

A Service of Thanksgiving & Celebration for the life of
The Reverend Dr. Glynis Ruth Williams



Saturday, November 15, 2025, 2:00pm

Armour Heights Presbyterian Church
105 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, Ontario

Order of Service

Prelude

Welcome and Prayer of Invocation Rev. Dr. Harris Athanasiadis

Hymn #314 – God is love: come heaven, adoring *(see insert)*

Remembering Glynis

Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll, Janet Dench, Adeena Niazi,

Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald

Special Music: Celtic Blessing

Katie Moran Bart

Erin Stone

Scripture Readings

Psalms 23 Madeline Alexandra Macleod, Norah Glynis Macleod

1 Corinthians 13

Rev. Karen Hincke

Romans 8: 18, 35, 37-39

Rev. Dr. Carol Loudon

Meditation

Rev. Dr. Harris Athanasiadis

Hymn #717: We cannot own the sunlit sky

Prayer of Thanksgiving & The Lord's Prayer *(insert)* Rev. Dr. Ian Fraser

Hymn #722 – Lord, whose love

Committal

Benediction

Postlude

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Thank you to all who participated in the worship service.

On behalf of the family, we invite you for a time of fellowship and light refreshments in the hall located next to the sanctuary.

A Brief Biography of Glynis Ruth Williams

Born in Point-Claire Quebec on October 13, 1951. Dear daughter of the late Graham and Janet Williams (nee: Campbell), Loving sister of Susan Williams, (Tom Corbi). Dear aunt of Dan (Grace) and Andrew Corbi and great aunt of Gwen and Alice Corbi.

"I just love people!" the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams declared with a warm smile and sparkling eyes, right up until the end of her remarkable life. This simple statement was the driving force behind her life defined by fierce advocacy, radical inclusion, and deep compassion. Glynis began living out her vocation as a nurse, dedicating her early career to palliative care – a field just emerging in Canada. In this role, she supported people with profound compassion through their living and their dying. Her calling soon expanded beyond Canadian borders. A six-month stint working in a children's hospital in Nicaragua was transformative along with her involvement with Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel in San Salvador, forging close, lasting connections with Central America.

Glynis pursued ministry within the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC). Her ordination to refugee ministry was precedent setting for the PCC, empowering her to focus her ministry outside the bounds of a congregation, serving people in need of sanctuary. Glynis was an early and vocal advocate for LGBTQI+ justice, challenging the church to live out the Gospel's vision of radically inclusive love. As she so often asserted, right up until her last day, "It's not who we love, it's that we love – that's what matters!"

While serving refugees through Tyndale Ste. George's Community Centre in Montreal, Glynis conceived a bold vision. Following a period of thoughtful consultation, she established an independent organization dedicated entirely to refugee support, Action Réfugiés Montréal (ARM). Under her leadership for many years, ARM grew into a crucial force, centred on three key mandates: private sponsorship, work with refugee claimants in detention, and *jumelage* (twinning refugee women with local women for social support). Glynis spoke and preached untiringly, urging people to open their hearts (and wallets!) to support those seeking safety. Her deep empathy created particularly powerful bonds with the Afghan community living in Canada. She served a term with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Syria bringing her formidable heart and skill to Iraqi refugees fleeing violence. In recognition of her life-altering service, The Presbyterian College, Montreal conferred upon her the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity (*honouris causa*) in 2009.

Eventually, Glynis discerned a call to serve as the Associate Secretary of International Ministries with the PCC. This role involved a relentless schedule of international travel – which she thrived on, developing meaningful relationships with people around the world. The work of peace and justice in the Middle East became especially close to her heart. She was a dedicated bridge-builder, nourishing partnerships and organizing delegations that often led to life-changing experiences for participants.

While Glynis was a passionate and steadfast advocate for justice, even more she was known for her warmth, kindness, grace, fun, friendship, and her love of children and family. Her friendships extend around the globe and she is known for her thoughtfulness and gracious generosity. Just as she was retiring, dementia crept in, depriving her of the opportunity to explore a new chapter in her life. Though challenging, she faced these years with the same determination, grace and courage that defined her life. She was surrounded by a circle of friends whose prayers accompanied her, by the constant, loving presence of her sister, Susan, and her dedicated church community.

As she passes into the next realm, may she be welcomed with the same spirit of hospitality and joy that she extended to so many, and may her lifetime of work for God's justice, kindness, and love continue to ripple forth in the lives of all she touched.

