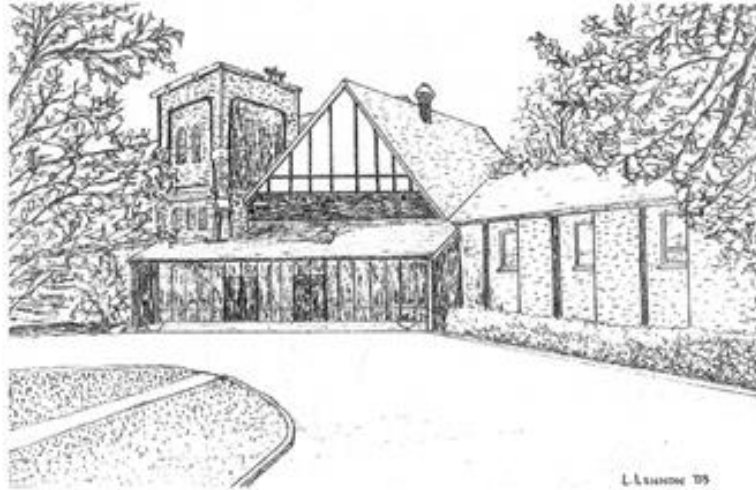


# WEST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT 2022

**Celebrating 151 Years of Ministry in Burlington**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We are an active faith community,  
seeking to deepen our relationship with God  
through thoughtful worship, prayer, uplifting music,  
outreach, friendship and study,  
inspired by a setting overlooking nature.

We are a growing church family,  
welcoming people of all ages to follow  
Jesus' teachings in their lives.



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**WEST PLAINS UNITED CHURCH  
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES OF THE UNIFIED BOARD - 2023**

Names in **Bold** are new

M - denotes Member

A - denotes Adherent

**CO-CHAIRS** - Bev Biggley (M) & Peter Fox (M)

**PAST CHAIR** - Linda Sanderson (M)

**CLERK OF SESSION** - Shelley Gaylard (M)

**SECRETARY** - Darlene Groves (M)

**MINISTER** - Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner; Ex Officio of all Committees except M&P

**Property**

(M) Brian Hallas - Co-Chair  
(M) Peter Fox - Co-Chair  
(M) Murray Biggley - Secretary  
(M) Steven Burford  
(M) Don Gordon  
(A) Phil Groves  
(M) Judie Langford  
(M) Ray Mifflin

**Finance**

**(A) Mike Fox**  
Treasurer  
(A) Margot Feyerer  
Asst. Treasurer  
(M) Marilyn Fox &  
(M) Linda Sanderson  
Contributions

**Worship Committee**

(M) Bev Robertson - Chair  
(M) Lois Lennon - Secretary  
(M) Christine Buxton  
(M) Marilyn Fox  
(M) Mary Starodub  
(M) Lianne Tan

**KITT** (sub-committee  
of Worship)

(M) Linda Sanderson - Chair  
(M) Jenny Hatch  
(M) Lois Lennon  
(M) Irene Jacobson  
(M) Mary Starodub

**Trustees**

(M) Peter Fox - Chair  
(A) Phil Groves  
(M) Brian Hallas  
(M) Ray Mifflin  
(M) Marj Wilson

**Ministry and Personnel**

(M) Bev Biggley - Co-Chair  
(M) Darlene Groves - Co-Chair  
(M) Pat Mifflin - Co-Chair

**Social Justice**

(M) Linda Sanderson  
(M) Steve Burford

**Faith Formation**

(M) Shelley Gaylard - Chair  
(M) Darlene Groves  
(M) Deb Burford

**Regional Council Representative**

(M) Darlene Groves

## **Other Committees of West Plains United Church -2023**

### **Archives**

(M) Ray Mifflin

### **Events and Fundraising**

(M) Shelley Gaylard

(M) Megan Groves - PR Product

(M) Linda Sanderson

Silent Auction

(M) Lianne Tan

(M) Marj Wilson

### **Out-4-Lunch Program**

(M) Ethyl Ballantyne

(M) Jan Hazelton

(M) Linda Sanderson

(M) Marj Wilson

### **Rentals**

(M) Judi Honsberger

(M) Peter Fox

### **Choir Executive**

(M) Lianne Tan - Music Director

(M) Lois Lennon - President

(M) Jennifer Scenna - Secretary

(M) Grace Tan - Librarian

### **Facebook Co-ordinator**

(M) Jennifer Scenna

### **Schedules**

(M) Linda Sanderson

Greeters/Ushers/Counters

(M) Marj Wilson

Readers

### **Welcoming Team**

(M) Joan Fox

(M) Mary Anne Gordon

(M) Lois Lennon

### **Crafters**

(M) Debbie Burford

(M) Lois Ford

(M) Marilyn Fox

(M) Shelley Gaylard

(M) Mary Anne Gordon

(M) Darlene Groves

(M) Judi Honsberger

(M) Lois Lennon

(M) Pat Mifflin

(M) Jennifer Scenna

### **Community Participants**

Arlene Etmanski

Bonnie Folkard

Dale Fox

Diana Fox

### **A/V Livestream**

(M) Jacob Sadler

(M) Peter Fox

### **Webmaster**

(M) Peter Fox

(assisted by:

Office Administrator

and Lianne Tan)

## MINISTER'S REPORT

One of the joys of working at West Plains is having access, at various times of the day, to our lovely sanctuary. Here I often spend time watching how the light breathes life into the beautiful stained glass windows that are placed in tribute to several saints who worked tirelessly to build up a vibrant community of faith. A window that is a favourite of mine is the middle of three that grace the north aisle. It shows a lively domestic scene taking place in a carpentry shop. A youthful Jesus enthusiastically assists his parents, Joseph and Mary, as they go about their family wood-working business. We know little of Jesus' childhood and young adulthood, so there is something delightful about being offered this artist's glimpse into what Jesus might have been up to before he grew to adulthood and waded into the waters of baptism that would mark the beginning of his intense years of public ministry.

But, as is often the case with translation from one language to another, there is a little word problem here. We are accustomed to imagining Joseph as a carpenter, in part because of a verse that we find near the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. When Jesus teaches in his hometown synagogue, we usually hear the crowd ask, "Is this the carpenter's son?" The Greek word *tekton*, most often seen in English versions of scripture translated as "carpenter" might more precisely be rendered as "crafts person" or "builder." And if we take the first-century Palestinian context into consideration, we might note that the majority of homes in Israel were constructed with stone, not with wood, since trees were not prolific in this part of the world. It is more likely that Jesus and Joseph would have formed most of their building projects from stone either by chiseling or carving the stone or stacking the blocks. This notion may account for the number of times that Jesus and his followers employ "stone" or "stones" as metaphors for the building up a faith fabric with Jesus himself in place as the chief "cornerstone" that the builders had "rejected" (Luke 20: 17-18; Psalm 118:22). There is something enduringly reassuring about stone. We can imagine being held in the well-worn hand of a skilled artisan who joyfully molds and shapes us into the image of Christ, and then places us as integral components in the building up of a strong bulwark of love, peace and justice for our world.

Our 2022 West Plains Annual Report details the ways that many lovingly crafted stones form and secure our human temple. Relying, in turn, on each other's strengths, we offer capacious shelter from often stormy weather. And we have had so much for which to be grateful as we reflect on the past year which offered its measure of challenging meteorology. We experienced a somewhat disappointing beginning when the Covid pandemic forced yet another shut-down of in-person worship. Nevertheless, we were back in our places at the beginning of Lent and we've managed to continue in-person since then. We seem to be finding a useful hybrid model between the in-person and virtual world that have allowed our worship and celebration, our wonderful music programme, effective governance, social justice initiatives, picnic lunches, and successful fundraising activities to continue to flourish. These activities you will find detailed in the pages that follow.

Once again I add my own thanks to all those who contribute in so many ways to the mission and ministry of West Plains and who make it an honour and a delight to be your minister. We feted our awesome Lianne Tan in October as she celebrated her first twenty-five years as Director of Music. She and her talented group of singers and instrumentalists have chalked up another year of sheer excellence in sometimes challenging circumstances. Peter and Marilyn Fox have capably managed things technical. They were joined by Jacob Sadler whom, I was delighted to learn, would take over in 2023 as our video technician. A great delight of 2022 has been welcoming Wendy Thomson as our Office Administrator. Wendy very quickly

demonstrated that she is quite simply golden. Will and Maria skillfully maintain the cleanliness and attractiveness of our church building, keeping it glistening for our use and for the use of our renters. None of us could be effective building blocks without the support of all those other integral stones—the countless volunteers who have spent countless hours in governance, dreaming, planning, cooking, baking, selling honey, crafting and organizing paper shredding. Well done, good and faithful ones!

*Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions: All are welcome in this place.*

(More Voices, #1)

Yours in Christ,

Philip †

## **BAPTISMS**

Hailee Catherine Jagula	July 10, 2022
Joshua Robert Jagula	July 10, 2022
Vivian Elizabeth Ball	October 23, 2022

## **WEDDINGS**

There were no weddings conducted at West Plains during 2022.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

Ina Margaret Tudhope	December 25, 2019
Margaret Kinlock Cook	February 14, 2022
Sylvia Irene Chitty	February 21, 2022
John Harry Halvorsen	March 3, 2022
Edna Margaret Cudmore	April 17, 2022
Colin Ivor Mayfield	May 3, 2022
Rev. Tom Murray	May 3, 2022
Ruth Lillian Bryant	May 24, 2022
Eleanor Pearl Unsworth	July 11, 2022
Peter Anthony Shaw	August 10, 2022
Dennis Eric Langford	November 13, 2022

*Please keep these families in your prayers, and others who have experienced recent loss.*

## **NEW MEMBERS**

No new members were received in 2022.

## ANNUAL MEETING – 2022 Via ZOOM

The Annual Congregational Meeting took place on Sunday, February 27, 2022. Because of the COVID pandemic the meeting was held via ZOOM. Attendance was 21.

Peter Fox called the meeting to order at 12:16 am.

Peter Fox welcomed everyone to the 2nd online Annual Meeting. This year's format was a repeat of last year's meeting, in that it was the downstairs portion of our usual Annual Meeting. None of the other reports would be presented. We had the normal motions to allow adherents to participate and vote and to accept the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Bev Robertson made the **motion** that all members and adherents be invited to participate and vote at this Annual Meeting. **Seconded** by Bev Biggley. **Carried.**

Lois Lennon made a **motion** that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of 2021, as printed in the 2021 Annual Report be accepted. **Seconded** by Murray Biggley. **Carried.**

Bev Robertson made a **motion** to accept all other written reports in the Annual Report of 2021. **Seconded** by Steve Burford. **Carried.**

Bert Posedowski reported on the 2021 finances. There was a positive outcome this year, partly due to monies from CEWS, an Estate and Federal assistance. We had a better finish to the year, expenses were lower. There is still the loan to the Memorial Fund of \$50,000. It was mentioned that on the Financial report – Benevolent only pertains to the Compassion Society and Outreach is all other givings. It would be helpful to have a further breakdown of fundraising – Marj's catering & baking, the Bee's and Crafters. **Motion** to accept the Financial Report as printed in the 2021 Annual Report by Murray Biggley. **Seconded** by Judi Honsberger. **Carried**

Bert Posedowski then presented the budget for 2022. The budget is built on the previous 2021 budget as found in the 2021 Financial Report. Changes were in salaries, benefits, and insurance. Hoping for more rentals and fundraising. Worst case scenario is a deficit of \$33,000. TAP has cancelled the spring show. Rentals are returning slowly. Upcoming Provincial Election rental is not included. There are no CEWS funds this year and no expected Estate donation. **Motion** to accept the Budget as presented in the 2021 Annual Report by Bert Posedowski. **Seconded** by Bev Biggley. **Carried.**

The Trustee Report was given by Peter Fox. Insurance has had some large increases in the past couple of years. Previously it was \$7,000, last year it was \$9,000 and this year will be \$12,000.

Peter then reported about the Memorial Fund. There has been some confusion about the reporting of the Memorial Fund and it is not very transparent. The new method will have three funds: Endowment Fund, Memorial Fund & Manse Fund. The Endowment Fund is the old Memorial Fund and will hold all the large donations. The Memorial Fund will hold the smaller donations "given in Memory of" and will accumulate until it is needed for a special project. The Manse Fund remains the same – it is the funds from the sale of the Manse and invested provides \$10,000 towards the Minister's salary. The Manse fund has not been performing very well and will be investigated this year.



## **New Business**

- 1) We will return to in church services on March 6 with COVID protocols. Greeters and ushers will wear masks and continue distancing where possible. There are no limits to numbers and there is no contact tracing.

Peter Fox thanked Bev Biggley for all her work in preparing the 2021 Annual Report and gave a big thank you to Deb Burford for acting as Secretary for our Annual Meeting once again.

Thank you to Lianne Tan for her fabulous work. Thank you to Rev. Philip for all his hard work in these trying times. We are fortunate to have both. Thank you to all committee members for all their work in this very strange year. We are thankful to all the background work by many congregation members and committee members to make the church run smoothly.

Bev Biggley thanked Peter and Marilyn Fox for all their hard work to make the service run smoothly.

Rev. Philip Gardner gave the closing prayer.

Motion to adjourn by Bev Robertson at 12:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Burford

## **CHAIRS OF THE UNIFIED BOARD REPORT**

Each year, Peter and I take this opportunity to pause and reflect on the past year at West Plains; its highs and lows and look for reassurance that we are on the right track or, like yourselves, consider changing or modifying course as we embark on the new year.

Living in a world dealing with a pandemic, the daily reminders of the devastating war in Ukraine, rising economic worries, issues of poverty and homelessness, the death of our sovereign Queen Elizabeth II, all added to the challenges and personal losses we faced as a community of faith.

However, we were fortunate this year to have also experienced the enriching highs of the covenanting services with Horseshoe Falls Region and Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner, and Lianne's 25th Anniversary Celebration as our Music Director. We also, after a period of not having an Office Administrator, felt fortunate to hire Wendy Thomson, effective August 30<sup>th</sup>. The recent addition of Jacob Sadler as our AV technician rounded out our very capable team.

As a people seeking to shine God's light, despite challenges, the various fundraising activities like the Crafters online bazaar, the community shredding event, ongoing honey sales and the cookie walk all continued very successfully, not only in raising much needed funds but in forging stronger links with our wider Aldershot community. Small acts of kindness, like delivering cookies to shut in's, mirrored the many wider acts of kindness and hospitality extended to strangers exhibited during the Christmas blizzard.

God's light shone through the many volunteers working to maintain the physical presence of our church building as a symbol in the community, in our online services reaching a wide audience and in the community outreach events. The resilience of the men and women who serve and form our West Plains Church family ensures our presence as a community of faith.

May the joy and love of Christ sustain us and may Christ's light continue to shine brightly, in all our lives, throughout the New Year!

Respectfully submitted,  
Bev Biggley & Peter Fox

## **MINISTRY & PERSONNEL REPORT**

To say that the last few years have been trying is an understatement, but we have been extremely fortunate over this period to have the worship team in place here at West Plains United Church that we have. We began the year with Covid looming heavy and continued with our online services. These services were being produced by Peter Fox, Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner, and Lianne Tan and her amazing choir. We were fortunate to enjoy the music from a number of Lianne's gifted friends adding their talents to our online services. Many thanks to the aforementioned team for all their hours of additional hard work producing amazing services and keeping our community connected and informed.

One of the challenges the Ministry & Personnel Committee faced was keeping the office running as smoothly as possible while we searched for a new Office Administrator. Our Ministry & Personnel team, Bev Biggley, Pat Mifflin, Darlene Groves, and Debbie Burford, kicked into high gear handling the phone and email messages, processing the mail, producing the weekly bulletin, pulling the Annual Report together and various other responsibilities. We had advertised this position through an appeal to local churches, notices in the bulletin and Mid-week Updates, and by word of mouth. We are thrilled that Wendy Thomson has joined our staff as Office Administrator as of August 30, 2022. Wendy comes to us with vast experience and knowledge of the working of this position. She was highly recommended and has integrated into our staff and church community seamlessly.

On Sunday, October 2, 2022 we were blessed to be able to take part in Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner's Covenanting Service with West Plains featuring a special guest speaker, Rev. Debbie McMillan. During this event we also had the Covenanting between West Plains United Church and the Region, with Region representative Pat Gilmore from Port Nelson United Church. The service was followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall.

On Saturday, October 22, 2022 West Plains was able to join with Lianne Tan in celebrating her 25 years as our Music Director. This was a celebration of music with a number of musicians contributing their talents, along with our amazing choir and Lianne, culminating in an uplifting afternoon followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall.

Rev. Philip has been able to take some well-deserved study leave and summer holidays and we were blessed to have Rev. Margot Feyerer share her gifts with us. We would also like to extend a thank you to Rev. Barbara Fullerton for taking over the urgent pastoral care concerns while Rev. Philip was away.

Another position Ministry & Personnel were working to fill was that of Audio/Video Technician to record and post our weekly services. Peter Fox has been undertaking this position for the last several years and has done an amazing job, along with Laura Fox who filled in when Peter was unavailable. We want to thank them both along with Marilyn Fox for volunteering numerous hours to make sure our on-line congregation were assured of a high-quality service each week. We have now found an Audio/Video Technician, Jacob Sadler who is currently working with Peter Fox to assure continuity, but will start his actual position come January 1, 2023. We are thrilled to have Jacob on board and look forward to his input and creativity.

The last note that needs mentioning is that Debbie Burford has decided to retire from the Ministry & Personnel committee. We would like to whole-heartedly thank her for all the years she has volunteered on this committee, as our payroll resource in addition to other talents. Being on any committee requires quite a time commitment and we appreciate all the knowledge Debbie brought to her role and her steady support of her committee members. We wish Debbie all the best in her future endeavors.

Respectfully submitted by  
Ministry & Personnel Committee

## **FAITH FORMATION REPORT**

The Faith Formation Committee met again this year via Zoom. Many thanks to Darlene Groves for her organization and preparation of Zoom links for each meeting. Rev. Philip, Darlene Groves, Deb Burford and Shelley Gaylard formed the Faith Formation Committee.

A four week Lenten Book Study was undertaken via Zoom in February/March 2022. We studied the book, "Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi" by Amy-Jill Levine. A very interesting read and discussion.

We were pleased to have participants from our own church family as well as a friend of Lianne's, Ms. Vicky Chen from the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic church faith community. Vicky was a welcome participant and we enjoyed her inspired thoughts, which contributed to a rich and thought provoking book study.

Although we did not meet again for book study in 2022, Barbara Morrison suggested a daily devotional for the Christmas and Advent season called "Life Happens in the Dark". This was shared in December on our Midweek update.

We look forward to more book discussions in 2023. The committee will also look at other possible ways the Faith Formation Committee can support our church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shelley Gaylard

## SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

The Compassion Society of Halton responds to the needs of the community by providing clothing, food and household items. During 2022 they re-located to what was the Michael's Store at 1881 Fairview St.

Our Benevolent contributions usually donated on Communion Sundays at West Plains are forwarded to the Compassion Society in the amount of \$200.00 monthly. Unfortunately this goal was not reached in 2022. The givings were \$1,243.00 this year.

The food drive at St. Matthews church on Wednesday mornings continues to welcome your donations of soup, coffee, tea, cereal, juice boxes, rice and sugar for the neighbourhood residents.

Our Outreach portion of the Social Justice dollars, once again for the Wesley Centre programs, reached \$1,465.00 during 2022. This contribution was toward the 5000 meals that are served weekly, as well as toward the Case for Kids event, in which Rev. Philip walked on a Sunday afternoon in June to represent West Plains.

As usual the Wesley staff has worked throughout the year to welcome vulnerable refugees from around the world.

On November 13th, 2022, our M&S Sunday, Denise Davy spoke to us about her book entitled "Her Name Was Margaret". There is a copy of this book available if you would like to read it, to learn the story of a woman who became a "street person" in Hamilton. A very interesting read!

And last but not least, your financial contributions to the M&S fund are sent to Toronto to the head office on a regular basis to support worldwide causes which COVID has made so much more important.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Sanderson

## MUSIC AT WEST PLAINS

As of Dec. 31, 2022, the **West Plains Choir** included the following singers:

*Sopranos:* Lois Lennon, Mary Starodub, Christine Buxton, Jennifer Scenna, Pat Mifflin, Carol Eydtt, Shirley Wales (new in 2022)

*Altos:* Grace Tan, Bev Robertson, Mary Anne Gordon, Joan Fox

*Tenors & Basses:* Steven Burford, Brian Hallas, Stan Stainton, Ron Steepe (new in 2022)

*Orioles (Occasionals):* Judi Honsberger, Shelley Gaylard, Deb Burford, Peter Fox, Ray Mifflin, Jacob Sadler, Murray Biggley, Rev. Philip Gardner (honorary)

**Special guests** to worship music this year included:

- Seiichi Ariga, flute
- Dorothy Haartman and Glenn Welbourn, violin and viola

- Tosh MacFarlane, voice & guitar
- MOWP (the Men of West Plains) Choir singing on Mother's Day
- Julian and Carolyn Eden, young singers
- Summer Musicians: Christy Lamphier, Mary Starodub
- Jacob Sadler, singing and playing guitar
- Chris Birkett, singer/songwriter
- Jeff Reynolds, trumpeter for Remembrance Sunday

#### **Other musical highlights:**

- Solos, duets and trios by our talented choir members and by our minister
- Piano music by Mary Starodub throughout the year
- New hymn tunes composed by Lianne, including "You Value Each of Us The Same", with text by Dan Damon
- Cheering live on the road for the in-person return of the Around the Bay Race
- Rev. Philip's Covenanting Service
- Lianne Tan's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert and Reception
- Carolling with Mary at Burlington Gardens and LaSalle Retirement

#### **Chris Birkett Hit Christmas song, Hear the Angels Sing**

A highlight of 2022 was the opportunity for the Choir to record audio and video with renowned record producer, Chris Birkett from Toronto. Chris and his wife Joan Prowse visited West Plains on Easter Sunday, and this chance meeting led to a beautiful collaboration with the choir. The song *Hear the Angels Sing*, was written and performed by Chris, with our Choir singing backup on the choruses. The YouTube video was released on October 31<sup>st</sup>, and gained 21,000+ views in just 2 months. The song was played on the radio pre-Christmas, and was the Top 9 most downloaded CanCon song in December. The Choir enjoyed participating in this project!

**Our Concert Series entitled "Live! @ West Plains"** lay almost dormant this year, except for a concert by the Infinitely More duo (Allison Lynn and composer Gerald Flemming), who offered to come and perform.

During this "Pandemic Year 3", our very dedicated West Plains singers continued to sing each week, whether online when required, or live, in-person, with masks on for most of the year. With faith and fortitude, our soloists, singers and guest musicians gave a fabulous **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert** on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, in celebration of my 25 years as music director at West Plains United Church. With over a hundred people in attendance at the concert, it was a great celebration with a most lavish reception afterwards! I will never forget all the joy we shared that weekend and over the last 25 years. Thank you, West Plains!

**Grace Tan**, choir librarian, continued to keep our gowns tidy and organized, our pencils sharpened, erasers intact, tabs refreshed, and music organized. Choir President **Lois Lennon**, assisted by the Choir Executive, ensured that the choir kept in touch through celebrations and times of sadness. **Mary Starodub** continued to enliven our worship with her amazing piano stylings and descants throughout the year.

The Shaw Opus 28 organ continued to serve us ably. A significant job was done this year in cleaning the contacts in the console to ensure better response from the keys. Our Yamaha GC-1 grand piano continues to bring us much beauty in its delightful tones.

Thank you to our minister, the **Rev. Philip Gardner** for his continued support in worship and musical leadership. Rev. Philip's solos are a highlight of our worship music, and his singing support of the bass harmonies is invaluable, as is his occasional piano and organ playing! With Rev. Philip's encouragement, the Choir has introduced many hymns that were less familiar to us, and built up our hymn repertoire.

Grateful thanks are extended to our West Plains congregation, musicians, and friends, for all of your musical gifts in 2022. Our collective dedication and persistence in keeping the music alive, live and in-person, masked and unmasked, are testaments to the strength of our West Plains community. *Hallelujah!*

Respectfully submitted,  
Lianne Tan, Director of Music since 1997 (25 years...and counting!)

## **PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Along with conventional housekeeping, the Property Committee is trying to regularize and record ongoing maintenance work to be current with changing public safety and insurance protocols. This includes a recorded monthly test of fire alarms, check of fire extinguishers and emergency exit lights.

The upkeep and maintenance of our older structure often brings surprises. Early in 2022 problems with the on-line telecast and WASS fire alarm panel was traced to a crossed Bell connection between the Church and Cemetery Board Offices.

The new (used) chairs for the Fellowship Hall were cleaned and repaired as needed. The chairs and moving dolly are a great asset, replacing the unsound blue plastic chairs.

A job long deferred saw the cracks in the asphalt parking lot sealed and faded parking lines repainted.

The badly worn roof on the ravine side of the office wing was replaced before a leak could damage the refurbished Board Room.

We wish to thank Phil Groves who volunteered to mow the yard and draw again, together with members of the congregation who assist with yard work maintaining beds, hedges, and roadside trash patrol.

Respectfully submitted by Brian Hallas

## **WORSHIP REPORT**

At the beginning of 2022, because of the ongoing pandemic, worship services were strictly online. A big thank you to Peter Fox for his continued work at making this technology happen. We were able to watch safely in the comfort of our homes each Sunday morning.

In March, Covid seemed to have subsided somewhat and we were able to resume in-house services as well as having the option of continuing to watch from home for those who preferred it. Attendance on Sundays was much lighter than in pre-Covid times as many people opted to continue to worship online at home.

The Good Friday service on April 15 was a joint service with East Plains. It was a service of Tenebrae with lay reader Gillian Webster assisting Rev. Gardner.

Easter Sunday was a joyous service with uplifting music and Communion.

In June we began our "lunch in the park" again where we met on Wednesdays in LaSalle Park. Each person brought their own lunch and enjoyed a time of midweek fellowship.

Our church picnic this year was held on June 17. We enjoyed our picnic in the Fellowship Hall so as not to disturb the bees in our back yard!

Our music director, Lianne Tan, was off in the summer and the music was capably handled by Mary Starodub and Christy Lamphier during the month of July. Lemonade was enjoyed on the lawn after these services.

Rev. Gardner took his vacation during the month of August and because of the low attendance, we suspended our in-house services for that time, opting to use some pre-recorded services from the previous year. This would alleviate the problem of trying to find a substitute minister and it would ultimately be a cost saving measure.

Rev. Gardner's long awaited Covenanting service was held on Oct. 2 with Rev. Debbie McMillan as the guest speaker. Covenanting also took place between the Horseshoe Falls Region and West Plains United Church.

On Oct. 22nd we celebrated Lianne Tan's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as music director at West Plains! Lianne planned a wonderful concert of great music, both instrumental and vocal, for all to enjoy. It was well attended and a reception followed in the Fellowship Hall.

Our 151<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Service was celebrated on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> followed by a soup luncheon downstairs.

Our Christmas Eve Service at 4 PM was well attended and included Communion. This service was live streamed so people could watch it in their homes. The Christmas Day Service was an online service only.

There are many people to whom we owe our thanks at West Plains!

To Rev. Gardner for his thought provoking sermons as well as his musical talents at the piano and organ and for lending his voice in the choir.

To Lianne Tan, our talented music director, for her capable leadership of the choir and procuring a variety of musical talents to enhance our services.

To Peter Fox for his unending technical knowledge, recording our services each Sunday so they can be enjoyed at home by our online folks.

To Christine Buxton for her preparation of the Communion elements when needed.

To Marilyn Fox for stepping in where a job needs to be done at the last minute.

To the many people who do endless jobs to make our sanctuary inviting, those who clean, decorate, make schedules, water plants, etc.

We thank you!

Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Lennon

## **WEST PLAINS ANTEPENDIA**

In 2019 I was asked by Reverend Leigh Olson to create antependia for the different liturgical seasons of the United Church Calendar Year. I was happy to do so. I would like to share my thoughts on the design of each one.

The first one I created was for the time called "Ordinary Time". This part of the church year represents nature. The colour is green for this season. The hanging on the pulpit was taken from an example online. To me the sun is represented by the yellow and the earth represented by the green. Having both colours in the cross is a symbol that God is everywhere. The hanging on the lectern is a representative of all of the parts of nature. The colours go from the sea up to the land, the flowers, the trees and the sky. The yellow cross in this one again represents that God is everywhere.

The second set of antependia I created was for the season of "Lent". Purple is the colour representing Lent. For the pulpit I chose to make the cross as the centre and the background a selection of purples symbolizing a time of examination, repentance, solemnity and darkness, reflecting the pain & suffering of Jesus and also his royalty. For the lectern I chose to do a depiction of the Crucifixion with the three crosses on the hill representing the three men who died that day. It is the standard depiction with Jesus' cross being central and larger than the other two. The background again represents the sea, then the land and finally the sky.

The Advent hangings are blue in keeping with the colour of Advent. They are not a picture as such but an idea of the meaning of the season. The two hangings are hung so that the lines head to the sky and the various colours of blue represent the ordinary people of many lands. The gold in the fabric represents both the importance of the events leading up to the birth of Christ and the splendour of the event itself. It also represents the idea of Christ the King. If you look closely, in the centre of each hanging is a strip of fabric with stars on it and these are meant to point the way toward heaven and the Star of the East.

I enjoyed creating these antependia and hope you enjoy viewing them as we worship. They are meant to be representative as well as thought provoking for all.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judi Honsberger



## CRAFTERS REPORT

The Crafters group got off to a slow start this year. With Covid still very much in evidence we had a great deal of uncertainty surrounding whether we could have a bazaar.

At the beginning of October we got together and had a planning session. There we decided that the bazaar would be online only and that there would not be just one leader of the group, instead we would take the team approach. There are so many talented people in the group and each has different talents. Some people preferred to work from home and bring in finished product. Darlene made adorable gnomes at home as well as other things, Jan made scrubbies, Lois Ford, Lois Lennon and Linda made knit goods and soup holders and several ladies made hanging dishtowels, etc. Two of our ladies, Dale and Diana, brought "boxes" of items they had made at home, from beautiful felt tree ornaments to wooden Christmas tree candleholders. There were knitted doorstops and star decorations as well. A team of ladies worked on creating the beautiful trees and wreaths we sold. Jennifer, Marilyn, and Mary Anne have real talent for that endeavour. Another team, Pat, Shelley, Judi, and Lois set about painting and finishing those wooden clowns. Lois Lennon brought that adorable idea to us. This team worked on other projects as well.

In addition to crafts Christine brought preserves as well as Christmas cakes. Judi and Brian made jelly, which disappeared quickly from the sale.

One new idea this year was to make gift baskets. These were put together from things people bought, made in the group, or donated. The baskets had a wide range in price so there was something for everyone.

From the beginning this was a team effort. We met twice a week, at least, in the church. As the bazaar approached we came to the church more often. The property committee set up our tables and we created the display – photographing each and every item for the online sale. Thanks to Lois Lennon for the photographs. Thanks also go out to Jennifer and Peter for setting up and running the online auction. People dropped in to pick up what they ordered, and Linda, Lois, and Deb helped with money collection. A group rotated this job once church resumed in person.

The bazaar did very well online. In total we donated \$3,000 to West Plains this year. Congratulations to all for their hard work in order to make the bazaar a success. The teamwork approach worked amazingly well.

Respectfully submitted by Judi Honsberger

## FUNDRAISING AT WEST PLAINS

Over \$7,000 was contributed to the Fundraising account during 2022 with an additional \$4,000 deposited into the General Fund.

Thanks are extended to the Crafters, meat pie ladies, cookie walk team, Bee product sellers, shredding event organizers and our salvage expert.

Covid continued to curtail large gatherings but the Crafters group, once again, successfully managed an online and after Church sale of their various homemade items. The ladies work diligently year round creating beautiful and original items and this year was their best year yet with sales of \$3,000 and seed money for purchasing supplies for 2023. Thanks are extended to the organizers including those who provided technical support and photography services as well as managing the online sales.

Meat pie sales and catering services raised \$2,844.20 for the Church during 2022. A significant amount added to the thousands and thousands raised over the years by this group. A big "Thank You" has to be extended to Marj Wilson who has led the meat pie and catering crew for more years than I'm sure she would like shared. Marg had to step back this year but the demand for meat pies continues. A small team is working on how best to meet this need.

Marilyn Fox assisted by Pat Mifflin and a number of home bakers managed a phone order cookie walk. Not only was approximately \$900 raised in sales but the ladies were able to package and have delivered 15 boxes of Christmas cookies and treats in the community. They received a number of sincere thank you's from people touched by this outreach.

Our Honey Bee saleslady, Judi Honsberger, assisted by Phil Groves and Brian Hallas, has been faithfully marketing our Bee products; after Church services, on Tuesdays by appointment, and within our Aldershot community at the Summer Market and even during a freezing cold Christmas market. We are not sure who is working harder, the Bees or Judi!

An organizing team, led by Shelley Gaylard ran our 2nd annual Paper Shredding event. This community event was well received, the weather co-operated and we successfully raised \$792 while managing to have a lot of fun in the Fall sunshine.

Phil Groves has also been very busy this year acquiring and selling excess carpet and ceiling tile. The efforts Phil puts towards generating revenue for West Plains is appreciated. So far he has salvaged and contributed around \$3,000.00! Well done Phil.

We are blessed to have so many dedicated volunteers at West Plains, willing to take on a variety of fundraising initiatives to help raise much needed income. We appreciate the time commitment this entails and thank each and every one of you!

Respectfully submitted,  
Bev Biggley & Peter Fox

## TRUSTEES REPORT

After several years of double digit increases in our property and liability insurance, we finally got some good news starting in 2023. The United Church of Canada is taking over the management of the insurance policy covering all United Churches. This will result in a decrease in our policy premiums by over 20%!

In 2021, West Plains was a beneficiary of the estate of Rosalie Andersen. Part of the bequest was used to purchase the audio/visual equipment that we required to livestream our weekly services. In 2022 we continued to upgrade our equipment by adding another camera and upgrading our microphones.

One of the responsibilities of the Trustees is to manage the endowment fund and the memorial fund. This has been a tough year for most investments. The details can be found on the next page.

The Trustees for 2023 are Peter Fox (Chair), Phil Groves, Marj Wilson, Brian Hallas, Ray Mifflin and Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Fox

## Trustee Funds

### ENDOWMENT FUND (Previously known as Memorial Fund)

Current Assets

Andersen Estate Bequest	\$ 180,000.00
Loaned to General Fund	\$ 60,000.00
NEI Can Equity Fund	\$ 85,616.00
Interest	\$ 233.00
	<b>\$ 315,849.00</b>

Liabilities

Outstanding Loan to General Fund	\$ 60,000.00
AV equipment, electrical work	\$ 31,984.00
	<b>\$ 81,984.00</b>

**Total Endowment Fund** **\$ 233,865.00**

**(NEW) MEMORIAL FUND** **\$ 2,421.50**

### MANSE FUND

Current Assets

CI Mutual Fund	\$ 107,062.00
GIC	\$ 20,000.00
GIC	\$ 32,383.00

**Total Manse Fund** **\$ 159,445.00**

**TRUSTEE FUND TOTAL** (assets less liabilities) **\$ 395,731.50**

## FINANCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

2022 ended with a deficit of \$18,320, which was favourable compared to a budgeted deficit of \$33,290. The main contributor to the improved outcome was higher than expected Givings (favourable by \$12K) and Other Revenue (favourable by \$7.6K).

Overall expenses in 2022 were unfavourable to budget by \$4.4K. The main contributor to the unfavourable budget variance was the property and maintenance expenses, specifically Building and Grounds, and snow removal. With respect to Building and Grounds, \$10K consisted of the Audio/Visual (A/V) upgrades, which were directly offset in the Additional Receipts by the Rosalie Andersen bequest.

Other expenses of note in 2022 were insurance \$13K which is now going to be self-funded through the United Church of Canada (UCC) and will be \$9K in 2023 and in future years. The other big change in 2022, was the hiring of part-time secretary (Sept 2022) and the decision to hire an A/V Technician. These expenses will continue through 2023 and beyond. The decision to hire the A/V technician was made to support the production of the live stream services, which has become a source of revenue for the Church since the pandemic.

The budget for 2023 is conservatively optimistic as we begin to see opportunities for building rentals and increased in-person events which we haven't seen in the recent past. There are currently three "Live! @ West Plains" shows scheduled for 2023. Although optimistic, we have maintained a conservative approach to forecasting increased revenues from in-person events.

The finance committee thanks the congregation and all the live streaming viewers who gave so generously to the Church throughout the year. With your support the financial health of West Plains in 2023 is in a stable position.

Respectfully submitted,

Finance Committee



## FINANCIAL REPORT

December 31, 2022

<b>Savings Account</b>			
Date	Debit	Credit	Comments
Jan 1	389.61		Kidz Club (Sunday School)
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>389.61</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	223.37		Garden
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>223.37</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	1,273.42		Wrap Around Aldershot
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>1,273.42</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	7,737.72		Sabbatical Fund
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>8,737.72</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	3,095.71		Youth Camping Fund
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>3,095.71</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	1,744.68		Piano Fund
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>1,744.68</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	1,672.54		Organ Fund
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>1,672.54</b>		<b>Total</b>
Jan 1	702.39		Interest
<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>848.13</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>17,985.18</b>		

**West Plains United**  
**2023 Financial Budget**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Revenue</b>				
Givings	131,200	142,700	130,950	156,735
Other Revenue	29,740	32,440	24,800	22,568
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>160,940</b>	<b>175,139</b>	<b>155,750</b>	<b>179,302</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Salaries & Benefits	141,629	128,599	133,376	107,469
Property Maintenance	20,000	29,784	16,700	36,175
Administration	4,100	3,949	4,170	4,463
Committee Expenses	1,000	1,388	800	810
General Expenses	24,864	29,740	33,994	31,460
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>191,593</b>	<b>193,459</b>	<b>189,040</b>	<b>180,377</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-30,653</b>	<b>-18,320</b>	<b>-33,290</b>	<b>-1,074</b>



## West Plains United

### 2023 Financial Budget

Givings	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Loose	7,200	7,249	1,650	1,647
Local	100,000	95,905	102,000	102,094
Benevolent	2,400	1,421	1,800	3,055
Outreach	1,600	1,615	6,000	5,925
M&S Givings	8,500	8,335	8,700	8,680
Additional Receipts	11,500	28,174	10,800	35,334
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>131,200</b>	<b>142,700</b>	<b>130,950</b>	<b>156,735</b>

Property Maintenance	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Building & Grounds	5,100	12,194	5,100	24,642
Heating	5,000	5,752	3,900	3,913
Hydro	6,000	6,362	4,800	4,755
Snow Removal	2,500	4,033	1,800	1,763
Maintenance, Lift	1,400	1,443	1,100	1,102
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>29,784</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>36,175</b>

Other Revenue	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Investment Income	10,600	11,488	10,600	10,605
Rentals- Sanctuary		-	-	215
Other Rooms	7,500	6,672	3,600	3,600
TAP	2,140	2,140	-	-
Fund Raising	6,500	7,261	6,100	6,112
HST/ GST Rebate	3,000	4,878	4,500	2,036
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>29,740</b>	<b>32,440</b>	<b>24,800</b>	<b>22,568</b>

Administration	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Advertising	-	-	-	362
Bank Charges	600	409	800	758
Payroll Charge - ADP	300	295	270	274
Office Supplies	900	941	800	762
Auditor	-	-	-	-
Telephone/Internet	2,300	2,303	2,300	2,307
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4,100</b>	<b>3,949</b>	<b>4,170</b>	<b>4,463</b>

Salaries & Benefits	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Minister Salary	75,787	73,295	73,300	59,652
Secretary Salary	9,557	3,844	8,736	-
A/V Tech	2,500	-	2,200	-
UC Benefits Expense	13,100	13,876	12,750	12,588
CPP/EI Expense	7,000	7,201	4,690	4,625
Minister- Travel Allowance	200	228	100	-
- Study/Books/Phone	2,443	1,592	1,500	1,482
Custodian	5,500	5,583	4,900	4,906
Music Director	23,042	21,040	21,600	20,640
Guest Musicians & Supply	1,500	1,276	2,000	2,000
Supply Ministers	1,000	664	1,600	1,576
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>141,629</b>	<b>128,599</b>	<b>133,376</b>	<b>107,469</b>
YoY variance	10.1%	19.7%		

Committee Expenses	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Congregational Picnic		-		-
Faith Formation	100	100		-
Music	900	1,238	600	612
Worship	-	50	200	198
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>810</b>

General Expenses	2022			
	2023	2022	Budget	2021
Benevolent	2,400	1,800	1,800	3,030
Outreach	1,500	1,465	6,000	5,875
Insurance Expense	8,800	13,339	12,000	9,079
M & S Givings	6,500	6,160	8,700	7,880
Observer Subscription	-	-	-	100
Other/Miscellaneous	500	1,014	330	332
Presbytery Dues	5,164	5,961	5,164	5,164
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>24,864</b>	<b>29,740</b>	<b>33,994</b>	<b>31,460</b>