



CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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AGENDA AGM 2025

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

Opening Prayer - Rev. Cathie Ellarby

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 23 2025 as printed

Approval of Annual Reports

Motion: All 2025 reports, except the Treasurer's Report be accepted as printed.

Treasurer's Report

Presentation of the 2026 Budget

Approval of Proposed Budget for 2026

Report from the Nominating Committee

Election of Council Members

Resolution re Borrowing

Appointment of Auditors for 2026

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 2027, date to be set by Church Council

**CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025**

Council Chair, Lesley Rickard welcomed everyone to our annual meeting and thanked everyone involved in preparing, setting up, serving and cleaning up, the International Soup Luncheon that was enjoyed just prior to our meeting.

Rev. Dr. Diane Walker opened our meeting with a prayer.

During morning worship, DLM Heather Filson, read and acknowledged those from our community of faith who had passed during 2024. DLM Heather Filson also acknowledged the baptisms that had been celebrated during 2024.

Moved by Barclay Walker, seconded by Chris Wilson, that Lesley Rickard chair this annual meeting, and that Bev Roseboom be secretary. Carried.

Chris Wilson moved, seconded by Barclay Walker, that adherents be allowed to vote on the business of this annual meeting. Carried.

Barclay Walker moved, seconded by Gloria Simon, that the agenda for this meeting be approved as circulated. Carried.

Moved by Chris Wilson and seconded by Wayne Schwartz that the minutes of the last annual meeting (Sunday, February 25, 2024) be approved as circulated. Carried.

Moved by Barclay Walker, seconded by Sandra Frame, that the 2024 reports with the exception of the treasurer's report and the Mission and Outreach report be accepted. Carried.

Treasurer Gloria Simon presented the treasurer's report. She thanked Sandra Frame for her continuing assistance with the Financials. All current government paperwork is up to date, the only hurdle currently being navigated is the amount of 'paperwork' only available online. Overall, our income was down slightly this year, as were our expenses. All expenses have been paid including two major repairs that were necessary, the roof and sewer. We are enjoying our second year of having a slight surplus of funds although this is partly due to not having a full time minister expense. Gloria noted that we have never received the HST refund for 2022 and 2023. Sandra Frame investigated this and found that our applications were refused due to the way they had been filed. They had been filed together instead of each six months and each year separately. Our 2024 HST has been filed and will be received (\$12,000.00) soon.

Chris Wilson added that Birchway and the Reach Bus have been added to our Mission and Outreach recipients and that Friends Over 55 will receive a one time donation from us to use towards their furnace repairs or replacement.

Gloria Simon moved that the treasurer's report and the report from Mission and

Outreach be accepted. Seconded by Donna Tuck. Carried.

Chris Wilson presented the Budget highlights for 2025. In this, he updated everyone on the progress of the proposed Collaborative Ministry between Central United Church, Forks Road United Church, Morgans Point United Church and Bethel United Church. He noted how each congregation is distinctive and that proceeding with the collaborative ministry, that needs to be maintained. Jim Brown questioned the difference in the proposed income for 2025 fundraising and the actual amount that had been achieved in 2024. This was explained that the the expected fundraising amount was being kept conservative. Our fundraising team had been extremely busy in 2024 and were suffering some 'burnout'. There are several projects planned for 2025 and hopefully after some rest and 'recharging' we will be able meet and possibly exceed the budgeted amount.

Chris Wilson moved, seconded by Barclay Walker, that the 2025 Budget be approved. Carried.

Barclay Walker noted from the nomination committee that there is still a need for a Council Vice Chairperson. He called three times for nominations from those in attendance. Receiving no further nominations, he called that nominations be closed.

Brian Haley asked that members of the congregation seriously consider being on the Ministry and Personnel committee as this committee is in serious need of members. We are required to have between 3 and 7 committee members and currently only have 3. There is no formal meeting schedule, most meetings are held over the telephone and currently there are no issues to resolve.

Chris Wilson moved that the church council be authorized to borrow up to \$50,000.00 for the operation of the church if and when this becomes necessary. Seconded by Marilyn Robinson. Carried.

Chris Wilson thanked Marilyn Robinson for auditing the 2024 financials and moved that she remain in this capacity for 2025. Seconded by Gloria Simon. Carried.

In New Business, Lesley reminded members of the Anniversary play being performed in our Sanctuary in April. Twenty-three local United Churches have received information and invitations to attend. It is hoped that there will be significant attendance from our congregation.

DLM Heather Filson closed our meeting with a prayer.

Rev. Dr. Diane Walker moved that our meeting adjourn and that the Church council and its executive be given the power to act in all necessary matters until the next congregational meeting, date yet to be determined. Seconded by Chris Wilson. Carried.

PASTORAL CHARGE SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now

Philippians 1:3-5

Although I have not seen you as much in the last few months as I was covering a three month sabbatical for a colleague, you remain in my prayers. I am Central's pastoral charge supervisor, 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.

The sustained presence of Rev. Cathie Ellarby as minister of worship, Heather Filson covering pastoral care, children and youth ministry, administration and some preaching, is working well for Central. Now that Heather is able to represent the Regional Council at board meetings, since she is a member of the Regional Council, this has further streamlined Central's functioning.

In a complex process, the four churches of the newly formed South Coast ministry have met all the requirements and a vacancy has been declared. The search team, with representation from Bethel, Central, Forks Road and Morgan's Point, is now receiving applications and expressions of interest, with Rev. Lloyd Bennett appointed by the Regional Council to assist in the search. Again I ask your prayers for the search team and for the faith communities involved. And you are, of course in my own prayers.

Respectfully submitted by
Rev. Dr. Diane Walker

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

As I sit here and contemplate what I should include in this report many thoughts come to mind, in particular our spiritual growth, continued outreach and the blessings of good ministry. We are so fortunate to have all the amazing committees and their leaders who always rise to the occasion.

As Chair of council, I have been fortunate as well to work with such a dedicated group who do so much for our church and the community. It has been a pleasure leading council and I have learned so much {in particular when we need a motion} from listening to the counsel and knowledge of others.

I feel 2026 will be another year of growth, learning and adjusting to any changes that come our way.

Blessing to all,
Lesley Rickard, Chair

DESIGNATED LAY MINISTER REPORT

2025 saw Central United Church focus on the celebration of the United Church of Canada's 100th Anniversary. We celebrated with a wonderful play, Maybe One? In April, welcoming back the amazing cast & crew of Godspell and saw them in action in May, celebrated the official anniversary on June 8th, led by Rev. Cathie Ellarby with cake & cupcakes afterwards and finished off the celebrations with having Rev. Dr. Orville James return as guest speaker in June. With all the preparations for these events, fundraisers and outreach programs, Central United was quite busy. And it is always a good type of busy.

Summer Adventure Camp is always a fun and busy week. This year was no exception. Please read Ava Laurin, this year's camp supervisor's report which is below. I need to thank Claire Maddison for overseeing the music for the camp. Her energy is contagious and so very much welcomed.

Pastoral Care and Visitation has been particularly busy time this year. As you can see from the Congregational Statistics report, we lost a lot of members this year. There are many of our church family that need pastoral care and the care required fluctuates depending on the issue and from person to person. In 2025 visits were conducted in family homes, Long Term Care facilities, and hospitals in the region and Hamilton. 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.

To finish off the year, Central United rented the ice at the Vale Centre for an hour on Sunday December 28th with time afterward to enjoy fellowship, coffee, tea and hot chocolate. Many are looking forward to having similar fun in 2026.

Submitted by
Heather Filson, DLM

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL REPORT

Once again, another successful year. Everything that we had set out to complete was completed. Many thanks to Jill Jackson, Sandra Frame and Brian Haley.

Chairman Barrie Wilson.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2026

We give thanks for the many members of our congregation who faithfully volunteer their time, gifts, and energy in service to Central United Church. Our church continues to be sustained by a strong spirit of generosity and participation, and for this we are deeply grateful.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Lesley Rickard for her faithful and dedicated leadership as Chair. Lesley has led with openness and approachability, creating space for honest conversation and shared discernment. Her genuine love for the Central United Church community has been evident in all she has done, and her willingness to work hard—often behind the scenes—has made a lasting difference. We are deeply grateful for her commitment, her care for the people of this congregation, and the steady presence she has offered during her time in this role.

The Nominating Committee wishes to name an ongoing challenge. While we are rich in volunteers, we continue to struggle to fill key leadership roles. There has been no Vice Chair for more than three years, and with the current Chair now stepping down, we find ourselves without someone to assume this essential role. Many individuals have been prayerfully approached and have given thoughtful consideration yet have felt unable to step forward at this time.

Leadership is vital to the long-term health and sustainability of our congregation. It is not about having all the answers, but about a willingness to serve, to listen, and to walk alongside others in faith. We invite members of the congregation to continue discerning how they might be called to lead, now or in the future. You may wonder, “Why me?” We gently encourage you to consider, “Why not me?” Together, through shared leadership and trust in God’s guidance, we can continue to build a faithful and sustainable future for Central United Church.

May we listen for God’s call with open hearts, trust in the gifts placed among us, and move forward together in faith, courage, and hope

Motion:

Moved by Barclay Walker, seconded by Lesley Rickard

Be it resolved that following members of Central United Church be appointed to lead and serve the committees of the church for 2026.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

Chair..... vacant
Vice-Chair vacant
Past Chair * Lesley Rickard
Secretary..... * Bev Roseboom
Treasurer..... * to be announced

FINANCE COMMITTEE

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

WORSHIP Committee

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

MISSION & OUTREACH

Committee Leader..... * Laurie Haley
Volunteers Rhonda Bilodeau, Judy Brennan,
..... 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

UCW..... *Vicki Fretz

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL

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

TRUSTEES

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

PASTORAL CARE & VISITATION

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

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.

MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE

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

Life Members of Council

..... Donna Tuck, Doug Frame, Sandra Frame

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Chairperson of Council..... To be named
Vice Chairperson of Council..... vacant
Past Chairperson of Council..... Lesley Rickard

2025 CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS REPORT

Baptisms

Scarlett Luna Vocal – September 14th

Deaths/Funerals

Mary Emery – March 3rd

Ross Tuck – March 7th

Bunny Lynn Marko – March 26th

Grace Finnegan – March 31st

Cheryl Leroy-Audette – April 8th

Elsie Bahnuk – April 21st

Jean Comfort – April 27th

Patricia Johns – June 2nd

Kevin Filson – June 27th

Julie Dickout – July 2nd

Marsha Dilts – August 1st

Maria van Dillen – October 9th

Lois McQuire – October 30th

Stanley Hiseler – November 15th

Jack O'Neil – November 17th

Nancy Rogers – December 8th

Tom Vance – December 9th

Ross Brown – December 11th

Transfer of Membership

To Central

From Central

Hendrika Black
First United Church,
Bathurst, NB

Timothy Barnai
Trinity United Church,
Grimsby, ON

CENTRAL CASTING

CENTRAL CASTING always proves to be a rewarding part of my week. We have such an amazing group of young people who listen to lessons and ask questions. This young people have giving, loving hearts and to see them in action is so very rewarding. If nothing else, in 2025 we all learned from them that the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We have a group of enthusiastic children with hearts to serve God. Many thanks to Erin Shisler, Caleigh Wilson, Judy Brennan and Marie Feduck for offering their time and support during the year.

Submitted by
Heather Filson, DLM

MUSIC MINISTRY 2025

The musical offerings of our three choirs are meant to contribute meaningfully to worship. Together with our ministers' considerations, as well as that of the congregation, all of the encouragement is definitely appreciated.

The **Youth Choir** (composed of nine children) exudes happiness and smiles when they bring their energy to present words to Believe.

Thank you to Erin Shisler, our Choir Mother, for the supervision and caring support. Thanks also to Caleigh Wilson for her consistent assistance.

The **Teen With Kin Choir** (now with twenty four members) also brings a ray of sunshine to our sanctuary as they so musically share God's word.

Both choirs find it difficult to schedule practice time.

Our changing society is crammed full of commitments and activities for children, as well as adults alike. However, these wonderful, energetic members make things work out. God willing, they are all learning His Word, and establishing friendships to last a lifetime.

The **Senior Choir** members, so diligent, talented, smart, and keen, work hard to learn music to offer in every Sunday worship service. It was great to welcome our new members this year. With weekly practices, the commitment is huge!

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

The events in 2025:

-joined choir at Annual Mariners' Service at St. James and St. Brendan's Anglican Church (March), participated 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 with friendships renewed, our own soloists contributed to each summer Sunday worship.

The Fall season renewed our gratitude and thankfulness through beautiful musical selections. "Celebration of Choirs" Concerts (2023, 2024 & 2025), totally a Senior Choir

initiative, raised over \$8,000.00 in these three years through freewill offerings to support “Food With Friends”, a community outreach program. Ten 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.

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.

The Casavant Organ and Yamaha piano, are grand possessions we are fortunate to have to support our music program.

Thank you to John Wilson and Jim Brown, both talented musicians, who offer assistance to me when needed.

What a great “United Church Small Group” you will find in the Youth, Teen With Kin, and 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

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: Fire Detection and Alarm System

The required annual inspection of the fire detection and alarm system was performed on November 24th. One of the emergency light fixtures didn't work at all and was replaced a week or two after the inspection. In addition, the two batteries in the fire panel were still working but were beyond their statistical life expectancy and had to be replaced to meet fire safety code. This was done immediately following the inspection by Great Lakes Fires Services. The cost, including the replacement batteries and the new emergency light fixture, was approximately \$1235 including tax.

3. Snow Clearing and Salting of Steps

Last winter, the company providing this service was changed to Enburgh's Backhoe Service. The contract with Enburgh's was on a "per plow / per salt application basis" (\$275 + HST per plow, \$150 + HST per salt/sand application). The invoice from last winter amounted to \$5,763 including HST.

Enburgh's is providing this service again this winter, and at the same rates as last winter.

4. Main Water Shutoff Valve

In late spring, it was discovered that the main water shutoff valve for the church did not completely shut off the water supply. In the later part of July, Sherk Plumbing coordinated with the City to temporarily shut off the main water supply to the church so that they could add in a secondary shutoff valve inside the church.

5. Accessible Washroom

Sherk Plumbing removed the urinal from the accessible washroom on Wednesday, June 4th, and after the secondary shutoff valve had been installed, cut off the protruding end of the pipe and capped it. They also did some repair work to the drain under the kitchen sinks on the south side of the kitchen and replaced a leaky faucet cartridge in the sink in the parlour kitchen.

A volunteer from the congregation repaired the hole in the wall with drywall, then taped and repainted the wall.

A baby change table was purchased and installed in the accessible washroom in Mid-June. The cost for the change table was approximately \$500.

6. Eaves Troughs

Baron Roofing completed the eaves trough replacement work on the 19th of August, including replacement/repair of the eaves, downspouts, and collection pipe on the east side of the building. (\$23,17.00 + \$3,012.10 HST = \$26,182.10)

However, when trying to connect the collection pipe on the east side of the building to the buried drainpipe (clay pipe from the 1950's?), they discovered that the drainpipe was completely plugged and not draining.

Enburgh's Backhoe Service was hired to investigate and "snake" the pipeline. What they found was not a simple clog. The pipeline was not only plugged with tree roots but also was cracked and broken in places. Repair would be complicated by the City owned sidewalk, and the presence of power cables and gas lines. Enburgh's have temporarily redirected the discharge from the eaves trough to flow over the sidewalk onto Delhi Street and boarded over the hole.

The church is concerned that this could lead to problems with ice formation in the winter.

7. Automatic Defibrillator

The electrodes for the defibrillator were replaced this summer as they had reached their "expiry date" (about every 2-1/2 years). (With tax, roughly \$120.)

The new ones expire on the 28th of Sept 2027. The old ones have been kept as spares in case we need them.

8. Outdoor Lighting

The two light fixtures over the main sanctuary entrance on Delhi St. were 75% to 90% burned out. Both were replaced in early July.

9. Water Fountains

In late December, a water bottle filling station / drinking fountain was purchased to replace the drinking fountain in the lower hallway. In late January, the old drinking fountain was removed and the new bottle filling station installed in its place.

At the same time, the old (non-functioning) drinking fountain in the upper hallway was removed. Presently, the supply pipe and the drainpipe for the old drinking fountain still stick out from the wall. However, the plan is to have the pipes cutback and capped inside the wall, and then to repair and repaint that section of the wall.

10. Roof Vent

In early January, one of the turbo (spinning) roof vents was partially pulled off. (Possibly by high winds, but more likely with the help of a racoon. Baron Roofing was hired to reattach or replace the vent cover. The cost was \$310.75 including tax.

Current Property Issues:

1. Maintenance: Boilers

The boilers were last given an annual inspection and cleaning in early December 2024. Routine maintenance checks on the boilers and piping system are important to ensure long term reliability. It is now time for the boilers to be inspected again.

2. Air Conditioning for Banquet Hall

There is a plan to get a couple of ductless air conditioning heat pumps for the banquet hall and kitchen area so that the banquet hall will be more comfortable on hot summer days and can be used for services. We are still in the investigation stage of this project.

3. Security Alarm System

We have periodically had multiple problems with the alarm system not properly disarming, and several motion sensors not triggering the alarm when they should. From an electronics point of view, the alarm system is quite old and out of date.

We have requested the alarm company (Sid Bates) to provide a quotation for replacing the entire security system (replacing all motion sensors and the alarm panel), including the communications tie-in to the fire alarm panel.

4. Eaves Trough Drain

As mentioned in Item 6 of the Resolved Issues, the drain line from the eaves trough on the east side of the building has been temporarily arranged to discharge over the sidewalk onto Delhi Street. This could cause problems with ice formation on the sidewalk in the winter. There is also a hole in the pavement where the drainpipe used to connect to the storm sewer. This hole is currently just boarded over. The hole needs to be filled in and repaved, and some changes might be needed to the location of the discharge pipe.

5. Ceiling Tiles

There are numerous places where ceiling tiles have become damaged from water leaks and other causes. A package of ceiling tiles has been purchased. Replacement of damaged tiles will be done on an occasional, one place at a time basis.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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

2025 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Program Committee had an eventful and successful year. Our events included a couple of eat in/takeout soup lunches, pasta and meatball dinner with dessert auction, book sale, a lunch of homemade salads on anniversary Sunday as well as on Rally Day the first week of September, ham and scalloped dinner with pie auction, and Christmas cookie boxes. These events are all well received and supported by the congregation and our community. As well as these scheduled events committee members are in the regular rotation to host coffee hour. Anyone that's available assists with other church functions that are not organized by the committee such as clothing boutique, yard sale, and this year's latest endeavour - cabbage rolls. We look forward to another busy and productive year.

Submitted by
Marie Feduck, Chair

FLOWER COMMITTEE REPORT

The ladies in the flower committee are kept busy displaying seasonal flowers in the sanctuary each week. At Easter we have a special display of Easter lilies and hydrangea. At Christmas we have our annual Memorial Poinsettias that beautify our sanctuary. The week before Christmas on " Poinsettia Sunday ". The plants are displayed on a special bench. This is a long time tradition at Central and the only fundraiser for our committee. In recent years we assign each person who has supported our Poinsettias on Sunday when the flowers placed are in memory of their loved ones. They This is our way of saying thank you for your support. Our "Flower team" each have a month when they place the memorial flowers in the sanctuary. We have a room full of assorted flowers for every season to choose from. We use artificial flowers most of the time because of the strong scents of some of the real plants. At Easter we gather to place the display of lilies (scent free). At Christmas the team as well as our auxiliary helpers get together to decorate the sanctuary and then take it all down after Epiphany. This is a big job and many hands make the job easier. We also have lots of fun doing it. We are grateful for the help we get. We warmly welcome anyone who is interested in joining our group. (contact Cathy Rubocki)

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.

Submitted by
Sandra Frame, Organizer

SOUP SUNDAYS WERE “MMMMM” GOOD IN 2025

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 2025 we had the opportunity to sample some delicious soups and to share lunch together. We had two special soup days during the year – one on the Sunday when we celebrated the reunion of the Godspell crew, and another when we featured international soups from all over the world. 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 2025 we brought in \$2,005.95

A special thank you goes out to all – to you 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

COOKIES and CHRIST

Cookies and Christ is Central's senior's day program. We visit Northland Pointe and Portal Village on alternating Months except for the summer Months. Our program consists of a hymn sing, short devotional service and fellowship while the residents enjoy refreshments and goodies. We are required to purchase goodies for Northland Pointe but are able to bring homemade goodies to Portal Village which are provided by volunteers. This program has been well received in the last 14 years that I have been coordinating it. I wish to thank my wonderful volunteers for all they do to make this program a success.

If you would like to volunteer your time or would like to supply goodies for this outreach program please contact me at carriedunn8@hotmail.com

Carrie Dunn, Coordinator

HOLY HANDS PUPPETS

2025 saw The Holy Hand Puppets being invited to Port Village and The Wainfleet Fall Fair. Since there were just a couple hands available, the puppets had to decline the invitation to the fair. Portal Village welcomed us at their Family Day in September which we were delighted to participate in, and again at Christmas. The puppets were welcomed to participate in a couple worship services and were delighted to be invited to Christmas Eve service.

Looking forward, the puppet team hopes to be seen more this coming year.

Respectfully submitted

Heather Filson, DLM

2025 SUMMER ADVENTURE CAMP ANNUAL REPORT

The 2025 Central United Church Summer Adventure Camp ran from August 11 until August 15. The theme of this year's camp was "Serengeti/Safari", which was adapted from the *Group's Serengeti Trek VBS*. The camp focused on youth Christian education through the song *Fruits of the Spirit* which they were taught the first day and continued to practice throughout the week.

The camp was split into two parts, the morning portion, and the afternoon portion. The morning half of the camp focused on Christian education and structured activities, 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 portion, the day began with practicing the song *Fruits of the Spirit*. This song taught the kids about what the fruits of the spirits are: love (Selfless love for others), joy (Deep-seated sense of well-being), peace (Inner tranquility within oneself and others), patience (Being slow to anger and showing forbearance towards others), kindness (Showing compassion and generosity to others), goodness (Moral excellence and righteousness), faithfulness (Loyalty, and trustworthiness), gentleness (Having a humble spirit, and compassion towards others), and self-control (Restraint and discipline in one's actions and desires). After the song, the campers would split up into their groups and rotate between science, crafts, games and snacks; all of which were entertaining, and the majority relating 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, and they were given the opportunity to ask any questions and talk about their favourite activities.

The afternoon portion began with lunch, which was brought by the campers. After that the campers participated in a number of activities and stations which were fun, engaging and easygoing. Some activities included building Lego, hide and seek, musical chairs and crafts such as bracelet making and creating rain sticks.

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 for all of the help behind the scenes with creative ideas and setting up prior to the camp.

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

2025 MISSION and OUTREACH REPORT

Together with the incredible support from the congregation and community support for the Chocolatier's the M&O committee of Central United was able to provide much needed funds for very worthwhile programs serving the needs within the community and surrounding area. The financial statement outlines income and distribution of funds. A special thank you to Judy Brennan and Gloria Simon's for their efforts to provide this detailed report.

Thank you to Jane Danch Roy and the Chocolatier's for their extraordinary efforts to raise funds for M&O.

Carol Suess and Cathy Roseboom spearhead the Food With Friends group from Central. Their report gives an overview of the 2025 program. Thank you to the entire team for their dedication.

Special thanks to Heather for always making sure the donations of food brought to church throughout the week are taken to the Food Bank at the Reach Out Centre.

Thank you to Kathy McQuire for leading the many volunteers who help to make the Clothing Boutiques happen. This group provides assistance throughout the year as requested by those in need.

Central United continues to support Rahim (pictured), our World Vision child in Bangladesh. Thank you to Darlene Sherk for managing the Book Table which helps support Rahim.



As mentioned, in the FWF report, a thank to Darlene Oord and our dedicated choir for organizing the Celebration of Choirs to support FWF.

Mission and Outreach is a huge part of Central United Church and when there is a need the answer is always positive.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is always looking for input and suggestions for new areas to support. Please feel free to speak to any member of the committee or the office if you see a need to be served. All monies distributed are approved by church council.

Respectfully Submitted by
Laurie Haley, Chair

REPORT FROM THE "CHOCOLATIERS" 2025

Our church-made chocolates continue to be popular at Easter and Christmas times, as we strive to create delicious concoctions packaged in an appealing way. Our group is happy that we can sell them at reasonable prices while making them conveniently available after Sunday services and other events which bring members of the larger community into our church.

This past calendar year, we used **305 lbs.(!)** of milk, dark, and white chocolate, along with a variety of food supplies and packaging materials. In addition to sales, we donated 120 suckers in December to our Food with Friends visitors, and special treats of chocolate crosses for Easter and angels for Christmas were given to the children in our congregation. Also, metal shelving was purchased for our use out of the funds raised this past year.

Thus, after expenses, we had a profit of **\$5163.62** which was handed over to the Mission and Outreach committee to help fund their local projects.

Laurie, Rhonda, Wendy, Carol, Colleen, and myself want to thank everyone who supported us with their purchases and positive feedback in 2025. It is our pleasure to make chocolate confections for this fundraising enterprise.

Submitted by Jane Danch-Roy

2025 FOOD WITH FRIENDS REPORT

The Food with Friends program, administered by the St. James & St. Brendan Anglican church, continues to offer take out meals each Tuesday evening, and in 2025 offered them from January - June and September - December. There are 5 local church teams involved, and the Central United church team prepares meals every second Tuesday of the month. The team is made up of 10 people who prepare and hand out 120 hot nutritious meals.

Some of the highlights from the year include a wonderful autumn afternoon of music held at our church, organized by Darlene Oord and supported by local choirs. This was the third year the "Celebration of Choirs" was held and it was well attended. A goodwill offering was collected and generously donated to the overall FWF program. Thanks go to Darlene and the choirs! As well, the chocolatiers of the church made and sold chocolates at Easter and Christmas. Some of the proceeds will be used to help offset rising food costs and provide special treats to our guests. At Christmas time, sock donations from the congregation, combined with chocolate treats and candy canes were once again offered to folks picking up meals. The socks were well received, and produced many smiles.

A thank you goes to the congregation for their continued support through donations and interest in the FWF program.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Roseboom and Carol Suess

2025 '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. The spring and fall auctions brought in a total of \$7,438.30.

We have already begun processing Spring and Summer auction items, with the auction running from March 19-24, with pick up on the 27th. The team is truly grateful to those who have supported this substantial fundraiser.

Darlene Sherk, Jan Wilson, Hammie Schilstra and Jackie Hill

2025 ANNUAL REPORT – UCW

Greetings from the UCW. A year gone by so quickly!! In 2025 our ladies were busy with funerals, luncheons and Christmas at Central which was a great success.

We are now planning for 2026 maybe a little early, but always good to plan ahead. We meet the second Wednesday of the month at 9:30 am in the parlor for any woman who would like to join in.

Thank you to all who helped with our projects. You helped make them all a success.

UCW President Vicki Fretz

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT 2025

I want to share good news with the congregation with respect to our financial situation at the end of 2025. We ended the year in surplus, in the General account, and in the Local Outreach accounts.

Our envelope givings for 2025 were up partly made up by a large estate bequest. 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 a major building repair item on the eaves and soffits which was partly funded by capital funds given to the congregation for that purpose. The General Fund contributed 25% of the cost and the capital fund paid the balance. Even with this we ended up in a surplus.

The fund-raising efforts of the several groups in the congregation is remarkable. Not only do they support the general mission and ministry of our congregation but also several important outreach projects are supported by your congregation. We continue to actively pursue our mission.

I want to thank Gloria Simon who has worked so hard as our Treasurer with the support of Sandra Frame. Marie Feduck is thanked as she continues as our envelope secretary and will have 2025 tax receipts issued shortly.

Thank you.

Christopher Wilson, Finance Chair.



Caribbean Workers Outreach Project-Niagara

February 7, 2026

Donna Brown, Convenor

Caribbean Workers Outreach Project (CWOP) is a not-for-profit organization started by a group of local churches almost forty (40) years ago. Our core mission is to reach out to Caribbean Agricultural Workers, who spend up to 8 months in the Niagara region each year.

In 2025 CWOP focused on celebration worship, personal support, a Dominoes tournament and a Cricket match. We also provided financial support for workers at the death of a family member.

We were supported by local churches (\$3350), community groups and organizations (\$2000) and individuals (\$2100). We again used chartered buses for Sunday night services and events. This was our major expense in 2025 (\$6,700). We continue to struggle with funding our programme and had an end-of-the-year shortfall of \$9600. We will be asking for continuing funding from our supporters. We also continue to seek volunteers for various areas such as assisting with refreshments, transportation, and music ministry. As the new season approaches, we look forward to your continued support for migrant workers.

On Sunday evenings in May and June an average of 130 workers gathered for worship, singing, fellowship, refreshments and networking. We thank Cornerstone Community Church who allowed us to use their Orchard Park facilities and local churches who provided refreshments each evening. Workers appreciated the opportunity to gather; fellowship with their peers and participate freely in worship. Many came forward for prayer at services.

The dominos competition, held in partnership with Lakemount Church, Grimsby, was an exciting opportunity for workers from Niagara and Lincoln farms to get together for friendly competition.

The cricket match at Memorial Park drew a crowd of over 350 people. The Niagara-on-the-Lake side claimed the trophy. Popeye's Restaurant in St. Catharines catered food for the event and donated cricket equipment and participant prizes. Thanks to organizers Elisha (Prophet) Steele, Nancy King, Dave Pritchard and Donna Brown. In August there was a banquet for both teams.

We continue to work with the following partners to advance initiatives that support temporary migrant workers: Gateway Community Church NOTL, Niagara Welcome, Southridge Church Vineland, Niagara Community Legal Clinic, the Farmworker Hub,

Bikes for Farm Workers, Orchard Park /Cornerstone Community Church, Lakemount Church Grimsby, Ntwyne Cultural Group, Niagara Legal Clinic, Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario workers (OHCOW), Quest Community Health Centre, Phil's Independent Grocer and others to support the various needs of workers. In collaboration with these groups we can extend support to over 2500 workers from the Caribbean and Mexico.

In 2026 CWOP remains committed to strengthening community support for workers, especially in light of the devastations created by hurricane Melissa. With ongoing support from donors, volunteers, and partners, we will continue our ministry of care and support.

2025 CAVE SPRINGS CAMP REPORT

Happy New Year from the Cave Springs Board!

As we say goodbye to 2025 and look ahead to the new year, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about church, and camp, and how things went in 2025, with your help and support.

CAMP STAFF:

2025 was our first year with Ryan Anderson in the role of Executive Director and Taylor Hodgins in the role of Program Director. Together, they worked tirelessly in the early spring to review and evaluate existing summer camp programs and policies. Policies were updated to be sure that our summer staff are properly trained, supported, and compensated for their work. Programs were re-designed thanks to Taylor's professional training in leisure and recreation program design. Ryan was able to find a local supplier and bring in a new low-ropes course at a great price. Most of our summer staff were new to Cave Springs, with a few core leaders returning from previous years. At the end of 2025 we said goodbye to our office admin, Jessica, and welcome Breanne into our new combined office and program support role.

CAMP SUNDAYS:

We were able to provide leadership to a few churches who reached out to have a Camp Sunday in church. One of our former campers, Emily, loves camp, loves church, and loves a chance to offer camp Sunday leadership. We are hopeful that in 2026 we can get a few more volunteers to get out and talk about camp, and offer some energetic and fun camp style leadership for a Sunday morning. Even if you don't have a youth group, you can continue youth ministry by supporting camp. If you're interested in having a Camp Sunday, please get in touch with the camp office.

FAITH FORMATION:

In 2025 our faith formation theme was The Golden Rule, Matthew 7:12. Some of our core staff leaders from past years developed programming around teaching that easy theme lesson to campers and new staff in 2025.

The reality for United Church camps in today's increasingly secular culture is that in order to keep the camp filled and open, we have to be inclusive and accessible to kids from all different faith groups and kids who come from unchurched families. The local area churches send very few children through a UCC pathway. So, we are going to move forward still providing faith formation and Christian values and relationship building, but we are going to put a lot of thought into how we provide that message to be inclusive and accessible for every kid and family who might be looking for summer camp.

As part of this work, we are looking at creating a volunteer chaplain role, whose job would be to help staff plan appropriate Faith Formation programming to include as part of our summer camp program. This idea is still in the Think Tank – more details to come once our board and corporation have made decisions around it.

SPRING CLEAN UP:

We're planning to ask for able bodied volunteers to get in touch with Sula, at sulaanne@gmail.com as we organize for a spring cleanup in late May/early June.

75th ANNIVERSARY:

This year marks Cave Springs' 75th anniversary. We have set aside the weekend of June 13-14. The 13th will be a kids fun day with programming for kids. The 14th will be a day geared toward churches to come and tour the new areas, meet staff, and enjoy some camp nostalgia. Mark that on your calendar and join us!

CORPORATION:

Each United Church in the region is asked to appoint one or two member(s) to the camp corporation. The corporation meets twice each year, at an AGM in the spring and then at a fall meeting as well. Usually April and October at the camp to hear reports, approve the annual budget, vote in the board members, approve the auditors, etc. If your church has not yet appointed a corporation rep, we ask you to share this invitation with your members. Our corporation members are the main source of our communication with churches, and sometimes offer up great ideas for finding solutions to any issues that arise.

We hope to see you out this year, as part of the Cave Springs family!

Blessings,
Rev. Sula Anne Kosacky
President of the Cave Springs Camp Board