

2019

# Annual Report - 2019

FIRST UNITED CHURCH - KELOWNA, BC

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## Agenda - 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting, March 1, 2020

### 1. Call to Order

- Introductions
- Quorum
- Inspiration/opening prayer – Cheryl Perry
- Election of Secretary  
Moved Beryl Itani /Seconded Leslie Atwell “That Gillian Hogan be elected as secretary for the 2020 First United Annual General Meeting.”
- Voting Privileges  
Moved Tracy Leader /Seconded Tami McMurphy “That that voting privileges and corresponding rights temporal be extended to all adherents present who are regular contributors to First United Church.”
- Review of Agenda
- Prior Meeting Minutes  
Moved Carol Drury /Seconded Joa Lazarus “That the minutes of March 10, 2019 be accepted as printed.”  
Moved Mary Lapointe /Seconded Judy Valks “That the minutes of November 10, 2019 be accepted as printed.”

### 2. New Business

- Annual Report  
Moved Tami McMurphy /Seconded Beryl Itani “That the 2019 Annual Report be accepted as printed.”
- Financial Statements  
Moved Mary Lapointe /Seconded Tracy Leader “That the Financial Statements for First United Church for the Year-Ended December 31, 2019 be accepted as printed.”
- Budget  
Moved Beryl Itani /Seconded Judy Valks “That the 2020 budget with a deficit of \$48,558, consisting of \$373,975 in revenue and \$422,533 in expenses, be approved.”
- Committee Reports
  - Nominating Committee  
The following nominations were received prior to preparation of the agenda:  
Trustee: Martha J. Lewis; Pacific Mountain Region  
Representatives: Pat Totton, Linda Gunn, Beryl Itani & Sue Sullivan; Treasurer: Michel Marentette; Secretary: Judy Valks  
In addition, the chair will call for nominations from the floor.
  - Search Committee
  - FirstUP! Committee
- Appreciation

### 3. Adjournment

- Adjournment  
Moved Joa Lazarus /Seconded Carol Drury “That the meeting be adjourned at \_\_\_ pm.”
- Closing Prayer – Reverend Bob Wallace

# Annual General Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2019

Introductions.

A quorum was present at approximately 59 members. 91 people total at the meeting.

Chas Moore called the meeting to order at 11:42 am.

Inspiration/Opening Prayer: Frances Kitson.

Election of Secretary:

**Moved Carol Drury/Seconded Beryl Itani that Deanna Peck be elected as secretary for the 2019 First United Annual General Meeting. Carried.**

Voting Privileges:

**Moved Tracy Leader/Seconded Carol Drury that voting privileges and corresponding rights temporal be extended to all adherents present who are regular contributors to First United Church. Carried.**

Review of Agenda.

Prior meeting minutes:

**Moved Judy Valks/Seconded Tracy Leader that the minutes of February 18, 2018 be accepted as printed. Carried.**

**Moved Judy Valks/Seconded Tami McMurphy that the minutes of November 18, 2018 be accepted as printed. Carried.**

## New Business

Annual Report: Discussion. Financial report from M & P had Donald Schmidt leaving in 2019 and it should be corrected to read 2018.

Request for people to identify themselves when they make a comment.

**Moved Tanya Pritchard/Seconded Beryl Itani that the 2018 annual report be accepted as printed. Carried.**

Financial Statements: Chas took the members through the financial statement, highlighting specific portions. Discussion.

**Moved Mary Lapointe/Seconded Deanna Peck that the Financial statements for First United Church for the year ended December 31, 2017 be accepted as printed. Carried.**

**Moved Mary Lapointe/Seconded Deanna Peck that the financial statements for First United Church for the year ended December 31, 2018 be accepted as printed. Carried.**

Budget: Mary Lapointe guided us through the 2019 budget. Discussion of PAR was introduced.

Tami McMurphy explained that the M & P core ministry has set the minister pay at 4 percent above the pay scale.

Discussion continued.

**Moved Mary Lapointe/Seconded Deanna Peck that the 2019 balanced budget consisting of \$412,932 in revenue and expenses be approved. Carried.**

Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee – Beryl Itani put forward a request for further assistance in the nominating committee.

**Moved by Beryl Itani/Seconded by Trent James that J. Bruce Pendleton be elected as a trustee for another seven-year term. Carried.**

**Moved by Rob Riddle/Seconded by Tami McMurphy that the following people be elected as representatives to the Pacific Mountain Regional Conference – Beryl Itani, Pat Totton, Linda Gunn and Susan Sullivan as the alternate. Carried.**

Search Committee: Applications are extended to March 31, 2019. Frances Kitson talked about the process she’s going through with school and her ministering to First United. Tami McMurphy followed up.

FirstUP! Committee - Ernie Park gave an update. Hiring of a consultant. Going to two architectural firms.

Appreciation – This year’s awards singled out those who have given a lot of hours to help with the “transition” First United is in as it looks toward the future of the building and ministry:

Greg Maier and Mahmut Kacuri (kitchen flood) and members of the Property Core Ministry.

FirstUP! team and Rising To The Challenge committee.

Audrey Beal and Jodine Ducs (envelope stewards).

Shirley Piedt and Margaret Sichel (outreach during Chery’s leave of absence) and Beryl Itani (education during Cheryl’s LOA).

Search committee.

Presbytery reps.

## **Adjournment**

Adjournment:

**Moved Tami McMurphy/Seconded by Deanna Peck that the meeting be adjourned at 12:55 pm.**

Closing prayer: Frances Kitson

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Chas Moore, Chair

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Deanna Peck, Secretary

# First United Church Congregational Meeting

## Meeting Minutes - November 10, 2019

1. Opening
  - a) Opening: Held in the Sanctuary and called to order at 11:16am by Chas Moore.
  - b) Quorum was met.
  - c) Opening Prayer by Bob Wallace
  - d) Election of Gillian Hogan as Board Secretary. Moved by Daphne and Seconded by Lil Basisty. Passed.
  - e) Voting Privileges and corresponding rights temporal be extended to all adherents present who are regular contributors to First United Church. Moved by Trent James and Seconded by Marlene Spicer. Passed.
  - f) Review of Agenda.
  
2. New Business
  - a) Compilation engagement:
  - b) That the Finance Committee seek a new year-end accountant to prepare the 2019 financial statement. Moved by Mary LaPointe and Seconded by Beryl Itani. 4 options were discussed. 1. Audit 2. Review. 3. Compilation Engagement and 4. By Volunteer. Congregation seemed to favour compilation.
  - c) Finance Update given by Mary Lapointe – Board Finance Stewardship and treasurer. It has been a challenging year.
  - d) Entrance Concerns. Outreach vs Homelessness. Suggested we start a Holy Conversation. Decided a Holy Conversation be held November 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am in Room 14.
  
3. Adjournment
  - a) Adjournment moved by Christine Moore and Seconded by Paul Might that the meeting was adjourned at 11:37am.
  - b) Closing Prayer by Bob Wallace.
  
4. Minutes submitted by Gillian Hogan  
Minutes Approved by

# Board, Core Ministry and Committee Members for 2020

Core Ministries welcome new members/volunteers at any time.

## **Church Board**

Tracy Leader, chair  
Vacant, chair elect  
Vacant, Treasurer  
Beryl Itani, Trustees  
Leslie Atwell, Education  
Tami McMurphy, M and P  
Alyssa Campbell, Outreach  
Joa Lazarus, Pastoral Care  
Carol Drury, Worship

## **Affirm Committee**

Kendra Berg  
Alyssa Campbell  
Pat McPhee  
Cliff Turner  
Sharon Pennell

## **First UP!**

Sharon Wilson, chair  
Nikki Attwell, secretary  
Chris Fabbi  
Jocelyn Smith  
Ernie Park  
Murray White  
Janet Watson  
Peter Wilson  
Linda Gilmour  
Rob Riddle

## **Trustees**

Beryl Itani, chair  
Linda Gilmour, secretary  
Margaret Sichello  
Ted Basisty  
Bruce Pendleton  
Murray White

## **Finance Committee**

Vacant, chair  
Treasurer, vacant  
Beryl Itani, secretary  
Dave Bertetic,  
Drew Irvine,  
Audrey Beal,  
Sharon Pendleton

## **Minister Search Committee**

Beryl Itani, chair  
Tami McMurphy  
Robyn Springer  
Rob Riddle  
Susanne Donkin  
Sue Sullivan  
George McKinney

## **Ministry and Personnel**

Tami McMurphy, chair  
Linda Gilmour  
Sharon Pendleton  
Marlene Spicer  
John Whitehead

## **Christian Education**

Leslie Atwell, chair & secretary  
Tanya Burke  
Rachel Anweiler  
Suki Vernet  
Cheryl Perry, DLM

## **Pastoral Care**

Joa Lazarus, chair  
Judy Valks, secretary  
Joan Grahl  
Mel Sparrow  
Lorraine McLarty  
Pat Totton  
Jan Goss

## **Outreach Core Ministry**

Alyssa Campbell, chair  
Pat McPhee, secretary  
Cliff Turner  
Margaret Sichello  
Linda Gunn  
Daphne Might  
Paul Might  
Shirley Piedt  
Gerry Hewitt

## **Worship Core Ministry**

Carol Drury, chair,  
Frances Chiasson, Linda Gunn,  
Karen Kranabetter, Linda Munce,  
Murray White, Tanya Pritchard

# Minister

Cheryl Perry

There is an adage “old ways won’t open new doors.”

As I read over my annual reports of the last few years it is clear that “change” and “transition” have not been temporary states for our congregation. We began this year without a full-time minister of Worship and Pastoral Care. Rev. Donald Schmidt retired; his last service on December 29, 2018 was a celebration of his two and a half years with us. When we welcomed Donald in May 2016 the children of the congregation presented him with lei, a Hawaiian custom of welcome. It was especially moving that his farewell service concluded with “Aloha Oe,” sung by the choir and accompanied by the bell ringers and several members who had learned to play ukulele for that occasion. That ukulele group has continued to meet and make music together, gathering weekly in Room 14 on Tuesday mornings. This is a hopeful sign, I think, that while some things come to an end, new things spring up. Likewise, you will read in Rachel Anweiler’s report how the end of a program that ran for 28 years has enabled new life and energy for children’s midweek programming.

From February to July we were blessed to have Frances Kitson, a student minister, who brought fresh energy to sermons and worship. I think her time with us was both challenging and enjoyable for her. She returned to studies at VST in August.

I enjoyed four weeks of holidays in June and July. At the end of July, as part of my continuing education, I attended the national Affirm Conference in Calgary (see Affirm report elsewhere). August was a busy month that included “Camp Adventure,” our Vacation Bible program that this year was held not at the church but at a rented camp on Lakeshore Road. This was another example of trying something new. The setting provided lots of space to enjoy God’s creation and an opportunity for leadership development in the youth who were small group leaders. We had an amazing week! September saw the beginning of a new year of Sunday School with an intergenerational worship service on Recovenanting Sunday that recalled the stories of some important characters in the history of our congregation: A.B. Knox, D.W. Sutherland, Rev. Braden, and Blanche Simpson—who helped the congregation take risks to expand and grow. Throughout the Spring in worship we had enjoyed dramatic vignettes of these folk written by Sharon Wilson, chair of the FirstUP Committee, that helped us celebrate our past as we looked to our future.

Rev. Bob Wallace arrived at the beginning of October. As our Transitional Minister, in addition to providing pastoral care and worship leadership, he is helping guide the many conversations about our future including building redevelopment and greater collaboration with other United Churches in the area. In order to get to know the congregation and to hear what is on its heart and mind, Bob organized a series of “blethers” throughout the Fall that were held in the homes of congregants. (Continued...)



To quote Isaiah, “and a little child shall lead them.” In response to a request from St. Paul’s United Church which does not have a Sunday School, the children of our congregation created a worship service and took it on the road, September 29<sup>th</sup> to St. Paul’s. This was a first! It was delightful for their congregation to see children in leadership roles and they appreciated the message of concern for the environment. And as we look to greater collaboration and partnership with the other United Churches in Kelowna, this “conversation” about how we might do more together will continue in 2020. We have been invited to gather at the end of February with members of St. Paul’s, Rutland and Westbank United to dream about the future of the United Churches of Kelowna.

I began my report with an old adage. I conclude it with the words of Mark Zuckerberg, 35-year old entrepreneur and the co-founder of social-media giant Facebook: “The biggest risk is not taking any risk. In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks.” I think this is also true for the church. May we enter this year of 2020 with the both the determination that God is calling us to take the risks of faith, and the assurance that we do not do this alone.

It is a privilege to serve among you. It is a full, demanding and deeply satisfying ministry, and one I could not do without all of you.

Blessings,  
Cheryl Perry

# Transition Minister

Rev. Bob Wallace

“Today I am giving you a choice. You can choose life and success or death and disaster.” (Deuteronomy 30:15 CEV)

Those words are before me today as one of the texts for this next Sunday. Looking at them, I realize how much they also speak to the life we have shared these past few months.

To serve as your Transition Minister is a great honour and privilege—for you have invited me into your congregational life and your personal lives. Such openness and trust you have shown, and I want, first of all, to say **“thank you”** to everyone in the congregation for the gift of your presence, your prayers and your wonderful enthusiasm. You have made my time among you a delight.

To the amazing choristers, you made this baritone-cum-tenor so very welcome; I am enjoying singing with you.

And a special word of thanks to those who hosted or attended one of the many *“Blethers”* we held last fall. Your energy and love make me feel most welcome. You are, indeed, a welcoming church.

I also want to express my gratitude and appreciation to this amazing staff here. You are people of deep faith, strong, wise, and often hilarious. To Cheryl, Tanya, Frances, Jessica, Alison, Vivian, Rachel, Mahmut and Fikrije – **Thank You!** You made (and make) me feel a part of your team, and without you, we all would be diminished.

Years ago, when I first began in ministry, there seemed a sameness to the work. Preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, committees – there was a cycle to the year that recurred with regularity and predictability. Or at least that is how my memory recalls those earlier days.

Now I wonder: was it ever like I remember? — stable, unchanging and quite predictable? It may only seem like that in hindsight! Perhaps I was just “playing ostrich”—sticking my head deep into the sand to avoid what was happening in the world around!

Such avoidance is not our option today. Like the Hebrews fleeing from Egyptian captivity into the wilderness, we are torn between looking back to what we remember as good and the uncertainty of heading off into a strange new land.

We too have to make choices, and those choices will need to be made over and over again as we move into this new way of being God’s faithful followers in the strange new landscape called the Twenty-first Century.

As People of God, we are in a minority in our land. There are many competing claims on allegiance and trust. We must learn to articulate our beliefs, so they are understandable to others. We must live out our beliefs in such a way that others will see who we are by our actions rather than our creeds. And we must continue to support and trust one another, so that no one is left alone. (Continued)

I do not know (as I write this) if anything will emerge at our “all-Kelowna United Church” gathering on February 29. But I trust that God’s Spirit will be present, like a “cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night” to lead us into this new future. It will not happen quickly. There will be lots of challenges and uncertainties. There may even be some disagreements. But I believe God is leading us – and we are called to follow.

Hold on to your faith. Hold on to one another. Sing and pray and laugh and dance and hope – for you are God’s beloved, and together, we move into God’s unfolding future.

## Chair of the Board

Chas Moore

We have had an eventful year, as a review of the church’s annual report will attest. Financially we ended the year in a smaller deficit than expected, due to careful management of expenditures by our core ministries and staff. Our 2020 budget is currently in a significant deficit and the discussion at the annual general meeting will be important to guide our decision-making going forward.

The FirstUP! Committee is finishing their work and have delivered impressive design documents to the board and congregation. I’m looking forward to seeing the results of this effort as we move into the next phase of the capital campaign.

I continue to be impressed by the efforts and actions of our many outreach efforts. I indirectly see these efforts as I walk through the hall, receive a report, or sign a cheque for an outreach program. It is clear that First United is an important resource and foundation in our community, especially for those with limited options.

While we continue our search efforts to fill our ministerial vacancy, I have appreciated the opportunity to work and learn with Reverend Bob Wallace. His experience has been a welcomed support as we move through this transitional period.

The annual general meeting will be my last act as board chair. Many of core ministry chairs are continuing their support to the congregation and the Chair-Elect, Tracy Leader, will bring his board and chair experience from other congregations to guide and lead our work going forward. We are in good hands.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve.

## Treasurer

Mary Lapointe

In March 2019, the First United congregation adopted a balanced budget for the year.

At year-end 2019, the Income and Expense Statement indicates an actual deficit of (\$12,251) which reflects the net impacts of lower than budgeted revenues offset by lower than budgeted expenses (primarily salaries, benefits and overheads).

The 2019 general offerings budget shortfall of \$25k was likely due to the impact of the successful Rising to the Challenge year-end initiative. Total expenses were lower than budgeted and the net impact of these items brings us very close to a balanced result.

The following summarizes the key differentials between budget and actual revenues and expenses for 2018 and the basis for the resulting surplus to budget of \$185,541:

### REVENUE

Item	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	Difference
Total Church Offerings	\$325,732	\$310,552	(\$ 15,180)
Bequests	0	\$4,219	\$4,219
Fundraising, Facilities, Thrift Shop, Other	\$87,200	\$75,894	\$(11,306)
Total Income	\$412,932	\$390,665	\$(22,267)

### EXPENSES

Item	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	Difference
Personnel /Overhead	\$327,116	\$287,237	(\$ 39,879)
Committees/Presbytery	\$ 90,740	\$115,709	\$ 24,969
Total Expenses	\$417,856	\$402,946	(\$ 14,910)

Over the year, we have also continued to make changes to our accounting policies in order to improve methodology and to increase clarity in the reporting and statements. We also added Alison Rose, our new bookkeeper, to the team and updated our bookkeeping software.

For 2020, there will need to be a strong focus on improving revenues through giving and particularly through the 'PAR' (Pre-authorized Automatic Remittance). Experience shows that congregations which most effectively implement and manage their PAR programs can improve overall contributions and benefit from greater certainty regarding the expected annual contribution level.

## First UP!

Sharon Wilson

FirstUP! was formed in February 2017 with the mandate to “dream” what the hall could be. Since that time we have met regularly as a team, reviewed the work of the previous three redevelopment committees, consulted experts, surveyed the congregation and even organized a cleaning bee and building tours! It has been a fulsome task fraught with both excitement and frustration. You will recall that in November 2018 we reported on our work to a congregational meeting and made the recommendation that the current hall be replaced. This decision was affirmed by a vote of the majority of the congregation present at that meeting.

Having clarified the direction of FirstUP!, we were able to move forward with greater focus in 2019. The team met ten times. In addition, members of the team attended a host of other meetings with architects, planning consultants, heritage consultants, archivists and potential tenants. Reports were made at most of the meetings of the Official Board during the year. We facilitated the presentation of four historic vignettes relating to key figures in the history of First. In August, morning worship was preceded by historic walking tours in the neighbourhood that reflected on the people and places central to the evolution of First.

Two key initiatives of FirstUP! in 2019 were: 1) the recommendation to the Official Board to create a fundraising committee to research and lead fundraising for the new hall both within and outside the congregation, and 2) the call for concept drawings from an architectural firm with local church experience. The Rising to the Challenge Capital Fund is being capably led by David Bertetic. Concept drawings were received in January 2020 from DiStefano Jaud Architects. With input from the congregation, we hope to incorporate the congregation’s vision for First United in our historic, downtown location. The next steps are many and complex but we are greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and support we have received.

This enormous task has been undertaken with diligence, creativity and faithfulness by the FirstUP! team: Ernie Park, Nikki Attwell, Rob Riddle, Chris Fabbi, Jocelyn Smith, Peter Wilson, Janet Watson, Murray White and Linda Gilmour with historical help from Lorraine McLarty and Tara Hurley.

## Board of Trustees

Beryl Itani, chair

The Trustees meet twice a year, in March and November. It is our responsibility to make sure that our building is adequately insured as well as the staff and volunteers. We did have a claim issued against First United Church, however it was settled by the Insurance Co. out of Court.

We are also responsible for investing any Bequests that are made to First United Church. We had no Bequests in 2019.

Our investments are held at Scotia Bank (Main Branch) and as of December 31, 2019 we have \$328,721.47 in GIC's.

The Trustees will have a new member joining us for 2020 as Trent James is retiring. The Trustees would like to thank Trent for his many years of service and commitment to the Trustees. His expertise and knowledge have been invaluable.

The Trustees of First United Church are: Beryl Itani – Chairman; Linda Gilmour – Treasurer; Bruce Pendleton – Insurance, Margaret Sichello, Ted Basisty, Murray White.

## Pacific Mountain Region

Beryl Itani

The first Pacific Mountain Regional meeting was held in Langley in May of 2019. It was the inaugural meeting of our new Region. (Formerly B.C. Conference) As you can imagine it was a meeting filled with memories of what had been and being very excited about our new beginnings as a Region. Our Region now takes in the whole of the Province of B.C, Whitehorse and Banff. I can already see your eyebrows raised, Banff!! Yes, they decided that they did not want to be in the south of Alberta and asked to be able to join the Pacific Mountain Region.

Most of the meetings were taken up with changing the wording of all our policies and procedures. This was done by everyone working in small groups to discuss some of the changes and then voting on them. All of it was done with respect for each other and asking the Spirit of God to be with us in all of our deliberations and changes.

Music again was a great part of the event and the musicians were from the Lower Mainland and really provided some upbeat and thoughtful music for us all to join in on.

The highlight of course was the worship on Sunday. The message was delivered by Rev. Doug Goodwin. This was his last worship service as Executive Secretary as he was retiring at the end of May. Then there was the Ordination service. This is always another highlight of our worship. Solemn, exciting, worshipful and enlightning, followed by Communion served to us by the newly ordained.

Rev. Blair Odney was sworn in as the first President of the newly formed Pacific Mountain Region.

Your representatives at this first Regional Meeting were Beryl Itani, Linda Gunn, Pat Totton. Susan Sullivan was a member at large.

## Minister of Music

Frances Chiasson

Another year has quickly flown by and it is my joy to report on the musical activities at First United Church.

The Alleluia Singers meet each Thursday evening to prepare music for Sunday mornings, to prepare to lead congregational singing on Sunday mornings, and to act as a supporting community to one another.

The Alleluia Ringers is our bell choir that rehearses on Sunday afternoons, preparing for their participation in worship on the last Sunday of every month. And the First United Children's Choir meet after church on Sunday's in the sanctuary, preparing to sing in church approximately once each term.

I'm grateful for the commitment given by the many volunteer members in all three of these groups and to those who share leadership with me – Nikki Atwell and Jessica Crawford. I'm also grateful to others who have provided musical leadership in various ways over the past year – Rob Riddle, Hugo De Burgos, Esther Goertz, Dawn Mussellam, Gerry Hewitt, Rhonda Draper, Coastal Sound Children's and Youth Choirs, Mark Hindley, Julie Harvey, Piperazzi Quartet, Janet Watson, etc.

Financial spending on sheet music was over budget this year, as I have worked to supplement the sheet music for those anthems where we don't have complete sets. In contrast, spending on organ and piano maintenance was lower than budgeted. Organ maintenance has been fairly minor over the past two years – only requiring tuning twice a year and very minor repairs. I am still bracing for the time in the near future when more significant work will be required – especially likely will be the failure of the leather on the original air chest (from 1925). Repair will be a significant job when it does fail, including dismantling and removal of the current (massive) air chest and replacement with a more efficient and modern model.

Our pianos are being maintained by a local piano technician. Tuning is greatly affected by room temperature, so although we keep the heat in the sanctuary from dropping too low, we have had some significant variations in tuning this winter because of the variety of weather. In terms of other pianos in the building, the upright in Room 14 is currently being tuned annually, while the Nordheimer in the hall and the upright upstairs in room 26 are not currently being maintained (as they are only being used for informal/casual playing). The 2<sup>nd</sup> piano in the hall (Samick) belongs to and is maintained by Okanagan Children's Choir. It is also used by one of our other user groups.

I am grateful for the remarkable colleagues I have the pleasure of working alongside each week in this ministry. Although the last couple of years have been a time of ministerial transition for us all, I feel that the music has remained a constant and steady part of our life as a community. May we all continue to find joy and comfort through music.

## Alleluia Ringers

Nikki Attwell, director

The Alleluia Ringers enjoyed a relatively uneventful year in 2019. No special concerts, no festivals or road trips (although we did attend a one-day regional workshop in Vernon), just our regular performances in church on the last Sunday of each month. This year marked the seventh year we have performed in the Candlelight Christmas Memorial Service provided by local funeral homes. But a low-key year is welcome every once in a while! And adding to the worship experience of our church family is a joy and a blessing for us.

We've welcomed a new member, and others have had to leave. We were tremendously saddened by the death of Joan Dalglish. Although she had retired from the bell choir in 2016, she was a charter member of the group, much loved by us all and is dearly missed. It was an honour to perform at her Celebration of Life in June.

Probably the most noteworthy thing was the long-awaited refurbishment of the entire set of bells, carried out over the summer. The bells were returned just before the start of rehearsals in September, looking and sounding great. Fortunately, this is a job that won't need to be done for probably another 15 or 20 years.

As always, we greatly appreciate the love and encouragement we are shown from the church, especially in support for our twice-yearly sale of chicken. For the past couple of years, those proceeds have been earmarked for the refurbishment, and now will go toward subsidizing our participation in the 2020 provincial handbell festival in Nanaimo.

## Parish Nurse

Pat Totton

I continued to visit congregants at home, in the hospital and in residential care. I represent our church as a member of the "On Call Chaplaincy" team for the hospital. These visits have all been to individuals that are not part of this congregation. The visits are usually with family members whose loved ones are dying.

The team of Jo-Anne Watts, Judy Valks, Benita Worley, Tom Kemp, and substitute volunteer Linda Munce and I led two 10-week Walk and Talk programs on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Attendance varied between 4 to 12 people. A special thank you to the speakers that shared your wisdom and anecdotes with the group.

Our hospital visiting team consists of Tom Kemp, Joan Grahl, Joa Lazarus, Judy Valks, Linda Munce, and Linda Gilmour. Weekly, someone from the volunteer team visits our congregation members who are in the hospital. Each Sunday, Nancy Hillmer provides a list of everyone in the hospital, from anywhere in the province, who identifies as being affiliated with the United Church. Our team visits the patients from out-of-town, who are admitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the hospital. (Continued...)



In addition to the people that I have named here, this church is very fortunate to have many individuals that visit the sick and dying people in the congregation, make phone calls and keep in touch with the lonely and isolated and provide soups and frozen meals for families who are having trouble meeting their nutritional needs while dealing with illness. In my humble opinion, this loving care is one of the great strengths of this congregation. "I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was sick and you visited me."  
-Matthew 25:35.

## Roll Clerk

Tanya Burke

### ***Membership Jan. 1, 2019: 211***

#### ***Received by Baptism: 7\****

Westin Dillabaugh

Arielle Flear

Nicholas Gervais

Adelaide Luca Cunningham Hogan

Lochlan Jasper Cunningham Hogan

Charles Pottie

Ashton Emmanuel Springer

#### ***Received by Confirmation: 7***

Caitlyn Elizabeth Bertetic

Gillian Hogan

Moira Sabine Pritchard

Ciera Rae Saundry

Nathaniel Mackenzie Pruden

Ashton Emmanuel Springer

Jessica Theodora Vinton

#### ***Received by Transfer: 3***

Joanne Wylie, Mark Wylie, Margaret Newbury-Jones

#### ***Removed by Death: 12***

Noreen Simkins

Raymond Norman

Linda Kemp

Christina Leathley

Joan Dalgliesh

Teresa Cornish

Lisa Wensink

Bill Greenwood

Gertie Johnston

Harold Magel

John Cameron

Janet Prozeller

### ***Membership Dec. 31, 2019: 215***

\*Baptisms are not counted in the Historic Roll

## Affirm Committee

Cheryl Perry

As an affirming congregation of the United Church since 2012 we believe in the full inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities both in our church and in society. Over the past seven years the committee has worked to increase awareness, in the congregation and outside its doors, of our status as an Affirming Congregation.

We have done this in different ways—having a booth at the annual Pride in the Park event during Pride Week, developing a brochure about our policies on same-sex marriage and our status as an affirming congregation, maintaining an Affirm bulletin board and offering educational opportunities to the congregation including film nights. We have added titles to our church library on topics such as families (same sex parented, adoptive), transgender, and racial diversity/the intercultural church. In 2015 we began designating the Sunday nearest the start of Pride Week as “Pride Sunday” to celebrate and uphold our affirming status. The Affirm Committee is a standing committee of the Board and its chairperson attends Board meetings.

Our mission is to create an inclusive and open community of faith that

- Recognizes that our faith is a journey illuminated by God’s love;
- Calls us to create sacred space that offers security and respect; and
- Affirms that our faith is calling us to express God’s love to all persons, celebrating their age, diverse abilities, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social status or ethnicity.



**Members:** Cheryl Perry, Kendra Berg, Sharon Pennell, Pat McPhee, Alyssa Campbell, Cliff Turner

(Continued...)

As an attempt to be in line with celebrations in major centres such as Toronto and Vancouver, the local Pride Committee moved its Pride Week to the third week in June this year! This left us scrambling a bit but committee members, along with other members of the congregation Keith Crawley, Ken Zarr, and our student supply minister Frances Kitson, staffed the booth at the Festival in the Park. This is a good opportunity to be visible in the community; some people who stopped by expressed curiosity and several commented that it was “good to see a church” there.

July 26-28 two members of our Affirm Committee, Sharon Pennell and Cheryl Perry attended the national Affirm Conference in Calgary, Alberta. Highlights included Harlan Pruden’s intro to Two Spirit identities and LGBTQIA refugees; a session on biblical engagement with Rev. Emmy Keglär entitled “Loving the Bible Again,” and the *Caretakers* theatrical reading.

Being an affirming congregation is not only about being a welcoming place for LGBTQ people, but also about being a welcoming and inclusive church for all people. That is an ongoing process and a huge undertaking—one that requires a lot of grace as we risk making mistakes but trust God’s call to be an “open community that embraces diversity.”

In February our church hosted **Living Hospitality in the Way of Jesus**, a workshop on radical hospitality. Participants came from as far away as Kamloops and Vancouver, as well as up and down the valley! Keynote speakers and workshop facilitators included Anna White (Camp Director for CampOUT!), Rev. Carmen Lansdowne (First United Church on Vancouver’s downtown eastside) and Christina Kinch (Justice Coordinator for the Pacific Mountain Region). Debbie Hubbard, as part of the Outreach Core Ministry, was instrumental in the organization and smooth-running of the day-long event. As the event was held on the weekend that normally would have been the regional gathering of Presbytery, participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to gather, to share what their congregations are doing, and to be challenged in their thinking of how we as churches offer radical hospitality.

In February we hosted a “rainbow potluck” dinner for LGBTQ members, allies and friends. We showed the short film, “Eye for Love,” created and produced by local film-maker Catherine Cunningham-Huston. It is the chronicle of her journey from one end of Canada to the other on the Greyhound bus while interviewing people along the way about how love showed up in their lives—a timely and thought-provoking discussion so close to Valentine’s Day.

In April we hosted P.I.E. Day—P.I.E. Stands for public, intentional and explicit. It is an initiative of Affirm United, the national organization to which all affirming congregations belong. Congregation members were invited to join us after church for delicious pie and to talk about how we can be more intentional, public and explicit about being an affirming congregation; ideas included using our electronic sign on our visible downtown corner to promote Pride Week and show our support for it, to investigate installing rainbow flags at all of our entrances, and to continue having a booth and participate in local Pride Week events where we can be visible. We hope to host a second P.I.E. Day in 2020 to encourage the brainstorming of more “bite sized ideas” and ongoing actions.

## Christian Education Core Ministry

Leslie Atwell, chair

The Education Core Ministry is a small group that works hard to organize many successful educational programs and events in addition to a well-organised and well-attended Sunday school program. The Education group members are Rachel Anweiler, Suki Vernet, Tanya Burke, Cheryl Perry and Leslie Atwell. Many other people in the congregation volunteered their time to help with different events as well as to teach Sunday School, including the Campbell family, Beryl Itani, Christine Moore, Frances Chiasson, Gerry Hewitt, Charlene Ward, Robyn Springer, and many others. The youth in our congregation took an active role in volunteering in the Sunday school classrooms, nursery, and during the summer Vacation Bible Adventure (VBA) camp. We had a huge turnout for VBA this year, and everyone enjoyed the outdoor camp format as well as the delicious meals provided by Rachel!

We had many interactive events throughout 2019, including an All Ages Dance, Walk Through Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday School Teacher Appreciation, Alternative Transportation Sunday bike rally, Congregational Picnic, Vacation Bible Adventure School, Graduation Sunday, Advent Party, and a wonderful Christmas pageant. There were two women's retreats – a one day retreat and a weekend retreat, as well as Adult Bible study programs.

Our Core Ministry is always happy to welcome new members, so if you're interested in joining the group, signing up to teach Sunday School, or volunteering to help with an event, please contact any of the Education group members.

## Friday Night Women's Group

Suki Vernet

The purpose of the Friday Night Women's Group at First is to build community and friendship. This is a social organization devoted to building connections between the women of our congregation. Through monthly meetings in the community and in our homes, we gather for fun and friendship.

Some activities have included a self-defense lesson, escaping an "Exit" room, sewing for "Days for Girls", creating art together, cooking for ourselves and others, bowling, karaoke, and more. This fall, activities have included sharing a meal, learning a Bollywood dance routine and a discussion night.

## Fun Fridays

Rachel Anweiler

Toward the end of the fall of 2018, because of steadily declining attendance, we made a decision to end a midweek program that had been running for 28 years! 'Gone Fishin'' was a group of children in grade 4-6 that met afterschool once a week. As there seemed interest in having opportunities for children to gather outside of Sunday School time, Cheryl and I brainstormed what we could do to offer programming for a broader age-range of children. We decided for the spring of 2020, to try to kick off "Fun Fridays at First." While these did not always happen on a Friday, we couldn't resist the name! The aim was to meet once a month during the school year and invite all school aged children to come and spend time together, to bond in a fun, relaxed environment.

In January we met for dinner and movie night. We enjoyed a pasta bar and watched the movie Wreck it Ralph 2. In February we invited parents and others in the congregation to join us for an all ages dance hosted by the Youth Group. In March we hosted a big Carnival for Shrove Tuesday which included a giant bouncy house in the church hall. April, we created three of our own puzzle-themed "escape rooms." The goal was to work together to solve puzzles to advance yourself to the end of the game. One team was in The Lost Mummy Room, where they were trapped in an Egyptian tomb and had to find their way out. While another team went to Pet Snatched, where they had to solve puzzles in order to find their missing pet Charlie the Cheetah. The final team went through a Time Machine and travelled into the future, then back in time to our church in 1928. This team had to learn some of the church's history in order to make it back to the present day.

We also hosted our first every Murder Mystery Dinner & fundraiser! It was set in a 50's theme diner, and many people got into the spirit and dressed up. We served hamburgers and hot dogs, and Cheryl wrote the amazing script that had every wondering who was the murderer. At the end of the night, every table got a chance to vote on who they thought did it. A fun evening for all ages!

The success of Fun Fridays, which saw an average of 20 kids attending, encouraged us to continue them in the fall. We met in September for a dinner and movie night and watched Detective Pikachu. In October we had a Halloween-themed night, filled with games and activities such as "bobbing" for apples. In November we had a Junior Chef Challenge where children were divided into an appetizer, dinner, or dessert team. Every team had the challenge of incorporating leftover Halloween candy into their dish. The food tasted amazing and kids picked up some important culinary skills and tips from the real chef, Rachel (who completed the Culinary Arts program at Okanagan College several years ago and who works as a chef when she's not leading youth programs!)

## Youth Group (grades 7-10)

Rachel Anweiler

To kick off the year in January, the youth group held a Masterchef competition. The youth group was divided into a main, and into a dessert team. The theme of the night was camping, so teams had to make a dish to reflect camping. The main course team made delicious sloppy joes, and the dessert team made homemade marshmallows and delighted us with a s'more casserole. Everything tasted amazing! The youth group also hosted their annual all ages dance in February that over 40 people attended! Also, that month we spent time discussing the word "love," and how it is used and portrayed in movies, tv, and music. We also looked into astrological signs, as well as the Myers Briggs personality test where we learned about introversion, extroversion, what that means, and how people can be a bit of both. In November we hosted a small concession for a craft fair that was being held at the church, and the youth group had fun making fresh cheese scones, muffins, as well as serving tea and coffee.

## Blanche Simpson Library

Lorraine Hladik

New materials are constantly being added to the collection, although use of the library collection is not high; usage may increase if there were more volunteers to provide better access and publicity for the congregation.

There is a good collection of books by "progressive Christian writers" such as Spong, Crossan and others. There are many books on grieving for adults, children and teens, as well books on LBGQT issues. As both these subjects are found in several areas of the collection, Grief ones have **blue** tape on the top of the spine and the LBGQT ones have **orange** tape. Easy to spot, so check them out. Other books that are scattered throughout the collection are related to Indigenous concerns and have a green tape on the top of the spine as well as the Dewey Decimal Number. There are many titles by our Lenten Lecture Speakers: Marcus Borg, Diana Butler Bass, and Peter Rollins, as well as books written by one of our former ministers, Donald Schmidt.

The children's collection has been given broad subject headings to make it easier to find a book. Please drop by and browse the collection and maybe borrow a book or two. If the library is closed, ask the office volunteer for the key and write out the title you borrow on the Sign-out Sheet.

## Women's Retreat Committee

Margaret Sichel

In January 2019, we held our One Day Women's Retreat at the Clubhouse of one of our members. This change was met with enthusiasm as we had 30 people attend. Cheryl Perry and Rachel Anweiler were our Facilitators, and the theme was focused on Women of the Bible. Thank you once again Cheryl for sharing your extensive knowledge with us. This was Rachel's first time Facilitating and she was very capable. We hope they will both be with us again in this capacity. Whenever Christine Moore attends a Retreat, we always know she will bring her flute and we can count on her to provide beautiful music for us.

For our October Fall Retreat, we were able to return to Naramata for the first time since 2013. Returning to Naramata resulted in another great turnout of 30 people. We had Rev. Ivy Thomas as our Facilitator for the weekend. Frances Chiasson once again stepped up to be our music leader and did an amazing job. This job takes a lot of preparation and Frances always goes above and beyond when she is picking music to share with us. As the chairperson of this group, I would like to say again, how blessed we are to have so many people right here at First United that step up and share their talents with us.

## Pastoral Care Core Ministry

Judy Valks, secretary

2019 has been a busy year of many changes for the Pastoral Care Core Ministry.

Early in January we lost our beloved Chair, Noreen Simkins. Judy Valks took over as chair at that time, followed by Joa Lazarus in September. We also had two other long-time members, Jackie Kelly and Audrey Mussellam retire.

We instituted a games afternoon, but realized there was not a need, as it was not well attended. The Walk and Talk program continued in both the spring and fall. It was noted that many of us actually notice an increase in mobility and better balance.

In March we collaborated with Mairi Forsyth's fundraising efforts and held a St Patrick's Day luncheon selling baked potatoes with a variety of toppings. There was also a limerick writing contest, some Irish music and a quiz on Irish history. A great time was had by all.

We held a successful, well attended newcomers luncheon in May. Also in May was a World Café event discussing 'Discontentment in Life'.

We held our annual 'Sparkle tour' in December. The sparkling lights followed by shortbread and spiced apple juice at the church were enjoyed by all.

We also continued with our usual tasks of manning the welcome table, ordering name tags, registering families and individuals, hospital visiting, care home visiting and phone calls, scheduling the coffee roster, and sending birthday cards to every registered member as well as get well, sympathy and thinking of you cards when needed. We arranged for new kettles and teapots this year as well. We began the process of making a new pictorial directory, which will be completed in the New Year.

## Ministry and Personnel Core Ministry

Tami McMurphy, chair

Ministry and Personnel Committee, also known as M & P, is made up of a maximum of seven members. We currently have five members. This Committee provides a means of support and well-being for the Ministers and paid staff. The Committee organizes Staff Team Building Retreats. Committee members oversee the drafting of job descriptions, do performance reviews, and assess working conditions and remuneration. They are also responsible for reviewing and revising staff duties as required. Recommendations are made to the Board. If congregants have questions, concerns, or positive comments about a staff member they can contact any member of the M & P Committee.

This year has been a time of transition and change as First United has been in an active search for a Minister of Worship & Leadership Development. While the Search Committee was working on finding a full time Minister, we had a couple of people fill this position. Frances Kitson provided worship and pastoral support from February – July. In October, Bob Wallace joined us as Supply Minister to assist with moving forward while we continue to look for a permanent Minister.

Cheryl Perry, Minister of Families & Social Justice, had a full and active year as she stepped up to full time hours at various times throughout the year to cover some of the extra duties with one less Minister. To ease some of the load, the Outreach Core Ministry assisted with some her Outreach duties. Along with the increased needs of the Church and the growing needs of Outreach, Cheryl organized Vacation Adventures, Women's Retreat and new programs for September and Advent.

Rachel Anweiler, Youth Coordinator, has explored some new programs to keep activities fresh and the youth active.

Frances Chiasson, Minister of Music, and Jessica Crawford, Accompanist, continue to share their musical knowledge and talents with choir members and our congregation.

Office Administrator, Tanya Pritchard, and Assistant Office Administrator, Vivian Dunne, continue to operate the office with the assistance of Office Volunteers. They provide support and assistance to all those who enter our building.

In May, Accountant/Bookkeeper Keith Crawley left the position and Alison Rose was welcomed into this position.

Custodians, Mahmut and Fikrije Kacuri, continue to maintain the building and clean the facilities so it is always ready for the many programs that happen. Greg Maier and Gerald Paul have filled in as needed.

First United has been a very busy and active Church throughout this year with programs that have welcomed everyone and encouraged respect and compassion to those who enter. Through the transition of hiring and growing, the Staff continues to provide support and spiritual opportunities for everyone. We want to take a moment to thank all the Staff and Volunteers who have committed their time and energy to First United!



## Outreach Core Ministry

Alyssa Campbell, chair

The mission of the Outreach Core Ministry is “To listen, share, and act for justice and positive change in our church, in our community, and globally.”

The Outreach Core Ministry is very grateful for all the support we have received throughout this past year, and those that have helped us continue to grow, through their contributions of time, energy and talent.

### Some of our members include:

Rev. Cheryl Perry, Alyssa Campbell, Geraldine Hewitt, Shirley Piedt, Pat Mcphee, Paul & Daphne Might, Linda Gunn, Cliff Turner, and Margaret Sichello.

### Our overseas projects include:

-Our relationship with our Sister Community El Triunfo, providing scholarships for high school and university students who otherwise couldn't attend, annual visits from our congregation, and connection with the UCC's Mission and Service partners in El Salvador.

-Fostering a partnership agreement with Amnesty International, to better work for justice in countries where human rights are being violated.

### Some of our local activities include:

-The Peace and Justice Table, a display set up on Sundays which focuses on issues of social justice, and sells Fair Trade coffee, soap, and other goods.

-Book Sales which raise funds for El Triunfo Scholarships and for Inn from the Cold.

-Seasonal Sales, including a Christmas Sale of Fair Trade and ecologically friendly goods.

-Christmas Photos are taken yearly at Tuesday/Thursday Coffee Mornings, to help our guests stay connected to friends and family. Christmas Cards were also donated for the same purpose.

-The New Year's Day Dinner, which allows approximately 200 people to share food and fellowship with us in the hall. This event is supported and coordinated by many, many volunteers, who in turn were coordinated by Cheryl Perry, Alyssa Campbell, Shirley Piedt, Nancy Hillmer, while Rachel Anweiler organized the kitchen and kept food services running smoothly. Jan Johnson, former owner of Tigerlily, co-ordinates The Warm Room, with the help of her friends Lori Burns, Carla Lundman and Yvonne Chaperon. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event happen!

-Our Tuesday/Thursday Coffee Mornings offer a place and time for street neighbours and congregation to share a safe space and a quiet cup of coffee or donated snack. A recently acquired agreement with KFC means donated chicken is being delivered, thanks to Kendra Berg, to our Outreach freezer, after which it can then be thawed and served to grateful guests. Members of our congregation are at the tables to talk with people, and support is available from our Minister of Outreach, Cheryl Perry, for those who need to connect with local services and with our Food Cupboard. (Continued...)

-The Food Cupboard continues to benefit from support of the congregation. This year food and personal items were generously given. We are also very grateful to those who donated sandwiches, and to Tammy Lavoy who coordinated the sandwich makers.

-Our membership with the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition helps us to better understand and address poverty issues in BC, and we continue to share this information with the congregation through First Word and Minute for Mission.

Shirley Piedt is our liaison to Journey Home, as she attends meetings and think tanks to help keep Outreach and first United in the loop, as well as to share our knowledge about what we see our community needing in terms of housing strategies. This year a coalition of faith communities was started to help coordinate resources and future organization of outreach efforts.

-We presented movies & documentaries such as “Us vs Them” and “Defensora”, through the church to the community, to help welcome people in and also to educate others and ourselves.

-We explored radical hospitality with a workshop called “Living Hospitality in the Way of Jesus”, which was well attended by First United members as well as several other denominations and participants in the Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness.

-We organized community grants which were received this year by CMHA’s Heath House, and the John Howard Society for Hearth Stone.

-We attended a workshop on “Combatting Stigma & Poverty Shaming”

-We continue our walks and talks with our indigenous friends, through their representative groups such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Centre.

***“Ceremony has become fraught with judgment: the idea that whoever our God might be, He requires absolute adherence to the way, to the means, of approach. But those reactions are based on fear and they’re inaccurate.***

***The elders say that Creator is perfect loving energy. Within the realm of perfect love there is no judgment. If there is no judgment, then there can be no failure. In turn, if failure does not exist, there is no unworthiness. We are all one energy. We are worthy and we always were. We never have to qualify. And ceremony was born to allow us to remember that.”***

***– Richard Wagamese, One Drum: Stories and Ceremonies for a Planet***

# El Salvador scholarships

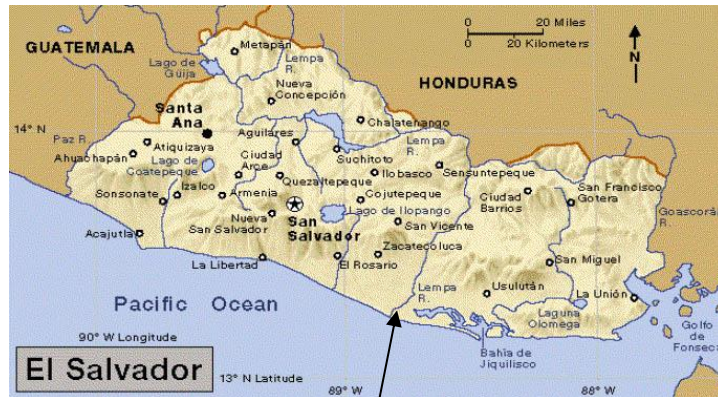
First's Sister Community Committee

Our El Salvador project assists young people living in our tiny rural sister community of El Triunfo to complete high school and for some, to go on to university. (The Salvadoran government covers schooling up to Grade 9.) Our commitment for the 2020 school year which commenced in January is as follows:

2 university students (Adonay & Fatima)	\$2,220
2 high school students (Marcela & Alejandra)	1,320
Workshops	265
Logistics & administration (FUNDAHMER)	<u>921</u>
Total Cost in U.S. Dollars	\$4,726
In Canadian funds (1.35 exchange + wire costs)	<b>\$6,450</b>

Here is how we have met our financial goals for the 2020 school year:

PAR & electronic giving	\$2,852
Other donations	2,716
Men's Club BBQ	409
Book Sales, sale of chocolates, crafts, Palestinian goods	<u>1,751</u>
Total raised	<b>\$7,728</b>



El Triunfo

Since the inception of our Sister Community relationship in 2009, First United has provided educational support to 18 young people and their families. We have donated books to the school. We've also partnered with Sunrise Rotary Club in a silo project and raised funds for beans and corn when El Triunfo was devastated by flooding.

Over the past ten years, 15 "pilgrims" from First United have travelled to El Salvador to visit our brothers and sisters in El Triunfo, experience the reality of life in a developing country, and participate in workshops and conferences. This exposure opens our eyes to the issues of economic injustice and the waste of human resources that also apply to the marginalized in our own community. Many thanks to the congregation for its continued support of this worthwhile relationship!

## Men's Group

Rob Riddle

The Men's Group continued to meet monthly on the second Thursday with varied times either morning (8:00AM) or afternoon (12:00PM). Our discussions continue to be facilitated by members and covered topics such as Loneliness, Interpretation of Music, Managing Difficult Life Transitions, etc.

We were asked to help with the Shrove Tuesday supper and after this received a request to think about taking this on each year. We also facilitated our annual June Father's Day barbecue for the congregation, another success in raising funds for First United's El Salvador project. We had our informal coffee meetings in July and August.

In December we had our annual Christmas luncheon which was well attended though we again received no response from our invitation to the other United Churches. We look forward to 2020 with challenging topics for discussion and taking responsibility for some congregational events.

## Worship Core Ministry

Carol Drury, chair

The Worship Core Ministry (WCM) is primarily responsible for all things worship oriented – from planning and reviewing worship services, listening for congregational feedback and discussions, arranging for various readers & lectors, greeters and ushers, sound and video system support, sanctuary décor, communion supplies, helping worship leaders and arranging for pulpit supply. We are also responsible for the administration of the church's Memorial Funds. We always welcome suggestions to improve the worship experience at First United Church.

### **Highlights of 2019 for the WCM work are:**

- Our members in 2019 were: Nikki Attwell, Frances Chiasson, Carol Drury (chair), Susanne Donkin, Linda Gunn, Karen Kranabetter, Tanya Pritchard, Marlene Spicer and Murray White. In addition, Frances Kitson and Bob Wallace have each served for part of that time. Joan Dalglish was also a member and our recorder until her sudden death at the end of June. Joan also organized the ushers and greeters; this task has now been taken on by Linda Munce, who joined our group in September.
- The 8:30 service still has a small, faithful group of attendees. We have an accompanist to play the hymns for the service.
- We were fortunate to have Frances Kitson take the job of interim minister for 6 months and we are grateful to Bob Wallace for agreeing to continue as a transition minister.
- We acknowledge the support of our pulpit supply preachers - Sharon Wilson, Darlene Cockerill, Tessa Russell and John Burton, who have filled in when needed. We are thankful for their willingness to be called in this way.
- Memorial funds – no purchases were made from this fund in 2019.

We look forward to another community-building, faith-filled year of ministering & worshipping at First United Church, Kelowna.

## Healing Ministry

Lorraine Hladik

We are very grateful for the space the Church has provided for the Healing Ministry to use as it allows for a consistent healing presence within the congregation and community, as well providing workshops and an ongoing practice group.

During 2019, healing was offered regularly on Thursday mornings. Our clientele came from the congregation and referrals from community agencies and individuals. Through feedback from clients and the referring agencies, we hear that the Healing Ministry has had an impact on their lives. By having specified appointment times, we were able to offer equal time to everyone who came and people recovering from major illnesses liked having regular appointments to help their healing process. We also went to the hospital or people's homes when requested. There is no cost for a treatment, but often donations are received.

Carol Brooks, Anne Shirley, Toshie Sumida, Judy Valks and Lorraine Hladik are the practitioners and continued to offer healing sessions to over 100 clients at the church and a few in the hospital. We were sorry to see Anne Shirley leave our group and wish her well.

\$500 was transferred to General Funds.

Some comments from recipients: "Thank you for helping me through some difficult times. I feel safe with you and that's so rare." "I would like to thank you for my treatments."

People receiving treatments are often given a Prayer Shawl and this has helped reinforce their feeling of being cared for in a loving way.

Members of our congregation are invited to come and experience Healing Touch, whether they are curious about it, seeking relaxation, looking for a change in their life, wanting support to heal from an illness or surgery, or needing help in dealing with personal loss at any level. The contact person is listed in every bulletin, so please call for an appointment.

## Thrift Shop

Linda Gilmour

Three days a week there are teams of volunteers who meet at the First United Thrift Store. There is always a hum of activity as the volunteers help our clients find quality household goods and women's and men's clothing at affordable prices. Some folk in the community, after counseling with out-reach staff, receive a voucher for goods as mentioned above. There is also a host of other items like books, jigsaw puzzle, CDs, craft and other items of interest that are there at reasonable prices. Our customs often say we are like a small department store and they appreciate how well kept it is and the helpful staff. We see what we do as a ministry to the larger community beyond our walls. Items that are not sold are donated to other local agencies. The Thrift Store hours are 10am to 2pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. If you would like join in this experience and become a volunteer, please contact Linda Gilmour at 250-212-7738, or Holly Pruden at 250-768-1303.

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Lorraine Hladik

A group of 6-10 women knit or crochet prayer shawls and lap robes that are available for the ministerial staff, Pastoral Care Core Ministry and members of the congregation to give to individuals who are experiencing life's challenges and who would benefit from a tangible reminder of God's surrounding love. This year about 25 shawls were knit or crocheted and over 20 shawls distributed. We receive many thank you cards and some comments from recipients were "It keeps me very cosy warm when I have it around my shoulders and brings me a certain peace. Thank you for your kindness."

All people in the congregation are encouraged to be a part of this Ministry by giving a shawl from the cupboard to someone they know who could benefit from it, whether a member of the congregation, a family member, a friend or someone in the community. The hospital visitors carry shawls in their car, ready to give when needed. There is a signup sheet to let the group know that a shawl was given and to whom, so we are aware of numbers and need.

The group meets monthly in Room #14 on the third Thursday from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm to knit together; share fellowship, inspiration and meditation; and to bless the newly knitted shawls and the people who will receive them. Knitting or crocheting tips and patterns are exchanged, as well as help given to beginners from the more experienced.

If you would like to contribute to the group, but no longer knit and have yarn, please donate that. For more information on the shawls or upcoming meetings, please call Lorraine Hladik at 250-763-3142 or Judy Valks 250-862-0712.

## Isabel Leitch – UCW

Jean Loyst

The unit meets the second Tuesday of each month in room 14 at 2 pm excepting July and August. We also meet the fourth Tuesday at 2pm in rm 14 when we enjoy fellowship. At each meeting we present an offering which is given to M&S. A worship and program is presented each month. Every meeting we contribute to a Christmas box which in 2019 the monies gathered were split between the church food cupboard and the Women's Shelter.

Special programs over the year consisted of; Kathy Rush & Mary Kjørven (an associate professor in the faculty of nursing at UBCO and a clinical nurse specialist) spoke of incontinence and bladder health; Beryl Itani – An exceptional lady spoke on emergency support services along with many volunteers during the 2003 disasterous fires; Robin Jarmin – speaking of his wide knowledge of how music therapy can affect our lives; Terry Welsh – A very talented gentleman entertained the unit with his guitar, familiar songs & his wonderful singing voice; Pam Laing – a birder who presented interesting photographs of the many different birds in the Okanagan Valley.

In December we celebrate with invited guests, a potluck meal and a special Advent worship and program. During 2019 we visited and sent cards to dear members who are ill. We miss them at our meetings. The year of 2019 was another year of friendship, caring, love and respect for each other.