



2024 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



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 Friends in Christ,
Sometimes when the year feels like it has rushed by, full of meetings, events, decisions, and sometimes heartbreak, it is easy to miss the ordinary wonders happening in the midst of it all.

I'm in awe of Westminster's resilience and compassion. At a time when the society around us feels increasingly fractured, more prone to outrage, the importance of communities of faith as places of welcome--where we listen, learn and grow together--cannot be overstated. I can't help but think that our greatest gift to the world just might be our commitment to being together. We need the church as a place where difference can exist without dividing. There are so many stories, moments both large and small, of you (individually and together) embodying a message of hope and compassion for one another whether in conversations after worship, shared meals, celebrating joys or making space for sorrow.

Meaningful worship experiences and outreach initiatives continue to touch lives within and beyond our church walls. Dedicated volunteers and staff continue to maintain our church facility enabling it to be a hub of activity not just for our community of faith, but for many community groups. Bible studies, fellowship groups, family events, kids' programs bring us together and remind us how we are held together in the story of Jesus Christ.

I am grateful for each of you: the staff, Council, committee members, leaders, teachers, prayer warriors, coffee makers, singers, knitters, sanctuary maintainers, gardeners, organizers, dreamers, servers and fellow travelers. Let's keep building the kind of community that reflects the love of God.

I look ahead to 2025 in anticipation, not because I know what the future holds, but because we can trust in the One who holds the future. The journey of faith is one of continual transformation, which does require courage and an openness to change on all our parts. Together we can be brave, trusting that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us in all that lies ahead.

With love and gratitude,
Rev. Michelle

2024 At A Glance

January/February

- 11th year participating in the Coldest Night of the Year Walk, Annual Pancake Dinner, Black History month service, Journey Through Lent, WUC Challengers joined an Eco-Challenge. Began monthly Living Alone Luncheon, Labyrinth Circle.

March

- Holy Week services including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and two Easter Sunday services, EGGstravaganza, Annual Congregation Meeting, World Day of Prayer.

April

- CDMC Curb Your Carbon presentation, Earth Sunday, Indoor Yard Sale, Photos began for Westminster's new Directory, Foodman Group BBQ sauce & soup base fundraiser.

May

- Linda Hunter retired as Minister of Music, Reta Strickland's last Sunday conduction the Senior Choir, Youth Initiative began online with Susie Noorlander, Newcomer's Potluck, UCW Mother's Day Tea, Dr. Benjamin Stein began as Minister of Music, Trivia Night Fundraiser.

Summer

- Picnic and J.a.M. Celebration Day, Takeout BBQ chicken dinner, Pride events including a multi-faith service and parade, a group from WUC attended the Mississauga's of Scugog Island First Nation Pow Wow, Multi Faith Prayer for Peace Service.

September

- Welcome Back Sunday, J.a.M. Kickoff, Season of Service focusing on backpacks, cards for long term care residents, Orange Shirt Day Sunday, Youth Paint Night.

October

- Stewardship Campaign, Thanksgiving Sunday, Elvis Show, Youth Group tour of Ontario Regiment RCAC Museum, food drive for congregation and community, Bible Study "How the Bible Actually Works".

November

- Indigenous Workshop with Dr. Peter Menzies, Christmas Bazaar, Remembrance Sunday, crisis intervention training by Jim Hung.

December

- A Quilted, Cozy Advent, Poinsettia sales, UCW Potluck dinner, ADVENTure Day, Advent and Christmas services including, Lessons and Carols, Longest Night, two Family Christmas Eve services, Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve, Christmas Hampers, Friendlies Cookie Drop, Youth Cookie Baking Night, Advent Bible Study.

Your Ministry Team



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



Cathy Shaw
Minister of Faith Formation



Dr. Benjamin Stein
Minister of Music



Amy Medlock
Ministerial Administrative Assistant



Ronell Paguio
Custodian



Rev. Sue Genge
Voluntary Associate Minister

VAM

Rev. Dan Yourkevich
Voluntary Associate Minister



Chair of Council

This is my first letter as Chair of Council. I would like to thank everyone for their love and support over my first 9 months as Chair. I feel truly blessed to be part of the Westminster Church family and the family of God.

During Advent, we waited for the Christ child to be born – we waited with Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. In Rev. Michelle’s message each week, our waiting was related to the sewing of a quilt – joining the quilt blocks of our community together as we waited. We learned that “We are blessed”, “We can’t do it alone”, to “Do the good that is ours to do” and that “Love is worth the risk”.

My hope is that we will carry these learnings into the rest of the year. As we live in this fractured world where we may sometimes feel that there is nothing that we can do to make change, I hope that we can remember this verse from 1 Peter 4:10 - “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

I have learned much through volunteering at Westminster. My faith journey has been strengthened through Sunday worship, participation in bible studies and working side-by-side with my Westminster family. I have been able to use my creative side to work alongside the Christian Education Team, teaching J.a.M. and baking with the Youth Group. On the Worship Team, I’ve learned more about the seasons of worship and the sacraments. As a member of the UCW, I’ve learned how to improve my baking and catering skills (from the experts!), helped organize bake and yard sales and participated in fellowship. I am very grateful for these experiences – the fellowship, the learning and the people I meet.

In 2024, Council began to prepare a new plan for the next few years at Westminster. A draft of this plan will be presented at the ACM in March 2025. I hope that everyone will review the plan, see God at work and consider where they might “jump-in” to support the work of God at Westminster and in our wider community.

Thank you and let us all “do the good that is ours to do”.

Respectfully submitted by Ava Tomlinson, Chair of Council



Minister of Faith Formation

This has been a year of change and transition, both professionally and personally. I am grateful that life does not stay the same and that the “only constant is change”. Without change we would not grow and thrive. The same can be said for our faith. Without movement we become stagnant, relying only on what

we used to know or operating in ways that keep us rooted in the past, grounded with no chance for forward movement.

While I was away last year working on my own growth, Westminster was doing the same in so many ways, especially when it comes to our young people. Much discernment took place on how best to accompany our children and youth on their faith journeys. Old ways were examined, creative ideas shared and new programs and curriculum implemented. There was no fear of change, only a focus on how to keep Jesus and God as the focal points of faith, and how to do so in this fast-paced, ever-changing world we live in.

Before taking my leave, I was pleased to be part of many events and activities that took place at Westminster, each one demonstrating what faith and community look like. I was fortunate to lead our Youth Group every Thursday and to learn and grow with these special young people. The Online Trivia that I designed each month brought many together, including from our own and other congregations and from different cities and provinces. The time spent each month offered fun, fellowship, laughter and a time to connect with others. Our Annual Easter EGGstravaganza was a special outpouring of love and service to the children and families from our community at large. It was another example of God’s love in action.

I am grateful and privileged to work at Westminster, a vibrant place that values all people and is willing to live into God’s word. I am also grateful to all who stepped in during my absence and to all who reached out and prayed for me. Your love and caring was so much a part of my healing.

I look forward to seeing what the future holds, as we continue to learn, grow and worship together.

Many Blessings, Cathy Shaw Minister of Faith Formation



Minister of Music

I began my tenure as Westminster United's Minister of Music in May 2024. I have had the pleasure of getting to know and working with the staff of Westminster, whom I have found friendly, supportive and professional. I have also been very lucky to have

the help and support of many volunteers who give of their time and energy in the Senior Choir and the Salt ensemble, as well as the sound team that assists both groups. Their volunteer efforts are the core of music at Westminster, and my job would be impossible without them.

Finally, I have begun to get to know Westminster's children and youth, and the dedicated parents who bring them to rehearsals, allowing them to make musical and dramatic contributions to services, as they did with great success for two services on Christmas Eve 2024.

I am currently planning both regular Sunday worship music, and a special good Friday service that will include music by Bach, Mozart, Leonard Cohen and others. I am looking forward to completing my first year at Westminster, and continuing to keep up with such an energetic congregation.

Respectfully submitted by
Dr. Benjamin Stein, Minister of Music

From the Office



I'm blessed to witness and support the work of the many talented individuals from our community of faith. Thank you for the time you give to each other and to this church. It was wonderful to connect with so many of you in 2024.

Membership By the numbers:

- 530 people are listed in the Westminster Historic Roll
- 5 new members were received by Certificate of Transfer
- 5 baptisms, 0 adult and 5 children
- 6 marriages
- 3 members removed by death
- 3 members removed by Certificate of Transfer
- 15 memorial/funeral services
- 414 people are in our contact/telephone list
- 408 email addresses that receive our weekly email blast

New Members:

- Elizabeth Sheyan
- Jill Cant
- Jim Knights
- Judith Russo
- Frank Russo

Baptisms:

- Margaret (Maggie) Dianna Millar Campbell - April 14
- Wren Willa Dawn Stouffer - May 12
- Beaumont Lydian Savio - September 22
- Hunter Kay Gilbert - October 20
- Thomas Spencer Melvin - November 10

Marriage and Memorial Services over the year were officiated by Rev. Michelle Robinson, Rev. Dan Yourkevich, and Rev. Sue Genge

Marriages:

- Stephanie Ridding & Thomas Sabourin - February 24
- Julie Wild & Philip Grenfell - June 22
- Heather Winkler & Daniel Ekker - August 11
- Alanna Rouette & Daniel Bickers - August 17
- Olivia Howe & Joshua Morantz - August 24
- Krystle Puddester & Russell Gilbert - August 29

In Memoriam:

The following names are listed in the Westminster Burial Register for 2024:

- Everett Finney
- Dawn Craig
- Gordon Peters
- Mary Shepherd
- Keith Pike
- Robert Bryson
- Guyavaughane Livermore
- Lois McLaughlin
- Cecilia Olaiya
- Robert Brawn
- Emma Lovasz
- Irene Cox
- Harold Heimstra*
- Barbara Heimstra*
- Laurel Tilley*
- Gail Brimbecom
- Alba Ruggiero
- Elizabeth Brown

**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

Summer Student



Westminster United Church received a Canada Summer Jobs grant from the federal government to help cover the wages for a student to work at the church for 8 weeks during the summer. Church Council decided to look for a videographer to show the life and ministry of Westminster. We recruited the very talented Abraham Aristide for the role.

Abraham filmed and edited an impressive total of 24 videos that showcased the work of our committees and even a couple of small groups! He brought a unique flare to the style of his videos and showed excellent professionalism in the production of his work. His videos have been showcased during worship on Sundays and will be utilized for future projects representing our community of faith. I want to extend a big thank you to Abraham. It has been a privilege working with him and to see his talents flourish here at Westminster.

Respectfully submitted by
Amy Medlock, Ministerial Administrative Assistant



Completed Films

Please click the links below to see the videos.

CDMC	Pride Durham 2024
CE Committee	Property Committee
Christmas Hampers	Sanctuary Committee
Communications	Stewardship/Finance
Foodman Group	Tech Team
Worship Intro Video	The Labyrinth
M&P Committee	The Pantry
Music Ministry	Trustees
Nominations Committee	United Church Women
The Offering Plate	Wellness Committee
Outreach Committee	Worship Committee
Parish Mosaic	Youth Ministry



Worship Committee



2024 has been a very busy year at Westminster United Church. The beginning of the year had the return of our coffee hour after service. This is a great time to catch up with people old and new in our community. We are also back with meeting and

greeting people at our front doors, so thanks to the many people who sign up to be greeters. It has been wonderful to have various readers through the year for the scripture. We continue to offer communion and baptisms throughout the year, and a huge shout out to our ushering teams who help to have every service run smoothly.

This year, on one of our affirming Sundays, Gail Brimbecom introduced Westminster to Dr. Peter Menzies who spoke about how to develop pathways within the Indigenous community. She then worked with various committees to have Dr. Menzies come back for an afternoon workshop about issues confronting Indigenous Peoples of Canada, their experience with colonialism and struggle for self determination. Thank you Gail!!

This Christmas we had a Lessons and Carols service, two Christmas Eve services led by the Junior Choir and our 10:00 pm Candlelight Communion service to top off a very busy and joyful year at Westminster.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Von Zuben, Worship Chair



Christian Education

It was a challenging year for the Christian Education Committee as the committee filled in and adapted during Cathy Shaw's Restorative Care Absence. Our heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Michelle Robinson, Ava Tomlinson (Chair of Council) and interim CE Chair Michelle Alston who provided guidance and leadership through the summer and fall.

New this year, birthday cards were sent out to the children and youth (with the exception of December due to the postal strike), curriculum has been purchased for Little Jammers (nursery age children), narrative based curriculum has been purchased for J.a.M. (ages 5 to 11) and Just Jammin' (ages 12 and up) classes. Story book bibles and age-appropriate bibles have been purchased for use in the J.a.M. and Just Jammin' classes. A new updated inventory supply list is being completed and supplied to the teachers. To our Nursery, J.a.M., Just Jammin' teachers and helpers – we are truly blessed – thank you for sharing your time, energy, and yourself with our children and youth. We truly appreciate your commitment and care of our children and youth.

A C.E. Youth sub-committee is providing monthly activities for the youth while the C. E. Committee is still looking for Youth Group leaders. There was no VBS held at WUC this year due to lack of planning time and the small number of registered children.

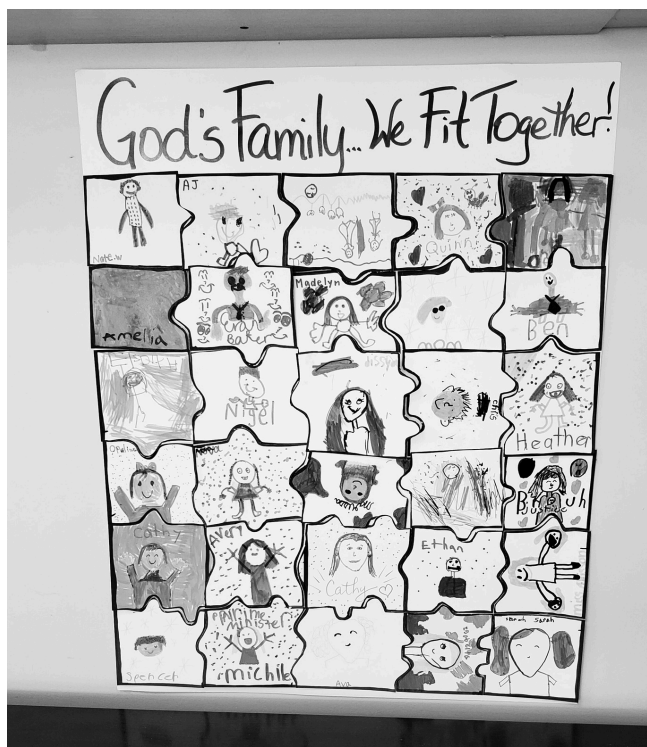
Games Night happened semi-monthly throughout the year, Easter Eggstravaganza was a success (our heartfelt thank you to all the people who provided the needed supplies and those who ran the various activities), the church picnic was a big hit (a big shout out to the Foodman Group who barbequed and served up the wonderful lunch), Summer J.a.M. was well attended (our deep gratitude to our summer J.a.M. teachers),

Family supper and movie happened in the Fall (thank you to Paul and Heather VZ who struggled to get the movie playing and thank you to Bev, Lynn, Sara and Laura Lee who provided the much needed kitchen help), and 'Advent'ure Day lunch and activities was a successful way to start Advent.

All these regularly scheduled programs, groups, and special events and activities could not happen without a multitude of people in the background and to those people – our heartfelt gratitude for your belief in the spiritual growth for all ages, faith-based programming for all ages, building community, providing opportunities for connecting with others and your willingness to help at a moments notice.

Two of our committee members have resigned: Tea Whyte and Debbie Pegg, thank you both for all your hard work and your contributions to the CE Committee.

Respectively submitted by, Susan Pleasance





Youth

This year brought some changes to the programming offered to our young people in grades 7-12. From January to May, there was a group of 6-8 teens who met every Thursday night.

In May, the leadership unfortunately was unable to continue with the program each week, so the Christian Education Team, along with Rev. Michelle established a Youth Planning Team to look at how best to move forward and serve our incredible youth.

After discussion with the youth and parents a decision was reached to have monthly events. To date volunteers from the Youth Group have hosted a Paint Night and a Christmas Cookie Bake.

As we go into the New Year, the Youth Planning Team has more to offer and have youth events planned until June 2025. The hope of this Team is to offer our teens a chance to come together, to share with one another, to have fun, to meet others their age, to feel included and to know that the church is a place for them to belong.

Thank you to the Youth, Parents, Grandparents, Caregivers and Leaders.
It is your dedication and participation that make our Youth Programs so meaningful.

Submitted by Cathy Shaw
Minister of Faith Formation





Online Youth Initiative

Funds were received in 2023 from the Community Foundations Grant (from the Federal Government) to develop an online youth program. Leadership: Susie Noorlander, Youth Ministry Initiative Lead with development support from Paul Pierson, Treasurer and Cathy Shaw, Minister of Faith Formation .

Objectives of the program:

Creating an opportunity for youth and children to connect with our various communities online and in person. During the process there was research and testing reviewed to determine the activities and programs that would best suit the target audience. The goal was to offer youth and children a diverse experience, while creating new relationships, acquaintances and friendships between the various age groups.

Programs and Activities Delivery:

The program was delivered from April 1 to June 30, 2024. There were a total of 9 youth interested with the online program; 4 junior youth between 5 and 11 years old and 5 senior youth between 12 and 17 years old and 1 in person.

The events were offered Wednesday evenings and attendance was constant with 4 to 7 youth attending. Most youth were from Westminster UC and with some attendance from 4 other Communities of Faith.

The online evening events, enjoyed, included Trivia Night, Escape Room, Safari, Kahoot, Origami, TriBond, and Cooking. The attendees were advised of each event and the supplies, if required, needed. The program ended with an in-person get together at NEB's for an evening of Bowling and friendship.

Thank you Susie for creating the program and leading so many enjoyable events; and Paul and Cathy for your support in this newly administered program.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Alston, C.E. Committee



Book Club

On the 4th Wednesday of January, March, May, September and November, a group of 12 to 20 people met from 1 to 3pm to discuss and reflect on how faith and life intertwine in our chosen book of the month. In 2024, we read and discussed the following thought-provoking books: *The Factory Voice* by Jeanette Lynes, *The Thursday Murder Club* by

Richard Osman, *Because of Mr. Terupt* by Rob Buyea, *Where The Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens, *All You Can Ever Know* by Nicole Chung and celebrated summer time reading in July in Sandra 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, Susan Pleasance



Westminster Library

Thank you to all who generously donated reading and media materials to our library (located in the Founder's Room). At the present time, we are not accepting any donations as we try to process and catalogue the backlog of donated material. 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.

When donations are being accepted, the library takes 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 through the week.

Respectively submitted, Susan Pleasance

Outreach



Westminster's Outreach Team met monthly (virtually) throughout 2024 focusing on the Outreach programs listed below. As in previous years, we have seen increased needs and are so thankful for this Community of Faith's continued support of our Outreach ministries. In May we said so long but not goodbye to our fearless leader Cathy Cherwinka who

has been such a vital part of Outreach for many years, her leadership has been invaluable to this team.

Paul Kneebone has also left us for monthly meetings but continues to support our initiatives. We welcome Kirsten G. Susan P. Maureen D. and Ashley E. to our team along with Joanne Y. and Debbie J.

We will be doing a planning session in early 2025 looking to enhance our Outreach initiatives. Speak to any of our team members for information or to join us.

Respectfully submitted by
Joanne MacPherson, Interim Chair of Outreach

Faith and Fellowship



Faith and Fellowship continued to meet in 2024 on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, except July and August. Devotion is lead by Debbie Joyce and includes a scripture reading, an opening and closing prayer and discussion and sharing. Refreshments are served and all are welcome to attend any session.

Respectfully submitted by Debbie Joyce



Christmas Hampers

We are so grateful to everyone who contributed to the 2024 Christmas Hamper Program – this Outreach ministry could not be done without you! This fall, we received a record number of hamper applications

through the Pantry (Westminster's Food Bank), reflecting the stressors families and individuals are experiencing within our community. We were overwhelmed with the outpouring of support for our Christmas Hamper Program from our congregation and our community.

Thank you to everyone who selected tags and bought gifts, gave their time (shopping, delivering, packing hampers, and organizing), made financial donations and shared well wishes and emotional support. Each family's hamper included grocery gift cards totalling \$75, enclosed in handmade cards that were made with love, creativity and joy by children within our J.a.M. Program. Thanks to Wendy E. Joanne Y. and Leslie G for all your help on hamper weekend.

Your contribution allowed us to support 96 families (29 adult only families, 67 families with children). This represents a total of 371 people, including 175 children under the age of 18. It's hard to put into words what this means, but if you had the chance to walk through the gym on "hamper weekend" you could feel it – hope, peace, joy and love. The true spirit of Christmas.

Thank you. Respectfully submitted by Ashley E.



Advent Winter Wear Drive

It has become an Advent tradition at Westminster to collect and distribute warm socks, mitts, hats and scarfs for various agencies in our region. Once again our Westminster community has responded generously and we have delivered 514 items to The Refuge, Bobby Orr

Public School, Village Union Public School, Denise House, the Muslim Welfare Shelter, the Back Door Mission at Simcoe UC. and Gate 3:16. Thank you for your generosity. These items are gratefully received and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Dingman



The Pantry Food Bank

This year at the Pantry our numbers have reached an all-time high. Each Tuesday from 10-12 noon we serve an average of 70 families.

For the year 2024 we served 2,875 clients and fed 10,878 people (a 50% increase) who live locally and are our friends in this community. Thank you for caring for these neighbours!

When you hear statistics on the news of how many people are using food banks it does not include our numbers or any other food banks who are self funded, so know that the numbers are much higher than recorded.

We are truly blessed to be able to continue this Outreach Initiative only because of your generosity and the support from many community groups. Some of the groups that have helped us are the Whitby Rotary, Lions Club, Whitby Scouts and Embers, Whitby Wildcats hockey, Brooklin schools and daycares, the TD bank, and Glen Hill Terraces who again collected 1,000 items! We participated in presentations to the Embers and have gotten together with members of other food banks in Whitby.

Our cooking class continued in 2024 run by Susan P. and Shirley P. Clients who participate look forward to this each month. Our thanks to Shirley P. who is not continuing in 2025, we appreciate all you've done to make this initiative successful.

A special nod to our volunteers who handle new surprises every Tuesday on your behalf! Our volunteers would tell you they truly get more out of this ministry than they give.

It is our honour to represent Westminster United Church in this ministry.
Blessings.

Respectfully submitted by Joanne Yourkevich



Season of Service

This year Outreach picked three areas to focus on in our fall season of giving, the backpack project, Thanksgiving cards and a community food drive.

- Backpacks-65 children from the Pantry clients registered and received backpacks filled with supplies ready for their first day of school. We filled another 7 backpacks with supplies to those who had not registered and handed out 21 bags of supplies. We also delivered 8 backpacks to the Refuge. Thanks to all who contributed to make this project a success.
- Thanksgiving cards- Susan P. led a group who made almost 100 Thanksgiving cards which were delivered to Glen Hill Terraces.
- Community Food Drive- Volunteers from Westminster delivered approximately 450 paper bags (donated by Sobeys) and flyers to homes around the church. We also gave out many bags to our congregation. We had over 100 bags returned which greatly helped our grocery expenses. Thanks to all who helped deliver bags and put away all the donations as well as those who filled these bags for us.



Coldest Night of the Year

The Coldest Night of the Year Walk was another huge hit in 2024! On Feb. 24th a team of 34 Westminster Walkers (of all ages) laced up their boots and bundled up, taking part in their 11th annual fundraising event in support of

The Refuge Outreach Centre for hurting, hungry and homeless youth in our community. Once again, with the support of friends, family and our community of faith, our team easily surpassed our goal of \$2000.00, raising a whopping \$7,315.00. This year was extra special for those involved because we walked in honour and memory of Dawn Craig, a dear friend and dedicated walker for many years. Thank you to all who made the 2024 event so special. Whether you walked, donated or prayed for us, you have our gratitude.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Shaw, CNOY Team Captain

Parish Mosaic



Parish Mosaic met throughout 2024 and continues to liaise with community groups. We had good participation in the Pride Parade and Multi-Faith Service in June even

with the inclement weather. We continue to educate through the bulletin board and newsletter and special services on the 5th Sunday of the month. In November we welcomed Glen Genge to join Parish Mosaic.

Don Fry has stepped back from chairing Parish Mosaic but will continue to be involved in Affirming Worship Durham and other agencies.

This report of Parish Mosaic is dedicated to Gail Brimbecom. Gail was a founding member of this group as well as part of the A Team that worked on Westminster becoming an Affirming congregation. Her strong advocacy for inclusion showed in the establishment of the Multi-Faith Pride Service and the flying of the Progress flag at Westminster. She brought Dr. Peter Menzies to us this past fall with a zest for what we can learn from our indigenous neighbours. To say she will be missed within the Parish Mosaic group as well as Westminster is such an understatement, but the work of Parish Mosaic will continue on her behalf. We must follow her example of not just believing that all are welcome to the table but living this out in our lives.

If you would like more information or to join the Parish Mosaic team please speak to Joanne MacPherson.

Affirming Worship Durham

Affirming Worship Durham has evolved as the Outreach arm of the Affirming Initiative at Westminster United Church. Since the Covid Pandemic, we have assumed an ever-increasing role in fostering, organizing and guiding multi-faith Affirming places of worship in Durham Region.

- Affirming Worship Durham has now grown to 25 places of worship in Durham.
- AWD organized and participated in the 2024 Pride Durham events. They were widely recognized as our best events ever. Affirming Worship Durham provided a highly visible “faith-based” presence at:
 - Multi-Faith Pride Service (June 2nd)
 - Pride Parade (June 2nd)
 - Pride Marketplace - AWD information table (June 2nd)
 - North Durham Pride – Parade and Information Table (June 8th)
 - Youth Pride (Children’s Aid) Event - AWD Information table (June 22nd)
 - Uxbridge Pride in the Park – AWD Information Table (Aug. 10th)
- Additionally, AWD provided a “faith-based” presence at other events (Pride, Transgender, flag raisings, etc.) throughout the year.
- With the objective of team-building and information sharing, AWD hosted Zoom “Gatherings” on April 17th and November 20th. Minutes were circulated to all 25 Affirming Places of Worship.
- To further the Outreach to and Fostering of the Affirming cause, AWD made presentations to new and existing places of worship regarding becoming Affirming or enhancing Affirming at churches in Durham region. Presentations were made at All-Saints Anglican, Kedran United, St. Andrews Presbyterian, Peace Lutheran and 2 presentations to the Durham Spiritual Dialogue Circle.
- Key to our effectiveness, Affirming Worship Durham has established and maintained close connections with agencies in Durham region that serve the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. These include, AIDS Committee of Durham Region, PFLAG Durham Region, Pride Durham, Durham Alliance Outreach/Club 717 and Children’s Aid Society of Durham Region.
- Maintained communication with the AWD group as issues/events, etc. occurred throughout the year. There has been an emergence of “Alt-Right” Ultra Conservative groups in Durham Region. As they all are targeting the Pride community’s rights and freedoms (particularly the Transgender youth), we have been motivated to take an advocacy role, as appropriate, recognizing that we are religious organizations.
- Again sent “Holiday Wishes” letter to AIDS Committee of Durham, PFLAG Durham, Durham Pride and 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.

Embracing Diversity

Respectfully submitted by Don Fry (he/him/il)



Durham Outlook for the Needy

This is the new facility at 227 Simcoe Street South in Oshawa that serves a 4-course meal every afternoon for 150-225 clients every day. It formerly operated as St. Vincent's Kitchen, and WUC volunteers have helped out

monthly for over 20 years. DOFN clients represent a variety of demographics in our wider community. Some are under-housed, with some living on the street or living rough. Others are under-employed and simply can't afford to provide themselves (and sometimes their families) 3 meals a day. Others are retired or disabled, and what the government provides (OAS, GIS, etc.) is not enough to cover rental housing, groceries and all the other necessities of day-to-day life. Westminster provides volunteers on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 3:30 to 6:30pm. Every month 10-15-20 (depending how many on the present list are available) help serve and clean up in DOFN's kitchen. At least some months, we don't have enough WUC folks (including a few from Faith UC in Courtice) to fill the shift requirements. Let Paul Kneebone know at paul.kneebone@rogers.com if you would like further information or want to sign up and help out.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Kneebone





Prayer Shawl Ministry

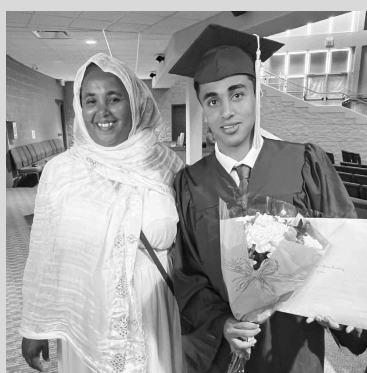
In 2024, the prayer shawl ministry saw a change in leadership part way through the year. Thank you to Linda Moroziuk who was the previous leader. Kirsten Grant began leading the ministry in June.

Since June, 27 shawls have been donated to the ministry and at least 10 prayer shawls have been given to members of the community. As well as giving and receiving prayer shawls, we are holding monthly knitting and crochet circles on the last Sunday of the Month in the Youth room. There are treats, fun, and fellowship. As well, there is usually someone who can offer help learning knitting or crochet. Between 4 and 6 people join us for each knitting group. Thank you to Bev Crumb who has volunteered to lock up after the knitting circles.

We have received a large amount of yarn as well as donations of knitting needles and crochet hooks. If anyone is interested in knitting a prayer shawl or joining the knit and crochet circle, they are welcome to the donated materials.

Going forward some goals for the prayer shawl ministry include: Developing a more organized cataloguing system, creating an email list of the people who regularly donate prayer shawls, continuing the knit and crochet circle. Currently, we are still looking for more white/cream shawls to use in baptisms.

Respectfully submitted by Kirsten Grant



Bridge To A New Home

Bridge To A New Home (BTANH) is dedicated to the settlement of refugees and is composed of volunteers from Brooklin, Columbus, Kingsview and Westminster United Churches and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Durham. We still have about 10 active

members involved from the original 4 churches. We continue to help all of our sponsored 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.

Sut, our first sponsored person, continues to work at his full-time job in a restaurant in Oshawa close to his home. He does some English work on-line and wants to work on getting his Canadian Citizenship.

Modar, his wife Rasha and their children moved to Bowmanville in the summer of 2024. The family has also applied for Canadian citizenship.

Freweyni and her children continue to thrive. The two younger children played soccer again this past summer. The children all swim and skate at the recreation centres near their home. Freweyni continues to study ESL. Jirom became a Canadian citizen in April 2024. He also finished high school in 2024 and is now taking a 2-year auto mechanics program at Durham College. Frtuna, Tmnit and Sammy also continue to make good progress with their studies.

Mebrahtom, Freweyni's brother, continues to work at the same restaurant in Oshawa as Sut. He travelled to Ethiopia for a month in September to visit his wife, daughter and other relatives and friends there. Mebrahtom, with BTANH's support and through the United Church, has applied to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to help get them to Canada as refugees.

Freweyni and Mebrahtom also want their nephew Haftom to be brought to Canada. An application through the United Church to IRCC has been made for Haftom. He continues to reside in Yemen under tough conditions with limited contact. Yemen still does not have direct access to Canadian consular services which makes it more difficult to reach refugees located there. This is problematic because it further complicates the ability to fulfill the necessary Canadian documentation requirements for his entry into Canada.

We have had many discussions about our future. As mentioned earlier in this report, we applied to IRCC through the United Church to sponsor Mebrahtom's wife and daughter as well as his nephew (Haftom) for entry into Canada as refugees. But after helping these individuals get into Canada, we will not take on any new refugees as we do not have enough volunteers to support the work involved in sponsoring additional refugee families.

Approximately \$40,000 is needed to bring these family members to Canada. While Mebrahtom has been able to save some of this money, we may need to fundraise to help with the full amount. It may still be one to two years before these individuals arrive, but they will need less help from our group as their family members will be able to assist them with their transition into Canadian society.

The support of the Westminster United Church congregation has been and continues to be an important part in assisting our new Canadians grow in our community. Members from Westminster are Maureen D. and Joanne M. Feel free to contact either if you want to know more about BTANH

Respectfully submitted by Joanne MacPherson



Living Alone Luncheons

The Living Alone Luncheons have been very successful in 2024. There are about 50 members who are called every month (September to June) to see if they will be attending, and to inform them what the

menu is for the month. This Outreach initiative has been in existence since 1997. It is a time for people from the community and our church to come together for fellowship and a tasty, hearty two-course meal at a reasonable cost. We are a mixed group of men and women who live alone. Our thanks to the hard-working church members who help in the kitchen and those who set up the tables every month. Please contact Barbara Auchterlonie or Bev Crumb if you would like more information about joining the diners or the helpers .

Respectfully submitted by Bev Crumb



Wellness



The Wellness Committee supports the spiritual and physical well-being of our Community of Faith by using a collaborative approach with ministry staff, other committees and groups. With the addition of 4 new members, we reviewed the committee's purpose and responsibilities.

Due to health reasons, the presentation by Hospice Whitby was postponed several times but is on track to be delivered in 2025. The Memorial Donation / Easter Flower Project raised funds donated in memory of loved ones to purchase flowers that were delivered to friends who could use a little extra love at Easter. This year 100 pots of colourful tulips were shared in the community.

The Friendly Visitor team, now with 7 members, is led by Paul Kneebone. Currently there is a list of 25 folks this team regularly contacts. This also includes the annual Christmas cookie packages and helping with the Easter flower initiative. The Friendlies Team ensures that people, especially shut-ins, LTC & retirement home residents, stay connected with Westminster. As well, personalized get well and sympathy cards are sent out regularly. This is all done with input from Rev. Michelle and the church office. Last May, the Friendlies, along with Stewardship, coordinated a well-attended Newcomers Potluck – which we hope to make an annual event. Paul also organized the Phone Tree Team that was phased out this year as most people, post-COVID, now stay connected via the weekly email blasts and church attendance, either in person or on-line.

The AED equipment and First Aid Kits continue to be monitored by one of the teens, Jordyn Lessor, who has taken on this role for us.

In the review it was discovered that The WUC Constitution indicated that the Labyrinth is part of this committee. In discussion with the Labyrinth Circle that hosts meditation experiences, it was agreed that they would come under the umbrella of this group for support and reporting purposes, ensuring that all groups have a voice and representation at Council. Gail Brimbecom was to be their representative, but due to her passing, Peggy Allen has agreed to assume the role.

Labyrinth Circle

Members: Clarence MacPherson, Peggy Allen, Gail Brimbecom, Jane Allen

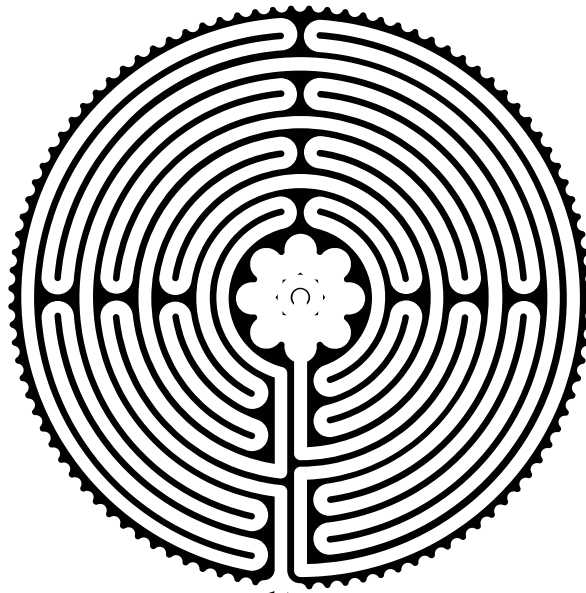
Throughout 2024 the labyrinth in the Sanctuary was open from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. The labyrinth is available

for prayer walks and meditation for the Westminster congregation as well as others in the community. For example, in September members of the St. George Anglican Church in Oshawa came to the opening to learn more about prayer walks as a resource for their congregation.

The labyrinth will continue to be open the first Wednesday of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm during 2025 to offer consistent access to a sacred space for people who are seeking to deepen their relationship with the Holy Spirit within.

We thank King Whitney and the Chair Man Group for physically opening the space each month. We also thank Amy Medlock for posting our announcements in the church bulletin and Facebook Page.

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Smith, 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 and are grateful to Mona T. who has stepped in as our new publisher.

A heartfelt thank-you is extended to Paul K. who continues to handle subscriptions to Broadview (formerly the United Church Observer). In addition to these important aspects of communication, we also maintain the bulletin boards in the hallway and oversee postings to the electronic sign. 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. A major undertaking in 2024 was the creation of a new photo directory of and for our church family. Approximately 150 families are now represented in this important document which helps us stay connected to one another.

Trivia Night '24 was another successful and very entertaining FUNdraiser.

Westminster's social media communication (website, Facebook and Instagram) is maintained by the office.

An upcoming project involves helping to update the church's website. We are ready to welcome new members to our team. My thanks to the long-standing, dedicated members of this committee: Mary-Lynn F., Lori R. and Cathy Shaw (staff liaison).

Respectfully submitted by Bev Crumb, Chair



Property

It was a challenging and exciting year for the Property Committee as it took on two significant projects in 2024. The first was the Anti-Hate Initiative. In March, the Province of Ontario awarded WUC \$20,000 for four projects which were completed by May. These projects were:

- Re-keying of exterior and interior door locking systems. Cost \$5,600.
- Update building security system. New software & three new key pads. Cost \$4,300.
- Installed 4 exterior south-side LED flood lights. Cost \$2,100.
- Narthex interior security lighting. Cost \$9,300.

Lighting in the Founders Room was also replaced to coordinate with the Narthex. The \$5,000 cost was covered by WUC.

The second initiative was funded by an Ontario Trillium Fund grant of \$126,500. We began the process to replace three HVAC systems servicing the community spaces in the north-end of the church. After a competitive process, a contractor was selected to provide three heat pump systems. Back-up heating will be provided by two gas furnaces and one electrical system. Installation will begin in January 2025. A second Trillium Fund project was the levelling of the north-east sidewalks.

The Westminster Weed Whacker and Buds & Shrub teams kept the exterior grounds in great shape.

We would like to thank Westminster's custodian, Ronell Paguio, for his dedication and hard work in supporting the mandate of the committee.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Neil, Interim Chair, Property Committee



Ministry & Personnel

It has been a very busy year. The Ministry and Personnel Committee (M&P) provided ongoing support for the transitions of two members of the Staff Team back from Restorative Care leaves of absence during 2024. M&P also provided support to the outgoing and incoming Ministers of Music;

we said farewell to Linda Hunter and wished her a happy retirement, and welcomed Dr. Ben Stein to Westminster.

To assist staff with their administrative tasks, a project was undertaken to have forms completed when requesting assistance. The pilot project was a success and was passed by Council as the accepted way for committee members to ask staff for administrative support.

We thanked Maureen Dingman for extending her stay on M&P as Chair for part of the year, to ensure a smooth transition back for Rev. Michelle. We also said farewell to Jocelyne Fry as she completed her term on M&P. We welcomed Janet Hendrikse and Joanne MacPherson as new M&P members.

In May, several M&P members attended the Roles and Responsibilities webinar for M&P Committees hosted by Pastoral Relations representatives from ECORC.

Following several incidents involving suspicious and/or aggressive behaviour by members of the public, M&P facilitated a series of discussions on safety and security for Westminster Staff and Volunteers, and established a working relationship with Durham Regional Police for purposes of reporting such incidents. Additionally, M&P hosted a Crisis Intervention Training workshop for Staff and Volunteers on November 23rd, presented by Jim Hung. More training is being planned for 2025.

Respectfully submitted by,
Peter Spratt and Lorraine Joynt
Co-Chairs Ministry and Personnel



Stewardship

God continues to be central in everything we say, think and do as a Stewardship/Finance Team. We take every opportunity to share and recognize Good Stewardship and Discipleship practices amongst and within our Community of Faith, through our:

- personal volunteering and community work
- weekly Stewardship Seconds eblasts
- quarterly Stewardship Moments
- annual Fall Campaign
- monthly meetings
- fundraising events and special celebrations, including in true Stewardship style, creating WUC friendships, by hosting dinner socials at Melanie Pringle's where over 20 guests attended each time!!

Our Team's main focus in 2024 was to share the financial results through frequent updates to the congregation. Being faced with another year of deficits, the focus was ways to achieve a balanced budget in the future 2 – 3 years: boosting the Local Fund; increased rental income; increased individual givings; and definitive tightening up of expenses.

As usual, we shared much fun and laughter hosting very successful fundraising events:

- June's 'annual' take away BBQ;
- in October, Elvis was back in the house;
- in November we had one of our most successful annual Bazaars
- ran our 2nd Poinsettia Sale.

Of course, these came to fruition because of the tremendous efforts of many members on the various planning sub groups and the help, support, input, and leadership from: the Food Guys (Saudi, Ken, Pat & Tim), Tom, Brian, Paul, Shane, King, Ava, Janice, Amy, Ronell and Rev. Michelle. Thanks for the many hours you have dedicated and for ALL that you do!! Your keen sense of Community Spirit and Volunteerism reinforced what great Stewardship and Discipleship look like.

The 2024-2025 Fall Stewardship Campaign resulted, to date, with over 80 intentional giving responses back, indicating a bountiful increase to the Local Fund. And for the 1st time this year, we advertised efforts to celebrate Giving Tuesday (Dec. 3rd), resulting in another small increase to our Local Fund!

To you, the reader(s) and the amazing congregants of our Community of Faith, THANKS for always being there for us and supporting us by attending, purchasing tickets, making donations and volunteering – please don't stop – our Community of Faith needs you!! We really do see how God works through you.

In celebration of all of our successes and especially in support of the Fall Campaign, we did what we do best – on December 15th, we “sat around the table breaking bread, meeting, greeting and sharing” Stewardship Stew together as one big family. Thank You Food Guys for the FOUR stew choices.

We, Paul, Brian, Monica, Lisa, and Margaret, take this opportunity to thank you in deep appreciation for supporting our many efforts. We are forever humbled to be of service to this Community of Faith!!

Come Join The Team!!

Blessings and respectfully submitted by Margaret Suepaul, Chair of Stewardship

Trustees



The Board of Trustees, as always, recognize the staff, the congregation and all the volunteers, without whom Westminster United Church would not be the thriving church that it is.

We applied for and received an Ontario Anti-Hate grant of \$20,000 which was used to upgrade the church building security and for new lights in the Narthex. Thank you to all who worked on securing the grant and completing the upgrades.

As well, we applied for and received a Trillium Fund grant of \$126,500 which was used to level the sidewalks in front of the church and will be used to upgrade our HVAC system at the north end of the church in the community space. Thank you to those who submitted the application and to those who will ensure that the work is completed.

From the Board of Trustees, we thank all of you for your time, talent and financial gifts. Our members: Barb Auchterlonie, Wendy Ekker, Bob Neil, Christopher Pegg, Ed Rosdobutko, Shane Suepaul and Jim Ward.

Respectfully submitted by Ed Rosdobutko, Chair

Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee



Westminster's Climate Disruption and Mitigation Committee (CDMC) continues to be an active part of our Community of Faith. It is with great sadness that Gail Brimbecomb cannot be with us as we carry on

with the plans that she had for our committee this year. At our meetings, she always welcomed us with a warm smile and told us how happy she was to be a part of our group. We will remember her quiet leadership, intelligence and enthusiasm in everything she did. Some of our initiatives in 2024 were:

- Shared CDMC's story and/or resources with Brooklin UC, Centennial Albert, Kingsview UC, Kedron UC and Westminster's UCW
- Promoted and participated in Drawdown EcoChallenge in February
- Conducted Congregational Survey, February 18th
- Prepared and delivered after-church seminar and discussion, April 14th (Presented: 'Curb Your Carbon' video)
- Participated in videographer project
- Attended several rallies and information sessions throughout the year related to environmental, social and Indigenous issues
- Planned and organized Indigenous Workshop and luncheon with Outreach and Parish Mosaic for Westminster's congregation and other faith communities, November 3rd (Presenter: Dr. Peter Menzies)

Respectfully submitted by Mona Turner



Manning Mews Non-Profit Homes Corp.

Manning Mews has 20 one-bedroom units for seniors in 5 pods on Manning Road near Garrard. Currently, with the assistance of subsidies from the Regional Municipality, 11 of the units are 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 to permit Manning Mews to qualify for CMHC mortgages and subsidies. The Corporation and the many volunteer directors have been providing social housing to the local community for 44 years at no cost or liability to the Church.

Since April 1, 2024 the corporation has operated under a 10 year service agreement with the Regional Municipality of Durham. The subsidy under this agreement for the 11 RGI tenants helps keep the rents well below average for the area while still paying for normal operations and maintenance. Under this agreement Manning Mews qualified to apply for a Canada Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) grant and an application was submitted for emergency funds to replace a failing retaining wall in June. The retaining wall has been rebuilt and although the grant has not been received as yet, Manning Mews has been approved for about \$38,000 to cover the direct costs of the retaining wall.

The corporation has, with the sponsorship of the Region, also applied for grants and loans to fund a Heat Pump project in the amount of about \$600,000 from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities but no decision has been reached yet on the application. The Heat Pump project would result in a substantial reduction of over 92 metric tons per year in the emissions of greenhouse gases (CO₂) by using electricity instead of natural gas for heat and hot water without a significant change in operating costs.

At the May 2024 monthly meeting of Westminster’s Council, the annual members meeting of the corporation was held and the audited financials were presented to the members of the corporation who are the members of Westminster Council. The corporation has vacant volunteer outreach positions for 2 individuals who would like to play a substantive role in this important Outreach, providing social housing to the local community.

Respectfully submitted January 2, 2025 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.

ECORC held two meetings, one in the spring and one in fall that were in person and online. There was an average of 150 people who attended each gathering. John Bowman, Helen Bowman, Paul Kneebone, Carol O’Neil and Susan Pleasance were part of the 27 Licenced Lay Worship Leaders that had their licences renewed 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, Simcoe St. United Church of Oshawa closed their doors in 2024. A new ministry has begun in Pickering Village-Audley with Rev. Kaitlyn Ostrander. Presently Dunbarton-Fairport, Northminster, Kendal, and Scugog Island United Churches do not have a minister.

Respectively submitted, Susan Pleasance



United Church Women

Westminster's UCW (United Church Women), are a group of women who meet at 2 pm on the first Monday of the month (except for July and August) for a time of worship, entertainment/educational programs, business and fellowship. This year, we are pleased to welcome Cecile and Sue S to our UCW executive as co-Vice-Presidents.

This past year we participated and learned about: Westminster's own Friendly Visitors Program, the history and purpose of Westminster's CDMC, bible study, Oshawa's Hearth Place, Raising Monarch Butterflies, interesting facts about El Salvador, and self improvement topics. We enjoyed lunch out in June and look forward to our Christmas potluck supper 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 103 cards to people within our church family and community (sympathy, thinking of you, Easter, get well, and Thanksgiving and Christmas).

In the past year, we mourned the losses of Mary Shepherd, Emma Lovasz and Gail Brimbecom. They worked tirelessly in our church and in the UCW and their cheerful presence, joyful smiles and Mary's beautiful knitting will be missed.

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

In 2024, we catered 4 funerals, 1 take out birthday reception, 1 church lunch, 10 Living Alone Luncheons, and had 4 Fundraisers. From the monies we raised, we donated to: Westminster United Church's local funds to honour our wonderful staff, Durham Master Gardeners, Oshawa's Hearth Place, Presbyterian UCW, ECORC UCW, and the National UCW Healing Fund. Over \$10,150.00 was given to Westminster United Church in 2024.

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

Respectively submitted, Susan Pleasance

United Church Women Financials

Westminster United Church Women Financial Report Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 2024

Income	\$	22,018
Expenses	\$	17,474
Income - Expenses	\$	4,544

Bank Balance Jan. 1, 2024	\$	1,239
Petty Cash	\$	150
Total	\$	5,932.65

Note:

DUCA Shares	\$	2
UCW Funds to Church		\$10,475

- \$10000 Westminster United Church Fund General Fund
- \$150 Westminster thru Visa and e transfers General Fund
- \$75 Westminster United Church General Fund Clean up Pot Luck
- \$250 Westminster United Church General Fund Staff Gifts

Westminster United Church Women Financial Statement for 2024														
Revenue	Budget	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Caterings	\$ 12,000	\$ 465		\$ 4,690	\$ 505	\$ 710	\$ 506		\$ 225	\$ 2,685		\$ 1,225	\$ 6,925	\$ 17,936
Donations						\$ 1,600								\$ -
Mother's Day Tea	\$ 2,500													\$ 1,600
Offerings														\$ -
Yard Sale	\$ 2,500				\$ 2,482									\$ 2,482
														\$ -
Total	\$ 17,000	\$ 465	\$ -	\$ 4,690	\$ 2,987	\$ 2,310	\$ 506	\$ -	\$ 225	\$ 2,685	\$ -	\$ 1,225	\$ 6,925	\$ 22,018
Expenses														
Banking/Office	\$ 50												\$ 54	\$ 54
Catering	\$ 5,000	\$ 119	\$ 283	\$ 1,160	\$ 230	\$ 874	\$ 173		\$ 92	\$ 850		\$ 372	\$ 1,696	\$ 5,849
Charity Donations														\$ -
	Camp Quin-Mo-Lac	\$ 500												\$ -
	Hearth Place													\$ -
	SickKids													\$ -
	Refuge													\$ -
	Durham Outlook													\$ -
	Westminster Youth	\$ 75										\$ 150	\$ 325	\$ 972
General Fund	\$ 600	\$ 50		\$ 100		\$ 347						\$ 150	\$ 325	\$ -
Presbyterial														\$ -
	Bursey													\$ -
	Cross Cultural													\$ -
	Lakeridge													\$ -
	Membership	\$ 300								\$ 300				\$ 300
	UCW Native Fund	\$ 300								\$ 300				\$ 300
UC Mission & Service														\$ -
Westminster UC	\$ 10,000									\$ 6,000			\$ 4,000	\$ 10,000
World Develop. & Relief														\$ -
														\$ -
Total	\$ 16,825	\$ 169	\$ 283	\$ 1,260	\$ 230	\$ 1,221	\$ 173	\$ -	\$ 92	\$ 7,450	\$ -	\$ 522	\$ 6,075	\$ 17,474
Surplus/Deficit	\$ 175	\$ 296	-\$ 283	\$ 3,430	\$ 2,757	\$ 1,089	\$ 333	\$ -	\$ 133	-\$ 4,765	\$ -	\$ 703	\$ 850	\$ 4,543



11th Whitby Scout Group

11th Whitby Scouts (Colony, Pack, Troop and Company) We've had fun learning and discovering new skills in 2024. As the proud sponsor of 11th Whitby Scouts, Westminster works to support all that this incredible program has to offer the youth and community. Our Pack (Cubs) meets here regularly and so does our Group Committee (Executive). Cathy Shaw, your Minister of Faith Formation, attends

meetings and acts as our liaison between Westminster and 11th Whitby, which has made for an incredible partnership.

Currently the 11th Whitby has 65 youth and 36 scouters (leaders). Our year is always a busy one, but one of our highlights happens in December. This year we held our third annual Drive Thru Christmas Parade in the church parking lot. This special program is an evening event where there are stationary light up displays to enjoy from the warmth of your car. Thank you to the church for blessing us with this event. The event is made extra special as it is done in support of The Pantry, with food donations as an entry fee. Many thanks for all those who donated and made this night fun and meaningful.

11th Whitby values their partnership with Westminster and are looking forward to another wonderful year together.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Winters



Guiding Report

31st Whitby Embers meet on Tuesday nights from 6:30 - 8:00. 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 and go camping 2-3 times a year. Each fall we make up cake kits to give to the Pantry and then in the spring we get a tour to see how the Pantry

works and helps the community. We very much appreciate the space and support of Westminster United Church.

-Respectfully submitted by Vicky Wood



Treasurer's Report - 2024 Results

Stewardship / Finance Fiscal 2024 Year End Update

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 ended

2024 with an operating deficit of \$8,400. This is a significant improvement compared to our original forecast a year ago (a projected deficit of \$22,000).

As communicated previously, our plan to reduce the deficit has 4 components to it:

1. Continue to actively monitor ongoing expenses.

●Update: Jan – Dec 2024 expenses were **\$19,000** below plan.

2. Continue to look for ways to increase revenues.

●Update: Unfortunately, **Rental Income** was **below** our original plan by **\$12,000** for the year. This was attributable to some clients leaving as their programming results were not as expected. We anticipate rental income to improve in 2025.

●Update: **One-time donations** were **slightly below** the original plan by **\$2,000** for the year.

●Update: **Net Fundraising Revenue** was **\$4,000** over plan.

3. Continue to apply for various government and United Church grants.

●Update: Received **\$126,000** government grant from the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** for the purchase of new heating and ventilation systems for our community space, and for levelling the sidewalks.

●Update: Received **\$20,000** government grant from the **Ontario Grant to Support Anti-Hate Security Measures for Faith-Based and Cultural Organizations** for upgrades to lighting and lock rekeying.

4. Continue our Congregational ask to increase offerings to the Local Fund.

●Update: **Thank you to all** who generously donated over **\$301,000** to the Local Fund during the past year (our goal was \$300,000)

Other 2024 Highlights

Supporting Our Community – Cumulative Donations of \$76,000 vs. Goal of \$61,000

- 2024 Mission and Service donations = \$30,000 (\$2,000 below our goal)
- 2024 The Pantry financial donations = \$37,600 (\$19,000 over our goal)
- Christmas Hampers and Tin Can donations = \$9,000 (\$2,000 below our goal)

Looking ahead

Inflation continues to increase costs for everyone, and Westminster is not immune. Thank you to those who have responded to increase their giving intentions to the local fund as we are forecasting a \$36,500 deficit for 2025.

We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support and commitment in responding to the ongoing challenges of balancing needs and resources. As a result of the improved financial results for 2024 and past years, we will be able to cover the projected deficit for this year and maintain our focus on our Mission and Vision objectives.

Thank you!

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

Paul Pierson – Treasurer

WUC – STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – LOCAL FUND

ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023		ACTUAL 2024	FORECAST 2024	FORECAST 2025					
CONTRIBUTIONS & REVENUES											
274,823	268,086	297,749	Local Fund Offerings	301,124	300,000	320,000					
28,973	43,412	49,433	Donations (excluding Christmas Hampers & Tin Cans)	33,212	35,000	40,000					
62,547	64,341	106,079	Rentals	107,788	120,000	112,000					
7,246	3,077	7,954	NET Fundraising (LF portion)	6,928	5,000	10,000					
2,156	2,790	3,251	Other Income	8,478	4,000	5,000					
375,745	381,706	464,466	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS & REVENUES	457,530	464,000	487,000					
EXPENSES											
255,096	284,239	279,696	Salaries, Benefits & Contract Payments	306,237	317,840	348,200					
67,954	75,150	85,383	Property Committee	85,469	85,000	90,000					
32,040	32,040	29,481	Mortgage Payment (P&I)	25,899	26,000	26,000					
19,509	15,470	16,874	UCC Assessment	16,761	16,760	17,500					
7,012	7,086	12,499	Stewardship & Finance Committee	14,900	15,800	15,000					
1,494	1,320	2,224	Outreach (excluding Christmas Hampers & Tin Cans)	1,707	3,350	3,500					
5,472	4,752	4,181	Office	4,346	5,000	5,500					
2,816	3,694	4,147	Worship Committee	2,651	4,800	5,000					
3,748	4,250	4,760	Christian Education	2,146	4,050	4,500					
3,270	-	-	Capital Expenditures (using Local Fund)	-	-	-					
2,316	2,902	1,925	Bank/PAR Charges	1,768	2,500	2,500					
1,013	1,324	875	M&P Committee	418	1,000	500					
958	816	1,430	Wellness	780	1,600	2,000					
361	175	332	Council & Trustees	768	250	1,000					
-	25	25	Communications Committee	844	100	150					
150	299	1,345	Other	1,206	1,600	2,200					
403,209	433,542	445,177	TOTAL EXPENSES	465,900	485,650	523,550					
-	27,464	-	51,836	19,289	LOCAL FUND NET SURPLUS (+) / DEFICIT (-)	-	8,370	-	21,650	-	36,550

WUC - STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – OTHER FUNDS

ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023		ACTUAL 2024	FORECAST 2024	FORECAST 2025
			MISSION & SERVICE			
25,371	28,503	31,066	Offerings (+)	30,071	32,000	33,000
25,371	28,503	31,066	Disbursement to UCC (-)	30,071	32,000	33,000
-	-	-	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	-	-	-
			CAPITAL FUND (HVAC)			
3,500	5,586	9,726	Offerings (+)	11,366	15,000	15,000
-	3,077	7,954	Fundraising (+)	6,928	5,000	5,000
-	-	3,025	Expenditures (-)	10,605	3,300	3,300
3,500	8,663	14,655	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	7,688	16,700	16,700
			THE PANTRY			
19,654	18,678	20,271	Financial Donations (+)	37,657	18,000	18,000
12,534	18,214	21,029	Expenditures (-)	18,698	20,000	20,000
7,120	464 -	758	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	18,960 -	2,000 -	2,000
			CHRISTMAS HAMPERS			
7,925	6,498	8,781	Donations + Transfers (+)	7,568	9,000	9,000
9,150	7,826	7,258	Expenditures (-)	8,587	9,000	9,000
- 1,225 -	1,328	1,523	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	- 1,019	-	-
			TIN CANS (FOR OUTREACH INITIATIVES)			
1,196	1,907	2,423	Donations (+)	1,278	2,000	2,000
217	4,321	78	Expenditures (-)	1,291	-	-
979 -	2,414	2,345	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	- 13	2,000	2,000

Notes:

- 2024 Capital Fund expenditure \$10,605 was for loan repayment of \$3,300 plus HVAC repair of \$7,305

WUC - STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – RESERVE FUNDS

ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023		ACTUAL 2024
RESERVE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS				
-	-	-	Offerings (+)	2,000
-	-	2,599	Expenditures (-)	5,796
-	-	<u>2,599</u>	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>- 3,796</u>
RESERVE FOR MINISTERIAL INVESTMENTS				
-	-	-	Restorative Care Payments Received (+)	8,744
-	5,000	7,250	Expenditures (-)	-
-	<u>5,000</u>	<u>7,250</u>	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>8,744</u>
RESERVE FOR SABATICAL				
-	-	24,214	Restorative Care Payments Received (+)	5,786
-	-	-	Expenditures (-)	-
-	-	<u>24,214</u>	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>5,786</u>

- **Note:** 2024 Reserve for Capital Improvements expenditure \$5,796 was for sidewalk repairs and Founder's Room lighting

WUC - STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – GRANT FUNDS

ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023		ACTUAL 2024
ANTI-HATE GRANT				
-	10,000	-	Grant Funds Received (+)	20,000
-	10,000	-	Expenditures (-)	20,000
-	-	-	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>-</u>
FEDERAL GRANT (YOUTH INITIATIVE)				
-	-	45,000	Grant Funds Received (+)	-
-	-	16,455	Expenditures (-)	28,545
-	-	<u>28,545</u>	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>- 28,545</u>
TRILLIUM GRANT (HVAC)				
-	-	-	Grant Funds Received (+)	80,000
-	-	-	Expenditures (-)	6,023
-	-	-	NET INFLOW (+) / OUTFLOW (-)	<u>73,977</u>

- **Note:** 2024 Anti-Hate Grant expenditures (\$20,000) was for upgrades to lighting and lock rekeying

LOCAL FUND DONATIONS BREAKDOWN

ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023		ACTUAL 2024
250	6,123	10,180	From UCW	10,150
10,855	8,990	8,705	In Memoriams	9,738
5,159	4,012	1,562	Other Donations	5,259
2,015	2,395	2,335	Easter Flowers	2,964
	269	932	Freewill Offerings	2,260
-	18,500	22,279	Bequest from Nicksons	1,527
1,000	1,100	1,085	For Bridge to a New Home	985
1,525	-	645	Backpacks	330
8,169	927	966	Gifts in Kind (stock donations)	0
-	1,096	744	From Trunk Sale	0
28,973	43,412	49,433	TOTAL LOCAL FUND DONATIONS	33,213

FUNDRAISING BREAKDOWN

	2024 REVENUES	2024 EXPENSES	2024 NET
BAZAAR	7,637	127	7,510
LOBLAWS CARDS COMMISSIONS	1,600	-	1,600
TRIVIA NIGHT	1,991	508	1,482
BBQ DINNER	2,154	717	1,437
ELVIS CONCERT	1,825	845	980
POINSETTIAS	1,186	678	508
FOODMAN GROUP	624	285	339
TOTAL	17,016	3,160	13,856

NOTES:

- Fundraising is split 50% 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, 2023	2024 Net Inflow (+) / Net Outflow (-)	as at Dec 31, 2024
RESERVE FUNDS			
Non-Allocated Funds	92,974	-14,266	78,718
Contingency for day-to-day operations	30,286	0	30,286
Reserve Funds for Sabbatical	24,214	5,786	30,000
Reserve for Capital Investments	41,818	-3,796	38,022
Reserve for Ministerial Investments	31,851	8,744	40,594
TOTAL RESERVE FUNDS	221,143	-3,533	217,620
RESTRICTED FUNDS			
Anti-Hate Grant	0	0	0
Thriving Congregations Grant (Youth Initiative)	28,545	-28,545	0
Trillium Grant (for HVAC Project)	0	73,977	73,977
The Pantry Fund	12,346	18,950	31,295
Capital Fund	26,817	7,688	34,505
Christmas Hampers	1,524	-1,019	504
Tin Cans (Outreach Initiatives)	2,423	-13	2,410
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	71,655	71,037	142,692
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	292,797	67,504	360,312

2024 Change in Reserve Funds = -\$3.5K

Beginning Balance as at Jan 1, 2024	221.1
Less 2024 Operating Deficit	-8.3
Less HST Receiveable	-3.5
Less Accounts Receivable & Prepaid Expenses	-2.4
Plus Restorative Care	14.5
Less Capital Improvements *	-3.8
2024 Change in Reserve Funds	-3.5
Ending Balance as at Dec 31, 2024	217.6

* sidewalk repair & Founder's Room lighting

2024 Change in Restricted Funds = +\$71.0K

Beginning Balance as at Jan 1, 2024	71.7
Anti-Hate Grant Receipt	20.0
Anti-Hate Grant Expenditures	-20.0
Thriving Congregations Grant (Youth Initiative) Expenditures	-28.5
Trillium Grant (for HVAC Project) Receipt	80.0
Trillium Grant (for HVAC Project) Expenditures	-6.0
The Pantry Fund Offerings	37.6
The Pantry Fund Expenditures	-18.7
Capital Fund Offerings	11.3
Capital Fund Net Fundraising Revenues	6.9
Capital Fund Expenditures	-10.6
Christmas Hampers Financial Donations	7.6
Christmas Hampers Expenditures	-8.6
Tin Cans (Outreach Initiatives) Donations	1.3
Tin Cans (Outreach Initiatives) Expenditures	-1.3
2024 Change in Restricted Funds	71.0
Ending Balance as at Dec 31, 2024	142.7

LONG TERM LIABILITIES

Mortgage Loan (UCC)

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

Balance as at Jan 1, 2024	\$238,490
Principal Paid in 2024	\$20,165
Interest Paid in 2024	\$5,732
Balance as of Dec 31, 2024	\$218,324

Operating Line of Credit (CIBC)

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, 2024.

Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) 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 at Jan 1, 2024	\$29,975
Principal Paid in 2024 (\$275 x 12)	\$3,300
Balance as at Dec 31, 2025	\$26,675

Westminster 2025 Council and Committee List



Ava Tomlinson Council Chairperson
 Paul Pierson Treasurer
 Shane Suepaul Past Chair
 Carrie Hunter-Cruz Council Secretary

TRUSTEES (10 Yrs.)		MINISTRY & PERSONNEL (5 Yrs.)	
(Chair)	2014	Lorraine Joynt (Co-Chair)	2024
Bob Neil	2013	Peter Spratt (Co-Chair)	2024
Jim Ward	2015	Katie Bonikowsky	2024
Wendy Ekker	2019	Janet Hendrikse	2024
Shane Suepaul	2024	Joanne MacPherson	2025
Ed Rosdobutko	2024		
Barb Auchterlonie	2024	REGIONAL COUNCIL REPS (3 Yrs.)	
Christopher Pegg	2024	Arthur Smith	2011
STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE (3 Yrs.)		Paul Kneebone	2012
Margaret Suepaul (Chair)	2019	Susan Pleasance	2016
Paul Pierson (Treasurer)	2022	Susan Shkolnik	2025
Monica Veenstra	2019	CLIMATE DISRUPTION MITIGATION	
WORSHIP (3 Yrs.)		Kathleen ffolliott	2019
Heather Von Zuben (Chair)	2018	Dennis Sallins	2019
Ava Tomlinson	2018	Kaireen Adamson	2024
Heather Montague	2015	Mona Turner	2025
Ed Rosdobutko (Head Usher)	2018	COMMUNICATIONS (3 Yrs)	
Benjamin Stein	2024	Bev Crumb (Chair)	2014
Joanna Coulter (Sanctuary)	2024	Mary-Lynn Fraser	2018
NOMINATIONS (2 Yrs.)		Lori Rosdobutko	2014
Paul Pierson	2016		
Shane Suepaul	2020		

PROPERTY (3 Yrs.)		OUTREACH (3 Yrs.)	
Bob Neil (HVAC, Buds & Shrubs, Weed Whackers)	2014	(Chair)	
King Whitney (Chair of Chairman Group, Fire Safety)	2019	Cathy Cherwinka	2017
Larry Laycock (Specialty Projects)	2018	Joanne MacPherson	2014
Dean Mortimer	2014	Debbie Joyce	2015
Dave Summers (Coord-Water Systems)	2009	Joanne Yourkevich	2019
Jack Darroch (Coord-Carpentry)	2017	Don Fry (Parish Mosaic Subcommittee Co-Chair)	2016
Bob Dingman	2014	Ashley Edwards	2024
Stewart Pegg	2024	Kirsten Grant	2024
Gordon Kirk	2024	Susan Peters	2024
AD HOC PROPERTY		CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (3 Yrs.)	
Shane Suepaul	2024	(Chair)	2022
King Whitney	2024	Cheryl Nicholson	2015
Larry Laycock	2024	Susan Shkolnik	2014
Brian Woodlock	2024	Michelle Alston	2015
Bob Neil	2024	Susan Pleasance	2014
Paul Pierson	2024	Joanna Shaw	2019
UCW Rep	2024	UCW (Term varies)	
Outreach Rep	2024	Tena Darroch (Pres)	2017
WELLNESS (3 Yrs.)		Carol O'Neil (Past-Pres)	2012
Crystal Smith (Co-Chair)	2020	Susan Pleasance (Sec)	2014
Carol O'Neil (Co-Chair)	2021	Shirley Penny (Treasurer)	2018
Paul Kneebone (Friendly Visitors, Phone Tree)	2021	Susan Shkolnik (Co-chair September 2025)	2024
Mike Nicholson	2024	Cecile Willert (Co-chair September 2025)	2024
Michelle Alston	2024		
Peggy Allen	2025		
Olivia Wild	2025		

Draft Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting from Sunday, March 3, 2024



Draft MINUTES of the ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Sunday, March 3rd, 2024

We Gathered:

1. Shane Suepaul, our Council Chairperson, called us to order at 12:17 p.m.
Shane thanked everyone for coming to the Annual Meeting either in person or online.

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.

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

The Light of Christ calls us into community and sustains us. Rev. Michelle lit the Christ candle to remind us.

3. Motion re: voting privileges:

Shane Suepaul explained that the meeting will be taking place on two platforms: in person and on Zoom. In person, please raise your hand to vote, on Zoom, turn on picture and vote with thumbs up or down. Zoom is being monitored by Margaret Suepaul.

Voting will be done by a show of hands. Please be aware of the time lapse between live and online. Questions will be repeated in the sanctuary.

MOTION: Moved by Rev. Sue Genge, seconded by Wendy Ekker, 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 Heather Von Zuben, seconded by Jody Pierson, that Joanne MacPherson be elected as Chairperson of our Annual Congregational Meeting. **Motion Carried.**

5. Motion to nominate a Secretary:

MOTION: Moved by Maureen Dingman, 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 Larry Laycock , seconded by Cheryl Nicholson, that the agenda be approved as circulated and amended from the original printed in the annual report. **Motion Carried.**

7. Motion to accept Minutes of March 5th, 2023 Annual Meeting:

MOTION: Moved by Cathy Cherwinka, seconded by Larry Laycock, that the minutes of the March 5th, 2023 annual meeting be approved as presented. Motion Carried. Note: date changed from 2021 to 2022 on the last page of the minutes.

MOTION: Moved by Jody Pierson, seconded by Heather Von Zuben, that the date change in the minutes be accepted.

Motion Carried

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

Rev. Michelle expressed her gratitude to her fellow staff and the congregation. Community is so important to Westminster. Thank you to Amy, Cathy, Linda and Ronell. Thanks to Rev. Sue and Rev. Dan, to Maureen Dingman and the M&P committee, and to our licensed lay worship leaders (LLWLs): to Shane Suepaul, Paul Pierson, Ava Tomlinson and all of the chairs and members of the committee and groups. Thanks for taking the time to celebrate the life and work we share together, and the many gifts we offer.

This month marks twelve years of Rev. Michelle being with us. A question often heard people wondering aloud is, "What do people do who don't have Faith?" Faith can be an inward, personal piety or trust, but is also a communal expression. Faith is an outward reality. We lifted up our prayers for heartbreak around the globe, stood with LGBTQ+ siblings, formed relationships with people through our Pantry and Christmas Hampers, Durham Outlook for the Needy and in numerous other ways. We continue to learn of our responsibilities as Williams Treaties people to work toward justice and respectful relationships.

We come together in worship, sing the best we can, no matter what we are facing in our lives. There have been conflicts and reconciliations. Shared meals together, funeral lunches. Moments that sustain us in community. Gentle moments between people who have connected here, supporting each other with emails and cards, casseroles and hugs in greeting and care.

Praying, sharing, singing and serving. Working through conflict and sharing bread. These rituals can be taken for granted, yet it is these ordinary activities, expressions of communal faith, that seem more and more important than ever. We need each other. It has become too easy to vilify the other. Christ's community is where we practise being together with others who don't look the same, think the same, love the same or vote the same. But we can be in the room together and care for each other. "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Rev. Michelle wrote in the intro to the annual report that there is a lot within the report to be proud of, but what shines through is community. Love of god, love of neighbour and love of ourselves too. We need a well to draw from. Jesus did that all the time. Healed others then retreated. Talked to a crowd then got in a boat and went to the other side of the lake. Not because He didn't care, but He knew that none of us can address everything all the time, even though a lot of us try.

Westminster Community means a lot to Rev. Michelle, and to many others. Rev. Michelle shared her love and gratitude for us and the faith we share together.

A video was shared of memories from the past year.

9. Minister of Faith Formation Comments: Cathy Shaw

The annual meeting is a good time to celebrate and look back at what we have done. We tend to forget about all that goes over the course of a year. Cathy reiterated Rev. Michelle's thanks to everyone for all that they do for this place and Cathy herself. In order to appreciate and celebrate we need to recognise the tough times as well. Sometimes faith takes a hit, and we need to find strength. Strength always and forever comes from God, and we are able to do great things with God, including when we are in doubt. This community of faith surrounds each other with such love and uplifts. People here make a difference. What we do here makes a difference. Everyone has gifts they are willing to share which are qualities that Christ himself had. Cathy celebrated ten years at Westminster last year, and she was so grateful and so moved and touched by the love shown of her ministry here. Cathy hopes to be able to do that for everyone here as well. Thank you to the staff and volunteers and to everyone who makes this place a home. Each of you matter and each of you bring something to this place and thank you for the privilege of walking with you and sharing the journey.

10. Minister of Music Comments: Linda Hunter

Linda is at home ill and unable to be with us today.

11. Council Chair Comments: Shane Suepaul

Shane thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting and supporting the work of Westminster. It is good to see and listen to what is going on here. It has been a pleasure to serve as Council Chair for the past three years. Linda is home ill but you can see her comments in the annual report. It has been a pleasure working with Linda and we wish her well in retirement. We look forward to meeting and working with our new Minister of Music in May.

We are reminded that all things are made through Him, and without Him nothing that has been made, that has been made. To all chairs and members of committees thanks for continuing to work so hard for Westminster and our community. We are a positive voice in the Durham Region. To Rev Michelle and Cathy, you are leaders to look up to. Thank you to our LLWLs for stepping up to the plate during Rev. Michelle's restorative leave. To the staff, thank you for all the work that is done. Special thanks to Ronell for his dedication to the building. Paul Pierson, thanks for all the support. To incoming council chair - Ava Tomlinson, may God continue to bless and guide you on your journey. Welcome to our incoming council secretary, Carrie Hunter-Cruz. Shane has been working very hard to find members for various committees, and thanks to everyone who has come on to participate. Thank you to everyone here who has contributed over Shane's past three years. Foodman Group and UCW, special thanks for providing lunch. Lastly, a thought to ponder: how can I continue to make a positive difference here at Westminster United Church and at the same time allow our differences not affect the work we do here. To whom much is given, much is expected.

Joanne thanked Shane and spoke to every Council Chair having some type of challenge during their tenure as Chair, but not many had to face a pandemic where we had to close the doors.

12. 2023 Financial Report: Paul Pierson

Monica Veenstra is attending online. The reports statistics produced are a lot of work for her so many thanks to Monica.

Treasurer's report - thank you for your support, engagement, leadership and financial support. It took a community to get where we are now. Paul is always reminded of all the moving pieces and people. Every dollar an equivalent hour of volunteer time - can't emphasise that enough. Financial results can be looked at like the score of a game, and this year we skated well as a team.

Last year we felt in the wilderness, and Paul talked of a deficit of \$36000. We didn't stay in the wilderness, but collectively chose to keep moving. We have turned challenges into opportunities, and taken advantage of opportunities presented to us. Paul's letter in the annual report gives a good view of where we are, with a surplus of just under \$20000 . Thank you to all!

An audited accountant statement was added this week. It is in draft form at the moment. Numbers line up with Paul and Monica's results.

Joanne thanked Paul for all that he does.

13. Motion to Accept Financial Reports for 2023

MOTION: Moved by Paul Pierson, seconded by Rev. Dan, to accept the 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion Carried.

14. Motion to Accept Budget Forecast for 2024

We are forecasting a deficit of \$24000. The challenge remains but is manageable. Paul is applying for a government grant for HVAC replacement. The grant is part of the reason we have the audited statement. We will also take advantage of the Faithful Footprints grant.

Results for January and February are going well, off to a good start. We really don't know until we get to November/December, as much happens at the end of the year. We do have reserves to help cover if needed.

One of our strengths is our outreach, we have exceeded Mission & Service, Pantry and Christmas Hamper givings, and we continue to support the Coldest Night of the Year walk. Our outreach donations went up as well as the local givings. This makes us who we are.

Comment from congregation thanking Paul for all the grants that he applies for, so hard to know what is out there.

MOTION: Moved by Paul Pierson, seconded by Arthur Smith, to accept the 2024 Budget Forecast as presented. **Motion Carried.**

MOTION: Moved by Paul Pierson and seconded by Arthur Smith, that we continue to use the Accounting Firm, Ritchie, Shortt and Tully for the upcoming year. **Motion Carried**

We Offer Ourselves:

15. Motion to accept the 2023 Annual Report as Published

Joanne mentioned that we are trying to keep report shorter as we have so much going on, yet the report continues to be over 60 pages

MOTION: Moved by Heather Von Zuben, and seconded by Maureen Dingman, that we accept the Annual Report as published. **Motion Carried**

16. Nominating Committee Report - Shane Suepaul

The Nominating Committee consists of Paul and Shane. We need to approve the committee list for 2024, but know that it could change throughout the year. Committees will be responsible for deciding on a chair and you will see that some committee chair positions are vacant at the moment.

MOTION: Moved by Shane Suepaul, seconded by Cheryl Nicholson that we accept the names resigning from Committees. **Motion Carried**

MOTION: Moved by Shane Suepaul and seconded by Ava Tomlinson that we approve and welcome the names coming on to committees for 2024. **Motion Carried**

MOTION: Moved by Bob Dingman and seconded by Paul Pierson, that we close the nominations for committees. **Motion Carried**

Joanne thanked Shane and wanted to celebrate that so many new people are coming on to council and committees.

17. Motion to Accept the Resignation of Trustee

MOTION: Moved by Wendy Ekker and seconded by Fitz Morrison, that the resignation of Trustee Ron Motum be accepted after serving 10 years. **Motion Carried**

Wendy also thanked Ron for all the work and research that he made over the years, particularly for all the work regarding insurance changes.

18. Motion to Approve New Trustees

Shane - bylaw regarding adherents as trustees

B.3.4 Adherents

B.3.4.1 Meaning ***An adherent of a congregation is a person who contributes regularly to the life and work of the congregation but is not a member or full member.***

B.3.4.2 Application *The governing body is responsible for deciding who is an adherent. Many people establish long-standing, committed relationships with congregations without formally becoming “full members” under section*

B.3.3.3 above. These people are often valued participants in the life of congregations as “adherents.”

G.3.3 Membership

G.3.3.2 Eligibility ***A majority of the trustees must be members of the United Church.*** Under secular law, a person must be of the legal age of majority in their province in order to serve as a trustee.

From the UC Trustee Manual 2021

Eligibility requirements **A majority of the trustees must be United Church members [G.3.3.2]. The remaining trustees may be adherents or others.**

Ron Motum expressed his appreciation to current trustees, many thanks for service and support over Ron’s time as Chair of Trustees. Sincere thanks to Shane, Paul and King. Fortunate to have some new trustees.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Motum and seconded by Wendy Ekker that we accept:

Barb Auchterlonie
Ted Phillips
Ed Rosdobutko
Christopher Pegg
Shane Suepaul

as new Trustees for Westminster United Church. **Motion Carried**

Arthur, on behalf of The East Central Ontario Regional Council (ECORC), welcomed the new Trustees. They are a very important part of the polity, the organisational structure of the church. A vibrant group of trustees, makes for a vibrant church.

19. Outstanding, New or Other Business

No new business was raised.

Joanne thanked everyone for continued support of The Pantry, which served 463 clients in two months. Fed over 1500. On track to surpass what we saw last year, which was doubled from the year before.

As We Go into the World:

20. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION: Bob Dingman moved by to adjourn our 2023 Annual meeting. **Motion Carried.**

21. Closing Prayer: Rev. Michelle Robinson