along the east sanctuary wall and up onto the chancel.
- As always, Barb Secord was on top of maintenance throughout the year and kept our facility in a condition we can all be proud of. Thanks Barb!
- Snow plowing and salting will continue through the rest of winter on an as-needed basis.

Now on to 2024! Our most visible project will be the wheelchair ramp. We are getting contractor quotes and our architect is preparing the drawings and detail needed to get the required building permit. We hope to define the build dates soon. Scheduling that into our busy church to minimize impact is important. Another project will be to cover the exterior wood eaves around the church with metal or vinyl siding.

We will await the outcome of the amalgamation work and the projects that will need to get organized and managed in 2024 and beyond, and blend that in with our other projects.

## ***MISSION AND SERVICE and OUTREACH***

***by Pamela Lock***

Jubilee continues to show interest in and give financial support to the national **Mission and Service Fund** of the United Church. In 2023, our gifts totalled \$29,043.65. Through monthly *Minutes for Mission*, the congregation hears examples of the ways in which our money is used by local, national, and international partners. Programs and projects include fighting racism, sending people to school, feeding children, helping refugees, and providing health care in global emergencies. Your generosity helps to transform lives. Thank you.

At Jubilee, our **Outreach** work encompasses efforts to reach and support individuals and programs within the congregation, our immediate neighbourhood, and the wider community. In 2023, we gave financial support to the local Don Mills Community Share Food Bank, the Scott Mission, and the Toronto Urban Native Ministry. We continued to offer financial aid to United Church work for Ukraine.

We have established a connection with our local 33 Division of Toronto Police Services through the “Cram-a-Cruiser” food drive in December. In March, one of their officers will give a presentation on crime prevention in a series being planned on topics/issues of relevance to the residents of our community. Formal details about the series will be announced separately, but topics include downsizing/de-cluttering, resources for caregivers, and resources for aging in place (at home).

Later in the spring there are hopes for a study series to which people from other congregations will be invited. Stay tuned for more details as they emerge.

# Home Safe

Lecture Series

**Wednesdays 130 - 3pm**

March 13 - Constable Roberts from 33 Div on Crime Prevention.

March 20 - Sharon Parenteau from SMART Realty  
on Downsizing and De-cluttering

April 10 - Peter Bride on Caring for Family at Home

April 17 - Alexa Gilmour and Carla Leon on Aging Well in Place

April 24 - Katie Griffiths from Alzheimer Society of Peel  
on Resources for Care Givers.

**Coffee and Tea served from 115.**

**There is no charge for these talks**

Jubilee United Church  
40 Underhill Drive, Don Mills  
[www.jubileeunited.ca](http://www.jubileeunited.ca)



## Jubilee Spring Market

**Saturday March 16,  
2024**

**9:30am – 2:00pm**

**Jubilee United  
Church**

Shop for Easter and  
Mother's Day gifts,  
jewelry, hand crafted  
items, books,  
beauty products, baking.  
Stay for lunch!

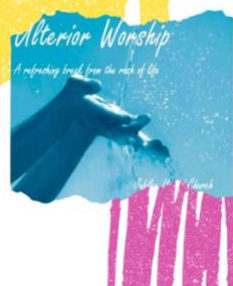


## ULTERIOR WORSHIP

**The First and Third Monday of Each Month.**  
Casual, approachable worship led by Rev.  
Norm Seli in the sanctuary at Jubilee.  
Come as you are, relax, breathe and leave  
no more than an hour later feeling  
refreshed and connected.

**Mondays at 630pm.**

*Ultior (Adj. from the Latin Ulter):  
Lying beyond what is evident,  
revealed or avowed.*



## Life Events at Jubilee

Barbara Scott passed away on December 27, 2023

Taylor Beatty and Karmela Laceda got married on January 6, 2024

Gertrude "Lennie" Reynolds passed away on February 21, 2024





# EASTER with Jubilee

**Maundy Thursday Meal  
and Informal Worship, March 28, 6pm**

**Good Friday Worship, March 29th  
In Person at 1030am and on-line from 8am**

**Easter Morning SONrise Service  
in person outdoors on the Labyrinth at 8am**

**Easter Breakfast in the Auditorium at 9am**

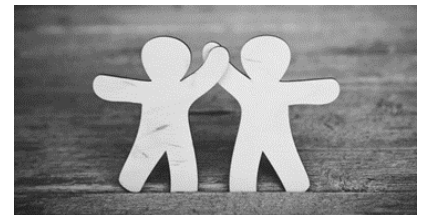
**Easter Sunday Service of Resurrection!  
in person at 1030am;  
on-line any time from 1030am**

## Rise and Shine!

**Join us - Bring a Friend**  
[www.jubileeunited.ca](http://www.jubileeunited.ca)

### The Benevolent Fund

There was remarkable support for the Benevolent Fund in 2023 and I thank you on behalf of those who have found it a little easier to sleep because there was food in the cupboard, heat in the house, care for a child, books or tuition to support education, medical or mental health support, and just simply some hope that things can turn around.



The Benevolent is a discretionary fund that I administer confidentially to those in need. Our support is not meant to be “on-going” but occasional (when it comes to food security) or “one-time only” when it comes to larger needs like paying a heating bill or getting books for school. We hope to help those who fall through the cracks, whose needs are recognized by the system and existing supports. Sadly, there is no lack. Often, people come looking for money and go away with connections to existing programs or prayerful and emotional support instead, but mostly people leave with something in their hands that can meet an immediate need.

You might be amazed at who needs help and the kind of help that is needed; you might be surprised to recognize the people discreetly seeking support and may also be surprised to know that several of the folks that we have helped in the past have come to be supporters of the benevolent fund in the present. Donations can be given to me directly, but are more likely to be properly receipted and/or included in your donations if give in the manner you are accustomed to giving (envelopes, etransfer, etc.) and simply mark the donation “Benevolent Fund”.

Thank you for your on-going support of the Benevolent Fund.

*Norm*



# Gigantic Garage Sale

## BBQ & Bake Sale



**Do you have quality, nearly new items to donate?**

**We do not accept:** mattresses, sofa beds, large appliances, suitcases, computers, skis, typewriters, console TVs, baby car seats/cribs, textbooks, magazines, baskets, or Christmas décor.

**Items can be dropped off to:**  
**Jubilee United Church**  
**40 Underhill Drive**  
**Thursday, May 2 and**  
**Friday, May 3**  
**9:00am - 7:00pm**

In case you missed it, we had 170 people at Pancake Tuesday supper - so many we had to create an overflow room! And 140 at the Royal Canadian Regiment Band concert. So many volunteers, so much fun!



## Would you like to be more involved at Jubilee?

We'd love to include you as a volunteer for Events, reading Scripture in Church, joining a Communion Team, helping with Community Table, Community Projects, Coffee Teams, Dinners, the Garage Sale - large jobs and small ones, it's a great way to meet people and make a difference

*We're also happy to help you get your "Volunteer Hours" for school*



Click on this image to be connected to our volunteer



### Jubilee Community Table

The Second Saturday of each Month at 6pm

**Our Next Community Table is Saturday, March 9**

Dinner with Friends on Saturday  
The Menu and Faces may change each month, but the welcome remains the same:  
No Charge, No Donation, just join us for dinner.



## Men's Contemplation Book Group

Wednesdays at 7pm on Zoom.  
We read books and talk together about them.  
No experience required. Click on this image for the Zoom Link

