



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH PORT COLBORNE, ON



## 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY Deep • Bold • Daring



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Report</u>	<u>Page</u>
Agenda of Annual Meeting.....	1
Central Casting Report .....	8
Chocolatiers Report .....	20
Church Council Report.....	6
Congregational Statistics.....	12
Cookies n' Christ Report.....	20
Designated Lay Minister's Report .....	7
Finance Committee Report.....	23
Food With Friends Report .....	19
Flower & Décor Committee Report.....	17
Holy Hands Puppets Report .....	22
Ministry and Personnel .....	9
Minutes of Annual Meeting February 25, 2024 .....	2
Mission & Outreach Committee Report .....	18
Music Ministry Report.....	16
Nominations Committee Report.....	9
'Not So' Silent Auction Report .....	22
Pastoral Care & Visitation Report.....	8
Pastoral Charge Supervisor's Report .....	6
Prayer Shawl Group Report .....	15
Program Committee Report.....	12
Property Committee Report.....	13
Soup Sundays .....	22
Summer Adventure Camp Report .....	21
United Church Women's (UCW) Report.....	23

## **AGENDA AGM 2024**

Words of Welcome, territorial acknowledgment (in the order of service)

Opening Prayer - Rev. Dr. Diane Walker

In Memoriam (in the order of service)

### **BUSINESS MEETING**

Call to Order

Election of Chair and Secretary for meeting

Meeting procedures for voting

Approval of the Agenda

Acceptance of the minutes of the last Annual Meeting, February 25, 2024 as printed

Approval of Annual Reports

Motion: All 2024 reports, except the Treasurer's Report be accepted as printed.

Treasurer's Report

Presentation of the 2025 Budget

Approval of Proposed Budget for 2025

Report from the Nominating Committee

Election of Council Members

Resolution re Borrowing

Appointment of Auditors for 2025

Other New Business

Closing Remarks

Adjournment Motion: "That this meeting adjourn, and the Church Council and its Executive be given power to act in all necessary matters until the next Annual Meeting to be held early in 2026, date to be set by Church Council.

**Central United Church  
Minutes of Annual Meeting  
Sunday, February 25, 2024**

**Words of Welcome**

Lesley Rickard welcomed everyone to the meeting following the Soup Sunday Luncheon.

**Opening Prayer**

Rev. Cathie Ellarby provided the Opening Prayer.

**In Memoriam**

The names of members of the congregation who passed were read and acknowledged by DLM Heather Filson during the morning worship service.

**Business Meeting**

**Call to Order**

Lesley Rickard welcomed everyone. She thanked the volunteers who arranged the luncheon before the meeting. Rev. Cathie Ellarby shared she was attending the meeting in place of Rev. Dr. Diane Walker. Should there be any matters that required the attention of the Region, Rev. Ellarby and Heather Filson would notify Rev. Walker.

**Election of Chair and Secretary**

Motion: That Lesley Rickard serve as Chair for the Annual Meeting and Barclay Walker serve as recording secretary.

Moved by: Amanda Bell                      Seconded by: Cathy Rubocki

Motion Carried.

**Meeting procedures for voting**

Motion: That adherents be allowed to vote on the business of this annual meeting

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Sandra Frame

Motion Carried.

**Approval of the agenda**

Motion: That the agenda for the meeting, as circulated, be approved.

Moved by: Gloria Simon                      Seconded by: Barry Wilson

Motion Carried.

### **Acceptance of the minutes of the last Annual Meeting, February 26, 2023**

Motion: That minutes of the last annual meeting be approved, as printed.

Moved by: Jane Danch-Roy

Seconded by: Donna Tuck

Motion Carried.

### **Approval of Annual Reports**

Motion: That the 2023 reports with the exception of the treasurer's report be accepted.

Amendment: That the 2023 reports with the exception of the treasurer's report and the Mission and Outreach Committee be accepted.

Moved by: Jim Brown

Seconded by: Jill Jackson

Motion Carried

### **Treasurer's Report**

Gloria Simon spoke to her report. She assumed the role of Treasurer in May 2023. Since that time, the church has transitioned to new accounting software and work is being done to align accounts and reporting procedures. Gloria highlighted there are some minor differences in the printed reports compared to the church's current financial statements.

Jim Brown had asked a question about why the Mission and Outreach disbursement report had shown funds from 2022. Chris Wilson explained the local account had funds that were collected at the end of 2022. Due to inclement weather and other factors, the funds were not deposited until 2023 and those collected funds were allocated and spent in 2023.

Chris Wilson provided an explanation for the Trustee Account, the Capital Endowment Fund. The fund's disbursement reflects a giving / gift made by a member. Chris explained the process followed when such a gift is made. He provided an explanation of changes to banking fees in 2023 that the church now incurs and the work to minimize those fees.

The treasurer and Finance Committee thanked everyone for meeting the appeal to increase givings in 2023.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report and Mission and Outreach Committee report be accepted.

Moved by: Chris Wilson

Seconded by: Paul Rubocki

Motion carried.

## **Budget for 2024**

### Highlights

The budget forecast is predicated on the church continuing with the current staffing pattern.

Allowances have been made for repairs. Currently, there are no plans for a specific large capital project.

Seeking a stable level for givings and hoping for a small increase to help with expenses affected by inflation.

Jim Brown asked if there has been any conversations about replacing funds from the accounts the church has borrowed from in previous years now that the church is having small surpluses. Chris Wilson explained there has not been a conversation for this yet. He outlined that there are ebbs and flows throughout the year when the church may need to draw on some of the surplus and with lower interest rates it may not make sense to re-invest monies that may have an immediate need.

Motion: That the proposed Budget for 2024 be approved.

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Donna Tuck

Motion Carried.

### **Nominations for Trustees**

Motion: That Sandra Frame, Donna Tuck, and Darlene Sherk be appointed as Trustees for Central United Church to fill the existing vacancies.

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Barclay Walker

Motion Carried.

### **100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada**

Lesley Rickard shared that 2024 marks the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada. She expressed that we should form a working group to explore how the church could celebrate this milestone.

### **Nominations Committee**

Motion: Be it resolved that the Congregation of Central United Church appoint Doug Frame and Sandra Frame as Life Members of Council.

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Barclay Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

Barclay Walker asked three times for nominations from the floor for people willing to serve on Church Council and its committees. No nominations from the floor were received.

Motion: Be it resolved that members of Central United Church be appointed to lead and serve the committees of the church for 2024, as printed in the report.

Moved by: Barclay Walker                      Seconded by: Lesley Rickard

### **Resolution for borrowing**

Motion: That church council be authorized to borrow up to \$50,000 for the operation of the church if and when this becomes necessary.

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Sandra Frame

Motion Carried.

### **Appointment of Auditors for 2024**

Thanks and gratitude was expressed to Marilyn Robinson for serving as auditor in 2023.

Motion: That Marilyn Robinson be appointed to serve as auditor for 2024.

Moved by: Chris Wilson                      Seconded by: Cathy Rubocki

Motion Carried.

### **New Business**

It was recommended that the Church Council consider holding the Annual Meeting later in February 2025 to allow time for financial statements to be prepared.

DLM Heather Filson shared a closing prayer.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Motion: That this meeting adjourn, and the Church Council and its Executive be given the power to act in all necessary matters until the next Annual Meeting to be held in 2025, date to be sent by Church Council.

Moved by: Jane Danch-Roy                      Seconded by: Joanne Acocella

Motion Carried.

## **PASTORAL CHARGE SUPERVISOR'S REPORT**

A pastoral charge supervisor is appointed by the local Regional Council when a congregation or pastoral charge is without an appointed or called minister. Since taking on this role in the spring of 2023 I have been impressed by a hard working and faithful congregation served by an effective and cohesive church council.

Of particular note is your manifest willingness to try this experimental ministry team with Rev. Cathie Ellarby as minister of worship, Heather Filson covering pastoral care, children and youth ministry, administration and some preaching, and me preaching monthly and attending meetings of congregation, council and trustees. My official role at meetings is to make sure that United Church policies are honoured.

We are experiencing an acute shortage of ministers in the United Church and in the years to come it might be seen that Central was ahead of the adaptation curve. That adaptation process has moved along as Central considers an arrangement with other nearby churches to share ministry personnel. I ask you to pray for your church and its mission in this possible new direction. May God grant his richest blessings on you in your faithfulness.

Respectfully submitted by  
Rev. Dr. Diane Walker

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL**

**“Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.”**

**–Maya Angelou**

As I reflect upon the last year, I can't help but feel extremely grateful and blessed to have such a great ministry, staff, volunteers and a cohesive congregation.

We here at Central host several charity events throughout the year. These efforts are coordinated by our dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure the success of each event. The other day I overheard someone say they would rather just donate a thousand dollars than to go to all the work that is required putting on an event. While this is a very generous offer they are missing the point. I appreciate all the hard work that goes into all our outreach efforts and in church occasions, but our gatherings are opportunities for fellowship and building community relations. The community here in Port Colborne has come to rely on and appreciate the efforts we make on their behalf. I am very grateful for all this congregation has accomplished.

I want to take this opportunity to thank council for all their energy and spirit to make the right decisions on behalf of our congregation. I would also like to say thanks for staying together for another year. You all are a pleasure to work with.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lesley Rickard, Chair of Council

## DESIGNATED LAY MINISTER'S REPORT

The family Central United Church never ceases to amaze me. As we navigate each year, the commitment to this church continues and grows stronger. In 2024 we witnessed vibrant worship services, numerous fundraising and outreach events all while showing God's love and sharing it. In 2024 there were numerous functions throughout the year. It may be a soup lunch, a sale of some sort or a big event such as the UCW's Christmas at Central Bazaar. No matter what is planned, there are eager hands to help in whatever capacity possible. This eagerness and volunteerism excited and propelled me to help in whatever way I can. Not only are we being productive within our four walls, but we are helping in our city and beyond.

This is just a little summary of what Central's family was up to in 2024. An event that is totally off-site is FOOD WITH FRIENDS. Every second Tuesday of the month there is a group of people from Central who meet at the Guild Hall. These people prepare and serve meals to those less fortunate but what the clients don't see is the friendship, laughter and sense of community that goes on prior to the doors opening. This group of people have fun being together and serving. This is only one event that takes place during the year.

After worship, on the last Sunday of every month during the winter, except for December we sit down for a SOUP LUNCH. In the warmer months, still on the last Sunday of most months, there are various lunches as well. This is a time of true fellowship where new friendships are formed, where friends catch-up on life and where family time is enjoyed by all.

During the year we have numerous people here at the church whenever needed to help with donations. Have you ever wondered what happens to the clothing, yard sale goods or books you donate? Well, behind the scenes there are volunteers who come in, sort and categorize clothing, box it up so it's ready for the next CLOTHING BOUTIQUE, which is a free outreach event for the public to enjoy. YARD SALE items that are dropped off are looked over, broken items discarded and the good items are packed away, waiting for the week of yard sale where they will be brought out, displayed on tables for our customers to go through to find *that* hidden treasure they've been seeking. Donated books either go on the BOOK TABLE, where people can pick up a book and leave a donation and all monies goes directly to support Rahim our World Vision son in Bangladesh while other books are boxed up in preparation for the annual BOOK SALE.

Have you ever participated in the DRIVE THRU FOOD DRIVE? One day before the summer heat comes on Central has one. You enter through the parking lot off Catharine Street and drive up to a volunteer who removes your donation from your trunk or back seat. It's that easy!!! The donations are very much welcomed at the door of the Food Bank. There are a couple SOUP LUNCHESES, on a weekday, during the year as well, spearheaded by the Program Committee with others volunteering their time and pots of soup.

The Program Committee hosts a PASTA DINNER in the spring and a HAM & SCALLOPED POTATO DINNER in the fall. Have you been to either of these evenings? Our Banquet Hall is filled with conversation, amazing aroma and laughter when the dessert/pie auction takes place at the end of the evening.

In the fall Central hosted, for the second year in a row, THE CELEBRATION OF CHOIRS with a freewill offering going to Food With Friends. What a lovely afternoon, and such a worthwhile cause. Twice a year, online, Central hosts a SILENT AUCTION. Behind the scenes, there is a group of people who spend Tuesday mornings here photographing and labeling items for either the Spring/Summer or Fall/Winter Auctions. For six days these items are up on auction on Facebook. It's a fun few days the community can't seem to wait to start bidding.

CENTRAL'S CHOCOLATIERS are such a dedicated bunch, but who wouldn't be working with chocolate. This group makes chocolates for the fall, Christmas, winter and Easter seasons with all profits going to mission outreach commitments. This group has quite a loyal following who wait patiently for their yummy treats.

Our UCW, United Church Women's group catered funeral receptions and special lunches and brought back their bazaar, Christmas at Central.

The one event that is especially close to my heart is SUMMER ADVENTURE CAMP. In 2024 we were awarded two students through the Government of Canada's Summer Student Job Grants. Ava Laurin and Amanda Hardy did a fabulous job leading our 35+ young people for the week. Please read Ava's report which is further down in this report.

Throughout the year, I've had the privilege on Sunday mornings to lead our young people in **CENTRAL CASTING**. We have a group of enthusiastic children with hearts to serve God. These young people love all that God has created. Seeing their excitement in learning Bible stories, doing crafts and being together downstairs warms my heart. It's always fun as I prepare weekly lessons for these young people. When you come into the church, you never know what I'm up to, whether checking out a science experiment or prepping a craft. Life is never dull when children are around.

**PASTORAL CARE** is always an ongoing aspect of life for me. There are many of our church family that need pastoral care and the severity of the care required fluctuates from person to person. Visiting church members had me travelling to St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland, not to mention those members here in Port Colborne. This part of my job is always busy and extremely rewarding. If you know of someone that may be ill and would like a call or a visit, please call the church office 905-834-4533. It's surprising how many people think I've been told of a situation and I'm totally in the dark. I can't finish this report without paying tribute to Central's Team, our Minister of Worship Rev. Cathie Ellarby, Pastoral Charge Supervisor Rev. Dr. Diane Walker, our Director of Music and Organist Darlene Oord, our Custodial Team Carrie Dunn & Steve Trider and our church council of dedicated people led by Lesley Rickard who faithfully steer our church through the easy moments and difficult decisions. I thank you all.

What a year 2024 was!! Sitting back and thinking of all that Central has accomplished gives me time to pause, reflect and thank God for all who walk through the doors. May the commitment to serve God and the energy we feel continue through 2025.

Respectfully submitted by  
*Heather Filson*, DLM

## **CENTRAL UNITED M&P COMMITTEE REPORT**

All contracts & evaluations have been completed.

All confidentiality and background checks are completed.

Great support from congregation and all the volunteers with all the hard work that they did and still Do!

We had no written complaints this year!

I want to thank Dr. Reverend Diane Walker, Reverend Cathie Ellarby, Heather Filson Lay Minister for their total commitment.

To Central United Church, along with Lesley Rickard Chair of Council, Darlene Oord for her music talents, Carrie and Steve for all your work in the church 2024 was a very successful year.

Many thanks to Jill Jackson, Brian Haley always willing to help out!

Submitted by  
Chairman Barrie Wilson.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Nominating Committee would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the current members of the Church Council who have agreed to continue in their roles for the coming year. Your dedication and service are invaluable in ensuring that Central United Church continues to thrive as a welcoming and faith-filled community.

We also wish to thank those we approached about joining the Council for taking the time to thoughtfully consider the invitation to serve. While they were unable to commit at this time, we appreciate their willingness to engage in conversation about church leadership.

As we look ahead, we recognize the growing challenge of filling future vacancies. A strong and committed leadership team is essential to the life and work of our church, and without leaders, we cannot effectively serve our congregation and community. We encourage all members to reflect on how they might contribute to the continued strength of our church through leadership roles in the future.

With faith and hope,  
Barclay Walker

On behalf of the Nominating Committee

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

Chair..... \* Lesley Rickard  
Vice-Chair ..... vacant  
Past Chair ..... \* Barclay Walker  
Secretary..... \* Bev Roseboom  
Treasurer..... \* Gloria Simon

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Committee Leader..... \*Chris Wilson  
Member ..... \*Gloria Simon  
Volunteers ..... Marie Feduck, Tony Roy

**WORSHIP Committee**

Committee Leader..... \* Joanne Acocella  
Volunteers ..... Brandee Oord, Emily Wilson, John Wilson

**MISSION & OUTREACH**

Committee Leader..... \* Laurie Haley  
Volunteers ..... Rhonda Bilodeau, Judy Brennan, Wendy Davies,  
..... Heather Orosz, Barb Parsons

**PROGRAM & FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

Committee Leader..... \*Marie Feduck  
Volunteers ..... Wendy Davies, Linda Doan, Carrie Dunn,  
..... Gail Etling, Darlene Sherk, Linda Traver

**PROPERTY**

Committee Leader..... \* Ron Jackson  
Volunteers ..... Ray Audette, Rick Bilodeau, Darin Hemauer  
..... Michael Oord, Jim Orosz, John Simon

UCW..... \*Vicki Fretz

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL

Committee Leader.....Barrie Wilson  
Members ..... Brian Haley, Jill Jackson

PASTORAL CARE & VISITATION

Cookies & Christ Coordinator.....Carrie Dunn  
Portal Village.....Jennifer Parker  
Northland Pointe .....

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE ..... vacant  
.....

Note: \*Denotes member of council. Committees may consist of additional appointed members who are members at large and who may serve for an indefinite term of office.

TRUSTEES

Chair .....Chris Wilson  
..... Terry Suess  
..... Sandra Frame  
..... Darlene Sherk  
..... Donna Tuck

MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE

The Chairperson of Council..... Lesley Rickard  
The Chairperson of Property ..... Ron Jackson  
The Chairperson of Worship.....Joanne Acocella  
The Chairperson of Finance.....Chris Wilson  
Two Members of the Board of Trustees..... To be named

## **2024 CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS REPORT**

### **Baptisms**

Wyatt Traver – January 28<sup>th</sup>  
Davie Rayne Haylock – May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Danika Kelly Mucicko – May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Aubrey Laine Oord – May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Jasmine Ellis Oord – May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Adeline Laura Toth – September 29<sup>th</sup>  
Anna Margaret Toth - September 29<sup>th</sup>  
Leo Michael Kenneth Toth - September 29<sup>th</sup>

### **Deaths/Funerals**

Thomas Ayres – February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Lorena Saxton – February 21<sup>st</sup>  
Bruce Wilson – March 27<sup>th</sup>  
Robert Finnegan – April 10<sup>th</sup>  
Marion Yalowica – May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Roger Gibson – October 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Leonard Koudijs – December 13<sup>th</sup>

## **PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT**

Program Committee had a successful fundraising year hosting our annual pasta dinner/dessert auction, ham dinner/pie auction, Christmas cookie boxes. We added two eat in/takeout soup lunches which were very well received and assisted in the kitchen for the UCW's "Christmas at Central". Above and beyond fundraising we host coffee hour once a month and plan and provide the lunch the last Sunday of May, June and September. Any members that are available also come out to help with most events like clothing boutique, yard sale, book sale etc.

We look forward to another year of fellowship with members of our congregation and the community.

Marie Feduck

## PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

### **PROPERTY ISSUES RESOLVED IN THE PAST YEAR:**

1. Maintenance: Elevator

The elevator is inspected periodically throughout the year, and any maintenance issues are dealt with at that time. An annual inspection certificate is issued and displayed in the elevator.

2. Maintenance: Boilers

The boilers were given an annual inspection and cleaning in early December 2024. Routine maintenance checks on the boilers and piping system were performed to ensure reliability. No issues were reported.

3. Maintenance: Fire Detection and Alarm System

The required annual inspection of the fire detection and alarm system was performed on November 6th. Some of the emergency lighting batteries failed their test and were replaced during the inspection. In addition, some of the fire extinguishers required testing to maintain their certification. Great Lakes Fires Services provides this service. The cost, including the replacement batteries, was approximately \$840 including tax.

4. Snow Clearing and Salting of Steps

The company providing this service has been changed to Enburgh's Backhoe Service. The contract with Enburgh's is on a "per plow / per salt application basis".

(\$275 + HST per plow, \$150 + HST per salt/sand application)

5. Catherine Street Sewer Line Replacement

The connections to the City sewer on the west side of the church (along Catharine Street) were dug up and replaced this past fall. These connections (the drain lines from the kitchen and two bathrooms) had been periodically backing up. As it turned out, all three of those drain lines had not been properly connected to the discharge pipes on the outside of the wall. New drain pipes were installed and re-routed to improve the drainage flow and re-connect to the City sewer line.

Enburgh's Backhoe Service performed this work. The work cost approximately \$10,500 including tax.

6. Organ

A gasket in the organ was replaced and the organ tuned in the late spring. The cost was approximately \$800.

(Dealt with by someone other than the Property Committee. "Thank you, Jim!")

7. Roof, Eaves-Trough, and Room 2

Baron Roofing 2021 Ltd installed new (50 year rated) shingles, including ice and water shielding to the roofing skirt on the east side of the church. In addition, the eaves trough and gutter guards were cleaned and re-mounted, and the three downspouts cleaned and modified so that they wouldn't overflow their collection drain pipe.

A section of the carpet in Room 2 had been getting wet whenever it rained. Water had been entering the building wall up at the roofing skirt, then running down inside the wall and coming out at the floor in Room2.

This work cost approximately \$6,400 including tax.

#### 8. Outdoor Lighting

Two new outdoor light fixtures were purchased and installed; one over the main entrance on Delhi St., and one over the Catharine St. entrance.

One of the two lights in the outdoor sign board was recently replaced.

#### 9. Doorbell

A Ring doorbell was purchased and installed at the main Delhi Street entrance. In addition to the doorbell ring, this provides a camera view of anyone at the entrance to office staff.

#### 10. Hot Water Radiators in Sanctuary

Some of the flow control valves were replaced to restore safe and reliable operation of the system.

#### 11. Broken Window Room-1 facing Delhi Street

One of the windows to Room-1 was damaged/cracked and was replaced by Regional Glass.

#### 12. Intersection of Delhi St. and Catharine St.

The intersection was changed back into a 2-way stop. (Stopping both ways on Catharine St. / no stops on Delhi St.) This work also removed the first parking spot on Delhi St. It has been hatched-out with paint. This is because the intersection did not meet MTO Safety Guidelines for line of sight at an intersection.

### **CURRENT PROPERTY ISSUES:**

#### 1. Clogged Eaves Trough

The eaves trough over the entrance at the south end of the upper and lower hallways is clogged and over flows when it rains. Due to the height, we will hire a roofing company to clean out the debris and re-adjust the mounting, if necessary.

## 2. Outdoor Lighting

One of the two light fixtures over the main sanctuary entrance on Delhi St. has burnt out and needs replacement. This will be dealt with in the near future.

## 3. Catherine Street Parking Lot

We are still considering painting the concrete parking barriers, and lines to better mark the parking spaces, some time this summer. No fixed date has been set.

## 4. Security Alarm System

We have periodically had problems with the alarm system not properly disarming. We have also had an instance when someone, entered through the back door of the church, and walked through the building without setting off the alarm.

We are going to be requesting the alarm company to provide a quotation for testing the entire security system, as if it had all been just installed, and they had to prove that everything worked properly.

## 5. Lower Hallway Painting

We are considering doing some touch-up painting in the lower hallway and adding some clear plastic corner guards in the more travelled areas. No fixed date has been set.

## 6. New Flooring in the Sanctuary

The assessment is that the condition of the existing carpet should be good enough to stay in place for yet another year and any soiled spots can be cleaned by a professional cleaner.

## 7. Miscellaneous Items

Miscellaneous items (dripping taps, rocking toilets, burnt out lightbulbs, etc.) will continue to happen and be dealt with as simply as possible on an “as needed” basis.

Ron Jackson – Property Committee Chair

## **PRAYER SHAWL GROUP**

The Prayer Shawl Group continued to work at their homes, knitting and crocheting beautiful shawls for Central’s family. Many shawls are given out annually and we will continue to support all who need comfort through this project. For knitters and crocheters in our midst, if you would like more information on this group, please contact the church office 905-834-4533. Donations of yarn, bags and tissue papers continue to be dropped off and the group is thankful for the support.

## **MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT**

The three choirs of our congregation exude the meaning of the Bible verse:  
Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing! (Psalm 100:2)

The messages from each musical offering every Sunday extend from our Ministers' meaningful and inspirational messages. Thus, we all have Joy in our hearts! The Youth Choir, made up of ten bright children, brings smiles and energy along with sweet voices. They sing once a month. Thank you to Erin Shisler, our Choir Mother, for the supervision and caring support. Thank you also to Caleigh Wilson for her assistance.

Our Teen With Kin Choir, composed of ten (pre)Teens and their ten Kin folk, provides monthly a source of harmonious delight. The intent to contribute musically to our worship service is a source of pride, certainly expressed by the appreciative congregation.

Truthfully, the problem to sustaining these choirs is rehearsal time. In this day and age, people have tremendously loaded schedules. Work, school and lessons leave little time for regular church music practices. So... definitely the choir members you see and hear on Sundays have extended their energies to make these choirs work. Weekly rehearsals are not possible, however we soldier on to somehow establish time to accomplish our goals!

Our congregation is rich, as we know John Wilson and Jim Brown are both accomplished musicians. I value their assistance whenever I call on them.

The Senior Choir is truly second to none in diligence, friendship, and musicality. Each week the (16-18) members commit to practising repertoire for upcoming services. We consider the messages of the choral anthems our privilege to sing, so as to contribute meaningfully to worship.

This choir keeps up an unbelievable schedule throughout the year, on behalf of Central United Church!

The events in 2024:

part of choir at Annual Mariners' Service at St. James and St. Brendan's Anglican Church (March), participate in Port Colborne Festival Of The Arts (May), served to everyone in attendance hot cross buns, homemade jams and coffee after Good Friday Service, presented a concert at Portal Village Retirement Home (June) where the residents (some from our own congregation) were entertained, and friendships renewed, our own soloists contribute to each summer Sunday worship.

The Fall season renewed our gratitude and thankfulness through beautiful musical selections. Celebration of Choirs Concerts (2023 & 2024), totally a Senior Choir initiative, raised over \$5,000.00 through freewill offerings to support "Food With Friends", a community outreach program. Eight church/community choirs volunteered their performances, and our church was filled with appreciative people generous to this cause. Refreshments that we made contributed to our comraderie, and many new friendships were established.

In December, Senior Choir members took time to treat themselves at a festive dinner at Betty's Restaurant, to celebrate the festive season. We all gladly anticipated resuming this annual event, as 2020 had halted our fun.

The year culminated with all three choirs singing together with the congregation on Christmas Eve. Truly a stirring, musical time together! God's will is that we hold fast to this same Hope, Joy, Peace and Love in every part of our daily lives, throughout the year ahead.

What a great "United Church Small Group" we have as Senior Choir. Hopefully you might consider joining us. No audition!! Just bring a love of music, dedication to your church life, and expectation of new friendship opportunities.

Thank you to our wonderful congregation for cheering us on!

Darlene Oord  
Director of Music and Organist

### **THE FLOWER & DÉCOR COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Flower/Decor committee consists of about 8 ladies from our congregation who share in the duty of placing floral arrangements in the sanctuary each Sunday. We have been using artificial silk flowers for many years now for many reasons....cost of fresh flowers, avoiding floral scents which are an issue for many with allergies and for convenience. We have a large collection of various flowers for every season. We share the months of the year by choosing which month or months suits our own schedule. Christmas is the biggest and most time-consuming event of the year. At this time, we all gather for the set up and take down days to make our church home ready for the season. We also have a few auxiliary ladies who faithfully join us. We are so thankful for their assistance.

Our church has had Memorial Poinsettias for many years. This is a time when we remember our loved ones who have passed. This is the only fundraiser that our committee has. The poinsettias go home after the Christmas Eve service or are donated to the Community Christmas dinner. We are thankful to Walden Gardens in Wainfleet who supply us with our plants.

Have you ever wondered how the Memorial Flowers each Sunday are assigned? Each Sunday there are memorial flowers in the sanctuary. This is our way, throughout the year, of honouring once again those remembered at Christmas through the Memorial Poinsettia program.

We also decorate the banquet room for the season or holiday we are in. The office stairway entrance is also decorated.

The flower ladies are Cathy Boggio, Marsha Warren, Cheryl Bull, Cheryl Brown, Linda Traver, Jackie Hill, Connie Ford and Cathy Rubocki.

Our special note of thanks to Jan Wilson, Judy Brennan, Linda Refling & Laurie Haley who help us out at Christmas.

The profit we make from our poinsettias allows us to make any purchases that we need to continue our work in the church.

Anyone who may be interested in joining our group please contact Cathy Rubocki.

Submitted by Cathy Rubocki

## **MISSION & OUTREACH REPORT**

Central is very involved in Mission and Outreach. Each year dedicated members organize and offer two Clothing Boutiques allowing anyone to come and choose items that may help them or someone they know. Clothing, shoes, boots and coats along with household items such as towels, face cloths and curtains are sorted and presented as they would be in a retail setting. Everything is offered free of charge but donations are accepted. Our volunteers also offer a once yearly Yard Sale. As always, only possible with the support from the congregation under wonderful leadership. We are fortunate to have strong leadership and support from our congregation, families and friends. Food with Friends continues to offer nutritious meals the second Tuesday of each month and we thank the very hard working volunteer group and especially the leadership for their dedication.

The Chocolatiers are a hard working group with all profits being returned to local Mission and Outreach for community needs.

Again this year a call went out for warm socks to be given as a Christmas gift to those served by the Food with Friends program. The Chocolatiers donated a sucker to be included. Warm blankets, new hats, mitts and scarfs have also been donated by our caring, generous congregation to be distributed to those in need at the January Food With Friends.

M & O financially supports many local outreach projects within our community and the financial statement included will show distribution of funds. The committee will be meeting to make decisions as to further allocations of funds. The committee is actively seeking input from our congregation for any areas of need that we could offer financial assistance. Please let a member of M &O or the church office know if you have suggestions for this committee. We also welcome new committee members with fresh new ideas. Please let the church office know if you have any interest.

Our M&O reaches out across the miles to support our World Vision Child, Rahim in Bangladesh. The book table in our banquet hall helps to support this mission and it is administered by a dedicated volunteer.

I am proud to be a member of Central United Church and a member of the Mission and Outreach Committee. Our congregation is a warm, welcoming and supportive opportunity for anyone to be involved a little or a lot. Please accept our thank you for all you do and offer. It is only with your continued generous support that our church will remain strong and vital.

Respectfully submitted by  
Laurie Haley, Chair

## **FOOD WITH FRIENDS (formerly Out Of The Cold)**

The Food with Friends (FWF) team continues to be busy. Our group consists of about 10 people. We are a team that provides a hot nutritious meal monthly (usually the second Tuesday of the month) to folks in our community needing such support. Currently we prepare about 120 meals each time, provided in a takeout style. The weekly program is administered by the St. James and St. Brendan Anglican church, out of the guild hall, and includes other church teams.

The program originally ran for about 7 months (the coldest months of the year) and in March of 2020 it was decided to run the dinner program all 12 months of the year. There seemed to be a greater need for food security for many people in the community. This past year however, it was decided that a short summer break was needed for the volunteers preparing and handing out the dinners. Starting up again in September 2024, meals have continued to be available as a takeout meal from the guild hall to those in need of them, on Tuesday evenings. We prepare about 120 meals and often they are all given out. DeLuca Fine Foods prepares one entree a month, a very generous and appreciated gesture by the FWF program. A meal was not regularly scheduled by the program for December 31, 2024, but a group from our church got together to prepare a meal in the church kitchen of sandwiches, fruit and a dessert. The meals were then made available at the guild hall to people looking for a meal that Tuesday. Around 70 meals were handed out that evening.

Once again, Darlene Oord, with support of the church choirs, organized a fall concert. It was a wonderful afternoon of music presented by a number of local choirs. It was well attended and a goodwill offering was taken in support of the Food with Friends program. The funds go a long way to help offset the rising costs of food. Thank you to Darlene and choirs!

At Christmas time, sock donations from the congregation, combined with chocolate suckers made by the Central United chocolatiers and candy cane treats were given to our guests in December and January. They were very much appreciated.

A thank you goes out to our congregation for the continued support through kind thoughts, interest, and actions.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cathy Roseboom and Carol Suess

## **CENTRAL'S CHOCOLATIERS REPORT**

2024 was a busy and productive year for the Chocolatiers.

Their church-made Chocolates were sold at the Annual Meeting, the Leap Year Soup Luncheon, the Spring and Fall Silent Auction Pick-ups, the Spring and Christmas Harbour Lites' Concerts, a Spring Book Sale, the Fall "Christmas at Central", the Tourtière and Cookie Pick up, Soup Sundays, and Sunday morning Coffee Hours.

At the December Food with Friends dinner, they donated 120 suckers to include in the Christmas treat bags that were distributed along with warm pairs of socks.

In addition with almonds, pecans, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, caramel, craisins, licorice sticks, pretzels, peppermint, peanut butter and Skor bits, they processed a total of 286 pounds of chocolate over the past year which generated a profit of \$ 5215.54. The funds raised will be donated to Mission and Outreach projects selected by the Chocolatiers.

Respectfully submitted by  
Jane Danch-Roy

## **COOKIES & CHRIST REPORT**

It has been 13 years now that Cookies and Christ (Central's seniors day program) has been going to the seniors at Northland Pointe and Portal Village alternating every Month except for a few Months in the summer. This program would not be a success without my wonderful volunteers!! I appreciate all that you do!

Our program consists of a short devotional service and hymn sing followed by fellowship with refreshments and goodies. The goodies are either store bought for Northland Pointe or homemade by volunteers for Portal Village. All seniors are welcome to attend!!

If you would like to volunteer your baking skills for our Months at Portal Village or to come out to help serve and socialize, it is only about an hour once a Month, please call me at 905-834-9774 or email [carriedunn8@hotmail.com](mailto:carriedunn8@hotmail.com).

Carrie Dunn (Seniors Day Coordinator)

## **2024 SUMMER ADVENTURE CAMP ANNUAL REPORT**

The 2024 Central United Church Summer Adventure Camp ran from August 12 until August 16. The theme of this year's camp was "Scuba/Underwater", which was adapted from the *Group's Scuba Studios VBS*. The camp focused on youth Christian education through the reading of biblical stories, which were simplified so the younger audience could better understand and interpret them, while encouraging engagement through asking questions before, during, and after the reading of each story.

The camp was split into two parts, the morning portion, and the afternoon portion. The morning half of the camp focused on Christian education, which ran from 8:30 AM until 11:30 AM. The afternoon half of the camp focused on making new connections and allowing the children to explore their creativity, which ran from 11:30 AM until 4:30 PM. 35 children registered for the camp, with more than half staying for the afternoon.

In the morning camp, the day began with Bible story time. The five main stories told were: Elijah and the Followers of Baal (1 Kings 18:16 - 39), Jonah and the Big Fish (Jonah 1 - 3), Jesus Calms the Storm (Matthew 8:23 - 27), Jesus' Resurrection and Crucifixion (Luke 23- 24), and Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish (Matthew 28:18-20 and John 21:1-17). After the story time, there was a transition into songs to have the campers moving, connecting, and engaging with one another. After the song, the campers would split up into their groups and rotate between snacks, science, crafts and games. All of which were entertaining, exciting and relating back to the theme of the camp. To conclude the morning portion of the camp, the campers reunited in the Sanctuary for a review of what they learned that day, and they were given the opportunity to ask any questions and talk about their favourite activities. The afternoon camp began with lunch, which was brought by the campers. After that the campers participated in a number of activities which were fun, engaging and easygoing. Each day they worked on a week-long project of making their own personalized gardens. Other activities included going to the local park; different crafts such as tie dye and Shrinky Dink charms; and games such as chocolate bar bingo, the cup game, and camouflage, all of which the campers enjoyed.

Thank you to all of the volunteers and donors for giving their time and support in helping to make Central United Church's Summer Adventure Camp possible.

And a special thank you goes out to Designated Lay Minister, Heather Filson, and Assistant Camp Supervisor, Amanda Hardy, for all of the help behind the scenes with creative ideas and setting up prior to the camp beginning.

It was a pleasure working with every single one of you and providing all of the campers with these experiences and memories.

Ava Laurin  
Camp Supervisor

## **HOLY HANDS PUPPETS**

2024 saw The Holy Hand Puppets being invited to various events. Portal Village welcomed us at their Family Day and again at Christmas and we, once again enjoyed time at the Wainfleet Fall Fair in September on the Friday morning of the fair. This is when Marshville Public School, the new elementary public school in Wainfleet where W. E. Brown and Winger Elementary schools merged as of September and St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary school send their students over to the fair to check out all the entries. The Holy Hands Puppets sing during the morning whenever the arena is full of students and we are rewarded with large crowds. The puppets were welcomed to worship in December which we are grateful for. Looking forward, the puppet team hopes to be seen more this coming year.

Respectfully submitted  
*Heather Filson, DLM*

## **SOUP SUNDAYS WERE “MMMMM” GOOD IN 2024**

Soup Sundays are held 6 times a year, on the last Sunday of the month from January to April, and in the months of October & November.

In 2024 we had the opportunity to sample some delicious soups and to share lunch together. All this happened because of the wonderful soup makers who provided the soup, and the many others who brought bread/rolls or goodies for dessert, or helped out in the kitchen. The proceeds from “passing the basket” are 100% profit – and in 2024 we brought in \$1926.60

A special thank you goes out to all – to you who helped set up, to you who provided lunch and cleaned up afterward – and to you who came out to enjoy lunch.

Darlene Oord  
Donna Tuck

## **‘NOT SO’ SILENT AUCTION ANNUAL REPORT**

The Silent Auction team had another successful year of fundraising thanks to the generosity of church and community donations. Processing Spring and Summer auction items has already begun with the auction running from April 3 - 8, with pick up on April 11. The team is truly grateful to all those who have supported this endeavour over the past few years. Our monetary donation to the church for the year 2024 was \$9369.00!

Darlene Sherk, Jan Wilson, Cheryl Leroy- Audette, Hammie Schilstra and Jackie Hill

## **UNITED CHURCH WOMEN'S (UCW) REPORT**

We are a small group and were very busy this past year. We had 4 funeral receptions, 2 luncheons and 1 birthday reception. Our ladies were happy to have our first Christmas at Central bazaar since 2019. It was very successful, so we plan to repeat it in November 2025. Many thanx to all who helped to make Christmas at Central a success. We look forward for your help this year. At the end of December, we were able to give the church \$7,500. We took a break from our regular monthly meeting in December and went out for lunch at the Wainfleet Restaurant.

On March 7<sup>th</sup> our church will host World Day of Prayer, written by the ladies of Cook Islands. We hope you will join us at that time.

May God bless you  
Vicki Fretz, President

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT 2024**

More good news to share with the congregation in our Annual Report. We ended the year in surplus, in the General account, and in the Local Outreach accounts.

Our envelope givings are down and partly made up by an increase in the PAR remittances. I encourage our supporters to consider an increase in their PAR givings if they have not done so recently. Our expenses rise with the current inflationary times and we need to be diligent in our stewardship. We did end up with two major building repair items in November being replacement of the sewer connection which ended up being more expensive than anticipated and a roof repair on the east side of the Christian Education wing. Even with these we ended up in a surplus.

We have to thank the many volunteers and organizers of the various fund raising efforts. We also received a generous substantial bequest which has gone some way to replenish our capital funds and invested and held for future needs.

As a result of the changes in the Treasurer's position the year end balances for the Local Outreach are considerably higher than anticipated and the Mission and Outreach Committee will be making recommendations on its expenditure. They are open to input and opinions on local projects that might need attention.

I want to thank Gloria Simon who has stepped into the position with a whirl wind orientation but has been able to call on Sandra Frame for her insight and experience. Marie Feduck continues as our envelope secretary and will have 2024 tax receipts issued shortly.

Thank you.  
Christopher Wilson, Finance Chair.