

Annual Report - 2023



**Preliminary Edition
Prepared for Part 1
Annual Congregational Meeting
2024**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MINUTES (OF 2023 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS)4

AGENDA (FOR 2024 MEETING-PART 1).11

COMMITTEE NOMINEES FOR 202415

STAFF REPORTS.18

 ...from the Minister of Worship & Congregational Life 18

 ...from the Minister of Music. 20

 ...from the Minister of Pastoral Care. 21

 ...from the Children's Program Coordinator 22

 ...from the Shared Youth and Young Adult Minister 23

COMMITTEE REPORTS24

 Council24

 Music25

 Membership & Nurture (including subcommittees)27

 Planning31

 Property31

 Outreach33

 Faith Formation & Worship35

 Ministry & Personnel36

 Finance37

OTHER REPORTS.39

 Board of Trustees39

 Communications & Marketing40

 FSA Helping to Address Community Needs41

 United Church Women42

 Shopping Card Program47

 Brown Bag Lunch47

CHURCH STAFF49

MINUTES OF 2023 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Annual Congregational Meeting – Part One
Sunday, January 29, 2023
Proudfoot Hall
12:48 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 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting. (Part One).

Moved By: Heather Locking-Cusolito

Seconded By: Paul Cooper

MOTION CARRIED

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

MOTION: To extend the right to vote to adherents and youth at the 2023 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: Linda Badke

Seconded By: Jeanette Eberhard

MOTION CARRIED

3.0 **Welcome:** Remarks from the Chair

David Wardlaw, Chair of Council, welcomed the congregation to the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting. FSA is a resilient and vibrant community of faith in positive transition. A report from Council can be found in the 2022 Annual Report.

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting – part 1.

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: Barb Dalrymple

MOTION CARRIED

5.0 **Approval of Minutes of the 2022 Congregational Meeting**

MOTION: That the minutes of part 1 and part 2 of the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting be approved.

Moved By: Jo Ann Silcox

Seconded By: Don Jones

MOTION CARRIED

6.0 **Minister's Remarks**

Pastor Joshua referred the congregation to the Pastor's Report "Trusting Within, Looking Beyond" found in the 2022 Annual Report.

7.0 Committee Reports requiring a decision by the Congregation

7.1 Finance – presentation of 2023 Budget – Laura Wood

Laura Wood, Chair of Finance, addressed the meeting.

Finance is currently reviewing 2022 financial results. A preliminary financial statement can be found in the Annual Report. A surplus is projected. The congregation was thanked for their generosity supporting the work of FSA.

The 2023 budget was presented. A deficit of \$171,255 is projected. Previous year surpluses and trust fund support will reduce the financial burden in order to sustain operations. The 2023 financial forecast includes salaries for a Director of Music and a Pastoral Care Minister joining the staff.

FSA has a bright future. Fundamental to that future is having a sustainable operating budget. Securing the financial future of FSA is the work of the entire congregation.

MOTION: That the 2023 budget as approved by Council be adopted by the congregation.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Jo Ann Silcox

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: That the First-St. Andrew's United Church Financial Statements at December 31, 2022 prepared internally by the Finance Committee be accepted as circulated.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: Mike Bancroft

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, 2022 for First-St. Andrew's United Church.

Moved By: Laura Wood

Seconded By: John Eberhard

MOTION CARRIED

7.2 Board of Trustees – Paul Cooper

Paul Cooper, Co-chair, Board of Trustees addressed the meeting. A report from the Trustees can be found in the Annual Report.

MOTION #1

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

- 1) hereby directs that for the year 2023, 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:

any obligation to maintain insurance coverage with higher limits than that provided in the aforementioned policy or policies, 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 2023.

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

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: David Wake

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #2

The congregation accepts the resignation of the following Trustee: Mary Vernon.

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: David Wake

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #3

The congregation approves the appointment of Rebecca Briley, Chartered Accountant 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 for 2023.

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: David Wake

MOTION CARRIED

7.3 **Nominating Report** - Steve Elson

Steve Elson reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Steve thanked those who served on committees in 2022. A slate of candidates for 2023 was presented.

MOTION: That the proposed 2023 membership for the Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, Officers and Committee members be accepted as presented.

Moved By: Steve Elson

Seconded By: Pat Pettit

MOTION CARRIED

8.0 **Adoption of Committee Reports** as published in the 2022 Annual Report

MOTION: That the Committee Reports as published in the 2022 Annual Report be adopted.

Moved By: Paul Cooper

Seconded By: Carol Riddell-Elson

MOTION CARRIED

9.0 **Recognition of Departing Committee Members and Interim Staff**

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

10.0 **Other Business**

No other business was brought to the attention of the meeting.

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

MOTION: That the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting (Part One) be adjourned at 1:57 pm.
Moved By: Heather Locking-Cusolito

MOTION CARRIED

Annual Congregational Meeting – Part Two
Sunday, June 11, 2023
Sanctuary
11:45 pm

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

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

MOTION: That Stephen Elson be appointed Chair and Merran Neville be appointed Secretary of the 2023 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 2023 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: Jackie Williams Seconded By: Heather Locking-Cusolito
MOTION CARRIED

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting – part 2.

Moved By: Michael Bancroft Seconded By: Charlotte Oldham
MOTION CARRIED

5.0 **Approval of Minutes from two special Congregational Meetings in 2023**

5.1 MOTION: To approve the minutes of the special congregational meeting on Jan. 8, 2023.

Moved By: Heather Locking-Cusolito Seconded By: Jan Hendry
MOTION CARRIED

5.2 MOTION: To approve the minutes of the special congregational meeting on May 7, 2023.

Moved By: Carol Riddell-Elson Seconded By: Pat Pettit
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 Financial Review by Famme & Co., London, of the Board of Trustee Statements for 2022 as approved by the Board of Trustees of First-St. Andrew's United Church be approved by the congregation.

Moved by: Jackie Williams Seconded by: George Jolink
MOTION CARRIED

6.2 MOTION: that that the 2022 Year-end Operating Statements as reviewed by Famme & Co., London, be approved by the Congregation.

Moved by: Laura Wood Seconded by: Jeannette Eberhard
MOTION CARRIED

7.0 Update on 2023 operating budget – Laura Wood, Chair of Finance/Treasurer

Trends:

- Budgeted givings are based on information available at the time. The deficit projected at the beginning of the year was \$62,269 but the actual deficit as of May 31, 2023 is \$42,181. This was due to increased rental income.
- Rental income will drop in the second half of this year with London Pro Musica moving to another location as well as moving their library. However, George Jolink is getting more rental enquiries.
- Our older building means we are experiencing more expenses for the property and the need for costly repairs.
- There will be ongoing communication with our membership to explore fundraising opportunities to offset the shortfall. There are new members, which is encouraging, but many more new members are needed to improve the financial situation. Younger members cannot be expected to give more. All members are encouraged to use PAR for their givings.
- The development of a multi-pronged approach, discussed at Council recently, will try to meet the challenges.

Data from the PowerPoint presentation that Laura referenced is included at the end of the minutes.

8.0 Other Business - None

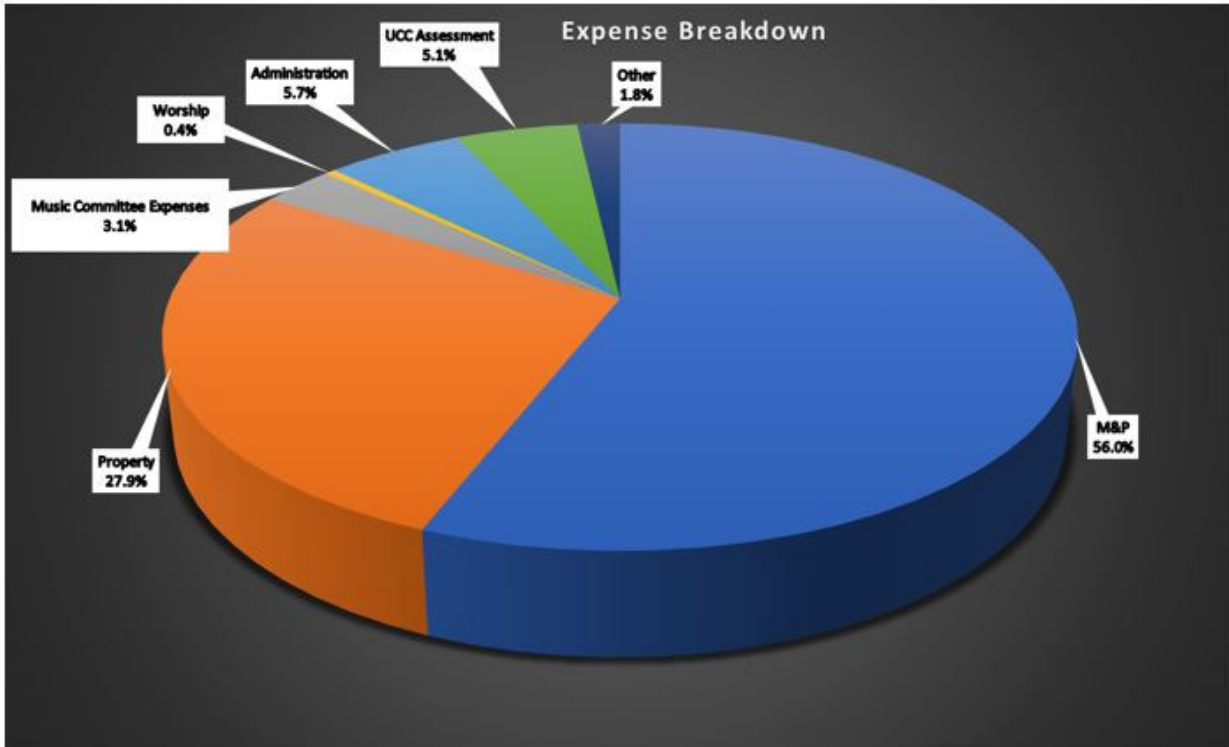
9.0 Benediction – Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

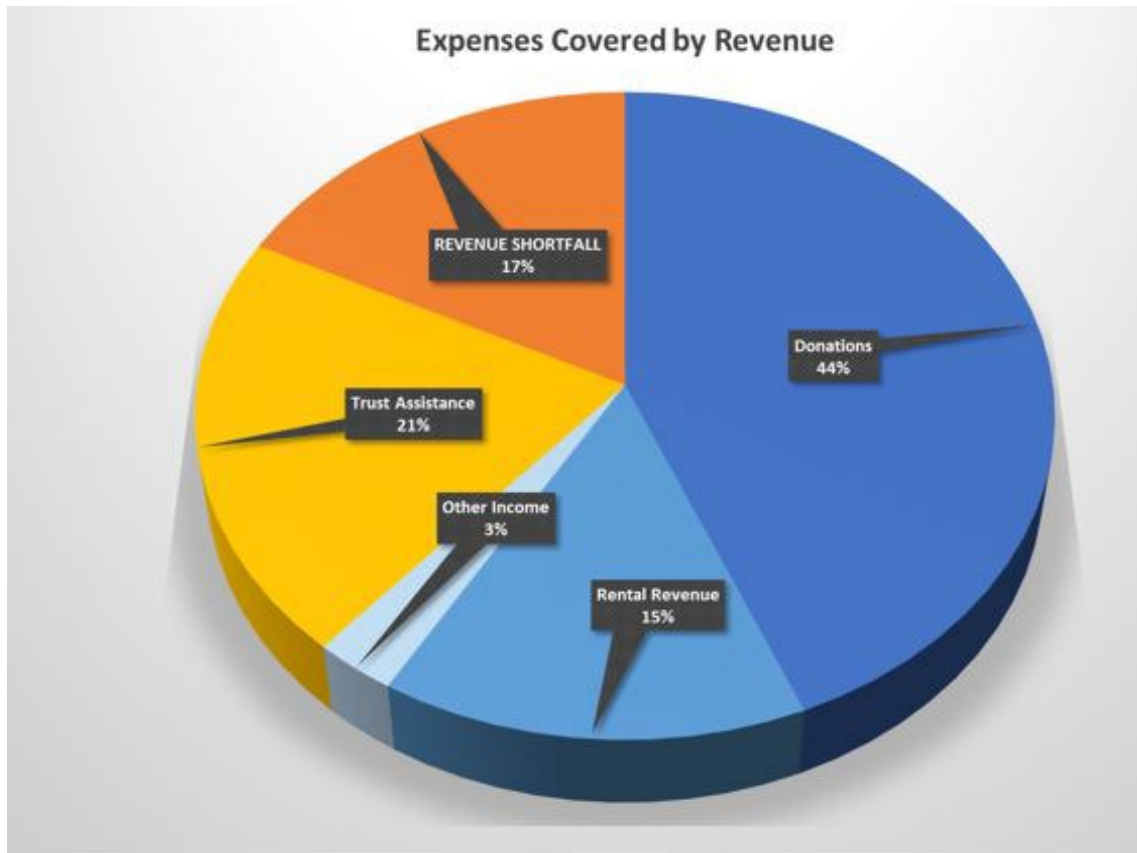
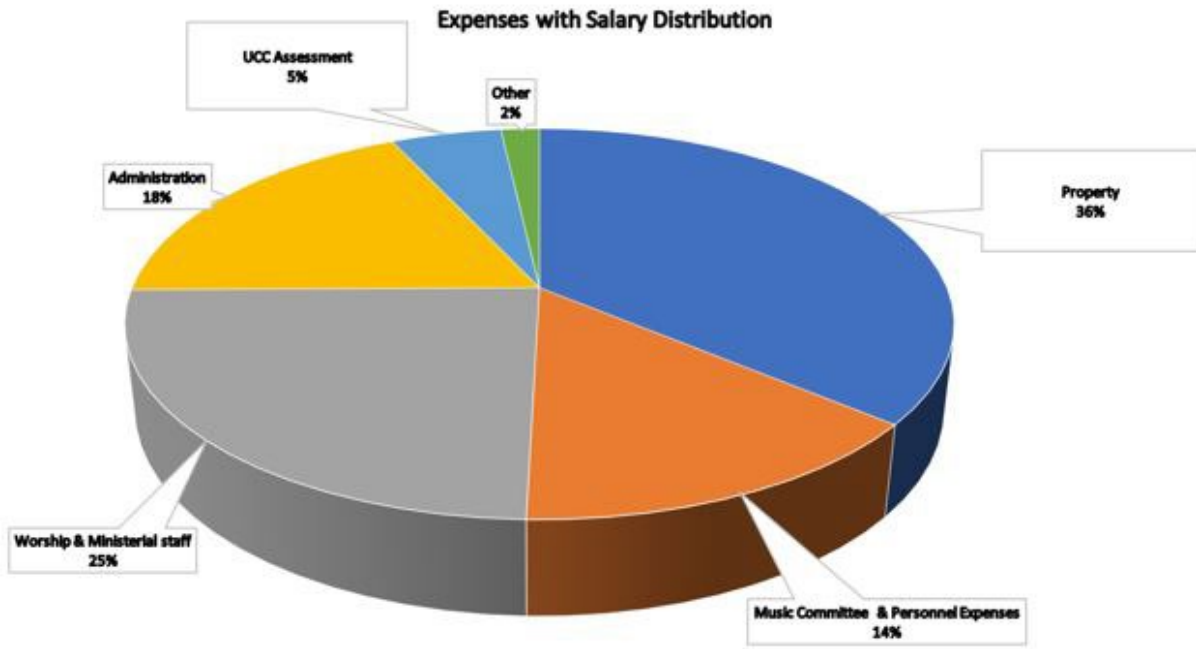
MOTION: That the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting – Part 2 be adjourned

Moved By: Stuart Eberhard

NOTES FROM PPT Presentation:

FSA Profit & Loss Statement at May 31 2023			
		May YTD 2023	May YTD 2023
		Budget	Actual
Total Operating Revenue		187,248	187,790
Total Expenses		291,181	279,972
Total Operating Deficit		(103,936)	(92,181)
Proudfoot Fund (Operations)		41,667	50,000
NET SURPLUS or (DEFICIT)		(62,269)	(42,181)
*Rental income higher than submitted budget but not expecting same revenue levels in second half of year			
*Givings are down by 9% over 2022- budgeted to be the same as 2022			
*Rental revenue and other income is offsetting loss in givings YTD but no indication we can sustain that			
*Salaries less than budget by \$8K- now fully staffed so that variance of actual to budget is expected to decrease			
*Property expenses currently below budget but unexpected boiler repairs of \$11K will likely put us at budget or higher			
* Proudfoot fund assistance forwarded up to end of June			





AGENDA FOR 2024 AGM-PART 1

Annual Congregational Meeting – Part One

Proposed Agenda

Proudfoot Hall, Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 12 noon (following a light lunch)

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: _____ Seconded By: _____

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: _____ Seconded By: _____

3.0 **Welcome:** Remarks from the Chair

4.0 **Approval of Agenda**

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

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

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

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

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

1

6.0 **Minister's Remarks**

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

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

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

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

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: _____ 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, 2023 for First-St. Andrew's United Church for 2023.

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

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:

- 1) 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: _____ Seconded By: _____

MOTION #2

The congregation accepts the resignation of Mary Vernon as a Trustee.

Moved By: _____ 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 for 2024.

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

7.3 **Nominating Report** - Steve Elson

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

Moved By: _____ Seconded By: _____

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: _____ Seconded By: _____

9.0 Special reports

- A. Update on development of social media platforms and presence – Lorna Gunning-Fratschko
- B. Report on multi-year, multi-point plan to create sustainable operating budget – David Wardlaw
- C. Report on establishment of sustainable housing situation for lead minister – David Wardlaw
- D. Report on Council-approved process leading to replacement of existing heating system – Steve Elson & George Jolink

10.0 Recognition of Departing Committee Members, Departing Staff, and Interim Staff

10.0 Other Business

11.0 Benediction

MOTION: That the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting (Part One) be adjourned

Moved By:

COMMITTEE NOMINEES

Nominations Report to the FSA Annual Congregational Meeting January 2024

Proposed Members of FSA Church Leadership and Committees for 2024

Chair of Council: David Wardlaw

Past Chair: Steve Elson

Associate Chair: Linda Badke

Chair Elect: Vacant

Secretary: Katherine Wonfor

Communications & Marketing Working Group

Jim Silcox

Kathryn Skelly

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 Graves

Jan Hendry – associate member

David Pederson

Carol Riddell-Elson

Kathryn Skelly

Jean Wright

Finance Committee

Laura Wood (Chair and Treasurer)

Jeannette Eberhard

Tristin Hill

Ivana Klouda

Doug McGregor

Barbara Ridgewell

Membership & Nurture Committee

Glenna Hall, Co-Chair

Lillian Reid, Co-Chair

Heather Locking-Cusolito

Annabelle Logan

Bev Lindsay

Mary Mattar

Gerry Meacham

Jo Ann Silcox

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

Heather Locking-Cusolito (ex officio)

David McKane

Jim Silcox
Heather Vouvalidis
Judith Walker

Jan Hendry
Laurel Kenney (UCW)
Pat Pettit
Natasha Roberts
Donna Thompson

Ministry & Personnel Committee

Kerry Hill (Chair)

Linda Badke
Margo Christodoulou
Barrie Evans
Ardath Finnbogason-Hill
Barbara Ridgewell
Kathryn Patton

Music Committee

Merran Neville (Chair)

Paul Cooper
Ardath Finnbogason-Hill
Ann MacPhail
Terry Peters
Barbara Plante
Igor Saika-Voivod
Jane Archer Smith
Janis Wallace
Margaret Wardlaw

Outreach Committee

Chair: Vacant

Marilyn Beach
Barb Dalrymple
Janice Elliott
Liz Galbraith

Planning Committee

Steve Elson (Chair)

Connor Campbell
Barrie Evans
Shannon Hawke
Nancy Johnson
Kathryn Patton
Laura Wood

Trustee Liaison members

John Eberhard
David Manness

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) (2020-2025)

Paul Cooper (co-chair) (2020-2025)

John Eberhard (2019-2024)

Janice Elliott (2020-2025)

Don Jones (2020-2025)

Robert (Bob) Kennedy (2019-2024)

David Manness (2019-2024)

Alan Salmoni (2019-2024)

Jim Silcox (2020-2025)

Katherine Wonfor (2022-2027)

David Wake (2022–2027)

Several vacant positions

**Jean Brown Permanent Ad Hoc
Committee**

Allyson Watson (Chair)

Merran Neville (Music)

Jackie Williams (Trustees)

Laura Wood (Finance)

Anne Cummings (member-at-large)

One vacancy – Member-at-large

STAFF REPORTS

...FROM THE MINISTER OF WORSHIP & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

“THE SPACE BETWEEN”

The Church has always maintained that we—that is, Christians—are an interval people. Living between the Resurrection and the Parousia, we are called to maintain faith amid the tumult and conflict of our world. This does not imply indifference but rather a sustainable engagement with our world, not grounded in quantifiable outcomes but rather the “assurance of things hoped for” (Hebrews 11:1). It would be easy to give in to the despair engendered by the 24-hour news cycle, and it would be equally understandable to lose the sense of personal efficacy required for community-building. Yet, the life of faith requires difficult choices and refuses to submit to the verdicts of today. One might say that Resurrection is the promise that another way is possible, and it is my belief that another way is inevitable—because the way we (our species) has been going, another way is existentially necessary. Our privilege as a community of faith is to take steps in that “other” direction without the coercion of economic decline or sociological trends. That is, we can move freely into the abundance of which Jesus spoke and which he embodied, today, here and now. But what are we willing to give up to do that? What can we part with, to stride freely towards the new life promised in the Beatitudes?

I completely understand wanting to put our fingers in the dam to prevent more water from passing through. However, that has been the strategy of far too many organizations over the past 30-40 years, resulting in situations where the dam has already burst or is about to burst, leaving destruction in its wake. A far more effective approach

would be to let more water through the gates to lessen the pressure on the fragile structure on which we have depended for a very long time. And yes, faith communities are fragile economies that have typically resisted change until it is too late. Thankfully, we at First-St. Andrew’s have managed to steer this rather large ship through some tumultuous waters. I commend the leadership of the community for that, and I am grateful to be on board at this time of my life and ministerial career. However, what has not happened might very well come to pass, if steps aren’t continually taken towards transformation. And that is the challenging part. We don’t get to stop! The author of Hebrews likens the aforementioned interval to a race that requires perseverance. But she doesn’t pretend that, geniuses that we think we are, we will figure it all out by ourselves. Instead, the text points to our “great cloud of witnesses,” who will give us strength and courage going forward. I have been gifted with some time to read through the interesting and rather labyrinthine history of our community, and I can attest to that great cloud—one that probably harbors some intense theological debate. Despite that, here we are, bearing witness to the faith that guides and exhorts, some 191 years later.

Fortunately, we don’t have to hope for everything the way that Hebrews suggests. We get to see it! We get to participate in it, co-create it, and even benefit from the fruits of our labor as a community that works to have impact in its bio-region and beyond. For example, instead of simply hoping for a Minister of Music, a Children’s Minister, a Minister of Youth and Young Adults, and a Pastoral Care Minister, we actually get to experience them. That was not true when I first arrived at First-St. Andrew’s some two and a half years ago. How far we have come as a community of faith and a ministry team! As a result of the countless hours

spent searching and hammering out details required by our covenant with the United Church of Canada, we now get to share so many of our gifts with the wider community and to grow what we already have through the insights of our talented ministerial staff. Kathryn Skelly and I could not be happier to have the opportunity to grow alongside such talented persons who are committed to a better world and a more faithful community of practitioners.

I could spend several pages listing events led by our staff team, but that would not begin to tell the story of all that they do. Many if not all of you will be very aware of their ministry at this point, whether through visitations at your home or hospital, the beautiful music we get to sing and hear throughout the seasons, the bright smiles and giggles of our children on Sunday mornings, or the growth and development of young leaders in our midst. Because of them, we get to run the race given to us, not in a way that we grow weary but rather in a relational way that strengthens our resolve and enriches our life most wonderfully.

When I opened this reflection by mentioning interval time, I meant to highlight the tension of our life together. Those competing affections for the bright light of resurrection and the aspiration for a new world created in accordance with the justice of Creator. A respectful look back at the witnesses that preceded us while simultaneously opening ourselves to the new thing God is doing (Isaiah 43:19). A difficult and necessary task that will continue to stretch us further than we thought possible. And I am grateful that I have been able to emphasize the occurrences of this dynamic tension in 2023.

I want to finally stress an important aspect of our work that frequently gets misinterpreted: new members. First, let me make plain that we are not in the “business” of keeping things going just to keep things going. Organizations that become self-serving are deserving of their fate.

Sometimes we as humans spend so much time turning inward that we fail to see that our purpose in life is not to simply maintain but create, which requires going outside of our “networks” or “zones” of perception. As a community created with purpose, namely, to bring about the transformation of the world, we have a lot of work to do. And we can work towards this end more effectively by welcoming as many new perspectives as possible. One of the vital signs of any community (especially a community of faith) is multigenerational space-making. If I walk into a congregation on a given Sunday only to find that the membership is comprised almost solely of much older or much younger members, I might reasonably conclude that the organization is either on its way out or simply trending, responding to a niche market of interest. However, if I witness different generations accomplishing tasks, singing songs, or simply living life together, that looks more like a healthy family of practice (not origin) that I can plug into. By investing ourselves in the dynamics of intergenerational work and play, we stand a greater chance of making a sustainable impact and fostering opportunities for the next generation. That is why it is so important to invite, connect, and listen to any who choose to spend time with us—not just on Sundays but any day of the week.

Like with any community, we have said goodbye a lot this year, wishing our saints a homegoing worthy of their time with us. And we have also confirmed, baptized, and celebrated with many other faith communities. Such is the essence of our journey into a richer, more meaningful faith. And just as with any interval, we will remain in that tension between what has come and what may yet be. I pray that the work of 2023 and the vision for 2024 encourages us and renews our spirit so that we might rejoice at the opportunities that await us in the weeks and months to come!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

...FROM THE MINISTER OF MUSIC

I am still very much in the middle of my first year as part of this amazing leadership team at First-St. Andrew's United Church, having just started in April, so this is more of a partial summary of musical activity. (The Music Committee will no doubt include a snapshot of the first three-plus months of 2023 in a separate report.) Despite the comparative brevity of my tenure thus far, I can say that I have never been happier in 32 years of music ministry. This is a faith community that takes its vision of "Faith, Service, and the Arts" very seriously!

From the incredible energy and commitment of the members of the Senior Choir, the Laudamus Bells, the FSA Strings, and the Music Committee – who work tirelessly to support our outreach to our neighbourhood and city through concerts – to the strong desire to learn and grow together as an intergenerational singing congregation, there is so much to celebrate at FSA. I rejoice in the collaborations that have already taken place between music programs and our ministries to children, youth, and families, resulting in the development of a trio of very well received intergenerational worship experiences. Our music ministries for our children and young people have been reborn with the launch of "ReBELLS" (beginning handbells and chimes for children and youth ages eight and up) and, beginning in January, with "Treblemakers" (singing, movement and drama for children and youth ages five and up).

ReBELLS began in September, on Sundays after church, and the group has participated in worship twice and grown to include eleven members. We look forward to transitioning from tone chimes to bells in the coming weeks! Treblemakers originated, also in September, out of a desire to share in the after-school music education program known as El Sistema (an outreach project housed at FSA), with our children offered a place in the

El Sistema choirs on Wednesday evenings. Unfortunately, this initial partnership was not successful, as the existing program's schedule and curriculum were not compatible with the families who had shown interest in participating, and there is a significant age gap between most of the ES enrollment and those FSA children who had initially registered.

Children's Program Coordinator, Christina Lindsay, and I are excited, however, that Treblemakers will move into 2024 on Monday evenings (before ReBELLS) and will allow us to focus on creating a program of singing, movement, and drama for our cohort of kids in a fun, family atmosphere. There will be dinner offered at the beginning of the evening, followed by two 45-minute classes (the first one for singing and more, and the second for ringing); this will allow younger ones to get home at a reasonable hour. (The entire program, with dinner, will run from 5:00 until 7:00 PM.)

It has been terrific to be able to share in leadership and direction of our strong musical ensembles and concert series at FSA. The FSA Strings offered their gifts in worship three times in 2023, as well as presenting a pair of innovative concerts – including premiere performances by works for choir and strings by local composers Robert Grenier and Jean Wuensch. Also, Richard Frank has led the Laudamus Bells in noon recitals and Sunday services, both as a conductor and as a saxophonist, and we have all been the beneficiaries of the joyous and stylish musicianship provided by this group of dedicated ringers (who have added two new members in 2023, including a certain Music Director Emeritus!).

The members of the Senior Choir have amazed me each week, both with their musical ability and insight as an ensemble – one that has grown since the spring to include both new and returning singers to their number – and with their willingness to continue stretching

beyond their collective comfort zone. They have shared in ministry with the FSA Strings, and with guest choristers, from members of the Aeolian Pride Chorus in June to the Elora Singers in November, to London Pro Musica and a large, enthusiastic singing audience in December's Singalong Messiah event. Along the way, they have performed music representing an immense variety of compositional eras and styles, and they have taken great care to include the congregation in every nuance of text. Every one of these people is a gift, not only to me, but to the FSA community.

I offer a concluding word of thanks to the team here at FSA: to my wonderful and compassionate colleague, Joshua Lawrence; to the rest of the phenomenal staff here – Kathryn, Colleen, Lynda, Christina, Marilyn, Annie, and Karen; to Merran Neville and all the members of the Music Committee; to Lynda Kennedy and Paul Merritt, who have so ably and willingly filled in when I have been away; to Richard and Igor, to our incredible soloists and choral scholars, and to all the generous and inspiring participants in FSA's music ministry. This is very much a labour of love, and I am so thankful to all of you for showing such encouragement and support to all of us.

With gratitude for what has been and for what will be...

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Fischer (they/them)

...FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE

It has been a joy and privilege to be in pastoral ministry at First-St. Andrew's, beginning my position as Minister of Pastoral Care on June 1st of 2023. 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. Getting to know the life stories, struggles, and their faith connections with First-St. Andrew's has been a blessing.

Visitation cards with a picture of the church has been helpful in Nursing Homes, and I have left special cards created by the Church School children and youth, as well as copies of the Sunday Bulletin. I plan to take Communion to shut ins in the future. I also attend the monthly church service at Richmond Woods with Joshua.

Working closely with the Minister and Chairs of Membership & Nurture, I identify the persons and families for whom support or services are needed; and visit members who are experiencing a life transition, illness, grief, or family or personal crisis; and offer prayer and support.

I understand the offering of spiritual and pastoral care as accompaniment, and view empathic listening to another's story, outreach to the marginalized, encouragement, guidance, compassionate support, counselling, and referrals to other professionals as a much needed resource. Other functions of pastoral care are to nurture, encourage spiritual growth, teach, lead, equip, and witness, especially through times of life transition, illness, loneliness, stress, grief and family or personal loss.

I hope to attend the national Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC) Conference being held in London, ON in April 2024.

I am grateful 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 CHILDREN'S PROGRAM COORDINATOR

2023 has been a busy year for FSA's children as many exciting things have happened. It is hard to believe it has only been a year since I was invited to start spending time with the kids up to grade 8 on a weekly basis. We sent some time focused on getting to know each other so I could learn what is important to the kids for FSA to be a place they look forward to coming to and is comfortable for them.

Firstly we started on Sunday mornings in Sunday school. There have been many weeks we welcomed new friends into Sunday school and happily, many of whom have come out several times if not regularly. This means we welcomed almost 60 different children throughout the year....not including Christmas Eve when there were MANY new children in the church. It became clear at the beginning of 2023 we could not keep having all the kids in one room anymore. We made the decision to separate into three groups on Sunday mornings: Nursery aged kids (0 – 3yrs), Middle group (4yrs – Grade 4) and the older kids (grades 5 – 8). This has helped our activities and programming be more age appropriate and engaging for each group. The donations of two smart TVs (for the youth room and Fireside rooms) have contributed greatly to our weekly discussions.

This year we especially welcomed Charity and Charlie Churchmouse! The congregation as a whole have enjoyed getting to know Charity and Charlie and finding them around the church each week. In 2024, this ministry will grow with the children as Charity and Charlie plan to start writing letters to the kids and hope the kids will write back to them. Charity and Charlie are very excited to have their very own mailbox to be set up in early January 2024.

As the year progressed, families started sharing some ideas for other programming their children would enjoy. Both Chris Fischer and I clearly heard the desire for children's music to come back to FSA. Treblemakers (a choir for kids ages 5 and up) continues to be a work in progress as we continue to tweak things so the group reflects the talents and desires of the kids who want to join. ReBELLS! Is another opportunity for the kids to express themselves musically with chimes and they are very keen to keep developing their skills with the handbells in the new year.

Joshua's C.R.E.W. has also had a successful year. This is a time when youth grades 5 – 8 can come, play some games usually saved for this time together (if you are interested, you might ask the kids about gaga ball or hungry hungry hippos!). We have welcomed youth from other churches to join us and slowly they are feeling more welcome to come out. In September many kids had a ton of fun at a sleepover here at the church. Many new friendships were made as we ate, played games and got comfortable with each other again after the summer. On October first, the Saidat Show! Came and led a pep rally with a strong message about social responsibility. We are looking forward to welcoming Saidat back in January and April 2024.

The last group to get started this past fall was Angels and Guardians which is a time for parents with preschool aged kids to come out and connect with drinking coffee. This group meets once a month before church.

This past year has been exciting while each program has started and continue to develop. As expected there are challenges. The biggest challenge is, very common with kids programming, finding enough adults to come and help to be sure everyone is having fun in a safe way. The children appreciate the leadership offered by Dakota Adams, Abbie Cull, Nicole Grady,

Allyson Watson, Lindsey Robinson, Rebecca Neaves, Michelle Beckett, Ann MacPhail, Linda Badke and Susan McKane this past year.

The support shown by the congregation in the past year has been extraordinary! It seems like all one needs to do is mention the kids and people will offer support however they can. Thank you to George Jolink, David Wardlaw and Steve Elson and AJ Lake for all their handyman skills and efforts to make the space the kids use safe, fun, accessible and gorgeous!

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Lindsay

...FROM THE SHARED YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTER

I am so thankful for the opportunity to be in ministry with First-St. Andrew's, Metropolitan and Siloam, and to work with such gifted and supportive staff and the people in each community of faith. I am incredibly grateful for this past year as I have continued strengthening and establishing community and relationships with many youth and young adults within our church communities and the wider church. I have thoroughly been gifted with this opportunity to get to know so many young people and share in their lives.

This past year's main focus for our high school and young adults has been building community and being in relationships where we have had the opportunity to play together, share in meaningful discussions and participate in outreach opportunities.

Our high school youth have had opportunities to gather 2-3 times a month for recreational activities such as board and active games, sleepovers, Escape Rooms, bowling, outreach initiatives and coffee houses (with LUSO). Our young adults had the opportunity to gather

together 3-4 times a month for an evening program named "Faith Questions" that allowed for a conversation about life/faith around the table with food. We also continued offering 'Pub Ministry,' where we gathered around the table for food and drink as we pondered the weekly scripture lesson or a particular church season we were in.

We gathered a couple of times this past year for intergenerational activities. In February, we had 60 people attend a trivia and potluck afternoon at First-St. Andrew's, a Bingo night at Metropolitan with 15-20 people in attendance, and a Maundy Thursday potluck and worship at Siloam with 20 people gathered.

Our SALT team (Summer Adventure Leadership Team) was made larger this summer thanks to the Summer Canada Jobs grant and the opportunity to expand our summer camps and programs.

Our SALT team was made up of 6 youth and young adults. Our summer team director and five youth coordinators were hired for 8 weeks for 35 hours/week. Our SALT team's employment started with a week of staff training and planning for the summer. The team led a week-long summer camp for children in JK-Gr. 6 from Monday-Friday from 9 am to 4 pm at First-St. Andrew's and Siloam. The SALT team offered the summer camp program at Metropolitan on Sunday mornings for the children who attended worship. The theme for the camps was 'Arise and Shine.' Activities, games and crafts each day helped the children learn about their God-given talents and gifts and how to shine their 'lights' on those they met in their lives and, in turn, help them discover how amazing they are. The team also planned 3 one day summer camps for children with the themes of Glow, baking/cooking and Water Day.

The SALT team also planned and led many other programs for people to gather, such as a tea party, Super Mario Kart tournament, sports/games day and 2 campfires (that were rained out).

This shared ministry model has continued to bring young people from various congregations together, and people are grateful for the chance to be part of inclusive, safe and non-judgemental communities where we hope they can be them-

selves.

With a great deal of gratitude and love,

Marilyn Arthur

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COUNCIL

In 2023 FSA continued on a path of positive transition, a journey that began in earnest in 2022 and accelerated in 2023 as new staff members were onboarded and the restrictive impacts of Covid on church activities disappeared in the rearview mirror. The resiliency and vibrancy of the FSA community of faith is revealed in this Council report and in the numerous from committees, group, and activity reports presented in this 2023 annual report.

A visible and uplifting sign of the vibrancy of our church is a growing number of adult and children participants: In new member services held in spring and fall, a total of 20 new adult members were welcomed. From January to December, approximately 60 different children and youth participated in weekly Sunday programming during the worship hour. And, in the fall of 2023, children's music programming resumed after a prolonged Covid shutdown with the launch of Treblemakers (voice) and ReBELLS (hand bells/chimes).

It is rare in the life of a church that its staff leadership team is completely renewed and rebuilt in a two-year period but that is exactly what has happened at FSA. Pastor Joshua began his ministry with us in September 2021. Marilyn Arthur began her tenure as shared (with Metropolitan and Siloam United Churches) Minister of Youth and Young Adults in May 2022. Also in May 2022, Karen Low became a Minister in Voluntary Association. Chris Lyndsay became the next Children's Coordinator in January 2023 and Chris

Fischer the next Minister of Music in April 2023. Then in June 2023 Annie Jannaway became our Minister of Pastoral Care (part-time). We are blessed with an outstanding leadership team!

At the June meeting of Council, the naming of the youth room in memory of Jane Dockrill was approved. An event celebrating Jane's contributions to FSA was held on Sept. 24.

The budget presentation at the congregational meeting in January 2023 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 at its May meeting. Implementation began in earnest 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 in June and September of 2023 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 2024 congregational meeting.

In early June 2023, FSA's facilities manager, Tim Miedema, resigned. This has provided an opportunity to assess our needs in the areas of facilities management, facilities maintenance, custodial services, and information

technology (IT) support. To this end, at its June meeting, Council approved a needs assessment study in the above-mentioned areas. In the 2nd half of 2023, in the absence of a facilities manager, an operational experiment – a practical, real-time needs assessment study – was conducted in which management and maintenance functions were covered on a volunteer basis by George Jolink in his role as Chair of Property, with assistance from members of the Property Committee and other volunteers. This model has worked satisfactorily so far, leading to the interim result that this experimental operational model will continue in 2024 for an, as yet, undetermined period of time. For the assessment of IT support, Terry Peters has volunteered to carry out a detailed audit and analysis. Custodial services, which were not part of the duties of the facilities manager, continue to be well provided on a contractual basis.

The boiler system that provides heat for the Sanctuary building and St. Andrew's Hall is well past its anticipated retirement date and its reliability has become problematic beginning last spring, necessitating numerous repairs and, thus, unanticipated expenses. Accordingly, Council approved a formal multiphase project to plan for, and then hopefully to acquire, an energy-efficient, modern heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) system. The project will be carried out systematically in a set of well-defined phases beginning in the winter of 2024, with a decision point at the end of each phase. A steering committee to lead the project is almost in place. If we reach the point of acquiring a new system, a capital campaign will be needed.

At the end of November 2023 and beginning of January 2024 town hall style congregational meetings on the 2024 operating budget were held after the worship service. The purpose was to provide an early opportunity to review and discuss a working draft of the 2024 budget, which includes a projected operating deficit. At

the annual congregational meeting at the end of January, 2024, a final draft will be presented for approval.

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 and clubs in 2023. 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

In 2023, we saw a return to a more normal year of music activities, including concerts and at long last the reintroduction of music activities for the children. The year began with the leadership of Victoria (Viki) Meredith, Choir Director (January) continuing from 2022 and then Kathryn (Kathy) Frank (February – April) through to Easter Sunday. Paul Merritt, (organist emeritus) continued for this period as organist. The leadership provided by Viki, Kathy and Paul was more than stellar and we greatly appreciate the effort that each one put into guiding the senior choir and music in worship during this period.

It was during January that the search committee for a new Director of Music (having been on the search since August 2021) at last met Chris Fischer, who came in person, with the senior choir present, for a second interview and audition. Following this visit, Chris was offered the position, accepted and started at FSA on

Monday, April 10 as the Minister of Music. There was a general sigh of relief from the search committee and the congregation at Chris's appointment. Chris was welcomed by the congregation on Sunday, April 16 at a reception following the morning service. Members of the search committee were Chris Wood (chair), Stephen Adams, Ardath Finnbogason-Hill, Sonja Gustafson, Lynda Kennedy and Merran Neville. Chris's report appears in the Staff section of this Annual Report and covers the children's programs that were introduced in September.

The Senior Choir choristers, both during the first months of the year and since Chris has taken over, have been loyal and reliable members attending rehearsals every Thursday night and participating fully in Sunday morning services. This can so easily be taken for granted but the members are a dedicated group and bring their musical expertise to this important endeavour. Two particular highlights for the choir stand out. Firstly, the collaboration with the Elora Singers in November with a day of workshops, attended by a hundred participants, which included many members from other choirs, and followed by a concert in the evening. The Sing-along Messiah on December 9, saw the choir combine with London Pro Musica to lead an enthusiastic crowd in the choruses.

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 wonderful Eberhard vocal scholars in 2023 are Madeline Berman – soprano and Daryn Nowlin – mezzo soprano.

The FSA Strings, under the direction of Igor Saika Voivod, have participated in services during the year and performed two concerts – June 7, A Latin Summer with guest artists Katerina Juraskova, cello and Madeline Hall, guitar; November 8, Autumnal Reflections, and joined by

Chris Fischer, organ, Lynda Kennedy, piano and the FSA Senior Choir. Their program always brings new and interesting repertoire. Igor draws the FSA Strings from a group of dedicated players, usually numbering about fifteen performers. We are grateful to Igor and the players who enrich our worship whenever they perform.

The Laudamus Bells report from their director Richard Frank follows below.

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 our members

Music Committee members: Glenda Baldwin, Paul Cooper, Ardath Finnbogason-Hill, Richard Frank, Ann MacPhail, Merran Neville (chair), Igor Saika-Voivod, Terry Peters, Janis Wallace, Margaret Wardlaw and Chris Fischer (staff)

Respectfully submitted,

Merran Neville, Chair

Laudamus Bells

2023 has been a great year for musical growth for the Laudamus Bells, including many excellent and focused Monday afternoon rehearsals followed by many wonderful, exciting and sensitive performances. For Black History month, we performed a new arrangement of a piece by Florence Price, who was the first black composer to

have her works performed by a major symphony orchestra. The piece was entitled *Fantasie Noire* and was arranged by Richard. Due to scheduling issues, we did not play our postponed Advent recital in January as intended and decided instead to work towards our Spring Recital where we performed a variety of pieces from the Fall of 2022 and the Winter of 2023. The repertoire of the recital was intended to celebrate Lent and the coming of Spring and included *Shades of Forest*, *For the Beauty of the Earth* and *Now the Green Blade Riseth*.

Our membership increased to 13 this year and we were delighted to welcome back Viki Meredith and new members Monica Cottrill, Paul Merritt and Leslie Carroll-Frye to our ensemble. Our other ringers are Barbara Plante, Marilyn Norman, Margaret Trethewey, Merran Neville, Kathryn Frank, Lynda Kennedy, Anne Cummings, Bob Kennedy and Michael Feeney. We would also like to thank our honorary member, KC Cann who has subbed in at both rehearsals and performances throughout the year. Her continued presence and expertise are valued.

In the Fall, we worked on *The Ash Grove* which was performed for Thanksgiving under the title *Let All Things Now Living* and was conducted by Chris Fischer, who filled in for Richard at the last moment. Thanks Chris! For Lessons and Carols we performed a beautiful and ethereal arrangement of *I Wonder as I Wander* as well as the quintessential holiday piece for handbells entitled a *Ukrainian Bell Carol Fantasy*.

To round out 2023, we performed our Advent Recital on December 8, entitled *From Darkness into Light*. This included an arrangement of Astor Piazzolla's melancholy tango for soprano saxophone and chimes, entitled *Oblivion*, as well as a carol sing with the tuneful singing of our full audience accompanied by bells and chimes.

We would like to thank Monica Cottrill for the donation of a set of chimes, which extends the

upper and lower range of the ensemble and provides a unified sound throughout the ensemble. In addition, Monica, who taught handbells in school, added two full tote boxes of handbell and chime repertoire to our library.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to all the members of the *Laudamus Bells* for a fun, productive year of rehearsals and dynamic performances.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Frank, Director

MEMBERSHIP AND NURTURE

Membership

- Glenna Hall-Co-Chair, Coffee & Conversation
- Lillian Reid-Co-Chair
- Rev. Annie Jannaway-Pastoral Care Minister
- Re. Joshua Lawrence-Staff support
- Bev Lindsay-Prayer chain
- Heather Locking-Cusolito-Secretary
- Annabelle Logan-Caring callers
- Mary Mattar- Lay visitation coordination
- Gerry Meacham-Consolation notes
- Jo Ann Silcox- Pastoral care, Roll clerk
- Donna Thompson- Pew cards

The Membership and Nurture Committee has been engaged in the following activities:

- Following the retirement of Heather Locking-Cusolito as Chair of the committee, we experimented with a rotating chair position. We were, however, immensely thankful when Glenna Hall and Lillian Reid agreed to co-chair the committee starting in the Fall.
- Pastoral Care continues to be a major role for the committee so we are very thank-

ful for the various lay volunteers that support the pastoral care teams- Lay visitation, Caring callers, Prayer chain, and Consolation notes. Each of these teams could benefit from enhanced membership. One example of the volume of need is the observation that in the last 3½ years Gerry Meacham has written approximately 140 notes of consolation, a startling proxy for the nature of the need.

- Because of the volume of need we are enormously thankful for the ministry of Rev. Annie Jannaway who joined the FSA staff and our committee in June, 2023. We continue to be struck by how quickly situations can change from healthy aging to crisis resulting in the need for significant support which Annie offers freely.
- Coffee and Conversation continues under the skillful leadership of Glenna Hall and the volunteers from each group on Council who have volunteered to serve for a month. Lemonade on the Lawn remains the responsibility of M&N.
- We were able to resume our Newcomers Friendship Group trialling a new format and time before church on Sunday, October 22, 2023. Turnout was not encouraging so we will need to revisit this approach in the new year.
- We were however delighted to have two New Members' Sundays. At the first, on April 23, 2023 we welcomed eleven new adult members and three children. At the second on November 12, 2023 we welcomed nine new members and two children. As well we welcomed three new confirmands to full membership on March 30, 2023. To fine tune the processes involved in preparing for new members, Glenna Hall, Rev. Joshua, Heather Locking-Cusolito and Kathryn Skelly met in the summer to develop a checklist and assign responsibilities for each item on the list.
- Glenna Hall led planning for Volunteer Appreciation Sunday which was held during the service on November 19, 2023, followed by

cake in Proudfoot Hall.

- We offer support to two subcommittees that fall under the aegis of M&N: Archives Committee ably led by Don Jones and Affirm also ably led and revitalized under the chairmanship of Rev. Karen Low.
- In the new year we will begin planning for a new photo directory which will require a major commitment from the entire congregation.

FSA Congregational Statistics provided by Jo Ann Silcox Roll Clerk

New Members:

- Audrey Coulthard
- Lillian Reid
- Connor Campbell
- Shannon Hawke
- Isabel Webb
- Mark Stanley
- Lorna Gunning Fratschko
- Chris Fischer
- Sarah Campbell
- Alexander Neaves
- Rebecca Neaves and their children
- Thomson Silcox
- Maddison Watson
- Elijah Lawrence
- Jeff Robinson
- Lindsay Robinson and their daughter
- Greg Beckett
- Michelle Beckett and their daughter
- Matthew Weikert
- Andrea Paquette Weikert and their son
- Karla Pena Mendez
- Dakota Adams

Baptisms:

- David Weikert

Marriages:

- Chris McGiven & Katie Hunter, January 21, 2023

- Connor Campbell & Shannon Hawke, August 8, 2023

Transfers Out/Moves:

- Margaret Taylor - Mitchell
- Gavin & Pat McGregor - Port Hope
- Sandra Black-Evans - Metropolitan UC

In Memoriams:

- Enid Merritt
- Bert Wilson
- June Mckay
- John Jardine
- Shirley Savigny
- Harold Jackson
- Jeane Stewardson
- Barbara Adams
- Mary Ellen Gustafson
- Stephen Adams
- Barbara Corbett
- Russ Gonder
- Nancy Hutchinson
- Ruth Butt
- Kay Hillier

In conclusion, the members of our committee remain ever thankful for the nurture and support that permeates our congregation and the many acts of kindness and support we witness on a regular basis.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Locking-Cusolito, Secretary

Archives Subcommittee

The Archives Committee has met monthly in 2023, except for July, August, and December. Meetings have been virtual, on Zoom. The focus of the meetings and the numerous additional “work bees” has been to organize what has been

stored in the Archives Room over the years and to digitize what is best preserved in that manner. The Office Manager, Kathryn Skelly, maintains a separate portable disk drive that contains the video of Sunday Services, and the committee has kept a separate disk drive with other data that has been digitized. Both have been backed up to a cloud drive. The important registers of Membership, Births, Deaths, and Marriages have not been digitized as they are changing constantly. The Roll Clerk, Jo Ann Silcox, has taken care of this with help from others.

Most of the Archives work by the committee focussed on the new Archives Room organization and renewal. Much has been done by committee members to make sure the Archives Collection is organized and available to members of the congregation who are interested to research items that are of interest to them. To this end there is a new protocol posted on the wall of the Archives room and available to read on the FSA website.

Many boxes of ‘Miscellaneous’ Items have been sorted, labelled, and stored together with their contents. These lists are available on the website. Similarly, the many photos from years past have been worked on over the past year to label as much as possible the photos and the albums in the new Archives Room. There are numerous framed items that are pictures, War memorial lists, and other memorabilia stored in the room and the decision to either digitize these or find a place in the church building for them to be displayed is ongoing.

The Archives Committee is a subcommittee of the Membership and Nurture Committee and reports to Council through the Chair of the M&N Committee. Members of the Archives Committee in 2022 and continuing in the year 2023 are: Pat Carter (Secretary), Don Jones (Chair), Heather Locking-Cusolito (ex-officio), David McKane, Jim Silcox, Heather Vouvalidis, Judith Walker.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Jones, Chair

Affirm Sub-Committee

It has been a difficult year for the LGBTQ-IA2S+ community in London, Ontario and across Canada with transphobia, biphobia and homophobia all on the rise. It has been challenging to watch individuals, groups and institutions still continue to reject who you are and try to deny members of our communities the rights to be seen, heard and celebrated. The number of police-reported hate crimes related to sexual orientation rose 64% over the previous year, according to Statistics Canada.

The past number of months have seen protests against drag queens reading to children, stand-offs around gender-affirming care, and public rows and vandalism over Pride flags. In New Brunswick, Premier Blaine Higgs lamented a rise in gender diversity as “trendy”, and proposed legislation that would bar teachers from using a student’s gender-affirming pronouns without parental consent. In the U.S. hundreds of bills focused on transgender individuals, targeting gender-affirming care, participation in sports, bathroom use, and education around sexuality and gender have caused division and the spread of misinformation.

Six months ago, we could have said such rhetoric was mainly in the United States, but it rose quickly from the south and it is spreading fast. We are reminded all too often, whether online, celebrating Pride, or in the living of our daily lives, that hatred still has a very loud voice. While those voices do not represent the vast majority of Canadians, the effect is hurtful and destructive. Research shows that lesbian, gay, bi, transgender, and queer youth are at increased risk of suicide and mental health issues like depression and anxiety. One of the most startling statistics: LGBTQIA2S+ teens consider suicide and make suicide attempts at about four times the national rate for all adolescents.

Now, more than ever, the work of the Affirm

Sub-Committee has vital work to do. Pushing back against abhorrent rhetoric, providing support, resources, education and advocacy comes down to saving lives. While we will continue to engage in activities around Pride celebrations in the month of July, we hope to increase our profile over the coming year. We are working on producing an informational brochure and hope also to compile and publish a directory of services and business of support to the LGBTQIA2S+ community in London and the surrounding area. As well, we are in contact with other Affirming churches in London, with an eye toward working together on projects and events, keeping up to date with an Affirm Inter-church newsletter. We would like to start a clothing cupboard geared toward our trans and non-binary folk. We have been considering the issues of the use of gender-affirming pronouns and expansive language in our worship and will be rolling out more information pieces around these topics as the new year unfolds. We hope also to occasionally invite someone to speak on a topic of importance to the congregation.

We are committed to creating a worshipping community where all people find their place, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, differing abilities, economic circumstance, ethnic background, physical or mental health. We hope you will join us in seeking opportunities to listen to and lift up each other’s stories and celebrate the multitude of gifts within our midst.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Karen Low, Chair

PLANNING

The FSA Planning Committee met a total of six times during 2023. During the year the Committee addressed a number of issues including:

- Establishment of a communal garden – **outcome** – deferred to a later date
- Promoting FSA as a wedding venue – **outcome** – under development - several steps have been taken to realize this initiative including a wedding “shoot” showing off what FSA has to offer in the best possible light
- Review of the FSA rental rates – in partnership with the Property Committee – **outcome** – completed - new updated rates were approved by Council in May 2023
- Strategic Planning – **outcome** – under development – the experience of other churches is being explored – and initial conversations have taken place with Kindred Works (www.kindredworks.ca) – a property development organization set up by the United Church. They describe their purpose as follows:

Using our knowledge and expertise in financing, development, planning, design and engagement, we build housing and gathering spaces that meet the needs of people and groups all over the country.

This relationship, should it “have legs” will be a major focus of attention in 2024.

- Follow-up to the October 4th, 2022 staff and Council retreat - **outcome** Several steps were taken to promote and reinforce the priorities coming out of the retreat, namely: *focus attention on Service/Outreach; promote and facilitate intergenerational Involvement; and, promote and facilitate inter-congregational and interfaith collaboration.* Promotion of a scorecard approach was largely unsuccessful. However, thanks to the FSA Outreach Committee and others, there has been

a consistent focus on Outreach during 2023. Intergenerational activities, including worship services, have taken place throughout 2023. Meetings with our neighbour United Churches took place in the spring of 2023 and a second round in the fall. Both meetings have helped to forge relationships at the governance and senior Ministerial level.

- Social Media – enhancing FSA’s presence and use of social media – outcome – under development - some background information was collected to help inform FSA on how FSA’s use of social media might be enhanced. A grant application was made to support this endeavour but unfortunately, we were not successful. Nevertheless, developments have taken place and a new member of our congregation who is a social media and branding professional has been instrumental in moving this agenda forward.
- **A final word:** Throughout 2023 the FSA Planning Committee has been acutely aware of the financial pressures being exerted on the operating budget of the church. At the same time, taking a longer-term view and knowing there is not a “quick fix” – the committee takes the position that we need to leverage the rich resources we have - thanks to our property - and re-imagine our church in the future as being one part of a multi-purpose complex located on our grounds.

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 Property Committee is dedicated to both maintenance of, and improvements to, our church home.

The biggest and most notable change experienced in the Property portfolio this past year was the loss of our Facilities Manager Tim Miedema in early June. Tim left us for personal reasons. His expertise and building knowledge have been greatly missed. Since his departure, the Property Committee and some dedicated volunteers have been actively involved regularly

to manage facility needs as efficiently as possible. Many thanks to those who assist in this capacity.

Our building has experienced a growth in regular use. In addition to our own full slate of program uses, El Sistema and Original Kids have placed increased demands on the building which are being closely monitored. So far all of our users seem to be able to work in the building in a collaborative manner.

Over the course of this year we have struggled with building security since our Atrium doors have become unreliable. This is partly due to increased use and the fact that the parts are reaching end of life. Originally installed in 1994, replacement parts have been difficult to secure. As a temporary measure we have introduced a deadbolt to maintain security. The impact of this is that the building is no longer accessible outside of office hours unless prearranged.

The Property Committee did undertake some capital projects as they became necessary. This past year we replaced an exterior fire door for increased security following an attempted break in on the second floor. We are gradually converting the entire building to LED technology which will result in energy savings. Sanctuary lighting upgrades continue to be a focus. Capital works under consideration are electrical upgrades to aging breaker panels and Fireside Room improvements.

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 being established to research options and make recommendations regarding HVAC changes for the future. This will be a major topic of discussion in the new year.

Rentals: Rental income continues to be an important source of revenue to offset operating costs. Our new partnership with the Aeolian Musical Arts Association began in January 2023 with El Sistema programs operating at FSA using the upper floors of St. Andrew's Hall as well as our larger spaces for ensemble work. This fall we welcomed Original Kids as a regular tenant in Proudfoot Hall. Concert rental revenue was steady in 2023 with the return of in-person events and parking revenue has been restored. Partnerships with some local artists and Ark Aid have brought in some additional revenue. As we move into 2024 our rental income stream has been largely restored to pre-pandemic levels.

Committee Members

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

Respectfully submitted,

George Jolink. Chair

OUTREACH

PREAMBLE: 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. The 2023 MO Committee members were: Linda Badke, Marilyn Beach, Barb Dalrymple, Janice Elliott, Liz Galbraith, Jan Hendry, Laurel Kenney, Pat Pettit, Natasha Roberts, and Donna Thompson .

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 projects locally, nationally and globally. We thank FSA members who contributed over \$47,000 to this important work of the national church.

Our Mission Sunday speaker this year was Julie Ryan from Indwell which provides housing and support services to marginalized Londoners. Indwell continues to build new accommodations currently converting the former War Memorial Children's Hospital into affordable apartments.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

We had another successful Canadian Foodgrains Bank campaign, chaired by Cynthia Simpson and Linda Badke. We started the campaign in September this year and ran it until November. The total combined income from St. Marys United and FSA was \$11,676.14 with \$6,291.52 from FSA. That includes our money from the corn roast. The proceeds were up from

last year. Soybeans were grown by a member of St. Marys United. This very successful project has been running at FSA for over 20 years. Our money raised is matched 4:1 by the Canadian government.

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 and people who have not needed help in many years. They also distribute coats, socks, toiletries and small take away meals for people living unhoused and provide referrals to assist people requiring additional help.

A full hot meal in the Fellowship Centre is provided every Thursday.

LOS Quinchos School

We contribute to the needs of 500 at-risk street children including food and educational school supplies. Los Quinchos also receives a grant from the United Church of Canada's Mission and Service Fund.

White Squirrel Golf Tournament

The White Squirrel Golf Tournament committee is delighted again this year with the results of our 17th annual tournament. FSA members and 27 hole sponsors helped us reach our goal with generous donations. Our net proceeds were \$11,500. Beneficiaries of these donations are London Lifts Together – Helping to bring an Afghan Family to Canada (\$5,040); families who depend on East London United Church Outreach (ELUCO) for financial support, food security and advocacy (\$2800); St. Paul's Social Services (\$1,120); Indwell Supportive Housing – London (\$1,120); and Los Quinchos school for child street vendors in Managua, Nicaragua (\$1,120). On a historical note, this tournament was initiated to help support Los Quinchos. Sincere thanks go to David and Diane Knoppert, Ivana Klouda, Jim Silcox, Bob Schram, Kathryn Skelly, Colleen Garrett and members of the Mission & Outreach

Committee.

A list of hole sponsors is located on the church website and in the Fall issue of *Tidings*.

Christmas Share – 2023

Christmas Share is an opportunity for the congregation to support our ELUCO community to make their Christmas brighter. Nancy Howard, their support worker, was able to purchase from FSA \$3,760. in gift cards with donations from the congregation. Grocery store cards were popular for Nancy to purchase because the families could purchase food, clothing toys, etc. with them. The program ran for 5 weeks from Nov. 5 to Dec. 3. The gift cards make Christmas so much happier for these families in need. Our thanks to the caring people of FSA for their support for this initiative.

Afghan Refugee Program

Our Refugee Committee has had a busy year of fundraising, advocacy work and filling out forms. The committee consists of Linda Badke, Janice Elliott, David Knoppert, David McKane, Shannon Hawke, Connor Campbell and Masuma Rauf. We received good news in December with the family having received their G numbers and being called up for biometrics. We anxiously await news of them being accepted and their files processed allowing them to come to Canada. We hope that they'll be here by spring. To date \$93,000 has been raised to support them in their first year in Canada.

East London United Church Outreach (ELUCO)

With the high cost of groceries, food security has been an ever-growing stress for families in the ELUCO community. Children and families continue to request breakfast and snacks from the ELUCO Unit. The school lunch program has never returned to pre-COVID numbers but there have been some new faces each week. Nancy picks up Cobbs bread at our Food Cupboard each Wednesday, as well as leftovers from the Welcome Wednesday lunch to distribute to our

families. We also have Harvest Bucks for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables from local markets. Families are very appreciative of the extras to supplement their grocery shopping.

Families have needed assistance with understanding and meeting OW (Ontario Works) and ODSP(Ontario Disability support Program) requirements. The letters received tend to be very confusing and it was somewhat easier when there was in-person communication.

There have been several Social Skills Camp meetings to discuss the future of our camps. It seems the City of London has not made this a priority for their budget, despite the need for this amazing program. We have not given up hope for another year, but it seems certain that we will not be running camps again this summer.

Heartfelt thanks to FSA for their amazing donations to Christmas Share in 2023! There was \$3,760 donated in total, well above last year's donations! Your generosity helped provide the Marconi Community with food, love and hope this Christmas.

The Welcome Wednesday program continues to operate at Rowntree United Church. There's a consistent number of people attending each week (45-50), and everyone is appreciative.

The ELUCO Food Cupboard served 47 families, in November. They have surpassed their numbers for 2022. The cost of groceries is a concern to sustain our program.

More financial support is urgently needed for ELUCO. They continue to operate at a deficit.

For more information about ELUCO, go to www.eluco.ca.

Amnesty International

First-St. Andrew's members have responded to Amnesty International appeals this year

through signing email letters, petitions and sending handwritten letters. The MO Committee has suggested a variety of Amnesty appeals each month in the weekly eblast. Amnesty Appeals were put on hold during the second half of 2023. Look for them to restart in January!

Respectfully submitted,
Outreach Committee Members

FAITH FORMATION

2023 brought us back to being able to offer more opportunities to our FSA community.

- **Adults:** Joshua has been able to facilitate bible study on Thursdays in both the morning and evenings. The structure has been themes in six-week blocks. If you have not had the opportunity to participate and are interested, please reach out to Joshua.
- **Intergenerational Opportunities:** We hosted our first trivia night in the spring last year, which was well attended and a fun opportunity to join together within our own FSA community as well as a day to be joined by members of Met and Siloam. We worked hard to implement an intergenerational Christmas Eve service as well.
- **Youth and Young Adults:** Marilyn Arthur continues to create wonderful programming for this age bracket. This shared ministry with Met and Siloam continues to be built. Please see Marilyn's report for more details of the year. FSA confirmed three youth, Elijah, Thomson and Maddie, who had participated in a long confirmation process, and we are thrilled to have had them complete the process and join our FSA family.
- **Church School and Children:** Christina

Lindsay has completed her first year working to provide programming for the children. There has been a huge influx of children attending on Sunday mornings. Christina has worked hard to engage these families and children into our FSA community. Please see her report for more details.

The youth room was dedicated to Jane Dockrill. It was our honour to highlight her deep impact on the youth of the FSA community while we were fortunate to have her involved and leading programs at FSA. In addition to the youth room dedication, two chairs were donated in her name to Camp Kee-Mo-Kee as well as a small fund to help support children to attend camp.

As a committee, we continue to push ourselves to help create fulsome and welcoming opportunities for our community to join in worship. We will continue to offer both intinction and individual communion cups as we look at protecting the health of our community. We are encouraging members to use their pronouns when they introduce themselves to help promote an affirming congregation. Please check out the educational materials on using pronouns that we are providing in partnership with the Affirm Committee.

Faith Formation is always looking for ideas and ways to continue to grow and provide more intergenerational opportunities within FSA. Please reach out with any thoughts, we love to hear from you.

Respectfully submitted,
Allyson Watson, Co-Chair

WORSHIP

Worship Committee chose in 2023 to meet conjointly with Faith Formation (under the leadership of Allyson Watson) as many members were parts of both committees and shared

common goals.

Anne Cunningham has ably provided Scripture readers for each week. Jan Hendry has organized Communion. Joshua continues to lead the preaching ministry with periodic relief from Karen Low.

Youth will be increasingly involved going forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Silcox

MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL

The Ministry and Personnel Committee has the role of managing and supervising 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 opportunities for personal growth. Each staff member, full or part time, is paired with an M&P liaison who serves as a channel of confidential communication to the M&P Committee. Liaisons meet regularly with their staff member to discuss any issues of concern and to ensure there are no barriers to their success.

The year 2023 was one of many staffing changes for FSA. Christina Lindsay joined our team in January as Coordinator of Children's Programming (12 hr/week). Her dynamic children's time during Sunday morning worship is the most visible evidence of her success, drawing large number of kids to the steps of the chancel each week. After a long and careful search, Chris Fischer, full time Minister of Music, started in April and quickly impressed us with their musical and leadership qualities. Rev. Annie Jannoway began her Pastoral Care Ministry (12 hr/week) in June and quickly became recognized for her gentle and caring support. The Search and Selection committees for these positions all did a great job!

Thanks to their chairs: Don Jones (Annie), Katie Glaves (Christina), Chris Wood (Chris F).

In June, our part time Facilities Manger, Tim Miedema, resigned. It has been decided that we will forego filling this position until at least 2025. This is possible because Property Committee members and others have stepped up to take on some of the facility duties. We will re-evaluate the position in 2024.

Our "old-timers", Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence (Minister of Worship and Congregation Life), Kathryn Skelly (Office Manger) and Marilyn Arthur (Youth and Young Adult Ministry – shared with Siloam and Metropolitan) provided continuity during the above transitions, while making their own significant contributions to FSA as noted in other committee reports. We are also very grateful for the support provided by Linda Cooper (contract maintenance), Colleen Garrett (contract bookkeeper), Richard Frank (hand-bells), Paul Merritt (Organist Emeritus) and the many musicians and others who supplement our regular staff.

In June, M&P held a staff appreciation lunch at the Hunt Club, hosted by Kathryn Patton. Thank you for your generosity, Kathryn.

As 2024 begins, we are blessed to have a complete roster of staff in place for the first time in a few years. Importantly, our staff work well together as a team to provide essential professional leadership at FSA. Thank you all very much.

The work of our staff is enabled by the hundreds (thousands?) of hours of volunteer help provided for programs, events and ministries by FSA members, adherents and friends. Thank you, too.

The work of the M&P committee in 2023 included a significant revision to the FSA Employee's Handbook, which will go to Council for approval in January. This past year, M&P

also developed a more structured formal staff performance evaluation process. Our ongoing work includes assessing and updating job descriptions, analyzing FSA staffing needs, and dealing with staff concerns.

As we look forward, the United Church has offered Marilyn Arthur and other United Church Designated Lay Ministers an opportunity to become candidates for Ordered Ministry (ordained ministers or commissioned diaconal ministers). Marilyn has indicated she will pursue this opportunity, which is to be made available in 2024. We wish her all the best in this endeavour.

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. Thank you!

With Rev. Annie's hiring, her partner Karen Low was required (by UCC policy) to resign from M&P, after only a few months on the Committee. Karen quickly became a respected voice on M&P and we have missed her presence. We will also miss the wisdom and dedication of long-time member Kathryn Patton, who at the time of writing, has confirmed she is stepping off the Committee after this year. Kathryn has served as a staff liaison, taken on special tasks, and provided valuable insight to the group for several years. She will be greatly missed.

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.

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Hill, Chair

Committee members (staff liaison in brackets):

- Linda Badke (Christina Lindsay)
- Margo Christodoulou (Rev. Annie)

- Stu Eberhard
- Barrie Evans (Pastor Joshua)
- Ardath Finnbogason-Hill (Chris Fischer)
- Kerry Hill (Marilyn Arthur)
- Kathryn Patton
- Barb Ridgewell (Kathryn Skelly)

FINANCE

The Finance Committee is currently reviewing our internally generated financial statements for 2023 (see below). Externally reviewed statements will be available for Part 2 of our Annual Meeting later this year.

Year-end Financial Results 2023

2023 has been a year of successes and challenges where we have often been reminded of how special our church is. In the first quarter of 2023, donations were behind 2022 and budget by 12%. Thanks to one-time donations totaling \$50,000, at the time of this report our givings were over budget and ahead of the previous year by \$27,200 by year end. Donations continue to be the single biggest and consistent financial contribution at 75% of our total revenue. We are so grateful for the continued generosity from our FSA members that allows us to continue serve our community and beyond.

Our gift card sales continue to be our single largest fundraiser for the church with profits of \$9,679 for 2023. With the formation of a Fundraising Committee in 2023 and initiatives like "Help Run the Church for a Day" we look forward to additional revenue streams in the coming years.

Our rental income from both one-time events and on-going lease agreements has been vital to our sustainability. We are grateful for Meals on Wheels continued use of FSA space. El Sistema Aeolian has also found a new home at FSA in 2023. This agreement has provided

consistent and valuable monthly revenue stream. Our building has also been busy with other rentals throughout the year beyond our expectations for 2023 and returning to pre-COVID revenue levels.

2023 M&P expenses increased as our investment in our personnel has allowed us to successfully develop programming and increase engagement within our congregation and larger community. Property expenses continue to be a challenge to manage. Our older church building faces increasing maintenance costs. Furthermore, utility rates increased approximately 18% and insurance premiums increased 23% from 2022 to 2023.

We are initially reporting an operating deficit of \$6,755 for 2023. This is a stronger financial performance than expected, when compared to a budgeted deficit of \$81,000 after Proudfoot Fund support of \$100,000. Fortunately, our operations continue to benefit from both the generosity of its members and the income earned by the Board of Trustees (primarily The Proudfoot Fund), allowing us to comfortably balance this deficit and so that we can continue to live as stewards of God's abundant gifts through Faith, Service and the Arts.

Budget 2024

At the time of this report, our 2024 budget is projecting an overall deficit of \$182,174 before Proudfoot Fund assistance. Previous year surpluses and Trustee support will again help to reduce some of this financial burden in the short-term in order to sustain operations.

Given the generosity of our members, we are optimistic that regular givings will remain relatively stable in 2024. Rental income will continue to be an important source of revenue to support operating costs.

A newly formed Fundraising Committee is expected to bring in \$15,000 to \$20,000 as an addi-

tional revenue stream to offset rising expenses.

Our Committees have actively worked to find opportunities to fund or reduce operational expenses. In order to reduce M&P costs, our Property Committee has offered to support the duties of the Facilities Manager for 6 months while we continue to evaluate the future needs of this position. The Music Committee has agreed that any soloist fees related to concert rehearsals will be funded by Friends of Music. They have also budgeted \$2,400 from the Music Trust Fund to further offset operational expenses.

We certainly face financial challenges by operating a historical building. Our property expenses will make up 26% of our total operating budget. Maintenance and repairs are budgeted to continue rise but most notably our insurance premiums increased 35% this year.

Assistance from Trust Funds continues to bridge a gap for us between revenue and expenses but the availability of those funds for operations is limited. Financial sustainability is an ongoing concern. However, evaluating the success of the church solely in terms of the amount of funds it raises and the size of its congregation, undervalues its contribution to a community. Council has regularly discussed opportunities to support operational expenses in the short-term but actively promotes the consideration of models for long-term financial sustainability while re-imagining our building as a valuable community asset.

Our financial challenges are not unique and there are new opportunities to envision a bright financial future. This will be the work of the entire congregation. In order to leverage the positive growth and change that we have already started to cultivate in recent years, we must continue assess cultural shifts openly, rally people and harness resources. Remember the words God spoke to Joshua: "This is my com-

mand – be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Committee Members

Laura Wood (Chair), Jeanette Eberhard,

Tristin Hill, Ivana Klouda, Doug McGregor, Barb Ridgewell

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Wood, Chair

OTHER REPORTS

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 2023, plus an extra emergency meeting. The Board of Trustees has four Committees accountable to it; Insurance, Investments, 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 2023, Trustees included: Paul Cooper (Co-Chair), John Eberhard (Chair, Long-term Giving Committee), Janice Elliott, Russ Gonder, Don Jones, Bob Kennedy, David Manness (Chair, Investment Committee), Alan Salmoni (Chair, Insurance Committee), Jim Silcox, David Wake (Secretary), Jackie Williams (Co-Chair), Katherine Wonfor (Chair, Memorials Committee), Jean Wright and Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence.

Also regularly attending Trustee, by invitation, during 2023 have been: George Jolink (Chair of Property), Laura Wood (Treasurer, Chair of Finance) and David Wardlaw (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 approved financial statements from the Trust Funds will be presented at the subsequent Congregational meeting together with those of the FSA operations.

In 2023, at the direction of Council, the Board of Trustees made available \$100,000 from the

Proudfoot Legacy Fund to FSA for Operations. Also, in 2023, a loan of \$55,000 was made from the Knowles and Proudfoot Trust Funds to the Afghan Refugee Team to apply to bring a family of Afghans under a new Canada Refugee Program. Thanks to the heroic fundraising efforts of this team, including David Knoppert, that loan has been paid back almost in full.

The previous year, 2022, was one of the most challenging that FSA has seen in recent times owing to the volatile stock markets which caused investments to fall in value across the board. Through careful management of our resources, thanks in no small part to the efforts of David Manness, guided by our investment consultants at BMO-Nesbitt Burns, there has been a significant recovery in 2023. The Trustees' strategy to stay invested, and sell as few assets as possible, meant FSA's investments benefited from this recovery, while avoiding loss of capital.

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 2024, 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 thanks to Jean Wright, who is stepping down, for her service on the Board of Trustees, as Secretary and Member of the Investment Committee, and to Mary Vernon, our Chair of the Memorials Committee, who retired from the Board during 2023 due to ill health. In closing, we should like to remember Russ Gonder, a valued Trustee who died this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Williams and Paul Cooper (Co-Chairs)

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

2023 was a year when the Communications & Marketing team consolidated its innovations and improved its weekly operating routines. During the fall we encountered some difficulty with our Sanctuary speakers which resulted in them being dismantled temporarily and checked by Horizon, the tech company which originally installed them. We are now in the process of reviewing their "fix" to determine if it is going to be satisfactory.

Lorna Gunning Fratschko joined the C & M team this year with the portfolio of Social Media. She will be initiating and implementing posts on various social media sites, including Facebook and Instagram. The new Post Script series was developed with her guidance. It consists of a weekly five-minute video in which Pastor Joshua reviews and reflects on his message from the previous Sunday. Links to it are also available each week from the E-Blast. Lorna has great plans for getting summer students to help her plan social media events well in advance.

This year we said good-bye to the *Tidings* Advertising Manager, Bob Peel. Bob was instrumental in ensuring that we had a significant number of advertisers to offset much of the annual cost of printing *Tidings*. We will miss his expertise and efficiency in this department. Meanwhile, under David Wardlaw's editorship, *Tidings* continues to offer stimulating articles of broad interest to the congregation and beyond. This quarterly magazine is now totally archived on the FSA website back to its first Issue in 1991. We are indebted to the behind-the-scenes efforts of the *Tidings* Team, including, Barb Dalrymple, Nancy Quinn, David McKane, David Wake, Anne Cummings and Jim Silcox. We also tip our hat to the many writers who have produced articles for us over the past year.

Finally, C & M would not exist without the weekly input from Kathryn Skelly who gathers information and ensures along with Jim Silcox that it goes out to the FSA family each week in the Bulletin Insert, the E-Blast, and the Sunday Slide Show as well as the website. Close to 300 people receive our "Blast" each week and we garner about 1800 hits on our website each month.

The C & M Team consists of Jim Silcox, Kathryn Skelly, Merran Neville, David Wardlaw and Lorna Gunning Fratschko.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Silcox

Live Streaming at FSA

Live streaming was introduced at FSA in 2022. Thanksgiving Sunday, October 9, 2022 was the first Sunday that the service was live streamed. [See Annual Report 2022, pages 23, 34, 45, 47 for details about the acquisition of the equipment and the implementation of the service.] Since then, and throughout 2023, every service has been live streamed.

The set up consists of three cameras, a laptop to run the PowerPoint slides created by Kathryn Skelly and an iPad to control and monitor the audio. This requires three people to manage the live stream equipment each Sunday. Funeral services and several concerts have also been live streamed in 2023. The service has given added value by providing online access to all those who are unable to attend in person. The repository of live stream videos on the FSA YouTube channel is also a rich archive. Many videos are viewed well beyond the live stream date, which is excellent outreach to the local community and beyond.

We greatly appreciate the time and effort giv-

en 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), Connor Campbell, Andrew Richardson

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

Data projection: Jim Silcox

Respectfully submitted,
Merran Neville

FSA: Helping to Address Community Needs through Partnership

Working in partnership with Ark Aid Street Mission an organization that works to meet the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of people who do not have a safe place in which to live, FSA, for the second year in a row, from December 2022 through March 2023 opened its doors to community members who were homeless and needed a warm place in which to sleep and receive some basic nourishment, as well as support and friendship.

Ark Aid provided the physical resources and staff to support the program; FSA provided the physical space for a modest fee and many FSA volunteers helped set up the mattresses, donated food, wrote notes of kindness, as well as donated clothing and other items.

Based on the experience in the winters of 2021-22, a number of important lessons were learned and important changes were made to

the program – changes that were instrumental in improving the experience for everyone involved or impacted by the program (our neighbours and tenants, for example).

More specifically:

- There was much less damage to the inside of the church
- It was a much smoother operation – there was better communication
- In terms of the people who used the program 15 (out of 40) stayed throughout the program – repeat stays helped – some people even moved onto having housing – although that was not the intent of the program – an unintended positive outcome
- The partnership among the participating organizations was stronger this time
- The community luncheon (provided by Ark Aid) held near the beginning of the program at FSA (end of January 2023) helped set a positive tone – this was at the annual meeting at FSA
- Got positive feedback about the change in timing and entrances used for the program

At the same time, as with any program, there were challenges.

- There were a few incidents of community members getting into the church
- At times not able to reach the people in charge to address immediate issues – this provides an opportunity for improvement
- Some people hung out on the porch of Farquhar House – the main staff entrance used by MOWL staff – this created several issues – safety concerns by staff, garbage and needles etc. around the entrance – people also left food, dishes, clothing – also people were not only hanging out before the program opened in the evening but slept on the porch overnight. Ark Aid did have a staff person present outside in the morning and worked to clean up – it was helpful when staff were outside.

- The church grounds were used as an outside washroom when people were hanging out and did not have access to facilities.
- A security gate around the porch was considered but was cost prohibitive (\$20K)
- There was an expectation that other churches would volunteer and contribute – meetings were held but nothing materialized – fell to FSA to provide most volunteers – what happened?

This coming winter season, FSA will be continuing its on-going relationship with Ark Aid and will be providing a similar program to previous years albeit on a more limited basis; namely on those days/nights when a cold weather advisory has been issued by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. Will it be perfect? No. Will mistakes be made? Yes. But this is the nature of being engaged and taking action. We will continue to learn and change and this is more important than getting everything right.

Working to address key community issues through partnerships is fundamental to FSA's mission and future as a community of faith – and this is a primary example of being able to “walk the talk” and putting “faith into action” - for it is what we do and not what we say that defines us.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Elson

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:

- Corresponding secretary sends many cards and letters to bereaved families, persons in hospital or ill at home, and to church members and individuals outside the church who have made a special contribution to the church or our community.
- Funding for supplies for the Isabelle Getliffe Sewing Group.
- Financial contribution to the Knitwits group who knit prayer shawls and other items.
- Funding provided to send two children from ELUCO to Camp Kee-Mo-Kee.
- Financial contribution to the operating budget of the church.
- Outreach donations to ELUCO, London Community Chaplaincy, Rotholme Women's and Family Centre, My Sisters' Place, L'Arche, Anova, and St. Paul's Social Services.

Money-raising Projects:

- Fall Boutique Bazaar convened by Glenda Robinson.
- Phantom Tea envelopes containing a poem written by Millie Bates inviting donations from the congregation.
- Provision of Green Envelopes available to all members of the congregation for personal donations.

Total revenue from fundraising projects:
\$8,607.84

Executive Meetings:

- Annual Budget meeting, Sunday, January 15, 2023 (via Zoom)
- Monday, February 13, 2023
- Monday, March 13, 2023

- Monday, April 5, 2023
- Tuesday, May 23, 2023
- Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Meetings:

- Monday, May 1, 12:30 p.m. community luncheon with speaker, Brandon Doxtator, Counsellor and Environmental Consultation Coordinator for the Oneida of the Thames First Nation. This luncheon was open to everyone with other Churches invited to attend. The title of the presentation was Water Issues Facing the Oneida.
- Saturday, November 18, Boutique Bazaar

Mission Project:

The next National UCW Healing Fund project focuses on Women and Children, and the current UCW Mission Project, as approved by the Antler River UCW Executive, is Safe Drinking Water for all Indigenous communities in Canada.

Sincere thanks to the executive of the FSA UCW and to all the women and men of the Congregation who have contributed to the work and mission of the United Church Women.

FSA Executive:

PRESIDENT: Laurel Kenney
SECRETARY: Helen Guthrie
TREASURER: Donna Fraleigh
TIDINGS REPRESENTATIVE: Nancy Quinn
CORRESPONDANCE SECRETARY: Millie Bates
ARCHIVIST: Millie Bates
MEMBERSHIP CONVENOR: Nancy Quinn
BAZAAR CONVENOR: Glenda Robinson
RUMMAGE SALE CONVENOR: Jan Hendry (sale cancelled in 2023)
MEMBER AT LARGE: Linda Badke

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Guthrie, Secretary

First St. Andrew's United Church Women

Statement of Financial Position

Page 1

As at December 31, 2023

With Comparatives as at December 31, 2022

Unaudited

ASSETS	August 2023	Budget 2023	December 2022
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank	\$11,084	\$9,961	\$13,286
Due to(from) FSA			0
	<u>11,084</u>	<u>9,961</u>	<u>13,286</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$11,084	\$9,961	\$13,286
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Equity			
Retained Earnings	<u>11,084</u>	<u>9,961</u>	<u>13,286</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	\$11,084	\$9,961	\$13,286

First St. Andrew's United Church Women

Statement of Operations

Page 2

For the Period Ended December 31, 2023

With Comparatives for the Year Ended December 2022

Unaudited

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	December 2022
<u>Donations</u>			
Green Envelopes	\$2,840	\$1,500	\$2,850
Donations	161	600	252
Flowers	0		70
Phantom Tea	860	1,500	1,080
Miscellaneous	25		20
	<u>3,886</u>	<u>3,600</u>	<u>4,272</u>
<u>Earnings</u>			
Holly Bazaar	5,408	5,000	5,292
Rummage Sale	0		0
Miscellanaous	2,425		0
	<u>7,833</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,292</u>
Total Revenue	11,719	8,600	9,564
<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	2,000	2,000	
Nurses for Housing Indwell	1,000	1,000	
Miscellaneous	0	200	
Total Outreach	11,075	11,275	8,075

First St. Andrew's United Church Women

Statement of Operations

Page 3

For the Period Ended December 31, 2023

With Comparatives for the Year Ended December 2022

Unaudited

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	December 2022
<u>Miscellaneous Expense</u>			
Middlesex Presbyterial	120	120	120
Subscriptions/journals	0	100	0
Speakers/Courtesy	0	300	0
Miscellaneous	2,726	130	884
	2,846	650	1,004
<u>General & Administrative</u>			
F.S.A. Congregational	0	0	675
Miscellaneous	0	0	2
	0	0	677
Total Surplus (Deficit) from operations	(\$2,202)	(\$3,325)	(\$192)

SHOPPING CARD PROGRAM

Final results will be published later in the year. Following 2022's record year for the Shopping Card Program with 25% growth in that year, we are pleased to report that 2023 results will be within 3% of those 2022 record results. Sales will be close to \$190,000 with profits near \$9,700. This is with many thanks to our very many loyal clients and the shopping card team for their commitment to this program.

The motto of this program is*harnessing the purchasing power of our family and friends to provide important financial support to the church*. It is the largest fund raiser for the church itself, at a time when fund raising has special significance and focus.

This is a team effort and I want to acknowledge and thank the following for their dedicated support: David Wake, Margo Christodoulou, Winnie Wake, Margaret Wardlaw, Heather Vouvalidis, Ivana Klouda, John Eberhard, Susan McKane, Barb Dalrymple and Linda Badke..... as well as new additions to the team - Ken Wright, Mike Koustrup and Helen Guthrie. We also appreciate the strong support of Kathryn Skelly and Colleen Garrett.

We encourage increased use of this program by our members and friends. Consider buying grocery cards and cards for many more outlets (gas, hardware, gift stores, pharmacy, restaurants). For new members to the church, using the Shopping Card Program to buy cards for purchases from your favorite stores is an easy way of financially supporting the church. Fundraising in this way reduces the size of the 'ask' for direct congregational donations to support church operations.

We believe that this program has the capacity to grow much larger. Retailers give us discounts

(many in the 5% to 10% range), far higher than that available from other rewards programs, like the money back credit cards, VISA and MasterCard . We want to take advantage of these offers for our church. There continues to be more work to do in 2024 to grow this program and we hope you will be supportive of our efforts. See you at the Desk!

Respectfully submitted,

David Manness

BROWN BAG LUNCH

The Brown Bag Lunch (BBL) continues to meet every noon hour on Wednesdays. During the Covid lockdown we began, like many other groups, to meet through Zoom, then decided to continue doing so even after we could have returned to meeting at FSA. In part, this was because some of our members were quite compromised, and still wanted to avoid face to face meetings, but also because members who were travelling could continue to meet with us.

We did make two exceptions this year: in June we met for one session in David Flynn's back yard, and in early December we met back in the parlour at the church. It was nice to talk to each other in person, but the consensus was that we should continue to our Wednesday Zooming.

We continue to have between five and nine of us who meet regularly. In the past we called it the Men's Brown Bag Lunch, but we have decided that from now on, we are inviting anyone who is attracted by the idea of talking about any topic. This year, topics ranged from choosing (or not choosing) MAID, to the wars in Ukraine and Israel; from our personal religious beliefs to the future of FSA.

Mostly we talk, but over the years we have initiated or participated in several events and

projects, from organizing the Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesdays, to replacing the sound system in the Sanctuary, to the recent livestreaming setup. Recently, we have begun to talk about the need to replacing the current decrepit HVAC system with a new one based on green energy such as heat pumps or geothermal.

We are looking forward to another year of chat

and action. If this interests you, email Don Jones (nodsenoj@gmail.com) and he will send you a Zoom link each week.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Jones

CHURCH STAFF - DURING 2023

- 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 (as of April).....Chris Fischer
- Shared Youth and Young Adult Minister..... 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
- Facility & Maintenance Coordinator (Jan - June)Tim Miedema
- 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.

Produced by Communications & Marketing
Printed at First-St. Andrew's United Church
with special thanks to Kathryn Skelly