



The Thornhill United Church Newsletter



'HANDS'

25 Elgin Street (at Dudley), Thornhill, ON L3T 1W5 Tel: 905 889-2131
Email: info@thornhillunitedchurch.ca Website: www.thornhillunitedchurch.ca

May 2026

A NOTE FROM LEIGH...

*Each little flow'r that opens,
each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.*

*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

Cecil Frances Alexander



Have you been waiting impatiently for our gardens to wake? The promise of spring is here as we look forward to the blooming of the earth. We knew it was coming when the robins returned with their cheery songs.

The hope of spring and resurrection, have come as the heaviness of winter has dissipated. God is calling us to throw off the winter gloom and to step into the renewal of creation, stepping into it with wonder. I have been watching my garden along my front walkway, seeing Tulip, Penstemon, Pasque, Creeping Phlox, Mountain Bluet and Black-Eyed Susan leaves pushing up from the soil. With these signs, we look forward to being outdoors and the warming of the season.

As part of God's holy garden, God encourages us to grow too, giving us opportunities to flourish in our faith and in our lives. God wants us to grow right along with the rest of the earth. I invite you to step or look outside, to watch the birds and the small animals and to watch the plants come to life. Pause and listen to the bird songs. Breathe in and remember God's love fills your lungs with each breath.

I pray that you will enjoy this spring and summer with gratitude. I hope to see you at church where we can celebrate God's goodness together, or at your home. Know that you can call me at the church, on my cell, or write me. It would be wonderful to talk and be together.

Please enjoy this copy of "HANDS" and all of its news. Keep the calendar of activities and services so that you will be able to take part.

May God bless and keep you.

Rev. Leigh Olson

They're coming back!!!!

THORNHILL COMMUNITY BAND

and Music Director, Hugh Corbett,

present



'SPRING FLING'



Save the date:

Saturday, May 9, 2026

7:30 pm

at Thornhill United Church

25 Elgin Street, Thornhill
(905) 889-2131



****Tickets: \$20** (children under 12 – free)

**available at the door

or from a choir or band member

Livestream (via Zoom) tickets: \$20

MEMORIAL GARDENS

The memorial gardens are the gardens at the front of the church building. They were established in 2001 to provide a dignified and caring sanctuary for the cremated remains of loved ones. While no markers are allowed, the area has been carefully mapped out, to assist families in selecting their desired site and a record of all interments is kept in the memorial book located in the glass case in the Narthex. Besides serving the original purpose, these gardens are enjoyed by our neighbours who frequently come to sit on the benches and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.

Like any garden, our memorial gardens require work. For several years, I, along with the assistance of Lucina Fraser, have maintained the gardens. Weeding, cultivating the soil and some pruning is required on a regular basis to ensure the gardens remain beautiful and welcoming. We now find ourselves in need of one or two new volunteers to take on this important work. Lucina and I will continue to assist as we are able, but we need help. I would be delighted to discuss this job with anyone who is interested. I can be reached at diane.mcleod@rogers.com or (905 737-8392).

There are many rewards, but my personal favorite is being greeted by the children that attend the Montessori school. As their parents drop them off, they say “good morning”, “hi” or sometimes just wave, but their smiles are better than anything money can buy. They are so cute.

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you.

Diane McLeod

GENTLE REMINDER OF OUR FRAGRANCE FREE POLICY:

As we try to make our church a welcoming place where all can worship in comfort and health, please do not wear scented products such as perfumes, lotions, hair sprays, aftershave, deodorants, etc. These items can cause health issues like migraines, breathing problems and other serious allergic reactions. Thank you for helping us to make our church a safe place.

HAS YOUR PHONE NUMBER CHANGED?

Please reach out to the church to update your contact information if there has been a change. We know a number of people are no longer using a home phone. We look forward to hearing from you so that we can stay in touch.

~ Life Passages ~

DEATHS

Beverley Deutsch, March 17, 2026, wife of Bob, sister of Glenn Terrell (Jeannette), aunt of Elizabeth, Jeff (Lesley McMahon), Kimberley, and her nephew-in-law Richard Javier, great-aunt of Deanne, Ewan, Gavin, Andrew, Nathan, Jessica, Jonathan, and Aria, and great-great-aunt of Madeline and James.

Allan Carswell, March 29, 2026, husband of the late Helen, father of Don (Elizabeth), Ruth (Bob Graham), and Diane (Taner Mahcupyan), grandfather of Allan (Alana), Patricia (Simon), Donald (Carine), Peter (Alicia), Heather, Alexandra, Sarah (Charlie), and Michael (Brenna) and great-grandfather of Georgia, Ben, Theodore, Evan, Owen, and Malcolm.

BAPTISM

Jeffrey Kwong, April 5, 2026.



“MUSIC NOTES” “SPRING FLING”

– a concert by the Thornhill Community Band
Sat. May 9 at 7:30 p.m.

On Sat. May 9 the Thornhill Community Band will return to TUC to play a concert of many styles of music. This band of over 50 musicians, under the leadership of Hugh Corbett, includes three members of our congregation. There will also be special solos by TUC musicians, including guitar, bassoon, oboe, bagpipes and a handbell tree solo! The Sanctuary Choir is hosting this fundraising concert and refreshments will follow in the auditorium.

Tickets may be purchased after worship from choir members. Tickets will also be available at the door: Adults: \$20; children under 12 – free. The concert can also be enjoyed online; please send \$20 to treasurer@thornhillunitedchurch.ca and a special link will be sent out during the week of the concert.

Ethel Briggs

Director of Music

**Bible Study summer break
for the month of August!**

REPORT OF ASSETS AND ADMINISTRATION PILLAR

Building Care and Use (submitted by David Argue)

Regular building maintenance has been ongoing with interior painting continuing. Reinstating pictures and plaques has occurred in the rooms that were painted. Painting will continue with the next areas being the kitchen, sanctuary, narthex, and washrooms.

Thank you for everyone's patience during the furnace breakdown which left the Upper Room, Gathering Place and offices on the chilly side. It took some troubleshooting to determine the reason for the breakdown and time to order parts.

Thank you to the Beavers and Cubs for cleaning up the church grounds. Four bags of garbage were collected. The Scouts also will be cleaning the gardens.

Dream Tree Montessori School uses and maintains the washrooms on the lower level and are for their use. Given this, locks have been installed on the washrooms on the lower level. The washrooms will be made available during church events, but we will arrange for cleaning after the event. Please coordinate with Tanya if access is required to the washrooms.

Safety and Security

We were notified that we were successful in obtaining a grant of \$7,500 to improve security at the church. Many thanks for the the efforts of Lyle Urquhart and Hilary Jacob who completed and submitted the application for the grant. Expenditures must be made by August 31st and a report is due to the funding organization. We are currently reviewing where to make improvements, but are looking at replacing some doors and purchasing additional cameras.

Constable Wojtulewicz from York Regional Police came to our church on Thursday, April 16th at 1:00 pm to talk with staff and council about safety and security and to answer questions.

Stewardship and Fund-Raising

The fifth Dine-Around Thornhill event will be held at Tutto Bene Osteria on May 8th. Thirty people will enjoy a typical Italian dinner with Antipasti, Pizza, Salad, Pasta or Veal main dish and Tiramisu for dessert. Tickets are \$70.

A big THANK YOU to Joe and Diane Ricciuti for making this possible and for their generous support of the events.

Linda and Lloyd Mather
Co-Chairs, Assets and Administration

BOOK STUDY – Begins Tuesday, May 5th

Please join us in person in the Upper Room at TUC for 5 consecutive Tuesdays at 10 am, until June 2nd. We will read one chapter per week.

Our book is “Sharing the Light: Stories and Reflections” by Monique Gray Smith, an indigenous Canadian author. “Sharing the Light” is a powerful reminder that when we embrace our light and share it with the world, that energy not only transforms us, but ripples out to uplift everyone around us.

For further information, please contact Monica Morand: monica@thornhillunitedchurch.ca or 647-544-2825.

A NOTE FROM THE PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

If you know someone who is dealing with a crisis or issue that would benefit from our support, please let any of our committee members know: Tanya Melbourne, Leigh Olson, Doug Whidden, Heather Morris, Linda Mather, Ann Louise Ross, Catharine Montgomery, Barbe Carruthers.

Barbara Carruthers
Chair of Pastoral Care

INTERCULTURAL WORKING GROUP (IWG)

May is Asian Heritage Month and each Sunday our Intercultural Working Group will be featuring short presentations by members of our congregation. They will speak about their cultural heritage and their faith journey to TUC at the beginning of each service. There will be special musical performances on traditional Asian instruments and some Asian treats during Coffee and Conversation Time.

We are also delighted that Sarang Seyrafiyan and Bahar Hajzadeh have recently joined our group.

On June 14 we will celebrate Indigenous Day of Prayer.

Leslie Benson and Joan Elliott
IWG Co-Chairs

**Next issue of 'HANDS' is August 1st, 2026.
Deadline for submissions is July 27th.**

STAFFING DEVELOPMENTS AT TUC

We are pleased that Monica Morand joined the TUC staff team in March as a part-time, temporary Care and Development Assistant. Monica has been an active part of the TUC congregation since 2024 in a variety of ways, including sharing with us through a sermon and lunch and learn sessions. Her extensive work experience includes teaching and family mediation.

This lay position was created by Council to support Reverend Leigh Olson following Reverend Mini Choi's departure. It is a transitional role, pending the completion of a needs assessment and the implementation of staffing decisions arising from that assessment. Monica will work to ensure the smooth functioning of the Sunday School and Youth Group programs in a leadership and administrative capacity, and to help meet TUC's pastoral care needs.

A team of five has recently begun work on the needs assessment and updating the Community of Faith Profile for TUC: Kate Dewhurst, Amir Javadi, David Rawcliffe, Dawn Sancho, and Katherine Sheridan (chair). They will be consulting with the congregation and staff in various ways to seek input. Once the needs assessment has been completed and shared with the congregation, it is likely that a search committee will be formed to help meet the identified staffing needs. Shining Waters Region will appoint a liaison to work with TUC through the search process.

Please introduce yourself to Monica, if you have not met her yet, and let either of us know if you have any questions.

Mike Hafeman and Kate Dewhurst
TUC Ministry and Personnel Committee

WELCOME AND AFFIRMING WORKING GROUP (WAWG)

This past March 8, we celebrated PIE Sunday with special speaker, David Lau, from our congregation. David's message was very personal and heartfelt. It underscored why it is important for our congregation to take time to focus on being Public, Intentional and Explicit in supporting our 2SLGBTQ+ community members. David and his partner are happy to be able to freely worship together in Canada. The service was followed by slices of delicious pies at Coffee and Conversation time.

This year the York Pride Parade in Newmarket will be celebrated on Saturday, June 13, starting at 4 pm. For anyone who hasn't experienced this joyful celebration, I encourage you to attend this wonderful, family friendly parade. Please let Heather Morris or Rev. Leigh Olson know if you would like more

information or to join the TUC delegation and walk the short, approximately 1 kilometer, distance.

On Sunday, June 28, we celebrate Pride Sunday in support of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, several of whom are active at TUC and are much appreciated volunteers in many aspects of TUC life.

Heather Morris
Chair of WAWG

A NOTE FROM THE COUNTERS

I am part of a small team of counters at the church. One of our duties is to process the offering from the collection plates. One small way that you can help us is to **not fold** your money when you place it in an offering envelope. Once folded, it tends to stay folded and that makes it difficult for us. Both the numbered envelopes and the visitor envelopes are sized so that money will fit in them without folding.

It's a little thing that makes a big difference to us, so please **don't fold** your money. Thanks!

Cathy Farrant

UPCOMING SERVICES

- May 3, 10:30 am – Asian Heritage Month begins
- May 10, 10:30 am – Mother's Day/
Christian Family Sunday
- May 17, 10:30 am – Victoria Day Weekend
- May 24, 10:30 am – Pentecost Sunday/
with Communion
- May 31, 10:30 am - Trinity Sunday
- June 7, 10:30 am – 101st Anniversary of the
United Church of Canada
- June 14, 10:30 am – Indigenous Day of Prayer/
Sunday School graduation and picnic
- June 21, 10:30 am – Father's Day
- June 28, 10:30 am – Pride Sunday
- July 5, 10:30 am – 6th Sunday after Pentecost
- July 12, 10:30 am – 7th Sunday after Pentecost
- July 19, 10:30 am – 8th Sunday after Pentecost
- July 26, 10:30 am – 9th Sunday after Pentecost
with Communion

WHAT SHOULD WE DO???

*If there is a forecast of possible bad weather for Sunday, a decision will be made on Saturday with an e-blast announcement to everyone, that we will only have Zoom worship the next day.

*If there is a reason early Sunday, that it will not be possible to worship in the sanctuary on that day, an e-blast announcement will go out between 7:00 and 8:00 in the morning.