



Newcomers Unitarian

## Welcome to our Congregation

See Sunday's service on the [GRU YouTube page](#).

We're proud to announce that our national organization, including delegates from our congregation, recently voted to add an eighth principle for our movement:

*We, the member congregations of the Canadian Unitarian Council, covenant to affirm and promote individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and systemic barriers to full inclusion in ourselves and our institutions.*



# Annual Report 2021

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Editor: Kristen Wilson

## Official Membership List

As of January 2022. Total: 156

1. Danielle **ALBERT**
2. Jim **ANDERSON**
3. June **ANDERSON**
4. Sarah **ANDERSON**
5. Kemeny **BABINEAU**
6. Irena **BALTADUONIS**
7. Dana **BARSTYS**
8. Jessica **BAYNE**
9. Ryan **BAYNE**
10. Jane **BELL**
11. Ed **BENNETT**
12. Brenda **BISSELL**
13. Laurie **BLAIKIE**
14. Bobbie **BLEILER**
15. Betty **BOOMER**
16. Carole **BOUCHER**
17. Adam **BRAHA**
18. Forbes  
**BURKOWSKI**
19. Karis **BURKOWSKI**
20. Carol **BURROWS**
21. Michele **CADOTTE**
22. Carolyn  
**CARNAHAN**
23. David **CARNAHAN**
24. Jay **CARNAHAN**
25. Tonnea  
**CARRE-HILTON**
26. Greg **CARTER**
27. Olivia **CASEMORE**
28. Aislinn **CLANCY**
29. Janis **COLLINS**
30. Kitty **CORBETT**
31. Anne **DAHMER**
32. Sky **DASEY**
33. Andrea **DEERING**  
**NAGY**
34. Lee **DICKEY**
35. Jonathan **DIETRICH**
36. Bob **DOERING**
37. Janet **DOUMA**
38. Curtis **DUECK**
39. Martin **EDMONDS**
40. Andrea **FISCHER**
41. Ida **FISHER**
42. Ellen **FORRESTER**
43. Jackie **FORSTER**
44. Ruth **GILBERT**
45. Penny **GRACE**
46. Robin **GRANT**
47. John **GREEN**
48. Dianne **HEISE**  
**BENNETT**
49. Jack **HORMAN**
50. Mag **HORMAN**
51. Lee **HORTON-**  
**CARTER**
52. Neil **HUNT**
53. Jennifer **HUNTER**
54. Robert **HUNTER**
55. Charlotte **INNERD**
56. Margaret **INSLEY**
57. Todd **KASENBERG**
58. Kathie **KEEFE**
59. Pat **KEEFE**
60. David **KELLER**
61. Jane **KELLER**
62. Wendy **KENNEDY**
63. Ian **KENT**
64. Mavis **KERR**
65. Judith **KOELLER**
66. Kathy  
**KOENDERINK**
67. Karen **LILL**
68. Steve **LILL**
69. Catherine **LIZOTTE**
70. Michael **LOCKHART**
71. Cathy  
**MACDONALD**
72. Charlie  
**MACDONALD**
73. Lois **MACDONALD**
74. Lynda **MACLEOD**
75. Larry **MAKI**
76. Lynda **MAKI**
77. Denise **MARIGOLD**
78. Wendy **MARTIN**
79. Alisa **MCCLURG**
80. Richard **MCCLURG**
81. Boyd **MCDONALD**
82. Lyn **MCGINNIS**
83. Ian **MCGREGOR**
84. Brie **MCKENZIE**
85. Lynda **MCKIM**
86. Dennis **MIGHTON**
87. Pat **MIGHTON**
88. Bey **MILLER**
89. Brenda **MOEN**
90. Doug **MOEN**
91. Jay **MOORE**
92. Kathy **MOSTARDI**
93. Tom **NAGY**
94. Margaret **NEIGH**
95. Leah **NEUMANN**
96. Diane **OLIVER-**  
**JENSEN**
97. Corliss **OLSON**
98. Ellen **PAPENBURG**
99. Susan  
**PATTERSON**
100. Leo **PETIPAS**
101. Kay **PFISTERER**
102. Art **PHELAN**
103. Nanci **PHELAN**
104. Leanne **PINCURA**  
**O'NEIL**
105. Tim **PINCURA**  
**O'NEIL**
106. Stephen **PREECE**
107. Colin **READ**
108. Rebekah **REMPEL**
109. Adrienne **RICHTER**
110. Bruce **RICHTER**
111. Evelyn **RICHTER**
112. Dorothy **RILEY**
113. Sue **RIVARD**

- |                                      |                                  |                               |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 114. Kathy<br><b>ROBERTSON</b>       | 130. Diana <b>SMITH</b>          | 143. Julian <b>VAN</b>        |
| 115. Norm<br><b>ROBERTSON</b>        | 131. Anders <b>STJÄRNE</b>       | <b>MOSSEL-</b>                |
| 116. Melissa<br><b>ROCKENFIELD</b>   | 132. Erin <b>STJÄRNE</b>         | <b>FORRESTER</b>              |
| 117. Jessica Purple<br><b>RODELA</b> | 133. Maca <b>SUAZO</b>           | 144. Elizabeth <b>VAN RIJ</b> |
| 118. Pamela <b>ROJAS</b>             | 134. Mike <b>SZARKA</b>          | 145. Becky <b>VERDUN</b>      |
| 119. Lynn <b>RUBINSTEIN</b>          | 135. Tracey <b>SZARKA</b>        | 146. Stacey <b>WATSON</b>     |
| 120. Joanne <b>RYDER</b>             | 136. Renny<br><b>TALIANCHICH</b> | 147. Travis <b>WATSON</b>     |
| 121. Richard <b>RUSSEK</b>           | 137. Julie <b>TAYLOR</b>         | 148. Susan <b>WILLMOTT</b>    |
| 122. Mary <b>SANDER</b>              | 138. Helga <b>TEWFIK</b>         | 149. Beth <b>WILSON</b>       |
| 123. Jim <b>SANNES</b>               | 139. Tui <b>TORRIE</b>           | 150. Cait <b>WILSON</b>       |
| 124. Mel <b>SCHOLZ</b>               | 140. Anne<br><b>TREADWELL</b>    | 151. Jamie <b>WILSON</b>      |
| 125. Cathy <b>SCOTT</b>              | 141. Anna <b>VALLENTIN</b>       | 152. Jane <b>WILSON</b>       |
| 126. Russell <b>SCOTT</b>            | 142. Christa <b>VAN</b>          | 153. Jeff <b>WILSON</b>       |
| 127. Kimiko <b>SHIBATA</b>           | <b>DAELE</b>                     | 154. Kristen <b>WILSON</b>    |
| 128. Gregg <b>SIMMONS</b>            |                                  | 155. Sophie <b>WILSON</b>     |
| 129. Louise <b>SIMS</b>              |                                  | 156. Scotte <b>ZINN</b>       |

### **Agenda for the Annual General Meeting, February 27, 2022**

1. Welcome and Chalice Lighting (2 minutes)
2. Appointment of Parliamentarian and Timekeeper; Review of Meeting Rules (5 minutes)
3. Verification of Quorum (2 minutes)
4. Approval of Agenda (2 minutes)
5. Approval of AGM 28 February 2021 Minutes (2 minutes)
6. Acceptance of Reports (2 minutes)
7. Appointment of Financial Reviewer (3 minutes)
8. Budget Report (10 minutes)
9. Motion to Approve 2022 Budget (15 minutes)
10. Motion to appoint Delegates to the Annual Meeting of the CUC (2 minutes)

- The Board moves that the congregation appoint Janis Collins, Carol Burrows, Wendy Martin, and Charlotte Innerd as their delegates to the CUC Annual Meeting.

11. Nominations and Election of Trustees to the Board: Nominating Committee (5 minutes)

- Motion: We appoint Carol Burrows, Anne Dahmer, Wendy Martin, Tom Nagy and Brenda Moen as Trustees to the Board

12. Thanks and Closing Words (2 minutes)

13. Adjournment

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, February 28, 2021**

1. Welcome and Chalice Lighting (2 minutes)

Board President Charlotte Innerd welcomed the congregation with opening words by Bruce Marshall.

2. Appointment of Parliamentarian and Timekeeper; Review of Meeting Rules (5 minutes)

The Board of Trustees has appointed Margaret Insley as Parliamentarian and the chair will be the time keeper. Meeting rules were reviewed by Parliamentarian.

3. Verification of Quorum (2 minutes)

With 157 members, 47 are needed for quorum and quorum was verified with 81 members present.

In the presence of a quorum of the members of Grand River Unitarian Congregation, the Chair called the meeting to order at 11:10 am.

4. Approval of Agenda (2 minutes)

The board moved that the agenda be approved, Becky Verdun seconded and the motion passed.

5. Approval of Minutes (2 minutes)

- AGM of February 23, 2020 and Special Meeting of the Members November, 15, 2020

Janis Collins moved to approve the minutes for the 2020 AGM and the special meeting of the members. The motion was seconded by Corliss Olson and the motion passed.

6. Acceptance of Reports (2 minutes)

- Settled Minister, Affiliated Minister, Staff, President, Committees, Affiliates & Affinity Groups

Tom Nagy made a motion to accept the reports found on pages 10-18 and 23-44. The motion was seconded by Anna Valentin and was passed.

7. Appointment of Financial Reviewer (3 minutes)

The board moves that BDO Canada be appointed as our financial reviewer.

The motion was seconded by Ida Fischer.

Discussion - it was asked what BDO charges for the review. While the exact number is not known at this time, it is noted that we have used BDO in the past and were happy with the value of services performed.

The motion passed.

8. Budget Report (10 minutes)

Carol Burrows presented the Treasurer's report.

9. Motion to Approve 2020 Budget (15 minutes)

The board moved that the 2021 budget be accepted. The motion was seconded by Anne Dahmer.

Discussion

- Why does CUC drop by over \$2,000 for 2021? Answered in Annual Report.
- Are we replacing the carpet and still bolting down the current pews? Yes
- The caulking of the front windows over the doors will require scaffolding or a zoom lift. I feel as I am sure the Board does that this should be performed by a contractor who understands the rules for working at heights.
- If we are able to open the building in September, won't we need to increase the hours of the CRE staff? 15hours/week may not be enough. This has been taken into account and this is the board's best guess at this time. It will be reevaluated as events unfold. The CRE estimates include nursery and assistants starting in September.
- Has there been any discussion of choosing a different flooring? A task force will be exploring options.
- Won't bolting down the pews ruin the flooring for future change to chairs to replace pews? It will be some time before a capital campaign for new chairs can take place. We believe that we can minimize damage and will address this problem when that time comes.
- Linoleum is considered a green flooring and may be a consideration over carpet? I agree with Michele. Linoleum would

be easier to keep clean and, if in the future we change to chairs, easier to move around. Hard flooring may echo and ruin the sound quality of our sanctuary. I can't see screwing the pews down through anything other than carpet.

- The task force is charged with investigating and advising re options of flooring, including what materials give us the best options re future chairs v pews

Motion was passed.

#### 10. Motion to Approve CEWS application (15 minutes)

The Board moves that the congregation approve the amount of up to \$41,000 towards the cost of applying to CEWS, should we determine for each claim period that we fulfill the application criteria, will be successful in the application, and that it is worth the expense of applying.

The motion was seconded by Ian Kent.

Discussion

- There was also an initial TEWS - 10% subsidy, in the early months of 2020. Did we also apply for that (through BDO?) The TEWS program was subsumed into the CEWS program. The program is not longer in effect and would not be worth applying.
- That would be a normal process to have a senior partner sign off on the final numbers.
- Sounds like a great plan
- I understood that businesses are eligible if they have a revenue drop of 30%. Have we had revenue drops of that much, since the early months? (If not, it might not be worth applying?) We will evaluate if it is worth applying for each period and only apply for the most cost effective.
- Why did we wait to apply for the CEWS that had come into effect in March 2020? We have sufficient cash reserves to make it through this period but it is not ideal to dip into those reserves. We have been discussing whether this is a program that we wanted to apply to and it took a great deal of time to review the numbers. We applied by deadline.
- Has the CEWS money that has already been received been included in the budget income? No it hasn't.
- I am concerned that if we can manage without requesting this assistance wouldn't it be ethical to pass on further applications? Managing is a matter of degrees. This program is to allow the "normal" amount of programming to continue without sacrificing



the wages of employees. This is the situation that we face. We can survive financially but can better live out UU values by providing regular programming, which this money would allow to continue.

- Why would it cost \$41,000 in application costs if the previous fee was only \$9,900 ? This would be the full cost if we apply for every period through the end of 2021. This gives the board flexibility if we find that it is necessary to apply for all.
- The government is going into massive debt to finance these programs which will affect future generations. I am not sure that this is ethical to take this money when we have such a large reserve fund.

Ida Fischer called the question for the vote, Adrienne Richter seconded and the question was called.

The motion was approved.

11. Motion to appoint Delegates to the Annual Meeting of the CUC (2 minutes)

- The Board moves that the congregation appoint Janis Collins, Corliss Olsen, Cathy Scott, and Charlotte Innerd as their delegate to the CUC Annual Meeting.

The motion was seconded by Art Phalen and passed.

12. Nominations and Election of Trustees to the Board: Nominating Committee (5 minutes)

- Motion #1: We nominate Cathy Scott for a two year term.
- Motion #2: We nominate Corliss Olson for a two year term.

The motion was seconded by Janis Collins. There were no nominations from the floor and the motions were passed. Congratulations Cathy and Corliss.

13. Thanks and Closing Words (2 minutes)

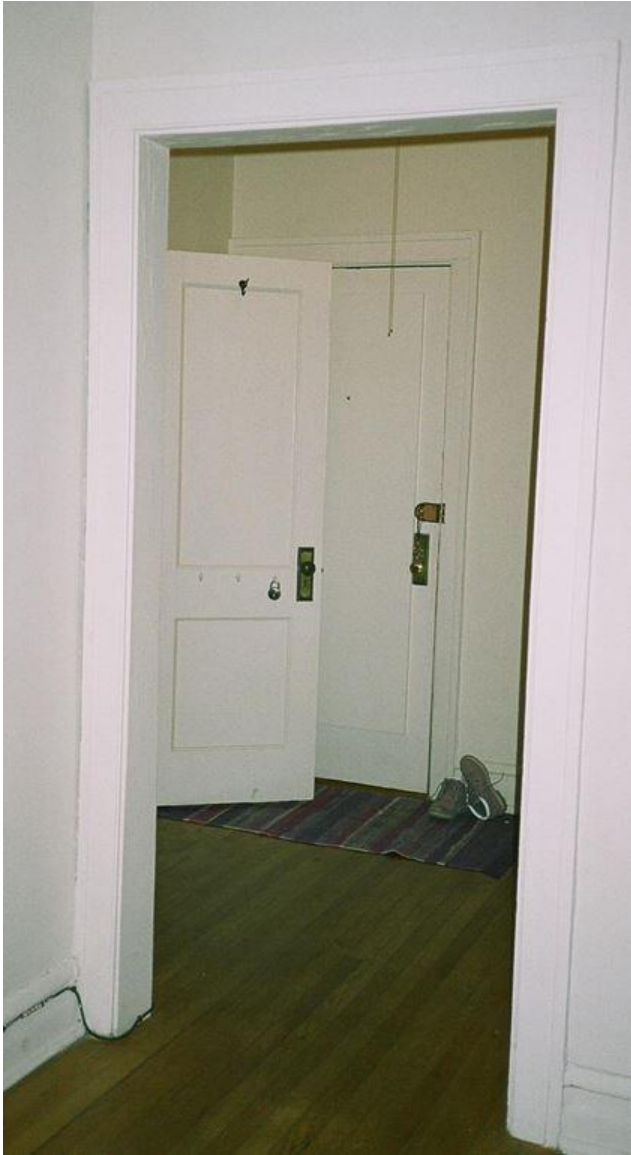
Thank you to all for participating. The meeting concluded with closing words by Kathy A. Huff.

14. Adjournment

Ida Fischer made a motion to adjourn. Colin Read seconded and the motion passed, Chair Charlotte Innerd adjourned the meeting at 12:22.



## Minister's Report



*“Stuck between an ending and a new beginning—when the old way of doing things no longer works but a way forward is not yet clear... Such in-between times are called liminal seasons—threshold times when continuity is disrupted and uncertainty reigns. In a liminal season it simply is not helpful to pretend we understand what needs to happen next.”*

—from church consultant Susan Beaumont’s book *How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going*.

I first learned the word *liminal* at seminary. We were given a writing assignment that included the term, and though the context of the exercise now escapes me, that one word intrigued me. When I learned that it is based on the Latin root *limen*, meaning *threshold*, I spent an hour taking photographs of the many many doors of the apartment building where I lived in Chicago’s south side, and was struck by the many vistas where there were doors within doors within door frames visible, like a hall of repetitive carnival mirrors, each both beckoning a welcome as well as warning of closure.

So has our life been in 2021 – as one wave of this pandemic ebbs just long enough for us to catch a collective breath of relief and reconnection, another wave overtakes us and we sigh, brace ourselves, and ride through it again practicing what patience we can muster. Meanwhile, we do what we can *when* we can, and cherish each possible gathering, made all the more precious in its rarity.

At GRU, winter and spring of 2021 were very much a continuation of what had become normalized pandemic operations and online programming both for faith development, pastoral reflection, and social connections. Fall brought a significant shift because we were able to host limited gatherings in the building, including Sunday services. With the support of the Board and the Committee on Ministry, I led three priorities in the new congregational year: a series of small group gatherings to reconnect over a different kind of Water Communion ritual, forums on the CUC's 8<sup>th</sup> Principle vote and its implications, and polling parents' needs and expectations about our Children's Religious Exploration options in the near term. I organized GRU GrUUs in late fall on diverse topics both pastoral and playful, and was able to pull together a full calendar of online and in-person events for the month of December. The year's highlight was the Legume Room Food Drive, designed and implemented in collaboration with our Climate Action team; we donated 391 pounds of legumes!

Being online has expanded opportunities for professional development, which served me well because the UU Ministers Association now requires a regimen of documented Continuing Education on a rolling basis, with some types of courses defined (racial justice and professional ethics, for example). Significant courses I took included the CUC's workshop series with David Campt on R.A.C.E. dialogue for anti-racism work, a continuing education human resources course with Susan Beaumont on Supervision, the Festival of Homiletics (an annual conference for preachers of all denominations), and a series of intensive workshops with Rev Dr. Natalie Fenimore on "Leading UU Culture Change" regarding how to decenter whiteness and learn to become more intentionally inclusive. Fenimore's was the single best training I've ever had on the subject, with lots of real-world practical suggestions (as well as many affirmations that we here at GRU have done many things right in laying a healthy foundation for next steps). Drawing on these courses, GRU leaders and I have been engaged in assessment and discernment toward meaningful action in dismantling racism within our institutional life and our community outreach, as well as continuing to provide opportunities for individual exploration. Though the Gotta Start Somewhere Team disbanded after one year, conversations and commitments on anti-racism work continue under a renewed

mandate urged by the adoption of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle by the Canadian Unitarian Council in November.

While the latest omicron wave has been a discouraging setback, I remain buoyed in this supportive community. I've been so very fortunate to work with the fine leaders and staff in this congregation - in particular I want to thank our departing Board President Charlotte Innerd, whose wisdom and humour and dedication have pulled me through many a tough dilemma over the years; I'm grateful for the good humour of office guru Kristen Wilson, who has been not just my "right hand" but often the left one as well; and you cannot imagine how many hours our amazing Board members devote to the work behind the scenes in discernment, discussion and documentation to keep our building running, our finances healthy, and our members informed. I know you'll join me in thanking all our Board members: Carol Burrows, Cathy Scott, Wendy Martin, Anne Dahmer, Corliss Olson, and Tom "Who.Does.All.The.Things" Nagy. I stand in awe and gratitude for the outstanding leadership you've provided in these especially challenging liminal times.

*Wabily-Sabily Yours, Rev. Jess*

*Submitted by Rev. Jessica Purple Rodela*

## **Board Reports**

### **President's Report**

This year has seen us move slowly and unevenly towards full programming, which still seems elusive. I extend my heartfelt and enormous thanks to the Board and Staff who have gone above and beyond during these pandemic times. The Board had so many discussions about this great community and how to best serve it.

The pandemic discussions and response focused on safety, community, and budget considerations. However, it was not the only topic that we engaged with. We also worked through processes for the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle and the overwhelming expression from congregants to do the work! We developed a Rule of 3 Pilot Programs & Projects to help facilitate ideas into action. We added GRU to the list of signatories on a declaration going to Waterloo Region Council in November asking for a ban on Conversion Practices. As I mentioned in my Notes from the Board, we had some challenges with the CUC and ended the year having a productive discussion with them about expectations. As my time on the Board has come to an end, we also

spent time on succession planning and knowledge transfer (I spent a lot of time documenting!).

### COVID-19 Response

The trajectory of this virus meant, as Rev Jess said, we needed contingency plans for our contingency plans. We held two outdoor services, so great to see everyone! We were able to start livestreaming from the sanctuary (a tremendous effort!) and sometimes even had attendees. The Board pored over the budget every month to ensure fiscal matters were well covered.

### Our Building

Attention was paid to keeping our building safe during the extended period of lockdown. We dealt with a small leak in the outside wall in the nursery. Many thanks to Diane Oliver-Jensen and Art Phelan for their years of dedication! The biggest project was making the sanctuary safe by replacing the carpet as well as caulking the windows and painting the walls. Many thanks to Cathy Scott for her leadership on this project.

### Human Resources

Thanks to our two DREs, Cecilia Macdonald and Kate Urquhart, who both moved on to new opportunities (See the CRE report for next steps). We hope our Musical Director, Stephen Preece is enjoying his leave.

### Governance

The Board continued to solicit feedback and input throughout the year. I continued with my monthly Notes from the Board, providing summaries of the Board meetings. We held a Covid feedback session in early June. 8<sup>th</sup> principle forums were held in October, led by Rev. Jess and the Committee on Ministry. There was also the Leadership Council Meeting in October. As is our practice, we hold open sessions before the AGM for people to come and ask questions or get clarification in a more informal atmosphere.

### Thanks

Thanks to the Board for all the work that they did this year. Thanks to Rev Jess and the rest of the staff who stepped up to this difficult situation. Thanks to everyone

who contributed in big or small ways. Thanks to everyone who managed to hang on this past year. Stay safe and take care!

*Submitted by Charlotte Innerd, President*

## **Financial Report**

In 2021, we budgeted conservatively for a decrease in donations of \$29,500 due to uncertainty with the pandemic, anticipating a deficit of about \$19,700 and a reduction in programming.

Due to the diligent work of Tom Nagy, the Board, and our accounting team at BDO, we were able to receive a net amount of \$31,906 from the federal government's Canadian Employment Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program which allowed us to maintain our staff and programming without incurring a large deficit.

As well, our wonderful dream auction team helped to raise almost \$7,000.

Happily, our year ended on a positive financial note. We ended up with a surplus of \$19,068, subject to our BDO financial review which is currently underway as of the time of this writing.

We were also able to do some necessary maintenance work in the Sanctuary: recarpeting, painting, and recaulking. The total cost for these maintenance upgrades came in at \$31,852, a little over budget.

As of the end of the year, our cash reserves were approximately \$225,000. We have almost \$47,400 in GICS and the rest in current and savings accounts. We earned \$2,100 in interest income.

Our bookkeeping and accounting team at BDO have provided us with excellent service this past year, filing our annual charitable return, submitting HST eligible rebates, and keeping monthly bookkeeping costs down. As well, they provided necessary guidance and prepared and submitted our CEWS applications. Overall, we feel our partnership with them has been of great benefit, especially during these trying times.

Below is a high level summary of our finances for 2021 and our proposed budget. In the following pages you can find more details.

## 2022 Budget Notes

2022 remains financially volatile, mostly because of the pandemic. Therefore, the board has put together a conservative budget. Here are some important highlights:

- We have set the budget for donations in 2022 **to reflect the actual donations we received in 2021**, or \$201,000, as we expect the financial effects from the pandemic to continue in 2022.
- Our budget anticipates a full resumption of programming in September 2022.
- We have included the hiring of a DRE in September.
- Our music director is on leave until April 17 and we have allowed for musician replacements during his absence.
- We have included a salary/pay increase of 2% for all staff, effective March 1.
- We are not planning any renovations in 2022, but we anticipate some small maintenance and repair items. See below for more details.
- Our office manager is now taking on more building maintenance and inspection duties so we have budgeted more hours of work in 2022.
- We anticipate a deficit of approximately \$7,000.

Other Budget Highlights:

Line	Description	Note
5108	Minister's Professional Expenses	One-time budget of \$4,000, down from pre-Covid budget due to ongoing travel restrictions
5110	DRE Salary	Budget of \$5,780 for salary and expenses of one DRE for 15 hours a week starting in September
5300	Leadership Training	Budget of \$3,000 for leadership seminars and training offered by the CUC, as some of these events now have registration fees..

5350	Members Conference Expense	Budget of \$600 for the cost of four online delegates to the CUC AGM.
5410	CUC Denominational Support	We have agreed to a CUC contribution of \$12,000. See line 5300 above for leadership training allowance also set aside for the CUC.
5515	Programming	This account has been renamed from Quest to Programming to reflect expenses related to specific programs which empower our committees, or specific initiatives such as the dismantling racism work. We have budgeted \$1000 towards these programs in 2022.
5536	Child Care	Budget of \$2,000 for CRE play care starting in September
5560	Communications	Budget of \$420 for Zoom license and \$480 for various mailouts.
5560	Worship Arts	Budget increased to \$2,250 to reflect current honorarium rates for guest speakers.
5641	Custodial	Budget based on increased hours starting in September.
5646	Maintenance and Repair	Includes \$2,500 for a roof inspection/repair, \$2,000 for the purchase of sound baffling in Whitton Hall, and \$1,500 for miscellaneous repairs including the replacement of external lights which are failing.
5650	Audio Visual	Budget allowance of \$250 for general small purchases such as replacement microphones.



5718	Bookkeeping	In 2021 we budgeted \$1,100 per month for bookkeeping and \$900 for our accounting software. Our actual costs in 2021 were less so our budget is based on \$550 per month.
5720	Professional Fees Accounting	This budget line has increased. We anticipate accounting fees for preparation of T4 slips (\$750), our annual tax return (\$600) and our annual financial review (\$2,800) for a total budget of \$4,150

## 2021 Financial Summary

2021 Financial Summary Cash Accounting Method	Budget 2021	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Budget Change
<b>INCOME</b>				
Donations	\$ 215,000	\$ 197,448	\$ 201,000	\$ (14,000)
Dream Auction	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,777	\$ 7,000	\$ 2,000
Other (Rent, Interest)	\$ 2,200	\$ 2,560	\$ 2,200	\$ -
CEWS		\$ 41,877		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 222,200</b>	<b>\$ 248,662</b>	<b>\$ 210,200</b>	<b>\$ (12,000)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program Expenses	\$ 13,170	\$ 7,916	\$ 16,060	\$ 2,890
Property Management	\$ 32,480	\$ 26,233	\$ 35,486	\$ 3,006
Renovations	\$ 27,000	\$ 31,852		\$ (27,000)
Office and Administration	\$ 23,790	\$ 15,321	\$ 16,930	\$ (6,860)
CEWS Expenses		\$ 9,971		
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 241,969</b>	<b>\$ 229,594</b>	<b>\$ 217,226</b>	<b>\$ (24,744)</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$ (19,769)</b>	<b>\$ 19,068</b>	<b>\$ (7,026)</b>	<b>\$ 12,744</b>

## 2021 Financial Review

2021 Financial Review Cash Accounting Method	Budget 2021	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Budget Change
<b>INCOME</b>				
4000 - Donations-Operating				
4050 - Identified Donations	\$ 215,000	197,284	\$ 200,000	(15,000)
4055 - Special Identified Donations	\$ -			-
4100 - Unidentified Donations	\$ -	164	\$ 1,000	1,000
<b>Total 4000 - Donations-Operating</b>	<b>\$ 215,000</b>	<b>\$ 197,448</b>	<b>201,000</b>	<b>(14,000)</b>
4505 - Dream Auction	\$ 5,000	6,777	\$ 7,000	2,000
4600 - Rental Revenue	\$ -	440	\$ 100	100
4902 - Interest Income	\$ 2,200	2,120	\$ 2,100	(100)
<b>Total 4500 - Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 7,200</b>	<b>9,337</b>	<b>9,200</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Total Income before CEWS</b>	<b>\$ 222,200</b>	<b>\$ 206,785</b>	<b>\$ 210,200</b>	<b>(12,000)</b>
4950 CEWS Income		41,877		
<b>Total Income (Including CEWS)</b>	<b>\$ 222,200</b>	<b>\$ 248,662</b>	<b>\$ 210,200</b>	<b>(12,000)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
5000 - Minister's Salary				
5005 - Salary	\$ 61,312	67,922	\$ 62,334	1,022
5010 - Housing	\$ 18,000	18,000	\$ 18,000	-
5012 - Pension	\$ 7,931	1,322	\$ 8,033	102
5015 - Health Expense	\$ 2,160	2,236	\$ 2,424	264
5018 - Professional Expenses	\$ 4,000	1,939	\$ 4,000	-
<b>Total 5000 - Minister's Salary</b>	<b>\$ 93,403</b>	<b>\$ 91,419</b>	<b>\$ 94,791</b>	<b>1,388</b>
5100 - DRE Salary				
5110 - Salary	\$ 6,160	5,620	\$ 5,280	(880)
5118 - Expenses	\$ -			-
5130 - Professional Development	\$ 600	160	\$ 500	(100)
<b>Total 5100 - DRE Salary</b>	<b>\$ 6,760</b>	<b>5,780</b>	<b>\$ 5,780</b>	<b>(980)</b>
5200 - Music Director Salary				
5210 - Salary	\$ 9,096	9,163	\$ 9,998	902
5230 - Professional Development	\$ 20		\$ 20	-
<b>Total 5200 - Music Director Salary</b>	<b>\$ 9,116</b>	<b>9,163</b>	<b>\$ 10,018</b>	<b>902</b>

2021 Financial Review Cash Accounting Method	Budget 2021	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Budget Change
5250 · Office Manager				
5252 · Salary	\$ 13,200	10,888	\$ 15,250	2,050
<b>Total 5250 · Office Administrator</b>	<b>\$ 13,200</b>	<b>\$ 10,888</b>	<b>\$ 15,250</b>	<b>2,050</b>
5373 · Combined CPP & EI	\$ 7,150	5,897	\$ 7,150	-
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>\$ 129,629</b>	<b>\$ 123,148</b>	<b>\$ 132,990</b>	<b>3,360</b>
5300 · Leadership Training	\$ 100		\$ 3,000	2,900
5350 · Members Conference Expense	\$ 600		\$ 600	-
5400 · Denominational Support				
5410 · CUC	\$ 15,000	15,000	\$ 12,000	(3,000)
5420 · Unicamp	\$ 200	155	\$ 160	(40)
<b>Total 5400 · Denominational Support</b>	<b>\$ 15,200</b>	<b>15,155</b>	<b>12,160</b>	<b>(3,040)</b>
<b>5500 · Program Expenses</b>				
5510 · Amenities (Sunday Services)	\$ 20	386	\$ 20	-
5515 · Programming	\$ 20		\$ 1,000	980
5520 · Board of Trustees	\$ 500	219	\$ 1,000	500
5527 · Care Network/Connecting Spirit	\$ 100	199	\$ 100	-
5530 · Chaplaincy	\$ 20		\$ 20	-
5535 · CRE	\$ 1,600	480	\$ 1,600	-
5536 · Child Care	\$ 950		\$ 2,000	1,050
5543 · Library Expense	\$ 200	111	\$ 200	-
5550 · Music	\$ 5,600	4,150	\$ 5,750	150
5555 · Communications	\$ 1,000	689	\$ 900	(100)
5560 · Worship Arts	\$ 2,000	1,682	\$ 2,250	250
5570 · Congregational Events	\$ 500		\$ 500	-
5575 · Social Action	\$ 320		\$ 370	50
5590 · Web Page	\$ 300		\$ 350	50
<b>Total 5500 · Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 13,170</b>	<b>\$ 7,916</b>	<b>16,060</b>	<b>2,890</b>
5640 · Property Management -Sydney				
5630 · Renovations	\$ 27,000	31,852		(27,000)
5641 · Custodial	\$ 2,940	2,026	\$ 4,326	1,386
5642 · Heating and Water	\$ 2,700	2,672	\$ 2,540	(160)
5643 · Electricity	\$ 2,700	2,166	\$ 2,340	(360)



2021 Financial Review Cash Accounting Method	Budget 2021	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Budget Change
5644 - Insurance	\$ 6,800	6,740	\$ 7,000	200
5645 - Snow Removal	\$ 8,000	6,353	\$ 8,250	250
5646 - Maintenance & Repair	\$ 4,500	1,847	\$ 6,000	1,500
5647 - Lawn Care	\$ 2,100	1,819	\$ 2,200	100
5648 - Elevator Mtce Contract	\$ 2,700	2,609	\$ 2,580	(120)
5650 - Audio Visual	\$ 20		\$ 250	230
<b>Total 5640 - Property Management -Sydney</b>	<b>\$ 59,480</b>	<b>58,085</b>	<b>\$ 35,486</b>	<b>(23,994)</b>
5700 - Office and Administration				
5705 - Telephone and Internet	\$ 2,040	1,821	\$ 2,040	-
5710 - Bank Charges	\$ 750	515	\$ 510	(240)
5711 - Safety Deposit Box		-13	\$ 30	30
5713 - PayPal Fees		19	\$ -	-
5715 - Photocopier and Supplies	\$ 3,800	2,652	\$ 3,600	(200)
5718 - Bookkeeping	\$ 13,200	6,338	\$ 6,600	(6,600)
- CEWS Expense		9,971		
5719 - Accounting Software	\$ 900		\$ -	(900)
5720 - Professional Fees Accounting	\$ 3,100	3,988	\$ 4,150	1,050
<b>Total 5700 - Office and Administration</b>	<b>\$ 23,790</b>	<b>\$ 25,292</b>	<b>\$ 16,930</b>	<b>(6,860)</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 241,969</b>	<b>\$ 229,594</b>	<b>\$ 217,226</b>	<b>(24,744)</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$ (19,769)</b>	<b>\$ 19,068</b>	<b>\$ (7,026)</b>	<b>\$ 12,744</b>

### Report on Non-Budgeted Funds, Fiscal year 2021

3160 Minister's Discretionary Fund *	
Opening Balance	1,187
Revenue for 2021	3,675
Expenses for 2021	662
End of Year Balance	4,200

\* We received some generous donations towards the Minister's Discretionary Fund in 2021 which were not correctly attributed to this fund until the year-end. We now have a generous balance in this fund for future use.

<b>3190 Youth Fundraising</b>	
Opening Balance	6,743
Revenue for 2021	-
Expenses for 2021	-
End of Year Balance	6,743
<b>3170 OWL Program</b>	
Opening Balance	210
Revenue for 2021	-
Expenses for 2021	-
End of Year Balance	210
<b>3210 Dorothy Harder Assisted Hearing Fund</b>	
Opening Balance	1,545
Revenue for 2021	-
Expenses for 2021	1,040
End of Year Balance	505

*Submitted by Carol Burrows*

## **Office Manager**

Wow, another pandemic year under our belts. I still count myself lucky to spend time in the GRU building each week. Among my duties are compiling the weekly newsletter (*The Tab*), processing pledges, donations, and bill payments, and acting as the “Zoom Minder” when we livestream from the sanctuary. Handing out and documenting rapid Covid tests are new this year, and in November building management duties were added to my docket.

If you have any question about GRU, you can always start with me - if I don't know the answer, I will know who to refer you to. If you're in a rush, text my cell (check the directory) or send a FB Messenger message - either one will “ding” my phone! (PS to longtime GRUsters - you may have a 519 number saved under my name, our old landline number that is now Jeff's cell. Always check the directory for the most up-to-date info!)

*Submitted by Kristen Wilson, Office Manager*

## **Committee and Task Group Reports**

### **Affiliated Licensed Ceremony Officiant's Report**

AGAIN, despite the continued roller coaster ride we had last year, there's no stopping love and marriage. I believe these couples are really liking the intimacy of a small ceremony.

Through our website, GRU was contacted for a Signing License Only in July, and 3 full weddings, one in June, and two in September. A note: the postponed wedding and child naming dedication in 2020 have been postponed indefinitely.

We had one celebration of life, a referral from a Unitarian member in Ottawa. Her mother lived in Waterloo, and she wanted a Unitarian service. Because of the technology we developed from this pandemic world, family from all around the world had an opportunity to attend.

Thank you again GRU, for the opportunity for the awesome experience, and to be an appreciative representative of GRU for the last year.

*Submitted by Susan Patterson, Officiant*

### **Affiliated Wedding Minister's Report**

Thank you to the Board for allowing me this continued joy of officiating at weddings in the larger community.

In 2021, I officiated at eight weddings. These took place in various places such as backyards, farms, Cambridge, Fergus, Stratford, and St. Jacob's (Cellar 52).

For 2022 at this point in time, there are 9 weddings booked.

In gratitude,

*Submitted by Rev. Evelyn Richter*

### **Audio/Visual Team**

Although some members of the A/V Team assisted with Zoom services throughout 2020 and 2021, the Team itself was on hiatus until in-person services resumed in fall 2021. For the parking lot services in September, Mel Scholz, Ryan Bayne, Colin

Read, Gregg Simmons, Jay Moore, Tracey Szarka and Tom Nagy planned out tech needs, rented equipment, and spent a (fortunately sunny) September Saturday afternoon setting everything up for testing. The following two Sundays were a real team effort, with many hands making the services run smoothly. Following this, the team moved to set up live-streaming, and the core group of Mel Scholz, Ryan Bayne and Tom Nagy have been keeping the services coming to you every week. Tom's initial setup has worked well, Ryan has spearheaded a system revamp that saw the A/V Team purchase a computer and mixing board to improve the quality of the sound and streaming system, and Mel has been instrumental in improving the systems and making the services happen every week. In early spring 2022, once the setup has been tweaked and proven out, we will be recruiting and training folks who may wish to help out on the tech side. If you're interested, please contact Tom Nagy for more details.

## **Archives**

In 2021, the table of contents of the archives was reviewed to ensure it reflected the actual state of the archives. This will allow the next archivist to continue with whatever organisation or reorganisation should be deemed necessary. For various health reasons, I have found it necessary to resign from this rôle which I have held for about seventeen years.

No progress was made to place the archives in acid free folders. That will be up to the next archivist.

Thanks to the diligence of our congregational office manager, it was possible to file orders of service and congregational newsletters and other internal publicity items from the past year in their proper place. As in previous years over the past decade, other items for the most part were not made available to the archives. Should it become necessary at some point to revise, reverse or build on decisions made in the past decade, the reasons for these decisions may have become permanently lost.

*Submitted by Jack Horman, Archivist*

## **Building & Grounds**

First of all, I want to thank Diane Oliver-Jensen for the huge amount of work she put in as Building & Grounds coordinator before stepping down in late 2021.



Diane established a relationship with Ernst Landscaping and Plowing and we have continued to use them for our summer and winter maintenance needs.

In the fall we had Fred Kau Plumbing replace the leaking faucets and stuck shutoff valves in the downstairs men's washroom, one year after doing the same work in the women's room. The toilet in the all-gender washroom in the upstairs foyer has suffered from disuse and we are evaluating it for possible replacement this year.

Art Phelan successfully caulked the seeping concrete wall by the nursery and filled the external hole with concrete. The efflorescence has stopped and Art repainted the wall. Thanks, Art! He also patched up the shed and will be trying out some new lights on the exterior of the building when the weather improves.

*Submitted by Kristen Wilson, Office Manager*

## **Building Rentals**

Not surprisingly, our rental program was barely there in 2021. The board was open to rentals for a time in the fall and offered space to a former regular renter, but the capacity cap was likely too small and the group found another location. There was one rental of Whitton Hall by a GRU member for a small birthday party. Uncertainty makes it difficult to cultivate "business," but caution in gathering continues to be necessary.

*Submitted by Kristen Wilson, Office Manager*

## **Children's Religious Exploration**

Among the Covid-related casualties of the year were the resignations of each of our co-Directors of Religious Exploration. We were sad to say goodbye to Cecilia-Marie Macdonald and Kate Urquhart, both of whom left their roles for other career opportunities. Though there had been robust family participation in the first months of the pandemic, once school was online families and children understandably had little appetite for any extracurricular online programming. With participation and communication in steep decline, our Board made the challenging decision to not hire staffing for CRE until we have more clarity about the needs and expectations of our family groups post-pandemic. Our experience is not unique – many CUC

congregations have found that online CRE is not viable and have put programming on hiatus.

In the interim, thanks to a library of pre-recorded stories by Kate, we were able to continue to include a Story for All Ages in Sunday services as well as weekly bedtime stories through the summer, and Rev. Jess offered weekly activities through the Family Fun Folder based on the Sunday service themes. CRE/Board liaison Anne Dahmer, with the support of Office Manager Kristen Wilson, designed and mailed family activity packets in late spring and early winter.

A survey was distributed to parents in October to assess the current needs of our family groups. It was shared to 73 email addresses through our GRU Parent Mailchimp list, representing 54 households. Of the 39 people (from 31 families) who opened the email, we received 18 survey responses (1/3rd of GRU families). Based on those responses, we are focusing on three CRE efforts: in-person social gatherings for younger children, seasonal activity packet mail-outs, and recruiting volunteers to lead outdoor family gatherings. Further ahead, we hope to start a Junior Youth Group once we are able to gather in-person again to better serve our pre-teens.

We see this unexpected gap as an opportunity to completely re-imagine how our congregation can better serve our youngest members. We look forward to a time of intentional community-building with our family groups in the months ahead so that we can design a rich and relevant multi-generational experience for all of us.

*Submitted by Rev. Jess & CRE Board Liaison Anne Dahmer*

## **Committee on Ministry**

The Committee on Ministry members works toward the “health of the whole” of our congregation through social networking, interpersonal relations, conflict management skills, group problem-solving, and serving as liaisons with our congregational teams, staff and board members as well as the minister. Its membership strives to represent the diverse demographic of the congregation. As such, the COM serves as a sounding board for discernment, priorities, and focus. This fall, Louise Sims helped with the GRU 8<sup>th</sup> Principle forums, and Denise Marigold helped design and implement the Parent Survey and its response. Martin Edmonds and Curtis Dueck have continued to serve in order to assure continuity during this liminal season.

*Submitted by Rev. Jessica P. Rodela*

## **Connecting Spirits (Pastoral Care Network)**

This team of trained volunteers, established in 2019, has been instrumental in responding to the increased pastoral care demands of the pandemic era. All members participated in a joint training with the Unitarian Congregation of Guelph, and three team members participated in a CUC-sponsored day-long conference on mental health care (the registration fees account for the over-expenditure in this budget line). In addition to one-on-one conversations, members offered Sharing Circles and other small group conversations on coping and discernment. Lynn Rubinstein continued her series on “Questions for the Soul.” Continuing team volunteers are Theresa Hanley and Lynn Rubinstein; we welcomed new members Cathy Payne and June Anderson; and we bid fond farewell with gratitude to Simon Daley, who has moved away from KW.

*Submitted by Rev. Jessica P. Rodela*

## **Hearts and Hands (Pastoral Care Network)**

The 25 member Hearts and Hands network has continued to support our friends and members during the past year. At times, postings were also made in the GRU Facebook group to solicit assistance from people not on the Hearts and Hands list.

We continue to use Google Docs Excel spreadsheets for people to sign on to provide assistance on dates of their choosing. As the interface person I am able to monitor these sheets and keep everyone updated.

Whenever I was apprised of a need in the congregation, support was offered. Sometimes an email or a phone call was all that was needed as a check in. This was another year when people reached out automatically to help each other as we dealt with the many challenges brought about by the Covid pandemic.

At least twelve families were provided with support during times of illness, surgery, cancer, grieving, or moving. Meals suitable to their dietary needs were provided and transportation was also given. A few people requested visitors when they were in recovering facilities and many phone calls were made to check in and lend a listening ear.

I continue to be impressed by the heartwarming generosity of this team in responding to requests for aid from the Grand River Community. Those who

received support were very grateful. It is a pleasure to be part of a group that provides a positive image of caring and follows up with action.

New members are always welcome to join the network. More hands make light work.

For future needs Nanci can be reached by phone or by email at [heartsandhands@grandriverunitarian.ca](mailto:heartsandhands@grandriverunitarian.ca).

*Submitted by Nanci Phelan, Coordinator*

## **Hospitality**

During Covid, all the hospitality at GRU has had to be the non-ingestible kind! We hope coffee and cookies return to the menu before our next annual report.

## **Leadership Council**

The Leadership Council is composed of the chairs of the main committees and other key people, with all invited to attend any meetings. The annual Leadership Council meeting was held on October 24<sup>th</sup> by Zoom.

*Submitted by Charlotte Innerd, President*

## **Library**

The Library had a quiet year as we were closed for the duration. We did purchase a few select titles to be added. We look forward to the day we can be open. In the meantime, you'll have time to finish reading your overdue books.

*Submitted by Charlotte Innerd, Coordinator*

## **Music**

Members: Jay Moore, Boyd McDonald, Stephen Preece (music director), Colin Read, Tom Nagy, Gregg Simmons, Margaret Insley (chair)

On the music front, 2021 was definitely an improvement over 2020. We were able to gather in limited numbers for in-person services with live music, starting with some wonderful outdoor parking lot services in September. Thanks so much to our music director Stephen Preece for his leadership and musicianship, creating beautiful music whatever the venue. Thanks as well to all of our volunteer musicians and

singers who bring so much richness to our services whether on-line, livestreamed or in-person. A special thanks to Rosemarie Harris, our song leader for many live-streamed services.

The choir continued with online rehearsals from January through May, which resulted in several video recordings. Choir members have mostly mastered the art of recording ourselves singing our individual parts while watching and listening to choir director Rich Hrytzak's recording. Video editing was done by Gregg Simmons and me, and we have learned many new video editing skills in the process. In the fall, we were delighted that the Board approved choir rehearsals in small groups, with all attendees wearing masks and providing proof of vaccination. Singing together, even when masked and distanced, is much more satisfying than singing alone, and results in better singing. Thanks so much to Rich for his excellent choir directing, and for producing the video of the masked singers. And thanks to all of our singers who keep showing up to make music together.

*Submitted by Margaret Insley (Music committee chair and choir member)*

## **Nominating Committee**

Members: Ian Kent (chair), Carole Boucher, Colin Read

The Nominating Committee is a unique operational group at Grand River Unitarian Congregation. We're:

- not quite a Standing Committee, which is delegated by the Board to take responsibility for some ongoing aspect of congregational life, and which has decision making, planning, and self-evaluating functions
- not quite a Task Force, which is appointed by the Board to carry out a specific task and is dissolved once the one-time task is completed or the mandate has expired
- the only operational group where neither the Minister nor the President are members – even ex-officio

Every year, a new Nominating Committee is struck (including at least one person, if possible, who served on the previous year's committee) and tasked with nominating

a slate of candidates equal to the number of positions to be filled on the Board. This year, the committee was asked to find candidates for five positions.

To be eligible as a Trustee, our By-Laws require nominees:

- be at least eighteen years of age
- be a voting member of the congregation – both at election and throughout their term of office
- not serve more than six years within eight consecutive years

Our current Board Trustees are serving a mix of two-year and three-year terms. At the February 2020 AGM, our By-Laws were amended to shorten the length of terms that started on (and after) that date from three years to two years. Our current Trustees are:

- **Charlotte Innerd, President**
  - o Ending a two-year term (elected in 2020), preceded by a three-year term (elected in 2017)
- **Cathy Scott: Vice President**
  - o In the middle of a two-year term (elected in 2021), preceded by a three-year term (elected in 2018)
- **Wendy Martin, Secretary**
  - o Ending a three-year term (elected in 2019)
- **Carol Burrows**
  - o Ending a three-year term (elected in 2019)
- **Anne Dahmer**
  - o Ending a two-year term (elected in 2020)
- **Tom Nagy**
  - o Ending a three-year term (elected in 2019), preceded by a one-year term (appointed in 2018)
- **Corliss Olson**
  - o In the middle of a two-year term (elected in 2021)

As noted above, Charlotte, Wendy, Carol, Anne, and Tom are completing terms. The last of the three-year terms are now ending, so all Trustees will be serving two-year terms after our AGM in February 2022.

- Wendy, Carol, Anne, and Tom are each eligible to stand for re-election.
- Having served five consecutive years on the Board - the last four as our President - Charlotte isn't eligible for re-election, as she would exceed six consecutive years during her new term.

The pandemic subjected GRU to challenges that persisted from 2020, as well as introducing unexpected new obstacles. We greatly appreciate the ongoing hard work

of our Board members. I'd like to express special thanks to Charlotte for her service and dedication as she steps down for a well-earned rest!

The Nominating Committee has five motions to make at the Annual General Meeting.

1. **Motion: We nominate Wendy Martin for a two-year term.**
2. **Motion: We nominate Carol Burrows for a two-year term.**
3. **Motion: We nominate Anne Dahmer for a two-year term.**
4. **Motion: We nominate Tom Nagy for a two-year term.**
5. **Motion: We nominate Brenda Moen for a two-year term.**

Thanks to Brenda Moen for accepting our nomination. Thanks, also, to Wendy, Carol, Anne, and Tom for their willingness to be nominated to new terms. Each nominee has supported our congregation in many ways. The Nominating Committee is confident they will make excellent contributions to the Board in the coming year. We asked each nominee to answer a few questions for us.

### **Wendy Martin Q&A**

- 1) **How long have you been part of GRU? What areas of your participation at GRU have been the most meaningful to you?**

I have been attending GRU since 2010. I have participated at GRU in many ways, all of which were meaningful but the most important aspect to me are the people and the relationships with them. I especially like working with CRE and getting to know the kids. I think that I learn as much from their curiosity and enthusiasm as I teach them.

- 2) **What excites you about volunteering for the GRU Board?**

I am excited to continue volunteering with the board because it is such a difficult time and climate with Covid. It is even more important that GRU be a presence in the lives of its members during times of trial. I am proud to be a part of keeping our community strong and functional in an ever-changing capacity.

- 3) **What unique perspectives and/or life experience do you bring to our leadership?**



My varied perspectives and experience include mother, wife, daughter, sister, friend, youth leader, crafter, thespian, dancer, singer, chronic pain warrior, healing minister, visual merchandiser, office administrator, aquatics instructor, baker, homemaker, volunteer, and teacher.

**4) If GRU had unlimited resources (money and people power), what would be the first project you would focus on?**

I would love to have a community dinner program.

**Carol Burrows Q&A**

**1) How long have you been part of GRU? What areas of your participation at GRU have been the most meaningful to you?**

I have been attending GRU for 20 years, since 2001. I have to say that the time spent working with the committees has been the most meaningful to me, along with the amazing music from our super talented pool of special performers. It was very gratifying to work with the congregation to welcome new refugees and to see the outpouring of support from people. It restored my faith in humanity. I have also enjoyed talking with people about climate change and learning the many ways people are doing their part to reduce their carbon footprint. I loved helping to organize the Fair-Trade Coffee House when I was part of the Social Action Committee. I am especially indebted to the wonderful musicians in our midst as they make our services and special events so meaningful to me. I love singing hymns with people, and we have wonderful hymns!

**2) What excites you about volunteering for the GRU Board?**

I am excited to work with all the passionate and energetic people who are members of the board. One of the things I really appreciate is the thoughtfulness of each board member. It makes us strong to have diverse voices and different perspectives, and I think it makes us a better organization.

**3) What unique perspectives and/or life experience do you bring to our leadership?**

I am one of those people who is not easily overwhelmed by financial statements, and I have quite a bit of experience working with financial

software, so I feel I can be of help in making sure the board understands the financial workings of the organization and makes good financial decisions.

**4) If GRU had unlimited resources (money and people power), what would be the first project you would focus on?**

At heart, I am someone who wants to make a difference in my local community, so I would reach out to other organizations, including other faiths, to build bridges and find ways we can work collectively to improve the environmental and human health of our broader community.

**Anne Dahmer Q&A**

**1) How long have you been part of GRU? What areas of your participation at GRU have been the most meaningful to you?**

I've been part of GRU for more than 10 years and became a member in 2013. Being a "Whatevers" Youth leader has been wonderful. I find interacting with our youth really rewarding and a lot of fun!

**2) What excites you about volunteering for the GRU Board?**

As part of the Board, I feel I can offer a sense of stability and continuity and I'm particularly interested in helping to develop the direction of our CRE programming.

**3) What unique perspectives and/or life experience do you bring to our leadership?**

I have a lot of leadership experience from different facets of my life: as a board member of USC Canada (now SeedChange); as chair of the Anti-Racism committee; and, most recently, the Equity Rep for the Elementary Teachers' Federation local branch. Although I was born and raised in Waterloo Region, I have traveled and worked all over the world and bring a global perspective to my everyday life.

**4) If GRU had unlimited resources (money and people power), what would be the first project you would focus on?**

If I had unlimited resources, I think I would like to develop a multi-use green space in our backyard. I'd love to see a small community garden for vegetables and flowers, a small labyrinth, a variety of seating areas for folks

to use for classes, worship, or social gatherings, a firepit, and a naturalized play space for all of us to enjoy.

### **Tom Nagy Q&A**

**1) How long have you been part of GRU? What areas of your participation at GRU have been the most meaningful to you?**

I attended my first service in early 2006... 16 years ago! Making music and committee/Board work have both been very meaningful activities to me, as has been helping generally with services since COVID hit.

**2) What excites you about volunteering for the GRU Board?**

I'm a power-hungry maniac. Actually, I enjoy dealing with the great folks on the Board, working together to address issues and make our congregation continually meaningful for others.

**3) What unique perspectives and/or life experience do you bring to our leadership?**

I've been a card-carrying Unitarian for well over a decade now, am director of an intellectual property consultancy, and am a professional musician. I've served on boards of various not-for-profit organisations, including GRU for the last few years. In all these endeavours, I've had to improve and draw on my managerial, planning, budgeting, communication, and interpersonal skills - I'll let others judge whether I've succeeded!

**4) If GRU had unlimited resources (money and people power), what would be the first project you would focus on?**

Getting the building renovations planned and finished!

### **Brenda Moen Q&A**

**1) How long have you been part of GRU? What areas of your participation at GRU have been the most meaningful to you?**

I have been attending GRU since November 2018 and have been a member since Dec 2019. I have really enjoyed becoming a part of the GRU community. I value the social events and learning opportunities that the congregation offers. I have loved getting to know people with different

interests and backgrounds. I make a point of participating in as many GRU activities as possible.

**2) What excites you about volunteering for the GRU Board?**

I have a lifetime of experiences as a volunteer, teacher, and school administrator. Now that I'm retired, I miss that kind of engagement, and I'm excited to use my skills in a new role, helping a community that I love. It's also an opportunity to stretch myself and try new things.

**3) What unique perspectives and/or life experience do you bring to our leadership?**

Volunteer: As a teenager, I was a Sunday school teacher, a Candy Stripper and Brownie Leader. As a teacher, I was part of many committees at a school, board, and community level. I am currently volunteering at GRU as a member of the Worship Arts committee.

Leadership: I have been a member of various governing boards and have been the chair of many committees. I was an executive member of a union. I have taken on leadership roles as a vice principal and principal for 14 years. I have led many hiring, professional development, mentoring and planned change committees.

Event organizer: I have organized many school and community events for hundreds of participants.

**4) If GRU had unlimited resources (money and people power), what would be the first project you would focus on?**

I'd like to strengthen the social connections between members of the congregation. I have noticed a hunger for connection at GRU, not just because of Covid, but even before. I'd like GRU to feel like a large neighbourhood of friends. Beyond that, I don't presume to approach this role with any agenda, I would be volunteering my time to do the work of the congregation.

*Submitted by Ian Kent, Chair*

## **OWL (Our Whole Lives)**

Our Whole Lives offers progressive UU values-based sexuality education for people at all stages of life. See <https://www.uua.org/re/owl> for more information about the development of the curricula. Over the years, many GRU parents have commented on how tremendously important it was to them to have their kids attend OWL. As school curriculums around sex ed change, OWL remains a steady source of information and a chance to consider that information in terms of values including self-respect, respect for others, and consent.

The OWL committee includes Julie Taylor, Judith Koeller, Kristen Wilson, Elizabeth Ford, and Breanna MacLeod. We are sorry to report that OWL programming is uniquely poor at adapting to pandemic conditions. Due to the sensitive nature of the material and privacy concerns, it cannot be delivered online. With waves of lockdowns, it is difficult to plan and schedule multi-session classes, and kids, parents, and potential facilitators are fatigued.

There is a particular need to deliver the class designed for kids in grades 7-9, but it is also the longest class, usually consisting of twenty-five workshops. While any abridgement of the standard curriculum is highly discouraged, we have gained permission to abridge it somewhat to make it possible to offer during these difficult circumstances. We are currently having a look at what the WRDSB offers for sex ed with the goal to abridge in a way that covers material the board does not. We look forward to having more details on how we'll move forward soon.

*Submitted by the OWL Committee*

## **Social Action**

Members: June Anderson, Irena Baltaduonis, Pat Bowers, Kathie Keefe, Jim Sannes, Corliss Olson, Joanne Ryder, and (for the latter part of the year) Anna Vallentin, Becky Verdun (chair). New members are always welcome.

Despite the limitations experienced because of the pandemic, the Committee was very active with monthly meetings on Zoom. Members felt keenly the restriction of activities, but, in preparing for the March Social Action Service, we were buoyed to realize the extent to which both Committee members and the GRU community were actively engaged in social justice initiatives. Highlighting those contributions served as the platform for the service, and the effect was uplifting in a dark time.

The Committee studied the award-winning research of the Globe and Mail's Tim Cordosa around the Custody Rating Scale, a highly flawed and racist measurement placement tool that discriminates against women and people of colour. We wrote a letter to the relevant government officials, and received a personal response from Senator Kim Pate, along with the newly released report, "Human Rights of Federally-Sentenced Persons."

Pursuing the issue of over-incarceration of Indigenous people, the Committee broadened our focus, undertaking a study of the Summary Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a daunting task because of the somberness of the Report and its 500-page length. We were aghast to learn how few recommendations had been implemented (14, with only modest progress on 60 others), and launched a letter-writing campaign to press for implementation of the recommendations. Letters from the Committee were sent to the Prime Minister and 12 Cabinet Ministers. Individuals also wrote to their MPs, and we expanded the campaign to the congregation via the *Tab* and Facebook. Over 125 letters were sent, proving this to be an effective model which we will use again. To date, we are aware of only a few replies to individual congregants. The Committee has received no replies and is undertaking follow-up measures.

Conscious that conditions in Canadian prisons have not improved, and have deteriorated even more during Covid, we have also maintained contact with Jessica Hutchison and Stride about issues of prison reform in general and Grand Valley Institute in particular. The biggest needs articulated by Stride are not within the purview of SAC (e.g., fund-raising). However, in February of 2022, the Committee is launching a collection of specific craft and exercise items requested by and approved for the women.

In addition to projects involving the whole committee, individuals on the Committee have continued or established various relationships connected with social justice. Connections and initiatives include, for example, the Cambridge Foodbank, Habitat for Humanity, the Muslim Women's Association, and anti-racism initiatives.

One of the biggest challenges facing the Committee is the enormous need. Besides the issues noted above, other pressing issues drawing the attention of the Committee continue to be affordable housing, food insecurity, poverty, the opioid crisis, and climate change. We welcome additional members with a passion for any of these or other social justice issues.

*Submitted by Becky Verdun*

## **Ushers**

The ushering team has been on hiatus since services went online on March 15, 2020.

## **UU Whatevers Youth Group**

This year has been a challenging one for our youth, learning online and being isolated from friends and regular activities.

During our 2020-21 year, the Whatevers were also an online community who met for fun and fellowship. We had a robust group of ten youth, from several newbies entering grade 9, to seasoned members finishing grade 12.

We offered a Zoom gathering on alternating Sundays throughout the year. One week we had a “Whatevers Film Fest” where we watched a thought-provoking TED talk or Youtube video and had a discussion. This was often attended by our younger members and gave them a chance to get to know each other. The other week, we played virtual games together. This week was well-attended by many youth. It was always good to gather together for companionship.

This fall, we were able to gather together, at a distance, in Whitton Hall! We have welcomed a few new members and have a strong group of about 10 youth again. We have had a great time enjoying each other’s company in real life!

Some highlights this fall include an in-gathering in our green space, a wonderful watercolour lesson with Pamela Rojas, a Halloween costume party, an outdoor youth service and campfire, and lots of time playing traditional Whatevers games and having interesting discussions together.

We have been in contact with WestJet regarding plane tickets purchased for the 2020 CanUUdle conference. We will be able to apply the value toward other tickets. Aden is monitoring this arrangement.

For the moment we are back online, hosting biweekly games gatherings. We hope to be able to gather together in person again soon to support our Youth through discovery, fellowship and fun.

*Submitted by your Youth Leaders, Anne Dahmer, Colin Read, Aden Seaman, and Erin Stjärne*



## **Website Team**

At this time the office manager handles most website updates, while Martin Edmonds updates the @grandriverunitarian.ca email addresses and handles the web hosting. The url grandriverunitarian.ca is paid up until 2022-05-14. At that time \$40 USD will be owed to cover another 2 years.

*Submitted by Martin Edmonds*

## **Worship Arts**

This team met online seasonally to provide feedback, brainstorm topics, and more for our pre-recorded, live stream, and hybrid Sunday services. Summer services were delivered online through a consortium of five Southern Ontario UU congregations, which helped cultivate camaraderie with our fellow UUs as well as give volunteer techs and service leaders time off after the relentless demands of the previous program year. In the fall, thanks to an initiative by Leanne Pincura-O'Neil and a lot of hard work by our musicians and techs led by Tom Nagy, and the cooperation of the weather, we were able to offer two outdoor services. Later in the season, we learned to livestream services, and finally opened the sanctuary to limited seating in a series of experiments with pre-registration processes. By far the biggest frustration of being together is the continued restriction on congregational singing. We all look forward to the end of these limitations when we can gather again and sing our hearts out! Big thanks to team members Brenda Moen, Doug Moen, Kathie Keefe, Rosemarie Harris, and Janis Collins for the support, energy, and creativity. If you would like to attend a meeting to explore if this team is a good fit for your skills and energy, we'd be delighted to welcome you!

*Submitted by Rev. Jessica P. Rodela, Coordinator*

## **Affiliate Group Reports**

### **Amnesty International Action Circle**

The Amnesty International Action Circle 120 has been on hold, as was our annual Write for Rights Event. We will see what happens when the congregation is back in the building.

*Submitted by Colin Read, Coordinator*

## **Climate Action Group**

### **Climate Action Group Committee Report, 2021**

The Climate Action Group's work continued this second pandemic year through informational emails with members and one in-person meeting in November. Regular updates on eco-events in the region and "invitations to participate" were sent to our distribution list throughout the year.

Carol Burrows and Kathy Mostardi presented an online workshop at the CUC's Annual Conference in May on the topic of "Sustaining Our Light on Climate Justice in the Age of Covid." The workshop was also presented three other times - as a "dry run" in early May to members of the congregation, on October 2nd for the B.C. Unitarian Regional Conference, and on Oct. 21st for Faith Climate Justice Waterloo Region. The workshop was well-received and we offered to share resources with other faith communities.

Our group participated in writing letters in response to the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan Review encouraging them to stay firm in their Climate Action Strategy and not place additional agricultural lands under development. As a group, we also endorsed a letter prepared by Faith Climate Justice Waterloo Region in support of this same Climate Action Strategy in early June. Carol was also a delegate on behalf of our GRU Climate Action Group at the Region's meeting where they were considering the proposal.

With Rev. Jess, we co-hosted a "Legume Room" in December with a total of 391 pounds of bean donations going to the House of Friendship. We have continued our affiliation with Faith Climate Justice Waterloo Region and plan to purchase and install their Climate Justice Banner on the GRU building in the coming year.

We see growing momentum in the community at large to support concrete action on climate change mitigation and adaptation and are pleased to see continued commitment in the GRU community to this cause.

*Submitted by Carol Burrows and Kathy Mostardi*

## **Refugee Concerns Group**

The past year has seen an exciting, tangible project come nearly to fruition. Our group has been active in consolidating steps to bring a family of five refugees to the region. The format we have chosen is a Group of Five sponsorship, which has evolved as a partnership with the Rochester Unitarian Congregation. A Group of Five is one of a handful of approved government categories for bringing refugees to Canada.

The Rochester congregation, which we learned about through Canadian contacts, has raised a considerable amount of money, which is now in our care at Kindred Credit Union, for the family's first year of settlement in Canada. The family is expected to arrive in the next few months of 2022. We will follow the usual financial and personal support methods we have used with our previously settled families. These include housing, social supports, links to schooling and social services, recreation, and labour market efforts.

In upcoming newsletters and announcements, our group will share progress milestones, letting the congregation know what specific forms of help would be appreciated. Timelines will be explained once these are clearer. Our intent is to make the family of five feel welcome, include our Rochester partners in some of our fellowship activities, and take steps to introduce both the family and our Rochester friends to the congregation when public circumstances permit. Profiles of the family will be shared.

In 2021, we continued to give support to the nation-wide Ride for Refuge, and raised \$3,200 for Reception House through this event. As well, members of the congregation attended Reception House's main annual fundraiser, contributing funds to the agency for its ongoing work in the community.

Members of the group are Carol Burrows, Nicole Langlois, Louise Sims, Ellen Papenburg, Jim Sannes, and Christa Van Daele.

*Submitted by Christa Van Daele, Coordinator*

## **Affinity Group Reports**

### **Earth Spirit Circle**

In the past year we have offered meditations and rituals for use by individuals and small groups. The only in-person gathering attempted had just one attendee.

Previous to Covid, about a dozen people typically enjoyed participating in rituals throughout the year. Now the time has come for our long-standing leader, Melissa Davis Rockenfield, to retire from leadership. The group is very grateful to Melissa for the many meaningful experiences she has created and led over the years with the Earth Spirit Circle group. It has been a source of inspiration and blessing for many of us on our journeys. We hope that in the coming year, when Covid restrictions finally ease, someone or several someones will take a leadership role to enable the group to continue. Contact Melissa Davis Rockenfield or Dianne Heise to learn more about this leadership opportunity.

*Submitted by Dianne Heise, Janet Douma, Catherine Lizotte, and Melissa Davis Rockenfield*

## **UU Stitch Circle**

Stitch Circle meets the third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon for creativity and companionship. This year we met via Zoom link. We continue to add new members and enjoy spending time together. Most of our members stitch, knit, or crochet but all crafts are welcome and anyone can drop in for a visit. We will continue to meet by Zoom but hope to meet in person again soon.

*Submitted by Wendy Martin, coordinator*

## **Women's Book Group**

The ongoing COVID pandemic has not robbed us of the joy of curling up with a good book, or the satisfaction of discussing said book with fellow Unitarians. Zoom calls are no longer a novelty; the Women's Book Group met virtually throughout the entire year. We appreciate the invaluable help of GRU Office Manager, Kristen Wilson, in scheduling the calls for us.

The Book Group meets monthly, usually on the fourth Monday, from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. Book titles for the year are chosen in September from lists suggested by members. They include fiction and non-fiction, current and older titles. Our discussions are lively and wide-ranging. Visitors and new members are welcome and can reach us at [womensbookgroup@grandriverunitarian.ca](mailto:womensbookgroup@grandriverunitarian.ca). Notice of meeting date and book title is provided in the GRU weekly online newsletter.

*Submitted by Pat Mighton*