

# HURON SHORES UNITED CHURCH



One of the 2023 year's story - THE SHED!

January to December 2023



## OUR VALUES

*Faith/Love of God* = BELIEVING

*Community/Inclusion* = BELONGING

*Compassion/Compromise* = INVITING

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

“Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.

We welcome and include everyone into congregational life.”



## VISION STATEMENT

We seek to make this community a reflection of God’s plan, to be a safe haven for ALL who seek peace, justice, freedom; a place where differences are celebrated and accepted as gifts; where new ideas and new ways are not feared but rather embraced as we learn to expand our hearts so that ALL are welcome.

We affirm that this includes persons of ALL sexual orientations, gender identities races, abilities, ages, economic circumstances and talents. Jesus knew no boundaries. He reached out to all people, honouring ALL in their diversity.

We celebrate the richness this brings to our church. We are called to be a part of a ministry that welcomes and includes ALL, honours the gifts of each and recognizes that ALL receive God’s abundant grace.

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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

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It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone. I remember being at the Annual General Meeting last year as a guest minister, and now I have the privilege of being the permanent minister at Huron Shores United Church. Amazing how a year can change so much!

As individuals, and as a church, I'm sure some of our hopes and goals for this year have been realized, and some not. We have given and received, worked and played, praised and paused in our work here at Huron Shores in 2023. And much of that has been recorded here in this Annual Report, helping us to remember all that has gone on this past year - both the times of celebration and struggle, work and fun, loss, birth, and new friends.

This is a time to allow us all to reflect on what God has been doing here at Huron Shores United Church this past year, and also to help us look forward to what God will continue to do through us as we faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

I am thankful for the many opportunities God has given us to grow in the ministries that we have through this place, allowing us to reach out to our community with the Gospel and to make God's presence and our own, known in our community.

And I am encouraged to see how even during this time of transition and change, HSUC still aims to be a light bringing the Gospel to our neighbourhood, supported enthusiastically, financially and prayerfully by all of you. I continue to be humbled by those who faithfully serve and contribute to the ongoing ministry and life of our church. I am also thankful to God for our staff, church Council, committees, and dozens upon dozens of volunteers who give so much of their energy and love to the work of God in this place.

The list can go on and on, so as we look back, I have two questions for you: What are you thanking God for as you look back on 2023? And what are you seeking God for as we move into 2024? As you read the reports and summaries of what has happened this year, be sure to take time to be thankful for all that has been done, and is being done here in our church. Also, continue to pray for the leaders and volunteers as you read through their reports. Take the time to thank them for their work, and continue to pray for them as they serve.

As we begin a new church year, my heart's prayer is that we would be a church that continues to strive to be a true family of God, and Christ's disciples.

Blessings, Nancy  
Rev. Nancy Knowles  
Huron Shores United Church, Grand Bend

## COUNCIL CHAIR

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Dear Members of our Community of Faith,

2023 was a year of transition. Thanks to the amazing work of our leadership team and our then pastoral supervisor Reverend Knowles, we were able to implement all of the changes recommended by our Region.

This year the Affirm working group recommended that we no longer require a formal group. Rather, it is hoped that we have come to a point where we can live our vision of welcoming all regardless of sexuality and gender identity. No doubt, we will need to be vigilant at reflecting this in our practices.

We have also come to a point where we recognize that Accessibility no longer needs to be a formal group. It is thanks to the vigilance of some members of this group that we have a building and grounds that are the envy of many folks in our community. The members will continue to monitor and make recommendations to Council as needed.

After working with Rev. Nancy in her capacity as our pastoral supervisor, I could quickly see she is a woman of great faith, wisdom, intelligence and has a terrific attitude. Last spring we revitalized the Search Team and with the special guidance of Kate Monk we were, together with Thamesview United Church in Fullarton, able to reach a Collaborative Pastoral Agreement. We culminated this process with a Covenanting service at the end of January. We were honored with guest Rev Micol Cottrell from the WOW region. Finally, we were able to officially welcome Nancy in a lovely ceremony. I believe we are just beginning to see the advantages of partnering with this beautiful country church filled with lovely people and a fantastic choir.

Other Council changes include the resignation of Co-Chair Lynne Desjardine, a highly valued and long term Council member. Thankfully, Lynne continues to support Fellowship and Outreach initiatives and she serves in the capacity of a Congregational Visitor. In addition, our highly devoted and long term Chair of Worship and Music, Ruth Ann Egelson has resigned from her position as Chair. We are blessed that Ruth Ann has agreed to continue to serve on this team in addition to former Co-Chair Wilma Harris. Thanks to Karen Etherington for stepping into the breach! Finally, the Western Ontario Waterways Representative position is being held by Peter Challen. Thanks to Bob Illman and the late Roz MacDonald for their dedication to this important liason with the Region.

Last June, we had the great privilege of honoring the long term Chair of Finance, Bryan Beattie. Thanks to the very talented new chair Lori Hyatt and her team, we have implemented all of the Region's finance recommendations. As well, recommendations of former reviewers have been applied including incorporating all of the Grand Bend Place finances within HSUC bank account and oversight.

## COUNCIL CHAIR – cont'd

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Last spring, we had the great fortune of hiring Christine Wilde in the half time position of Community Wellness Coordinator. This woman of great integrity and passion for helping others has been such a boost to promoting our vision of community outreach. Almost simultaneously, and after four years of great service, Janna Oud decided to leave the Office Administration position. Fortunately for us, Janna continues to work with both our websites. Meanwhile, we were delighted to offer this ½ time employment opportunity to Christine Wilde. This is a solution that seems to be working very well for all concerned.

Also on the good news front, this year we benefited from receiving three grants. One allowed us to update some of our technology requirements. Also, we were able to employ Tyler McFadden with a summer student grant. He was a real boost to our community outreach opportunities and very popular! Finally, the Sunset Community Foundation supported us with a grant that will give us the ability to purchase appliances and shelving to support our Food Bank.

So what will 2024 bring to HSUC? We will be looking at fine tuning facility management, improving food security for our community and actively providing community outreach opportunities. All the while we will be deepening our relationship with God and each other which will strengthen us and make the world a better place.

However most importantly, with the Grace of God, we will be embracing stability...and a wonderful permanent minister.

Sincerely, Debra Gill, Chair HSUC



## COUNCIL SECRETARY

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Before writing this year's report, I read last years. The Council Secretary's job hasn't changed - it is the very same! I take the minutes of Council meetings, any Special Congregational meetings and the Annual Congregational Meeting. In addition to taking the minutes, I work with the Council Chair, our awesome Deb Gill, to create the agenda. About a week before each meeting, the team chairs send their monthly reports to me. These reports are compiled into one document - Team Reports. A few days before the meeting, the agenda, the previous month's minutes, team reports and any other attachments are sent to the Council members by email to prepare for the upcoming meeting. Once the minutes are approved, they are printed along with the attachments and kept in a binder. They are also posted on our website. The other thing that has not changed is my total admiration of each member of Council. Trust me, our church is in good hands!

I am adding to this year's report the job of producing the Annual Report for the Annual Congregational Meeting. My first one was in 2003 - that makes 20 years of doing this!! And, I actually really enjoy pulling it together. Using the technology available to create auto page numbering and table of contents and matching an image to a report to enhance it just adds to the fun! I hope you take the time to read all the carefully written reports - they really do tell our story!

Submitted by Mary McFadden, Council Secretary

## WESTERN ONTARIO WATERWAYS REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Two themes dominated 2023.

A review of the change from a four-tier to a three-tier court model, culminated in an October seminar which highlighted the concern that some congregations feel less connected to the Regional Council than they did to their former presbytery. Congregations that are smaller, with fewer personnel and resources, are finding this transition especially difficult. The Regional Council is well aware. The seminar was highly effective, and increased steps are being taken to address the concern. This does not appear to be an issue at HSUC.

The more predominant theme has been the Remit, to "Establish an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada. At HSUC, this has been a non-stop effort, since September, to ensure our whole Community of Faith has the necessary information to make an informed decision, including a Straw Vote, so that our Council can make the formal vote, by the deadline, March 31, 2024.

Regional meetings are held in-person and via Zoom twice a year; in the spring, and in the fall.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Challen

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATION & WEBSITE MAINTENANCE

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This year was yet another interesting year at Huron Shores United Church.

After four years, it was finally time to let go of the administration part of my job at the church, and I confidently handed it over to Christine Wilde in Oct 2023. I admire her amazing ability to be able to juggle both the Office Administration and Community Wellness position.

In January 2024, I also gradually handed over the production of shorelines to Christine and I think she's doing a fabulous job.

I will continue to be involved in the website updating for both Huron Shores United Church and Grand Bend place. I also look forward to collaborating with Rev. Nancy in the coming months to re-design the Huron Shores United Church website.

I would like to thank Steve Northey for always being committed to solving problems, finding solutions and being the voice of reason. And a thank you to Melodie Northey for covering my job duties while I was on holidays throughout the year. Thank you to Christine Wilde for her amazing contributions and patience while we transitioned the job over to her. And of course, to Mary McFadden for always being my life line at HSUC as a resource whenever I had questions.

It is nice to see people back inside the church and watching the amazing events that are put on by the "little church on the lake". There is no doubt in my mind that Rev Nancy Knowles will be the shining star that we've been longing for.

I think that HSUC is doing amazing things for our community which is much needed.

Keep pushing forward, keep giving and keep being a beacon in the town of Grand Bend.

Submitted by Janna Oud

## MEMBERSHIP

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Transfer in – none

Transfer out – one

Marriages - none

Deaths - 10

## MINISTRY & PERSONNEL

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**The Ministry and Personnel Team** is the congregation's supervisor of staff. We ensure their jobs are being performed properly, that our people are satisfied with their positions and that you, the congregation, are confident with their work performance. To do that, we monitor their job performance throughout the year and ensure that any concerns raised and compliments received are properly communicated to each individual.

Our 2023 M&P team consisted of Chair, Steve Northey, Peter Challen, Mary McFadden, Christine Bregman and Janice Sinker.

Normally, we meet a few times a year or as needed, and do informal checks with staff regularly throughout the year. In December we perform job interviews/performance reviews. When it comes to budgeting, we recommend salary increases to Finance, in keeping with United Church of Canada guidelines. Should you be interested in joining our team, please contact one of the members listed above.

2023 has continued to be a very challenging year at HSUC during the absence of a full-time minister, after Rev. Kate Crawford transitioned to long-term disability.

- A new supply minister Rev. Gail Fricker was hired as of June 26<sup>th</sup> 2022. Unfortunately, she had to seek medical leave in the fall and resigned from Pastoral duties with HSUC effective January 15, 2023.
- Council asked the Search Team to once again move forward to hire a new minister. This would be a supply position until Rev Kate's LTD term expires on or before January 15, 2024. Rev. Gail's resignation had meant that the Pulpit Supply initiated in 2021 was once again put into effect.
- I am pleased to report that Rev Nancy Knowles, Thamesview United in Fullarton and Huron Shores United entered into A Collaborative Agreement whereby Rev Nancy would be the Minister for both churches, splitting her time equally between both churches. (This was a supply position for HSUC until Jan. 15, 2024). Rev Nancy began her Collaborative Ministry in September. At this time Sunday services were moved to 9am for HSUC to allow Rev Nancy time to drive to Fullarton and perform the Sunday service at Thamesview.
- Rhonda Manore was hired as our bookkeeper when Sherrie Smith retired. Rhonda, who assumed the duties of Par/Envelope coordinator in 2022 added bookkeeping to her responsibilities. Her new title is Finance Administrator.
- Council hired Christine Wilde as Community Wellness Coordinator in March 2023. This is a contract position covered by a UCC grant. Christine has excelled in the position and has developed many new programs while reaching out to the community at large.
- A summer student, Tyler McFadden, was hired through a grant to assist the Wellness Coordinator and members of council during July and August. Tyler did a good job particularly with the music ministry and children's summer camp.

## MINISTRY & PERSONNEL – cont'd

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- In the Fall it was decided that Christine would assume the position of Office Administrator and that Janna would be responsible for Shorelines and updating web sites for both HSUC and Grand Bend Place. This will be a work in progress and monitored going forward.
- Our Congregational Visitors Joanne, Lynne, and Peter (Rosalind resigned in the Fall) have been busy this year keeping in touch with many of our congregants by phone, emails and personal visits. The CVs began working with our new minister, Rev. Nancy Knowles, in the Fall of 2023. CV administration is the responsibility of M&P.
- The staff reviews were held in December and staff expressed their gratitude for all that the team does to assist them in the performance of their jobs.
- We remind the congregation that they can provide input to the Ministry and Personnel Team relating to our staff. If you see a problem that is staff related, please speak to one of the Ministry and Personnel Team.
- On behalf of the HSUC Ministry and Personnel Team, I would like to thank our 2023 staff: Janna, Christine, Elva, Bob, Sherrie, Rhonda, our Congregational Visitors: Peter, Lynne and Joanne, and of course, Rev. Nancy, for all they did for our Community of Faith in 2023.

Submitted by Steve Northey, Chair

## HURON SHORES UNITED CHURCH STAFF

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Minister : Rev. Nancy Knowles

Director of Music : Elva McIntyre

Church Office Administrator : Christine Wilde

Community Wellness Coordinator: Christine Wilde

Finance Administrator: Rhonda Manore

Custodian : Bob Stewart

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

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"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us and helps make the world a better place."

The Worship and Music Team and its volunteers attempt to live this relationship and use their talents to "Make the world a better place."

The Worship and Music Team voted to change from 'Let's Talk Worship' to remain consistent with the names of other teams. Meetings were held monthly. Regular attendees were Elva McIntyre (Music director), Janice Sinker (keyboard and vocals), Mary McFadden (Decor), Karen Etherington (Readers), Deb Hinz (Communion set up), Chip Styles (slide specialist), Wilma Harris (past co-chair) and Ruth Ann Eagleson (Chair). Virginia Scott (Christian Education) and John Scott (Right Relations) joined to assist with the picnic and indigenous services. Peter and Trish Challen replaced Chip as slide specialists when Chip retired in September. Rev. Nancy Knowles joined us to assist with summer worship and then as our Supply Minister in September. It has been a pleasure to work with Rev. Nancy.

A huge 'Thank You' to Wilma Harris for her years of service as chair and co-chair of Worship. When the Matrix system was presented by Council, Wilma resigned as co-chair. Ruth Ann remained as chair. Wilma's assistance remained a call away when needed and she remains a valuable member of our team.

A special thanks to choir members for their dedication and service of song. Thank you also to Paul Seagrave and Janice Sinker for accompaniment and vocals. A huge thank you goes to our music director, Elva McIntyre. The music report will be submitted by Elva under choir. Doug Proctor, tracks and records copyright usage which is greatly appreciated.

Guest Worship Leaders once again carried us from January to June. We are grateful to each of the following for their time and Christian dedication in assisting us. Rev. Harry Disher, Peter Challen, Kate Monk, Heather McKechnie, Rev. Marlene Britton, Rev. David Kai, and Rev. Nancy Knowles.

Our greeters create the welcoming attitude in our church. Thank you to each and every one who warmly welcomed others to our church. We appreciate your enthusiastic reception to others. Thank you also to bell ringers who announce our presence on Sunday mornings. Larry Taylor, Marla and Barry Nichols, Oakley and grandpa Norm Harris. We thank Vince Bury for his dedication as lift operator to assist with accessibility. Thank you to Deb Gill our Chair of Council who set up rosters for helpers for the summer services. Her focus on assisting with arranging helpers for Sunday services is appreciated.

Special themes for services were Black History, Family Sunday, AGM, Holy Humour, Covenanting with Council, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Mothers and Others, Fathers and Others, God Will Make a Way (Lois Gill), Picnic on the Farm, Indigenous Heritage, Thanksgiving, Ninth Anniversary, Remembrance Day, Advent and Christmas Eve. Rev. Nancy wowed us with her summer services where we found an enjoyment of Blues, Opera, Jazz and music in its many genres. Thank you to Janice for the continuation of Jazz Vespers.

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC – cont'd

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Thank you to the Tech Team personnel who on a weekly basis make it possible for both Zoom and You Tube access to our services. Thank you to Dan Gill, Chris and Joanne Barry, Christine Bregman, Lori Hyatt, Bob Illman, Donna Frim, Nelson Anselmo, Chip Styles and Leslie Bella for assisting at the console and Zoom. Thank you to Dennis McIntyre, Will VanderLinden and Doug Kyle for manning the sound. The retirement of Leslie Bella meant discontinuance of the Phone Ministry which served us well.

A caring community of Faith is behind the success of Worship and Music. Thank you to all who gave their gifts of time, talent and love to make our church what it is.

Submitted by Ruth Ann Eagleson, Worship and Music Chair



## CHOIR DIRECTOR

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As we reflect on the past year, it is abundantly clear that music has continued to be a very important part of our community of faith. Despite the challenges of being without a minister at the beginning of the year, the choir continued to keep our music ministry alive with weekly anthems and/or special music.

Lois Gill brought a new anthem to the choir for a special service which is now a choir favourite, " God Will Make Away". John Scott invited Jeffery George to play his flute and speak on the Sunday for Indigenous People. The last Sunday in June was the church picnic at the Eagleson's. Our newest choir member, Brenda Heath, played the music for that Sunday.

Rev. Nancy Knowles led our summer services. Special music each week came from Rod Culham (Thamesview Music Director), Tom Taylor, Janice Sinker, Sharon Beeler, Jaidyn McFadden, a duet from Rev. Nancy and Janice, and the last summer music supplied by Louise Dockstader and friends.

A few choir members were able to join with the Thamesview choir for Good Friday and at Christmas. There will be more opportunities to sing with this choir as we move forward.

A special Thank You to Paul Seagrave and Janice Sinker for their musical talents and support.

A big Thank You to Nelson Anselmo and all of the tech team for everything that they do. Thank you to the team for installing the hanging mics. It certainly has made the setting up and sound checks much easier and quicker.

I am grateful to be your Director of Music and grateful to have such an amazing choir. Thank you Janice and choir for the "Tribute" song and for making my first 25 years such a great success! (And the cake was good too!)

2024 Here We Come! Hear Us Sing!

Submitted by Elva McIntyre, Music Director



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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**FAMILY PICNIC & SERVICE** - The church family picnic and service was held on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at Ruth Ann and Ken Eagleson's Farm, as a pot luck lunch. A big Thank you to the Eaglesons for hosting us at their farm. Virginia Scott was the worship leader with Rev. Knowles helping with the message and music. A big Thank You to Brenda Heath for providing the music, and to Julie Ciufu and Ann Russell who arranged to have some games for all ages. Everyone had fun and it was well attended.

**CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMP** - The theme was "Kids in the Kitchen". Christine Wilde was the camp director and we had help with the Summer Student Tyler McFadden. We had many volunteers: Ann Taylor, Brynn Ciufu, Addison Wood, Lynda Hillman-Rapley, Lois Gill, Amelia Wilde, Julie Ciufu. Guest Facilitators: Beate Schultz, Amanda McEwen and John Scott. A big Thank You to everyone who helped, and to Rosaland MacDonald for arranging the grant through the Scotiabank Employee Volunteer Program. There were 16 children between the ages of 7 to 12 attending 9 a.m. to noon daily for 5 days. Each day was a different theme and everyone had a good time.

**BAPTISM/NEW MEMBER** - There were no baptisms or new members this year.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** - There are no students regularly attending Sunday School at this time. The Sunday School Box was created by Julie Ciufu, Sunday School Supervisor. The box contains books, toys, colouring, activity sheets and 2 tablets. This is refreshed as needed by Julie and is at the back of the Sanctuary on the children's table. Ann Russell currently looks after making sure that the tablets are charged up for use. Julie Ciufu and Ann Russell provide support to children and their parents who may attend and want to use the activities in the box.

**ANGEL TREE** - Ann Russell manages this program. With the help of the Grand Bend Health Centre we provided gifts and gift cards to 2 or 3 families this year. Everyone was helpful in providing the items that were needed by these families.

**COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY** - We have been studying online since Covid was running rampant. Our lessons are easy to find. What we do is ask the minister to furnish us with this week's Bible verses that she is going to preach on. We then discuss the Bible verses, and try to guess the topic that the sermon will be on. It is an interesting process as we all have our own perspectives, and though we may argue a point, no one's point of view is considered right or wrong. We leave it up to God to sort it out for us in our hearts. Our purpose is to learn what is in the Bible and with so many versions of the Bible out there, it's challenging. We try, we have fun, we laugh, we even cry sometimes. If you can join us, we'd love to have you. Wednesday morning, 10 a.m. If you contact Vince, he'll send you the Zoom link to join us. [skotia.vince@gmail.com](mailto:skotia.vince@gmail.com).

Submitted by Vince Bury

## CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT – cont'd

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**GRAND BEND VIPASSANA MEDITATION GROUP** - The Grand Bend Meditation Group has continued to meet on Zoom throughout the year with a break during the Christmas holidays and another break during July and August. Our session format follows the Vipassana (insight) meditation tradition as introduced in the groups early days under the guidance and direction of Reverend Kate Crawford.

The Grand Bend Meditation group is an inclusive group. We currently have a mailing list of thirteen and are keen to welcome new members. The meditation group holds weekly sessions that include sitting meditation, dharma talks, and Metta practice. Vipassana meditation, more commonly known as insight meditation, is a non-denominational spiritual practice typically bringing enhanced self-awareness, better stress management, improved self-confidence, empathy, and interpersonal skills. These sessions are suitable for both new and experienced meditators. Everyone is welcome.

Although, the group originally met in-person, the circumstances surrounding the Covid pandemic resulted in the move to hold sessions on Zoom. The group has agreed to continue meeting on Zoom and have relinquished their reserved space in the Fellowship Hall. We are grateful to Huron Shores United Church for allowing us to continue our sessions accessing the Church's Zoom licence. There is no fee for the sessions, but our members are encouraged to show gratitude for the practice through donations to Huron Shores United Church or community-based service groups.

This year the group held a well-attended half day retreat in June and plans to hold at least one retreat each year. This is an opportunity for members to meet in-person once again and to deepen their commitment to their practice. Although some may see meditation as a solitary pursuit, the sangha (meditation community) is a very important element. It provides a supportive environment where through interaction, we grow and learn with one another, which in turn means we can then support others in the wider community.

Submitted by Karen Hodgins

**LIBRARY** - The library is located in a cabinet in the Fellowship Hall. There is a sheet on the inside of the door for anyone wishing to sign out a book and sign in when the book has been returned.

The members of the Christian Education Team are Dan Gill; Julie Ciufu, Sunday School Supervisor; Ann Russell, and myself, Virginia Scott. More members are always welcome. It is greatly appreciated that Lois Gill, Karen Hodgins, Vince Bury, Ruth Ann Eagleson and Christine Wilde help with our groups.

Submitted by Virginia Scott, Chair

## FELLOWSHIP AND OUTREACH

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Wow! Where did that year go? Lots of great stuff has happened at Huron Shores this year.

- **Right Relations:**
  - Monthly meetings were held discussing books by various authors re: Indigenous issues.
  - An Indigenous Prayer Day Sunday service was held on June 11.
  - We participated with Kids in the Kitchen Camp (ages 7-12) where we made 3 Sisters soup and with a talk/demo on “drumming”
  - \$6,700 was grant received from the Regional Council of the United Church of Canada to support Indigenous programs re: Truth and Reconciliation Awareness and Education.
  - We held an “Every Child Matters” walk to beach with a smudging ceremony in the Community Living Room on September 30.
  - We provided information re: Remit vote on “Establishing an Autonomous Indigenous Organization.” within The United Church of Canada.

We are very grateful to John Scott for all that he does as chair of this group.

- **“Help the Hungry”/Food Bank /Parking Project** - The donations from parking boxes amounted to \$2,909.29 and local outreach. This amount is down by approximately \$1,000 from last year. Thanks to Peter Challen and Lynne Desjardine and Linda O. for looking after boxes and counting.
- **Food Bank Sundays** (first Sunday of the month) was restarted this year. Financial donations have been dispersed to Huron County Food Distribution Center, Blessings in Zurich and Ailsa Craig food bank. Dry good food donations have been sent to Blessings in Zurich and our own Food pantry.
- **Gift cards:** have been purchased for the food bank through the grocery card program which benefits the church. These gift cards are used by those in need of fresh foods etc.
- **Caring Casseroles:**
  - Meal-making sessions continued to happen every 2 months with good volunteer participation and feedback. This year cabbage roll casserole, stew, chicken pasta bake, turkey dinner and chili macaroni casserole were made and frozen. For approximately \$100 we acquired containers big enough for food for 2 people for approximately \$4 each, by purchasing food locally and utilizing sales. We gratefully received donations again this year to support this program.
  - Volunteers prepared lasagna for Valentine’s fundraising dinner for the foodbank.
- **Free Store:**
  - Successful spring and fall free stores were held with many generous donations of clothing, small appliances, décor items helping many families in need including a local Ukrainian family
  - Donations of \$1,200 (from both free stores) to this cause were allocated to Caring Casseroles and local outreach. Thank-you Joanne Barry and Ruth Ann Eagleson for organizing this very worthwhile outreach program.

## FELLOWSHIP AND OUTREACH – cont'd

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- **Mission and Service:** Interesting and informative monthly reports given by Roger and Lori Hyatt with respect to both local and international stories/events. Thank-you Lori and Roger.
- **Prayer Shawls:** The Prayer Shawl group continued to meet regularly, making shawls, prayer bears, hearts, and baby hats. In the winter, hats, mittens and scarves were made for the Women's Shelter in Sarnia. There is always a supply of these items at the Church to be taken and/or distributed by anyone. These can be found in the Greenway Chapel, in the sanctuary, or the cupboard in the Fellowship Hall.
- **Sunday Nighters/Brunchers:** This was restarted after several years and has changed to Sunday Brunchers, held after church once a month. Thanks to Peter and Trish Challen for organizing this.
- **Summer Student:** We were successful in securing a government grant (\$3,700) from Canada Student Jobs for a summer student (Tyler McFadden) for July- August.
- **Other Happenings:**
  - Christine Wilde, Debbie Procter and Lois Gill filled out a grant application for Sunset Community Foundation and we are so grateful to be the recipients of a grant of \$8,300! This will be used to support our "Help the Hungry" food bank initiative for appliances and shelving etc. for the foodbank initiative. Thank-you Sunset Community Foundation!
  - Christine and Lois worked with the Jingle Bell group to plan community events during Light Up Grand Bend weekends.
  - Volunteers helped to assist refreshments and snacks in Huron Shores Café, outdoor summer services, and Grand Bend Place "Jazz Vespers" concerts.

We are looking forward to more exciting things happening this year at Huron Shores United Church!

Submitted by Lois Gill, Fellowship and Outreach Chair



## COMMUNITY WELLNESS

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As the resilient residents of Grand Bend and area began to be more and more confident about gathering in person and overcoming the fears still lingering after Covid 19 isolation, I came on board as Community Wellness Program Coordinator in March. My goal was to reenergize the Community Wellness Program and provide new opportunities for friends and neighbours to gather, learn, reconnect, volunteer and collaborate once more.

It wasn't long before we were able to reboot established programs like Coffee Club each Thursday and Pole Walking each Tuesday. To launch a new pole walking group, we were pleased to welcome Kate Mason, OCT, from the Grand Bend and Area Community Health Centre to give us a demonstration.



I assumed the coordinator role with the goal to identify and take advantage of every opportunity to become more visible in the community, such as attending the Grand Bend Volunteer Fair and speaking at Women's Probus and the Huron Country Playhouse Guild meetings. I took over creating social media posts and hardcopy posters to share around town. I became the point of contact for new volunteers and supervised our HSUC summer student.

Key to the plan for this role was to get to know members of Council and other volunteers in order to support them in their dreams for our community and help promote their events. It is such a privilege to serve in that capacity for the Right Relations team and their annual Truth and Reconciliation Walk; for the Grand Place team providing top-notch entertainment events; for the Fellowship and Outreach team and their Caring Casseroles, craft-making, and other activities; for the Property team and their Safe Food Handling Course; and much more.

It was especially exciting to be part of the Christian Education team in the summer to design and implement the Kids in the July Kitchen Summer Camp, reaching children who might not otherwise be able to attend camp, for an entire week of fun, crafts and cooking!

Meanwhile, we introduced some new opportunities, including our Drumming Circles led by Sheila Horrell in both the summer and the fall, and our Avoiding Scams and Frauds talk by Elder Abuse Ontario.

As relationships blossomed, the CWP soon became a conduit for information from local organizations like the Grand Bend Legion, Grand Bend Rotary, Grand Bend Horticultural Society, The Jingle Bells Group and many more, who held events of interest to our community of faith. Other groups enlisted my assistance to promote and coordinate their events onsite, including

Partners in Learning, Workout for Your Life, Lakeshore Eco-Network and others who held a wide variety of workshops and talks in our welcoming space.

## COMMUNITY WELLNESS – cont'd

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As my role has become popular in the community, two major initiatives have taken root:

1. Founding the Grand Bend Cares Community Group – a powerful collaboration with 13 organizations serving the Grand Bend community. Our charter event - Warm Up Grand Bend - brought together dozens of volunteers, donors and needy families for Grand Bend's first community wide warm clothing drive.
2. Establishing Grand Bend's first local Food Bank, beginning with a small food pantry in our Fellowship Hall and stocked in time for the holidays with the help of GB firefighters, GB police, No Frills the GB & ACHC, and the community at large. As the vision has evolved, we proudly won a grant from the Sunset Community Foundation to furnish a new, independent location, and acquired a shed to be installed behind the Green Cathedral. Community support has grown exponentially since the idea first emerged, with several members reaching out with their desire to help build our volunteer cadre of "food rescuers."

Finally, late in the year, I took on the added role of Office Administrator, and quickly integrated facility usage and administration tasks into my daily routine. There has been a very productive relationship between the two roles that has resulted in a more integrated and comprehensive approach to both. A win/win for all!

We are looking forward to 2024 to see these projects gain momentum! It has been my great privilege to be part of an overall effort to reduce social isolation, alleviate conditions of poverty and food insecurity, and enhance HSUC's contributions to the physical, emotional and spiritual health of this wonderful community!

Submitted by Christine Wilde,  
Community Wellness Program Coordinator

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

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The Property Management portfolio is a large component of the everyday operations and maintenance of our church building. Without the help of the many volunteers on the Property Management working groups, it would not have been possible for me to have looked after all of this by myself.

The following working groups make up the Property Management Team: Maintenance, Operations & Repairs, Outside Green Working Group, the Security Working Group, the Kitchen Care Working Group, the Embellishment Working Group, and the Accessibility Working Group. The following volunteers are all part of the Property Management Team; Dan & Lois Gill, Roger & Lori Hyatt, Chris & Joanne Barry, Glen Miller, John & Deb Gill, Bob Illman, Doug Procter, Mary McFadden, Karen Etherington, Carey Eddy, Jacqui Krech, Mary Marg Prowse, Judy Riley, Vince Bury, Wilma Harris, Donna Frim & Ruth Ann Eagleson. A huge thank you to all these volunteers!

New Terms of Reference for all the Working Groups have been formalized and submitted for approval at the Annual Congregation Meeting on March 10, 2024.

A big thank you to Bob Stewart, our custodian, who faithfully every week shows up and cleans our building. It is such a pleasure to walk into our building and see everything sparkling. In January, a new snow blower was purchased with donations from two anonymous donors. A snow removal contract was arranged at a cost of \$175 all inclusive per month from November 1/23 to March 31/24.

Our contract with Schindler Elevator Corporation was renewed until May 2023. The Lambton Public Health Unit recertified our kitchen for another year.

A proposal was made to Council to purchase a shed for the purposes of using it for extra storage for our overflow of church inventory and housing a new Food Insecurities Food Bank outreach program. The Accessibility Team became a Working Group of the Property Management Team.

In February, new bristle weatherstripping lock guard, astragal and door sweeps were placed on the Queen's Ave. and Main St. entrances. This work had to be completed as part of our Faithful Footprints "Green Energy Audit", which also showed how much energy savings we have saved with the installation of our new windows in the Sanctuary/Gathering Place. A final report was submitted and our final \$1,000 has been received as part of our grant.

In April, Inglewood Mechanical changed all the filters on our HVAC system. This service is done quarterly. The Fire Inspector for Lambton Shores did a fire inspection of all our fire equipment in our building. to make sure everything was up to code.

In May, exit sign batteries were replaced, fire extinguishers serviced, the automatic door opener repaired and the elevating device license was renewed. A suitable space was found for the Church Trustees filing cabinet. Also, this month, the parking donation boxes were readied for summer, and the sprinkler system was turned on for the summer with hoses in place to

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – cont'd

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water the gardens. The Green Cathedral benches, stage and walkways were pressure washed and the sunshades were installed.

Two storage cupboards were donated to the church to be used by the Community Wellness Coordinator for our Food Insecurities Food Bank initiative.

Throughout the seasons, the Embellishment Working Group has been doing a great job making our building look amazing, highlighting the various church seasons and special occasions.

New one-man walking signs were made for our parking spaces to the north of the Queens Ave. entrance. Volunteers were asked to help each Sunday with the placement of these.

In June, a permanent fix to the Main St. door latch was completed, a new tap was installed in the lady's washroom, and the lift service contract was renewed. To keep the outside looking beautiful, a volunteer maintenance schedule for the church gardens was made up of with 13 volunteers offering to help. Mulch was purchased and spread on our church gardens, windows were cleaned, and the Green Team looked after cutting the lawn while the custodian was on holidays.

In August, three accessibilities pull down bars were installed in 3 of our washrooms. The cost was partially covered by a \$2,500 grant. As well, new headphones were purchased by the Accessibility working group for use on Sunday morning by those with hearing impairments. In the Green Cathedral, the dead Scotch Pine tree was cut down and the wood removed, along with the dead branches on our Queens Ave Oak tree, and a new battery-powered lawn mower was purchased. An overall end of the summer cleanup for the inside of the church was organized in preparation for our indoor church services.

In September, unfortunately our Pride flag was stolen. The incident was captured on our video surveillance camera and reported to the police.

The cost of our water bill for 3 months was excessive. An internal audit showed we only used our sprinkler system eleven times from May 9 to July 1. The only reason the Property Team can account for this excessive water usage was from the Rotary Refilling Station. It was suggested we put a separate meter on the water refilling station and the sprinkler system for the 2024 summer season.

A Safe Food Handling Course was conducted on October 5 and eleven members of our COF attended and were certified.

A fire drill was held on October 19 at our Council meeting. Each member of Council was given a copy of the Fire Drill Procedures for our building in case of a Code Red.

In October, a new security working group was formed. Members include Dan Gill (Chair), Glen Miller, Chris Barry, Roger Hyatt, and Debbie Procter.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – cont'd

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A new bulk purchasing system was implemented for all custodial supplies for our church to help reduce the same supplies being ordered by different individuals.

In November, the Accessibility Working Group and Rev. Knowles produced a church information pamphlet and submitted it for consideration by Council. The group also placed a reminder in Shorelines about not using plastic water bottles in our building.

A 10' x 10' used shed was purchased from Bayfield Recreation. The cost of the shed including delivery and tax was \$5,560.00. This required a new cement pad to be poured in the Green Cathedral to set the shed on. The physical labour was provided by our church volunteers. A trench will have to be dug from the shed to the church to provide electricity to it. The walkway in the Green Cathedral was extended back to the shed as a bonus.

A new maintenance and repair working group was established as part of the Property Management Team. This working group consists of Dan Gill, Roger Hyatt, and Chris Barry.

Ryan Lalonde's two poems were framed and hung on the wall in the Queens Ave. entrance, with thanks to Karen Etherington for donating the funds for this project.

In December, windows were cleaned inside and out. LED lights were installed in the Queens Ave., Main St. entrances and the Sanctuary/Gathering Place.

\*A full report with details and costs is available from the Property Management Chair, if requested.

Submitted by Debbie Procter, Property Management Team Chair

**A JOB FOR SOMEONE:** Every week the two pendulum clocks in our building must be wound up by Property Management. A volunteer is needed to take over this duty, and should be comfortable climbing a step ladder. Please talk to me if you are willing to take on this job!



## GRAND BEND PLACE

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Grand Bend Place: Centre for the Living Arts is alive and well at Huron Shores United Church! After a successful 2022 concert season, we planned an interesting and varied season for 2023. Interest in our venue is gaining within our Community of Faith and beyond into the community at large. We offer interesting concerts, some original artists and some tribute acts as well. Our goal is to offer something for every musical taste. Our concert line-up for 2023 included the following concert performances:

- **The Dixie Demons**
- **Fiddlestix**
- **The Music Makers Little Big Band**
- **Emm Gryner**
- **The Ballaghs**
- **Always Abba**

Grand Bend Place continued to offer Jazz Vespers services throughout 2023, featuring local jazz artists along with liturgy.

Sunset Cinema has found a home in Grand Bend Place as well, showing a feature film every month between September and May. (popcorn included)

Many community groups and organizations hold their meetings and functions at Grand Bend Place as well, including Partners in Learning, Workout for Your Life, prayer shawl ministry, Community Foundation, Thursday Cafe, Pole Walkers and many more evolving organizations as the schedule for our building allows.

### **Grand Bend Place Team 2023**

Janice Sinker: Chair  
Bob Illman  
Debbie Procter  
Carey Eddy  
Tom Taylor  
Paul Rivard

Submitted by Janice Sinker, Chair



# CONTRIBUTION RANGE REPORT

## 2023 CONTRIBUTION RANGE REPORT

Huron Shores United Church  
For Period: 01/01/2023 to 12/31/2023

*Huron Shores United Church*  
**Contribution Range Report**  
For Period: 01/01/2023 to 12/31/2023

15 PM Page: 1

<u>Contribution Range</u>	<u># of Contributors</u>	<u>Total Given</u>	<u>Average per Contributor</u>
0 -	0	85	0.00
0.01 -	100	51	2,699.50
100.01 -	200	10	1,583.50
200.01 -	300	5	1,203.00
300.01 -	400	1	322.50
400.01 -	500	14	6,824.00
500.01 -	750	12	7,313.25
750.01 -	1,000	10	9,205.00
1,000.01 -	1,500	14	17,070.50
1,500.01 -	2,500	13	24,288.00
2,500.01 -	5,000	19	66,010.50
5,000.01 -	10,000	8	55,967.45
10,000.01 -	15,000	0	0.00
15,000.01 -	25,000	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>\$192,487.20</b>	<b>\$795.40</b>

Among the 242 contributors there are a total of 50 who donate monthly through **"Pre Authorized Remittance" (PAR)**. This is a much appreciated, vital financial stream that is a reliable, consistent support of Huron Shores United Church. **As we all know, costs have risen a great deal over the last few years and our expenses are no different!**

As a result of many factors, including fewer "in person" attendances at our Sunday services due, in part, to the "covid factor", the popularity of Zoom, other donations are difficult to track by category. Although the donation envelope numbers are still used in our accounting programme for tax receipts, electronic transfers, PayPal, personal cheques or other methods of payment have become more popular. We still have a good supply of the traditional donation envelopes, therefore, feel free to let me know if you need a box.

With the introduction of the "Finance Administrator" position, the Bookkeeping and Envelope & PAR Coordinator's responsibilities have been amalgamated. Church donations received from the "Counters" are still entered into our accounting programme (Power Church), primarily for the purpose of issuing tax receipts. The Finance Administrator also deposits money received, that was not handled by the "Counters" on a weekly basis, and carries out other typical bookkeeping responsibilities.

We cannot express strongly enough our appreciation to everyone who has continued to financially support Huron Shores United Church and its many community outreach programmes.

If you are interested in **Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)**, would like to **increase** your monthly donations or have a question about your tax receipt, please contact me at:

Rhonda Manore, Finance Administrator  
Phone: 519-238-2432  
Email: [manore@ezlink.ca](mailto:manore@ezlink.ca)

## STEWARDSHIP

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**Throughout 2023 Stewardship**, reporting through the Finance team, continued to inform the congregation of ways they could support the financial needs of Huron Shores United Church and expressed gratitude to all for their contributions. Once again, October was Stewardship Month. In conjunction with the month's spiritual messages of Thanksgiving, weekly announcements in Shorelines spoke of various methods available for giving such as Personal Envelopes, PAR (pre-authorized remittance, encouraging year-round financial support), Special Envelopes, and Grocery/Gift Card purchases.

- The congregation was informed as to how their contributions to Huron Shores United Church are used in general operations, as well as how they could assign portions of their donations to specific programs including General Operating, Debt Retirement or the Mission and Service Fund.
- Letters from Rev Nancy, Lori Hyatt-Chair of Finance, and Steve Northey-Chair of Stewardship were mailed in October to celebrate our 9th anniversary. This year, Anniversary donations of over \$37,000 were gratefully accepted to assist our Debt Reduction program.
- A weekly announcement in Shorelines provides information on five ways to financially support HSUC during these times of need.
- A tri-fold brochure has been prepared and will be sent out to the Grand Bend Area before Easter. Purpose is to inform the community about Huron Shores United, our new Minister and to invite people to attend. Thanks to Donna Frim and Rev Nancy for their input and designing of the brochure.
- A key component of the Stewardship program is 'gratitude'. Members and adherents of HSUC are greatly appreciated for their monthly financial contributions or whatever they can give to the ongoing support of the church's operations, debt retirement and internal/community projects. The Donor Wall outside the Sanctuary continues to be updated yearly and expresses gratitude to all those who financially contribute to the HSUC debt retirement fund.

We recognize that there are so many others in our community who contribute to our present and future, not only of monetary treasures but also gifts of their time, and talents. We extend our gratitude to those who make up our council, teams and working groups here at Huron Shores United Church. These individuals work very hard behind the scenes to make our Church such a vibrant Community of Faith.

Thank you to all supporters of Huron Shores United Church.

Submitted by Steve Northey

## GROCERY GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER

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On the final Sunday of each month, we submit bulk orders for “Grocery” Gift Cards to Sobeys and to President’s Choice (No Frills). Although there have been some challenges, persistence pays off and it always works out. Over the years, both grocery card chains have made changes in the way the cards are ordered, processed, paid for, and delivered. Since Sobeys cards are shipped by Canada Post from Stellarton, Nova Scotia and PC cards are shipped by FedEx from Minnesota via Tennessee, it is understandable that we don’t always receive the cards when expected.

But the work has been worthwhile. Although the amount is lower than in recent years, we still earned \$4,292 for the church in 2023 bringing the total earned through this programme to \$63,132. We have purchased over \$1.5 million worth of gift cards.

We need more help to make this programme sustainable. Only half of our Sobeys orders reached or exceeded the \$5,000 threshold meaning that we earned 2% rather than 5% on our orders. Perhaps everyone needs to eat more, but a better alternative might be if more of our COF participated on a regular basis. And by inviting family, friends and neighbours to participate as well. There is no cost whatsoever and card purchasers receive an income tax receipt for their share of the part that goes to the church. By participating, everyone benefits!

Thanks to all who help make this work. If you need more information, please let me know.

Submitted by Doug Procter



## TRUSTEES

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The trustees of Huron Shores United Church are: Glen Miller (chair), Carey Eddy, Norm Harris, Doug Kyle, and John Scott. Our responsibility continues to be the general overseeing of the church property and resources. The Team meets at least once annually. Lately, discussion has been centered around the "Terms of Reference" for the Board of Trustees within the new document "Activity and Communications Governance Flow 2024", and how that impacts the work of the Trustees. It is an honour to serve on this leadership team.

Submitted by Glen Miller

# GRAND BEND UNITED CHURCH CEMETERY

YEAR ENDING December 31, 2023

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## BANK ACCOUNTS AND INVESTMENTS VALUES

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B.M.O. Community Account	\$ 6,073.62	
T.D. Canada Trust Community Plan	\$ 6,000.00	
G.I.C. Principal Amount		
#7 BMO G.I.C.	\$ 1,745.79	Matures 8 March 2024
#8 BMO G.I.C.	\$ 8,500.00	Matures 8 March 2024
#19 BMO G.I.C.	\$15,000.00	Matures Jan. 29, 2024.
#20 BMO G.I.C.	\$ 8,000.89	Matures July 4, 2024
#21 BMO G.I.C.	\$ 6,000.00	Matures Sept. 23, 2024
#1 T.D. Canada Trust (columbarium)	\$10,231.35	Matures Jan. 6, 2025
#2 T.D. Canada Trust	\$14,000.00	Matures June 25, 2025
#3 T.D. Canada Trust	\$13,000.00	Matures June 25, 2025
Scotia Wealth Management	Market Value	\$55,058.00

**During the year 2023 there were 10 burials –4 cremations and 6 full burials.**

### Cemetery Board Members

Dan Gill	238-5871
Glen Miller	238-8259
Matthew Miller	237-3772
Douglas Russell	238-8283
Larry Taylor	238-8732
Donna Lovie	238-8395

Donna Lovie  
Secretary/Treasurer

## FINANCE TEAM REPORT

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This has been a year of change for the HSUC Finance Team.

Changes in both personnel and procedures has made for an interesting year. HSUC Finance had been under the direction of Bryan Beattie for a number of years and Bryan continues to be an integral part of the team. Bookkeeper Sherrie Smith also moved on from her position in the spring of the year and Rhonda Manore agreed to assume this role in addition to her position of Envelope/Par Coordinator. We have also added Bonnie Bartlam to the team, and she has taken on the role of recording secretary. So along with the knowledgeable team of Bob Illman, Janice Sinkler, Steve Northey and Norm Harris we oversee the financial operations and status of HSUC with monthly meetings reporting back to council.

Because of these changes we embarked on the mission to make our accounting software which has been in place since 2006 more attune to our current business practices by using more of the functions contained therein and therefore alleviating some of the need for additional records to be maintained outside of the software. We have made strides but there is still work to be done. The changes made are not without problem, in that as we recategorized accounts to be in align with the new Governance Document, established procedures to better monitor receipts and disbursements of restricted funds (grant monies, debt retirement, etc.), integrated GBP into the HSUC finances and made decisions regarding the further breakdown of income and expenses. It meant that comparing year to year was not straightforward for the 2023 Reports. Moving forward there will be more consistency regarding year to year and actual vs budget comparisons.

The finance team with input from team leaders and council compiled the 2024 Budget a job which was taken very seriously as we are faced with financial challenges in the upcoming year. We continue to pursue the retrieval of the funds currently held by the Bank of Canada in the frozen "Land Bank Account" in the amount of \$11,312.10.

The 2023 Financials were reviewed by John McIntosh of Thamesview United Church and John provided the following statement regarding our adherence to requirements and accuracy of financial reporting; "February 19, 2024 Thanks for putting trust in me to go over the Huron Shores financial records for 2023. I examined each month's entries on a random basis, as well as the opening and closing bank balances. I found the accounting to be accurate and is an honest accounting of your Church's financial position. It is signed, John M McIntosh." Original signed document filed in Finance Team Minute book.

The following reports are available in a separate document titled "**2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS**":

- Balance Sheet-Listing Current Assets and Liabilities as of December 31, 2023
- Income & Expense Summary Report – January – December 2023
- Income & Expense Detail Report – January – December 2023
- Proposed Budget 2024

Submitted by Lori Hyatt, Finance Chair

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT 2024

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**Note: The Minister is an ex-officio on all committees other than Ministry & Personnel.**

### **COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE EXECUTIVE**

- **Chairperson:** Debra Gill
- **Vice Chairperson:** Roger Hyatt
- **Secretary:** Mary McFadden

### **WORKING GROUPS OF COUNCIL:**

- **Accessibility Monitors:** Vince Bury, Ruth Ann Egelson, Wilma Harris
- **Congregational Visitors:** Joanne Barry, Peter Challen, Lynne Desjardine
- **Facility:** Deb Gill, Amanda and Ryan Lalonde, Debbie Procter, Christine Wilde
- **Technology:** Chris Barry, Joanne Barry, Christine Bregman, Dan Gill, Lori Hyatt, Doug Kyle, Dennis McIntyre, Wil VanderLinden

### **TEAMS OF COUNCIL**

- **Christian Education:** Virginia Scott, Julie Cuifo Dan Gill, Anne Russell
- **Fellowship and Outreach:** Lois Gill, Lynne Desjardine
  - **Free Store:** Joanne Barry, Ruth Ann Egelson
  - **Help the Hungry:** Lois Gill, Christine Wilde
  - **Membership:** Mary McFadden, Melodie Northey, Christine Wilde
  - **Prayer Shawl:** Trish Murdock, Sharon Soldan
  - **Right Relations:** John Scott, Carolyn Bropey, Bob Illman, Judy Riley, Lynn Tremain
- **Grand Bend Place:** Janice Sinker, Carey Eddy, Bob Illman, Debbie Procter, Paul Rivard, Tom Taylor
- **Ministry & Personnel:** Steve Northey, Christine Bregman, Peter Challen, Mary McFadden, Janice Sinker

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE – cont'd

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- **Property & Maintenance:** Debbie Procter, ex officio: Custodian
  - **Green Team:** Lois Gill, Debbie Procter
  - **Kitchen:** Lois Gill, Debbie Procter, Janice Schaefer
  - **Repairs & Maintenance:** Chris Barry, Dan Gill,
  - **Security:** Chris Barry Dan Gill, Ryan Lalonde
- **Stewardship & Finance:** Lori Hyatt, Bonnie Bartlam, Bryan Beattie, Norm Harris Bob Illman, Rhonda Manore, Steve Northey, Janice Sinker
  - **Mission & Outreach:** Lori Hyatt, Roger Hyatt
  - **Donor Recognition Display:** Peter Challen, Rhonda Manore, Mary McFadden
- **Trustees:** Glen Miller, Carey Eddy, Norm Harris, Doug Kyle, John Scott, Larry Taylor
  - **Grand Bend Cemetery Board:** Glen Miller, Dan Gill, Donna Lovie, Matthew Miller, Doug Russell
- **Worship & Music:** Karen Etherington, Peter Challen, Ruth Ann Eagelson, Wilma Harris, Deb Hinz, Mary McFadden, Janice Sinker
  - **Embellishment:** Mary McFadden, Karen Etherington, Lois Gill, Jacqui Krech, Debbie Procter, Mary Margaret Prowse, Judy Riley
- **Western Ontario Waterways Representative**
  - Peter Challen

## CAMP BIMINI

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Through our school program in May and June, approximately 1300 students came to Bimini. In the fall we were able to welcome approximately 30 students to Bimini. It has been our biggest year for the school program. It is a time for games, pool, nature studies, crafts and camp life for a day. It is a great way to connect with many kids about the many blessings of camp and of the great outdoors. Our summer program (which includes our fall leadership camp) had over 690 campers registered. We all sang lots, saw lots, created lots, ran lots, discovered lots and danced lots. Many of our campers come from within 45 minutes of Bimini with some coming from more than 5 hours away. We continued the Gift of Camp program which helps families who find the cost of camp to be a challenge. We helped many families this year. 36 campers (\$18,000+) as the tough economic times continue for so many. We will need to rebuild this account up for 2024. Every kid deserves a week at camp. We encountered a few challenges that have surfaced due to the pandemic including social skills and awareness, confidence, problem solving skills.

Our staff of 2023 was again great—a staff committed to the campers and each other. We increased our wages significantly to be able to compete with other jobs for students. By doing so, we were also able to apply for the Canada Summer Jobs Grant which helped with some of the increase. It helped us keep and attract some students in post-secondary school. Having mature, flexible leaders is a must for camp. The challenges that we are faced with are bigger than ever before and heavier than ever before. Because of COVID-19, we lost two years to the cycle of leadership development. We also struggled to find certified lifeguards (as did all pools) due to no courses being offered during the pandemic. We have obtained a grant to help lifeguards be trained for camp which will also help the communities from where they came. Our staffing shortage may be a struggle for a couple years as we rebuild our staff team.

We had our annual Women's Day Retreat on September 30. It was a fabulous day of community and time away.

Our rentals this past year brings many groups to Bimini all in the spring and fall. This is a great way for us to have the camp in use during our non-summer program time.

Our latest capital project is the replacement of the siding on the mess hall. We have completed two sides and look for funding for the remaining sides (\$30,000 approximately). We look to projects in the next couple years of updating washrooms to be more inclusive and bridge maintenance. Our capital projects over the past few years leaves us still with a bank loan of \$27,000. Our CEBA loan, which was received from the Federal Government for pandemic help, was paid back in December. The camping industry has not fully recovered from the pandemic and this will make us dig deep again.

We continued to hold fundraisers throughout the year to support Bimini—an online auction and Mother's Day Brunch and our 5KM walk, ride, run. We had a local photographer offer mini photo sessions at Camp Bimini prior to Christmas with a portion being donated to Bimini.

## CAMP BIMINI – cont'd

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We are grateful for this relationship. Our wish list provides a list of items that is required and requested ranging from craft supplies to kitchen supplies to maintenance supplies. Be sure to look at it and share it.

Creating a legacy through a bequest in your will or other planned gift such as a charitable annuity or a gift of life insurance is a simple and thoughtful act that reflects your commitment to Camp Bimini, your concern for future generations, and your love for the camping world. The best part of planned giving is that you

have the comfort of knowing that you have provided for the future of something you care about very dearly. A successful planned giving program can help to fulfill our inherent desire to give. One of the real blessings of planned giving is that it benefits both the giver and the recipient. For more information, please contact the camp.

St Francis of Assisi said “Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.” That’s how we feel called to be the church: to live each day showing God’s love and being God’s love...to everyone and everything we come into contact with—even when it’s difficult.

We are blessed to have a great community around us—people like you. We thank every one of our supporters: those who support us physically, spiritually, emotionally and financially. Your support is important and invaluable. It was with this strong support that we were able to strengthen our ministry this past year. We look forward to what we can do together!

Carol Young, Camp Bimini Coordinator  
*Experience Nature, Grow Spiritually, Create Lifelong Friendships*

## CHRISTIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

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Happy New Year all!!

We would like to thank all of you for your continued support of our ministry. As we go forward, we would ask that you hold the Resource Centre – volunteer board of directors, volunteers and staff in your thoughts and prayers as we find new ways to minister to and support our family within the United Church of Canada. We ask that you consider us as you decide where your local mission donations are being allocated. If you could add us as a budget item on your financial statement this year we would be so appreciative. We want to be here for you as long as we possibly can and anything you can do is very much appreciated.

## CHRISTIAN RESOURCE CENTRE – cont'd

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This year, we set up displays at a regional meeting and UCW events as well as other church functions. Thank you all for thinking of us and inviting us to be there with you! We have received many positive comments on the amazing selection of gifts for baptism, confirmation, graduation and weddings. We also have individual cards, boxed cards and books for everyone and loads of resources.

We have a **great lending library** of Christian fiction as well as DVD's.

We receive one copy of Broadview and the Gathering magazine when they are released. You are free to come in and look through them and use what you need. Saves you from having to purchase a subscription 😊.

We maintain an in-store selection of church supplies that we order in bulk from the United Church Resource Distribution Centre. The difference is you do not pay shipping when you buy them from us instead of them. This includes bulletin covers, baptism and confirmation certificates, baptism candles, and candles for Advent and Lent, Christ Candles, baptism, marriage and burial record books and communion supplies. We have new crest lapel pins, key chains, embroidered badges and window decals as well as many other United Church items.

We have vendors who can provide us with candlestick holders, vestments, communion trays and many other items for your sanctuary. What we do not have we can get for you, just ask and we will do the research for you. We are able to order Sunday school curriculum for each season of the church year. Tell us what your needs are, we will do some digging for you and then hook you up!!

As a non-profit ministry within the United Church, we attempt to provide for all your needs at a reasonable price. If you are unable to pick up your order, we will arrange for you to get it – one way or another.

We also have a cozy little space in the Resource Centre were 3 or 4 folks can meet – consider that when you are planning to meet with folks that are travelling from different places.

You are **ALWAYS** welcome to visit us at 29 Main Street, Mitchell (Box 760) N0K 1N0 – we are snuggled between the TD bank and the Hub restaurant on the corner of highway 23 and highway 8 – coming from Goderich, follow highway 8 and we are on the left hand side right after you go through the lights in Mitchell. Our hours are 10 – 4 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Our website address is [www.wowresourcecentre.ca](http://www.wowresourcecentre.ca), our email address is [hpprc@quadro.net](mailto:hpprc@quadro.net) and our phone number is 1-519-348-9261. We also have a Facebook page – Christian Resource Centre – like us and share our postings please and thank you. We are here to serve you – bless you for all that you do!!

With sincere thanks,

The Christian Resource Centre, 29 Ontario Road, Box 760, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0  
Volunteer Board of Directors and Staff

# *We Remember Them*



*Doris Bestard*

*Ivan Herrington*

*Sue Laughton*

*Elaine Ramsden*

*Doug Riddell*

*Marlene Scheerer*

*Judith Trudgeon*

*Brian Trudgeon*

*Ron Turner*