# UNITED CHURCHES OF LANGLEY



# Annual Report 2022 *SIGNS OF HOPE*

# UNITED CHURCHES OF LANGLEY Weaving a Faith that Matters

# **MISSION STATEMENT**

We Are a

*Thriving* congregation, *Vital* to the community, *Alive* as followers of Jesus the Christ, *Sustainable* into the future.

We are naming this booklet **Annual Report**: *Signs of Hope* to highlight the moments of *Hope* we experienced in our ministry together. 2022 continued to be a volatile year of navigating community life in a pandemic. In this journey, we were able to see and create *Moments and Signs of Hope*—rentals being up, the return to in-person worship, gathering for the Holly Luncheon and Christmas Bazaar, and an amazing new choir director.

Hope is not wishful thinking; it is a state of being, a posture through which we reflect on our lives and our community. It comes with a sense of peace with "what is" and opening to the Spirit to reveal what lies ahead and feel that it is good.

Enjoy these highlights, and add your own, in the margins of this booklet, in the conversations of the Congregational Retreat and Annual Congregational Meeting, and in the year to come as we continue our journey together!

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# UCoL TEAM 2022



**Rev. Sophia Ducey** Co-Minister with focus on <50 year old Adults, Families, Children, Youth, and Communications



Rev. Ryan Tristin Chapman Co-Minister with focus on >50 year old Adult Faith, Pastoral Care and Outreach



**Gillian McLeod** Social Justice and Outreach Program Facilitator



Sharon Lauze Choir Director



Grant Wutzke Church Musician



Deanna Feuer Children, Families & Youth Facilitator



Sarah Veltman Senior Youth Leader



William Ness Tech Lead



Jovana Ivanovic Office Administrator



Sherry Klassen Finance Administrator



# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR Eilleen Anderson

Hello Everyone!

As we reflect on the year 2022, I am amazed and proud of the work done, goals achieved and the accomplishments of willing hands within and around us at UCoL. This *"Weaving of a Faith that Matters"* is real. It is supported by our relationships, discernment, and efforts – and is most dependent on Faith in Action with God.

Rereading the Board minutes of last year was a welcome reminder of the faithful contribution and willing participation of the UCoL Board members in supporting our Church. The practical matters of the Church are addressed in a timely manner. Planning and follow through of ideas, proposals and projects are done with care and capable participation. I am heartfully thankful for the Board Members and their gifts to all of us.

I celebrate the steadfastness and persistence of the people of UCoL to continue "Weaving." Our Congregation, Ministers, Church leaders and Teams Sunday Worship, Live Stream Team, SHIFT, Youth and Children Ministry, Music Committee, Bible Study, Skeptics, Pastoral Care, Social Justice & Outreach, Affirm Team, UCW, Prayer Shawl, Food Bank Volunteers, Yoga Class, and Board Committees — <u>Spiritual Work and Play in Action!</u>

# My Request and Challenge

To members of small groups: take the time to personally invite and welcome someone to join your small group. Share with them the enjoyment/ reward/fulfillment/learning you experience in being a part of the group.

To those who feel they may be interested in joining a particular small group: Contact a Minister, Jovana or any Board Member for details and how you can connect with the group.

Small Groups are a fertile place for building faithful relationships with others, enriching our own understanding and faith, working for God, and having fun!

Blessings to you, my Friends, Eilleen Anderson, Board Chair

and our Staff continue to support the health of UCoL through both easy and tough times.

A significant observation that I have of our church life together is the power and energy of small groups. Last year, small groups gathered to share thoughts and feelings of who we are as a church and what our church community might become. This consideration and sharing of thought, feeling and vision is important and continuing into 2023.

We are enriched by a "plethora" of small groups, teams and programs. We have



# **BOARD COMMITTEES**



# FINANCE Kellie Warnock, Chair

We will again submit a deficit budget to the congregation for the coming year. It is a smaller deficit than the previous year and will once

again be covered by our Bequest fund, which is continuing to dwindle in value in our investments. The Finance team is very aware that this is not sustainable for too many years, and we are concerned. We hold this as our primary concern around our finances. The last year has had both positives and negatives around our finances.

First and foremost, we are incredibly grateful for the financial support of the congregation. Your givings enable United Churches of Langley to continue, and your generosity, individually as well as in the various groups, including the UCW, is so appreciated. Please know all that is donated is incredibly important to the life of the Church.

We started the year still dealing with the effects of COVID and the limitations around policies, as the Board worked to ease restrictions and make the Church a welcoming place for those in our congregation with health concerns. We slowly started fundraising again and brought back longstanding events that everyone was longing for. We are grateful for those who brought back the Ceilidh and the Teas that have been a mainstay in our Church.

We were without a Stewardship team and a Treasurer for a great part of the year. While we are grateful for those that joined the Finance team and have taken on the treasurer position, it is important that we get more people to volunteer to help in this area. The Finance team brought forth to the Board the idea to commit to a Community of Faith Profile to really take a good look at the direction of the Church and how we plan to move forward. Work around this began in earnest in the Spring to find out who we are as well as spend time working on a financial analysis of the last few years. The team discussed bringing in a consultant to assist, and interviewed a few to perhaps take on this work. The fees were significant, and ultimately, we agreed to continue the work ourselves. This may be revisited as personal issues have taken away those working on the Profile.

We also encouraged a good look at increasing our revenue through rentals. We are grateful for the hard work done by Tom Louie, property, and Jovana Ivanovic, office administrator, in increasing rentals with a Daycare, group rentals and the film industry.

We, unfortunately, had to deal with unexpected expenditures in property that were costly, such as the drainage in Fort Langley and the sprinkler systems in Murrayville. Our insurance was taken over by a new underwriter who required us to have formal assessments, electrical and plumbing inspections of both the Church and residence, plus an increase in our insurance.

The Finance committee teamed up with Social Justice to create a Pentecost Fire Campaign that was incredibly successful, and we are thankful for all of you who donated to this campaign.

As most know, investments were hit hard last year worldwide, and we were no exception. Having said that, we have full confidence that our investments are being handled well by Connor, Clarke and Lunn and are hopeful that we can gain strength in the coming months. We paid back our Government CEBA loan at the end of the year.

Work was done to try and make our bookkeeping easier to understand. We are grateful to Phil Dyer for the work that he did in helping us do this.

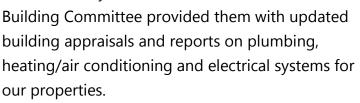
We still have work to do to get into a better financial situation. We need stewardship campaigns to encourage growth. As we continue to withdraw from our investments to cover deficits, our funds are getting smaller. We hope the Community of Faith Profile goes forward so that we can make the right decisions for the sustainability of this Church.

On a personal note, this past year has been very difficult for me due to personal family issues. I admit and apologize that my time and energy have not been at the level that I expect of myself when taking on a leadership role in the Church. If it were not for the group of people on the Finance team, much of the work in the latter part of the year for finance would not have been accomplished. Thank you to Barb Nelson for the countless phone calls to answer my questions and for staying involved in the role that she had resigned. Thank you to the rest of the team, Dougal Shewan, Andrea Hammond and Dale Hewitt, for not only doing the work that needed to be done but for offering much -needed personal support to me throughout this year. Thank you to Sherry Klassen, our financial administrator, for all the work that you do and for answering my countless emails and submitting all the papers. Thank you to the ministers for your support, in particular Rev. Sophia, for assisting me in gathering historical financial information for our sustainability. Thank you for the work, so many of you have done around the finances, and I hope and pray for a better sustainable future as we move forward.

TRUSTEES Jim Jordan-Knox, Chair

There have been no significant events for the Trustees to report for 2022.

As requested by our insurance underwriters, your Trustees and



There has been a big change in The United Church of Canada Insurance Program where, going forward, the UCC program will be self-insured. Our insurance renewed on June 1, 2022, but the new program commenced on December 1, 2022. We are expecting to receive a credit for the period from December 1, 2022, to June 1, 2023, upon renewal at a lower rate.

Other routine matters, such as insurance renewal and Permissive Tax Deduction applications, were looked after, and no bequests were received in 2022.

# MINISTRY & PERSONNEL Jayne Slawson, Chair

As the only mandatory Committee of the Board, our role is to build positive and trusting relationships between paid staff, members and



adherents of the Community of Faith at UCoL and provide consultation, support and supervision.

The committee this past year consisted of Janice McTaggart, Judy Chang, Janet Smith, new member Betty Hewitt and myself, Jayne Slawson, as chair.

Our faithful staff members are Rev. Sophia Ducey (Minister of Children, Families, Youth, Young Adults

Blessings, Kellie Warnock and Communications), Rev. Ryan Chapman (Minister of Adult Faith, Pastoral Care and Outreach), Jovana Ivanovic (Office Administrator), Sherry Klassen (Finance Administrator), Deanna Feuer and Sarah Veltman (Youth leaders). New members this past year are Sharon Lauzé (Choir Leader), Grant Wutzke (Church Musician) and Gillian McLeod (Social Justice and Outreach Program Facilitator).

Much time was spent this year working with the Board to formulate and refine accommodations to cope with the continuing changing COVID protocols that will keep all our staff and congregants safe. Some changes have happened quickly, which added to stressful discussions and decision-making, and other changes continue to drag along, making for the need for patience.

We have worked on ways to help staff and congregants visualize what the M&P committee is responsible for, and make contact with an M&P Member easier by using the highlight announcement time during worship services, having each M&P member responsible for each staff member and putting notices in the e-news. We will soon have a bulletin board in the hallway for M&P and staff communication.

We have identified the need to work more effectively in addressing behavioural concerns between different parties in our church and have done this with posted signage, discussions at the Board and Pacific Mountain Regional level and Disruptive Behavior protocol education.

We have also made reference to Healthy Relationships during the Highlight section of the worship service – Communication between congregants and with ministers.

We have been extra busy with staff performance reviews as we work along with new staff members. In addition, we have set this year as the time to have all our committee members go through the mandatory M&P online training.

The past few years have presented our M&P members with a plateful of enthralling issues, and the M&P team has risen to the challenge in their dedicated capacity to serve UCoL and its staff.

Bring on 2023!



# PROPERTY Tom Louie, Chair

I want to thank members of my committee, Tim Jones and Jim Jordan-Knox. Special thanks to Carol Sawyer and Jovana Ivanovic for looking

after the Murrayville site's gardens and watering them during the extended drought.

With the lifting of COVID restrictions, renters and church users slowly returned, resulting in an increase in movie rentals and new renters.

Murrayville (Lower Hall) is now the new home for Friendz at Five Corners child care services. Thanks to Jim Jordan Knox and Jovana Ivanovic for their assistance in making this happen.

Farmers Market and Montessori Preschool continue to operate at Ft. Langley. Also, the Church of the Sent has rented St. Andrew's Chapel for Sunday worship and the hall on Wednesday evenings for their youth group.

The property maintenance team was busy undertaking a number of projects and building maintenance activities:

 Coordinated visits with the Gandy HVAC system maintenance contractor and Fraser Valley Fire Protection Services at both church locations

- Tom Louie coordinated the washroom renovation project in the rental house in Murrayville.
- Completed concrete stairs repair at the back of the church in Murrayville
- Tom Louie coordinate the roof replacement project above the church office (MV).
- Partnered with Langley Housing and Health Society for an Extreme Cold Weather Shelter in the Lower Hall.
- Repairs to the dry sprinkler system in the Lower Hall (MV)
- Worked with Jovana on 2023 Facilities Rental Rates
- Eric Sigalet, Tim Jones and Tom Louie worked on improving the parking lot drainage at Ft. Langley.
- Tom Louie coordinated getting the exterior of Murrayville church pressure washed.
- Coordinated landscaping maintenance work with Carol Sawyer
- Sourced out new landscaping and snow removal contractors for both locations

# AFFIRM COMMITTEE Barrie Mills, Chair

This report summarizes the UCoL Affirm Committee activities and highlights upcoming initiatives.

The UCoL Board formed the Affirm Committee to plan

and lead a process of study and reflection toward our Church's possible consideration to become an Affirming Ministry.

The UCol Committee began by providing content for weekly services to familiarize the congregation with relevant Queer issues. A new Queer section was added to the UCoL website with a wealth of related material. The congregation was surveyed to identify any outstanding questions and information gaps.

Special Affirm services included: the *Double Rainbow* service for Autism Acceptance Month, the *Love Intersections* service on Queer and Asian issues during Asian History Month and the *Hark* service for Pride Month. These and other services included many videos, interviews, personal stories, and special music and writings. Zoom sessions were also held after Sunday services to discuss Affirm questions.

A "Popsicle Poll" outside the Church sampled member interest in becoming an Affirming Ministry. During COVID church closures, a Love Intersections Zoom workshop was held. Later, an open church allowed a post-service Lunch & Learn on terminology to be held. Additional Lunch & Learn sessions are planned this Spring. An ongoing Affirm display at Murrayville provides a wealth of information:

- A 50-Year Timeline of LGBTQIA+ and Two-Spirit Justice in The United Church of Canada
- What does Welcome mean to you: principles of a welcoming church
- PIE: going beyond Welcome, to offer a Public, Intentional, and Explicit atmosphere
- Posters: to outline the Affirm Process
- Affirm Pamphlet: Becoming an Affirming Ministry

An important part of the Affirm process is preparing several actions for our Church, as follows:

• A Vision Statement which specifically includes the full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the life and work of the ministry



- A Continuing Plan of Action for our Church once we become Affirming
- An Equal Marriage Policy

Drafts of these three statements are currently being finalized for congregation approval. Then they will be sent to Affirm United. Following their approval of our Vision Statement and Plan of Action, a congregation vote is taken to approve becoming an Affirming Ministry. It is hoped that such a vote might be possible by this Summer. If it is passed, we are expected to hold a public service of celebration for our ministry, our community and the wider United Church and community.

Our Affirm process was affected by changing Committee membership, COVID restrictions, and a focus on the Community of Faith Profile. At the heart is our answer to two simple questions. The first: **What is Love?** Over 20 years ago, the United Church affirmed that all sexual orientations are a gift from God. The Church has been a sustained advocate to governments of rights for all sexual orientations and gender identities. There are over 240 Affirming ministries in every part of Canada and 100 additional ministries in the Affirming process.

The second question is: **What is Welcome?** The Welcome Poster on the Affirm display highlights principles of caring, diversity in cultures and abilities, individual faith journeys, service to others and celebrating whole lives and loves. Do we welcome and accept others who are different from us? Do we rejoice and celebrate how their diversity helps to enrich our Church and us as a complete community under God?

There is a past to everything. The United Church was part of government efforts to limit the rights of others through residential schools. In 1998, the Church apologized specifically for its role in these schools, and since 2008 has been actively engaged in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, created to address the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools.

There is also a future to everything. Our future lies in Love. *"Love is patient, Love is kind... Love never fails".* Love will be waiting for all; at the doors, we chose to open to the world.

# MINISTRY & PROGRAM TEAMS



# Rev. Ryan Tristan Chapman Minister of Worship, Pastoral Care,

Adult/Spiritual Education, Social Justice and Outreach

What a thrill to find ways to connect in person as we continue

to live with COVID as a daily reality. After two summers of gathering cautiously outdoors, it is well worth celebrating our return to in-person worship and rejoicing in opportunities to witness the risen Christ. For Christmas Eve 2021, United Churches across our region closed due to rising risk factors. We continued to stay at home and exercise caution around common cold symptoms with extra care to protect those around us. Finally, this year we were able to celebrate the birth of Christ together once again!

Some groups continue to meet online, while others are back to meeting in person - in our large hall or sanctuary - and the choir has been reassembled, recharged, and inspired to share their voices with us each week. After two years of hard-working song leaders and soloists providing tunes to sing along to at home, how wonderful it is to join our voices in prayer, praise, and hymn singing. Sharon Lauzé continues to inspire as our director as we sing along, glowing with good news! This is one way we continue to share and spread the love and joy of Christ in our midst.

Our friends at Fort Langley continue to join us virtually, as do friends far and wide, across Turtle Island and beyond! It is a privilege to continue to offer a live-streamed service. We have a fantastic setup thanks to many volunteers spending many hours creating and updating it, so we can all share the clearest picture possible! If you appreciate this service, please consider joining our AV team. William Ness is happy to train anyone, and the jobs are now set up to be straightforward and userfriendly. Additional help will allow volunteers to rotate and plan around other commitments.

We welcomed new members in March of 2022, which included individual meetings both in person and virtually to discuss interest in church membership. In June, we again welcomed new members! It is vital to rejoice at this commitment to our community, affirming everyone's place at our table. We also welcomed a new member through baptism. The family had awaited an opportunity to celebrate this sacrament for two long years! Along with a handful of weddings, these celebrations are a highlight of interest and growth. We have also been able to gather once again to celebrate the lives of those we lost. This is a vital community service and an opportunity to support one another.

Welcoming Gillian McLeod on staff as our Social Justice and Outreach facilitator is a tremendous gift. Through dedicated funding, the SJO team and Gillian, we continue to animate our faith, with the resources we have to share and connect. A recent partnership with the Community Peacemaker Teams has me especially excited. Each decision we make to support others in need is a thrilling undertaking. It is a privilege to disperse these funds. Gillian and the team consider each request prayerfully.

In October, I attended an investment seminar from The United Church about Reconciliation through investment choices. This was part of my commitment to pursue opportunities to practise less exploitative forms of fund development. John and Tony Snow's Lenten series was another thought-provoking series. I studied the experiences of refugees in Canada in anticipation of our support for refugees and their families, including migrant workers and newcomers. I have queer primers around language and history, and am eager to encourage others in this learning as part of our spiritual development as well.

I recently attended a 3-day Wild Church retreat at Loon Lake as a part of my continuing education. Guest speakers at UCoL, such as Caitlin Rielley Beck and Laurel Dykstra, have highlighted and shared about similarly nature-based churches-led worship services on Sunday mornings, as well as offering curricula as part of Camp Spirit. The Skeptics continued weaving this thread of education with a fun Lenten series designed by Rev. Wade Lifton. The Skeptics continue to engage in conversations about climate change, faith, and everything in between! Bible Study, Centering Prayer, Contemplative Worship, Art Break, and many other expressions of our ministry continue in person. While our Prayer Shawl group creates pieces remotely, still other groups (such as our Board) continue to meet online, while we explore hybrid options as well.

Thank you for all the ways in which you give to United Churches of Langley. Please know that you offer unique contributions and that we are richer for your participation. I look forward to 2023 and believe we will continue to weave a faith that matters together.



# Rev. Sophia Ducey Minister of Children, Families, Youth, Younger Adults (under 50) and Communications

What a journey we have been on! We began the 2022 year "shut-down" again –

unable to gather in person due to the surge in COVID-19 Omicron variant cases. The Children, Families, Youth, Younger Adults (CFYYA) ministry team had planned to re-engage with UCoL children, youth and their families and begin to dream again about gathering together for worship, messy/wild church, youth and young adult groups, and community meals. Much of our initial planning was focused on the "Beyond" – beyond Sunday, beyond our buildings, beyond the inner circle, and cultivating new and ongoing relationships with children, youth and families of UCoL and in the greater Langley community.

While some of this was able to be leaned into, much screeched to a halt again. We had to move everything back online to honour the safety protocols set in place in the Winter. Two years into the pandemic, people had a high degree of screen fatigue and a deep yearning to connect personally and deeply with others. Many had created these deep and rich connections within their own neighbourhoods and ongoing family activities in the community (sports, clubs, etc.)

The other thing we noticed in people of all ages is that many had gotten out of the habit of gathering together for worship on Sunday mornings. Parents and elders alike shared that their new rhythm of worship & community was hard to break out of – coffee & danish while watching worship with their spouses and families at home, or at an alternative time than 10:30am Sundays. While we were able to re-open our doors in the Spring, many people of all ages have not returned to our worshipping community in person.

CFYYA ministry continued to be more of a pastoral ministry rather than a gathering ministry. Since we were unable to gather in groups, we continued to reach out to people under 50 at home and online. Sarah and Deanna offered support to youth and young adults in the Langley area and to those who live elsewhere but have had a connection to United Churches of Langley in the past. Sophia reached out and connected with parents, and Carley continued to create beautiful programming for children until May when she resigned.

We were able to host Camp Spirit again with 36 children plus youth and young adult staff in our church building and engage with the indigenous site at the Arboretum. How wonderful it felt to be engaging with children in this meaningful way.



The Children, Youth and Families Team and congregants were actively engaged in community activities at the Farmer's Market, Langley Community Days, Boppin' in the Park and reconciliation activities at the Arboretum and throughout the Fraser Valley. Fall brought a few families back into Sunday morning worship and Spirit Academy, and we continued to engage with youth and young adults in our pastoral relationship as they continued to journey through the stressful young lives during a pandemic.

# SHIFT

(See full SHIFT update in October 2022 Board report.)

Our Podcast continued to take a back seat to the immediate and important ministry of Livestream and Reconciliation. The podcast was intended to be the starting point for gathering in meaningful conversation. Other meaningful conversations and ways of gathering surfaced emerged without the catalyst of the podcast topics.



Some SHIFT ministry participants have found a passion in the Indigenous Reconciliation work in our community, and we together dream and move forward on a permanent place of healing in Langley – for settlers and indigenous people to engage with, grieve, and heal from the trauma of residential schools.

We were blessed to be invited to offer a Jazz AWE (Alternative Worship Experience) as part of the Fort Langley Jazz Festival. This AWE kicked off a Fall of Jazz AWEs that we offered in person as well as recorded and uploaded online through our YouTube library.

As is the nature of younger people, many of the SHIFT ministry participants have graduated from University, or their lives changed drastically; they have moved away or moved into other areas of community engagement in their lives.

### Worship & Spiritual Practices for All-Ages

Although we have not had many families join us for Sunday Morning worship, Sophia has worked to bring AWE moments (all ages engagement) into our regular worship service. Sophia continues to support Ryan and the choir director in seasonal worship planning. We are missing our dear Pat Thebaud and her playful way of engaging with worship and the many ways she supported the full congregational worship experience with candles, communion, sanctuary décor, and so much more.

**Centering Prayer** continued online with special series for Lent and Advent. This continues to be a rich community practice for some who find it difficult to join in person. **Contemplative Worship** was able to come together again in-person on Sunday mornings. Weekly contemplative pilgrims gather for prayers, scripture, music and silence. We also continue to offer **Yoga in the Chapel** where congregants and local friends gather for this wonderful spiritual practice led by Denise Hay.

### 2023 and beyond:

Sophia's sabbatical that was postponed from last year is now set for May-August 2023 (with a few weeks in town for Camp Spirit and the Jazz Festival AWE).

Fall 2023 will be filled with Sophia bringing back her insights and rejuvenation from Iona, Findhorn and Taize – bringing new life to ministry of young people – children, youth, families and younger adults. We will also be looking at the staffing of the Ministry of Children, Youth, Young Adults and Families and the overall staffing of the church to ensure that we are supporting the ministry that the congregation has identified as meaningful and their priorities. With the resignation of Carley Carder in the Spring of 2022, the extended leave of Deanna and Sarah, and now the 2023 sabbatical of Sophia, we will come to the staffing conversation in the Fall with fresh ideas – open to the Spirit's guidance as we move forward together. In the meantime, a rotation of volunteers will be put together to "host" children who attend Sunday worship with their parents in a "Spirit Academy" time of story, play and art during the summer months.

We give thanks for the Signs of Hope we experienced in 2022, and open up our hearts and minds to the "new thing" the Spirit is calling us into in 2023.



# SOCIAL JUSTICE AND OUTREACH Gillian McLeod, Social Justice & Outreach

**Program Facilitator** 2022 brought significant

changes to our SJO Ministry at United Churches of

Langley. The biggest update was the hiring of Gillian McLeod as the new SJO Program Facilitator, beginning on April 1, 2022.

The SJO program has become more a part of UCoL's communications and programming as the websites, language and work programs are more inclusive of SJO programs and opportunities.

Gillian participated in training and education courses in Anti-Racism, Indigenous Reconciliation,

Social Justice and Climate Change provided by the United Church of Canada. The SJO team connects with Langley inter-faith communities, non-profits, community committees and members. Gillian also meets with Langley Mayors, Council members and Senior Staff to communicate regarding needs and supports in both Langley communities.

The SJO YouTube account was not updated, as the team is no longer doing videos, blogs or podcasts. This may develop in 2023. The SJO website was incorporated into the UCoL website and can be found through links on the main page. Local partners that SJO works with are also now listed on the website <u>https://www.ucol.ca/pages/our-partners</u>.

Projects, Committees and connections active for 2022 are listed below.

- UCoL Affirming Team
- UCoL Congregational Education of Social Justice and Outreach Issues, including Library purchases
- UCoL Refugee Sponsorship
- Langley Poverty Reduction Committee
- Langley Housing and Homelessness Committee
- Langley Community Action Team for Toxic Drugs and Overdoses
- Langley Local Immigration Partnership
- Langley Seniors in a variety of ways
- Langley Community Mental Health and Community Support
- Healthier Communities Partnership
- PRIDE programs and services
- First United Redevelopment Funding
- Building Safer Communities for Youth, Youth Engagement Project, The Foundry
- Langley Memorial Hospital Foundation
- Langley Food Banks

- Indigenous Solidarity, Walk for Reconciliation, Truth and Reconciliation projects
- Langley School District Foundation Nicomekl Breakfast program, Starfish Backpack program
- Local Community Members with limited income and basic needs

For any questions and comments, please feel free to contact Gillian by email at <u>socialjustice@ucol.ca</u> or at extension #207 by phone.

# CHRISTMAS HAMPERS PROGRAM Andrea Hammond and Diane Frew

Since COVID, when the Langley Christmas Bureau stopped providing families with physical hampers, we have participated in the program by contributing cash from our allotted outreach budget. The Christmas Bureau provided families with gift cards during this time. In 2022, the Christmas Bureau got a late start and tried to provide hampers and gift cards to registered families.

When the UCoL donation cheque was submitted this last year (2022), we were told that next year (2023), the program would be administered, as in the past, with sponsors such as ourselves, obtaining families and providing hampers. With this in mind, we hope to begin our program planning here at UCoL sometime this summer. We know many of our congregants have missed "doing the work" required to put together and deliver the Christmas hampers and gifts. So hopefully, you are all looking forward to resuming the program next Christmas.

# NICOMEKL BREAKFAST PROGRAM Maureen Burgess

With increased enrollment at the school, we have had to make changes with how the program is run. We still prepare the breakfast, but the children eat in their classrooms. We miss seeing them. With the former coordinator, Sue Saunders, moving to Alberta, we are delighted that **Diane Frew** is our new fearless leader. We still hope to recruit a few more volunteers. **Is that you?** 

# STARFISH PACK PROGRAM Bev Rodrigo, on behalf of the Starfish Pack

#### Committee

During the past two and a half years, we met the students' needs for weekend food with gift cards to the families.

In October 2022, we were pleased to start our program at our Murrayville site each Thursday at 12 noon. We are blessed to have many of our regular committee members and several new members from our church and the community join us with their enthusiasm and commitment to the program.

We have increased our number of packs to 57 due to the needs.

Freshco Foods have generously donated bags to us for the school year. We are so thankful for the generous gift. The bags are working so well that we plan to continue in the future with the bags instead of the backpacks. We plan to donate our useable backpacks to the Gateway of Hope.

We continue to review our menus to meet students' needs and monitor the rising food costs.

At this point, we do not have funds to cover the costs of gift certificates for the school breaks. We are continuing to look for solutions to help during the summer break.

Our thanks to the congregation, Social Justice and Outreach Team and the ministers and staff for their continued support of the program.

We acknowledge and thank our sponsors - the School District Foundation, Shewan Foundation, Freshco Foods, and Save-on-Foods for their continued support.



# MUSIC MINISTRY Sharon Lauze, Choir Director

First I want to say how much I am enjoying being a part of UCoL. Thank you to everyone for making me feel welcome.

The choir and I have made significant progress in the last few months. We have welcomed some new members, and we are learning how to be a great team. I am still working my way through our music library to see what we have, and I am so fortunate to have the incredible organizational skills of Maureen Burgess keeping us all on track.

Music is an expression of the soul and has always been a large part of worship. The more we sing together as a choir, the more we connect as Christians. As any of the choir members will confirm, I am constantly asking them to "tell the story." We have a lot of fun on Thursday evenings. I know I surprise them often with some of my teaching methods; ask them about the baseball.

I am grateful as well for the incredible musical talents of Grant Wutzke. He definitely helps to make us sound good.

We are always looking for more singers, particularly a few more male voices! Enthusiasm counts for more than experience in my book. Don't worry if you have never sung in a choir before, just come and give it a try. We meet at 7:30 pm on Thursdays in the sanctuary. I look forward to meeting you.



# CARE MINISTRIES

Rev. Gabrielle Suedfeld

# PASTORAL CARE NETWORK TEAM

This year, our pastoral care team members were: Rev. Ryan Chapman, Jackie Peebles and



Debbie Koroll (co-chairs), Gabrielle Suedfeld (secretary) and Elaine Pokorny, Sherry Robles and Amanda Vanags.

We began the year with Zoom meetings, and in March, continued with in-person meetings. We share prayers, a reading, a brief check-in time, and then discuss pastoral concerns, phone contacts and visits, and other pastoral matters listed below. Elaine Pokorny keeps in touch with all the members of the Fort Langley church. Sherry Robles has helped organize meals for people in the congregation who have health issues and need extra support.

### Cards: Debbie Koroll

Cards are sent throughout the year by the group. Jackie sends Birthday cards to all who are 90 and over. Debbie sends sympathy cards to families who have lost a loved one, "Get well" cards and "Thinking of You" cards to families on the first anniversary of a death. This year, the team mailed or delivered approximately 50 cards to congregants in seniors' homes and those who are shut in at home, both at Christmas and Easter. Just before Christmas, shortbread cookies were made and packed up and delivered to seniors living at home. Jackie also delivered Christmas plants to four families who had experienced loss this year. At our monthly meetings, we try to keep our lists updated and continue to think of new ways to keep in touch with those in need.

# Communication "Vine":

Since the beginning of the COVID outbreak, 15-20 people have been in contact with a majority of people in the congregation. Sophia has kept in touch with families with children, youth and young adults. Doing the math, our Congregational Directory comes out to about 230 entries! This has been a massive undertaking, and gradually, we were able to streamline calls to those who were not meeting as part of the church's board and committee structure. Now it is time to re-group again, and most of the callers are concentrating on people with special pastoral needs and those who are confined to home or are in seniors' facilities. As we begin to gather in worship, we know that new friendships have been formed, and there is rejoicing that our conversations can take place in person, as we share our faith and our smiles with one another. Our sincere appreciation to all who have taken on this task and continued to care about the needs of our church family.

### Bears

Several bears have worked during the year, and a new bear will be named, introduced to the congregation and blessed at a service soon. Those who have received a bear companion during a time of spiritual or health needs, always express appreciation for this ministry. The bears are waiting for permanent accommodation, and at present, reside in the back of the sanctuary, under Ryan's watchful eye.

# **Emergency contact list**

Many thanks go to Maureen Burgess and Jovana Ivanovic for their work in completing a new emergency contact list. This gives the office the name and phone number of a family member or close friend who can be contacted should a health emergency arise during worship or other church functions.

# PRAYER SHAWL GROUP Rev. Gabrielle Suedfeld

Two in-person meetings were held in March, and we realized that most of the group were unable to attend on a regular basis. Some have taken on other responsibilities in the church, and for the rest of the year, shawls were made at home and brought in when ready. Six shawls were handed out, and many are waiting to be blessed and made available when needed. Our prayers and faithful service continue in the hope that we will be able to gather in the coming months.

# WORSHIP IN SENIORS' HOMES Andrea Hammond

Unfortunately, our team has not been able to resume these services. We are hopeful that we may be able to re-visit this important ministry soon.

# 2022 MEMBERSHIP ROLL

Removed:	8
by transfer	2
by death	6
by request	0
by board review	0
Received	5
by transfer	1
by profession of faith	4

Total on United Churches of Langley MembershipRoll on December 31, 2022:359

Active Member and Adherent households(indicated by inclusion into the CongregationalDirectory):227Households on the mailing list (estimated):280Households on email list:2782022 Child Baptisms12022 Weddings2

We remember the following people who died in 2022:



# UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Shirley McGonigal, President

Year 2022 was a challenge, recovering from COVID, a return to a new normal. We lost many members in two and a half years of COVID, others are aging out.

Umbrella Group involves all members, our

Trinity is now a Fellowship Unit.

Friendship Circle in Fort Langley raised \$500 in 2022.

Catering to Funerals, numbers are now small.

Friendship Unit has 18 members, organize events and support each other in fellowship.

UCoL Catered to 3 funerals.

Gatherings were in Sharon Chapel in February, May, August, September, October and November.

We were able to donate to UCoL General Fund \$6500.



Holly Luncheon



Strawberry Social



Remembering our lost members in Fraser Region, at Fraser UCW AGM at Peninsula United Church, which four of our members attended.

# ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

# BIBLE STUDY Gabrielle Suedfeld

Bible study began again in the fall, meeting in person on Wednesday at 10:30 am. We decided to change the format and discuss readings based on themes chosen by the group. In October, we explored Friendship and Hospitality, using passages from Hebrew and Christian scriptures, getting some historical background, sharing a recipe for "scripture cake," and enjoying some biblical snacks. During Advent, we talked about some of the people in the stories and how their experiences intersect with our lives today. This included looking at the ancestry of Jesus and angels in our lives.

The group welcomes all who would like to join in the conversations. For an updated list of future sessions, please contact Gabrielle.

# COMMUNITY BUILDING

# ART BREAK Sharon McMath

For 16 years, our art group has been meeting every Friday morning in our Church Hall in Fort Langley. The group began as an outreach program connecting artistic



individuals who wished to meet others to create art and develop new friendships. It appealed to local retired women and those who had retired and relocated to this area.

As we age, it is these bonds of friendship that help us through challenges of life. Many of the group members have been attending for a number of years. During COVID, we met outdoors and enjoyed the experience. We will consider that option again when the weather warms. Also, to ensure safety in our group (up to 11 participants each week), we still space ourselves out using separate tables as much as possible. This setup works well.

To add new energy and encourage us to exercise our abilities and move outside our comfort zone, some members have brought in new ideas to focus on and promote excitement on Friday mornings. We hope that from these new ideas, we can revitalize ourselves and our art display in the Gathering Space.

Although at present, the group takes up most of the space in the hall, as health concerns subside, it may be possible in the future to put out an invitation sign welcoming drop-ins on Friday mornings.

# CÉILIDH

Jack & Margaret Williamson - Ceilidh & Biscuit Coordinators

The Céilidh is a fundraising outreach and



community event held at the Fort Langley site. It is essentially a live music concert based on the concept of the Celtic and Maritime "kitchen parties" (i.e. ceilidhs).

We schedule one céilidh a month, usually on the third Thursday, and take a break for the summer. We provide a mix of live music, free parking, coffee and tea and a traditional "lunch" of biscuits and jam included in the admission price. We have recently increased the admission fee to \$10, which matches the Aldergrove ceilidh's entrance fee. All performers and all team members are volunteers and do not pay admission. We restarted the Ceilidh on October 20th, 2022, with Board approval after a two-year COVID pause. There were a few changes. Audience numbers dropped by about 25%, and the revenues dropped accordingly. The entrance price went from \$5 to \$7, then to "by donation." In January, we raised the entrance price to \$10. Most of the audience understood the need for the increase and believed the Ceilidh was well worth the new price.

Fifteen years ago, we started the Ceilidh at \$5 and kept that price until the 2022 post-COVID opening. Since then, the prices for supplies (coffee, tea, flour, milk, sugar, butter, jam, etc. and masking tape, various little things, replacement cables for the sound system, heat, light, etc.) have gone up. Also, we lost approximately \$60 to \$80 per Ceilidh when we stopped running a 50/50. We have a lot of volunteers who work hard putting the Ceilidh together. We need to show that our efforts are worthwhile.

The January audience numbers increased to sixtyone but are still not up to our pre-COVID numbers. We have just one price, \$10, for all. Children are not charged, but few attend. The Ceilidh's income for Season Thirteen thus far is:

- October 2022: @ \$7 Net earnings: \$381
- November: by donation Net earnings: \$343
- December: by donation Net revenues: \$364
- January 2023: @ \$10 Net earnings: \$552
- Total for 4 ceilidhs (to date) Net earnings: \$1640

Our core Ceilidh Team is outstanding and includes both UCoL people and community members with no association with our church. The current team includes: John Hunter (setup and backup sound and backup MC), Olie Hunter (kitchen), Tim Jones, (sound and setup), Ernie and Suzanne Kendal (door), Tom Louie (setup), Sharon McMath (kitchen), Ron Star (MC), Margaret Williamson (kitchen, biscuits, performer, Ceilidh Accounting, etc.) and Jack Williamson (overall coordinator and organizer.) In January, we had a total of 30 volunteers, including performers.

The Ceilidh has been an important and successful outreach program that has brought in a small but steady cash flow. Now that the Ceilidh has resumed, we will be able to contribute financially and provide this significant community outreach.

#### **APPENDIX 1**

#### Minutes of Annual Congregational Meeting United Churches of Langley February 27, 2022 by Zoom, following Online Worship Service

Chair, Eilleen Anderson, began by inviting Tom Louie to give a quick outline of the Zoom format for this meeting. Tom did so, and let people know if they had any technical issues they could call him, Jim Jordan-Knox or Brad Jarvis for help.

Kellie Warnock worked on confirming the number of people present, both members and adherents.

#### Quorum

According to the UCC Manual, for a congregation of 100 or more members, at least 20 full members must be present to convene a congregational meeting. Since there were 41 full members present, a quorum was declared. There were also 10 adherents present, plus our two ministers, for a total of 53 people in attendance.

#### Welcome

At 11:40 a.m. Eilleen called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to our Annual Congregational meeting.

#### M/S Kellie Warnock/Maureen Burgess that adherents be included as eligible voters.

#### **CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR**

#### Opening

Rev. Ryan then gave an opening reflection before leading us in prayer.

#### In Memoriam

A slide presentation was shown with photos of those from our congregation who had died. Rev. Sophia then read their names and we remembered them and gave thanks for their lives.

In 2021: Tom McMath, Charles Cuthbert, Allan McLeod, Donna McTaggart, Jean Davis, Elfreda Anderson Early in 2022: Mary Marquette, Agnes Bierwirth

#### Short Reflection on the Year: Annual Report – Praying, Pivoting and Paying it Forward

Eilleen commented on our Annual Report by saying that all of the words, stories and expressions within each of the reports are important and written with care. If you haven't done so, she encouraged each of us to take the time to sit and read it. If you don't have a copy Jovana can email it to you, or you can stop by the church and pick one up.

She also stated that the Board has heard the appeal and desire for more timely and better communication. We will work on improving in this area; and also welcome your input – questions, comments and ideas. Please don't hesitate to call or email Eilleen or Board members – you will find contact information in our Directory. With the return to in person services on March 6<sup>th</sup>, Eilleen announced that we have a musician in place to play for at least two weeks, maybe longer. The Search Committee is hoping to complete the hiring of a regular musician as soon as possible.

Eilleen then asked Tom to give a short report on the Extreme Cold Weather Shelter that took place in our Murrayville basement this past week, in partnership with the Lookout Housing & Health Society (LHHS). This was open to homeless people from Tuesday through Friday nights during the below freezing temperatures. There was an unfortunate incident on Friday night, which was handled very quickly with RCMP in attendance and the LHHS staff ensuring that new procedures were in place to prevent any future issues around loitering. This partnership is in place until the end of March, if we have weather that warrants opening up.

#### Motion to approve the Minutes of 2021 Congregational Meeting

#### *M/S Maureen Burgess/Joanne Rathgeber to approve the Minutes of the ACM held on Feb. 28, 2021 CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR*

# Motion to Receive and Accept the 2021 Annual Report

M/S Tom Louie/Jim Jordan-Knox to receive and accept the 2021 Annual Report CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR

#### Nominations

Before presenting the slate of nominations, Tom Louie had four motions to put forward on behalf of the Nominations Committee.

### M/S Tom Louie/Marianne Clarke that each PMR representative have a vote on the Board.

At this time we have three (3) PMR representatives, who have only one vote between them on the Board. It is felt that all three reps should each be entitled to vote. After discussion ...

The question was asked and the motion was CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.

# *M/S Tom Louie/Joanne Rathgeber that we increase the number of Members-at-Large on the Board from 2 to 3* It is felt that increasing the number of 'members-at-large' would allow the congregation to have a better voice on the Board. After discussion ...

The question was asked and the motion was CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.

# *M/S Tom Louie/Jim Jordan-Knox that the Stewardship Committee have representation on the Board. This person would be selected by the Stewardship Committee.*

Having a member from Stewardship on the Board would help with the communication between Church finances, Church operation and the Stewardship committee. After discussion ...

The question was asked and the motion was CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.

# *M/S Tom Louie/Ron Kinley that the Social Justice & Outreach Committee have a representative on the Board and this person would be selected by the SJ&O Committee. This position would have non-voting status.*

The Nominations committee felt it important to have a representative from this team because they are administering a significant budget, and could answer questions from the Board and also ask questions they may have. There was discussion around this motion resulting in an amended motion which was agreed to by Tom Louie and Ron Kinley.

# *M/S Tom Louie/Ron Kinley that the Social Justice & Outreach team have a representative attend the Board meetings, and this person would be selected by the SJ&O team. This position would have non-voting status. The question was asked and this amended motion was CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.*

It was noted that our Governance document would need to be updated to reflect these changes.

The following people are going into the second year of their two-year terms:

Chair	Eilleen Anderson
Past-chair	Tom Louie
Chair of Finance	Kellie Warnock
Property Chair	Tom Louie

PMR Rep.	Sylvia Mountain
Member-at-large	Joanne Rathgeber
Member-at-large	Sandi Takasaki
Secretary	Maureen Burgess has agreed to serve a further year, as no one had been found to fill this position.

The following people are letting their names stand to serve in the positions as noted:

Chair of M & P	Jayne Slawson
PMR Rep.	Marianne Clarke has agreed to serve another two-year term
PMR Rep.	Barrie Mills has agreed to serve at least a one-year term
Member-at-Large	Trudy McMurdo

Tom asked for nominations from the floor, three times, for each of these positions.

There being no further nominations, these people were declared elected.

There are two positions still vacant.

On February 4, 2022 William Ness resigned from the position of **Vice-Chair**, leaving a vacancy for a Vice-Chair. Tom called for nominations from the floor three times.

With no nominations, Tom stated that the Nominations Committee will keep searching for someone to fill the one year remaining in the position of Vice Chair.

Barb Nelson has completed her appointment as **Treasurer**, and is unable to stand again for this position. Tom called for nominations from the floor:

Sylvia Mountain nominated Lori Shewan. Lori declined, with thanks.

Kellie Warnock nominated Dale Hewitt. Dale also declined with thanks.

Tom called for nominations from the floor a third time.

With no further nominations Tom stated that the Nominations Committee will keep searching for someone to fill the position of Treasurer.

#### Trustees

Tom reported that five of the six trustees are going into the second of their three-year terms. The other trustee, Kellie Warnock has completed her 3-year term as a Trustee, and will not be letting her name stand for a further three years. There is therefore a vacancy for another trustee. Please let Tom know if you are interested in serving as a trustee.

**CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.** 

#### *M/S Tom Louie/Maureen Burgess to approve these nominations.*

Thanks were given to those who have completed their terms on the Board:

Stacey Jordan-Knox, who has completed 4 years as Chair of the M&P Committee.

Barb Nelson, who has completed her appointment as Treasurer.

Marianne Clarke who has completed two years as PMR Rep., and is continuing on for two more years. William Ness for the year he spent as Vice-Chair of the Board.

And a Welcome to the new and returning members of our 2022 Board.

#### 2021 Financials & 2022 Budget

The Budgets sheets were then shared on the screen, and Barb went through, discussing the 2021 budget, actual spending in 2021, and the proposed budget for 2022, pausing at the end of each of the sections asking for any questions. It was pointed out that there were a couple of numbers that needed correcting, as noted at last

week's Finance Forum, and Barb will make sure these corrections are made. Kellie explained the extraordinary adjustments that will bring our budget down to a deficit of \$99,932.43. After this presentation and discussion it was ...

M/S Barb Nelson/Kellie Warnock to receive 2021 Financials (unaudited) CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR.

### Motion to Receive and Approve the 2022 Operational Budget

*M/S Barb Nelson/Kellie Warnock to receive and approve the 2022 Operational Budget* After Barb had gone through the budget, as stated above, and answered questions ... *The motion was CARRIED WITH ONE ABSTENTION.* 

#### Motion to Approve the Independent Financial Review of the 2021 Financials

Agatha Cluff is an independent accountant, who has been reviewing UCoL's records for many years.

*M/S Barb Nelson/Kellie Warnock to approve a contract to hire Agatha Cluff to review the 2021 United Churches of Langley records.* 

### CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOUR

## **Community of Faith profile** Kellie Warnock

The Community of Faith profile began at the Finance committee level and was brought forth based on concerns around the financial realities for UCoL. We believe this profile can assist our congregation around self-assessment of our vision and mission and beliefs. What is important, is to listen and hear from everyone, and report on a specific set of questions/ideas that enable good discussion. There are a variety of approaches to gather input from the congregation, including: written request for feedback; phone interviews; face to face conversations OR by Zoom; large group, small group and focus groups.

As we participate in our visioning work, by talking and listening, we ask ourselves: Why are you part of this congregation? What is important to us? Who are we and why do we gather? How are we being called to be the Church? Discerning our faith story helps us identify not only who we are, but it also helps us see what our priorities are as a congregation and what our mission is in the greater community. The success of this work is dependent on the faithful, caring, honest and respectful participation by the community, and our goal is to make sure everyone has a chance to engage in expressing ideas. But just as important, our hope is that we all take part in actively listening to each others' voices.

In answer to a question, Kellie said she hoped we might have this project completed in three months. So if you would like to be part of the team working with Kellie on this important project, please be in touch with her. She would love to hear from anyone interested and will be happy to answer any questions. All help will be welcome. And if you are interested in arranging for a small group, i.e. Skeptics, UCW, or any other idea for a group, again, please call or email Kellie.

The meeting was closed at 1:40 p.m. with a prayer by Rev. Sophia.

United Churches of Langley Women Financial Report 2022

Submitted by Lynda Christensen, Treasurer

# United Churches of Langley UCW Financial Report

Submitted By Lynda Christensen Treasurer December 31st, 2022

Shares	\$30.56		
Balance from 2021	\$1,131.90		
Income		Expenses	
Interest	\$0.10	Bank Fees	\$119.50
Strawberry Social	\$1,211.05	Strawberry Social	\$621.05
Memorials	\$3,275.00	Memorials	\$394.86
Holly Luncheon	\$3,024.15	Tablecloths	\$53.85
		Fraser UCW	\$250.00
Total Income	\$8,642.20	National UCW	\$36.00
		Holly Luncheon Expenses	\$403.87
		Donation to United Churches of Langley	\$6,500.00
		Total Expenses	\$8,379.13
		Balance	\$263.07

