



# 2023 Annual Report

## Westminster United Church

### Our Mission Statement



Westminster United Church is a Christian family sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the congregation, the community and the world at large. We provide a spiritual home for worship, celebration of the sacraments, and Christian Education.

### Statement of Inclusion



Affirm | Saffirmer  
UNITED | ENSEMBLE

We embrace people of all ages, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities, ethnicities, social and economic circumstances in the membership, ministry, leadership and life of this community of faith.

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# Minister's Introduction

Dear Westminster Friends,

The following is what I shared with you on my first Sunday back in the pulpit after being away on restorative care since the end of May 2023. It is what I want to say again here as part of this introduction to the annual report.

I'm really proud of this congregation. I am proud of you, the worshipping community, of the leadership here for continuing Christ's ministry amidst uncertainty and change (thank you Shane, Ava, Paul, and all the Chairs of our committees and groups.) Thank you to the staff—Amy, Cathy, Linda and Ronell—who suddenly had a few new dance steps thrown at them and handled them with grace; to our licensed lay worship leaders who shared their gifts; many thanks to our Voluntary Associate Ministers, Rev. Dan Yourkevich and Rev. Sue Genge, for your pastoral care of the congregation and of me. And thank you to Maureen Dingman and the Ministry and Personnel Committee for all of your hard work. I really hope that you all feel good about what you have continued to do and who you are as a community of faith.

As I have been spending time with the gospel of Mark this season, I am struck again by **how healing was central to Jesus' mission and ministry** and to his message of the nearness of God's kingdom. Almost every healing story involves a **restoration to community. Community is central** to our Christian calling, life, and well-being. It is a gift that God gives and that we get to be a part of. We need honest community, the kind that is unafraid of vulnerability and that will *make a hole in the roof* (Mark 2:1-12). There will be times when we'll need others to lower us through the roof to Jesus, sometimes we'll be the ones doing the lowering. And sometimes just witnessing that happen helps us all feel less hidden and alone.

You'll read about a lot of things in this report, but what I hope really shines through is community. Love of God, love of neighbour.

Keep loving.

Yours in Christ, Rev. Michelle

# 2023 At A Glance

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## January

- Return to J.a.M. and Youth Group, First online Trivia of 2023, Book Club, Games Night, World Religion Day

## February

- 10th year of participating in The Coldest Night of the Year Walk, Service recognizing Black History Month, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, Movie Night, Ash Wednesday Service

## March

- Lenten Study Series, Annual Congregation Meeting, World Day of Prayer

## April

- Holy Week services, including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday outside, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Easter EGGstravaganza, Indoor Yard Sale

## May

- Westminster's Got Talent, Mother's Day Tea, Mental Health Week with speaker Alec King from CMHA

## June

- BBQ Dinner Fundraiser, Jack Talk Mental Health for Young People, Pride Month Events, VBS, J.a.M Family Service, Picnic Sunday

## July/August

- VBS, Many Community Programs running in the building

# 2023 At A Glance Contd.



## September

- Welcome Sunday, J.a.M. Kickoff, Trunk Sale, Season of Service, Caring for the Caregiver Workshop, Orange Shirt Day recognition

## October

- Moderator Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne Service, Season of Service continued, Elvis Show Fundraiser, UCW Presbyterial Gathering

## November

- I Am a Changemaker pilot program in J.a.M., ECORC Flourishing Workshop, Christmas Bazaar, Progress Flag raising

## December

- Cantata, Tapestry of Light presented by the Choir, Scout Parking Lot Parade, ADVENTure Day, Longest Night of the Year Service, Family Christmas Eve Service and Play - "Tails From the Manger", Candlelight Communion Service Christmas Eve, Christmas Hamper Program

# Your Ministry Team



**Rev. Michelle Robinson**  
Lead Minister of Word,  
Sacrament and Pastoral Care



**Cathy Shaw**  
Minister of Faith Formation



**Linda Hunter**  
Minister of Music



**Amy Medlock**  
Ministerial Administrative Assistant



**Ronell Paguio**  
Custodian



**Rev. Sue Genge**  
Voluntary Associate Minister



**Rev. Dan Yourkevich**  
Voluntary Associate Minister



## Chair of Council

◆————◆  
“All things were made through him. Nothing that has been made was made without him” -John 1:3

The congregation at Westminster continues to show up and do the work of the Lord in so many amazing ways that it is having a positive impact both in our church and by extension in the community.

We are a vibrant community of faith, so I will attempt to keep my comments to a minimum and not repeat anything said by the individual committees or groups that we have within our walls and out in the public.

During the past twelve months, we have been able to enhance our services and outreach programs and I must say that we are having great success. However, we cannot rest as **“To whom much is given, much will be required.”** -Luke 12:48

We continue to make adjustments in almost every aspect of the work we do and in the manner in which we deliver our spiritual and material information to our members and the community at large.

This past year we had some changes that we were not planning on and we all stepped up to the plate and again rose above these challenges.

We are so very thankful to our Ministerial Staff for their leadership and support, knowing that they too have had to adapt to these changes and approaches, including increased use of new technology. We continue to be blessed in having Rev. Michelle, Cathy, Linda, Amy and Ronell as part of our Community of Faith. Special thank you to Rev. Dan Yourkevich, Rev. Sue Genge and all of the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWLs) for pitching in after Rev. Michelle went on leave. Thank you to Sara Russell who continues to amaze us as she works towards her Masters in Divinity. A special thank-you to Katie for continuing as council secretary throughout 2023 and we wish her all the best as she takes on a different role in our church in 2024.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Shane Suepaul - Chair of Council





# Minister of Faith Formation

On May 1, 2023, I joyfully celebrated my 10th Anniversary as your Minister of Faith Formation. What a blessing I have been given, to be part of a faith community that cares deeply, shares abundantly and makes a difference in God's world!

I am grateful to each of you for the love and kindness you share with me each day and for the lovely gifts, musical presentations, blessings and well wishes you bestowed upon me as we celebrated this milestone together.

Faith formation is a *lifelong* process of discipleship and is at the heart of what Christian life is all about. As individuals and as a church community we grow in our daily lives and we grow together as a collective in Christ - through worship, outreach, education, working for justice and peace, embracing diversity, affirming all people and sharing our good news stories. By doing so, our faith is nurtured, enlivened, sustained, and *formed*.

In my role as Minister of Faith Formation, I am privileged to work and worship alongside incredible people. I am truly in awe of the gifts and the talents, the kindness and the compassion that I encounter every day. Each of you is responsible for making Westminster what it is; a warm, inviting, safe and welcoming place. Through your willingness to care for one another, to support outreach projects, to work on committees, to teach our children, to give of your time and to share your talents, this community of faith is strengthened.

Thank you for allowing me to journey with you all these years and thank you for all you do to make Westminster a wonderful place to both worship and work... I am blessed indeed!

Many thanks to my colleagues, Rev. Michelle Robinson, Amy Medlock, Linda Hunter, Ronell Paguio, Rev. Dan Yourkevich and Rev. Sue Genge. I appreciate each of you and I thank you for encouraging me, empowering me, inspiring me and sharing the load!

Additional gratitude is expressed to Jocelyne Fry, my amazing M&P Rep and to all those who have served on the M&P team. Thank you for taking such great care of my colleagues and I throughout the last year.

As we celebrate 2023 in the pages of this report, and as we go forward in this new year, may God continue to richly bless each of us, as we in turn continue to share God's blessings with others!

Many Blessings,  
Cathy Shaw



# Minister of Music

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2023 was a busy and fun year of music happenings at WUC and I feel so privileged to serve as Minister of Music for such a wonderful church family.

The Adult Choir continues to add valuable music ministry for weekly Sunday services. Also providing music is the Salt praise group. The contemporary music and anthems are much enjoyed and appreciated. Thank you to these talented and faithful singers and musicians and to Reta Stickwood for her help in conducting the Adult Choir. Thank you to Kyle Cullen and Heather Von Zuben for offering their talents to cover my holiday time.

We have enjoyed the Junior Choir singing under the leadership of Heather Von Zuben as well. Thank You!

Because of space I cannot list all names of soloists and musicians. Please accept a "Thank You" for sharing your talents so generously and adding so much to the music at Westminster.

Some of the highlights of this past year: Westminster's Got Talent, Mother's Day Tea, Elvis is in the house, Tapestry of Light Cantata and Tails from the Manger Christmas Eve Pageant. Wow! Great job! Thanks to everyone that helped with the above presentations, we couldn't do this without all the wonderful volunteers! Special mention of the Tech team working so diligently with new equipment and to King Whitney for being so accommodating and helpful. So appreciated!

To the amazing Ministry team of Rev. Michelle, Cathy, Amy, Ronell, Rev. Sue Genge and Rev. Dan Yourkevich, and all the LLWL leaders, it has been a pleasure working with you, and I wish many blessings to Westminster Church in the future.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Hunter, Minister of Music

# From the Office



It has been such a joy to greet so many new and familiar faces this year! Westminster's staff and volunteers have shown such creativity and dedication to our faith community. Thank you to everyone at Westminster for making it such a pleasure to welcome you through the doors each day.

## Membership By the numbers:

- 529 people are listed in the Westminster Historic Roll
- 14 new members were received by Certificate of Transfer
- 6 baptisms, 0 adult and 6 children
- 2 marriages
- 2 members removed by death
- 2 members removed by Certificate of Transfer
- 13 memorial/funeral services
- 732 people are in our contact/telephone list
- 383 email addresses that receive our weekly email blast

## New Members:

- Margaret Bradford
- Gail Morris
- William Morris
- Amy Deegan
- Philip Deegan
- Geoff Osborne
- Katie Osborne
- Glenn Genge
- Susan Genge
- Cecile Willert
- Gary Willert
- William Sandiford
- Barbara Beaton
- Heather Morton

## Marriages:

- Stefanie Hannelore Pueschel & Navid Hejazifar  
- May 20, 2023
- Isabel Ovens Driver & Joshua Burleton  
- June 24, 2023

## Baptisms:

- Scarlett Johnson - April 23
- Isaac Deegan - May 14
- Zoey Giles (Flagler) - July 9
- Austyn Mokedanz - November 12
- Cade Cracknell - November 12
- Matthew Cha - December 3

## In Memoriam:

The following names are listed in the Westminster Burial Register for 2023:

- Joan Sanderson
- Bill Beer
- Sean Kelly
- Dora MacPherson
- Jo-Ann Henry
- Mary Salmers
- Joseph Poirier
- Eileen Greenaway
- Grant Armstrong
- James Gartshore
- Shirley Zilinsky
- Dorothy Frauts
- Rui Bortelho
- Catherine Climpson\*

\*These names are not listed in our burial register

*"I am the resurrection and the life.  
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,  
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."  
John 11:25-26*

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amy Medlock - Ministerial Administrative Assistant

# Worship Committee



The Worship Committee has worked hard this year to support the Westminster community in worship and hospitality. We are very grateful to Rev. Michelle, our LLWLs, Rev. Sue, Rev. Dan and Sara for presiding over our weekly worship services and bringing us messages of hope and inspiration.

The members of the Worship Committee and many volunteers have worked on the following in 2023:

- Celebrating communion and baptism in person for the full year!
- Coordinating speakers for Affirming Sundays – Jake Farr from PFLAG and Alec King from CMHA.
- Welcoming The UCC Moderator, Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, on October 22, 2023.
- Jack Talk on June 3, 2023.
- Serving coffee/tea on the third Sunday of the month.
- Christmas Eve was on a Sunday this year with services at 10:30am, Family Services at 2:00pm and 4:00pm (Tails from the Manger) and Candlelight Communion at 9:00pm – bringing the Christmas message to approximately 625 people.

Thank you to everyone for all your support during the year – whether it is ushering, serving communion, changing the adornment of the Sanctuary, greeting at the door on a Sunday morning or offering hospitality by preparing and serving coffee, - we are very grateful. We are always looking for new ideas and committee members – please let us know if you're interested!

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ava Tomlinson and Heather Von Zuben, Co-chairs

# Sanctuary Committee



The goal of the Sanctuary Committee is to make Westminster United Church a welcoming beacon in the community through our creative efforts in decorating the Narthex and Sanctuary to reflect the liturgical events throughout the year. At times the decorations may reflect special celebrations and times of our lives that link us to our community and church.

# Christian Education



Christian Education offers life-long learning and faith formation for all ages.

Without having a Chairperson for this committee at the moment, it is an honour for me to write this report on behalf of this incredibly dedicated group of people.

Along with assuring that Westminster has a vibrant and educational Sunday School and an amazing J.a.M Teaching Team, the CE committee is also responsible for the leadership and support of Adult Christian Education Programming, Confirmation Classes, Vacation Bible School (VBS), Family and Adult Social Events (Family Dinner/Movie, Games Night, Movie Nights), Youth Groups, Library, J.a.M Worship Service, Church Picnic, ADVENTure Day and the Easter EGGstravaganza.

We look back on 2023 as a year full of fun and adventure and we move forward into 2024, eager to find those moments of learning, growth and opportunity, as we share God's love in all that we do. My sincere thanks and appreciation go to each member of this team, for their time, their insight and their devotion to the Christian Education of the Westminster community.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cathy Shaw, Minister of Faith Formation



# J.a.M

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J.a.M is our rotational based Sunday School program and 2023 was another jam-packed, fun-filled year for our children and their families, where bible stories came to life every Sunday through our interactive curriculum and our dedicated teachers.

J.a.M is a much needed and very important ministry that touches not just the families, but the whole Westminster community. Our Jesus and Me program encompasses all ages, including those in our Baby Jammers Nursery (3 and under), our J.a.M Kids (4-11) and our Just Jammin' Youth class (12 and up).

We are grateful to our children, who make J.a.M so spectacular, to our parents, for trusting us with your child(ren)'s Christian education and to our teachers, for their time and energy and dedication.

We are blessed to journey together and it is truly a privilege to watch our children, youth, parents and leaders grow in their faith through our J.a.M program!

Submitted by  
Cathy Shaw, Minister of Faith Formation



# Vacation Bible School



*Welcome to a work in progress... you've entered a Construction Zone! We're building on a firm foundation... but not with bricks and stone. Jesus is the model of perfection... His plans for us are Divine. So, welcome to a work in progress... building Character in our Lives!*

Working together, building character and learning about Jesus were all part of our week-long Construction Zone VBS. How exciting to build our faith in such a fun way... with new friends, old friends and amazing leaders!

Crafts, Games, Food and Music made this week one to remember. We are grateful to the children and their parents for participating in this wonderful outreach ministry - we couldn't do it without you and your support! We are also tremendously grateful to our VBS Leadership Team and other Volunteers for their dedication, their "help behind the scenes" and their willingness to share their faith with our children and each other.

This year a special note of thanks goes to the Durham Works Department for loaning us their construction equipment so our Crews could experience the real thing and our mascot, Darryl the Barrel could be brought to life.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cathy Shaw, Minister of Faith Formation



## Book Club

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On the 4th Wednesday of January, March, May, September and November, a group of 12 to 20 people met from 1:00pm to 3:00pm in person or on zoom (depending on weather) to discuss and reflect on how faith and life intertwine in our chosen book of the month. In 2023, we read and discussed the following thought-provoking books:

Five Little Indians by Michelle Good, The Giver of the Stars by JoJo Moyes, The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donoghue, An Astronaut's Guide to Life by Chris Hadfield, and One Thousand White Women by Jim Fergus. At the end of June, Sandra Kell Cullen hosted a garden tea party for the book club members and a birthday celebration for Susan in the Cullen's beautiful garden.

All are welcome to join the group for each of the monthly book discussions, whether for one or all of the gatherings.

Respectively submitted by,  
Susan Pleasance

# Westminster Library

Thank you to all who generously donated reading and media materials to our library (located in the Founder's Room). We would like to especially thank Sue Shkolnik and the estate of Barry Knibbs for their generous donations of books. During the fall Michelle A. and I have been busy sorting and organizing the many boxes of books.



In the New Year we plan to start cataloguing the newly donated books and putting new book updates in the Westminster World newsletter.

It is very simple to check out material. To check out any library material, simply enter your name, phone number and book title in the Blue Sign-out book provided. Book "Return" and "Donation" containers can be found in the library or you can drop them off at the church office.

The library accepts both new and gently used books in good condition. The church librarian in consultation with the Christian Education Committee makes a determination as to the suitability of any donated resources. Donations can be left in the library or can be dropped off at the church office once the church is open.

Respectively submitted,  
Susan Pleasance

# Youth



Our Youth Group is active, engaged and comprises nine amazing, diverse and dedicated young people who meet weekly to share in their faith, discuss important topics, play interactive games, take part in community and church events, learn from each other and find friendship among their peers.

This group has moved into a different age bracket, with it now having members who are in Grade 8 and above. Previously this group was for those from Grades 6-8.

We are currently looking for leadership so that a Grade 6-7 Junior Youth Group might be formed. These amazing young people are looking forward to another incredible year together, as they continue to learn more about God, the world, each other and themselves.

If you have youth in your family, we'd love to get to know them. If you would like to add to our leadership, please contact Cathy at [westminster.cathy@gmail.com](mailto:westminster.cathy@gmail.com) for more information.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Shaw, Youth Group Leader



# Outreach



Westminster’s Outreach Team met monthly (virtually) throughout 2023 with focus on the following Outreach programs and continued response to increased needs in our surrounding community. We continue to be thankful for our community of faith’s tremendous support of community outreach ministries.

Westminster’s Outreach Committee looks forward to enhancing its outreach initiatives in 2024. We warmly welcome new Committee members at any time to help us extend our programming.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Cherwinka, Chair

# Christmas Hampers



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our yearly tradition of Westminster Christmas Hampers. Through your overwhelming generosity, we supported 78 families, comprising 265 people, in our community. This included gifts for 125 children and 51 adults living alone. We were overwhelmed with the generosity of our community of faith, both in selection of tags, financial donations, donations of toys, shopping, driving and giving of their time. We would also like to thank the “Westminster Shoppers” who took remaining tags and were able to shop for kids using the financial donations we received.

It was wonderful to see and feel the Christmas spirit alive and well in our community as gifts were dropped off at the gym, picked up (in drive-through fashion) and delivered. We heard firsthand from hamper recipients the impact of this outreach ministry, gratitude for not only grocery gift cards and gifts, but also community -- the care of neighbours supporting one another.

This year, thanks to the generous financial donations we received, we were able to increase the amount of grocery gift cards each family received, which was much appreciated by recipients, particularly with the increased costs of groceries. Thank you for your generous support of the Westminster United Church Christmas Hamper Outreach Ministry.

Please contact Ashley Edwards or Joanne MacPherson for information about our Christmas Hamper Program.

## Advent Winter Wear Donation Drive



To mark the 4 Sundays of Advent 2023, our Outreach Team put out a call to our community of faith for donations of new mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, and socks to benefit the work of several community groups: Gate 3:16, YWCA, Denise House, Back Door Mission, Durham Outlook and refugee support efforts. Donations were made to Christmas baskets placed in the Narthex. We are so grateful to our community of faith and neighbours, near and far, for donating over 600 new items to support those in need this winter. Donations were delivered by Outreach Team members in January.

## Living Alone Luncheons



The Living Alone Luncheons have been very successful in 2023. There are about 50 members that are called every month to see if they will be attending and to inform them what the menu is for the month.

This Outreach program has been in existence since 1997. It is a place where people from the community and our church community can come together for fellowship and a hearty meal.

The only requirement is that you are living on your own. We are a mixed lot of men and women. Thank you to the hard-working church members who help in the kitchen and set up the tables every month.

Please contact Barbara Auchterlonie or Bev Crumb if you are interested in joining the team.

## Prayer Shawls



In 2023, Westminster gratefully received approximately 10-12 prayer shawl/blanket donations. Prayer Shawls are gifted at baptisms, confirmations and provided to those in our community who may benefit from Westminster's love and care at challenging times.

Knit and Crochet circles were scheduled to meet quarterly at the church. In the first half of 2023, however,

these turned into monthly times of creating and fellowship. In the fall, meetings resumed as initially scheduled. An exciting event occurred on October 22nd when Moderator Lansdowne, spiritual leader of The United Church of Canada, visited Westminster. Mary Shepherd crafted a prayer shawl in her honour and it was presented to Moderator Lansdowne during service.

Please contact Linda Moroziuk for more information about Westminster's Prayer Shawl ministry.

## Bridge To A New Home (BTANH)

Our group met 4 times in 2023, mostly in person, with a few members still using ZOOM. Still about 10 members were involved from the original 5 churches.

Our sponsored refugees continue to do well as they learn Canadian life. Sut, our first person sponsored has a full-time job now, closer to home that he enjoys. He does some English work on-line and wants to work on getting his Canadian Citizenship.



Freweyni and her children continue to thrive, all played soccer again this past summer, and swim and skate at the rec centre near their home. Freweyni continues to study ESL. Mebrahtom, her brother, has 2 jobs currently as well as taking online courses. Mebrahtom found his wife and daughter in 2023; they are currently living in Addis Ababa. Also, a nephew of theirs was kidnapped in 2023, and released after Freweyni and Mebrahtom paid a ransom. He is in Sudan.

Modar and his wife Rasha welcomed another baby at the end of June, Zain. They moved again in the summer of 2023, which meant helping the children register for school. They also want to work on obtaining Canadian Citizenship.

We continue to help each of these families as needed with things such as medical appointments and renewal of items such as health cards and permanent residency. We have certainly learned that one year is not enough to resettle anyone.

There were more privately sponsored refugees that arrived in 2023, most through Kingsview United Church who have held the funds for them.

We have had many discussions about our future and in the fall, we decided we would apply for Mebrahtom's wife and daughter to be sponsored as well as his nephew, but will not take on any new refugees as we do not have enough volunteers to support this. Approximately \$40,000 is needed to bring these family members, which Mebrahtom is saving for, but we may need to fundraise to help support this amount. It may still be 1-2 years before they arrive, but they will require less help from our group as they have family members here.

We will continue to meet quarterly in 2024.

Thanks for your support of this outreach initiative.

Please contact Joanne MacPherson or Maureen Dingman for more information about Bridge To A New Home.



# Durham Outlook For The Needy (DOFN)



Since mid-2022, DOFN, formerly known as St. Vincent's Kitchen, has been operating in a brand-new building with modern equipment and facilities on Simcoe Street South. A group of volunteers from Westminster & Faith United Churches is there the 2nd Tuesday of each month (3:30pm - 6:30 pm) to serve and clean up that day's 3-course meal. Presently, the team averages 8-10 volunteers from a list of 12-14 possible names.

The team serves between 100-200 needy clients. Westminster is one of a handful of local churches that do so. Most DOFN volunteers now originate from service clubs, company-sponsored groups or other community folks.

Please contact Paul Kneebone if you would like to join this very worthwhile monthly outreach.

# Coldest Night of the Year Walk



In February 2023, Westminster's Coldest Night Walk Team was twenty-nine strong. Together, with support from friends, families, colleagues and our faith community, we were able to support the critical work of The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre in Oshawa.

From our original fundraising goal of \$2,000, Team Westminster contributed an amazing \$6,601. We are currently signed up to Walk in our 11th Coldest Night event on Saturday, February 24, 2024.

Please contact Cathy Shaw for information about this annual outreach initiative.

# Faith and Fellowship



We were pleased to again offer in-person small group gatherings at Westminster on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 2:30pm – 3:30pm in the Founders Room. Typically, 6-8 folks come together for reflection and fellowship. All are welcome, anytime.

Please contact Debbie Joyce or Cathy Shaw for more information about this ministry.

# Food Bank (The Pantry)



Thank you for reaching out with such care - as you fill the bin in the Narthex with cans of meat, jars of coffee, rolls of toilet paper, or give financially, you are changing lives. The Pantry volunteers are proud to represent you, our church and local community as they serve our neighbours. It's humbling to see how you can change a life or calm a fear.

During 2023, we faced surprises and challenges. Some clients became healthy enough to return to work and can't thank you enough for the help you've given them through tough times.

In September, international students from local post-secondary schools started to come to the Pantry seeking help with food, as many food banks have experienced. By the end of the month, we had 25 students on top of our regular weekly clients. To seek help with addressing this need, we spoke to the Dean of International Students at Durham College. She was unaware of this and told us about the campus food bank. Within a week, she met with the international student representatives to address this concern. As a result of the Dean's assistance, we supported 1-2 students per week, moving forward.



In 2023 we served 2,049 clients and fed 6,508, almost double the numbers from 2022. As the numbers rose, as well as the cost of food, we worried that we wouldn't be able to serve everyone who came to our doors, but this community of faith rose to the challenge. We held 4 food drives, generously supported by the congregation and community. Other organizations including the Rotary Club, Lions Club and Westminster's Whitby Scouts held food drives for us, as did Glen Hill Terraces, which collected over 1,000 items.

We also could not feed so many without our committed group of volunteers who help with filling food orders, shopping and anything that is needed.



Also in 2023, Susan P and Shirley P approached us about offering a monthly cooking class for 5-7 clients of the Pantry. This initiative started in March and has been enjoyed by all who have participated. Susan and Shirley look for economical recipes using many items that we offer at the Pantry. Not only are the participants learning new skills and taking home a meal to their families, there is fellowship shared and much laughter. We will continue this outreach in 2024.

We are truly amazed how this community of faith has supported this outreach initiative in so many ways.

“When Jesus saw that the crowd was hungry, he didn't just feel bad for them. He took action to help them, He received the humble gift given by the child, and miraculously turned those small loaves and fish into enough food for thousands” -Kids Corner

Miracles happen even in your own backyard!

Please contact Joanne Yourkevich and Joanne MacPherson for more information about The Pantry.

# Season of Service



Our Westminster congregation ushered in a new church season this past fall with acts of service in support of our community. Over 3 Saturdays in September and October, the following outreach activities were carried out and supported by members of our community of faith and wider community:

Over three Saturdays, a total of 25 people across 6 service teams:

- Assembled and delivered 500 Pantry Food Drive flyers and donation bags (donated by Sobeys Whitby) to neighbourhoods surrounding our church
- Created beautiful hand-made “Thinking of You” cards for residents of the Chartwell (Colonial) Retirement Home
- Received, sorted and shelved many food donations for The Pantry from neighbours and members of our community of faith
- Helped with painting and yardwork at the Manning Mews seniors complex
- Made delicious cookies for Pantry clients and homebound friends in our Westminster community
- Helped with yardwork and small jobs inside our church to make ready for winter and the many activities planned for the winter season



Also, while not directly part of our Season of Service programming, members of our Outreach Team and dedicated community volunteers gratefully collected school supplies donated by our congregation and assembled 62 school backpacks to provide to school-aged youth serviced by The Pantry and youth supported by The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre, Oshawa.

Please contact Cathy Cherwinka for more information about the Season of Service program.

# Parish Mosaic (Subcommittee of Outreach Committee)



The work of the Parish Mosaic Committee flows directly from the Westminster United Church “Statement of Inclusion”.

*“We embrace people of all ages, gender, race, sexual orientations, gender identity, abilities, ethnicity, social and economic circumstances, in the membership, ministry, leadership and life of this congregation.”*

The Mandate of the Parish Mosaic Committee is to provide leadership, education and support within our congregation and community as we live into our ministry of radical welcome and inclusion.

In 2023, Parish Mosaic published articles in the monthly Newsletter and/or weekly email blasts on subjects such as: Indigenous affairs and Land Acknowledgement initiative, anti-racism including ECORC Anti-Racism forum, a Pride month schedule including all faith-based activities where Westminster had a presence, Transgender Day of Remembrance, World AIDS Day, as well as a “did you know” article on the Parish Mosaic committee.

Parish Mosaic again also undertook the following projects:

- Took the lead role in organizing and participating in the 2023 Pride Durham events. It was widely recognized as our best event ever with a further increase in the number of other “Affirming Places of Worship, Durham” participating this year. Westminster United and the Affirming Worship Durham group had a high visibility presence at:
  - Multi-Faith Pride Service
  - Pride Parade
  - Pride Marketplace Affirming Worship Durham information table
  - Youth Pride Affirming Worship Durham information table

- Hosted the 3rd and 4th “Gathering” of Affirming Places of Worship, sharing information, team building and creating an active Affirming community in Durham Region. Because of aggressive attacks by ultra-conservative right-wing groups on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, especially transgender youth, our group has been compelled to take a strong advocacy role in their defense. The group has now grown to 23 Affirming Places of Worship, including 2 Synagogues. This initiative remains very active.



- This fall, advocated for the installation of the “Progress Flag” on a flagpole on the corner of Rossland and Gerrard. The flag indicates to the community Westminster’s continued work with and support of the Pride Community, now including the Transgender community. Special thanks to Gail Brimbecom for her strong advocacy on this project and to Ava and James Tomlinson for their strong support of this initiative.

- Parish Mosaic and Westminster United continued to provide a faith presence for Transgender Day of Remembrance events, World AIDS Day event and several individual advocacy events.
- Participated in 2 ECORC Affirming forums for the Affirming United Churches in East Central Regional Conference. As we are well advanced in our Affirming process, this afforded us the opportunity to share with/mentor other United churches in their process.
- Again sent “Holiday Wishes” letter to AIDS Committee of Durham, PFLAG Durham, Durham Pride AND new this year, Durham Alliance Outreach. The letter, along with the listing of Affirming Places of Worship, were placed on the Facebook pages and websites of all 4 organizations.

Please contact Don Fry or Gail Brimbecom for more information about the Parish Mosaic ministry.

# Wellness



Since 1996, the congregation of Westminster has supported the principles of this committee with their mission statement: *“Following the ministry of Jesus, we are called to promote physical, mental and spiritual health within our Christian family and the community we serve.”* Our goals have not changed. We continue to strive to meet them.

This past year, we were able to facilitate 3 seminars for our members that were also opened to the community.

- Dementia Friendly Communities – delivered by the Alzheimer’s Society
- Youth Mental Health Talk – by Jack.org
- Caring for Caregivers – facilitated by Gail Brimbecom, former Parish Nurse and member of WUC.

Under the direction of Paul Kneebone, The Friendly Visitors group continues to meet with members about 4 times per year including a cookie drop at Christmas. Paul also organizes the Call Tree that ensures that all WUC members and adherents receive a telephone call or communication from WUC. The annual Easter Flowers Project continued with 100 pots of tulips delivered to friends in memory of the financial donor’s loved ones. The Sanctuary Course that was scheduled for the fall has been postponed until further notice.

The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) has been updated with new batteries, electrodes and special electrodes for infants and children that were funded by the Montessori School. A presentation was given during Sunday service on the simple instructions for use of the equipment and to give members the confidence needed should they experience an emergency. This device will have to be replaced in two years as the manufacturer will no longer support this model.

Although this committee is small, it continues to run successful programs and activities with the assistance of many volunteers from within the WUC congregation.

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Smith and Carol O’Neil, co-chair

# Communications



The goal of our committee is to facilitate, promote and improve communication at Westminster United Church. We are responsible for the monthly newsletter - The Westminster World, for the Program Directory - Welcome to Westminster United Church and also for subscriptions to Broadview (formerly The United Church Observer). Our continued gratitude to

Paul Kneebone for shouldering this annual task. In addition to these important aspects of communication, we also maintain the bulletin boards in the hallway and oversee postings to the electronic sign. Honouring our commitment to reduce our carbon footprint, we no longer publish fridge flyers nor fill the pew pockets. Instead, Prayer Request cards and offering envelopes are available on a table in the Narthex. Keeping the information on the kiosk in the Narthex current is another of our responsibilities. At our monthly meetings, we discuss ways to enhance communication in our expanding congregation. One of our current projects is creating a glossary of terms to help newcomers feel comfortable with church terminology and Westminster-specific terminology.

We were once again able to hold our 'annual' FUNdraiser in the Spring, and everyone enjoyed another successful and very entertaining Trivia Night. The committee also sponsors on-line Trivia Nights, led by Cathy Shaw.

Our committee completed the work initiated in 2022 to update the church's database. We made phone calls to members of our faith community who had not completed an electronic update of their contact information. Changes resulting from these calls were submitted to the church office.

Westminster's social media communication (website, Facebook and Instagram) is maintained by the office. We are ready to welcome new members to our team. The long-standing, dedicated members of this committee are Mary-Lynn F., Lori R., Cathy Shaw (staff rep.) and Bev C. (chair).

Respectfully submitted by Bev Crumb



# Property



It was a challenging and exciting year for the Property Committee. The committee strives to support the daily operations of the church, perform repairs and plan for the future. As well as managing expenses, we attempt to increase income through rental opportunities.

The committee applied to the Trillium Foundation to make improvements to our heating and cooling system but unfortunately we were not approved, and we will have to look at alternative plans and funding. There were many projects completed during the year ranging from fence repairs, tree removal, installation of flag poles and memorial tree planting to the containment of black mold in the custodial room and the rebuild of that area.

We were able to exceed the budget for rental income. The addition of the Weight Watchers group, which held 5 meetings per week, and the youth cooking school Rooks to Cooks, which held classes during the summer months, was a major contributor. Also, the Whitby Brass Band and the O'Neill Performing Arts music department held events at the church. These groups, as well as the long-term renters, have made the church an active and vibrant place and have exposed the church to many visitors.

The committee was instrumental in the establishment and participation of an Interfaith Property group. The group includes 10 local churches, including United, Anglican and Free Methodist participants, and meets regularly to share information and expertise.

Respectfully submitted by:  
King Whitney  
Chair, Property Committee

# MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL

## Ministry & Personnel

Two thousand and twenty three was a year of challenge and change. In early 2022 our beloved Minister of Music, Margaret Motum retired after many years of leading us in musical worship. A Search Committee was formed and in October 2022 we hired Linda Hunter, an accomplished musician who plays both piano and organ.

May 2023 was the tenth anniversary of our Minister of Faith Formation, Cathy Shaw. Her many talents were celebrated during a special church service.

Our Lead Minister, Rev. Michelle Robinson made the decision to take a Restorative Leave in June, 2023 until the present time, January, 2024. Her return is expected in February, 2024.

During Rev. Michelle's leave, Rev. Dan Yourkevich and Rev. Sue Genge have been responsible for Pastoral Care. Our Lay Licensed Worship Leaders and Cathy Shaw have provided pulpit supply. We are most grateful to all of them for their support.

Linda Hunter retired from her position as Minister of Music in September, 2023. She has graciously agreed to stay in the position until a replacement can be found. A Search Committee continues to entertain applications.

Staff increases were approved by Council as part of the 2024 Budget.

Three M&P Committee members will be leaving the committee at the end of this term. Recruitment efforts are underway.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Maureen Dingman, Chair of M&P  
Jocelyne Fry, Co-Chair

# Stewardship



In an attempt to be concise and to consolidate everything that was accomplished in 2023, this is what is currently playing online:

... *“So this is Christmas and what have you done?  
Another year over, a new one just begun...”*  
(being sung by John Lennon & Yoko Ono)!!

Well, let’s start at the beginning:

1. In Jan. 2023, we decided to follow the UC’s “Called to be the Church: The Journey” whereby recognizing “the abundance of the harvest, the gifts of creation and the contribution of our human labour inspired by God’s guidance and Grace”.
2. In February, we met with an amazing group of volunteers to plan our fundraising activities for 2023, as we were presented with a possible \$80,000 deficit budget.
3. Fundraisers included: Westminster’s Got Talent; BBQ Pick up dinner; A trunk sale; Elvis In the House concert; a Poinsettia Sale; and culminating with a wonderful Christmas Bazaar.
4. We coordinated a beautiful tree and plaque dedication in September, to honour the Dynamic Duo, Joan and Harry Sanderson
5. Planned out in June, we ran our annual Fall Stewardship Campaign with a strong focus on volunteerism and focused tithing, from September 24th to October 15th, culminating with over 85 responses, from increased giving to increased PAR usage!!
6. With our Ministerial Administrative Assistant, Amy Medlock’s help, we presented a well received video, “Why I Give” at the end of our campaign, and would like to express thanks to Joanne, Gord, Michelle and Jordyn!!

All of this would not have been possible without YOUR continued support and help!! You came through by attending the fundraisers, lovingly giving your time, your efforts and expertise, and your financial support to ensure Westminster would “Close the \$50,000 Gap”, continue to serve the Community every Tuesday morning, be fully staffed, and would remain a safe, clean place for all of our users to visit, to work and to worship. We continue to welcome many newcomers with open arms and they in turn bring their families and friends. That speaks volumes to you all for being the amazing, joyful folks that you are.

By “investing in Westminster” you ensured that giving to Mission and Service again surpassed previous years’ contributions thereby continuing to transform lives at home and internationally by building a better world “together”. Your stewardship and discipleship are so evident in all that you do!!

Westminster is a better place, led by God’s Grace, and supported by His people!! We are truly humbled and truly grateful. As we continue into another year, we do need you to consider volunteering by joining our Stewardship/finance Committee. We are a small but, dare I say mighty, team! Without the tireless and selfless efforts of Paul Pierson, Brian Woodlock and Monica Veenstra, we could not do all that was done in 2023. We have found that with many hands, the work is easier so our closing request is for your kind consideration in ‘lending your hand’ and we look forward to hearing from you!! With grateful hearts, thank you again.

Respectfully submitted by  
Margaret Suepaul, Chair of Stewardship

# Trustees



The Board of Trustees would like to again recognize the work and support by our Staff, the Congregation and the Volunteers who continue to make Westminster UC a success and integral part of our community.

The United Church of Canada's new self-insurance plan was phased in 2023. The new plan implemented will reduce premiums and all policies will be renewed annually on December 1st. From March 1st, 2022 to March 1st, 2023, our premiums were \$17,413.60. Then from March 1st, 2023 to December 1st, 2023 (new plan) the premiums were \$9,655.20 (9 months phase-in). Now with full implementation from December 1st, 2023 to December 1st, 2024 our premiums will be \$14,122.08. This new plan has reduced our annual premiums by \$3,290.64.

We have an update to the \$40,000 Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan from the Federal Government and an expansion loan of \$20,000 in 2021. Originally, the loan was due December 31st, 2022 with \$20,000 to be forgiven if this deadline was met but the Government changed the loan due date to the end of December 2023. Any portion of the loan not repaid by the deadline is subject to 5% per annum interest starting January 1, 2024. Council approved and our Treasurer has paid this amount resulting in forgiveness of the \$20,000 and any loan interest that we would have incurred.

Our Church was bequeathed a generous gift of \$69,089 from the wills of Dr. Harry and Joan Sanderson with the stipulation to apply these funds towards our mortgage. Harry and Joan were integral and supportive members of our church community for many years and a letter was sent to their families expressing our appreciation and how beloved they were to our members. This gift has reduced our mortgage and our monthly payments significantly.

At the end of 2023, we acknowledge the generosity of our members to support Westminster financially. Our Council and Stewardship/Finance Committee continue to look at ways to close the gap between revenues and expenses to hopefully eliminate the deficit.

Board of Trustees Members in 2023

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Year Started</b>
Ron Motum	Chair	2014
Wendy Ekker	Member	2019
Bob Neil	Member	2013
Jim Ward	Member	2015

The Rev. Michelle Robinson, Minister by virtue of UCC policy, sits as a member of the Board of Trustees. Please consider becoming a Trustee.

Respectfully submitted by  
Ron Motum – Chair

# Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee



We were pleased to welcome Gary Willert to CDMC which brought our membership to eight: Bill Shepherd (Chair), Mary Shepherd (Recorder) Kathleen ffolliott, Dennis Sallans, Kaireen Adamson, Wendy Ekker, Gail Brimbecom and Gary Willert.

Mission: To engage Westminster's congregation, both collectively and individually in the mitigation of climate disruption and further, to facilitate other faith communities doing the same.

Activities during 2023 included the following:

- Monthly newsletter submissions.
- Attendance at rallies - Stop Sprawl Durham, Climate Justice Durham and Global March to End Fossil Fuels at Queen's Park.
- Signing petitions related to protecting farmlands and wetlands.
- Communication and advocacy with local politicians.
- Ongoing communication with 30 faith communities in Durham Region, offering to meet and share resources. We have received requests for information and support and an invitation to speak at Brooklin United Church in 2024.
- Communication with our United Church National Office and East Central Ontario Regional Council (ECORC) in an attempt to connect with faith communities across the region and the country to share resources.
- Display in gym on Welcome Sunday.
- Pause for the Planet - The committee initiated two minute presentations during worship to offer ideas for climate disruption mitigation.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Brimbecom (on behalf of Bill Shepherd)



# Manning Mews Non-Profit Homes Corp.

Manning Mews has 20 one-bedroom units for seniors in 5 pods on Manning Road near Garrard. 50% of the units have been and continue to be offered as rent geared to income (RGI) at no more than 30% of the tenant's income as reported on their previous year's tax assessment.

This Outreach Mission Project of Westminster United Church in Whitby was begun in 1978 with the approval of The United Church of Canada (UCC). The Corporation was established to reduce the liability to the Church and permit Manning Mews to qualify for CMHC mortgages and subsidies. The Corporation has run for over 45 years at no cost or liability to the Church.

The Corporation has recently been operated under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Region of Durham. The subsidy under this MOU for the 10 RGI tenants helps keep the rents well below average for the area while still paying for normal operations and maintenance. In 2023 negotiations were begun to replace the MOU (due to end on March 31, 2024) with a Service Agreement for 10 years that would offer higher subsidies and permit larger capital projects to rejuvenate the HVAC and other aging systems. A Financial Grade Energy Audit was commissioned to examine the potential costs and potential energy saving projects and enable applications for grants and loans.

At the May 2023 monthly meeting of Westminster's Council, the annual members meeting of the corporation was held and the audited financials were presented to the members. Due to a lack of directors nominated by Westminster, 2 more external directors have been recruited recently to fill vacancies. Both of the new directors have a financial/banking background. Training in facilities management and governance is available to any new applicants wishing to become directors. At the end of the year, the CMHC sponsored mortgage was renewed at an interest rate of about 5%. The principal of this mortgage was used to buy the land from the church.

Respectfully submitted, on behalf of Manning Mews Non Profit Homes Corporation by  
Arthur J. Smith, President



# ECORC



Region 11 or East Central Ontario Regional Council, or ECORC is the next level of church governance above the local Community of Faith. Westminster United Church has 4 representatives: Arthur Smith, Paul Kneebone, Gail Brimbecom and Susan Pleasance.

Many thanks to Shirley Penny for her years of faithful service as our ECORC representative and who retired in the fall. Gail Brimbecom is our new representative. ECORC held two meetings, one in the spring and one in fall that were in person and online. There was an average of 150-175 people who attended each gathering. John Bowman, Helen Bowman, Paul Kneebone, Carol O'Neil and Susan Pleasance were part of the 30 Licenced Lay Worship Leaders that were recognized by the Regional Council in the fall. Paul Kneebone and Susan Pleasance serve on the LLWL Forum and Arthur Smith serves on the Mission Through Property and Finance.

Locally, St. Stephens of Oshawa and Prince Albert United Churches closed their doors in 2023. New ministries have begun in the following churches: Claremont with Rev. Sandra Farrow, Mount Zion with Rev. Karen Smart, St. Mark's in Whitby with Rev. Steven Davis, Orono with Michelle Hoffman DM, Kingsview with Rev. Mary-Jane Hobden, and Kedron with Rev. Stephanie Richmond. Pickering Village-Audley, Dunbarton-Fairport, Northminster and Scugog Island United Churches presently do not have a minister.

Respectively submitted, Susan Pleasance

# United Church Women



Westminster's UCW (United Church Women), is a group of women who meet at 7:00pm on the first Monday of the month (except for July and August) for a time of worship, entertainment/educational programs, business and fellowship. This past year we participated in and learned about: Westminster's own Pantry, Westminster's Bridge to a New Home,

bible study, Amica Retirement Homes, Parkwood's Wartime Kitchen program, National Truth and Reconciliation Day, and self improvement topics. We hosted the Presbyterian Fall Gathering and enjoyed a summer potluck meal in June and our Christmas potluck in December at the church.

Our heartfelt gratitude to Tena D. and Joanne Y. who helped with the various UCW and Outreach and Food Drives.

We sent out 95 cards to people within our church family and community (special birthdays, sympathy, thinking of you, Easter, get well, and Thanksgiving and Christmas). In the past year, we mourned the losses of Eileen Greenaway and Joan Sanderson. They worked tirelessly in our church and in the UCW and their cheerful presence, joyful smiles and Eileen's beautiful handwork will be missed.

Throughout the year we collected and continue to collect used stamps, hearing aids, eye glasses, bread tags, pop tabs, and knitted goods that are used to fund worthwhile projects locally and worldwide through the Presbyterian and we welcome your contributions of these items. They can be placed in the wooden box in the narthex.

In 2023, we catered 5 funerals, 2 baptisms, 2 church lunches, 10 Living Alone Luncheons, and had 5 Fundraisers. From the monies we raised, we donated to: United Church's Gifts With Vision projects to honour our wonderful staff, Camp Quin-Mo-Lac, The Refuge in Oshawa, Hearth Place in Oshawa, Sick Kids (Gillie Beans Fund), Durham Outlook (St. Vincent Kitchen), Presbyterian UCW, ECOR UCW, National UCW, and the following Westminster United Church groups: Youth Group, The Pantry, Bridge to a New Home, Christmas Hamper Program and General Funds. Over \$10,600.00 was given to Westminster United Church in 2023.

Together with you and your support in so many ways we were and are able to plant seeds of change within our church and within our community. You made our success possible.

Respectively submitted by, Susan Pleasance

# United Church Women Financials

## Westminster United Church Women

### Statement of Financial Position Dec. 31, 2023

Bank Balance Jan. 1, 2023	\$	3,030
Deposit	\$	17,609
Cheques Cashed	-\$	12,362
Cheques Outstanding	-\$	7,052
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,226</b>

<b>Petty Cash</b>	\$	150
<b>Deposit</b>	\$	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,376</b>

DUCA Share		1
Donation to Westminster	\$	10,540

# Westminster United Church Women

## Revenue and Expenses 2023

### Revenue

Acc.#	Budget	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
100 Caterings	\$ 8,000	\$ 220	\$ 1,698	\$ 372	\$ 505	\$ 1,445	\$ 745	\$ 800		\$ 805	\$ 2,496	\$ 530	\$ 1,624	\$ 11,240
110 Donations														\$ -
120 Mother's Day Tea	\$ 900				\$ 1,160	\$ 1,040								\$ 2,200
130 Offerings														\$ -
140 Yard Sale	\$ 1,000				\$ 2,369									\$ 2,369
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 9,900</b>	<b>\$ 220</b>	<b>\$ 1,698</b>	<b>\$ 372</b>	<b>\$ 4,034</b>	<b>\$ 2,485</b>	<b>\$ 745</b>	<b>\$ 800</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 805</b>	<b>\$ 2,496</b>	<b>\$ 530</b>	<b>\$ 1,624</b>	<b>\$ 15,809</b>

### Expenses

200 Banking/Office	\$ 50						\$ 179					\$ 50		\$ 229
210 Catering	\$ 3,000	\$ 134	\$ 559	\$ 224	\$ 268	\$ 1,089	\$ 375	\$ 190		\$ 187	\$ 760	\$ 151	\$ 450	\$ 4,386
220 Charity Donations	\$ 1,000													\$ -
Camp Quin-Mo-Lac														\$ 300
Hearth Place														\$ 300
SickKids														\$ 300
Refuge	\$ 1,000													\$ 300
Durham Outlook														\$ 300
Westminster Youth	\$ 300					\$ 50				\$ 100		\$ 75	\$ 250	\$ 75
230 General Fund					\$ 75									\$ 475
240 Presbyterial														\$ -
Burse														\$ -
Cross Cultural														\$ -
Lakeridge														\$ -
Membership	\$ 150					\$ 150								\$ -
UCW Native Fund														\$ -
250 UC Mission & Service	\$ 3,000					\$ 6,000							\$ 100	\$ 250
260 Westminster UC	\$ 300												\$ 300	\$ 300
270 World Develop. & Relief												\$ 100	\$ 4,300	\$ 10,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,800</b>	<b>\$ 134</b>	<b>\$ 559</b>	<b>\$ 224</b>	<b>\$ 343</b>	<b>\$ 7,289</b>	<b>\$ 554</b>	<b>\$ 190</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 287</b>	<b>\$ 760</b>	<b>\$ 376</b>	<b>\$ 6,900</b>	<b>\$ 17,614</b>
Surplus/Deficit	\$ 1,100	\$ 86	\$ 1,139	\$ 148	\$ 3,691	\$ 4,804	\$ 191	\$ 610	\$ -	\$ 518	\$ 1,736	\$ 154	\$ 5,275	\$ 1,805

# Sparks, Embers, Guides and Rangers

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31st Whitby Sparks and Embers meet on Tuesday nights from 6:30 - 8:00. We are officially one unit (5-8 year olds). We always enjoy going on hikes, making crafts, selling our chocolate mint cookies, selling our chocolate and vanilla classic cookies and working on

badge work. We participate in a Thinking Day event every February, visit the Oshawa Museum and go camping 2-3 times a year. New for 2023, the name Brownies was changed to Embers for inclusion and the kids have been embracing the change.

**18th Whitby Guides** meet Monday nights from 6:30 - 8:30. Along with learning about the Guiding organization around the world, we are learning about differences in Guiding and us as individuals. Thank you for allowing us to use the church to teach our Girl Guides what Believing in Themselves is all about!

**4th Whitby Pathfinders/Rangers** meet every other Wednesday night from 6:30 – 8:30. They are a small unit so right now they do a lot of bridging with another Pathfinder unit.

We would all like to thank Westminster United Church for allowing us to use your gym and meeting rooms.



## 11th Whitby Scout Group

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Westminster is a proud Charter Holder for the 11th Whitby Scouts (which includes all levels of Scouting... Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers and Rovers) and supports the incredible programs offered to the youth of our community and the stellar leadership that is present at all levels.

Cathy Shaw, Westminster's Minister of Faith Formation continues to be a liaison between the 11th Whitby Executive and the church. While most groups do not meet at the church, the 11 Whitby Cubs now call Westminster home. They meet on Wednesday evenings and are "grateful for the space that has allowed us to learn new skills (like first aid), prepare for outings and camps, do crafts, play games and have fun learning about Scouting"

Working together in partnership has been a blessing to both parties. Many thanks to the 11th Whitby members and leaders for their ongoing support of our Pantry through their annual Christmas Parking Lot Parade/Food Drive and for the many other donations and services they offer throughout the year. Westminster and the 11th Whitby Scouts value their partnership and are looking forward to another wonderful year together.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cathy Shaw, Minister of Faith Formation



# Treasurer's Report - 2023 Results

**Thank you** for continuing to share your time, talents, and finances to ensure that Westminster remains a vibrant Community of Faith for so many.

We are delighted to report that we ended 2023 with an operating surplus of \$19,000. As communicated in our previous letters, our plan to reduce the deficit had 4 components to it:

1. *Continue to actively monitor ongoing expenses.*
  - Update: Jan – Dec 2023 \$12,000 below plan.
  
2. *Continue to look for ways to increase revenues.*
  - Update: **Rental Income** was **ahead** of original plan by **\$25,000** for the year. **One-time donations** were **ahead** of original plan by **\$19,000** for the year.
  
3. *Make use of various government and United Church grants. (recap for 2023)*
  - Received \$20,000 Grant from United Church for Thriving Ministries
  - Community Foundations Grant (federal government). \$45,000 received to support upgrade technology contract role for online delivery of youth programming.
  
4. *Congregational ask - increase in offerings to the Local Fund.*
  - Update: **Thank you to all who have responded.** To date we have increased our forecast to Local Fund by **\$12,000**.

## “Close the Gap” Summary

<b>Goal</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>Full Year Results:</b>	
Increase Annual Rental Income	\$25,000
Increase in Annual Local Fund Contributions	\$12,000
Donations over budget	\$19,000
Reduction in expenses	\$12,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 68,000</b>

**We exceeded our goal!! Thank you!**

## ***Other 2023 Highlights***

### **Supporting Our Community**

- Mission and Service \$31,000 (\$5,000 over budget)
- Pantry Donations \$20,000 (\$8,000 over budget)
- Christmas Hampers and Tin Can Donations \$11,000 (\$5,000 over budget)

### **Looking ahead:**

Inflation continues to increase costs for everyone, and Westminster is not immune. We are forecasting a \$23,500 deficit for 2024 compared to a forecast deficit last year of \$55,500.

We have made significant progress in reducing our deficits and with continued focus and your support should be able to reduce further. As a result of the strong financial results for 2023, we will be able to cover the project deficit for this year and maintain our focus on our Mission and Vision objectives.

### **Thank you!**

We are extremely grateful for your positive responses as we worked together to “Close the Gap.”

Whether through volunteering your time, sharing your many talents, or giving your financial resources, collectively and with God’s guidance, we are making a difference in people’s lives.

Paul Pierson  
Treasurer



# WUC – STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – LOCAL FUND

For the Calendar Year 2023

## WUC - STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (Local Fund)

ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022		ACTUAL 2023	FORECAST 2024
280,119	274,823	268,086	<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		
			Local Fund Offerings	297,749	300,000
23,671	28,973	43,412	Local Fund Donations (excluding The Pantry & Christmas Hampers)	49,433	35,000
<b>303,790</b>	<b>303,796</b>	<b>311,497</b>	<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>347,182</b>	<b>335,000</b>
37,669	62,547	64,341	Rentals	106,079	120,000
4,537	7,246	3,077	Net Fundraising	7,954	5,000
9,865	3,062	5,343	Other Income	5,016	4,000
<b>355,861</b>	<b>376,650</b>	<b>384,258</b>	<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>466,231</b>	<b>464,000</b>
			<b>EXPENSES</b>		
257,564	253,806	281,218	Salaries, Benefits & Contractor Fees	279,696	319,652
65,949	68,860	77,703	Property	87,148	85,000
8,010	32,040	32,040	Mortgage Payment (P&I)	29,481	26,000
19,859	19,509	15,470	UCC Assessment	16,874	16,760
6,678	7,012	7,086	Stewardship & Finance	12,499	15,800
1,841	1,494	1,320	Outreach (excluding The Pantry & Christmas Hampers)	2,224	3,350
4,888	5,472	4,752	Office	4,181	5,000
2,933	4,104	6,714	Worship	4,147	4,800
3,113	3,748	4,250	Christian Education	4,760	4,050
4,421	3,270	0	Capital Expenditures (using Local Fund)	0	0
2,858	2,316	2,902	Bank/PAR Charges	1,925	2,500
0	1,013	1,324	M&P Committee	875	1,000
1,032	958	816	Wellness	1,430	1,600
2,235	361	175	Council & Trustees	332	250
0	150	299	Other - Small Groups, Pancake Supper, ACM Lunch, Welcome Bank	1,345	1,600
173	0	25	Communications Committee	25	100
<b>381,554</b>	<b>404,113</b>	<b>436,094</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>446,942</b>	<b>487,462</b>
<b>-25,693</b>	<b>-27,464</b>	<b>-51,836</b>	<b>NET SURPLUS (+) / DEFICIT (-)</b>	<b>19,289</b>	<b>-23,462</b>
<b>Other Revenues</b>					
		2,349	Government Rebate - Hydro & Gas		0
9,363	0	0	Government Rent Subsidy	0	0
71,863	11,138	0	Government Wage Subsidy	0	0
0	0	10,000	Government Grant (Anti-Hate) Receipt		0
0	0	-10,027	Security System Expenditure		0
			COVID Loan Grant	20,000	
			United Church Grant	20,000	
			Restorative Care	24,214	
			Durham Community Foundations Grant	45,000	
<b>81,226</b>	<b>11,138</b>	<b>2,322</b>	<b>TOTAL OTHER REVENUES</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>-23,462</b>

**\*Note:** Net Fundraising revenues are equally divided with the Capital Fund. Restorative Care Insurance paid to WUC was offset against Salaries for months of June and July. For the remaining months the payment was not offset against salaries but allocated to Ministerial Investments Reserve.

# WUC - STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – OTHER FUNDS

## For the Calendar Year 2023

ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022		ACTUAL 2023	FORECAST 2024
			<b><i>SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING MINISTRY</i></b>		
0	0	1,000	UCC "Seeds of Hope" Grant Income	0	0
0	0	5,000	Transfer from Reserved Funds for Ministerial Investments	6,000	0
0	0	6,000	Spiritual Well-Being Expense	6,000	0
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b><i>CAPITAL FUND</i></b>		
0	3,500	5,586	Offerings	9,726	15,000
0	0	3,077	Net Fundraising Revenues	7,954	5,000
0	0	0	Expenditures	3,025	3,300
<b>0</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>8,663</b>	<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>14,655</b>	<b>16,700</b>
			<b><i>THE PANTRY</i></b>		
14,596	19,654	18,678	Financial Donations	20,271	18,000
9,075	12,534	18,214	Expenditures	21,029	20,000
<b>5,521</b>	<b>7,120</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>-758</b>	<b>-2,000</b>
			<b><i>CHRISTMAS HAMPERS</i></b>		
8,304	7,925	5,989	Financial Donations	8,781	9,000
5,752	9,150	7,826	Expenditures	7,258	9,000
<b>2,553</b>	<b>-1,225</b>	<b>-1,837</b>	<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b><i>MISSION &amp; SERVICE</i></b>		
21,184	25,371	28,503	Offerings	31,066	32,000
21,184	25,371	28,503	Disbursement to UCC M&S Fund	31,066	32,000
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b><i>Outreach Initiatives ( Tin Cans)</i></b>		
			Financial Donations	2,423	2,000
			Expenditures	0	0
			<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>2,423</b>	<b>2,000</b>
			<b><i>Federal Grant ( Audio and Youth Program)</i></b>		
			Funds Received	45,000	0
			Expenditures	16,445	28,555
			<b>Net Cashflow</b>	<b>28,555</b>	<b>-28,555</b>

### Note:

- \$2599 was transferred from the Capital Fund reserve to pay for engineering firm for mechanical plans (HVAC).
- \$1250 was transferred from the Ministerial Investment reserve to assist with travelling costs for El Salvador Mission trip.
- \$6000 was transferred from the Ministerial Investment reserve to assist with the Spiritual Well-being Ministry project

## DONATIONS BREAKDOWN (LOCAL FUND)

	<b>ACTUALS JAN - DEC 2023</b>
Bequest (for Local Fund)	22,279
From UCW	10,180
In Memoriams	8,705
Easter Flowers	2,335
For Bridge to a New Home	1,085
Gifts in Kind (stock donations)	966
Freewill Offerings (Pancake Supper, Welcome Back Sunday, etc.)	932
From Trunk Sale	744
Backpacks	645
Other Donations	1,562
<b>DONATIONS TO LOCAL FUND</b>	<b>49,433</b>
Bequest for from Sandersons (for Mortgage)	69,091
Christmas Hampers	8,781
Donations Received for Outreach Initiatives (tin cans)	2,423
<b>TOTAL DONATIONS</b>	<b>129,728</b>

**FUND RAISING BREAKDOWN**

	<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>NET</b>
Bazaar	\$ 7,771	\$ 1,085	\$ 6,686
Elvis Concert	\$ 3,266	\$ 896	\$ 2,369
BBQ Dinner	\$ 2,226	\$ 638	\$ 1,588
Talent Show	\$ 2,212	\$ -	\$ 2,212
Poinsettias	\$ 1,785	\$ 1,081	\$ 704
Trivia Night	\$ 1,731	\$ 482	\$ 1,249
Loblaws Cards <u>Comissions</u>	\$ 1,100	\$ -	\$ 1,100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 20,090</b>	<b>\$ 4,182</b>	<b>\$ 15,908</b>
	<b>\$ 10,045</b>	<b>\$ 2,091</b>	<b>\$ 7,954</b>

**50% Split between Local Fund and Capital Fund**

*Loblaws Cards Commissions are 5% of the Face Value of the Loblaws Cards sold.*

## ALLOCATION OF AVAILABLE FUNDS

	as at Dec 31, 2022	2023 Net Outflow (-) / Inflow (+)	as at Dec 31, 2023
<b>RESERVE FUNDS (not restricted)</b>			
Non-Allocated Funds	34,079	58,895	92,974
Contingency for day-to-day operations	30,286	0	30,286
Reserve for Capital Investments	44,416	-2,599	41,818
Reserve for Ministerial Investments	39,101	16,964	56,065
<b>TOTAL RESERVE FUNDS</b>	<b>147,882</b>	<b>73,261</b>	<b>221,142</b>
<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>			
Bequest for Mortgage	0	0	0
Federal Grant	0	28,545	28,545
The Pantry Fund	13,104	-759	12,346
Capital Fund	12,162	14,655	26,817
Christmas Hampers	0	1,524	1,524
Outreach Initiatives	78	2,345	2,423
<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>	<b>25,344</b>	<b>46,310</b>	<b>71,654</b>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS</b>	<b>173,226</b>	<b>119,571</b>	<b>292,796</b>

### Change in Reserve Funds (\$73,261)

#### Add:

- Operating Surplus \$19,289,
- UC Grant \$20,000,
- Restorative Care Payments \$24,214,
- COVID loan grant \$20,000 subtract.

#### Subtract:

- \$1250 from the Ministerial Investment reserve to assist with travelling costs for El Salvador Mission trip. (5 Westminster members attending)
- \$6000 from the Ministerial Investment reserve to assist with the Spiritual Well-being Ministry project (completed June 30, 2023)

### **Change in Restricted Funds (\$46,310)**

#### Add:

- Grant for Audio Upgrade and Youth Program \$28,545 (originally \$45,000)
- Capital Fund donations net of expenses \$14,655.
- Outreach and Hamper donations exceeding expenses \$3,869.

#### Subtract:

- Pantry expenses exceeding donations \$759.

## LONG TERM LIABILITIES

### Mortgage Payable

2.5% interest, monthly blended repayments of \$2,158 due July 2034.

as of Dec 31, 2022		329,586
Principal Paid in 2023		90,804
Interest Paid in 2023		7,777
UCC MORTGAGE LOAN - as of Dec 31, 2023		238782

*Notes: Principal payment includes lumpsum payment from Sanderson Estate.  
As result of lump sum payment, monthly payment was reduced from \$2670 to \$2,158.*

### Canada Emergency Business Account Loan

This loan represents the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan repayable on or before December 31, 2023, with 0% interest. Up to \$20,000 of this loan is forgivable if certain conditions are met.

Balance as of Dec 31, 2023, \$0

### Operating Line of Credit

An operating line of credit in the amount of \$25,000 bearing interest at the rate of prime plus 7% is secured by all general assets of the Church. There is no balance owing on this line of credit as of December 31, 2023.

### Toronto United Church Council Loan

A \$33,000 loan was taken out to finance the HVAC replacement for the gymnasium. First Term (years 1 to 5) has an interest rate of 0%. The balance remaining unpaid on the 5th anniversary date shall constitute the principal owing for the Second Term. Second Term (years 6 - 10) has an interest rate of 1% per annum, calculated monthly. Repayment commences February 2023.

Balance as of Dec 31, 2023, \$29,975

# Westminster 2024 Council and Committee List

Rev. Michelle Robinson Minister of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care  
 Cathy Shaw Minister of Faith Formation  
 Linda Hunter Minister of Music  
 Ava Tomlinson Council Chairperson  
 Paul Pierson Treasurer  
 Shane Suepaul Past Chair  
 Council Secretary

TRUSTEES (10 Yrs.)		MINISTRY & PERSONNEL (5 Yrs.)	
(Chair)	2014	Maureen Dingman (Co-Chair)	2018
Bob Neil	2013	Jocelyne Fry (Co-Chair)	2020
Jim Ward	2015	Lorraine Joynt	2023
Wendy Ekker	2019	Katie Bonikowsky	2023
Shane Suepaul	2023	Janet Hendrikse	2024
Ed Rosdobutko	2024	Peter Spratt	2024
Ted Phillips	2024	<b>REGIONAL COUNCIL REPS (3 Yrs.)</b>	
Barb Auchterlonie	2024	Arthur Smith	2011
Christopher Pegg	2024	Paul Kneebone	2012
<b>STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE (3 Yrs.)</b>		Susan Pleasance	2016
Margaret Suepaul (Chair)	2019	Gail Brimbecom	2023
Paul Pierson (Treasurer)	2022	<b>CLIMATE DISRUPTION MITIGATION</b>	
Brian Woodlock	2017	Gail Brimbicom (Chair)	2019
Monica Veenstra	2019	Kathleen ffolliott	2019
Lisa Wells	2024	Dennis Sallins	2019
<b>WORSHIP (3 Yrs.)</b>		Wendy Ekker	2022
Heather Von Zuben (Chair)	2018	Gary Willert	2023
Ava Tomlinson	2018	Kaireen Adamson	2023
Heather Montague	2015	<b>UCW (Term varies)</b>	
Ed Rosdobutko (Head Usher)	2018	Tena Darroch (Pres)	2017
<b>COMMUNICATIONS (3 Yrs.)</b>		Carol O'Neil (Past-Pres)	2012
Bev Crumb (Chair)	2014	Susan Pleasance (Sec)	2014
Mary-Lynn Fraser	2018	Shirley Penny (Treasurer)	2018
Lori Rosdobutko	2014		

<b>PROPERTY (3 Yrs.)</b>		<b>OUTREACH (3 Yrs.)</b>	
Bob Neil ( <b>Interim Chair</b> ) (HVAC, Buds & Shrubs, Weed Whackers)	2014	<b>(Chair)</b>	
King Whitney	2019	Cathy Cherwinka	2017
Larry Laycock (Specialty Projects)	2018	Joanne MacPherson	2014
Dean Mortimer (Chairman Group Team Lead)	2014	Debbie Joyce	2015
Dave Summers (Coord-Water Systems)	2009	Paul Kneebone	2015
Jack Darroch (Coord-Carpentry)	2017	Joanne Yourkevich	2019
Bob Dingman	2014	Linda Moroziuk	2022
Jim Fielder (IT)	2022	Don Fry (Parish Mosaic Subcommittee Co-Chair)	2016
Michelle Alston	2024	Gail Brimbecom (Parish Mosaic Subcommittee Co-Chair)	2016
Stewart Pegg	2024	Peter Spratt	2016
Gordon Kirk	2024	Shirley Penny	2023
Samuel Ojilere (Tech)	2024	Kirsten Grant	2024
<b>AD HOC PROPERTY</b>		Michelle Alston	2024
Shane Suepaul	2024	<b>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (3 Yrs.)</b>	
King Whitney	2024	<b>(Chair)</b>	2022
Larry Laycock	2024	Cheryl Nicholson	2015
Brian Woodlock	2024	Susan Shkolnik	2014
Bob Neil	2024	Michelle Alston	2015
Paul Pierson	2024	Susan Pleasance	2014
UCW Rep	2024	Joanna Shaw	2019
Outreach Rep	2024	Téa Whyte	2024
<b>WELLNESS (3 Yrs.)</b>		Debbie Pegg	2024
Crystal Smith ( <b>Co-Chair</b> )	2020	<b>NOMINATIONS (2 Yrs.)</b>	
Carol O'Neil ( <b>Co-Chair</b> )	2021	Paul Pierson	2016
Paul Kneebone (Friendly Visitors, Phone Tree)	2021	Shane Suepaul	2020
Téa Whyte	2024		
Mikaela Wright	2024		
Mike Nicholson	2024		
Michelle Alston	2024		



# Draft Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting from Sunday, March 5th, 2023

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## We Gathered:

1. Shane Suepaul, our Council Chairperson, called us to order at 12:18 p.m. .

Shane extended a welcome to everyone joining us through all three different platforms. Thanks to all for your continued involvement in the support of Westminster United Church. Thank you for your love and care of our Westminster Community of Faith

2. Rev. Michelle Robinson Opening Prayer

A Moment of Remembrance for those that are no longer with us, in our congregation and within our community, we hold them within our hearts.

Janice Ovens

Milly Harding

Duane Pitchforth

Charles Broughton

Clayton Jarvis

Gregg Johnston

Margaret Hodder

Lew Yourkevich

Jo-Ann Vaughan

Grant Bennie

Margaret Dunk

Andrew Senko

Connor "Wisdom" Tomlinson

Marion Montgomery

Scott Huntley

Phyllis Raines

Shirley Howes

Gordon Adair

Fern Schad

Anna-Jane Sharrard  
Joan Sanderson  
Bill Beer

3. Motion re: voting privileges:

Shane Suepaul explained that the meeting will be taking place on three platforms: in person, on Zoom and on a live stream on YouTube. In person, raise hand, on Zoom, turn on picture and vote with thumbs up or down. Livestream, please type yay or nay.

Zoom is being monitored by Margaret Suepaul. YouTube livestream is being monitored by Ava Tomlinson.

Voting will be done by a show of hands. For those on the phone, when called on, a verbal yes or no or abstain.

Please be aware of the time lapse between live and online. Questions will be repeated in the sanctuary.

**MOTION:** Moved by Shane Suepaul, seconded by Brian Woodlock, that with the consent of the full members of Westminster United Church, adherents of the church will be permitted to vote on all matters. **Motion Carried.**

4. Motion to nominate a Chairperson:

**MOTION:** Moved by Cathy Cherwinka, seconded by Bob Dingman, that Joanne MacPherson be elected as Chairperson of our Annual Congregational Meeting.

**Motion Carried.**

5. Motion to nominate a Secretary:

**MOTION:** Moved by Ava Tomlinson , seconded by Eileen Whitney, that Katie Bonikowsky be elected as Secretary of our Annual Congregational Meeting.

**Motion Carried.**

6. Motion to accept the Agenda:

**MOTION:** Moved by Maureen Dingman , seconded by Jim Ward, that the agenda be approved as circulated and amended from the original printed in the annual report.

**Motion Carried.**

*amendments: no changes of Trustees, added approval of the new Statement of Inclusion*

## 7. Motion to accept Minutes of March 6th, 2022 Annual Meeting:

**MOTION:** Moved by Bob Dingman, seconded by Bill Shepard, that the minutes of the March 6th, 2022 annual meeting be approved as presented. **Motion Carried.**

## **Our Ministry:**

### 8. Minister's Comments: Rev. Michelle Robinson:

Annual Congregation Meetings are always great occasions to celebrate the ministry we share and all that has happened in the past year. It is an amazing story of God's presence and the way the spirit moves through people. We still catch ourselves speaking about returning to "normal", even though we know that the landscape has changed. That change brings challenge and opportunity; creating new spaces to gather and share, to listen and learn from one another, to love and serve, and to use creativity to reach out, build community and connect. If you are someone who has joined recently, we hope that our enthusiasm for the ministry we share has been enthusiastic without being overwhelming. Rev. Michelle's prayer is that God's

marvellous love can be felt here, and that you don't feel like you are attending the church but that you are the church. Every time someone new comes to the community, in person or online, we are made new. It releases us from the burden of thinking that we have to stay the same. We don't know what the future looks like, but we won't glimpse it if we aren't looking ahead. Behold, I make all things new, says the Lord.

One of the newest for us has been the use of technology. Most of us live hybrid lives moving through the digital and the physical all the time. Speaking in person with someone and then quickly sharing something through our phones or connecting online with others. Rev. Michelle mentions all this because it makes sense that our ministry reflects this reality. When we first started, it was seen as a temporary measure and the worry was presenting something online would prevent people from connecting in person. Habits have changed and we are learning that online engagement is still engagement. Going forward she wants to continue to lean into our online and in person ministries in creative ways, looking at what we can uniquely offer.

When we are clear and who we are and what we are about it makes it all easier. As stated in the Minister's report, with all the changes, our reason for being church is still the same. Rev. Michelle sees the church as existing to help each other grow in our relationship with God and with one another. Love God. Love Your Neighbour as

Yourself. As we go forward, we are called on to make decisions about what to do, take on and how to do it and we have that mission as our guide. Serving needs a well to draw on, so we sink our roots down deep into God's love and we branch out. It is amazing to see all of the reaching out that goes on at Westminster and is so glad that it is balanced by opportunities for grounding spiritual practice and faith connection with each other. Cruciform, the horizontal and the vertical.

To Cathy, Amy, Ronell, Margaret and Linda, Sara and our Voluntary Associate Ministers (VAMs) Rev. Dan and Rev. Sue, it has been a privilege to be a part of the ministry team with you this past year, to share in this beautiful and baffling thing called ministry. Thank you for working so hard and letting your lights shine. To Shane and Council, Treasurers Monica and now Paul, and all the chairs of our committees and groups, to the volunteers, thank you for your care, faith, energy, and creativity. You are cared about, needed and appreciated. Thank you, all of you, for being Christ's church. Rev. Michelle shared: I love you. I am grateful for this holy ground, to be in ministry with you and among you. A video from the past year was shared.

Joanne thanked Rev. Michelle for her dedication and talents. She is very loved as well.

#### 9. Minister of Faith Formation Comments: Cathy Shaw

It's amazing to see the video and to speak after Rev. Michelle -both covered a lot of the bases. When we started in 2020 it was a time of transition into the unknown. In 2021 the word we used a lot was pivot: weekly, daily, hourly even and we find ourselves in 2022 in transition again, in somewhat of the other direction, and coming back together in person. As we worship online and in person, it is incredible to see what this Community of Faith can accomplish and has accomplished. I have had opportunities to engage with new people and people who have been here a long time, and it is always interesting to hear the stories as to what has brought and kept us here. One thing I always say about Westminster is the can-do attitude of the people here. There is a commitment to making something work, even if we don't know how. This is done in all different areas and on different levels. Cathy loves that we have been able to rise to

the challenges in front of us. As this has gone on, groups like the Return to the Church Building committee have walked with us every step of the way. God has gifted all of us with something special and for that I am most grateful. It has been 10 years now of working with Rev. Michelle, and it is wonderful to be in team with so many wonderful

people. Today we don't want to live in the past so we celebrate the pivots and transitions, we celebrate our love for God and one another, our individuality, differences and our togetherness. We celebrate our ministry and how we reach out inwardly and outwardly to show others what God means to us and our world. Cathay gave thanks to colleagues, Rev. Michelle, Amy, Ronell, Sara, Linda and say goodbye to Margaret. Thanks to our VAMs, to volunteers, and to all of you. She feels so privileged and so blessed to be on this journey with all of you and to celebrate the spirit you possess. .

Joanne thanked Cathy, and shared that we celebrate her as well.

#### 10. Minister of Music Comments: Linda Hunter

This is Linda's first Annual Meeting at Westminster. Music is important in worship, we speak to one another with songs and hymns from the spirit. Music connects us, touches our soul, and is often referred to as food for the soul. Linda remembers being very little and sitting between her father and grandfather, and feeling such joy in singing a favourite hymn with voices raised to the Lord. Make a Joyful Noise all the Earth! We declare How Great Thou Art through singing. A favourite hymn is Let us Build a House where Love can Dwell. The chorus resonates because the moment Linda stepped into this place she knew we meant it. Music should be a blessing to one another, and so many people have been so welcoming. Thank you to staff, to Heather, Ava, Cathy and Sue for the Christmas pageant, thank you to choir and Salt for the enthusiasm and inspiration music you provide and thank you all for the opportunity to be the Minister of Music at WUC.

Joanne thanked Linda and wished her that this be the first of many reports at an Annual Meeting.

#### 11. Council Chair Comments: Shane Suepaul

Thanks to our staff, they are such a great team to work with and have made the job as Chair of Council much easier. To Council and committee members - without you and the staff this Community of Faith would not be here. A lot of work went into the Annual Report, a special thanks to Bev who spent many nights looking over the reports and

making sure that they were correct. Thanks to Katie and to Amy, big round of applause for putting it all together. Paul, Clarence, Gord, and the rest of the Tech team, thank you for all the work that you do as we continue to reach out to the community that we serve and live in. Special thanks to Rev Michelle, Paul and Margaret for all the support, and to Joanne for chairing the meeting. Special mention to RCB and to Tom for taking us through the pandemic and making sure that we followed all regulations keeping us all safe and together. When our Mission & Vision report came out, Shane made a commitment to follow through with that document. We have completed the first things that we wanted to do, but there is more work to be done. Thank you to CDMC for helping us remember to care for the world that we live in. Thanks to everyone here, in person and online, for caring about and contributing to the life of Westminster's Community of Faith.

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## 12. 2022 Financial Report: Paul Pierson

### 2022 Financial Report

Before even starting, thank you so much to everyone in the room, online and elsewhere for support of talents and time and finances. It takes a community to make the church work, and thank you so much for making us a vibrant community. Much work in the report is the work of Monica Veenstra who is joining online. Thank you for everything you have done for us.

Through the previous reporting that has been communicated, nothing should be a surprise. Paul highlighted that the deficit has been brought under \$50,000, as direct support came in slightly ahead of projected. The UCW made a donation of \$6000 after being sidelined for a few years. Rental revenues are picking up, this year should be back on track. Expenses are being controlled and thanks to Property for that. The Capital Fund was created and thank you for your generosity in supporting that. Our building is 20 years old and needs some work - Property again doing research on the best way to maintain and replace what needs to be fixed. Pre-covid The Pantry donations were \$2000, and last year they were \$20,000. The community support has been extraordinary. It is wonderful that we can run The Pantry, if sad that we need to. It is supported by 20 plus volunteers. Last year we moved our Mission and Service (M&S) contribution goal to \$26,000, and \$28,000 was donated. Between M&S, The Pantry and the Coldest Night of the Year Walk \$60,000 was given in support of our wider community, which doesn't include the volunteers that work with Durham

Outlook for the Needy, our Season of Service and the UCW contributions to local charities.

Comment from Rev. Dan Yourkevich - when a congregation has higher than 10% of local givings to support the wider community it is a good indication that it is a thriving community. Our report shows that givings have continued to increase and as long as we are doing for others we will continue to grow. The email from Stewardship regarding our financial situation, reminds us that our giving is about our relationship with God and what we give reflects that. All of us together can make a difference to change the direction, as we can not continue to run with the deficit.

The accountant statements will be made available and published once they are finalised. The accountant confirmed the great work Monica did. We took the statement up a notch to a Review of Engagement.

### 13. Motion to Accept Financial Reports for 2021

**MOTION:** Moved by Paul Pierson, seconded by Dan Yourkevich, to accept the 2022 Treasurer's Report as presented with the accountant's statement to be approved by council when it is finalised. **Motion Carried.**

### 14. 2023 Budget/Forecast

We are projecting a deficit of \$36,000 which comes after repaying the government loan we received during covid. Council has gone through expenditures, confident that they are watching closely. We are facing inflation, and we understand that everyone's circumstance is different. We continue to be very grateful for

all contributions of time, funds and talents. Paul shared the grid as a guideline to consider donations to lower our deficit. Paul is applying for grants to help the church, both from the government and The United Church of Canada. One is from The United Church of Canada to help thriving communities of faith that are affected by debt. Also grant programs are available to help support the work that is being done by property on HVAC. Sara's work as Small Group Coordinator is supported by funds received from a grant. Our M&S goal has been raised to \$27,000. We do have the funds this year to support the deficit, but after this year it becomes harder. It is good to have an element of faith, but faith requires some work on our part. Paul has no doubt that we will get there, even if not sure exactly how.

### 15. Motion to Accept Budget Forecast for 2023

**MOTION:** Moved by Paul Pierson, seconded by Brian Woodlock, to accept the 2023 Budget Forecast as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Joanne thanked Paul for taking on the challenge of Treasurer. We are very thankful for him and his work.

### **We Offer Ourselves:**

### 16. Motion to approve amended Statement of Inclusion : Gail Brimbecom

We received some feedback from the community regarding our Statement of Inclusion, indicating that we were using the wording of gender and gender identities which are the same. We have removed the word gender, and have also changed congregation to community of faith to reflect terminology that is being used by The United Church of Canada.

*We embrace people of all ages, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities, ethnicities, social and economic circumstances in the membership, ministry, leadership and life of this community of faith.*

**MOTION:** Moved by Gail Brimbecom , and seconded by Bill Shepard, that we approve the amended Statement of Inclusion. **Motion Carried**

### 17. Motion to approve Council and Committees list for 2023 as published

Shane shared his thanks to Paul and Monica for constantly keeping us aware of where we are financially, and for all of the work that goes into that. He also shared his thanks to the UCW for providing the lunch before the meeting.

Changes to the Council and Committee list:

The Return to the Church Building Committee has ended and Shane thanked the members, including chair Tom McNown for their work in keeping us safe and well informed.



Leaving Committees:

Clarence McPherson from Wellness

Sandra Cullen from Worship

Peter Sprat from M&P

Willian Von Zuben from Property

Joining:

Paul Pierson - Treasurer/Stewardship

Linda Moroziuk - Outreach

Lynn Majoros - Outreach

Gail Brimbecom - Parish Mosaic Co-Chair

Lorraine Joynt - M&P

Katie Bonikowsky - M&P

Shane thanked everyone volunteering in committees, we are always looking for more people.

**MOTION:** Moved by Shane Suepaul, seconded by Elizabeth Hatter, to accept the amended council and committee list for 2023. **Motion Carried.**

It was asked once, twice, three times if there were any other nominations from the floor. There was no response and it was declared that the nominations were closed.

18. Motion to Accept 2022 Annual Report as published

**MOTION:** Moved by Shane Suepaul and seconded by Amy Medlock , that the 2022 Annual Report that is on the WUC website be accepted. **Motion Carried.**

Joanne commented on the fact that we had an 81 page Annual Report during a pandemic, and this year it is 95 pages.

19. Outstanding, New or Other Business

Shane shared his thanks for working with exceptional people, and thanked everyone for coming out to take part in the meeting and supporting the community of faith that we all enjoy and love.

Joanne added her thanks that The Pantry has money left over from last year to help provide for clients, and they haven't had to turn anyone away or limit how often people can come in a month. Thank you to Cathy Cherwinka for chairing Outreach and all the work she does.

No items brought forward.

### **As We Go into the World:**

#### 20. Motion to Adjourn.

**MOTION:** Lynn Majoros moved by to adjourn our 2021 Annual meeting. **Motion Carried.**

#### 21. Closing Prayer: Rev. Michelle Robinson