



Tidings

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Tidings

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



David Wardlaw

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The *Tidings* team hopes you experienced a summer with ample relaxation and were able to do at least some of the activities that you associate with the summer season in Canada. May you enter the new church year with a sense of renewal.

The feature article is on church governance at FSA and focuses on a proposed change in the governance model to one more closely aligned with the size of our community of faith, with its demographic, and with the ongoing evolution of the concept and practice of volunteerism in our society. The article describes the current and proposed "new" model in detail. The Council report in this issue outlines the process undertaken by Council to arrive at the new model and approve test driving it on a trial basis.

The Tribute article by Don Jones pays homage to Barrie Cabena, who was the Director of Music at FSA from 1957 until the mid 1970s, and is fondly remembered by those who participated in the music program under his leadership. Barrie lived a full and interesting life, and was very productive and accomplished as a choral director and composer. Barrie passed away in April of 2025.

Many, perhaps most, readers have seen a quilt on display at the front of the sanctuary from time to time. Odds are that such a quilt was made behind the scenes by the longstanding Quilting Group which meets twice monthly at the church and produces over 50 quilts per year. Learn all about this enterprise in the article by quilter, Lesley Pergau.

An ongoing *Tidings*' project is to introduce new members and profile existing members of the FSA community of faith. In this issue Karen Reese is profiled by none other than our own minister, Joshua Lawrence.

Long-time FSA members Jean Wuensch and Joni Pypka, both of whom passed away earlier this year, are the subject of Remembering articles.

As announced in the last issue, the graphic designer/layout artist (Jim Silcox) and the editor (yours truly) are retiring after publication of the next issue of *Tidings* (Advent/Christmas/Epiphany). Unless replacements are identified for these positions in the interim (interested parties should contact Jim Silcox, head for Communications and Marketing), the next issue will most likely be the final issue of *Tidings*, at least for the time being. Given the situation, consideration is being given to publishing readers' reminiscences of *Tidings* in the next issue in the form of letters to the editor. Stay tuned for a possible call for such letters in the eblast and bulletin this fall.

†



"Still Learning"

Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence



Since arriving in Canada, I have learned a great deal about the practices of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Obviously, I will never learn as much as I would like to know, but it has been a highlight of ministry for me. I give thanks for the many opportunities to grow in right relation with my kin from different nations and recall that treaties are kin-making ceremonies. Yet, despite what I think I know, I sometimes get it wrong. I misunderstand a practice, a gesture, or a word. While I do get frustrated by the missteps I take, I am reminded by my Indigenous friends and teachers that trying is an important part of reconciliation. It demonstrates a willingness to change, an openness to right relation.

During the recent gathering of United Church leaders and delegates in Calgary, AB, a proposal was brought forward by an Indigenous representative from the Antler River Watershed Region (the broader ecclesial body to which FSA belongs). In the proposal, the authors cited the dissolution of the National Indigenous Council and the All-Native Circle Conference as examples of 'consistent lack of respect, nonexistent consultation with grassroots people...and the constant push for assimilation.' Although every congregation of the United Church was invited to vote on the establishment of an autonomous Indigenous body, the congregations were not told that this creation was not asked for by the majority of Indigenous Christians in the United Church. In fact, the congregations were told that the establishment of an autonomous Indigenous Church was actually the anticolonial gesture many of us want to make as part of broader rec-

conciliation efforts. At General Council 45, Indigenous leaders asked for two in-person yearly gatherings to build and strengthen their relationships with the Original People's elders, youth and the 'sandwich generation.' They want an annual National Original People's Spiritual Gathering so as to create 'healthy relationships amongst the 'Original People of Turtle Island.'

"I am reminded by my Indigenous friends and teachers that trying is an important part of reconciliation."

As indicated both by the strong language of the proposal and the overwhelming vote to advance the proposal, the United Church has much to learn and many of us are willing to do just that. It is important that we take inventory, not only of what we have not done or done without consultation, but also of what we are willing to do with our time, energy, and skills. Just as I have been reminded that even my faulty efforts to practise reconciliation demonstrate a willingness to take right steps, so too can the whole Church admit missteps and move in a new direction. I am still learning. We are still learning and we must not stop, for that would indeed be an anti-reconciliation practice. May we all learn from the failures of the past and present and move forward with the Spirit in a new way for a new day: a journey that honors all our relations fully and faithfully. †





Steve Elson*



David Wardlaw*

CHURCH GOVERNANCE AT FSA: A

Introduction

Although operating mainly out of the limelight, the governance of FSA, like in any organization, plays a vital role. Its primary function is to make decisions and provide leadership in the best interests of FSA as a whole – to provide for its future as well as responding to its ongoing needs.

There are two major aspects to church governance: one is the leadership given to the physical assets of the organization and its long-term financial health. This is provided by the Board of Trustees which is common to all United Churches. The second is the leadership given to its ongoing operations, annual budget, staff, volunteers, programs, and services. The governance of this aspect of FSA is provided by the Council, currently made up of the officers of the church and the chairs of standing committees. The hands-on work of operations is provided by staff, volunteers, church officers (Chair of Council, Past-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, the lead minister), and the leaders and members of the standing committees and other groups. Everyone involved plays a vital role in bringing all FSA programs and services to life.

The Council model of governance adopted by FSA 33 years ago (in 1992) is one of a small number of governance models operating within the vast majority of communities of faith in the United Church of Canada (UCC). Models other than the common ones are possible, as long as they fulfill the basic requirements of the UCC. Those basic requirements are: a Board of Trustees; a Ministry and Personnel Committee; a governing body that includes the officers of the church and the lead minister; and approval of the model by Regional Council. In the early days of the UCC, the most common form of church governance was bicameral consisting of a Session and a Board of Elders.

The Council model has served FSA well but for several reasons Council has decided the time has come to try out a new model - one that

is more in keeping with the current realities and future needs of FSA.

- It is becoming increasingly challenging, for a variety of reasons, to find people willing and able to fill key leadership roles;
- The ongoing evolution of the concept and practice of volunteerism in our society;
- It is demanding on the time of those Council members who fill two roles at the same time – being a Council member and also leading a standing committee or chairing the Board of Trustees;
- The current size and organization of Council and standing committees lacks flexibility and reflects an era when FSA was a much larger congregation (~ 2,000 five decades ago).

The proposed new governance structure

The proposed change involves having a smaller (eight person) governing Council which would involve the four officers of the church (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Past-Chair) plus the Minister of Worship and Congregational Life and three members-at-large – hereafter referred to as the New Council.

The intent behind proposing a change in governance is as follows:

- To “free up” the time of current leaders who carry responsibility for leading their committees as well as a responsibility to Council itself;
- To allow those who will become members of the New Council to focus their time and attention on church-wide matters. New Council members will not represent a committee or group but will focus their attention on the church as a whole;
- To allow the New Council to focus attention on two key areas: long-term strategic direction-setting and operational management from an FSA-wide perspective;
- To allow some areas of responsibility which

A CONTINUING EVOLUTION



fall, intentionally or by default, to the Chair under the existing governance model, to be taken on by other members of the New Council;

- to allow greater flexibility in how operational groups and committees are organized and structured - including promoting shared leadership. Shared leadership is seen as a way to make it easier and more attractive for people to take on leadership roles – and to make these roles more rewarding and fulfilling.

Moving Forward

At a special meeting of Council held on June 24, 2025 a decision was made to move ahead with implementing the New Council model on a trial basis. This would allow changes to be made as needed before a final restructuring model and plan is brought to the congregation for approval. It is anticipated that implementation could begin sometime in the fall of 2025. This being the case, an update would then be provided at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January 2026 where a decision would be made on whether or not to continue the trial period using the new model, or possible variation thereon, for another year (to January 2027). This is seen as giving ample time to test the new model and decide whether it is in the long-term interests of FSA to continue to use it as the preferred governance model. Approval by the Regional Council of the United Church (the Antler River Watershed Regional Council) would also be required following approval of a new model by FSA.

Initiation of a trial run of the proposed model is contingent on several factors. One is dissemination of the rationale for, and substance of, the New Council model. This article marks the beginning of that process. A congregational town hall meeting, planned for the fall, is another forum. The second factor is securing membership for the New Council: confirming that the

current church officers (Secretary, Treasurer, Past-Chair) are willing to serve; identifying nominees to serve as members-at-large on the New Council; and identifying nominee(s) to serve as Chair or Co-Chairs. Fulfilling the latter contingency may well be the limiting factor in launching the trial period.

In the short term, it is proposed that the current seven standing committees remain in place, namely:

- Faith Development Committee
- Finance Committee
- Membership and Nurture Committee
- Ministry and Personnel Committee (required by the United Church of Canada)
- Music Committee
- Outreach Committee
- Property Committee

Note that all committees, with the exception of the Ministry and Personnel, are not required, but have been set up by FSA to meet specific needs, i.e., they are discretionary. In addition, the Board of Trustees, as currently structured, will remain in place and will not change.

A key feature of the new governance – Flexibility

Rather than having standing committees as currently defined, it is proposed that the six discretionary areas of responsibility (currently covered by committees) listed above be redefined as portfolios, each of which would have a lead Coordinator (or co-Coordinators) The intent is to introduce new flexibility in how the functions that are important and necessary to the work and life of FSA, are carried out - rather than prescribing a specific structure, organization, and membership, as is currently the case.

Each portfolio will involve all of the following: leadership, oversight, and responsibility for the functioning of a designated operational area of FSA on a regular and ongoing basis and working





within an approved budget. Each portfolio's short-term and long-term plans will inform the overall planning for FSA as undertaken by the New Council.

At the outset, the number and main focus of the portfolios would mirror that of current standing committees, although this could change over time. It is intended that there could be flexibility in the number and mandate of portfolios/committees. Any formal changes would be approved by the New Council in consultation with existing portfolios, staff, and other affected parties. Current Regional Council representatives could also be considered as a portfolio for reporting purposes.

As noted above, a key difference is the flexibility in how the work would be undertaken. The Co-ordinators will have considerable discretion in the operational and administrative structure of their mandated area of responsibility. In other words, a portfolio and its leader(s) can elect to continue to function as a standing committee, or choose an entirely different structure within which to carry out its mandate, or adopt a hybrid approach. Whatever form the initially adopted structure takes can be changed at any time in consultation with the New Council.

A Key to Successful Implementation - Communications

Effective and on-going communications is a key success factor within any organization, and especially during times of change. Recognizing the critical role of communications, the following mechanisms are proposed:

- Selected members of the New Council will serve in a liaison role with portfolio Coordinators— to ensure on-going communications to and from the New Council;
- The New Council will have meetings with Coordinators and others several times per

year to share information, receive input, and identify key issues and strategies;

- During the trial period several Town Hall meetings will be hosted by the New Council to communicate with and receive feedback from the FSA community;
- Regular communications from the New Council will be sent out via the e-blast and bulletins;
- Other methods to communicate effectively will be undertaken on an as-needed basis.

First (baby) Steps

Adopting the adage that it is better to walk before one runs and knowing that the new governance model will take some time to become fully operational, the following initial steps will be undertaken by the New Council:

- Confirmation of membership and Coordinators for the six Portfolios – including any changes to the structure and organization of the Portfolios;
- Confirmation of membership and leadership of the M&P Committee;
- Drafting of the mandate and terms of reference for the New Council and for each of the Portfolios – to reflect current and future practices;
- Selection of the Coordinator liaison roles for the New Council members;
- Organization of the initial meeting of the New Council with Coordinators

Closing Remarks

Accepting and adapting to a proposed change is not easy and making it work is a challenge. But with a recognition that there are important benefits to be gained – change is not only possible but can evolve to become the “new normal” that is both exciting and enriching.

†

** David Wardlaw served as Chair of Council from February 2022 to June 2025 and is currently Past-Chair. Steve Elson served as Chair of Council from February 2020 to January 2022 and as Past-Chair from February 2022 to June 2025. The position of Chair of Council is currently vacant.*



FSA QUILTING GROUP

Lesley Pergau

The First-St. Andrew's United Church quilting group legacy began in 2007 when we made *one* quilt to send to the Comfort Quilts Organization.

This amazing organization was sending quilts to injured soldiers being treated in Germany. Since its inception, our quilting group has grown to an active team of 12+, meeting twice per month, the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, from 9:30-2:00pm in the Fireside Room.

With donations of materials from a variety of sources, we can continue creating many quilts each year. Our collection of material grew with the donation of items from the estate of Joan Kaluza and because of her kindness, we continue to create many quilts which we can donate annually to support those in need. With Joan's donation, we were able to sell much of her gift to allow us to create a fund to access the purchase of items needed for quilt completion, including batting (the soft lining in between the layers of fabric), spray glue (used when we "sandwich" the three layers together to hold everything in place prior to quilting), and backing in wide width.

Our completed quilts are donated to the Linus Project, which are delivered to Fabricland for distribution to local organizations such as Merrymount and Anova. Quilt sizes include baby, children, and teens. A couple of years ago, Ronald MacDonald House expressed a need for quilts for families who were staying there while their child was receiving care at Children's Hospital. We proudly answered this call without hesitation, giving quilts to them directly.

In 2024, we sold four quilts and distributed an additional sixty-one quilts to The Linus Project and Ronald MacDonald house directly. To date this year, we have completed sixty-four quilts.

When we gather as a team at the Church: we sort fabric for new quilts; decide on a pattern for the quilt; choose backing for quilt tops; assemble "blocks" together to create the top portion of the quilt; and do a lot of ironing, cutting and "sandwiching" of fabric and batting together. Not everything can be done here at First-St. Andrew's, so some of our members complete the following tasks at home: sewing tops together; sewing on binding; and machine quilting.





Quilters at meeting in August: *Front Row L to R:* Margaret Trethewey, Dallas Knight, Barb Robson, Cindi Lee, Shelley Kostecki
Back Row, L to R: Judy Beitz, Donna Fraleigh, Lesley Pergau, Pat Flynn
Absent: Lynne White, Jane Westmorland (A complete list of Quilting Group members is found in the text of the article.)



This year we have taken on some special projects, including making a banner for Easter for FSA, a Remembrance quilt for the Parkwood Veterans, and proudly providing two quilts to the church for the FSA fundraising auction in late September. We will also be at the November 2025 Eclectic Christmas Market, where we will display and sell some of our quilts to the public.

Some of our quilting members are also part of a sewing group that meets weekly, from April to November, making smaller personal items to contribute to the annual Eclectic Christmas Market. Do you need something to hold all your charge cards together or a safe place for your jewelry to be stored while travelling? Make sure to check all of our items out at the November

Market!

Our team includes dedicated machine quilters, Lynne White and Cindi Lee, and sewers Jane Westmorland, Barb Robson, Dallas Knight, Pat Flynn and Lesley Pergau. Block assembly, top matching and ironing are processed by Judy Beitz, Shelley Kostecki and Donna Fraleigh plus whoever is available to help! We continue to be supported by Mary Balicka, Shirley Santonioli, Deanne Peterson and Maureen Kirkland and welcome Marg Trethewey as our newest member!

We welcome new members and if you think this is the group for you, bring a coffee cup and lunch! One member per week prepares coffee and a snack for our 10:30 break time and this is when we do our "show and tell," seeing all the amazing work members have done since our last meeting and also discussing ideas for future projects.

Deanne, one of our members, shared the following quote which sums up the group beautifully: "I suggest that one of the blessings of the group is the support, creativity, and laughter that happens. I am continually amazed to see the way in which colours and fabrics are arranged to create such beautiful quilts. There is a wonderful camaraderie amongst the group that makes this possible."

For any questions, or wanting to join this creative group of quilters and sewers, please contact Barb Robson by email at barbararobson7@gmail.com. †



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Karen Reese



Joshua Lawrence



If you have been to First-St. Andrew's United recently, you will have noticed a bright smile and warm presence sitting on the pulpit side of the sanctuary. Elegantly dressed and wonderfully hospitable, Karen Reese embodies the spirit of our community as much as any other. But she is not, like some of our members, a cradle United Church member. In fact, Karen is not from Canada at all. Like Dorothy, she is from the Sunflower State of Kansas!

Raised in a family of 16 children, Karen had many mamas and papas! According to her, she was convinced that her mother had eyes in the back of her head. She did not get away with anything. That said, being raised in an agricultural area enabled Karen to build resilience and develop a deep gratitude. Plenty of hard work and fun was had to be sure, and it has made her the indomitable and giving person of faith that we know and love.

Karen was raised as a church-goer and in a church culture and, according to her, following the teachings received there was mandatory. Her father was born in 1897 and her mother in 1907. At this time, Kansas law forbade Black male children from pursuing education beyond Grade Four. In the face of systemic discrimination, educational and otherwise, Karen's parents were determined to have all their children educated and well equipped for the world. And she is certainly that!

In Karen's words, it is thanks to her family's values and support that she has enjoyed a career as a Nurse in the United States and Canada as well as a Retail Banking Trainer

with the former Canada Trust bank. In addition to these amazing accomplishments, Karen has consistently given her time as a volunteer: seven years with VON Canada helping to check on clients' health, 27 years performing throughout the area with the London Sweet Adelines Barbershop Chorus, 20 years singing in two different barbershop quartets, and 22 years as a Toastmaster. These opportunities have exposed Karen to the City of London and all the growth it has undergone in the last few decades. It is her sincere hope to continue volunteering at her spiritual home, FSA.

As one would imagine, family is of great importance to Karen. She remains in contact with her six siblings who are still alive. On the first Sunday of each month, Karen, her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, contact three different family members by phone, text, or a video call to stay in touch. Additionally, they have an organized family reunion every other year as well as a family Facebook account.

Karen is both inspired and grateful for the kindness extended to her by FSA. She has communicated on many occasions that it is true joy to be greeted with warm smiles and hear such dynamic, spiritually grounded music every week, led by Chris Fischer. She did also mention that she appreciates the encouragement and guidance from the messages delivered by yours truly. I, for one, am humbled and grateful for the way she is lifted up by what we do at FSA. What a blessing! This last line is for Karen, and also for those of us who are in the know: Rock Chalk, Jayhawk! †

Jean Wuensch

December 5, 1939 - May 6, 2025



Marilyn Norman



Jean Anderson was born in Bradford, Yorkshire, in the north of England. From childhood, music filled her world. She played piano and violin, graduating from Nottingham University, Leeds University, and the Royal Academy of Music. She began teaching in England, but in 1964 moved to the United States to teach in Minnesota. In 1967, Jean returned to school to earn a Master's degree in Composition from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. In 1969, Jean joined the Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario, finding in London her permanent home.

At Western, Jean taught Theory, Composition, Ear Training, and Sight Singing. She joined the choir at Metropolitan United Church and played violin with the London Community Orchestra. Her compositions were commissioned by the Ontario Council for the Arts and the Middlesex Board of Education, and performed across North America and Europe. She enjoyed setting poems to music. Two of these, *Quiet* and *Riding*, are by fellow English émigrée, Marjorie Pickthall. A composition for piano, *Glimpses of the Canadian North*, which captures the coldness and vastness of the Canadian north, can be found and sampled on YouTube.

In 1973, Gerhard Wuensch came to Western as Jean's Head of Department. They married and began family life together on Sherwood Avenue. With Gerhard's son Peter, theirs was a busy household, and the centre of much entertaining. Gerhard cooked and Jean baked. They travelled widely, often to Austria

and England to visit family. While much of her life centred on music, Jean was also passionate about tennis. She played regularly at Western and followed all of the major tournaments. She supported foster children overseas and locally volunteered with Big Sisters. Above all, Jean was a good friend and a true patron of the arts, supporting many arts organizations, including London Symphonia and The Jeffery Concerts.

In 1989, inspired by the leadership of Frank Meadows and Paul Merritt, Jean transferred to First-St. Andrew's. She joined the choir and accompanied the Junior Joyfuls. Following Gerhard's death, Jean moved to 22 Picton, where her apartment faced the church, the perfect place for Jean in retirement as her faith and the church were central to Jean's life. Here she was able to maintain her independence while actively participating in church life and attending concerts in the core. She played euchre, enjoyed book clubs, and exercised at the Y. Jean brought people together. She organized a monthly lunch date for senior and retired altos: the Lunch Bunch. She baked for friends. The last few years of her life, however, were more difficult. Jean faced many health challenges; yet she rarely complained. She moved to Richmond Woods for more support and happily played hymns for Joshua's services there. Throughout the journey, until the end, her friends, many from FSA, stayed with her. Two paintings from her collection were gifted to the church and are on display in the Parlour area, reminders of a beautiful and generous spirit.

†



Joni Pypka

October 16, 1936 - January 21, 2025



Nancy Quinn

Joan (Joni) Elizabeth (Page) Pypka was a stalwart and beloved long-time member of our FSA church family. Trailblazing, as one of the original “superwomen” of the 60s and 70s social reformation, Joni combined raising her cherished son, Chris, on her own with building a full-time, respected career at London Hydro. Profoundly missed by Chris and by her grandchildren, Kyle, Brett, William, and Olivia Pypka, she is also survived by many beloved nieces, nephews and cousins.

Joni was an alumnus of Alma College and for many years she gave leadership in organizing reunions. She was also very active in London’s Women’s Canadian Club. Her interests, which she shared with her many friends, included global travel, competitive bridge, and creative fashion. At FSA she was known for her quiet compassion for new outsiders, for whom she found practical ways to help, welcome, and include.

A charter member of our FSA United Church Women (UCW), Joni was known for pitching in, wherever she was needed, on UCW projects. Laurel Kenney, our FSA UCW President, says of Joni that “she was a valued, long-time member of our FSA UCW, who energetically participated in our many endeavours.” One of Laurel’s favourite memories of Joni involves

her, ten years ago, tirelessly driving Laurel and other volunteers to and from many workshops, organized to make dolls for the UCW National Project, Bread not Stones. The beautifully hand-crafted dolls were given to all MPPs in Toronto and all MPs in Ottawa, as part of the nation-wide UCW campaign to address child food insecurity here in Canada. Joni would load up her car with passengers (Laurel and other volunteers), sample “model” dolls, and materials to make more dolls and then faithfully drive all over London to various United Churches and Women’s Institutes. At the workshop destination, she would help unload, set-up, coach the sewers, and at the day’s end do the lengthy take down of the workshop.

Other UCW projects included sign-making. Renowned for her elegant calligraphy, Joni often contributed memorable signage for baking sales and other events. I personally remember Joni generously helping with our UCW Rummage Sale’s Women’s Boutique and Men’s Haberdashery. Known for her fashion elegance, Joni would always find the perfect high-end, thrift treasure for our community customers.

Compassionate, kind, elegant, hardworking, humble, and creative are all qualities I think of in grieving the loss of Joni’s gracious presence at FSA. Her life, indeed, is an inspiration, a life well shared and well lived. †

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**Note: There are two benches dedicated to Helen Payne.*



Don Jones

Barrie Cabena

Barrie Cabena was a composer, choir director, organist, teacher and friend. He passed away on April 24, 2025, at the age of 92 in Guelph, Ontario.

I first met him when my wife, Dorothy, studied organ performance with Barrie. Dorothy and I were jointly in charge of the music at Knox United Church and Dorothy wanted to improve her skills. The best organ teacher was Barrie Cabena. He taught Dorothy and later I studied composition with Barrie.

We left the position at Knox United when directing the choir, teaching music, and directing the Sisters of St. Joseph's Choir and Band became too much. Three years of working 7 days per week became unmanageable. We decided, (encouraged by Barrie), to join First-St. Andrew's United Church and sing in Barrie's choir. That was in the year 1965.

Barrie had a cohort of supporters in the church that made the decision to join FSA one that we would cherish for the rest of our lives. We joined that cohort. Barrie asked me to supply musicians for performances of operas and productions that he led while at FSA. A few times he asked me to direct the choir when he was representing Canada in various organ and church festivals around the world.

Barrie was an international figure on the organ, as a composer and performer. He was well known for his compositions and often was asked to perform in Europe, USA and Canada. He, of course, often played concerts himself to the great enjoyment and satisfaction of our FSA community of faith. He also invited organists from around the world to perform concerts at FSA.

Barrie came to FSA in 1957 at 23-years-old. He grew up in Australia and studied at the Royal College of Music, London England. He had just won the Haigh Prize, the highest distinction awarded to organists. He wasted no time in getting right to work at FSA by planning and performing Bach's Christmas Oratorio on December 8, 1957. At this performance, he asked John Cook, the organist and choir director at St. Paul's Cathedral London Ontario, to play the organ. This was the beginning of a long friendship and collaboration of these two fine musicians.

One of his enthusiastic supporters was Merrie Young. Her scrapbook of Barrie's accomplishments and other aspects of his life and work is kept in both digital and hard copy format in our FSA archival collection.



Barrie Cabena composed and directed many opera productions while at FSA. Many of the works that were performed in that era were written by Barrie. One of these was *The Selfish Giant*. My two daughters, Beth and Sharon, performed as members of the cast as did Heather (Corbet) Vouvalidis. It ran from April 9–11, 1970.

Probably the most significant lasting contribution Barrie made while at FSA was the recommendation for a new organ. When the recommendation was accepted, he then oversaw the installation of our excellent Casavant Organ in the balcony. The Festival of the Arts was very important that year and the "Year of the Organ" was celebrated with concerts and performances by world celebrities like E. Power Biggs, who opened that festival in 1969 with a concert on the new organ. †





MUSIC

Chris Fischer

“Then Let Us Sing!”

Well, it's finally arrived: the new hymn resource, *Then Let Us Sing* (TLUS), is now here. To say that I am excited to dive into its pages would be an understatement... This songbook, the first in the United Church to exist for congregations in digital rather than physical form, is the culmination of seven years of work by many people. (The late Terry Head, former Director of Music at FSA, was a founding member of the first working group.) I am humbled to be gifted with such a labour of love as this: a book which endeavours to fill in some of the gaps in our song tradition as a faith community that is trying to come to grips, musically and theologically, with our contemporary world.

In our services of worship, Joshua and I attempt to provide you with a conduit to the sacred in our daily life, partly through singing with (we hope) one voice – songs of praise and thanksgiving, affirmation and blessing, confession and lament. We find ourselves preoccupied, often, with hearts that are breaking for all the beings in Creation that are pushed to the margins, and often too, we are overwhelmed with the enormity of the injustices that are being perpetrated each and every day. We need to be reminded that the Spirit still has something to say, and that God still has work for us to do, work that gives meaning and purpose to the followers of Jesus in this United Church of Canada as we head into a second century.

Over the coming weeks and months, we at First-St. Andrew's will be learning and offering songs that affirm and strengthen community, that express grief and even anger that so much is not the way God wishes it to be, and that encourage us as we work to care for the world and its people. We'll be singing songs from around the globe, songs that centre the perspectives and spiritualities of creators representing many genders, abilities, cultures and generations: songs in English and French, Spanish and Lingala, Arabic and Nepalese. There will be songs to energize all of us, of all ages, as “little by little, the tiniest seeds will grow...”, tools to change the world” (TLUS #134, “Little by Little by Little”).

I close with the words of Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath, newly elected Moderator of the United Church, who quotes the late, great Stuart McLean's immortal slogan for the fictional Vinyl Café: “We may not be big, but we're small!” Let's live into hope that transformation, that Resurrection, happens among us and within us, one step – one song – at a time.



PASTORAL CARE

Rev. Annie Jannaway

Some of the goals of Pastoral Care are: emotional support - listening empathetically during times of illness, grief, or uncertainty; spiritual presence - helping individuals find meaning, peace, or spiritual comfort; religious needs - offering prayer, sacraments, scripture, or rituals when requested; family support - being present for family members during crises or end-of-life care; and ethical guidance - helping navigate moral or spiritual questions, especially during difficult medical decisions.

Areas of special focus are found in: critical care and ICU - emotional and spiritual crisis support; end-of-life care - offering presence, final prayers, or life reviews; and mental health units - supporting identity, meaning, and hope during psychiatric care.

Pastoral Care in homes focuses on: building long-term spiritual relationships with residents; providing companionship and spiritual rituals in a familiar setting; supporting family caregivers emotionally and spiritually; and addressing loneliness, existential distress, or memory-related issues. In hospice/home palliative care, it is helping patients and families navigate dying with dignity and spiritual peace.

With deep listening and empathy, a nonjudgmental presence, cultural sensitivity, and confidentiality and trust, the benefits can include: reducing anxiety and emotional distress; enhancing quality of life and dignity, especially in chronic or terminal illness; the support of ethical clarity in complex decisions; and the promotion of healing even when a cure is not possible.

In the past few months, I have journeyed with members of First-St. Andrew's during prolonged illness following surgery, concerns about finding a job, the death of a grown child, the death of a parent, recurring admissions to hospital, depression about health, sudden unexpected illness, progress in Rehab, meeting family members of seniors, a long journey of grief, life altering illnesses, physical and emotional pain, dying with dementia, caregiver exhaustion, loss of driving privileges, restored health, and learning about past involvement in the church. It is always a privilege to journey with those in need of pastoral care and support at First-St. Andrew's. †

Answers to the FSA History Quiz (page 20)

1. (c) 70 years ago
2. (d) symbolizes the Holy Spirit and Christ
3. (b)
4. (c)

Triumphant



CHILDREN & YOUTH

Christina Lindsay

They do not know it yet, but this summer has been an exciting (and busy!) time for the children and youth at FSA. Happily, throughout the summer, there has continued to be an energetic presence from our young people each week. Sunday mornings have been a time we have welcomed more children than previous summers as we have prepared classes for younger and older kids separately. The children have enjoyed using Lego, bubbles and other fun things to learn several different parables. The children have also made communion a weekly experience that we will continue into the Fall. Amazing leadership has been provided by Will Purkis, Ginny Carter, Amanda Newbury, Connor Campbell, Linda Badke, Jess Huber and Emma Dickson.

Another time one can hear sounds of happy youth is on Wednesday evenings. This summer we launched "SubHub" at FSA and, in so doing, we have welcomed 33 youth in grades 7-12 for fun, food and fellowship. During our time together we often play games, create things, eat, and spend some time exploring our faith. We are so grateful and appreciative for Jess Huber and Emma Dickson who have made time to come and get to know us better.

This is only the beginning! If you are curious about what to expect in the Fall, a Children and Youth Program brochure can be found in the pews. To start, the brochure outlines what families can expect on Sunday mornings. This year there will be four classes (depending on age) in Worship & Wonder (previously known as Sunday School). The program for each group will include discussion and various activities we think will be engaging for our youngest friends. Our quest to build a team of adults to assist this program is ongoing. This is a special ministry within FSA and you will find fulfillment when you spend time with us! The brochure also shows we will be hosting a Confirmation class this year and our youth music program is expanding. This Fall will be a busy time. Welcome back everyone! †

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GOVERNANCE REPORTS



COUNCIL

David Wardlaw

Chair and Past-Chair Positions

At June 30, 2025 Steve Elson completed his term as Past-Chair of Council and David Wardlaw completed his term as Chair and moved into the Past-Chair position. The position of Chair of Council is currently vacant, a somewhat precarious situation for FSA.

Church Governance

One of the five key strategic priorities adopted by Council in the fall of 2024 is:

- *take immediate steps to research and report on alternative church governance models*

The need to reconsider FSA's governance structure and function arises from a considerable drop in the size of the congregation since the current system was introduced 33 years ago and a decline in the number of individuals willing or able to fill ongoing roles, including leadership roles, within the current Council/Committee structure. Leadership roles will, of course, persist in any structure, but one of the goals in any restructuring is to reduce the load associated with the various leadership roles compared to the current system.

To this end, Council participated in an online workshop on church governance models in the United Church of Canada in February. Subsequently, a discussion paper on church governance revision for FSA by Steve Elson and David Wardlaw was presented at the March Council meeting. The focus is on a different model involving a smaller governing body whose members do not have another major role (currently Council is our governing body) and a more flexible, adaptable approach to covering the programming and operational areas currently covered by standing committees. Discussion on this topic continued at the May Council meeting and was the sole topic of a special June meeting of Council. At the conclusion of the June meeting, Council approved a new governance model on a trial basis. During the trial period the new model would be assessed periodically and possibly adjusted. At the conclusion of the trial period, it is anticipated that a proposal for a (permanent) new governance model would be brought to the congregation for consideration for approval.

This new governance model, as approved by Council on a trial basis, is *described in full in the Feature article in this issue of Tidings*. Launching the trial is, however, contingent upon identifying nominees for three members-at-large on the "New" Council and a nominee for Chair or nominees for Co-Chairs. It is hoped that the trial would begin sometime in

the fall. Implementation would be preceded by a Town Hall meeting to provide a forum for questions and discussion.

Replacement of Heating System

The Working Group looking at replacing the current heating system has identified an engineering firm that would be willing to prepare a detailed engineering report on options for modernizing the church heating system and adding air conditioning at the same time. Three members of this group did a building walk-through with an engineer from this firm on July 22. The group is currently awaiting initial feedback and a quote for preparing a detailed report. The report would provide the project specifications needed to solicit proposals/quotes from HVAC contractors.

Update on fundraising for our 2025 operating budget

In June of 2023, Council adopted a multipoint, multiyear plan to sustain and increase auxiliary revenue for the FSA operating budget. In 2024, approximately \$35K was raised. Fundraising under this plan continues in 2025 with the following components:

- Donations to help Run-the-Church-for-a-Day
- Food Fest sales (3-4 rounds through the year)
- Congregational dinner on April 6
- Auction event (Bidding for a Better Future) on Sept. 26
- Congregational dinner on November 9
- Eclectic Christmas Market in November (FSA receives 50% share of net)
- Shopping card sales (all year) †

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TRUSTEES



Jackie Williams



Paul Cooper

In this report, we highlight how the work of the Board of Trustees is divided among its various committees. *The Trustees Handbook* states:

“In the context of the United Church, a Trustee is an individual who, along with the other members of the Board of Trustees for a congregation, holds all of the property of that congregation for the use and benefit of the congregation as part of the United Church.”

All the property refers to the buildings, the contents and the investments. This responsibility requires different types of knowledge, and so the Board is divided into four committees: Insurance, Investment, Long-term Giving, and Memorials. Each Trustee serves on at least one committee, depending on their preference, and some Trustees also serve on other committees within FSA.

The Insurance Committee ensures that the congregation always carries adequate property and liability insurance. This involves tracking the inventory of FSA contents and organizing appraisals of the buildings and contents to ensure the correct level of insurance. This committee is responsible for finding the best insurance company with affordable rates, no easy task, since very few companies will insure churches, and particularly historic churches such as FSA.

The Investment Committee creates an investment policy to decide the financial goals for FSA trust funds and lays out how the investment of funds is to be diversified and administered. The Ontario Trustee Act of 1990 states that: Trustees “must exercise the care, skill, diligence, and judgment that a prudent investor would exercise in making investments,” and “may invest trust property in any form of property in which a prudent investor might invest.” This committee is ably assisted by advice from professional Investment Advisors at BMO Nesbitt Burns.

The Long-Term Giving (LTG) Committee encourages and facilitates significant gifts to FSA in the form of bequests or from living donors. The late John Eberhard, in his role as Chair of this committee, created the Proudfoot Atrium Tree Policy to recognise monetary gifts to the church. He was also a major contributor in the creation of the FSA Legacy Gift Policy. In 2021, under John’s direction, the LTG established the Proudfoot Society, a Benefactor Program for living donors. The Memorial Committee works in conjunction with the LTG to recognise and keep a permanent record of all gifts to the trust funds of the church. This committee maintains Memorial Books that are displayed for the congregation. †



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Bidding for a Better Future for FSA
a Fundraising Auction Event

Friday evening, September 26, 2025

Featuring:

- live & silent auction components
- pre-auction social hour
- appetizers and cash bar
- 50-50 draw
- entertainment

Tickets (\$25) on sale beginning Aug. 11 at the Shopping Card desk on Sundays and through the FSA Office.

189 79

First Steps for Autism

CONGREGATIONAL DINNER:
SAVE THE DATE:
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9
ANOTHER INTER-GENERATIONAL DINNER IS BEING PLANNED.
BRING YOUR APPETITE!
FREEWILL OFFERING IN SUPPORT OF THE FSA BUDGET
DETAILS TO COME



The Eclectic Christmas MARKET

Save the Date!
Saturday, November 22, 9am-3pm
Contact Convenor,
Ardath Finnbogason-Hill for more
information (ardath@rogers.com)
Stay tuned for details



THIS WAS US

(Since our last issue)



Left: We welcomed the
Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir
on June 15.



Left: Children's *Teddy Bears'*
Picnic: August 24



We took our worship service
outdoors on August 3





Heather Vouvalidis
& the Archives Sub-Committee



Theme: Lofty Heights

Next time you are in the FSA Sanctuary look up, look way up. You will see there are many biblical symbols stencilled on the ceiling; 19 sets, in fact.

1. What year were those symbols first stencilled on the ceiling?

- (a) 1872
- (b) 1923
- (c) 1955
- (d) 1967

2. In 1975 the ceiling symbols were covered with drywall when some plaster fell. The symbols were rediscovered and repainted when the sanctuary was refurbished in 1999. One symbol design can be found on both the ceiling and on the sanctuary carpet. Which one is it?

- (a) Winged Eagle
- (b) Winged Man
- (c) Open Bible with Sword
- (d) Descending Dove in Crown.

3. The sanctuary was renovated when the new organ and choir loft were installed in the gallery. Since which year has the Senior Choir been climbing that steep set of stairs from the narthex to the gallery?

- (a) 1955
- (b) 1968
- (c) 1972
- (d) 1980

4. Our church spire can be seen for miles around. Rev. Moir Waters wrote a hymn about it. Many sermons have referred to it. The church was built in 1869, and the steeple was added thirty years later, in 1899. The copper cladding was replaced in 2002/2003. The steeple was repainted to match the historic shades of yellow and green. How tall is the church tower with steeple?

- (a) 33m (108 ft)
- (b) 52m (171 ft)
- (c) 66 m (217 feet)



Answers on Page 15