

# Parkwood Methodist Church



## The Herald

April 2022

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Dear friends,  
I enjoy when the clocks go forward, and the nights begin to draw out more and more. I always look forward to it as part of the pattern of the year. Over the past two years, that pattern has felt disrupted in some ways. Not all disruptions are unwelcome- the unexpected cup of tea offered when life is busy or the phone call that brings good news are very welcome. Covid, though, has brought changes to patterns of life that have felt fixed for many years, much of which has been very unwelcome.

There is a sense of drama that runs through Lent. In the stories that are told, the symbols that we use in our Lent liturgies, the connections in this vast journey are marked, explored and made. Some of these are inherited from those who have come before us, and some connect us with the wider Church, reminding us that this is something we share with others.

Some of this drama has been able to be shared in different ways over the past two years, but there is something important to us as human beings in how we interact with each other and with this huge story of God's love. Sometimes we need ways to tell stories that go beyond words and into actions.

This year there are different ways in which we can play our part in marking Lent and Easter, Holy Week, through prayer, sharing in services and in how we give to others. After suspending them during the past two years of the pandemic, Good Friday walks of witness

and other public acts of worship are returning this year. If you would like to join in with a service in person on Good Friday, and go for a walk, one will be held by Father Simon Crook, starting at the war memorial at 10am.

As we begin our final weeks of Lent for this year and anticipate Easter to come, may our journey be filled with wonder, questions as we hear the story of God's love for us in new ways, in word and action.

**Rev Ros**

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I'm sad to report that Barbara Horn, died on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Barbara the wife of Philip, our friendly local magician who entertained us many times at Parkwood events.

Our condolence goes out to Philip and their family at this sad time (ed!)

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Maybe time to go back to the smaller room again!

# Never Again!



*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

When everyone said after World War 2: 'Never again' – well, we know it has tragically happened again on our own continent of Europe in Ukraine.

I'm sure we have all been watching this on our TV's as we watch the most horrendous scenes:

- Hundreds of thousands of displaced and separated families fleeing to safety.
- Scenes of the brutality of war

The only way that I have found to share this horror of war with you is to see it through the eyes of one of Hitler's prisoners in the Second World War.

His name was Dietrich Bonhoeffer and he was a minister and also a Christian thinker.

He was born into a prestigious family and his father was a professor of psychiatry at the University of Berlin.

The family weren't pleased when he announced when he was quite young he wanted to be a minister of the church.

After his training he followed an academic career and became a lecturer at the University of Berlin.

During these years Hitler rose to power and Bonhoeffer opposed his antisemitic speeches.

The strange thing is that Bonhoeffer signed up to be a double agent in the German secret service.

He was supposed to be collecting information about the places he visited, but he was, instead, trying to help Jews escape Nazi oppression. He also became a part of a plot to overthrow, and later to assassinate, Hitler.

The Gestapo caught up with him and he became a prisoner, eventually finishing up at the Flossenburg concentration camp. He was engaged to be married when he was executed by the Nazis – just one month before Germany surrendered.

It was in 2008, that our partner church, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in America, officially recognized Bonhoeffer as a "modern-day martyr." He was the first martyr to be so recognized who lived after the Reformation.

It was during Bonhoeffer's time in prison that he wrote what is considered to be one of the classics of Christian writing of the twentieth century. It's

not everyone's cup of tea, but it is still read by Christians today throughout the world.

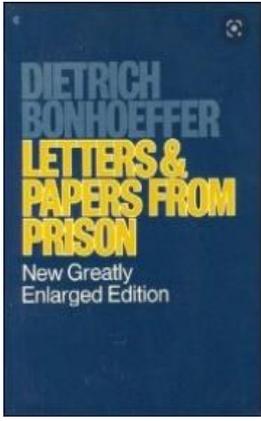
We are lucky that some of his correspondence and writing was preserved in this book which has become an inspiration to many Christians - it's called 'Letters & Papers from Prison'.

Here's a poem and a passage from Bonhoeffer's writings (translated from the German), if it's only to try to scratch the surface of what it must feel like to experience the fear and dread of war. The poem is called: 'Who Am I', and it's something that has always haunted me since I read it so many years ago.

## **Who am I?**

Who am I? They often tell me  
I step from my cell  
calm and cheerful and poised  
like a squire from his manor.  
Who am I? They often tell me  
I speak with my guards  
freely, friendly and clear,  
as though I were the one in charge.  
Who am I? They also tell me  
I bear days of calamity  
serenely, smiling and proud,  
like one accustomed to victory.  
Am I really what others say of me?  
Or am I only what I know of myself?  
restless, yearning, sick, like a caged bird,  
struggling for life breath, as if I were being  
strangled,  
starving for colours, for flowers, for birdsong,  
thirsting for kind words, human closeness,  
shaking with rage at power lust and pettiest  
insult,  
tossed about, waiting for great things to happen,  
helplessly fearing for friends so far away,  
too tired and empty to pray, to think, to work,  
weary and ready to take my leave of it all?  
Who am I? This one or the other?  
Am I this one today and tomorrow another?  
Am I both at once? Before others a hypocrite,  
and in my own eyes a pitiful, whimpering  
weakling?  
Or is what remains in me like a defeated army,  
Fleeing in disarray from victory already won?  
Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions  
of mine,  
Whoever I am, Thou knowest me, O God, I am  
thine!

*The next month, on August 23, 1944, he wrote in a final letter to his friend Eberhard Bethge before he was murdered by the Nazis:*



...I am so sure of God's guiding hand that I hope I shall always be kept in that certainty. You must never doubt that I'm travelling with gratitude and cheerfulness along the road where I'm being led. My past life is brim-full of God's goodness, and my sins are covered by the forgiving love of Christ crucified. (John)

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**A friend has offered this to Parkwood:**

**For a donation to church funds you could be the proud owner of this Rowing Machine. In really good condition. It does fold in the middle for storage or transport. It can be picked up either from Brighthouse or from me at my home. (Too big to post).**



**Message me if interested.**

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**Remember these times!**



**Well join us on Easter Sunday and see!**

**He is gone.**

**You can shed a tear that He is gone, or you can smile because He has lived.**

**You can close your eyes and pray that He will come back, or you can open your eyes and see all that He has left.**

**Your heart can be empty because you can't see Him, or you can be full of the love that you shared.**

**You can turn your back on tomorrow and live for yesterday, or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.**

**You can remember Him and only that He has gone, or you can cherish His memory and let it live on.**

**You can cry and close your minds, be empty and turn your back, or you can do what He would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.**

*(Can' give credit because I don't know who wrote this. (ed!))*

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**Yippee! A contribution to YOUR Herald!**

**Way back on Valentine's Day in 1953 a young couple went on their first date.**

**It must have been a successful venture as the young man later gave the lady this Sugar Paste Easter egg.**

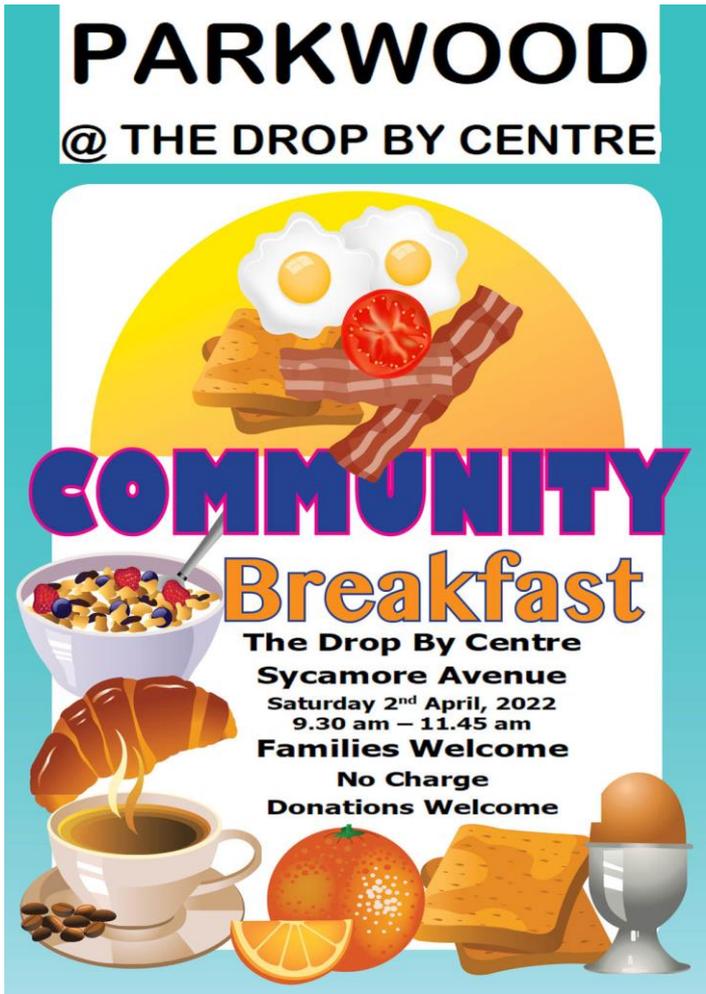


**Which has been preserved and admired over the years. I'm led to believe that it is still in perfect condition.**

**You have to guess who!**

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**DON'T FORGET:**



**PARKWOOD**  
@ THE DROP BY CENTRE

**COMMUNITY Breakfast**

The Drop By Centre  
Sycamore Avenue  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2022  
9.30 am – 11.45 am  
Families Welcome  
No Charge  
Donations Welcome

The poster features illustrations of a sunny background with a fried egg, tomato, and bacon on a toast; a bowl of cereal with fruit; a croissant; a cup of coffee with a saucer; an orange; and a slice of toast with a hard-boiled egg.

**TELL YOUR FRIENDS.**

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**The Broken Chain**

We little knew that morning that God was going to call your name.  
In life we loved you dearly, in death we do the same.  
It broke our hearts to lose you, you did not go alone;  
For part of us went with you, the day God called you home.  
You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide;  
And though we cannot see you, your always at our side.  
Our family chain is broken, and nothing seems the same.  
But as God calls us one by one, the chain will link again.

Anon.

**Spring Forward:-  
Don't forget to put  
your clocks forward  
one hour on  
Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> Night.**

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**Serious discussion!**



**Now March came in like a lamb!  
Watch this space.**