

Annual Report - 2024



**Interim Edition
(Without Financial Statements)**

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MINUTES OF 2024 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Annual Congregational Meeting – Part One

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Proudfoot Hall

12:07 pm

1.0 **Invocation** – Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

2.0 **Election of Chair and Secretary of the Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That David Wardlaw be appointed Chair and Katherine Wonfor be appointed Secretary of the 2024 Annual Meeting (Part One).

Moved By: John Eberhard

Seconded By: Jackie Williams

MOTION CARRIED

2.1 **Declaration of Voting Rights of Those Present**

MOTION: To extend the right to vote to adherents and youth at the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting – part 1, according to the provisions of the United Church of Canada Manual and the Statement of Policies and Procedures of First-St. Andrew's United Church.

Moved By: Barb Dalrymple

Seconded By: Nancy Quinn

MOTION CARRIED

3.0 **Welcome:** Remarks from the Chair

David Wardlaw, Chair of Council, welcomed the congregation to the Annual Meeting. The resiliency and vibrancy of First-St. Andrew's are embedded in the annual reports.

David thanked Ark Aid for providing the lunch prior to the meeting. The audio-visual team was recognized for their assistance.

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting – part 1.

Moved By: Kerry Hill

Seconded By: Mike Bancroft

MOTION CARRIED

5.0 **Approval of Minutes of the 2023 Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That the minutes of part 1 and part 2 of the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting be approved.

Moved By: Barb Plante

Seconded By: Charlotte Oldham

MOTION CARRIED

6.0 **Minister's Remarks**

Pastor Joshua referred the congregation to the Minister of Worship and Congregational Life's report "The Space Between" found in the 2023 Annual Report.

7.0 **Committee Reports requiring a decision by the Congregation**

7.1 **Finance – presentation of 2024 Budget – Laura Wood**

Laura Wood, Treasurer and Chair of Finance, presented the 2024 budget. Two townhalls were held to present the budget and discuss FSA's financial position.

For 2024, revenue of \$487,000 and expenses of \$680,000 are forecasted. The trust funds will cover \$100,000 of the deficit. The Finance Committee is actively working to address the forecasted deficit of \$93,000. The position of Facilities Manager is vacant, and hiring has been deferred for six months with volunteers from the Property Committee and the congregation filling the job.

MOTION: That the 2024 budget as approved by Council be adopted by the congregation.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Doug McGregor

MOTION CARRIED

Laura Wood presented 2023 financial results. The deficit of \$106,000 will be covered by \$100,000 from the trust funds and \$6,000 from cash on hand.

MOTION: That the First-St. Andrew's United Church Financial Statements at December 31, 2023 prepared internally by the Finance Committee be accepted as circulated.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Doug McGregor

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: That the congregation approves the appointment of RLM Professional Corporation as the Firm of Record for the Review Engagement Report of Financial Statements at December 31, 2023 for First-St. Andrew's United Church for 2023.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Doug McGregor

MOTION CARRIED

The congregation expressed their thanks to Laura.

7.2 **Board of Trustees – Paul Cooper, Jackie Williams**

MOTION #1

That the Congregation of First-St. Andrew's United Church, Antler River Watershed Region, the United Church of Canada:

hereby directs that for the year 2024, it will carry only the insurances in Ecclesiastical Insurance Co. Policy #0102687F and acknowledges that the limits in such insurance policy or policies may be less than the full replacement cost of the buildings insured under the attached policy or policies;

2) Releases the Trustees of First-St. Andrew's United Church from:

a) any obligation to maintain insurance coverage with higher limits than that provided in the aforementioned policy or policies,

b) actions taken on behalf of the congregation in respect of property held by the Board in the name of the congregation, and agrees to indemnify and save harmless the Trustees of First-St. Andrew's from all claims with respect to such decisions taken during the year 2024.

Particulars of the Insurance Coverage are available from the Church Office Manager and may be found and reviewed in the Church Office.

Moved By: Jackie Williams

Seconded By: David Wake

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #2

The congregation approves the appointment of RLM Professional Corporation as the Firm of Record for the Review Engagement Report of the Trustees' Financial Statements for First-St. Andrew's United Church for 2024.

Moved By: Jackie Williams

Seconded By: David Wake

MOTION CARRIED

7.3 **Nominating Report** - Steve Elson

A full list of committee members can be found on the FSA website. Steve Elson reported that positions are available throughout the year.

MOTION: That the proposed 2024 membership for the Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, Officers, and Committee members be accepted as presented.

Moved By: Linda Badke

Seconded By: Ken Wright

MOTION CARRIED

8.0 **Adoption of Committee Reports** as published in the 2023 Annual Report

MOTION: That the Committee Reports as published in the 2023 Annual Report be adopted.

Moved By: Jim Silcox

Seconded By: Steve Elson

MOTION CARRIED

9.0 **Special Reports**

9.1 **Update on development of social media platforms and presence** – Lorna Gunning-Fratschko, Leah Morise

A presentation was made on the development of FSA's social media presence. With the aim to share the voice of FSA with the community, FSA can be found on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and the FSA website.

The congregation was invited to follow FSA on social media and help build our on-line presence.

9.2 **Report on multi-year, multi-point plan to create a sustainable operating budget** – David Wardlaw

David Wardlaw reported on the multi-point plan to create a sustainable operating budget. The plan outlines strategies to increase revenues. The plan is updated regularly to show progress and can be found on the FSA website.

9.3 **Housing for the Minister of Worship and Congregational Life** – David Wardlaw

David Wardlaw reported that recognizing the barriers to home ownership foreign nationals face (The Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act) a Housing Task Force was formed to look at solutions for how FSA could assist the Lawrence family. A recommendation was brought to the Board of Trustees and Council that FSA purchase a house and lease it to Joshua Lawrence. The lease payments are at market value and there is an option to purchase the property when the Lawrences become permanent residents of Canada. The agreement was vetted by a lawyer. Approval was received from the Antler River Watershed Regional Council who thought this was an innovative and positive way to support our minister.

The congregation expressed their agreement with this housing solution.

9.4 Report on Council approved process leading to replacement of existing heating system – George Jolink, Steve Elson

Steve Elson reported that while the boiler remains operational it is becoming increasingly unreliable. A task group will be formed to consider options for a new HVAC system.

10.0 Recognition of Departing Committee Members

Appreciation was expressed to all who served on committees and volunteered their time and talent in the past year.

11.0 Benediction

MOTION: That the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting (Part One) be adjourned at 1:25 pm.

Moved By: Linda Badke

MOTION CARRIED



Annual Congregational (Celebration) Meeting – Part 2

Sunday, June 2, 2024
The Sanctuary
11:35 am

1.0 **Invocation** – Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

2.0 **Election of Chair and Secretary of the Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That David Wardlaw be appointed Chair and Katherine Wonfor be appointed Secretary of the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Part 2.

Moved By: Barb Dalrymple

Seconded By: Anne Cummings

MOTION CARRIED

3.0 **Declaration of Voting Rights of Those Present**

MOTION: To extend the right to vote to adherents and youth at the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Part 2, according to the provisions of the United Church of Canada Manual and the Statement of Policies and Procedures of First-St. Andrew's United Church.

Moved By: Jim Silcox

Seconded By: Pat Pettit

MOTION CARRIED

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Part 2.

Moved By: Steve Elson

Seconded By: George Jolink

MOTION CARRIED

5.0 **Approval of minutes from special congregational meeting in 2024**

5.1 MOTION: To approve the minutes of the special congregational meeting on April 7, 2024.

Moved By: Kerry Hill

Seconded By: Paul Cooper

MOTION CARRIED

6.0 **Financial Review of the Board of Trustee and Operational accounts of First-St. Andrew's United Church**

6.1 MOTION: that the 2023 Board of Trustees Statements as reviewed by Famme & Co., London, and as approved by the Board of Trustees and by Council of First-St. Andrew's United Church, be approved by the congregation.

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: Bob Kennedy

MOTION CARRIED with one abstention

6.2 MOTION: that the 2023 Year-end Operating Statements as reviewed by Famme & Co., London, and as approved by the Finance Committee and by Council of First-St. Andrew's United Church, be approved by the congregation.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Merran Neville

MOTION CARRIED with one abstention

The approved financial statements will be appended to the 2023 Annual Report. The Annual Report can be found on the FSA website.

Thanks were expressed to Laura Wood, Treasurer and Chair of Finance, and Colleen Garrett, Staff Bookkeeper, for their work preparing the year end financial statements.

7.0 **Benediction** – Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

MOTION: That the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting – Part 2 be adjourned at 11:47 am.

Moved By: Jim Silcox

MOTION CARRIED



AGENDA FOR 2025 AGM-PART 1

1.0 **Welcome:** Remarks from the Chair – David Wardlaw

2.0 **Invocation** – Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

3.0 **Election of Chair and Secretary of the Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That David Wardlaw be appointed Chair and Katherine Wonfor be appointed Secretary of the 2025 Annual Meeting. (Part One).

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

2.1 **Declaration of Voting Rights of Those Present**

MOTION: To extend the right to vote to adherents and youth at the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting – Part 1, according to the provisions of the United Church of Canada Manual and the Statement of Policies and Procedures of First-St. Andrew’s United Church.

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting – Part 1.

Moved By: Linda Badke Seconded By: _____

5.0 **Approval of Minutes of the 2024 Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That the minutes of Part 1 and Part 2 of the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting be approved.

Moved By: Merran Neville Seconded By: _____

6.0 **Minister's Remarks**

7.0 **Report from Council on Several items (for information) – David Wardlaw**

8.0 **Committee Reports requiring a decision by the Congregation**

8.1 **Finance – presentation of 2025 Budget – Laura Wood**

MOTION: That the 2025 budget as approved by Council be adopted by the congregation.

Moved by: Laura Wood Seconded by: _____

MOTION: That the First-St. Andrew's United Church Financial Statements at December 31, 2024 prepared internally by the Finance Committee be accepted as circulated.

Moved by: Laura Wood Seconded by: _____

MOTION: That the congregation approves the appointment of RLM Professional Corporation as the Firm of Record for the Review Engagement Report of Financial Statements at December 31, 2024 for First-St. Andrew's United Church for 2024.

Moved by: Laura Wood Seconded by: _____

8.2 **Board of Trustees – Paul Cooper, Jackie Williams**

MOTION #1

That the Congregation of First-St. Andrew's United Church, Antler River Watershed Region, of the United Church of Canada:

- 1) hereby directs that for the year 2025, it will carry only the insurances in Ecclesiastical Insurance Co. Policy #0102687F and acknowledges that the limits in such insurance policy or policies may be less than the full replacement cost of the buildings insured under the attached policy or policies;

2) Releases the Trustees of First-St. Andrew's United Church from:

a) any obligation to maintain insurance coverage with higher limits than that provided in the aforementioned policy or policies,

b) actions taken on behalf of the congregation in respect of property held by the Board in the name of the congregation and agrees to indemnify and save harmless the Trustees of First-St. Andrew's from all claims with respect to such decisions taken during the year 2025.

Particulars of the Insurance Coverage are available from the Church Office Manager and may be found and reviewed in the Church Office.

Moved by: David Wake Seconded by: _____

MOTION #2

The congregation accepts the scheduled resignation of David Manness from the Board of Trustees, effective Dec.31, 2024.

Moved by: David Wake Seconded by: _____

MOTION #3

The congregation approves the appointment of RLM Professional Corporation as the Firm of Record for the Review Engagement Report of the Trustees' Financial Statements for St. Andrew's United Church at December 31, 2024 for 2024.

Moved by: David Wake Seconded by: _____

8.3 **Nominating Report** - Steve Elson

Steve Elson to ask if there are any nominations from the floor. Add any that come forward

Moved by Steve Elson and seconded by _____ that nominations be closed.

MOTION: That the proposed 2025 membership for the Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, Officers, and Committee members (as tabled or as amended) be accepted.

Moved by: Steve Elson Seconded by: _____

9.0 **Adoption of Committee Reports** as published in the 2024 Annual Report

MOTION: That the Committee Reports as published in the 2024 Annual Report be adopted.

Moved by: Jim Silcox Seconded by: _____

10.0 **Recognition of Departing Committee Members and Departing Staff Member**

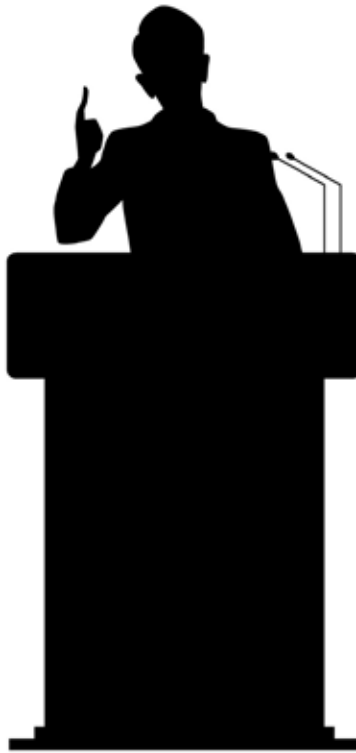
11.0 **Other Business** (as approved when agenda adopted)

12.0 **Benediction**

13.0 **Closing**

MOTION: That the 2025 Annual Congregational Celebration Meeting (Part One) be adjourned

Moved by: _____



COMMITTEE NOMINEES

The following persons are presented as members and adherents of FSA who have agreed to have their names stand for the positions outlined below.

Please note that the positions of Chair and Past Chair of Council are identified as interim in nature. Both David Wardlaw and Steve Elson have served a full three years in these two roles – one more than is typical. Both have agreed to continue in their current roles until June 30, 2025 during which time the Council of FSA will be taking the time to examine alternate governance models with a view to possibly changing both the structure and composition of the governance of FSA's Council as it currently stands. The position of Chair Elect is currently vacant.

In the presentation on Vulnerable Congregations held on January 5 one of the vulnerabilities was listed as challenges filling leadership positions – this illustrates that this is an area that needs to be addressed.

The Outreach Committee, while having active members, is lacking a **Chair** to help define and bring leadership to their work.

The **Membership and Nurture Committee** is a very active and engaged one but to share the workload a second Co-Chair of this committee is being sought.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Elson

**Nominations Report to the FSA
Annual Congregational Meeting
January 2025**

**Proposed Members of FSA Church
Leadership and Committees for 2025**

*Names in bold and Italics are new
members*

Interim Chair of Council: David
Wardlaw

Interim Past Chair: Steve Elson

Associate Chair: Linda Badke

Chair Elect: TBD

Secretary: Katherine Wonfor

**Communications & Marketing
Working Group**

Jim Silcox

Merran Neville

David Wardlaw

Lorna Gunning Fratschko

Faith Formation Committee

Jo Ann Silcox (Co-Chair)

Allyson Watson (Co-Chair)

Susan McKane (**Secretary**)

Anne Cunningham

Michael Feeney

Katie Glaves

Jan Hendry – associate member

David Pederson

Carol Riddell-Elson

**Faith Formation - Jean Brown
Permanent Ad Hoc Committee**

Allyson Watson (Chair)

Merran Neville (Music)

Jackie Williams (Trustees)

Laura Wood (Finance)

Anne Cummings (member-at-large)

Finance Committee

Laura Wood (Chair and Treasurer)

Jeannette Eberhard

Tristin Hill

Ivana Klouda

Doug McGregor

Frank Kearney

Membership & Nurture Committee

Glenna Hall (Co-Chair)

Karin Symonds (Co-Chair)

Annabelle Logan

Bev Lindsay

Mary Mattar

Susan McGregor

Lilian Reid

Jo Ann Silcox

Karin Symonds, (**Secretary**) Donna

Thompson

Affirm Sub-committee

Anne-Louise Jannaway (Co-Chair)

Rev. Karen Low (Co-Chair)

Chris Fischer

Christina Lindsay

Jo Ann Silcox

Margaret Wardlaw

Jean Wright

Archives Sub-committee

Don Jones, (Chair)

Pat Carter, (Secretary)

David McKane

Paul Merritt

Barbara Plante

Jim Silcox

Wes Sole

Heather Vouvalidis

Judith Walker

Ministry & Personnel Committee

Kerry Hill (Chair)

Linda Badke

Margo Christodoulou

Barrie Evans

Ardath Finnbogason-Hill

Alex Neaves

Barbara Ridgewell

Music Committee

Merran Neville (Chair)

Paul Cooper

Ardath Finnbogason-Hill

Ann MacPhail

Terry Peters

Barbara Plante

Igor Saika-Voivod

Janis Wallace

Margaret Wardlaw

Outreach Committee

Chair: Vacant

Marilyn Beach

Barb Dalrymple

Janice Elliott

Liz Galbraith

Jan Hendry

Linda Imrie

Laurel Kenney (UCW)

Pat Pettit

Natasha Roberts

Property Committee

George Jolink (Chair)

Ron Bradley

Connor Campbell

Bill Guthrie

Peter Ross

Heather Vouvalidis

One vacancy

**Regional (Antler River Watershed)
Representatives**

Linda Badke

Jo Ann Silcox

Barbara Ridgewell

Board of Trustees

Jackie Williams (Co-Chair) (2020-2026)

Paul Cooper (Co-Chair) (2020-2026)

Janice Elliott (2020-2026)

Don Jones (2020-2026)

Robert (Bob) Kennedy (2019-2025)

Tony Parker (2024-2030)

Alan Salmoni (2019-2025)

Jim Silcox (2020-2026)

Heather Vouvalidis (2024-2030)

Katherine Wonfor (2022-2028)

David Wake (2022–2028)

Ken Wright (2024-2030)

Retiring Members

Board of Trustees – David Manness

**Ministry and Personnel – Kathryn
Patton**

Music Committee - Glenda Baldwin

Passed

John Eberhard, Board of Trustees

STAFF REPORTS

FROM THE MINISTER OF WORSHIP & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

SANCTUARY AND THE SUBLIME

It was difficult this morning, and not simply because of the snow which had yet to be shoveled. Well, maybe difficult isn't quite the word. Heavy is perhaps more accurate, more precise in its brief diagnosis of life for many of us. I felt the weight of the day, the weight of the year. Already. So many changes, so many uncertainties. Whither are we moving? How long must we wait? Has the Christ-child actually arrived in our time and place?

Not that I want to overdetermine your experience of this "new" year, but I suspect some if not all of these questions have passed through your mind in recent weeks. And if you are anything like me, your responses have been a rotation of immediate tasks and enjoyable distractions. Nothing wrong with either, but I do believe something different is warranted. Something like listening, but not in the typical way that we listen for "keywords," or wait for a pause so we can intervene with our brilliance. No, the listening I have in mind now is the kind of listening that can take weeks and months—sometimes years. Resisting the temptation to volunteer quick solutions to deeply embedded (structural, systemic) problems is necessary if we are find a way forward—as a community of faithful practice, as a city, and as a country. So listen we shall. But where and how?

I want to propose that we revisit the idea and practice of sanctuary. Sure, the word is used quite often, especially by members of First-St. Andrew's. But in most cases, it refers to a physical space where we celebrate, worship, and have concerts. I intend something beyond this usage,

though not wholly unrelated. Some will be familiar with the Greek term "liturgy," from *leitōs* (public) and *ergos* (work). And historically, the Church has understood liturgy (the structure of worship) as the "work of the people." Some might say that this work refers to a kind of praise structure, where hymns and acknowledgment of God are primary. But I would suggest, to the contrary, that while these aspects are certainly present in most liturgies, they are not the most important part of a liturgy. And I don't think anyone at First-St. Andrew's believes that God needs weekly cheerleading to "perform." Therefore, I want to propose instead that liturgy is the activity of building/cultivating the beloved community through activities like prayer, song, reflection, and many other forms of creative engagement with Holy Mystery. After all, the Gospel of Matthew has the figure of Jesus make clear that loving God and loving neighbor are inextricable (22: 36-39). On these hang the Law and the Prophets. The Apostle Paul echoes this emphasis in his famous meditation on love in 1 Corinthians 13. And if this unconditional, encircling love is the greatest commandment, then what else should receive the most attention in our work as people of faith and practice.

We can now freshly examine the idea of sanctuary. If sanctuary is etymologically designated as a "holy space," what better way to cultivate and practice holiness than by extending welcome and compassionate care to all people. We might say that there are degrees of holiness insofar as not all holy spaces are as welcoming. I and many others have learned this the hard way, having been met with summative dismissals if not outright discrimination because of the beings we are. However, we at FSA are committed to being an Affirming community. We are also a gathered body that works towards Truth and Reconciliation. And for those of us who benefit or have benefited from white supremacist structures

of power and plunder, we are a people committed to practicing Anti-Racism in our daily lives. There are many ways that we must grow in each of these areas of our life as faithful practitioners. And in doing so, I believe we are certainly living sanctuaries, emancipatory space-makers.

Having probed the possibilities of true sanctuary for our present, and I hope being stirred in the direction of extravagant welcome, we must also look into the future with humility. This is where we encounter the sublime. For those unfamiliar with the term, it stems from artistic and philosophical discourse of the 18th and 19th centuries. The sublime refers to an experience that the mind cannot exhaustively categorize or contain. It is too vast, too mercurial, for our disposition to comprehension and management. We often hear of the sublime in art and music, but I would extend this experience to all of life. How many times have we been surprised and brought to tears by the simplest gesture, a smile or handshake, a falling leaf, a line of poetry? These priceless and unpredictable experiences of resonance, wherein we are addressed by this majestic world we get the privilege of inhabiting. But lest I only emphasize the gentle aspects of the sublime, we are also frequently confronted by it in the face of a winter storm, a terrible loss, or a definitive crisis of faith. These experiences too can be thought of as sublime. Like all religious experience and practice, the sublime is a contested space. There is nothing beyond life itself that will teach us what we are to receive from these sublime experiences. Nor can we manufacture the beautiful and terrible moments that arguably constitute the essence of abundant life. But we must always heed them and come to realize that they are what we crave, what we need, and why we practice sanctuary. So that all might feel nurtured, supported, and connected, not only to community but also to

that experience of the Sublime/Divine/Holy that abides with us as humans.

And we should be humbled by the awareness that these encounters/experiences are often threatened by our efforts to control/manage/categorize. Both sanctuary and the sublime refer to organic practices of care, attention, and presence that can only be leaned into with trust, hope, and love. The more we try to determine them, the less likely they are to emerge in our life together.

Having come full circle, we should all be delighted in much of what transpired at FSA in 2024. New members, new programs, new opportunities to serve and create. New ways to grow and contribute not only to our community but to an ever-widening, diversifying network of relations. And we should all be humbled by the opportunity to trust just a bit more in 2025. To be still long enough to listen, to hear, and eventually respond. As tempting as it might be to act and plan, I want to encourage us all to rest in the assurance that the efforts we have made to be abundantly hospitable have borne fruit and continue to bear fruit beyond what we can know. And just as so much that occurred in 2024 happened outside of our expectations and plans, so too will 2025 have surprises, sometimes pleasant and sometimes completely disruptive. What we can do, gently and humbly, is become vibrant sanctuaries ourselves and remain open to the great swirls of cosmic unfolding that have brought us to this place and time for tasks which we are still discerning together. Weighty and difficult for sure. But also joyous and meaningful. May we all receive this upcoming year in the fullness with which it is given to be received. May we honor this life, our life, and the life of the world with our faithful practice.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Joshua Lawrence

FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE

It continues to be a joy and privilege to be in pastoral ministry at First-St. Andrew's. For 12 hours a week, I visit members in Long Term Care, Retirement Homes, hospitals, and homes. Contacts are also made by email and phone calls. I also attend the monthly church service at Richmond Woods with Joshua. Getting to know the life stories, struggles, and faith connections of the First-St. Andrew's congregation has been a blessing.

Working closely with the Minister and Chairs of Membership & Nurture, I identify the persons and families for whom support is needed; visit members who are experiencing a life transition, illness, grief, loneliness, stress, or family or personal crisis; and offer prayer, and pastoral/spiritual support. Empathy, active listening, meaning making, spiritual guidance, comfort, crisis interventions, and support, are the foundation of my interactions.

Virtually I attended the national Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC) Conference held in London, ON from April 14-16, 2024. There were 2 Keynote Speakers. Shadrach kabango (Shad) – a black Kenyan born rapper and hip hop artist, and Juno award winner who grew up in London ON spoke of his faith journey, meaning making in music and art, the experience of new Canadians, the meaning of suffering, and spiritual inspiration. The second speaker, Rev. Dr. Carrie Doehring, Professor of Pastoral Care and Counselling at Iliff School of Theology is a psychologist whose most recent publications explore the moral stresses of religious leadership and chaplaincy, the moral stress of student debt, military moral injury, and assessing competency in intercultural and evidence-based spiritual care.

The Workshops I viewed were: "Spirituality, Meaning-Making & Reality – Helping Clients Make Sense of Spirituality, Life and Its' Events;" "What Modalities Do Spiritual Care Practitioners

Use When Offering Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy?;" and "Early Exits: Spirituality, Mortality and Meaning in an Age of MaiD." I was grateful to be enriched by this Continuing Education opportunity.

I am thankful for the support of Rev. Joshua, the Membership & Nurture Committee, Margo Christodoulou from the Ministry & Personnel Committee, the FSA Staff, and many members of the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Anne-Louise (Annie) Jannaway

FROM THE MINISTER OF MUSIC

My first full year as a part of the staff team here at FSA has passed. Rather than dwell on highlights from our various events and programs, however, I feel it would be helpful to reflect instead on the "big picture" of music ministry in this time and place.

I do not need to remind you of the turbulent year that was. Our world and our city are both suffering from multiple crises, and in this environment, it can be exceedingly difficult to rise above feelings of helplessness and despair to keep fighting, to continue trying to make a difference, however small it may appear. And yet, resistance is not futile. (Sorry for the Star Trek reference!) We believe that we can make this world a better place by refusing to be governed by fear, to (in the words of composer, Mark A. Miller) "pray for your enemies, welcome the stranger, show love to your neighbour," as we sang in each of the Sundays of Advent 2024.

We are, I maintain, better placed for our mission when we are inspired with energy for the fight, and that is what I am coming to view as music's core purpose for our church family: to anchor ourselves in the eternal presence of the Holy, and to go out into our lives empowered to

follow Jesus; to care for all, not just for some, and to practise radical and extravagant hospitality, especially to those who do not look, sound, or act like us.

There is much still to do, but there is positivity in the air. New individuals and families of a variety of configurations are finding their way through our doors. The word is out in London and beyond that we have a kind of “secret sauce” and are forming an intentionally compassionate and affirming community of faith. People are finding something here, and hope – strange as it may seem in the global context of 2025 – abounds. Our Senior Choir alone has added nine (!) new members since the start of 2024. Our Treblemakers, ReBELLS, and Ring of Fire groups for children and youth currently connect and support over thirty young people (and growing), most from beyond FSA. Individuals and families are experiencing the powerful difference that comes with not being alone, and this is so critical for folks to experience today.

The choir and guest musicians presented a concert in November, “Songs of Love and Remembrance,” which included pieces by Jake Runestad, Eleanor Daley, Morten Lauridsen, and Gabriel Fauré that were filled with hope and the enduring comfort of the knowledge that there is, in the words of our New Creed, a “life beyond death.” Such glorious music endures in our collective memory long past many spoken words, and this is a tremendous gift for us in uncertain times.

Recently, I stumbled across a song by a singer-songwriter named Ben Rector, and I hope these lyrics encourage you as we journey into the unknown together.

*Please let me make something beautiful,
a thing that reminds us (that) there's good
in this world, a thing that reminds us (that)
there's still something out there worth fighting
for... Let it be something wonderful...
Let it be something beautiful.*

Let us make something beautiful here in downtown London in 2025: a vibrant community of hope and refuge for all. May it be so!

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Fischer (they/them)

FROM THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

The vitality of the FSA community is alive and strong as shown by increasing numbers in our children’s programs. It seems we welcome new friends, families and young people weekly whether it be on Sunday mornings, for Joshua’s C.R.E.W. or in Treblemakers/ReBells!

On Sunday mornings we have four classes weekly during our time together during church. We regularly have 15–22 kids ranging in ages from 1 – 17 years-old. In 2024 we used the curriculum *I am a Changemaker* which was encouraged by our region. This curriculum taught us to look at ourselves and how our behaviour can affect change in the world around us.

In 2024 we welcomed over 70 kids and young people on Sunday mornings. The congregation was generous by providing some additional stories and resources to add to our time together. This year we also met several new friends from our new Puppet Ministry: Oswald the Wise Owl, Pip, Tyrone, Dai and Meme who have helped us have some conversation about our questions about our faith.

Thank you to the many people who help us on Sunday mornings: Connor Campbell, Amanda Newbery, Linda Badke, Susan McKane, Lindsey Robinson, Christine Koustrup, Cara Bulmer, Steve Elson and Mary Ann Hodge. Thank you to Chad Louwerse, Leah Morise, Chris Wood, Linda

Imrie and Barrie Evans and David Wardlaw for bringing the puppets to life in such a heartwarming and entertaining way.

While the Youth Room is a happy place on Sunday mornings, it is also a place where young people gather in the afternoons. In 2024, 25 kids from four churches gathered for Joshua's C.R.E.W. This is a time for kids in grades 5–8 to gather to form friendships and have some fun together while we figure out the world around us. We have also welcomed Olivia Merryfield, who is a youth volunteer from a local highschool who is developing her leadership skills by coming out to get to know the kids.

Monday afternoons is when music and faith formation work together to host **Treblemakers** for kids ages 5–grade 8. In 2024, we had 45 kids enroll from 25 different families; 18 of those families were new to First-St. Andrew's. We gather to eat simple kid-friendly meals before heading up to the Sanctuary to make music together. In June we presented our musical, *Chilling in the Furnace* to the congregation with enormous success. It takes a lot of help to welcome this many kids and families on Mondays.

This past Fall, Laura Wood offered to add a drama component to our evenings for kids in grades 3–8. They are learning to express themselves through drama while managing to have some fun at the same time. We appreciate all the volunteers who help Treblemakers happen: Laura Wood, Pippa Belding, Alexis Cloutier, Jake Mendonca, Gillian Channer, Linda Imrie, Mary Ann Hodge, Susan and David McKane, Carol Elson and Ann MacPhail.

It has been such a busy and successful year, it seems like a long time ago that Marilyn Arthur moved on but somehow it has only been a couple months. Although the youth and young adults miss her greatly, Steve Elson and Mary Ann Hodge have done an amazing job at engaging highschool students on Sunday mornings while other programming and leadership is in limbo.

FSA has much to be excited about and look forward to in 2025!

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Lindsay, Coordinator of Children's Programs



COMMITTEE REPORTS

COUNCIL

In 2024 FSA continued on a path of positive transition, a journey that began in earnest in 2022, gained momentum in 2023, and further accelerated in 2024. The resiliency and vibrancy of the FSA community of faith is revealed in this Council report and in the numerous committee, group, and activity reports presented in this 2024 annual report.

A visible and uplifting sign of the vibrancy of our church is a growing number of adult, children, and youth participants: In new member services held in spring and fall, a total of 18 new adult and youth members were welcomed, this adding to the 20 new members welcomed in 2023. From January to December, approximately 105 (versus ~60 in 2023) different children and youth participated in FSA weekly and special programming (this includes Sunday School, Treblemakers, ReBELLS, and Joshua's C.R.E.W.).

Another sign of vibrancy is a complete professional staff complement for most of 2024. This is something that is difficult to achieve and challenging to maintain in a church for a variety of reasons. All of us should rejoice in this beneficial situation and take every opportunity to support our staff in their endeavours on our behalf. We are blessed with an outstanding leadership team which is making a positive difference!

The reader will have noticed the phrase 'most of 2024'. This is attributable to the departure of our shared Minister for Youth & Young Adults, Marilyn Arthur, in October of 2024. Marilyn became a diaconal minister in the spring of 2024 and accepted a call to be the Congregational Minister at Grace United Church in Tavistock in October 2024. Council is grateful for Marilyn's inspiring presence at FSA and for the dedication

and enthusiasm she brought to the shared ministry for youth and young adults. We offer best wishes to Marilyn in her new role. Grace UC has made an excellent choice.

Future of Ministry to Children and Youth

Given the increase in the number of children and youth participating in FSA activities and programs in 2024 and the recent departure of our Minister for Youth & Young Adults there is now a substantial gap in staffing resources in this area. Faith Formation has undertaken a needs assessment to ascertain the level of staff time required to continue our current youth and young adult programming. With the needs assessment in hand and factoring in ongoing expansion in numbers and activities in children & youth area as well as synergies with FSA's other ministries, a small working group is preparing a proposal for consideration first by Faith Formation and then by Council in early 2025.

Creating a Sustainable Operating Budget

The budget presentations at the congregational meetings in January 2023 and January 2024 made clear that we must focus more attention on stewardship, fundraising, sustainable revenue generation, and cost savings. A multi-point, multi-year plan to create a sustainable operating budget for the FSA community of faith was approved by Council in the spring of 2023. Implementation began in September 2023 and is ongoing. This plan consists of near-term, medium-term, and long-term items and provides a blueprint for the next 4-5 years. It is a living document which has already been updated several times in the interim and will undergo further revision when there is a new 'point' to add or an existing 'point' requires modification. An update on its implementation will be provided at the January 2025 congregational meeting.

Fundraising

A central component of the plan is fundrais-

ing in support of the operating budget, a multipronged approach to which is laid out in the multipoint plan. Implementation of the fundraising component began in earnest in 2024. It includes: the sale of prepared food by the Food Fest team; a gala dinner held in September 2024; a helping to Run-the-Church-for-a-Day initiative, the Eclectic Christmas Market held in November 2024; and the well-established Shopping Card program. The combined funds raised for the operating budget in 2024 is \$34.5 K. Such progress on fundraising is attributable to many contributions of various types: donation of time & talent by numerous volunteers; cash donations; and purchases by the FSA community. Thanks for your generous support of these initiatives in 2024!

Committee Changes

In early 2024, Council formally approved the creation of the Faith Formation Committee which is the union of the Worship and the Christian Development Committees. These committees had been meeting jointly for over a year as a pilot project. Council also approved a name change for the Mission and Outreach Committee. It is now simply the Outreach Committee. This change came the request of the Committee.

Information Technology Makeover

FSA's Information Technology (IT) infrastructure (computer hardware, software, internet) and how it is managed had become increasingly problematic over recent years. There was a dire need for equipment replacement and a coherent management paradigm. On behalf of Council, FSA member Terry Peters undertook a very thorough audit in the period November 2023 to January 2024 and prepared a comprehensive action plan based on his findings. After approval by the Executive early in 2024, the action plan began to be implemented in step-by-step fashion under Terry's guidance. Implementation is now complete and all systems are 'go'. Thank you, Terry!

Exploring Redevelopment of Church Property

At its March meeting, Council received a report from the Chair of the Planning Committee concerning FSA's interactions with an organization called Kindred Works. This initiative is being led by the Planning Committee augmented by others (e.g., Chair of Property, Chair of Council, and a few more). Kindred Works (KW) is an organization created by the United Church of Canada to partner with churches in redeveloping church property to provide an income stream for the church while simultaneously providing a mix of affordable and market-based housing. KW is building a nationwide portfolio of mixed-income rental housing and gathering spaces being developed in collaboration with individual churches. Initial discussions between FSA and Kindred Works have taken place. KW is currently undertaking a feasibility study to look at what is possible on the FSA property and provided an interim report in April. There is no charge for the study. Completion of the feasibility study is not anticipated until mid 2025. Once this study has been received and vetted by Council, an update will be provided to the congregation.

Introduction of The Eclectic Christmas Market

In late May 2024, I received, as Chair of Council, a notice from the UCW Executive stating that they had passed a motion transferring the annual fall Bazaar from a UCW-sponsored event to a Council-sponsored event. The FSA Executive Committee considered this matter in July 2024 and expressed that it would be desirable to continue this event and agreed that it could operate under the greater auspices of Council provided a Convenor or Co-convenors could be found. Fortunately, two people stepped forward on short notice as Co-convenors: Ardath Finnbogason-Hill and Tara Gonder, both experienced fall Bazaar veterans. Under the leadership of Tara and Ardath table coordinators and volunteers were recruited, sales tables were rented to local artisans, Ark Aid was identified as the beneficiary of 50% of the net funds raised, and the event was

renamed The Eclectic Christmas Market. Thank you Ardath and Tara!

Guiding FSA to the Future

At the September meeting of Council, a set of five key strategic priorities to guide FSA into the future were adopted. These priorities are:

- continue to expand our path to become a more inclusive and welcoming community of faith
- take deliberate and purposeful steps to explore and enter on-going partnerships with other communities of faith
- take immediate action to adopt and use the United Church of Canada Vulnerable Congregations Assessment tool on an on-going basis
- take immediate steps to explore and engage in opportunities to redevelop the buildings and property of FSA
- take immediate steps to research and report on alternative church governance models

The full report is available on the FSA website from a link on our COUNCIL page. Actions to launch implementation of each priority have been taken. Ongoing activity is necessary for these priorities to have traction. Activity is being coordinated by the Chair of the Planning Committee (Steve Elson) and regular reporting to Council is anticipated. Thank you Steve!

Vulnerable Congregations Assessment Tool

At the beginning of January 2025 a town hall style meeting on the 2025 operating budget was held after the worship service. The purpose was to provide an early opportunity to review and discuss a working draft of the 2025 budget, and introduce the congregation to the Vulnerable Congregation Assessment Tool provided by the United Church of Canada. At the annual congregational meeting at the end of January 2025, a final draft will be presented for approval. Council began using the fall of 2024 and plans to update the input data on a regular basis in order to track the 'vulnerability' of FSA.

Gratitude

As Chair of Council, it has been my privilege to work with scores of dedicated individuals who served faithfully on Council, standing committees, subcommittees, ad hoc task groups, search committees, and FSA organizations in 2024. It has equally been my privilege to work with our leadership staff and office staff. The staff support provided to me in the Chair role is strong and constant. The supportive engagement of the staff team with Council makes FSA stronger. To each volunteer, each Committee member, each member of Council, and each member of staff, I express my appreciation and offer heartfelt thanks.

Respectfully submitted,
David Wardlaw, Chair

MUSIC

2024 marked a full year that our Minister of Music, Chris Fischer, was in place bringing their vision for the music program. This included directing the Senior Choir, preparing music for services supporting scripture, prayers and the message, in collaboration with Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence Minister of Worship & Congregational Life, and building on the exciting music program for the children and youth in partnership with Children's Program Coordinator, Christina Lindsay.

The Senior Choir rehearses Thursday nights from 7:30-9:30pm and meets Sunday mornings for a final rehearsal before the service. Choir membership has been increasing this year and there are now 41 loyal choir members.

At the beginning of 2024, together with music for Sunday worship, the **Senior Choir** began learning the music for the spring concert. **Considering Matthew Shepard** for choir, solo-

ists and orchestra was presented on Sunday, April 21, 2024 at 3pm. It was a privilege for the choir to perform this amazing and profound work which was met with an enthusiastic response from the audience. Congratulations and appreciation are due to Chris Fischer for bringing this performance to FSA. The choir gave a second concert on Sunday, November 3, 2024 at 3pm – **“Songs of Love and Remembrance”** which included the Fauré *Requiem*. The **Sing-along Messiah** on December 7, saw the choir and London Pro Musica, lead an enthusiastic audience in the choruses. Paul Grambo conducted this performance which included soloists, the FSA Strings, pianists, trumpets and timpani.

Lent and Advent – Friday Noon Recitals

- April 5 – Madeline Berman, soprano; Daryn Nowlin, mezzo soprano; Chris Fischer, piano
- April 12 – Chris Fischer, tenor and Lynda Kennedy, piano
- May 24 – Laudamus Bells, Richard Frank, director
-
- Nov 29 – Kathleen Gahagan, harp and Susan Millar Boldissar, ‘cello
- Dec 6 – Kennedy Kimber-Johnson, organ
- Dec 13 – Laudamus Bells, Richard Frank, director

We are so fortunate to have four excellent soloists/section leaders and two vocal scholars. The staff soloists are Sonja Gustafson – soprano, Francesca Ranalli – mezzo soprano, Chris Wood – tenor and Alastair Smyth – bass. Our two Eberhard vocal scholars from January-May 2024 were Madeline (Maddie) Berman – soprano and Daryn Nowlin – mezzo soprano. Daryn graduated from Western with an MMus in Voice Performance in June. In September, Yuqi Cui – mezzo soprano, joined Maddie as a vocal scholar.

The FSA Strings, under the direction of Igor Saika Voivod, have participated in services during the year and performed two concerts

– Wed. May 29 – **“Scandinavian Spring”** with soloists Kelly Wallraff, violin; John Wiebe, viola; Will Cavanagh, trombone and Wed. October 9 – **“Shades of the Baroque”** with soloists Margaret Trethewey, flute; Peter Bartley, violin; Isacc Lee, ‘cello. Their programs always bring new and interesting repertoire. Igor draws the FSA Strings from a group of dedicated players, usually numbering about fifteen players at each performance. We are grateful to Igor and the players who enrich our worship whenever they perform.

The Laudamus Bells report from Richard Frank, director, follows.

The Music program, including worship and concerts, depends on the following generous funds.

- Friends of Music
- Eberhard Memorial Music Scholarship
- Music Trust Fund (Dr. Elmer Butt Shekinah Fund, Terry Head Memorial Fund, Clark Wilson Fund [established by the Music Committee in 1983])
- Music Budget – approved by the generosity of the FSA membership.

The Music Committee is grateful to Kathryn Skelly who assists in so many ways in supporting Music activities, particularly in preparing programs for the concerts and live streaming these performances.

Music Committee members: Paul Cooper, Ardath Finnbogason-Hill, Ann MacPhail, Merran Neville (chair), Igor Saika Voivod, Terry Peters, Barbara Plante, Janis Wallace, Margaret Wardlaw [Chris Fischer - staff]

Respectfully submitted,
Merran Neville, Chair

Laudamus Bells (this section contributed by Richard Frank)

The Laudamus Bells had an excellent year of music making in 2024. As always, each Monday brings the joy and satisfaction of working together preparing to perform. Throughout the year we performed at six services and two recitals. Starting in the winter season we celebrated Black History month by playing “Deep River”, a piece of music that honours the hope for freedom. We followed that in March on Palm Sunday with the “Road to Jerusalem” and then during Earth week, we performed “On This Day Earth Shall Ring”. Our winter session ended in May with our contribution to the Spring (Lent) Recital series.

Currently we have a full complement of 12 ringers and this includes Leslie Carroll-Frye, Barbara Plante, Marilyn Norman, Margaret Trethewey, Monica Cottrill, Victoria Meredith, Merran Neville, Anne Cummings, Lynda Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Paul Merritt and Michael Feeney. We also want to thank our honorary member KC Kann who filled in for a number of our members who were away during the season.

The Fall began with a beautiful bell arrangement of the John Rutter “Gaelic Blessing” and was followed in November with a “Celtic Farewell” for Remembrance Day. We finished the year with our Advent Recital during which (Richard) played on sax and was joined by friends Don Whitehead and Mike Dees on piano and drums respectively. On Sunday, Dec. 15, we played two pieces for Lessons and Carols.

As you can see, the Laudamus Bells is a very busy and dedicated group and I would like to thank them for their efforts to create beautiful and dynamic musical experiences.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Frank, Laudamus Bells Director

MEMBERSHIP & NURTURE

Committee Membership

- Glenna Hall, Co Chair, Coffee & Conversation, Welcoming New Members
- Lillian Reid, Co Chair, Welcoming New Members
- Rev. Joshua Lawrence, Staff Support
- Rev. Annie Jannaway, Pastoral Care Minister
- Bev. Lindsay, Prayer Chain
- Annabelle Logan, Caring Callers
- Mary Mattar, Lay Visitation
- Susan McGregor, Consolation/Congregation Notes
- Karin Symonds, Secretary
- Donna Thompson, Pew Cards & Donation Envelopes
- Jo Ann Silcox, Pastoral Care and Church Roll

We were delighted to welcome two new members, Karin Symonds and Susan McGregor to our committee. Karin has assumed the role of secretary; recording summaries of our monthly meetings and sending reports to council. Susan has assumed the role of writing notes to members of the congregation undergoing difficult times. We bid farewell to Gerry Meacham who has written over 170 notes in the last three and a half years. We thank Gerry for her significant contribution to this important ministry.

Pastoral Care

We are so grateful for the support and nurturing ministry of Rev. Annie Jannaway who continues to reach out in very meaningful and attentive ways to our congregation. (Report attached)

Pastoral Care continues to be a major role in our committee’s responsibilities. We are thank-

ful to the volunteers, who under the leadership of Mary Mattar, provide Lay Visitation four times a year to many members of the congregation. Mary continues to recruit new visitors and keep in touch with everyone involved.

The **Prayer Chain**, a chain of seven volunteers, led by Bev Lindsay, offers confidential and quiet prayer for those who are experiencing the need for spiritual support.

We are also grateful to the volunteers, who are members of the **Caring Callers**, under the leadership of Annabelle Logan, who regularly reaches out to several people to ensure that they feel connected and cared for by the FSA community. Jo Ann Silcox continues to provide outreach to people at FSA.

Susan McGregor is writing letters of congratulations, comfort and consolation to members experiencing joy, loss, illness or grief.

Volunteer Appreciation

We celebrated Volunteer Appreciation Sunday. Glenna Hall took time during the service requesting any volunteers in the congregation to stand and be recognized for their help supporting the important compassionate work of faith in action. Afterwards, at Coffee and Conversation, we enjoyed cake, fellowship and gratitude.

We offer support to two committees that come under the umbrella of Membership and Nurture.

(Reports attached)

- Archives led by Don Jones
- Affirm under the chair of Rev. Karen Low

Coffee and Conversation

Coffee & Conversation is an important part of fellowship and community at FSA. On Sunday,

C & C continues under the leadership of Glenna Hall and the volunteer work of members from the Council committees. Congregational volunteers have offered to run the dishwasher for a month. Membership and Nurture extends thanks to these wonderful people. Lemonade on the Lawn also remains the responsibility of Membership and Nurture.

Photo Directory

Our biggest undertaking this spring was coordinating a new photo directory. This work was very time consuming. Heather Locking-Cusolito, Glenna Hall and Lillian Reid contacted over 250 people through sign up sessions before and after church, phone calls and e-mails to set up appointments for photos or request permission to add them to the roster. The photo directory was completed and distributed in September 2024. It will be a valuable communication reference for our congregation. Our committee could not have done this without the support of Kathryn Skelly and Jim Silcox.

FSA Congregational Statistics (based on the Membership Roll published in Tidings - 2024)

We welcomed thirteen new members this year at FSA. Photos of our new members, taken by Jim Silcox, are published in our *Tidings* issues.

New Members

- Aaron Ansah
- Gillian Channer
- Emmanuel Churcher
- Linda Margaret Imrie
- Frank Kearney
- Sara Kearney
- Ken Lund
- Wendy Lund
- Tony Parker
- Lindsay Rivard (Children Margaret & Norman)

- Karin Symonds
- Joan Wannamaker
- Ron Wannamaker

Leaving Members

- Mason Robichaud to Yarmouth, N.S.
- Catherine “Gayle” Smith to Port Hope, Ont.

Confirmations

- Oscar Appleton
- Tyler Koustrup
- Natalie Lake
- Robin Neaves
- Rebecca Skelly

Baptisms

- Adarsh Yadav
- Dakota Adams (adult)
-

Marriages

- Tristin Hill & Camilla Skowran
- Gordon Benbow & Thi Thanh Nirung

In Memoriam

- Edna Allcorn
- Bev Ballantyne
- Judith Ann Barker
- Bill Bettger
- Ron Chatterson
- John Eberhard
- Jim Hendry
- Mayme Marti
- Cedomir (Ched) Radoja
- Sue Scorgie
- Sarah (Sally) Smith
- Robert Walters

In Memoriam - Non-Members

- Vereta Bohri
- Sean Dyson
- Andrew Hunter

The Membership and Nurture Committee are thankful for the continuing support from Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence and Rev. Annie Jannaway who guide us spiritually as we strive to look after the congregation and the needs of all.

Respectfully submitted,
Glenna Hall, Co-Chair
Lillian Reid, Co-Chair

Pastoral Care Report

It continues to be a joy and privilege to be in pastoral ministry at First-St. Andrew’s. For twelve hours a week, I visit members in Long Term Care, Retirement Homes, hospitals, and homes. Contacts are also made by email and phone calls. Getting to know the life stories, struggles, and their faith connections with First-St. Andrew’s has been a blessing. I am grateful for the support of Rev. Joshua Lawrence, the Membership & Nurture Committee, Margo Christodoulou from the Ministry & Personnel Committee, the FSA Staff, and many members of the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Annie Jannaway

Archive Sub-Committee Report

The year, 2024 has been a year of consolidation for the Archives Committee. The decision to digitize what is possible in the collection has been continued. Progress has been made on digitizing a Music scrapbook donated by Merrie Young in 2016. Miscellaneous boxes have been catalogued and added to the collection in labelled boxes. There is much to be digitized yet and work continues on items that have been donated by members and have been or will be placed in miscellaneous boxes for future reference.

A new sign to identify the room amid the EI

Sistema rooms on the second floor has been added to the door. Nuggets have been included in the weekly Blast. The Marian Keith Scrapbook has been digitized and stored with the digital items. A large portfolio has been added to hold the items too large for the shelving. Photo Albums have been recorded with names when possible and made available on the Website. Tidings Quiz items have been continued this year. Discussions have been started on ways to digitize the Baptisms/Funerals/ Marriages to make it easier for the office manager to search when requested to do so.

New members Paul Merritt, Barbara Plante and Wes Sole have been welcomed to the committee.

Members: Pat Carter, (Secretary), Don Jones, (Chair), David McKane, Paul Merritt, Barbara Plante, Jim Silcox, Wes Sole, Heather Vouvalidis, Judith Walker, Rev. Joshua Lawrence (Staff) Lillian Reid, Glenna Hall (Membership & Nurture Reps)

Respectfully submitted,
Don Jones, Chair

Affirm Sub-Committee Report

As we seek to be more inclusive of all who might be marginalized and break down barriers to full inclusion at First-St. Andrew's United Church, the Affirm Sub-Committee has been looking at how our worship might broaden its reach by becoming accessible to the deaf and hearing impaired. We continued to bring issues pertinent to the LGBTQIA2S+ community to the attention of the congregation throughout the year by way of announcements and e-blasts and maintained a bulletin board with items of interest in Proudfoot Hall. We are conscious of the real and present danger the LGBTQIA2S+ community faces in places around the world and the need for asylum. In the new year we hope

to continue discussion regarding the sponsorship of an LGBTQIA2S+ refugee. Knowing this would be a major undertaking, our hope would be to engage other area Affirming congregations in this discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Karen Low, Chair

OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee is an important part of our church, our local community and beyond. By raising funds through several key projects, we represent our church to the community, as the funds we raise are dispersed in the name of our church to local Outreach projects. Our church members are also ardent supporters of the United Church **Mission and Service Fund**. Thank you, committee members, for all of your work.

Our 2024 committee members were: Marilyn Beach, Barb Dalrymple, Janice Elliott, Liz Galbraith, Jan Hendry, Linda Imrie, Pat Pettit, Natasha Roberts.

Amnesty International

Members of the congregation are invited to sign an online petition or letter, or to write a letter, in support of a variety of Amnesty International appeals for justice around the world.

This gives those at FSA the opportunity to act in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere to change our world for the better.

Afghan Refugee Support Group

It has been a big year for the Afghan Refugee Support Group! After close to three years of filling in applications, fundraising, and waiting, some of the family has arrived in London! Three fam-

ily members arrived in July, and one more came recently at the end of November. We continue to await 2 more family members whose applications are still being processed in Pakistan.

A lot has been accomplished in settling those family members who are here. The family is living in a lovely three-bedroom townhouse, well furnished with the many donations of furniture and household goods which we have gratefully received. They have health cards and social insurance numbers. They have a family doctor and have had appointments to have their health needs met. They have had dental appointments at the Wright Dental Clinic. They have bank accounts, cell phones, a computer and internet. The family has been connected to a settlement worker at the Cross-Cultural Learner Centre which has been helpful. They attend English classes daily and are considering job and educational opportunities. In fact, the eldest brother has recently obtained a part-time job at a nearby fruit market. So impressive! The family is becoming more independent in attending appointments and moving around the city on their own.

The many donations we have received have been crucial in helping this family find a safe home in Canada. Many thanks to all who have donated. I am so grateful for the dedicated work this committee has done to assist this family. Many others at FSA have also made a big difference in their lives and we are so thankful to everyone. The family frequently express their thanks and appreciation for all they have received and feel blessed to now be living in Canada.

Our fundraising for this family is ongoing! Maple Syrup sales continue! Please contact David McKane or the church office to buy Maple Syrup and support the family in this way.

Our need now is for help driving the family to appointments and meeting other needs as they arise. Any offers of help are appreciated without a need to join the committee. Please contact Linda Badke.

Canadian Foodgrains

First-St. Andrews and St. Marys United Church once again held their joint Grow-a-Row campaign in support of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The campaign ran for 8 weeks and our members contributed \$4,550 during that period. The FSA total was lower than last year, but we did not hold a corn roast this year as it would have been in the same time frame as the church's gala dinner fundraising event. However, the total proceeds between the two churches from donations plus the sale of the soybean crop totalled \$11,480, which is comparable to last year's campaign total and still a big increase over our 2022 campaign figures. This figure will be matched 4:1 by the Canadian Government. Thank you to our generous FSA supporters of this important initiative to combat global hunger and food insecurity.

Christmas Share, 2024

Christmas Share was very successful this year. We received 35 donations totalling \$5,455.00! This includes a very generous donation of \$1,000 from the London Interact club, the high school Rotary group that Linda Badke leads. We are so grateful to all those who donated.

Christmas Share supports East London United Church Outreach, known as ELUCO, which works to stand by those in need in the Marconi community of east London through their Community Outreach worker, Nancy Howard.

We also greatly appreciate the Shopping Card Program at FSA for their support of Christmas Share and ELUCO. They make it easy for donations to be made. Shopping Cards and donations made at the Shopping Card table are given to Nancy Howard for the ELUCO Christmas Share Program. Nancy uses the donations to buy needed Shopping cards from FSA, which is a benefit to FSA. These cards are then distributed to families in need in east

London, helping to make Christmas a more joyous, hopeful celebration for them. Many thanks!

East London United Church Outreach (ELUCO)

ELUCO is an incorporated, Outreach of the United Church, Antler River Watershed London Regional Council, Ontario, supported by four United Churches in London: Siloam, Rowntree, Richards Memorial and First-St Andrew's United Churches.

'The simple truth.....We all just want to be accepted, respected, appreciated, heard and loved' (Samantha Woodbeck). This sums up exactly what ELUCO is about. Nancy Howard, ELUCO's Community Outreach Worker and the face of ELUCO in the Marconi Low Income Housing Community in East London, feels that the personal care and attention offered by ELUCO to the community is what sets ELUCO apart from other agencies.

During 2024, the following continued to be key issues facing individuals, families and children living in the **Marconi Low Income Housing community**, East London. Food security escalated during the past year due to a 4.5% increase in the price of food. Mental health issues continue to plague the community. Nancy Howard, the ELUCO Community Outreach Worker offers support & counselling. Supporting United Church congregations, UCW groups, youth groups and individual donations allows distribution of school supplies, toiletries, grocery gift cards. ELUCO supports many families with LMCH, OW, ODSP, Housing Stability, and Housing Access documentation and support during meetings. The **ELUCO Gethsemane Food Cupboard** operates by volunteers out of the Gethsemane Gardens Housing Complex and is open to clientele Wed. and Fri. mornings from 9:30am to noon. By the end of Nov, 2024, the Food Cupboard has served 584 families (2023, 467 families in total). This increase is a reflection of the increase in food prices. Sisters

of St Joseph and London Food Bank support this initiative. **Welcome Wednesday:** Once/month ELUCO volunteers serve a noon day meal at Rowntree United Church. Approximately 45-50 individuals attend.

ELUCO Community Outreach Worker Change to Part Time Hours: The ELUCO Board of Directors has had to make the difficult decision to reduce the Community Support Workers (Nancy Howard) hours from full time to part time (20 hours/week), effective Jan 1, 2025. By reducing ELUCO's financial commitment, the Board is ensuring the continuation of ELUCO's important work at the Marconi Housing Community in the areas of food security, advocacy, family counselling & support, and seasonal fund raising under the caring and effective guidance of Nancy Howard. The ELUCO Board of Directors thanks you for your understanding and continued, on-going support.

Fundraising Initiatives: *Voices of Broadway* (April, 2024) = \$945; *FSA White Squirrel Golf Tournament & Fund Raiser* (June, 2024) = \$3800; *Walk & Roll Fund Raiser* (Sept, 2024) = \$11,426; *FSA Christmas Share* donations (Nov, 2024) = \$5,455;

Heartfelt Gratitude to Our Funders: Mission and Service, United Church of Canada; United Church Women; May Court Club of London; Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada; Middlesex London Health Unit; Westminster College Foundation; London Food Bank; United Church congregations & generous individuals.

The Jean and Bill Knowles Outreach and Social Justice Endowment Fund:

Our committee is most grateful to receive the yearly interest from this newly established Endowment Fund, a gift from the estate of Bill Knowles. For decades Jean and Bill worked tirelessly on our committee, supporting social justice initiatives.

In 2024 we were able to donate \$3500 to the Wright Dental Clinic, \$1170 to send 9 children to FSA summer day camp from the London Chaplaincy, and \$830 to ELUCO

Los Quinchos school for child street vendors in Nicaragua

From its early days at FSA this committee has contributed to the needs of 500 at-risk school children including food and educational/school supplies. Los Quinchos also receives a grant from the United Church of Canada Mission and Service fund.

United Church Mission & Service Fund

We informed the congregation of the work of the United Church Mission & Service Fund through *Tidings*, eblasts and monthly Outreach Moments. This fund represents who we are as a church supporting social justice initiatives locally, nationally and globally. We thank FSA members who contribute to this important Fund. Our Mission Sunday speaker this year was Pam Cullen, chaplain and Executive Director of the London Community Chaplaincy which provides support to children and families living in two of the largest low-income housing complexes in London in the Southdale and Limberlost areas.

St. Paul's Social Services

We continue to support St. Paul's Social Services with monetary and non-perishable food donations to their daily food bank which welcomed many new clients who have not needed help in many years. They provide an emergency three-day supply of food including fresh eggs, powdered milk, peanut butter, canned fish and fresh produce.

The Fellowship Centre of St. Paul's Social Services serves guests hot lunches every Thursday. The meals consist of a choice of homemade soup and freshly-made sandwiches, with the frequent addition of fresh fruit salad.

White Squirrel Golf Tournament

The Outreach Committee extends its sincere thanks to all those who so generously contributed to the success of our 18th annual White Squirrel Golf Tournament in June this year. FSA members and over 20 Hole Sponsors helped us reach our goal with generous donations. Our net proceeds were \$12,600. The beneficiaries of these donations were: ELUCO (East London United Church Outreach), Indwell and Ark Aid Street Mission which each received \$3800.00 as well as St. Paul's Social Services and Los Quinchos school in Nicaragua which each received \$500.00.

Heartfelt thanks go to Diane and David Knoppert, Jim Silcox, Bob Schram, Ann MacPhail, Kathryn Skelley, Colleen Garrett, Sara Kearney, Margo Christodoulou, Liz Galbraith and other members of the FSA Outreach Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Outreach Committee Members and Ann MacPhail (member of the ELUCO board)

PLANNING

The Planning Committee of FSA held its first meeting on April 6, 2016 – nearly nine years ago. It began as an ad hoc group and then evolved into a standing committee of the FSA Leadership Council.

Over that time a number of actions have been taken and documents produced that have helped to guide decision-making at FSA. In 2024 steps were taken to produce a strategic priorities plan to help guide the future of FSA and this document also served as a summary of previous reports. For more information see: https://www.fsaunited.com/files/ugd/25fec5_55d075bb376a42909e892de80900e945.pdf

A decision has been made to return the

Planning Committee to its earlier ad hoc status and to re-activate it on as an “as needed” basis.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Planning committee, past and present, for their many contributions and dedication to the work of the committee. Thanks is also extended to the Western University, Conestoga and Fanshawe College students who helped the committee to fulfil its mandate from time to time.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Elson, Chair

PROPERTY

First St Andrew’s United Church is an historic structure which requires regular care to ensure its viability for generations to come. The Property Committee has been meeting monthly via zoom to address ongoing maintenance issues, Avis Report deficiencies and unexpected occurrences. The committee is dedicated to both maintenance of, and improvements to our church home.

The Property Committee has completed our first full year with the absence of a Facilities Manager. The Property Committee and some dedicated volunteers have contributed extensive volunteer hours to manage facility needs as efficiently as possible. Many thanks to those who assist in this capacity. The resulting savings to the Operating budget are significant. This year we also saw the retirement of our regular custodian, Lynda Cooper, who provided excellent service for many years. We are currently working to train a replacement.

Our building has experienced a growth in regular use. In addition to our own full slate of program uses and concert events, El Sistema, Original Kids and the Nepalese Church have placed increased demands on the building. So far all of our users seem to be able to work in

the building in a collaborative manner. We understand and appreciate that balancing the needs of multiple users is demanding and requires flexibility. However, the rental income stream largely covers all property operating expenses and justifies any inconvenience. Having said that we believe the building is currently being used at capacity.

The Property Committee did undertake several projects as they became necessary:

- Fireside Room Flooring (Capital)
- Atrium Door repairs
- Electrical Panel upgrades Fireside hallway (Capital)
- Electrical closet enclosure
- Heat Pump installation – Ministers Office, Youth Room (Capital)
- Stair tread repair – Proudfoot Hall
- Exterior Doors Weatherstripping
- Painting porch floor Farquhar House
- Burnt out Lightbulb replacement throughout the building
- Motion Sensor light switch in single bathroom
- Painting, small bathroom, new electrical closet, Farquhar House front porch
- Rebuild retaining wall in Alcove
- Boiler System Startup annual inspection, cleanout and water testing (Capital)
- Kitchen repairs, stove, dishwasher
- Alcove Security Fencing (Capital)

We are extremely grateful to the Board of Trustees and Council for their ongoing support of Capital requests.

Heating System

Maintaining our current heating system has become a priority. This year we experienced significant boiler issues which required remediation. The committee continues to engage in planning for a replacement heating system. Green options remain a primary focus for an older historic structure such as ours especially in light of the recent increases in utility costs. The heating system was identified by the Avis report many years

ago as being due for replacement. Once again repairs were undertaken as required. A steering Committee is currently working to research options and make recommendations regarding HVAC changes for the future. This will be a major topic of discussion in the next year.

Committee Members

We currently have two vacancies on our committee, one member at large plus the Facilities Staff position. Current members include: George Jolink (Chairperson); Heather Vouvalidis, Bill Guthrie (Secretary), Peter Ross, Ron Bradley and Connor Campbell.

Respectfully submitted,
George Jolink, Chair

FINANCE

The Finance Committee has reviewed a preliminary version of our internally generated financial statements for 2024. Externally reviewed statements will be available for Part 2 of our Annual Meeting later this year.

Like many churches FSA faces challenges as revenue declines and expenses increase. However, we have seen many positive developments in 2024 that we have the opportunity to leverage as we build Financial Plans in future years.

Revenue Donations

We want to thank our donors who provide most of our Revenue. We especially want to thank our members who donate by PAR and stock donations. PAR Revenue now makes up 75% of our Offering - thank you for this consistent monthly income!

Total donations including Fundraising and Memorial Donations totaled \$367,641 in 2024

and were \$9.4K ahead of budget. Revenue is declining year over year. For the first 3 Quarters of 2024, Envelope and Par Givings were ahead of 2023 by 3%. However, in Q4 they fell behind 2023 by 19%. Seasonal appeals fell below 2023 by \$7,950. Overall, Envelope/ Par, Seasonal Appeals and Other Givings decreased 7% from 2023 to 2024.

Work has begun to gather data regarding trends in givings, and in particular, PAR donations. We will use this analysis to better forecast financial results and cash flow in the future. We are losing long-time members year over year. As new members become more engaged, they will be more likely to donate more. However, we must consider that external challenges like increased cost of living and reduced disposable income and competing priorities will contribute to a reduction in both the number of regular donors and givings per person.

Fundraising

We are very grateful for our volunteers who help to organize fundraising projects. Donations of talent and time have been paramount to the success of these initiatives. As a welcome new revenue source for 2024, fundraising contributed \$25,763 to Operations. Although there are still opportunities to increase this revenue stream in the future, it will require more volunteers to support and sustain these initiatives.

Rental Income

Our rental income from both one-time events and on-going lease agreements continues to be vital to our sustainability and has increased by 8% from 2023 to 2024. We are grateful that Meals on Wheels and El Sistema continued use of FSA space. In 2024 a long-term rental agreement was negotiated with a fledgling congregation from the Nepalese community in London. These agreements have provided a consistent and valuable monthly revenue stream.

Our building has also been busy with other

rentals throughout the year beyond our expectations for 2024 and the use of the building has likely reached capacity.

EXPENSES

Compensation

Investment in our Ministry and personnel has allowed us to successfully develop programming and increase engagement within our congregation and the larger community. The surpluses or close to breakeven financial results reported in recent years are in part due to staffing vacancies. In 2024 functions of the role of Facilities Manager which has been vacant since July 2023, were filled by volunteers. Our Youth and Young Adult Minister, Marilyn Arthur vacated her role in October 2024. This vacancy has been taken as an opportunity to conduct a needs assessment to develop an appropriate role going forward. The impact of any new roles or changes in positions on the budget will be carefully evaluated but consideration will also be given to continuing the momentum that our programming has experienced with our investment in staffing.

We assume our current Ministries and all our programs will continue. UCC recommends a COL increase for Ministers at 3.0%. Roles are evaluated regularly and budgeted by M&P to increase accordingly. Other Allowances such as Mileage and Telephone and Continuing Education make up our total M&P expense. Continuing Education is funded by the Clark Fund and \$3,271 for was utilized by staff in 2024.

Property

Property Expenses are the second largest Expense in our Budget. The Property Committee prepare a very detailed Budget for both the fixed costs (such as utilities) and for additional Building Maintenance Projects. Taxes, Insurance and Utilities comprised 67% of Property Expenses in 2024. This coming year we will be attempting some building repairs that have previously been put off for years due to budget constraints. Capital Expenditures in 2024 totaled \$45,498.

Music

In 2024 Music Expenses were \$20,494. Year over year increases have been curtailed by assistance from Friends of Music in the amount of \$3,700 for concert related soloist rehearsals and \$2,400 from the Music Trust Fund.

Administration

Administrative expenses increased by 16% from 2023 to 2024. These increases are largely driven by increases in monthly charges for service contracts and service charges as well as investment in ITS infrastructure.

UCC Assessment

This amount is determined by UCC based upon their formula that uses our financial information from 2 years prior. In recent years, our Assessment has been:

- 2022 - \$23,841
- 2023 - \$33,657
- 2024 - \$31,967
- In 2025, the Assessment is set at \$20,327

CASH ON HAND

At Dec 31, 2024 our bank balance was \$126,183. Of this \$68,335 reflects a cumulative Operating Reserve. The remaining funds are restricted and not available to spend on Operational Expenses. FSA needs to have sufficient cash flow coming in from various income sources and going out to pay expenses and other obligations when they are due and monitoring our balances is crucial. The reconciliation below illustrates how our preliminary cash surplus reported for Dec 31, 2024 relates to the cash available in the bank.

Preliminary Cash surplus reported at Dec 31, 2024	68,335.20		
Receivables not collected	(7,732.00)		
Trust Receivables	(32,142.40)		
Outstanding Deposits (deposited to bank in Jan)	(11,267.00)		
Inventory Gift Cards	(13,553.64)		
HST recoverable	(10,114.99)		
Prepaid Insurance Expense (paid not expensed until 2025)	(32,068.80)		
Liabilities not paid	29,840.89		
Due to Board of Trustees	18,212.00	9,509.26	
Advance from Trustees - Gift Cards		35,000.00	
Actual Cash in Bank a Dec 31 related to Operations			44,509.26
Friends of Music and Window Sonnets Inventory not sold			17,109.92
Restricted Funds- funds received not designated for Operational expenses			64,564.12
Bank Balance			126,183.30

YEAR-END FINANCIAL RESULTS 2024

Although December 2024 results are not final, we initially project a financial break-even. This is great news and a much stronger financial performance than expected, when compared to a budgeted deficit of \$91,912 after Proudfoot Fund support of \$100,000. Total revenue exceeded budget by \$19K and total expenses were \$62K less than budget. Staff vacancies, less than expected expenditures for ITS initiatives and a delay in some larger property maintenance projects contributed to this.

Trustee Assistance

Previous year surpluses and Trustee support reduce financial burdens in order to sustain operations.

The Trustees hold an investment portfolio on our behalf. Each year, the Trustees deliver the Return on the Investments to our Operating Budget. The Trustees provided the following assistance to directly offset Operating expenses in 2024.

- Proudfoot Fund (Operations): \$107,500
- Proudfoot Fund (Capital): \$45,498
- Pastoral Care Salary Support: \$20,000
- Jean Brown Fund (Programming): \$748

- Jean Brown Fund (Salary Support): \$27,576
- Clark Continuing Education Fund: \$3,271
- Knowles Fund (MO Special Outreach): \$5,500
- Music Fund: \$7,390

Financial Health

FSA's financial challenges are not unique but new opportunities have allowed us to envision a bright future. This will be the work of the entire congregation. However, evaluating the success of the church solely in terms of the amount of funds it raises and simply measuring the size of its congregation undervalues its contribution to the whole community.

Fortunately, FSA continues to benefit from both the generosity of its members, income earned by the Board of Trustees (primarily The Proudfoot Fund), as well as the mindfulness of committees to curtail expenses or develop new revenue sources when appropriate. This has allowed us to minimize deficits and to continue to live as stewards of God's abundant gifts through Faith, Service and the Arts.

Respectfully submitted,
 Laura Wood, Treasurer and Chair

MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL

The Ministry and Personnel Committee manages all FSA staff. Our goal is to create and maintain a high level of staff performance within a work environment that promotes individual well-being and harmonious relationships. Each staff member, full or part time, is paired with an M&P liaison who serves as a channel of confidential communication between the staff member and the M&P Committee.

The role of the M&P Committee was detailed in a recent edition of the *FSA Tidings*.

The year 2024 saw one staff resignation and a contractor retirement.

Marilyn Arthur, Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, resigned to take up a full-time post as a congregational minister. Marilyn received her Diaconal Minister designation this year. Unfortunately, Siloam United Church pulled out of the three-church partnership that employed Marilyn; FSA and Metropolitan were unable to pick up the one-third portion of Siloam's financial responsibility, leaving Marilyn with a part time job. Much effort was expended by both Marilyn and FSA to try to recruit other congregations to the youth partnership, without success. The future of youth programming is still under discussion. We are very grateful for Marilyn's contributions to our youth during her time with us.

Lynda Cooper, our contract custodian for several years, retired in November. Lynda worked three mornings a week to help keep our church sparkling clean. Thank you, Lynda.

Our minister of Worship and Congregational Life, Pastor Joshua, continues to bless us with inspiring worship leadership, and has established collaborations with several other churches and community organizations to reach out to the disadvantaged in the London area.

Our two Chrises, Fischer and Lindsay, have not only settled well into their jobs since joining us, they have excelled! Our music program has grown and prospered under Chris F's leadership as Minister of Music. The children's Sunday participation has increased significantly due to Chris L's enthusiastic leadership as our Children's Program Coordinator.

Our longest serving staff, Office Manager Kathryn Skelly, continues to provide great support to staff, FSA members and visitors. Kathryn's formal job description now includes all aspects of her work, including that related to live streaming of FSA services and concerts.

Pastoral Care Minister Annie Jannaway has now been with us for eighteen months. Her gentle manner combined with her many years of experience in various aspects of caring for people has brought excellence to her position.

In 2024, we completed a major revision to the FSA Employee Handbook, which was subsequently approved by Council; it is posted on the FSA web site. Regular staff evaluations were carried out for each staff. We hosted the annual staff appreciation lunch and, at Christmas, provided a small gift to each employee as an extra token of our appreciation.

Finally, I am very thankful for the valuable contributions by my fellow members of the Ministry and Personnel Committee. We are a working committee: members take on special studies, liaison roles, and participate enthusiastically in discussions of significant issues. Special thanks to Kathryn Patton who retired from M&P during the year. Kathryn was a long-time member of M&P. Her thoughtful contributions to our discussions and our monthly "reflections" agenda item have served M&P very well.

In the fall, we welcomed Alex Neaves to the M&P committee, adding an important legal perspective to our work.

Reminder: FSA members who have issues concerning staff should contact the appropriate staff liaison or the Chair of M&P. Confidentiality is strictly adhered to.

Committee members in 2024 (staff liaison in brackets)

Linda Badke (Christina Lindsay)
Margo Christodoulou (Rev. Annie Jannaway)
Barrie Evans (Pastor Joshua)
Ardath Finnbogason-Hill (Chris Fischer)
Kerry Hill (Marilyn Arthur)
Alex Neaves
Kathryn Patton
Barb Ridgewell (Kathryn Skelly)

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Hill, Chair

FAITH FORMATION

The Faith Formation Team is a joy to work with. We meet monthly and do our best to guide the spiritual growth and fellowship of our FSA community.

Worship

We have worked with many groups and implemented different programs this past year. We continue to try and bring awareness and inclusivity to our services and appreciate those discussions around the use of pronouns. There have been more intergenerational services and we look forward to seeing the collaboration between all groups continue to create dynamic worship opportunities throughout the year. There are many people who do lots of work behind the scenes for the service each Sunday. A special thank you to Carol Elson for coordinating the greeters, Jan Hendry and her team for organizing and serving communion and Anne Cunningham who coordinates the readers each Sunday.

Youth and Young Adults

We, with sadness, had to wish Marilyn Arthur goodbye and celebrate her new position in Tavistock. We continue to work on a strategy and long term plan to provide support and programming for our high school and young adults. Last summer we provided a week day camp that was staffed by amazing volunteers under the leadership of Marilyn Arthur and Denver Milner.

We supported a group of five young people through their confirmation journey and celebrated them in June. We will continue to support Hopelyn in her book project, *Queer Conversations in the United Church*.

Stephen Elson has been leading the High School Sunday Program with support from Marilyn Arthur and Mary Ann Hodge.

Youth and Young Families

Christina Lindsay is doing an amazing job of providing programming for our Grade 8 and under children. She and Chris Fischer have been running a music and fellowship program on Monday evenings. Christina continues to look for more people to help support programming on Sunday mornings.

Adult Education

Pastor Joshua has been providing leadership with the Adult Bible Study on Thursday morning. The Faith Formation committee would like to offer some other opportunities for spiritual growth and fellowship in the new year. Please send your suggestions to Allyson Watson.

Respectfully submitted,
Allyson Watson, Co-chair

OTHER REPORTS

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

2024 saw the C & M team continuing to support the various activities of the church via its many communications platforms: the website, the weekly Bulletin insert, the weekly email Blast and the weekly slide show. The latter has been played in the Sanctuary before the Worship service, on the Atrium video monitor during the week and on the Billboard page of the church's website. In addition, we produced advertising materials for Music at First-St. Andrew's, the White Squirrel Golf Tournament, the Eclectic Christmas Market, FSA Food Fest, the Shopping Card Program, and the Annual Fall Stewardship Campaign and its related Lenten Campaign.

C & M has been working closely with the Archives Committee this past year to post documents to the Archives web page which show clearly what records we have and where they can be physically located in the Archives Room. It is important that our stored documents be available and useful.

From a print perspective, we continue to be an active participant in the production of *Tidings* each quarter and ensure that it is also available online. Special thanks to the Editor, David Wardlaw, and team members, Barb Dalrymple, David McKane, Nancy Quinn, Jim Silcox and Anne Cummings. We also collated and produced this Annual Report and played a small role in the design of the new FSA Photo Directory this year. A challenging new print project was the creation of an FSA 2025 Calendar which was sold as a fund-raiser for the Operating Fund.

The faithful and hard-working "Tech Elves" are Kathryn Skelly, Merran Neville and Lorna

Gunning-Fratschko. They are truly saints, toiling away year round without complaint.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Silcox

Live Streaming at FSA

Live streaming was introduced to FSA on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 9, 2022 and is now a standard offering for worship services and FSA concerts. As well, a number of funerals have been live streamed over the past year allowing those who could not attend in person the chance to "participate" online.

The service has also been made available as part of the rental cost for a couple of concerts of outside groups.

The introduction and installation of live streaming at FSA was covered in the previous two Annual Reports – 2022 and 2023. This past year, the service was updated with new handheld and easier to use mics and a new iPad to manage the audio.

We greatly appreciate the time and effort given by the dedicated members of the live stream team. New team members are always welcome.

Live stream team members:

Cameras: Kathryn Skelly (principal videographer), Merran Neville, Allison Wyant

Audio: Chris Wood (principal sound technician), Kathryn Skelly, Andrew Richardson, Connor Campbell

Slides: Derik Koustrup, Tyler Koustrup, Andrew Richardson, Rebecca Skelly, Merran Neville, Allison Wyant

Data projection: Jim Silcox

Respectfully submitted,
Merran Neville

BROWN BAG LUNCH GROUP

A year ago, we decided to drop the prefix “Men’s” from the BBL title but so far it remains a group of about ten or twelve guys who meet through Zoom every Wednesday, 12-1. Because we are online, we have had participants who were confined to their homes for one reason or another, or just visiting in another city.

We have tried in the past to be more organized, for example, to read and discuss the same book, but we soon reverted to what is basically a friendly general conversation.

These conversations continue to cover a very wide range of subjects over the one-hour session. We still enjoy talking about books we are reading, as well as programs we have observed on TV/online, plays or musical events we have attended, and so on. Someone often follows up later with the name of the author, or an online link.

Other topics range from outer space to inner feelings, not infrequently connected to our varied religious beliefs. We try to avoid the ‘T topic’, but its difficult to avoid considering the implications of what is going on in the country to the south, as well as events elsewhere in the world. We try not to focus all the time on our health, what someone called an “organ recital”, but it’s surprising—or maybe not—how often another member will suggest a treatment, an online site, or just comment, “yeah, I had the same problem.”

In general, our stories are wonderful, and get better each time we tell them.

This past year we didn’t sponsor any FSA project, as we have in the past, but we are interested in future plans for the heating system (ideally based on ‘green energy’). Another project

might be to help with a new projection system for live and online events.

So, if any of this interests you, just send your email address to Don Jones (nodsenoj@gmail.com) and he will email you the Zoom link he sends out each week.

Respectfully submitted
Don Jones

SHOPPING CARD PROGRAM

Profits from this program contribute importantly to the bottom line of the church. The year is not quite over at the time of writing this report. Revenue is currently more than \$184,000 with profits of over \$9,200 with a few weeks in December to go. Thanks to our many loyal clients and to our shopping card team for their commitment to this program.

We continue to focus onharnessing the purchasing power of our family and friends to provide important financial support to the church. It is a significant fund raiser for the church itself, at a time when fund raising is greatly needed.

This is a team effort and I want to acknowledge and thank the following for their support: David Wake, Margo Christodoulou, Winnie Wake, Margaret Wardlaw, Heather Vouvalidis, Ivana Klouda, Susan McKane, Barb Dalrymple, Ken Wright and Mike Koustrup.....as well as a newcomer – Barb Ridgewell,. We also appreciate the strong, reliable support we receive from Kathryn Skelly and Colleen Garrett.

We encourage increased use of this program by our members and friends. We believe that this program has the capacity to grow. Retailers give charities like the church discounts (many in the 5% to 10% range), far higher than

that available from any other rewards program, like the money back credit cards, VISA and MasterCard . We want to take advantage of these offers for our church. Fundraising in this way reduces the size of the 'ask' for direct congregational donations to support church operations. We have more work to do in 2025 to further grow this program and we hope you will be supportive of our efforts. We look forward to seeing you at the Desk on Sunday!

Respectfully submitted,
David Manness

UCW

UCW Purpose: *To unite women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and to provide a medium through which we may express our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship, and service.*

First-St. Andrew's UCW meets as one unit, for worship, fellowship, and interesting and informative programs. All women in the congregation are warmly welcomed.

Services Provided

- In April, VON offered a one hour SMART Exercise class for seniors. All FSA members were invited.
- After many decades of UCW sponsorship, the organizing of the annual Christmas Church Bazaar was formally delegated to FSA.
- On October 2, UCW organized a Life*Spin Baby Shower/informational event with guest speakers Rose White and Kathy Eddington. All FSA members were invited. Donations of baby items, as well as, monetary donations were given directly to Life*Spin. These will be used for Life*Spin's spring Baby Fair. See December 2024 *Tidings*, UCW Outreach article for more information.
- Corresponding secretary sends cards and let-

ters to bereaved families, persons in hospital or ill at home.

- In May 2024, the UCW approved a donation of \$1000.00 to The Wright Clinic, operated by Ken Wright, to bridge finances until the Canadian Dental Plan is in place.

Money-Raising Projects

- Provision of Green Envelopes, available to all members of the congregation for personal donations.
- Phantom Tea envelopes containing a poem written by Millie Bates inviting donations from the congregation.
- Total revenue from fundraising projects: \$2,147.00
- In May 2024, the UCW approved a donation

Outreach

- Donations made to ELUCO, as well as two children were sent to Camp Kee-Mo-Kee, London Community Chaplaincy, Rotholme Women's & Family Centre, My Sisters' Place, L'Arche, ANOVA - Women's Community Centre, and the United Church of Canada Mission & Services.

Executive Meetings

- January 31, 2024
- March 13, 2024
- September 4, 2024

Mission Project

- The UCW Mission Project as approved by the Antler River UCW Executive is Safe Drinking Water for all Indigenous communities in Canada.
- UCW President, Laurel Kenney and Executive member, Nancy Quinn, collaborated with members of the Oneida Nation of the Thames in support of our mission project.

UCW Executive

President: Laurel Kenney

Secretary: Helen Guthrie/Helen Mahabir

Treasurer: Donna Fraleigh/Helen Mahabir

Tidings Representative: Nancy Quinn

Correspondence Secretary: Jane Graves

Membership Convenor: Nancy Quinn

Archivist: Millie Bates

Bazaar Convenor: Glenda Robinson (Delegated

to FSA in 2024)

Rummage Sale Convenor: Jan Hendry (Sale cancelled)

Member at Large: Linda Badke

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Mahabir, Secretary

First St. Andrew's United Church Women

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2024

With Comparatives as at December 31, 2023

Unaudited

ASSETS	February 2024	Budget 2024	December 2023
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank	\$3,684		\$11,084
Due to/(from) FSA			0
	<u>3,684</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,084</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$3,684</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$11,084</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Equity			
Retained Earnings	<u>3,684</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,084</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	<u>\$3,684</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$11,084</u>

First St. Andrew's United Church Women
Statement of Financial Position
As at December 31, 2024
 With Comparatives as at December 31, 2023
 Unaudited

ASSETS	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	December 2,023
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank	\$3,915		\$11,084
Due to(from) FSA			
	3,915	0	11,084
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,915	\$0	\$11,084
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$0	\$0	\$0
	0	0	0
Retained Earnings	3,915		11,084
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	\$3,915	\$0	\$11,084

First St. Andrew's United Church Women

Statement of Operations

For the Period Ended December 31, 2024

With Comparatives for the Year Ended December 2023

Unaudited

	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	December 2023
<u>Donations</u>			
Green Envelopes	\$325	\$1,500	\$2,840
Donations	547	300	161
Phantom Tea	1,255	1,000	860
Miscellaneous	20	300	25
	<u>2,147</u>	<u>3,100</u>	<u>3,886</u>
<u>Earnings</u>			
Holly Bazaar		5,000	5,408
Miscellanaous		0	2,425
	<u>0</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>7,833</u>
Total Revenue	2,147	8,100	11,719
<u>Out Reach</u>			
E.L.U.C.O.	1,300	1,300	1,300
London Community Chaplaincy	1,000	1,000	1,000
Rotholme Women's & Family Centre	500	500	500
My Sister's Place	500	500	500
L'Arche	725	725	725
ANOVA - Women's Comunity Centre	500	500	500
Mission & Service U.C. of Canada	2,750	2,750	2,750
Camp Kee-Mo-Kee(ELUCO)	800	800	800
Afgan Refugee Program		0	2,000
Nurses for Housing Indwell		0	1,000
Miscellaneous		200	0
Total Outreach	8,075	8,275	11,075

First St. Andrew's United Church Women
Statement of Operations
For the Period Ended December 31, 2024
With Comparatives for the Year Ended December 2023
Unaudited

	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	December 2023
<u>Miscellaneous Expense</u>			
Middlesex Presbyterial	92	90	120
Subscriptions/journals		100	0
Speakers/Courtesy	50	300	0
Miscellaneous	1,022	130	2,726
	1,164	620	2,846
Total Surplus (Deficit) from operations	(\$7,092)	(\$795)	(\$2,202)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees holds title to and administers all property owned by First-St. Andrew's United Church for the benefit and use of the congregation as part of The United Church of Canada under the provisions of the *Trusts of Model Deed* of the United Church Manual. The Board is also the registered owner of the freehold title to the lands upon which the church sits.

The Board of Trustees held three regular meetings in 2024. There are four Committees accountable to the Board of Trustees: Insurance,

Investment, Long-Term Giving, and Memorials. At least one member of the Board serves on each committee. Meetings of the various Trustee Committees also took place during the year, and Trustee members also attended and made presentations at the Annual Congregational Meeting, at regularly scheduled Council meetings, and the Co-chairs sit on the Council Executive.

During 2024, Trustees included: Paul Cooper (Co-Chair), John Eberhard (Chair, Long-term Giving Committee), Janice Elliott, Don Jones, Bob Kennedy, David Manness (Chair, Investment Committee), Barbara Plante,

Alan Salmoni (Chair, Insurance Committee), Jim Silcox, David Wake (Secretary), Jackie Williams (Co-Chair), Katherine Wonfor (Chair, Memorials Committee), Kenneth Wright and Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence (ex officio). Invited guests to the Trustees meetings during 2024 have been: George Jolink (Chair of Property), Laura Wood (Treasurer, Chair of Finance), David Wardlaw (Chair of Council) and Steven Elson (Past Chair of Council).

The Board manages the Proudfoot Legacy Funds, made up of the Proudfoot Legacy Restricted Fund, the Proudfoot Legacy Unrestricted Fund, and other Funds restricted as to their use by their donors. We are very pleased to report to the congregation that in 2023 the two new Restricted Funds established by bequest: the Jean & Bill Knowles Fund for outreach projects, and the Pastoral Care Endowment Fund, have done well financially. We can all feel blessed and deeply grateful for the foresight of the many individuals who have supported First-St. Andrew's through donation of these funds over the years.

In December, the Investment Committee reported that, without exception, all Trust Funds are above their Principal values. Of course, each financial year can end well, with the New Year bringing gloomier forecasts. This makes continuous monitoring and adjustments by the Investment Committee necessary to optimize FSA's Trust Funds over the long term.

The Trustees work closely with the Finance Committee, and the final reports, and the approved financial statements from the Trust Funds will be presented at the subsequent Congregational meeting together with those of the FSA operations.

In 2024, at the direction of Council, the Board of Trustees made available \$212,698 from the Proudfoot Legacy Fund to FSA for Operations. This included over \$38,000 for capital expenses

approved by the Trustees, most notably, boiler repairs to keep FSA's heating system operational for as long as possible. It also covered such expenses as new flooring for the Fireside Room, more security fencing to prevent vandalism, air conditioning for the Minister's office, and new microphones.

As Chairs of your Board of Trustees, we greatly appreciate the efforts of our fellow Board members and of you, the members of our congregation. We anticipate a busy 2025, looking after our fiduciary responsibilities on behalf of the congregation and managing the funds that are so important for our ability to do God's work in this great community.

We offer many thanks to David Manness, who is rotating off the Board of Trustees after seventeen years of service, twelve of which he served as Co-chair, alongside John Eberhard. He is also stepping down from his role as Chair of the Investment Committee but has generously volunteered to stay on this committee in an advisory capacity.

We welcome three new members to the Board this year. Kenneth Wright is a long-term member of FSA, with extensive experience in fund raising. Heather Vouvalidis also is a long-term member of the church, and served for a time as FSA's Office Administrator. Tony Parker became a member this year and has graciously agreed to become our next Chair of the Investment Committee. Tony retired from the Bank of Montreal in 2012 after a 37-year career. During the last 20 years of his career he was a Private Banker in the Private Banking division. We are blessed to have these exceptional individuals as new members of the Board of Trustees.

In closing, we remember John J. Eberhard, an invaluable member of the Board of Trustees for seventeen years, twelve of them as Co-chair, who died in November of 2024. John's many contributions to this Board and to FSA are legend

and will be long remembered by all those fortunate enough to have known him. Rest in Peace, dear friend.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Williams and Paul Cooper, Co-Chairs

CHURCH STAFF - DURING 2024

- Minister of Worship and Congregational Life The Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence
- Minister of Pastoral Care (as of June)..... The Rev. Anne-Louise Jannaway
- Minister of Music Chris Fischer
- Shared Youth and Young Adult Minister (Jan. through Oct.)..... Marilyn Arthur
- Coordinator of Children's Programs Christina Lindsay
- Voluntary Associate Minister The Rev. Karen Low
- Minister Emeritus The Rev. Dr. David McKane
- Organist Emeritus..... Paul Merritt
- Office Manager..... Kathryn Skelly
- Chair of Council David Wardlaw

We recognize that we gather to worship on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, the Attawandaron, the Huron and Wendat Peoples. We value and have deep appreciation for the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all the Original peoples of Turtle Island.

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