

# First United Church Mount Pearl



Annual Report 2023

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**Minutes**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**First United Church**  
**March 26, 2023**

The meeting began immediately following the morning worship service at 12 noon..

Current Board Chair, Gary Gosse, called the meeting to order and called on Rev Heather Sanford, regional representative, to say a prayer.

Gary then called for nominations for a Secretary and a Chair Person for the meeting. Carolyn Rice nominated Heather Sinyard for secretary and Kelly Tuck nominated Wayne Rideout for chairperson. Both accepted their nominations and were elected to the positions.

There were 40 people in attendance.

Wayne opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for their attendance. He expressed his thanks to Rev. Ian and staff as well as the volunteers during the year. He also thanked all church members for their continued support.

**Proposed Agenda** – It was moved by Gary Gosse and seconded by Paul Hillyard that the proposed agenda be adopted. **Motion Carried.**

**The Minutes of the Congregational meeting of April 3, 2022** – It was moved by Jean Fry and seconded by Madeline Rideout that the minutes of the previous congregational meeting be accepted. **Motion Carried.**

There was no business arising from or questions raised by the minutes.

**Committee Reports** – It was moved by Tony Tuck and seconded by Pam Morgan that the committee reports excluding the Stewardship and Financial Reports be accepted. **Motion Carried.**

The Report from First Dawn Eastern Edge is supplied for information purposes only and did not require a motion to accept.

**Minister's Report** - Wayne asked Rev. Ian and the members present if there were any comments or questions on the report. There were none.

**Board of Management** – Board Chair, Gary Gosse had no further comments

Wayne then proceeded to ask if any one had any further comments or questions on each of the reports.

- **Property Report** – Property Chair, Harold Sinyard, spoke to the delayed roof repairs. The committee is currently in the process of having deterrents installed on the roof that will hopefully discourage the gulls from settling on the roof. The gulls are already hanging around. He asked that if any one notices any start to nest building to notify the committee. We can remove nests up to when the eggs are laid. The contractor is ready to start as soon as the weather permits.
- **Worship Committee**
- **Christian Development Committee**
- **Sunday School Report**
- **Youth Group and Youth Group Financial**
- **Book Club**
- **Quilting Group**
- **Bridges to Hope** – First's representative to BTH was unable to attend. Wayne Rideout spoke in her absence. The food bank is having a difficult time with registrations of people in need going up each week. There will be a drive in Food Drive at the Church next Saturday, April 1 and any help would be appreciated.
- **Ministry and Personnel** – Chair, Brenda Andrews, took the opportunity to thank the staff and all the volunteers for their ongoing work and dedication.
- **Board of Trustees**
- **Men's Fellowship Club and Men's Financial Report**
- **First United Church Women and UCW Financial Report**
- **General Protestant Cemetery Report**

**Stewardship Report** – The Stewardship Committee / Financial Report was moved by Gary Gosse and seconded by Sara Case. **Motion Carried.**

Wayne asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the report. There were none.

## **Re-Election of Current Board Members and Election of New Board Members –**

Wayne announced that we are seeking new members for the board.

Current members on the board serving in their first 2 years do not require a new vote.

They include Lilly Pope, Heather Sinyard, Allison Randell, Sara Case and Jean Whelan.

Current members on the board serving in their 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year do require a vote by the congregation. 3<sup>rd</sup> year – no one. 4<sup>th</sup> year – Brenda Andrews and Carolyn Rice.

5<sup>th</sup> year – Gary Gosse, Len Sturge and Kyle March-MacCuish.

There are 4 new people who have offered to serve on the board. They are Joan Winsor, Kirk Howell, George Hicks and Tony Tuck. Each of these congregational members named have agreed to serve on the board.

Wayne then called for Nominations and/or Volunteers to serve on the board. (Repeated 3 times.) Nominations closed.

Motion to accept these members nominated to serve on the board. Moved by Kelly Tuck and seconded by Cynthia Burt. **Motion Carried**

Wayne expressed thanks to the two board members, Madeline Rideout and Harold Sinyard, who are stepping down after 5 years of service.

## **Election of Delegates to First Dawn Eastern Edge –**

Jean Whelan is stepping down as a delegate. Brenda Andrews, Janice Andrews-Ralph and Cynthia Burt have agreed to continue as our representatives. The 4<sup>th</sup> delegate position is now vacant. Wayne called for a nomination or volunteer to become a delegate to represent First at FDEE. (3 Times) There were no additional nominations or volunteers. A motion was made to accept these delegates. Moved by Gary Gosse and seconded by Pam Morgan.

**Motion Carried**

**Statistics for 2022** – Rev Ian read out the names of the 22 members for whom funerals were conducted. A moment of silence and prayer was held for the deceased members.

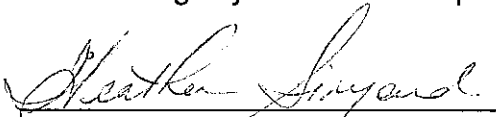
**New Business** – there was no new business brought forward.

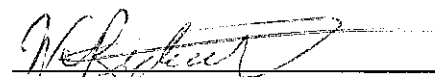
## **Closing Remarks –**

Wayne again thanked the congregation for all their support.

Rev. Heather Sanford concluded the meeting with a benediction.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25pm.

  
Heather Sinyard  
Secretary

  
Wayne Rideout  
Chairperson

**FIRST UNITED CHURCH**  
**Official Board**  
**2023**

<b>Minister</b>	Rev Ian March-MacCuish
<b>Chairperson</b>	Joan Winsor
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Carolyn Rice
<b>Secretary</b>	Heather Sinyard
<b>Treasurer</b>	Glenys Harris
<b>Stewardship Chair</b>	Len Sturge
<b>Worship Co-Chair</b>	Jeannie Whalen
<b>Worship Co-Chair</b>	Sara Case
<b>Worship Member</b>	Kyle March-MacCuish
<b>Property Chair</b>	Kirk Howell
<b>Property Member</b>	Gary Gosse
<b>Christian Development Chair</b>	Allison Randell
<b>Membership &amp; Social Action</b>	Vacant
<b>M&amp;P Chair</b>	Brenda Andrews
<b>Board of Trustees Chair</b>	Nelson Harris
<b>UCW Rep</b>	Gloria Gosse
<b>Men's Club Rep</b>	George Hicks/Gary Gosse
<b>Board Member</b>	Tony Tuck
<b>Youth Board Member</b>	Lilly Pope

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
FIRST DAWN EASTERN EDGE REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Annual Meeting  
May 12-14, 2023  
via zoom video conference

RC45

Created in God's Image

Friday, May 12, 2023

REGISTRATION

Registration

Members of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council registered online for the May 12-14, 2023 Annual Meeting of the Regional Council. In preparation for the annual meeting, the Executive offered three webinars so that members were able to ask questions for clarification about matters that will require decision making at the annual meeting.

ATTENDANCE – Appendix A

Attendance

Regional Council members in attendance at the meeting are included in Appendix A.

REGRETS – Appendix B

Regrets

Appendix B lists regrets received by members of the region.

GATHERING

Gathering

The annual meeting, held by zoom video conferencing, opened at 5:30pm for members to gather and to test connections.

CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order

The President, Nancy Mojica-Fisher, welcomed everyone to the fifth annual meeting of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council and called the meeting to order. The President highlighted the Whole People's Covenant and Holy Manners, as printed in the docket of reports, as guidelines for the business proceedings.

QUORUM AND CONSTITUTION OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Quorum

The President noted that there was a quorum present, and constituted the council in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, for all the business that shall properly come before it.

Constitution of  
the Council

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

Acknowledging  
the Land

The President began the meeting by acknowledging the land on which we gather. The island of Newfoundland is the ancestral homeland of the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk. We also recognize the Inuit and the Innu as the original people of Labrador. We strive for respectful partnerships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation.

THEME VIDEO

Theme Video

A video, created by the President, Nancy Mojica-Fisher, and her nephew, King Senerpida, was shared. The theme video was offered as an anchor to the regional council meetings to help animate the theme "Created in God's Image".

OPENING WORSHIP

Opening  
Worship

The Liturgy Team, led by Gneid Lackey, opened the meeting with scripture, song, reflection and prayer to animate the theme *Created in God's Image*. Beverly Matthews offered the opening prayer. Nancy Mojica-Fisher, President, offered the reflection, based on a scripture reading from Psalm 139:7-12. Beverly Matthews and Jocelyn Cook provided music leadership. Stephanie McClellan offered sign language translation for the theme statement, *we thank you, God, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made*. The members gathered were invited to repeat the theme statement three times together. Jocelyn Cook offered the blessing.

**First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Annual Meeting, May 12-14, 2023  
via zoom video conference**

In Memoriam**IN MEMORIAM** – Appendix C

The in-memoriam slideshow presentation was led by Rev. Heather Sandford, Regional Minister. The Regional Minister offered prayer, as we paused to remember those that we have lost since we last gathered, and celebrate all that they have given to us, and this church of ours.

Procedural Motion**PROCEDURAL MOTION**

Peggy Johnson and Cecil Noseworthy of the Regional Council Program Team presented the opening procedural motion.

**MOTION:** (Peggy Johnson/Cecil Noseworthy)

That the Roll of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council be (Manual 2023 C.1.1 and C.1.2):

- a) Members of the order of ministry within the bounds served by the regional council; and
- b) Other ministry personnel in a covenantal relationship with a community of faith within the bounds of the regional council; and
- c) The lay members who are members of the United Church who are not ministry personnel and who are elected by their Communities of Faith.
- d) Appointed members, lay members of the Regional Council Executive who have not been elected by their Community of Faith.

That the quorum be as indicated in Section C.4.3 of the Manual 2023;

“The Regional Council may meet only if a minimum number of members is present... If there are 60 or more members, at least 20 members must be present; and that there must be at least one ministry personnel and one lay member who is not ministry personnel present. Corresponding members are not counted for this purpose.”

“That the bounds of the Regional Council meeting be the virtual meeting room, the telephone connections to that meeting space and Wesley United Church”

“That representatives of General Council; representatives of United Church organizations; ministry students not serving a pastoral charge; and any other registered visitors to the Regional Council meetings be Corresponding Members of this Council.”

“That the agenda, as printed and distributed, be adopted as the agenda for this meeting of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council, subject to such changes as may be adopted and such Orders of the Day as may be determined by the Council.”

That the business table be Peggy Johnson and Cecil Noseworthy.

That the minute secretary for the Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Annual Regional Council meeting be Jennifer Taylor.

The President will chair the meeting, making any rulings necessary. The Regional Council will work together using the Whole People’s Covenant and Holy Manners as its guide. The President will apply the Manual 2023 Appendix: Procedures for Holding a Meeting and Decision-Making.

Bourinot’s Rules of Order will be used as the authority should a question arise which is not answered by the Appendix.

Speakers will:

- start by identifying themselves (name, Pastoral Charge or Community of Faith)
- direct all discussion to the President
- address the President only once about a motion; except the mover, who may speak both first and last
- be allocated time as follows: The initial time allocated for the mover to address the motion be limited to three (3) minutes, and that all subsequent speakers be limited to two (2) minutes, including any reply by the mover of the motion.
- make every effort to have discussion clear and concise, and deal only with the motion.

**CARRIED**



**CONSENT MOTION:** (Peggy Johnson/Cecil Noseworthy)

**Consent  
Motion**

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council:

1. Approves the Minutes of the Regional Council Meeting, May 13-15, 2022 (RC77-RC88) as circulated.
2. Receives and accept the following accountability reports:
  - a. President
  - b. Executive Minister
  - c. Division of Finance and Administrative Resources
    - Financial Accountability Investments & Trusts
    - Incorporated Ministries
  - d. Division of Regional Council Services and Support
    - Communications
    - Faith Formation, Christian Education & Leadership Development
    - Justice, Mission & Outreach
    - Stewardship
  - e. Division of Communities of Faith Support and Planning
    - Mission Consultation & Accountability
    - Future Directions in Ministry
  - f. Division of Human Resources
    - Licensing
    - Pastoral Relations
    - Retiree Support
    - Nominations  
**INCLUDING THE NOMINATIONS REPORT AND THE  
2023-24 REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE**
    - Chaplaincy
  - g. Tri-Regional Staff Support Committee
  - h. Affirm Committee
3. Receives for information the following other reports:
  - a. Atlantic School of Theology
  - b. Centre for Christian Studies
  - c. Emmanuel College
  - d. Office of Vocation
  - e. St. Andrew's College
  - f. Ukulele Church

**CARRIED**

**MODERATOR**

**Moderator**

The Moderator, the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdown, joined the meeting through a video presentation, to bring greetings and blessings from the office of the Moderator to the members gathered. The Moderator shared that it is both a hard and exciting time to be church. The Moderator offered that the call of The United church of Canada; deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice, will anchor us as we look to the future.

**THEME I**

**Theme**

Nancy Mojica-Fisher, President, introduced General Council Office representative and theme speaker, Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu, Executive Minister of the Church in Mission Unit of The United Church of Canada. The theme presenter shared that, throughout histories and traditions, the image of God has been central to understanding God's plans and purposes; and that humans must love each other as an expression of God. The theme presenter offered theme scripture references from Genesis 1:26-27 and Psalm 139:14. A video message was shared from an intersex person, who believes that they were also created in the image of God, and praises and thanks God. They ask the world to respect all creation; not just man and woman.

A video, *How does the Image of God Look?* was shared, asking humanity for love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

**First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Annual Meeting, May 12-14, 2023  
via zoom video conference**

The theme presenter asked the members to move into breakout rooms to discuss *Where in our communities do we notice that the image of God in others is not recognized and respected?* and to *Name something we can do to live in respect with all creation.* The theme presenter left the council with the message that ALL are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Introduction of  
Candidates and  
New Ministers

**INTRODUCTION OF CANDIDATES AND NEW MINISTERS**

Andrew Richardson, Office of Vocation Minister for the eastern regions, welcomed students and candidates for ministry to the council. Welcome and congratulations were extended to Stephanie Rose, being ordained this weekend at the Celebration of Ministries service, and Keith Wiseman, being recognized as a Designated Lay Minister in Regional Council 15 in June. Stephanie was offered the opportunity to introduce herself to the regional council. Andrew Richardson also introduced candidates for ordered ministry Jennifer Billard and Katelyn Vardy, Designated Lay Ministerial candidates Heather Cronhelm and Corey Paul (FSLDW), and Admissions applicant, Rev. Liberty Matabire.

Heather Sandford, Regional Minister, welcomed new ministers to the region, Rev. Dianne Crewe, serving Gambo Pastoral Charge, Rev. Darlene Keddy, retired clergy, and admissions candidate, Rev. Liberty Matabire, serving Fogo Pastoral Charge.

Health and  
Wellness  
Moment

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS MOMENT**

Regional Council members participated in a health and wellness moment for our physical, spiritual and mental health. Members gathered were invited to go for a walk, in place, as a scenic outdoor video was shared.

Milestones in  
Ministry

**MILESTONES IN MINISTRY**

Heather Sandford, Regional Minister, hosted the Milestones in Ministry event, celebrating significant milestones in the lives of some of our ministry personnel. A slideshow and music highlighted the years of service of those who have offered their gifts and talents to The United Church of Canada and are celebrating milestone events.

Retirement

**Retirement**

Rev. T. Wayne Blackwood

Anniversaries

**Anniversaries**

The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy	55 Years	The Rev. Sidney K. Newbury	45 Years
The Rev. Dr. Wayne M. Cole	35 Years	The Rev. Harry J. Whitehorn	35 Years
The Rev. Veronica Brett-Williams	30 Years	The Rev. Darlene V. Keddy	30 Years
The Rev. John Maich	25 Years	The Rev. Guy Matthews	25 Years
The Rev. Stephen Matthews	25 Years		

Leaving

**Leaving**

Goodbye to Rev. Simbarashe Mazhara and Rev. Grant Stuckless, who have left the region, with thanks for their ministry among us.

Staff  
Anniversaries

**Staff Anniversaries**

There was special acknowledgement of staff celebrating significant anniversaries with The United Church of Canada. This year, Leona Laundry celebrates 15 years. Rev. Dr. Andrew Richardson was also acknowledged on the occasion of his 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination.

Closing  
Vespers

**CLOSING VESPERS**

Closing vespers were led by the Liturgy Team. Gneid Lackey led the members gathered in quiet moments, to centre ourselves and close the meeting with time for quiet reflection, prayer and blessings. Catherine Stuart and Gneid Lackey offered music ministry. Hope Rowsell offered prayer, and Stephanie Rose offered the blessing.

Saturday, May 13, 2023

**GATHERING WITH MUSIC**

The meeting opened at 9:15am for members to gather and to test connections. Liturgy Team Convenor, Gneid Lackey offered music ministry as members gathered. Stephanie McClellan offered sign language interpretation.

Gathering  
with Music

**CALL TO ORDER**

The President called the meeting to order and thanked members of the regional council for gathering together. The President reminded the council of Holy Manners, as guide for our meetings. Special welcome was extended to new members to the region.

Call to  
Order

**ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND**

The President acknowledged the land on which we gather. We strive for respectful partnerships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation.

Acknowledging  
the Land

**OPENING WORSHIP**

Opening worship began with the members gathered repeating the theme statement *we praise you God for we are fearfully and wonderfully made*. Worship was led by the liturgy team, who offered prayer, scripture and song to help center those gathered. Gneid Lackey offered the opening prayer. Amanda Barnes, President-Elect, offered the reflection based on Psalm 139. The President-Elect reminded us that we are all children of God, created in the image of God, to do all that we are called to do. We are all part of creation. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Ken Barnes and Yvonne Milley provided ministry of music, and Heather Cronhelm offered the blessing. Stephanie McClellan offered sign language interpretation.

Opening  
Worship

**UNITED CHURCH FOUNDATION**

Sarah Charters, President and Executive Officer of Philanthropy of the United Church Foundation joined the meeting by video presentation. The video shared examples of individuals supported by Mission and Service gifts, with thanks to all communities of faith for their support. *Called to be the Church: The Journey* was highlighted as a program offered by the United Church to help congregations get started in stewardship, as well as offer ongoing coaching and support. The United Church of Canada Foundation offers programs and support through grants, investments and giving. An overview of resources and support available to communities of faith, particularly granting programs, was provided.

United Church  
Foundation

**GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME I**

Marion Pardy, Provincial Coordinator, introduced the topic of Guaranteed Livable Income, contained in the docket of reports (pp R55-R56). A video from the Moderator was shared, with the sincere hope that communities of faith will become involved in advocating for a guaranteed livable income.

Guaranteed  
Livable  
Income

**CHECK-IN**

Using breakout rooms, members of the region took time to check-in with each other and further reflect on the theme. Members were asked to share where they are joining from, and how they see themselves created in God's image.

Check-In

**ELECTIONS – Part 1**

**President-Elect**

Gneid Lackey, Nominations Secretary, introduced the matter of the election of the President-Elect. The nominee for President-Elect, Rev. Jocelyn Cook, attended a webinar on May 4, 2023, and was given five minutes to speak to introduce herself to the members gathered. Voting took place on the nominee for President-Elect.

Elections

President-  
Elect

**First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Annual Meeting, May 12-14, 2023  
via zoom video conference**

**MOTION:** (Gneid Lackey/Peggy Johnson)

That Rev. Jocelyn Cook be acclaimed as President-Elect of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council.

**CARRIED**Break**BREAK**Theme**THEME II**

Japhet Ndhlovu, theme presenter, was welcomed back to the council. The theme presenter reintroduced the theme scripture from Genesis 1:26-27 and Psalm 139:14. A video was shared, offering one person's journey, and highlighting how important inclusion is in the life of the church. In the image of God, we all have the ability to encounter a diverse world with an equally diverse body. Words from the Song of Faith and New Creed, remind us that all creation is good, and that diversity is important as a core value in living out our Christian faith. The theme presenter offered that we can begin to live out this faith by: cultivating cultural awareness and belonging; confronting bias; mitigating microaggression; combating stereotypes; and understanding multiculturalism. Members took time in breakout rooms to consider *How do we become prophetic communities of faith to destroy systemic injustices?* Groups shared some of their discussions with the council, and the theme presentation closed with the reading of a poem by Tim Blickham.

Proposal**PROPOSAL** – Appendix D

Paula Gale and Kathy Brett introduced the proposal *A Revision of the Wording of the First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council's Call Statement*. (Appendix D), received from First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Executive. There was extensive work done to receive and accept the call and vision statement in 2019. Since then, the Affirm Committee was asked by the Executive to work on the statement to ensure that the language we use is what we want to say to be inclusive of all of God's beloved. The proposal asks that the regional council accept the wording of the call statement as presented. Members were invited to ask any questions for clarification.

**MOTION:** (Kathy Brett/Paula Gale)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council approves the Call Statement:  
*With joy in our hearts and a song on our lips we, the First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council of The United Church of Canada, acknowledge that we are called by God to love and serve all creation as bold disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe that full participation in all aspects of our calling is the right of people of all racial backgrounds, creeds, ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender expressions, economic statuses, abilities or any other lived experiences that have led to marginalization and oppression. Through our various shared ministries and paths of deep spirituality, we are called to uphold the varied gifts and skills in one another; to be accepting of change while honouring heritage and traditions; to resist bias as we seek justice. We are all God's children. We are not alone. Thanks be to God!*

**CARRIED**President**PRESIDENT**

(Peggy Johnson, former president, assumed the chair)

The President, Nancy Mojica-Fisher, presented her report, included in the docket of reports on page R8. The President shared that her time as president has been a rewarding and humbling experience. Over the past year, the President has heard the sadness of struggling congregations, but also the hope of the churches to go on and "be church" in the midst of challenges faced. The President offered thanks to the members gathered for all the learnings and the growth that was offered to her this year, thanks to all the divisions, teams, staff and executive for their work for the wider church, and special thanks to the Executive Minister for her guidance and support.

(Nancy Mojica-Fisher reassumed the chair)

**LUNCH AND GRACE**

Lunch and  
Grace

Grace and prayer were offered by Gneid Lackey, Liturgy Team Convenor.

**GATHERING WITH MUSIC**

Gathering  
with Music

The members of regional council were gathered together after the break with music ministry led by Gneid Lackey, Yvonne Milley, Bill Matchem and Catherine Stuart.

**GENERAL COUNCIL OFFICE REPRESENTATIVE**

General  
Council Office  
Representative

Japhet Ndhlovu, theme presenter, was also in attendance at the annual meeting as General Council Office representative. Japhet shared a video highlighting the pillars; deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice; words that express the call of The United Church of Canada. Japhet highlighted some of the work of the United Church, through some of the work he is involved in with the Church in Mission Unit. The United Church currently has 90 (ninety) global partners, which work together to provide basic needs such as education, food security, and human rights justice for all. Japhet thanked the council for allowing him to be present to bring greetings.

**REMIT**

Remit

Faith March-MacCuish, Executive Minister, introduced the remit for voting. A remit is a proposed change to the Basis of Union. The remit before us today is an amendment to the Basis of Union in The Manual of The United Church of Canada to establish an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada. This is a Category 3 Remit, requiring a majority vote by all the regional councils and all communities of faith that are pastoral charges. A video was shared presenting the remit before us.

**Remit 1 – Amendment to the Basis of Union to Establish an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada**

Does the Regional Council agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect this change as follows:

1. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council\*; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
2. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union\*\*; and
3. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

Results:            YES     (73)                    NO     (2)

It was noted that Elsie Squires, Gneid Lackey and Alice Moores asked to abstain from the vote.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS MOMENT**

Health and  
Wellness  
Moment

Regional Council members participated in a health and wellness moment.

**GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME II**

Guaranteed  
Livable Income

Marion Pardy, Provincial Coordinator, shared a video highlighting the work of the Atlantic Group, with the hope that communities of faith will become involved in this important advocacy work.

**HOLY LANDS VISIT**

Holy Lands  
Visit

Two applicants have requested support from the MacPherson Family Bequest for funding for a pilgrimage to the Holy Lands. Rev. Shepherd Munikwa and Rev. Dr. Simon Muwowo each addressed the council with their desire to travel to the Holy Lands. Voting by regional council members took place by secret ballot.

Executive  
Minister

**EXECUTIVE MINISTER**

The Executive Minister began her address to the council with a reading from Jeremiah 29:11. She likened the church today to those in exile, moving to a new place where nothing looks the same. In this post pandemic world, what do we leave behind? what can we bring forward? God has a plan for us for a future and a hope. The General Council Office has released a priority plan to grow and revitalize the church. This plan comes from the call for deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice. The Health, Joy and Excellence Institute was highlighted as a new initiative to support and encourage ministry personnel in the eastern regions. The Executive Minister encouraged members to be involved in the work of the regional council and to help with this vision and growth. The Executive Minister encouraged all who gathered to help be the change!

United Church  
Bookstore

**UNITED CHURCH BOOKSTORE**

Leona Laundry, Bookstore Manager, provided members with an update on the United Church Bookstore. The bookstore is now available online, so we welcome your orders. Copies of the Manual 2023 are in stock.

UCRD

**UNITED CHURCH RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION (UCRD)**

A video presentation highlighted several books available now, and invited members to follow the UCRD newsletter and social media for more details.

Break

**BREAK**

Financial  
Statements  
2022

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2022**

Roy West, chair of the Division of Finance and Administrative Resources, presented the 2022 audited financial statements to the regional council. A detailed account of the region's finances was presented during a webinar on May 4, 2023. The auditor, Brian Scammell, reported that the statements present fairly the financial position of the regional council. The division chair noted that losses in the Statement of Change in Net Assets are due to losses on investments in 2022 from a downturn in the market. This situation has already begun to improve as markets recover.

**MOTION:** (Roy West/Eleanor Wentzell)

That the 2022 audited financial statements for First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council be accepted as presented.

**CARRIED**

Budget 2024

**BUDGET 2024**

The First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council budget for 2024 was presented by Roy West. An information webinar for the 2024 budget took place on May 4, 2023. It was noted that minimal changes are anticipated in budgets for divisions and teams, based on previous year's actual expenditures. Cost of living increases to staff salaries, maintenance and repairs to the regional council office building, and the cost of hosting an in person annual meeting in 2024 are the noted increases in the 2024 budget. A deficit of \$42,445 (forty-two thousand four hundred and forty-five) is projected in 2024, however it is proposed that this amount be covered through prior years' surpluses in the discretionary fund.

**MOTION:** (Roy West/Simon Muwowo)

That the budget for 2024 be approved as presented.

**CARRIED**

Elections

**ELECTIONS – PART II**

The newly acclaimed President-Elect, Jocelyn Cook, was provided the opportunity to address the regional council.

**CHILDREN, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS**

**Children,  
Youth and  
Young Adults**

Catherine Stuart was welcomed to regional council. Catherine discussed her role as Minister of Children, Youth and Young Adults, and highlighted camping ministries, leadership and committee support, and resource sharing as some of the main pieces of work that she carries out in the region. Catherine was pleased to announce that Rendez-Vous will run next August, and that Ukulele Church continues to grow as a new ministry. She encourages members to join the Children, Youth and Young Adults Team and help continue this exciting work in the region.

**HOLY LANDS**

**Holy Lands**

The President announced that voting has closed and that there has been a tie. As a result, the bequest will be split between the two participants. Congratulations are extended to both recipients.

**MOTION:** (Peggy Johnson/Cecil Noseworthy)

That the ballots be deleted/destroyed.

**CARRIED**

**COURTESIES**

**Courtesies**

Peggy Johnson offered thanks and acknowledgement to all who participated in the regional council meetings. The team convenor offered a heartfelt thank you to the President for her theme, video creation and guidance throughout the entire weekend. Thanks to the theme speaker and General Council Representative, Japhet Ndhlovu. To those who attended, presented, planned, and inspired, thank you!

Gratitude was also expressed to the regional council staff, the liturgy and music team, president-elect, division chairs, program team, and all the members who attended. Special thanks and appreciation were offered to the Executive Minister for her steadfast leadership and guidance.

The President then thanked Peggy Johnson for her leadership on the Program Team.

**CLOSING MOTION**

**Closing  
Motion**

**MOTION:** (Peggy Johnson/Cecil Noseworthy)

That First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council designate to the Executive the power to act for the Region in all matters except those excluded by the Manual 2023; and

That the fifth annual meeting of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council close at the completion of the Celebration of Ministries Service, Sunday, May 14, 2023; and

that the sixth annual meeting be held on June 7-9, 2024, at a place to be determined.

**CARRIED**

**CLOSING WORSHIP**

**Closing  
Worship**

Catherine Stuart introduced the closing worship, prepared by Rebecca Pike and led by youth from throughout the regional council. Prayer, scripture and song highlighted the theme *Created in God's Image*. The reflection highlighted all the places that we can see, feel and hear God in our presence. Catherine Stuart and Ethan Stuart offered music leadership. Rebecca Pike offered the blessing. Worship closed with members joining one last time in repeating the theme statement *we thank you for we are fearfully and wonderfully made*.

**GRACE AND SUPPER**

**Grace and  
Supper**

Nancy Mojica-Fisher, President, offered a blessing and grace.

**First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Annual Meeting, May 12-14, 2023  
via zoom video conference**

Kitchen Party

**KITCHEN PARTY**

President-Elect, Amanda Barnes hosted a relaxing and entertaining "kitchen party". Members signed up to participate and offered to share their songs, stories, poems, skits, and laughter to conclude the day of meetings.

Closing Prayer

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Amanda Barnes, President-Elect closed the meeting with prayer.

**Sunday, May 14, 2023**

Celebration of  
Ministries  
Service

**CELEBRATION OF MINISTRIES SERVICE**

The Celebration of Ministries service was held at Wesley United Church, St. John's, on Sunday, May 14, 2023 at 2:00pm. The service was also live streamed so that all members who were unable to attend in person were able to witness this important milestone event. The President, Rev. Nancy Mojica-Fisher, was the preacher. Stephanie Rose was ordained as a minister in The United Church of Canada, and Rev. Amanda Barnes was installed as the President of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council. The newly installed President, Amanda Barnes announced the theme for the 2024 annual meeting as "When We Say Yes", based on scripture from John 6:66-69.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Nancy Mojica-Fisher  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Minister



## From the Desk of Reverend Ian March-MacCuish

It's annual report time once again, which means another year has gone by. A year that has been full of so many wonderful things. We had a whole year with no lockdowns. We celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a variety of ways. We shared memories and stories, we had guest speakers, our Peace Garden was unveiled, a wonderful anniversary meal and spiritually uplifting worship services. It was a great year for celebrations.

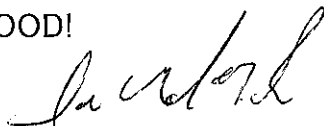
As the world continually works towards a new normal, we do need to pause and reflect on the reality of what has occurred during the pandemic. During COVID a fairly large number of our members have died. Due to the pandemic, funeral services have been limited or did not happen at all, and the regular support system of Sunday morning gatherings was non-existent. As we move forward, we recognize those beautiful people who are with the communion of saints that surround us. A second reality that we are dealing with is a difficult financial position, with two years of deficits and are already accumulating a \$25,000 deficit so far this year. May all of us prayerfully consider our financial obligation to the ministry that is our church.

One of the things that I have missed is fellowship gatherings in Trinity Hall. The last few years has seen a sharp decline in all those activities that enabled us to share, talk, laugh, and celebrate. Last year we started to recapture some of these things. It reminded me how important church halls really are. Carol Green in the January/February issue of Broadview magazine wrote the following:

*Ghosts from the past echo through these church halls  
The sounds of children running and giggling  
Ethereal notes of a choir wafting through thin air  
Church ladies and men bustling, helping with an occasion, whether joyous or sad  
Food appearing on tables, the loves and fishes realized  
Dishes clanking in the kitchen  
My young son coaxing the temperamental dishwasher to life  
The sound of the minister chatting at coffee hour, surrounded by the buzz of  
congregants catching up with each other  
Another minister, another coffee hour  
We are so lucky to have the cast of characters in our collective memory  
Ghosts from the past who warm these halls  
Their spirits hovering nearby in warm solace, embracing our souls  
This is why I love church halls  
Not just our own but everywhere  
They are a spiritual harbour of eternal love.*

May Trinity Hall ring with laughter and notes of celebration and fellowship.

GOD IS GOOD!



**FIRST UNITED CHURCH**  
**Board of Management**  
**Annual Report 2023**

This has been a building year at First United! We have started to get more people in church for our Sunday morning services, Sunday School has started up again and all groups are meeting again. We had a very successful 70th Anniversary Year. We still have a way to go to get back to pre-Covid!!

During the summer, a Peace Garden was constructed on the church property. Thank you to the Anniversary Committee for all their hard work in making this happen. Also, to the Youth Group for donating the Peace Pole and to all members of the congregation and church families for all the donations towards the garden. This is a place where you can sit and think about loved ones, meditate or just enjoy time to yourself.

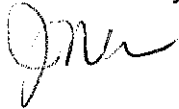
First United have a lot of valuable volunteers that look after the running of the church and looking after the property. There are too many to name but THANK YOU!!

Thank you to Rev. Ian for your help and guidance during the year.

I want to thank the Board members and staff for all their hard work this past year.

Looking forward to 2024.

Submitted by,



Joan Winsor  
Chairperson

**70th ANNIVERSARY REPORT**  
**What a Year!**  
**Come Home to First United 2023**

**Committee members:** Rev. Ian, Kelly Tuck, Carolyn Rice and Joan Winsor

The committee started meeting in 2022 to get plans underway. We decided that our celebrations would kick off on Sunday, March 19, 2023 and conclude on Sunday October 22, 2023.

During the Kick off service with guest speaker, Rev Peggy Johnson, an anniversary project was revealed. The committee brought forward the plans to construct, on the church property, a "Peace Garden". With the help of the congregation and friends, six park benches and 60 Verazzo stones were all donated in memory of loved ones or in celebration. Donations were also received to the general fund. We were successful to receive a grant from the United Church of Canada. Also, thank you to the Youth Group for the donation of the Peace Pole! The garden was constructed in July and dedicated on Sunday, September 24, 2023 by the President of First Dawn Eastern Edge, Rev. Amanda Barnes.

Some of the activities during the celebration year were:

**March 19** - Kick-off Service with guest speaker Rev. Peggy Johnson

**April 21** - Jiggs Dinner by the Men's Club

**April 23** - Guest speaker Scott Worsfold

**April 30** - Old Tyme Hymn Sing with invited Men's Club from Topsail United Church

**May 6** - UCW Anniversary Morning Coffee

**May 28** - Special surprise from the Quilting Group and guest speaker Rev. Nancy Mojica-Fisher

**June 25** - Service by the Youth Group and a family time after

**August** - On-line Auction

**September 24** - Dedication of Peace Garden, guest speaker Rev. Amanda Barnes

**October 21** - Anniversary Dinner and basket walk

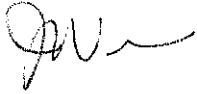
**October 22** - Anniversary Service with guest speaker Rev. Faith March-MacCuish

**December** – Selling of Purdy's chocolates

Thank you to the UCW for providing coffee and snacks after the several services.

A big THANK YOU to the congregation for all their support and help with donations etc. to make the 70th Anniversary year a great success!

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JW' with a flourish.

Joan Winsor  
Chairperson

## FIRST UNITED CHURCH PROPERTY REPORT 2023

This year the Property Committee started for me when I returned from vacation in early June, 2023. Other than a few issues, things have been fairly calm at First United with regards to property.

Our biggest project and responsibility was to get our main roof re-shingled. As the congregation was aware, we had endeavoured to have this done two years previous. This was hampered by a family of sea gulls that took up residence and started a family near one of the steeples. We were forbidden by law to remove them and, consequently, lost our window of opportunity to have it completed that year. The next year we were much in the same position, between the gulls and the contractor giving us a run around, so we didn't get it done that year. This was starting to become a contentious issue due to the fact that had we encountered leaks, and we would have had to deal with another issue. This last Spring and early Summer left us scrambling, as the contractor that we were dealing with defaulted and left us back to square one, looking for a contractor. Through many inquiries from various people, we were successful in securing another contractor. After some research, this one seemed to be our best choice so far. The price was a little higher than first anticipated, but given the way prices for everything were going up, we had no choice but to go with them. This project was successfully completed the first week in August. As well, we were also able to supply enough shingles to re-shingle our storage shed. So, with the assistance from a few men from the Men's Club, necessary repairs were made to the roof and then re-shingled.

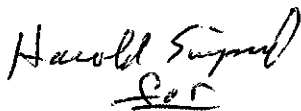
Other than some routine maintenance items, things were pretty quiet.

The Anniversary Committee installed a Peace Garden in early August and proved to be quite the attraction as you entered the church by the main entrance.

The elevator lift gave some trouble prior to Anniversary Week. Again, as a result of the current service provider not able to make the necessary repairs, we were again tasked with finding another service company. We were successful and, hopefully, this company will continue to be our provider, as they seemed very interested. Our fire alarm system, emergency lighting and other systems requiring inspections have been completed as required

Our snow clearing arrangement for walkways have been secured with the same person and the parking lot remained as in previous years.

Respectfully submitted,



Kirk Howell  
Property Chair

## **FIRST UNITED CHURCH WORSHIP COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**Committee Members:** Rev. Ian, Peter, Kyle, Co- Chairs Sara and Jean

2023 proceeded slowly to return the services to pre-Covid by implementing more normal routines. Attendance has increased. Communion was returned to the use of original elements. What to do regarding the collection plates was discussed with the Board and now, in the new year, the ushers are taking the collection in the pews. Communion is the first Sunday of the month. Baptism is the last Sunday of the month. However, Baptism is so infrequent, it has been taking place with Communion, at the request of date from the parents. In 2023, we only had seven babies baptized.

We had people on our Ushering Teams retire. We want to thank them for their dedication and service over the years. A call went out, and by December, we had a few volunteers come forward giving us a full schedule for 2024.

Our readers list for scriptures has grown. Thanks to Sara's scheduling, we have people lined up a few weeks in advance. We appreciate all our readers and ushering teams who have come forward to help make our services run smoothly.

All the special services of Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas went very well. We thank the UCW, Youth Group, Men's Club, Choir and Sunday School who participated in their special way. Also, thank you to the volunteers who help with setting up and putting away the decorations.

There are many people kept busy each week - Christina in the office, Glenys our Treasurer, and also the volunteers on Sunday mornings or whenever office coverage is needed. The sound booth volunteers who keep us going every week with the microphones, headphones, recordings and some weeks broadcasting to VOWR.

It is the dedicated work of Kyle and Quintin who bring our church services into the homes of so many each week. The importance and impact this provides is immeasurable for the benefits it provides to our congregation!

**\*\* Points of interest, on some YouTube Analytics, provided by Kyle.**

1. Views of the channel in the past 28 and 365 days.

**28 DAYS - 764 VIEWS     365 DAYS - 13,197 VIEWS**

2. Watch time (hours) in the past 28 and 365 days.

**28 DAYS - 277.3 HOURS (27.3 more than the usual 190-250)**

**365 DAYS - 3,404.1 HOURS (about the same as previous 365 days)**

3. The difference between viewers who have subscribed and those still yet to subscribe.

**Period of February 8, 2023 to February 7, 2024**

- **Subscribed viewers – 33.8%**
- **Unsubscribes viewers – 65.8%**

Again, we are very grateful for Rev. Ian for his spiritual guidance. To Peter and Melissa for their hard work and dedication for their musical leadership. Also, to our Board for keeping us all organized and supporting whatever projects we come up with.

It is with thanks and appreciation to all who come forward to help our Worship Committee each week with the services.

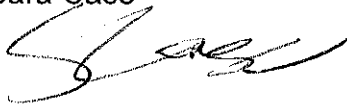
**It takes a team, and we are Blessed to have a great team of volunteers!**

Respectfully submitted,



Jean Whelan

Sara Case



**First United Church  
Christian Development Committee  
Annual Report 2023**

The Youth Group were involved in many projects this year. Many of these events were with the Anniversary celebrations, including after church luncheons, breakfast with Santa, and the Frosty Festival Service and Supper. The youth worked hard decorating Trinity Hall for Christmas and delivered their annual valentines cards and cookies to the seniors with the help of our leaders.

Sunday School is back up and running, however it's small group of children. Isn't it nice to hear the Sunday School song "Children, Go to Hear God's Word" as they make their way downstairs to class!? Things are finally feeling like we are getting back to normal. Please contact us if you would like to volunteer or join our Youth Group or Sunday School Program! Please see Rev. Faith's report for more details on these programs!

The Book Club and Quilting Group continue to meet and were involved in many projects this year during our anniversary celebrations. Please see Pam Morgan's report for more details on their recent activities.

A huge thank you to ALL of our volunteers that help keep these groups involved in our worship. For their hard work, thoughtfulness, kindness and love always shown to our church community.

Submitted by,

*Allison Randell*

Allison Randell  
Chair of Christian Development



## **FIRST UNITED CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT 2023**

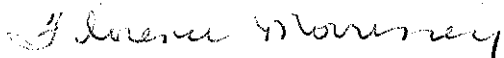
Sunday School started up again on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It was the first time since Covid, and was a very welcome sight to see and hear the children back to our church!

We registered eleven (11) children ages 1 – 8. We sing Happy Birthday and light the birthday candles to celebrate birthdays, collect money for our foster child and collect pop tabs for wheelchairs. We read bible stories and have discussions on moral beliefs. Snack time and craft time are always a hit.

A special Thank You to moms and nans who help out every week.

Our Sunday School children took part in our White Gift service in December and enjoy being a part of the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,



Florence Morrissey  
Judy Blackwood

# **Youth Group Annual Report**

## **SNAC - 2023**

The Youth Group at First United Church known as SNAC-Sunday Night at Church (because that is where you will find us, and you will also see us snacking among other things) has had another successful year.

We are very fortunate to have a group of dedicated leaders. Thank you to: Jenny Noel, Pamela Morgan, Kelly Tuck, Tony Tuck, Sarah Walsh, Allison Randell, Emily March-MacCuish, Faith March-MacCuish, and Rev. Ian.

Our Youth Group is a small and mighty group, with seven youth and nine leaders. We have been able to have wonderful programming and relationship building. The theme for our group for these past two years is 'Care for self and others'. All of our activities have been based on that theme. The following list of activities is part of our living our theme.

### **Outreach Programs**

#### **Can Project:**

This year we were please to have our can project return after a break through COVID. This is a project between the Church Board and the youth in which cans are delivered to each household and members are asked to fill their can through the Summer with change. The cans are returned in the Fall and funds realized are shared with the Church Board, 30% to the youth and 70% for the church operations. The funds raised help to support youth activities throughout the year. Thank you to all the members of our church for supporting our Can project - "Together we Can".

#### **Prison Joy Bags:**

This year we contributed 200 Christmas bags for the inmates who are at Her Majesty's Penitentiary. It is important for our Youth Group because it always reminds us that we are all children of God, that all of us are capable of making mistakes, and we all have the potential for forgiveness and restoration.

#### **Seniors Outreach:**

This year we were fortunate to have been able make our cards and cookies for the seniors. We made arrangements for delivery of the cards and cookies, but a prolonged snow storm prevented the youth from delivering the cookies, so we turned to Rev. Ian and he delivered the cookie and cards on our behalf.

#### **Congregational Outreach:**

**Trick or Trunk** – It was exciting to get back to our pumpkin carving and our trick or trunk. Thank you so much to all the congregation who came out to support our efforts with their decorated cars and Halloween treats. We had about 50 children take part, which we consider a great success.

**Breakfast with Santa** – This year we took on a new outreach program, Breakfast with Santa. The youth group had a great time hosting this breakfast with some helpers from the Board, some extra family members and, of course, Santa. We cooked pancakes, sausages and toast. A good time was had by all.

**Easter Breakfast** – It was very exciting to host our Easter Breakfast again for the first time since Covid. The youth were at the church bright and early and started the kettles and the big pots boiling. We then went to the 8 am Communion Service and then back down to cook our eggs and toast. Thank you to all of the members of the congregation that came out to support the youth.

### **Good Friday Vigil**

We, as a group, also took part in the Prayer Vigil. It is one of the things the youth loves to do, and it is important for us to have this time in prayers and to help continue a beloved tradition of our church.

### **Worship Services:**

The Youth Group were able to host the Vesper Service this year. It is such a wonderful candlelight service that gives time for reflection and singing of our Christmas hymns.

### **Faith Talks:**

Talking about our faith is an ongoing thing, but there are times when we study topics that are important to us.

### **Peace Pole**

About two years ago during one of our faith talk nights the theme was Peace. As we studied the concept of peace, peace within ourselves, our families, our community, and our world Rev. Ian showed us the world-wide movement of the concept of a Peace Pole. We were excited about our church becoming one of the sites that housed a Peace Pole. When the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee made the decision to put in a garden, we couldn't think of a better name and place for our Peace Pole but in the peace garden. We are very proud that, as a Youth Group, we were able to raise enough funds to purchase the Peace Pole for the garden.

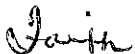
### **Fun and Fellowship:**

Our Youth Group provides a place for youth to come and feel comfortable, supported and safe. We play games, go bowling, watch movies, go curling, have sleepovers, play darts, ping pong, crafts, baking and much more. It is important for youth to have a place where that know they are valued, cared for and love. There is no better place to do that, than with their church family. We are also very fortunate to have a strong group of young adult leaders who give their time support and love to our youth. Thank you to them for taking on more and more of the leadership. We truly are blessed.

### **Thank You:**

Thank you to First United Church for all your support, to the UCW, Men's Club and Official Board who support us and the whole congregation. Thank you to Rev. Ian, our Minister. Thank you to the youth for being such a great group of young people. We are so proud of you. Thank you to the parents who help and support the youth and get them to the church and events we are hosting and for being a support to all we do!! Thank you to all the leaders who give of their time for the love of our youth.

Submitted by,



Rev. Faith March-MacCuish for SNAC

## First United Book Club Annual Report 2023

A small group started up the year in January, this time with two books as our Christmas meeting had been cancelled due to illness; we held our Christmas dinner in January with both our December and January books on the discussion list. This then necessitated shifting our other dates a little so we didn't have big gaps or fast turn-arounds to get the next book read.

Our Christmas dinner was held at one of our member's home, and we enjoyed the relaxing social time so much, that, with such a small group, we decided to rotate holding the meetings in members' houses rather than going back to meeting in the church basement, which didn't heat up until we were ready to go. We finished up in June and reconvened in September, with the same small group of four, and rotating houses for meetings, culminating in Chinese food for Christmas as we discussed a book about Chinese immigration to Newfoundland.

This was a year for thought-provoking books on a range of topics we hadn't encountered before ... suicide, assisted suicide, palliative care, apartheid, slavery, and immigration. These included several very good books by Newfoundland authors.

Below are our one-line book reviews for the past year:

- 2023-01-11 **The Midnight Library** by Matt Haig  
*"A very thought-provoking book; There's a little bit of Nora in all of us"*
- 2023-02-15 **The Good Women of Safe Harbour** by Bobbi French  
*"A good book for any harbour; one of the best we've had"*
- 2023-03-22 **The Last House on the Street** by Diane Chamberlain  
*"The more things change, the more they stay the same"*
- 2023-04-26 **The Hundred years of Lenni and Margot** by Marianne Cronin  
*"An interesting hundred years"*
- 2023-05-25 **Unsheltered** by Barbara Kingsolver  
*"Relevant but not at all compelling"*
- 2023-06-28 **A Funny Kind of Paradise** by Jo Owens  
*"Perspective is everything; life is what you make of it"*
- 2023-09-27 **The Book of Lost Friends** by Lisa Wingate  
*"An obscure piece of history that could have done with stronger characters to reach its full potential"*
- 2023-10-25 **Most Anything You Please** by Trudy Morgan-Cole  
*"A Newfoundland story that could be most anywhere or anyone you please"*
- 2023-11-22 **The Faith of Queen Elizabeth: The Poise, Grace, and Quiet Strength Behind the Crown** by Dudley Delffs  
*"readable but more speculative than well researched"*
- 2023-12-20 **Hollow Bamboo** by William Ping  
*"Interesting, lesser known piece of NL history."*

Submitted for the Book Club by Pam Morgan



## First United Quilting Group Annual Report 2023

We came back from Christmas, settling back into an in-person routine and deciding that we were comfortable without masks. We continued with our biweekly meetings, the first, third, and fifth Monday evenings of each month with occasional changes.

There were a couple of group projects that we brought to fruition this year. These include:

- the Fall Fair quilt that had been started pre-Covid was finished. It had fallen to the back-burner since there was no Fall Fair to push a deadline for completion.
- a Banner for the sanctuary to celebrate the church's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was completed.
- a lap quilt for Rev. Ian as he recovered from his surgery, although with us only meeting every second week and missing a week for our own illness, we were pretty slow in getting it to him.
- a couple of almost-finished projects were donated by members who had decided that the items had lost their appeal. They were finished by other members for donation/fundraising (a pieced top for a lap quilt and a Christmas runner).

This Fall, several members took on a mystery block quilt challenge hosted by a local quilt shop. They aren't all finished yet, but seeing the different fabrics put together into the same blocks and the quilt that comes out is amazing.

This Fall, we also decided to take on a charity project. One of our members has connections with an obstetrics clinic that works with pregnant immigrants and refugees. So far, we have completed four quilts, three of which have been given away already. These quilts are a mix of baby quilts for the new baby, a quilt for the mom, or quilts for older siblings of the new baby.

As usual, we met throughout the Summer, so long as at least three of us were available. We held a very successful quilting day in October and members were able to make progress on a variety of personal projects. We are already planning another one for the new year. And we finished out the year with our Christmas social, although we changed it up this year and ordered in supper rather than just doing a dessert party. We still had plenty of desserts!

While our membership has changed slightly with some members dropping out and new members coming in, we are holding steady at about 15 on our mailing list and averaging 6 people per meeting.

Submitted for the Quilting Group by Pam Morgan



## Bridges to Hope 2023 Annual Report to our Supporting Congregations

Once again the Staff, Volunteers and Board of Directors would like to express our sincere thanks for the ongoing support of Bridges to Hope by our founding and supporting congregations. The importance of our core mission, *to reduce the effects of poverty on individuals and families through access to essential food, and other programs that help empower our clients*, has unfortunately grown within 2023.

**Operations:** For the most part, 2023 has seen us operating under post-pandemic conditions, with volunteer levels at pre-Covid levels and clients re-entering the waiting area. Our dedicated volunteers are performing yeoman service again in the pantry as well as the kitchen, and over the year we have added some additional volunteers and increased our food preparation activities.

**Staff:** Our new staff structure has carried through 2023, with Jody Williams as our Executive Director, Lesley Burgess as our Operations Manager, Raylene Roche as Intake Coordinator, and Emily Noel as Food Support Worker. We have a wonderful core team. We had an addition to the team mid-year, with Federal grant money providing one year funding for a dedicated Fund Development Coordinator. Sashika Dilshan has proven to be a great asset in building public and corporate awareness of our organization and its' mission.

**Demand:** 2023 saw continued increases in the number of clients coming to Bridges to Hope. We believe that this is primarily as a result of rises in the cost of living from inflation, but we are also seeing increased numbers of new Canadians and international students. We provided support to over 13,100 people in 2023, including 3448 children and 2214 Seniors. This is almost a 20% bump in the number of clients over 2022. The Wednesday evening openings that we commenced in 2022 are ongoing, no surprise in light of present socio-economic conditions.

We continue to be open and supportive of all, regardless of religion, race, status or location.

**Programs:** Again in 2023, Bridges to Hope managed to offer valuable and essential programs and services to our clients. In addition to normal food support services, we had our Bags to School program in late summer, which distributed 468 Back Packs full of quality curriculum based, age appropriate, school supplies to students of all grades. We distributed Smart Snack Kits with healthy after-school snacks for school age children, and through our annual Christmas program, funded by Rotary, we distributed \$75 gift cards for groceries from Colemans to 315 of our client families, supporting 662 individuals.

**Support:** Bridges to Hope remains very grateful for support from our founding churches, during universally challenging times. We remain an Outreach Ministry of the United Church of Canada, with financial assistance from First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council of the United Church,

as well as the Presbyterian Synod of the Atlantic Provinces. And of course, donations and volunteerism from congregational members remain crucial to our ongoing mission.

Individual and corporate donations remain a critical part of our funding, in addition to grants and funding from community service groups. It is remarkable how much the caring people of our province have supported our mission, even as their own costs of living increase. In 2023 Bridges to Hope continued to add to our Sustainers Circle core of monthly donors, which provides a level of core funding through the year.

It is important to note that congregational supporters who join the Sustainers Circle as regular monthly donors can have their donations reported as part of your Church's annual support of Bridges to Hope. Please contact Jody Williams (j.williams@bridgestohope.ca) to arrange.

Food drives continued in 2023, with a gradual post-Covid increase. We had a major fundraiser in the form of our Songwriter's Circle event in March with Music NL, at Gower St. United Church, as well as numerous other events in support of Bridges to Hope. We are blessed with a talented and dedicated community underpinning us all.

**The Future:** Bridges to Hope has continued to advance the milestones in our 3 to 5 year strategic planning exercise conducted in 2022. We strive to build upon and enhance our core mission offerings, while adding new services and elements. We are building collaborative relationships with similarly-minded groups.

*Submitted by:*

Ewan Cumming

Board Chair, Member from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

**FIRST UNITED CHURCH  
MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (M&P)  
ANNUAL REPORT – 2023**

The M&P Committee respectfully submits our Annual report. M&P representatives for 2023 were: Brenda Andrews (Chair), Eric Eveleigh, Ada Eveleigh, Janice Andrews-Ralph, and Cynthia Burt. Joan Winsor left the Committee during 2023 and became our new Board Chair.

The M&P Committee acts under the guidance of *The Manual* of the United Church of Canada. The committee functions around three roles, which are: the consultative and supportive role, the healthy relationships role, and the supervisory role. We provide resources and support for our staff and our community of faith with respect to any issue involving staff of our Church, including ministry personnel and lay employees. The Committee works to build positive and trusting relationships between staff and members and adherents of our community of faith.

If members of the Community of Faith have praise or concerns about staff, these can be shared in signed correspondence with the Committee. The issues will be considered confidentially by the Committee, who will recommend action.

Much of the M&P Committee's most effective work is done quietly and confidentially. The Committee has a responsibility to make recommendations to the Board and receives direction from the Board. We welcome advice and input from staff and the congregation at all times.

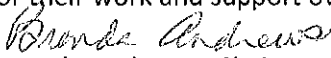
Examples of our 2023 efforts include:

- Reviewed and kept current the employee job descriptions
- Advised the Board on salary levels appropriate for each position
- Recommended to the Official Board annual compensation guidelines
- Advised employees in general on HR issues
- Attended Board meetings and submitted monthly reports
- Met with and supported staff on an ongoing basis
- Communicated salary and wage changes for employees

First United Church is blessed with staff who are committed to their work, and we are thankful for this work in our Community of Faith. Our dedicated staff and volunteers help to ensure that we have meaningful worship services on a regular weekly basis, both in church and online. We are grateful to Reverend Ian March MacCuish (Minister), Peter MacDonald (Music Director), and Melissa Butt (Associate Music Director), who, with the help of several dedicated members of our congregation, ensure that we have access to inspiring spiritual services every Sunday. Christina Manning continued to provide excellent office support as our first point of contact for those who interact with First United. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all who have helped in any way with the ongoing operations of our Church and to those who volunteered to help build our beautiful Peace Garden during 2023. As well, of course, we continue to be very grateful for the excellent overall leadership and guidance provided for our churches by First Dawn Eastern Edge Region.

During 2023, Avalon Cleaners provided cleaning services, as necessary, on a contractual basis. Mr. Jim Eales, Jr., provided snow-clearing services for the parking lot, and Mr. Tom Cheeseman provided snow-clearing services for the thoroughfares and exits. Nutri-Lawn looked after the grounds keeping during the summer. We are very grateful to all who have assisted in any way in keeping our church property safe and beautiful.

Many thanks to the M&P Committee members for their work and support over the past year!

  
Brenda Andrews - Chair



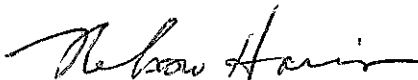
**First United Church Mount Pearl  
Board of Trustees Annual Report 2023**

The function of the Board of Trustees is to hold, in trust, all of the property of our congregation for the use and benefit of our congregation as part of the United Church and to liaise with the Official Board respecting any relevant matters which arise.

In the tradition of First United, matters related to the operation, the mission and the ministry of our church is handled by the entire Official Board which results in our trustees having little in the way of official business. However, I, as chair, attend monthly Board meetings in order to participate in discussions and to remain up-to-date on all church activities.

We are indeed grateful for all the people who work together in fulfilling the mission and ministry of our church.

Respectfully submitted,



Nelson Harris, Chair

Members: Carolyn Rice

Rev. Ian March-MacCuish

## **First United Church Men's Fellowship Club Annual Report 2023**

First United Church Men's Fellowship Club is a group of men of the congregation who meet once per month for worship, fellowship and a good meal. In 2020, just prior to the start of the pandemic, our club adopted a less formal meeting agenda, usually with a meal, worship, a short business session and followed by social time for things such as darts or cribbage.

Our club prepares meals for fundraising or to support our UCW and assists the Board with other meal preparations.

Many members of the club are also involved in various activities such as:

- delivery of envelopes, newsletters and other items to members of the congregation
- assistance with the sanctuary sound system
- various repairs and maintenance around the building
- taking part in church services and visitations in partnership with UCW members.

The following is an outline of our limited activities for 2023.

**January** - We held our regular meeting on Jan 17<sup>th</sup> and made some brief plans for the next couple of months.

**February** - We held our regular meeting on Feb 7<sup>th</sup>. On Feb 20<sup>th</sup> we held a baked beans and sausage supper as a fundraiser. On Feb 26<sup>th</sup> we organized and led the Sunday Church service.

**March** - Our regular meeting was held on March 7<sup>th</sup> with a meal of beef stew and sandwiches.

**April** - We held our regular meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup> with a meal of stuffed cod. We held a jiggs dinner fundraiser on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

**May** - Our meeting was held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> with members of Cowan Heights Men's Club as our guests. We enjoyed a meal of turkey soup and stuffed pork loins, and we took part in a sing-along led by Sid Butt.

**June** - Instead of our regular meeting, we held a BBQ on June 13<sup>th</sup> with spouses/partners invited.

Unfortunately, after the Summer, our remaining executive members were feeling too much of a workload strain to resume activities. No other activities were conducted in the Fall, except for the preparation of the UCW Christmas turkey dinner in December.

After several members expressing a desire to carry on, it now appears that some new leadership is ready to step up. So, hopefully, some club activities will resume for 2024.

Our club was saddened in 2023 by the loss of longtime members John Powell and Frank Whiteway. I must apologize for being remiss in noting the sad loss of Maurice Bennett in 2022.

As I am resigning my position as President, this will be my final annual report for the club. I wish to thank all the members of the club for their support, especially those who served with me on the executive.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold Sinyard  
President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harold Sinyard". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name and title.

### **First United Church Women.....Annual Report 2023**

First UCW meets one Monday each month beginning at 12:30 pm. Ladies bring their own lunch with tea and coffee provided. Worship and business follow lunch. All ladies are welcome.

On April 7<sup>th</sup> we were able to have our Good Friday service and on December 3<sup>rd</sup> our Christmas Lights service.

As part of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations , on May 6<sup>th</sup> we had a Morning Coffee and Cakewalk. This event was well attended and enjoyed by all. In the Fall we sponsored a Bakeless Bake Sale. Both events were very successful and we thank all who contributed.

We sponsored fellowship socials after the morning worship service on January 29<sup>th</sup>, February 26<sup>th</sup>, March 19<sup>th</sup>, April 30<sup>th</sup>, May 28<sup>th</sup>, September 24<sup>th</sup> and October 22<sup>nd</sup>. A free-will donation was received at each of these socials.

In the Spring some of our ladies, with some men from the Men's Club visited Hillcrest Retirement Home, Westbury Estates Retirement Home and Meadowcreek Retirement Home for a time of fellowship and singing.

In November we had our annual shower of personal care items. We filled and delivered 24 Christmas bags for residents of Carew Lodge and the remaining items were delivered to Stella's Circle.

Outreach is also provided with our "Quilts for Comfort" project....ladies knit strips (according to a pattern), strips are knit together into a quilt. These quilts are distributed to give a little warmth where needed. This year we took eight (8) quilts to Naomi Centre on Patrick Street. We thank all those who provided wool, knit the strips and to those who put the strips together.

The UCW continues to financially support the Chaplaincy Fund, Burry Heights Camp, Our Daily Bread ministries, Mission and Service Fund as well as the Local and Building Fund of the church. In addition, this year instead of a Christmas gift exchange, we each donated to the Foster Children's Fund. We express our thanks to all those who continue to support our many projects. Without you we could not do what we do.

We extend an invitation to all women of the congregation to join us in our faith journey as we share our time, talents and treasurers. We pray that God will continue to bless us and our work,



Glenys Harris (for Linda Manuel, Secretary)

**The General Protestant Cemetery Trustee Board Inc.  
Annual Report for 2023**

We continue to make improvements to our cemeteries each year. In addition to our regular maintenance at all three cemeteries, we leveled and sodded many graves and leveled several headstones in the General Protestant Cemetery and Mount Pleasant Cemetery. We install several thousand square feet of sods per year. In Memorial Gardens we have installed continuous reinforced concrete bar beams under each row of monuments. This method has proven to be beneficial in reducing the overall maintenance cost around the monuments.

During the past year we had 202 burials, which is a decrease of 48 over the previous year. Of these 202 burials, 156 of them were cremations which is a decrease of 13 from last year.

The following breakdown may be of interest:

Burials in:	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>
The General Protestant Cemetery	20	10	29
Mount Pleasant Cemetery	159	190	131
The Field of Honor	12	24	20
Memorials Gardens Cemetery	<u>35</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>22</u>
Total Burials	226	250	202
Cremations Included	173	169	156

Your Board met nine times during the past year.

There have been 163 burials in Memorial Gardens. 22 of these were in 2023.

We have sold all the niches in the columbarium which was installed in 2015 at Mount Pleasant and 115 of the 125 columbarium niches that were installed in 2019. We had a third columbarium installed at Mount Pleasant in July 2022. Of the 125 niches, 60 have already been sold.

We have signed a contract with Murray's Landscaping Services for landscaping at Memorial Gardens Cemetery.

This year we installed a double concrete foundation for two columbariums at Memorial Gardens. One columbarium has been received and several niches have already been sold.

All maintenance at Memorial Gardens, such as grass cutting, snow clearing etc., is done by our own staff.

The Memorial Services for 2024 are tentatively scheduled as follows:

- 1) Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Monday, July 1, 2024, 7pm.
- 2) General Protestant Cemetery, Monday, July 15, 2024, 7 pm.
- 3) Memorial Gardens, Monday, July 29, 2024, 7pm.

A personal thank you to the congregation of First United for their continual support.

I am pleased to place on record thanks to our cemetery staff. We have a dedicated staff, and the feedback from the public is excellent. We appreciate the work done by Bill, Vince and Graham. We operate six days a week, sometimes through difficult and challenging situations, especially during the winter season.

Respectfully submitted,

*Calvin Gibbons*

Calvin Gibbons  
First United Church Representative  
Vice Chairman, General Protestant Cemetery Trustee Board Inc.  
Tel: 709-364-9733, Cell: 709-763-0988  
Email: cgibbons@nf.sympatico.ca

## Stewardship Report 2023

Our Stewardship Committee is indeed very grateful to everyone who has contributed in any way toward the life and work of our church. Of necessity, however, our main focus in this report must be about the financial health of our congregation.

We are happy to report that all our financial obligations for 2023 have been met. For the last calendar year, however, there was an Operating Account (deficit) of \$58,938 and those obligations were met only because there was some money available from a few good years in the past when there were small balances to carry forward. That source is rapidly being exhausted and the question we all want answered is; what then?

Our Building Fund loan balance at year end was \$169,000 and we must be ever mindful of this responsibility as we plan our regular givings.

We believe that we have the resources within our community of faith to proceed with enthusiasm far into the future. As God has blessed us, let us prayerfully consider what our objectives must be and how we can individually help achieve those ends.

There are several ways to contribute; in-person collection (we love to see as many worshippers as possible), pre authorized remittances (forms available at the Church), E-transfer, post-dated cheques or Canada Helps. Those may be suitable options when our folks are unable to attend regular worship services.

Once again, thank-you so much for all that you do. We pray for God's richest blessings on you and yours.

Respectfully submitted,



For Stewardship Committee

### Statistics 2023

<b>Baptisms:</b>	7
<b>Marriages:</b>	1
<b>Funerals:</b>	11

### Confirmation of Membership

December 31, 2022	1076
Added by profession of Faith	0
Added by Transfer	0
Removed by Transfer	0
Removed by Death	5
Removed by Request	0
Membership as of December 31, 2023	1071

### Marriages in 2023

Shannon Marie Greene and Mason Barry Lake

### Baptisms in 2023

Reid Clifford Slaney	Emmy Marie Burt
Joseph Eric Douglas Issac Styles	Isla Jamie Noelle Peddle
Ayana Sujana Novecosky	Celina Mercy Perera
Zoe Grace Goodland	

### Deaths in 2023

Rose Marie Foote	Derrick Blundon
Mason Tiller	Barbara Clarke
Ralph Sparkes	Robena Margaret Geraldine Norberg
John Powell	Florence Hazeltine Anderson
James Eales	Shirley Powell
Myra Jean French	