

## UPC Summer 2026 Newsletter



**Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” (James 1:17)**

Unionville Presbyterian Church      [www.upc.community](http://www.upc.community)  
600 Village Parkway, Unionville, ON L3R 6C2    905-475-6233

### **From our Interim Moderator Rev. Joan Masterton**

#### **With notes of summer...**

Dear friends,

As summer settles in with its long evenings, open windows, and the occasional heroic battle with a mosquito, I want to send greetings and gratitude to all of you. It continues to be a privilege to walk with this congregation in this interim season – an in-between time, yes, but also a holy time, full of possibility, learning, and the quiet work of the Spirit.

Very soon, Scott and I will be taking our annual camping holiday. I am looking forward to about six weeks of fresh air, simple meals, early nights, and the humbling reminder that backing into a campsite with a trailer is, for me, often far more complicated than it appears when Scott does it. I expect there will be moments of beauty, moments of quiet, and ample time to get caught up on my reading.

Scripture reminds us that Sabbath is not a luxury for when everything else is finished; it is part of God's good design from the beginning. In Genesis, after the work of creation, God rests and blesses the seventh day (Gen. 2:3). The commandment to “remember the Sabbath day” (Ex. 20:8) invites us to make space for rest, worship, delight, and trust. Sabbath is a way of saying, with our bodies as well as our prayers, that the world does not depend entirely on our effort – thanks be to God.

There is something especially renewing about receiving Sabbath in a natural setting, something that I have always cherished. Jesus told his listeners to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Matt. 6:26 – 29), and many of us have discovered that the trees, lakes, trails, gardens, and night skies still have sermons to preach – usually without requiring a committee meeting afterward. Creation has a way of slowing us down enough to notice grace: the shimmer of light on water, the patience of a growing seed, the courage of a bird singing before the day is fully awake.

My prayer for you this summer is that you, too, will find some Sabbath space. It may come on a campsite, a porch, a park bench, a walking path, a backyard chair, or beside an open window with a cup of tea. It may be a whole day, an afternoon, or ten blessed minutes when the phone is quiet and your soul can catch up with your body. Wherever it happens, may you know God's nearness there.

Some of you may face challenges this summer; may you face them with courage, confidence in God's presence within you, and with grace.

I also want to say how hopeful I am about the road ahead for UPC. Interim times can feel uncertain, but they can also become seasons of deep listening, honest reflection, renewed courage, and fresh imagination. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, we will gather as a congregation and discuss options for UPC's future. We will use words like hope and gratitude, and memories and legacy, and a continued determination to truly respond to God's mission for our place and time. I continue to see signs of God's faithfulness among you – in your welcome, your questions, your care for one another, your ongoing commitment to justice, and your willingness to keep becoming the church God is calling you to be.

So, take heart. Rest when you can. Laugh often. Wear sunscreen. Give thanks for the gifts of creation. And if you find yourself sitting quietly under a summer sky, remember that Sabbath is not about escaping the world God loves; it is about being restored so that we may return to that world with gentler spirits, clearer eyes, and renewed hope.

With gratitude and hope,

Joan

Rev. Joan Masterton  
Interim Moderator, Unionville PC  
416-992-4901  
[Jmmast0112@gmail.com](mailto:Jmmast0112@gmail.com)



## A note from Session

The Session report from June 7th provided the congregation with food for thought on the long-term future of UPC, which we will decide together. Remember that we will gather after worship on Sept. 13 for the opportunity to express our own thoughts and ideas and hear from each other. In the meantime, Session is also doing our best to attend to the on-going needs of the congregation and the operations of the church.

We are blessed with the leadership of our Interim Moderator, Joan, who arranges for our worship guest speakers, moderates Session, provides pastoral care and leads UPC with her wisdom and care during these times of major decision-making. Joan is leaving this week on a well-deserved vacation. We wish Joan safe travels and a time of peace and restoration. Session will be meeting over the summer and we are grateful that Joan will interrupt her vacation to moderate our meetings via Zoom.

As the Session report pointed out, "UPC has a capacity issue; we have too few people...able to help in key leadership positions." This means that Session members have been taking on more, particularly in areas of financial and facilities management. We have organized a garden clean-up day for June 27th, we are overseeing the closing of the current manse tenant rental and will arrange for preparing the house for new renters for 12 months. These are but a few of the ways in which Session is supporting UPC beyond their normal scope of responsibility. We ask for your support where you are able and for your prayers and understanding as we navigate these waters.

While these are challenges, there is also good news and blessings that we are most grateful for:

-  Those of you in our Care Network (including Session elders) who pray for and offer care to the people of UPC who are in need.
-  Our ENJOY lunch team (led by Linda) offering good meals and opportunities for fellowship weekly.
-  Rachad and our choir, who bring meaningful music and anthems to Sunday services.
-  The flower arrangement displays (primarily by Lorne) that change with the seasons.
-  Our AV team (led by Linda) who skillfully operate all our complex AV equipment each week.
-  Julie who, among other things, works with guest speakers weekly to provide PowerPoint slides.
-  Our Worship Support Team who assists during our Sunday services.
-  Hospitality Team (led by Vikki and Lynn) providing our much-appreciated coffee time after service and the banners and worship symbols that are rotated with the worship themes.



We celebrate the high school graduations of Preetham R., and Grace and Oliver G, and Usman R. from University of Toronto with a Master of Teaching. We wish them God's blessings and best wishes as they move on to the next chapter in their lives.



UPC and CPC ladies had a delightful potluck breakfast together at UPC earlier this month. There was great fellowship, great food and much laughter. We will have a joint service with CPC on July 26th. This is the day of CPC's Matthew Loo Memorial BBQ to which all UPC is invited.



Each Sunday we have folks who join our service via Zoom. Although they are not able to be with us in person, our technology, that allows them to tune in, is appreciated. Here is part of a lovely note we received from one of these families.

*"May God continue to bless you all. We know that in God's own time He will restore UPC.*

*We just have to remain faithful and trusting in Him for all that's to come. " Pat and Roy L.*

The UPC-CPC Campus Board met this week and among the topics of discussion was the Mistletoe Market. CPC is willing to take part as they did last year. The tentative dates were identified as either Nov. 14 or 21. For those of you who have been involved in the past, please come forward and let us know your thoughts about this.

I leave you with the same words as I have in past messages: Grounded in the Love of Jesus Christ, let's move into the future together with open hearts and minds.

*"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?*

*I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:19*

Blessings,

Margaret Mack



CPC & UPC Women's Potluck Breakfast  
June 13, 2026



## A message of thanks and good news from our Afghani family:

Dear Randy, Marg, and everyone at UPC,

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all of you for the support, generosity, and encouragement you have shown our family.

Yesterday was a very special day. My niece, Zainab, graduated from high school and proudly received her diploma. This milestone represents years of hard work, perseverance, and determination, and marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter in her life. It is a steppingstone toward even greater opportunities and future success. We are especially proud that she has enrolled in post-secondary education this fall, where she will continue pursuing her goals and building a bright future.

As we celebrated her achievement, I found myself reflecting on the important role each of you played in making this possible. By sponsoring her journey to Canada, you helped provide not only safety and stability, but also access to opportunities that many young people around the world can only dream of. Your kindness opened doors that have allowed her to learn, grow, and build a brighter future.

This accomplishment carries even deeper meaning because of the situation facing girls and women in Afghanistan today. At a time when many Afghan girls are denied access to education and women are restricted from pursuing work and participating fully in society, my niece was able to stand proudly on a graduation stage and receive her diploma. What may seem like a simple ceremony was, for us, a powerful reminder of the value of freedom, education, and opportunity.

Your support has helped make that possible. You have not only changed one young woman's life, but you have also helped create hope for a future filled with possibilities. The impact of your generosity will continue to be felt for many years to come as she pursues her goals and contributes to her community.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for believing in her and investing in her future. We are deeply grateful

for all that you have done and for the lasting difference you have made in her life.

With sincere appreciation and warmest regards,  
Maryam Durani

## A note from Randy C., who attended Zainab's graduation:

As well as Maryam's eloquent and heartfelt thanks on behalf of herself and the family, I might add a few comments about the graduation ceremony yesterday.

Over 100 graduates received their Ontario high school diploma via the York Region Adult Day School program. They ranged in age from 18 to 75, supported by eager, proud and boisterous family members. All of the graduates would have had a story. As an old white guy, I was surrounded by colours and languages and smiles and cameras. It was a happy and excited United Nations, and it was thrilling. Maryam and I and Zainab's mother Sosan were there to bear witness. (Father Abass and brother Ali Reza had to work).

Here was Zainab, now aged 21, who had about five years of schooling before arriving in Canada last September. She was able to earn her high school diploma in nine months – while also working jobs, figuring out a new country and culture, assisting her parents in their acclimation. It's hard to comprehend.

As I said to the congregation last fall when we greeted the family in the UPC sanctuary, our church was a cog in the process – an important cog, as was each of the other cogs – without which all of this wouldn't have happened for the Naqizadah family. And yesterday's graduation ceremony was another milestone in the process.

We have helped to change lives. And we can be proud.

Randy



Uncle Randy, Zainab, mom Sosan



This spring, a mother robin chose our family backyard to start her new family. The colour of the teal eggs was so beautiful, and I was astonished by God's creation and the beauty of nature.

Mother Robin's constant care and incubation brought the eggs to life. Through steady nourishment, the hatchlings gained the strength to open their eyes and mouths, and one day, to become independent on their own.

God created each of us as beautiful as those teal eggs. His everlasting love, provision, and faithfulness continue to nourish us every day, with the hope that one day we will become more like Jesus Christ, serving and loving one another.

Julie S.

### UPC and Markham Food Bank

Thank you for all the food and financial contributions over the past few years.

We are no longer collecting food items in our UPC Markham Food Bank wagon.

You are encouraged to continue with your support for food insecurity in Markham. For food items, add your contributions to the Markham Food Bank bins in any of the local grocery stores.

Financial contributions can be made through "Canada Helps" or UPC – cash, cheque or e-transfer by clearly noting it is a "Markham Food Bank" donation.

Your contributions are very much needed and they do make a difference in our community.

Jean C.