



*Moved by the Winds of God
Bearing Gifts of Faith,
Respect and Peace
Charting a Course for Life*

Rockingham United Church Annual Report



July 2021 – June 2022

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Halifax, Nova Scotia
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MINISTER’S REPORT

Well, it’s been another difficult year, but I have hope for the year ahead.

This past year has been a little slow, but still some great things have happened in our church.

- We have had a number of study groups, book discussions, faith development conversations etc. where great conversation has happened.
- Our worship life has continued. Do you know that the last time a storm has interrupted our worship was January 2020? There have been a number of people who have helped to lead worship in the past year, which I’ve absolutely loved. Thanks to Sharon Ernst, Brian Martin, Jean Wentzell, Ben Kinsey (our student minister for 3 weeks in January), Terry Shaw, Beth Wilson, Anne Forbes and Matthew Galloway.

- A number of new people have become involved in Rockingham United this year, and we are all the richer for it.
- Our youth program is booming.
- Our pastoral care team has not lost touch with anyone during the pandemic, even though they couldn't visit. We are able to visit more people now and services at Parkland are happening more regularly now.
- We need a new way to structure our outreach work. The committee has disintegrated over the pandemic, but there is such a strong heart for outreach work here that much of the work has continued. There are quite a number of projects on the go that are guided both by the interests of those providing leadership and the needs of the community.
- Our men's group is going strong, and our women are in the process of re-forming into something new.
- And our AV team. Wow. Geoff Doane, Rodger Middleton and a growing group of AV volunteers have done amazing work. Go back and look at the first service we did during Covid. The sound was terrible (Geoff stepped in and fixed that right away) and the whole thing was done on one iPad. Our online presence is so much richer now, thanks to a lot of hard work.
- There are bridge games and crafts and a parent's play group, and so many more things going on.

In the book of 1 Samuel, it says that "it was a time of infrequent vision." This past year, our congregational energy level has been down and it has indeed felt like a time of infrequent vision. But out of that sleepier time in 1 Samuel, all of a sudden things started to happen, and it became one of the "golden ages" of the biblical era. I believe that we are also on the cusp of a more vibrant time. We have been faithful and quietly serving God these past years. This coming year, let's make some noise!

In faith, Rev. Sarah Reaburn

COUNCIL REPORT

Ministry: Rev. Sarah Reaburn; Chair: Dianna Prest; Chair Designate: Craig Sutherland; Secretary: Nancy Lowery; Treasurer: Wendy Burns; Trustees: Gary Wilson; Building & Property: Mark Thornton; Christian Development & Education: Wendy Bona; Membership Relations: Noelle Murphy & Sharon Ernst; Ministry & Personnel: Gaye Wishart; Outreach: Terri Billard; Pastoral Care: Eleanor King; Stewardship: Matthew Galloway; Worship: Heather McLearn; Region 15 Reps.: John McLearn, Brenda Munro

In the last year, we have had new representation on Council: Wendy Burns as Treasurer, Matthew Galloway as Chair of Stewardship, Mark Thornton as Chair of Building & Property and Noelle Murphy as Chair of Membership Relations for the remainder of 2021 with Sharon Ernst talking the helm in 2022. I want to thank the outgoing Chairs of 2021: Colleen Rollings, Sandra Taweel and Mary Lou Evans-Isaacs for all their contributions to Council and Rockingham United Church. Thank you for blessing us with your talents and all your hard work.

We have had some major changes in our church in the fall. The Montessori school moved to a new location that gave them opportunity for growth. We upgraded the sound system in the

sanctuary as well as the projector and video system installing new cameras and video controllers in the summer. This greatly improved our online worship services.

Our fundraising efforts in the fall including Christmas Sale and Christmas baked good trays being ordered online, thru email and the phone line. We supported our White Gift recipients AIDS Coalition of NS and Shelter NS as well as our Charlie Murphy Memorial Tree campaign.

We have had yet another difficult year of navigating Covid-19 in our church and in our community, locally and globally. We had hopes of things being different starting in the fall to be able to work towards more normalcy in our lives. We were able to celebrate wonderful services including the Children's Pageant Sunday, Carols by Candlelight and our Close to Home Advent services. Unfortunately, once again in the Christmas season, Covid19 numbers increased, our doors were closed, and we went to online worship for our Christmas services with worshipping online well into February.

We have been able to, in all of this, continue to do the work of our church. This year, we have made suppers for St. Andrew's United Sunday suppers. We have supported Brunswick Street Mission with a Valentine project collecting socks, gloves, and towels. We have had a chili take-out fundraiser. We have given food to the neighbourhood cupboard in Fairview. We have supported Feed Nova Scotia with food and monetary donations. We have supported Square Roots collecting outerwear for women. We are building relationship with the local Eritrean community who use our sanctuary for their Christian devotion. We have a thriving youth group of over 40 youth in our community. We have nurtured a Good Enough Growing Garden for Lent and Easter.

I want to thank all of you for the giving you do for and on behalf of Rockingham United Church. We have changes coming up, by the generosity of donations, for the choir loft and lighting in the sanctuary. We have ongoing fundraising efforts with FundScrip, O.S.C.A.R, the Yard Sale & Plant Sale in June and a RUC cookbook in the coming fall.

Our activity is growing again as we move forward on the path Jesus Christ set out before us to love and support our community within and outside of Rockingham United Church. That is what gives us hope for our future at Rockingham United Church. Thanks be to God.

Respectfully submitted, Dianna Prest

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees (BOT) met. The BOT follows the checklist outlined in the United Church Trustees Handbook of Accountabilities (2013), particularly checklist items that are relevant to property and investments of Rockingham United Church (RUC). Members include Doug Chaytor, Donna Richards, Santosh Lall and Gary Wilson.

The plan for future membership was discussed. Rick Lowery resigned from the BOT on November 1, 2021. This vacant position was not filled because a smaller committee can handle the necessary business of BOT effectively. Janet Mosher also resigned from the BOT. Gary thanked them for their contributions to the BOT and asked Council to recruit a new member for

the BOT. The membership terms of Donna Richards expires in 2023, Gary Wilson and Santosh Lall in 2024, Doug Chaytor in 2026.

The BOT met twice during this report period. The final receipt of the Stevens Estate Bequest to RUC was accepted. With the help of Rodger Middleton, the insurance policy was reviewed and adjusted to reflect the solar panel addition. The taxation of the property was reduced when the Montessori School ended their rental agreement.

Respectfully submitted, Gary Wilson, Chair

COMMITTEES

BUILDING AND PROPERTY

The Building and Property committee met once over the last year but has been busy doing tasks to keep the building and property in good shape.

Sylvia Thorne has been very helpful in identifying tasks for the B&P Committee that required our attention since many of us are not in attendance at the building frequently at the moment. She also continues to work with our current tenants and works to find us new tenants.

The committee has a few large tasks in the works, including refinishing the altar area, finding a solution to the lighting issue in the sanctuary and replacing lights in the Fireside Room, kitchen and offices with LEDs.

The members of the B&P Committee include Mark Thornton, Sandy Munro, Doug Redden, Chris Bona, Colleen Rollings.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Thornton, Chair

Technology Sub-Committee

The Committee's Mission: The Technology Sub-Committee of Rockingham United Church seeks to adhere to our church's mission to worship God, share Christ's teachings, welcome all with love, reach out, work for social justice and to care for God's creation. (paraphrased) This is done by promoting the use of technology to assist the operations of the church office, provide technological tools for our minister, council and all volunteers which will assist them to communicate with members/adherents, the wider church community and to reach out to the community around us. The committee supports the use of technology in the sanctuary to enhance the worship experience; supports the enhancement of our church web page and expanding the use of social media.

This past year has seen additional changes. In late August of 2021 we replaced our one camera with two digital cameras, added a controller which allowed us to have pre-sets on the two cameras and to zoom in and out with each camera. The cameras greatly enhance the video product. We opted to move away from OBS software to a production board which allows us to input PowerPoint from the computer and engage it with either of the cameras. Using the production board, we are now able to set up the live stream to our YouTube Channel in advance

and go live at the commencement of the service. We also record a video of the service in case something happens and we can revert to the recording by uploading it manually to the YouTube Channel shortly after the service is over. Geoff Doane and myself spent the fall and winter learning how to use this new equipment.

We began to have issues with loss of connection of devices and getting the livestream thru to the YouTube channel. We discovered that the router being used in the church network was a) very old, and, b) was designed for use in a residence. With the addition of IP addresses for data being transmitted to Nova Scotia Power from the Solar Panels, we needed to upgrade the router to one built for a commercial installation. That was done over Thanksgiving in 2021 and all the issues and problems with the video production setup went away.

We have a group of people who are interested in the video production for worship. In May of 2022 we began training sessions. All four will have sat in the driver's seat, controlling the production of the product that is used in the service and fed to our YouTube Channel. Going forward, there will be a schedule set up with five of us looking after this on a rotational basis.

Our YouTube Channel seems to be watched by a number of people, both, members and non-members. We get between 50 to 100 on a regular basis, and, on Easter Sunday 2022 we had over 300 watching all or part of the service. The YouTube Service on Sunday is watched at Parkland Seniors Complex on Parkland Drive each Tuesday morning.

We have not been able to get the church network server reconfigured to allow the upgrade of Power Church Plus. This is an outstanding item along with upgrading the church office computer with a new Microsoft Office product. These will be our focus going into the fall of 2022.

I thank the committee members for their continued involvement in this committee:

Geoff Doane - Sound Specialist

Don Hailstone - Networking, wired & wireless

Shawn Silver - Server, Cloud Computing & Computer Maintenance

Respectfully Submitted, Rodger Middleton, Chair

COVID-19 Sub-Committee

The Covid committee has met diligently over these past 2 years. We have amended policies for the church as necessary in response to changing government and United Church regulations, keeping the age and health of our congregation, our limited ventilation in mind, and community concerns in mind. We've tried to maintain a balance between safety on the one hand, and a desire to be together on the other. We know that for some we've been too restrictive and for others we've been too open. We appreciate your patience and cooperation. Stay well, everyone.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Sarah Reaburn

CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

Sunday School Programs

Sunday school had a successful year considering the restrictions and limitations that Covid-19 caused. We have been able to hold in-person Sunday school classes. Participant numbers have been down since the beginning of the pandemic. There are around 3 to 5 participants each week. I have been teaching the group as one group this past year and numbers do not require 2 separate classes at this time.

Sunday School participants were able to have a Christmas pageant in December. Numbers were lower than in previous years, but it all came together nicely. The majority of the service was done in person and one family recorded their parts at home and they were played at the appropriate part of the pageant.

Sunday School has been following along with the United Church lectionary calendar. Each week children and youth read a Bible story together, discuss that story and then do related crafts and activities.

Sunday School is currently work hard at bringing together the Youth Led Service that will take place early June 2022. The theme is Children of the Church. Children and youth will be discussing different Bible scriptures related to children and discussing how they feel about them / relate to them.

Respectfully submitted, Wendy Hawley, Staff

Youth Group

Youth Group had an extremely successful year. There are around 40 participants registered for the group with around 20 to 25 attending each meeting. New members are continually joining and the group continues to grow. In the Fall of 2021, we had a couple Zoom Youth Group meetings and then were able to return to in-person meetings.

Some of the meeting themes this past year were:

- Candy Bar Bingo
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Paint Night
- Let's Get Messy (making slime and other messy experiments)
- Glow Party (music, black lights, glow sticks)
- Movie Night
- Board Game Night
- Scavenger Hunt
- Bowling Party

For each meeting I always have a second adult present for safety reasons. It is never an issue to find volunteers to help out.

The end of the May the youth group is going bowling at Bowlarama. After the Youth Led service in June, youth group will be joining the Sunday School participants for a picnic and games at the church to celebrate the end of this year's meetings together.

The youth group now has a Facebook page, which is a great way to spread news of meetings and information with families. (Youth of Rockingham). The youth group and Sunday School also have their own Gmail account for correspondence (youthrockingham@gmail.com) instead of using personal email accounts.

Respectfully submitted, Wendy Hawley, Staff

Adult Education

We have continued with Zoom meetings due to the Covid restrictions, which in turn restricted the ways in which we could gather as adults. The on again off again restrictions have made Adult Education an ongoing challenge, but we have persevered with success.

In the early fall book talks were scheduled to take place to discuss the book “The Book of Longings”. This was both in person (with distancing rules) and on Zoom.

In November, the group study centered around the life, death and after series from the book of “For the Death of Me”. This was well received with lots of deep conversation.

In the new year, we looked at another book study. The books are “Bootstraps Need Boots” and “One Tory’s Lonely Fight to End Poverty in Canada”

Book study of the book ‘Good Enough’ started March 9th for the Lenten book study, combined with Fairview United Church with Revs Sarah & Angela taking turns. This was a great success with a large turnout.

Reader’s circle has completed “5 Little Indians” with a smaller turnout but some very good discussion. Book study on the Book ‘Inspired’ has started - a way to read the bible with intelligence & integrity. This is a much more intense type of study.

Confirmation classes seem to be an ongoing challenge. These are being looked at again late Spring for in person classes.

Respectfully submitted, Wendy Bona, Chair

MEMBERSHIP RELATIONS

Committee Members are Eleanor King, Noelle Murphy, Gaye Wishart and Sharon Ernst, chair.

Rockingham United Church Webpage and Rockingham Reflections newsletter fall under the umbrella of Membership Relations. Thank you to both webmaster Rodger Middleton and editor Gary Wilson for keeping us informed of all that happens at Rockingham United. We appreciate your work.

With ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the activities of our committee have come to a stop. Continued online worship services and at times, in-person worship with social distancing, has meant that we could not host Cup and Conversation.

Noelle Murphy served as chair of the committee from June 2021 to December 2021. Sharon Ernst took over as chair in January of 2021 and continues to work closely with Noelle. We both look forward to being able to see people standing together chatting at Cup and Conversation hopefully soon.

Thank you to the committee members for their years of dedication to the hospitality ministry at Rockingham United Church.

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Ernst, Chair

MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL

Members: Kate Brown, Kaireen Chaytor, Barb Lall, JoAnne Tanton, Gaye Wishart (Chair)

- The two students (Paige Thornton, Evan Thorne) completed their job assignments for the Summer Employment Program, summer 2021.
- Wendy Hawley, Sunday School/Youth Group Coordinator, accepted her new contract from September 2021 to June 2022.
- The Minister and staff received economic adjustments to their pay rates effective January 2022.
- All performance reviews will be completed by the end of June 2022.
- The Minister and staff have continued with a hybrid approach to work, on-site and at home.
- JoAnne Tanton will be leaving the Committee. We thank her for her role as Secretary to the Committee and liaison with the Office Administrator.
- My second term as Chair will be up at the end of June. We are hopeful the Nominating Committee will successfully recruit a replacement.
- We are thankful for the flexibility of our Minister and staff and the important contributions each and everyone makes to the life and work of Rockingham United Church.

Respectfully submitted, Gaye Wishart, Chair

OUTREACH

There is little doubt that 2022 has been a challenging year for everyone and the Outreach Committee was no exception. Covid 19 continued to batter society as a whole and programs that we would normally do had to be cancelled or downsized due to ongoing restrictions. Despite this challenge, the Committee like so many others quickly adapted. It is with some satisfaction that we were able to maintain many of our programs this year and start at least two new efforts. On a sour note, as of the Congregational meeting on 12 June 2022 the committee will consist of one person. New folks are badly needed.

The first effort of the year was our White Gift Campaign. This year we added Brunswick Street Mission, which also included the Aids Coalition of Nova Scotia and Shelter Nova Scotia, to our list of recipients for the gifts from this activity. Despite our smaller numbers we had nearly the same contributions to each organization. It was also in a period when we started to lock down again, so it seemed almost an anti-climax.

We also became involved in organizing the “Socks for Valentines Day” event, a new idea for a worthy cause. The efforts of the Congregation were greatly appreciated, and the socks were well received by the recipients. The committee intends to keep this event for next year.

So, what is happening now? Our efforts are to regain a more direct relationship with our partners which also have been forced to downplay their direct in-person relations with other organizations.

Most of our partners have been hampered the same way we have whether Al Rasoul or Bedford United as examples. The second initiative is to assist a new Christian denomination, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church who has been trying to establish themselves in Halifax. The community is made up of members from both Ethiopia and Eritrea and was quite a small community until about three years ago when the most recent conflict took place in Tigray province. Many moved to various locations where they could find safe havens. Halifax became one of those havens. The local community has grown from a small number to nearly six hundred. They are in the process of raising funds to purchase a church of their own, but recently have been sharing our facilities when possible. Their other challenge is to find a priest not only for their Congregation but also to train their acolyte or priest in training.

It has been a mutual benefit as they have also helped older members of Congregation move. I should also mention they are very young with most of the Congregation are in their twenties and thirties and most have young children. It is a pleasure to see the great enthusiasm for their project. Although our Roman Catholic friends say they are the oldest church, these folks would disagree, their language of their religion is the original language of Christ, Aramaic.

We are continuing to help them on their journey to establishing a new church in Halifax for a new community of new Canadians. It has been a joy to see their vigour and youth as they rise to this challenge. RUC intends to be there for their journey such that we become friends and establish a long-term relationship with this vital new community.

Respectfully submitted, John McLearn, Rep

PASTORAL CARE

Members: Eleanor King (Chair), Heather Coady, Barb Lall, Doreen Martin, Jan Mills, Hazel McLeod, Janet McMurtry, Jean Wentzell, Joan Munro, Lynda Pentz, Diane Ward, Terry Shaw and Rev Sarah. We are pleased to welcome Ann Collinson and Donna Richards to the Committee. Donna will assume the responsibilities of Chair on Jan 1, 2023. We have met monthly usually by Zoom.

The Pastoral Care Committee provides support to members of our church community, especially during times of illness and death of a family member. COVID made it necessary to cancel the monthly service by Rev. Sarah and Joan Munro at Parkland and also the Friendly Socials. We celebrated at Birthday parties with those who are 90 and over with tea, flowers and treats which COVID also made it necessary to cancel. Anyone over 80 receives a Birthday card and those over 90 a gift. We appreciate any information that helps us to update our birthday and anniversary list.

Gift bags were delivered to 32 people at Thanksgiving and Christmas 2021 as well as Easter 2022.

Respectfully submitted, Eleanor King, Chair

UCC ATLANTIC REGION

Regular Covid updates from Executive Minister Rev. Faith March-MacQuish have been circulated according to provincial Health Authority and premier guidelines.

Weekly updates from Region 15 are generated and are available to anyone on-line at <https://ucceast.ca/regional-council-15/>

The 45th General Council of The United Church of Canada will meet in July 2022, entirely online, for the first time in the history of the United Church. You are encouraged to pray for the leaders at this conference to strive to maintain structure of our UC of Canada.

The Annual Meeting of Region 15 took place on May 27th – 29th, 2022. Three webinars occurred in advance of the meeting, addressing important issues and allowing for understanding and dialogue in advance of the meeting and therefor efficiency at the meeting itself.

- Information Webinars (Pre Annual Meeting)
- **Webinar #1:** Intro to Zoom, Practice Voting and Orientation Date: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 12:00pm-1:00pm (ADT) – Lunch & Learn
- **Webinar #2:** Division Reports and Strategic Plan Date: Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 7:00pm-8:30pm (ADT)
- **Webinar #3:** President-Elect Nominee Introductions, Budget 2023 and 2021 Audited Statements Date: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at 7:00pm-8:30pm (ADT)

The theme for this year's annual meeting was "We Are Not Alone: Reimagining Community". The Guest speaker was Rev. Dr. Anna Robbins, from Acadia University. She gave a very effective and encouraging way to think of reimagining community activities, hopeful regular activities can change, yet still be effective.

- There was also encouragement on the theme from Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary, UCC.
- Rev. Murray Pruden, from General council Executive on how to welcome friends and strangers into our churches and sharing goals in all we do. He reported on UCC strategic plan and addressed aboriginal affairs in our Regions.
- Hal Llewelyn reported on the Region work on Guaranteed Living Income and the way every person can be involved in the Conversation.
- Rev. Ivan Gregan reported on behalf of 'Affirm United' with information on how to become an affirming church.
- There was reporting on Nova Scotia's relationship with Bermuda, renaming of the Region 15 to include both NS and Bermuda.

At the virtual Annual meeting, Shauna MacDonald was voted to be the President Elect of Region 15 and First Dawn Shing Waters in 2023, Shauna's home church is St. James United in Dartmouth, NS for 40 years. Her church experience is vast; UCW, Representative at various levels of UC governance, teaching Sunday School and Coordinator of Feeding Others of Dartmouth for 18 years, this FOOD program provides a meal the 3rd Tuesday of every month at Margaret's House, a downtown Dartmouth soup kitchen. It was moved that the 2023 Annual meeting of Region 15 and First Dawn Shining Waters will happen together and in person. Region 15 Annual Report May 2022 Well known friends from Bedford United Church, April Hart who worked for decades with Youth and Young Adult ministries and Rick Gunn who provided music leadership for decades will be Ordained on May 29th at Bedford United Church. Updates on all activities, conversations and actions of Region 15 and First Dawn Shining Waters can be found online at <https://ucceast.ca/regional-council-15/> and United Church of Canada at <https://united-church.ca/>

Respectfully submitted, Brenda Munro, Rep

STEWARDSHIP

In September, the stewardship Committee welcomed three new members of the team, including Jennifer Thornton, Jack Rilett and Matthew Galloway as Chair. We said good-bye to David Carmichael and Brenda Munro and thanked them for their donating their time and talent to this committee.

The committee met a couple of times in both November and December by zoom to brainstorm and put together a calendar of fundraising events for 2022.

Fundscrip began in September and ran until early June and after eight orders, raised \$3,657.13 in donations. We would like to thank our usual 25 supporters and look forward to more participation from the congregation when we start up again in the Fall.

In late February we put our talented committee to work and held a Chili Takeout. This fundraiser made a \$1680 profit.

In early April we held an Easter Cookie Fundraiser which generated a profit of \$1000. We would like to make special thanks to past Chair Sandra Taweel and Barb Lall who did most of the banking and decorating.

A plant sale was held in June of 2021 and it should be mentioned that this sale made a profit of \$499. Another plant sale was held in early June of 2022 in conjunction with the Yard Sale, and made a profit of over \$700. Again Sandra Taweel should be thanked for organized this event.

Respectfully submitted, Lynn Knapp, Rep.

WORSHIP

Current membership of the Committee:

Heather McLearn (chair), David Clare, Anne Forbes, Ann Collinson, Brenda Munro, Terry Shaw, Anne Haché, Kathy MacNeil (RUC Music Director), Rev Sarah Reaburn (ex-officio)

The Worship Committee met monthly (mostly by Zoom), on the first Tuesday of the month from September 2021 to June 2022.

Statistics 2020/21

- We welcomed 7 new members by membership transfer, as well as Rev. Suzanne Edgar, who has found a church home with us; as an ordained minister she is a member of Region 15 rather than a congregation.
- Weddings 0
- Baptisms 0
- Funerals 7

Another year of challenges for many of us, but we are moving forward as COVID restrictions are lifting.

We resumed in-person worship in September 2021, including choir and congregational singing, but were once again forced to suspend these activities in mid-December due to a fourth wave of COVID infection. We restarted in-person worship in February 2022 and dropped distancing requirements and made masking optional as provincial restrictions eased in mid-March. Masking and distancing were briefly reintroduced in April due to a spike in cases within the congregation;

distancing has since been dropped once again, although masking remains mandatory at this time.

Planned installation of new flooring in the choir loft area was approved by the committee and is being arranged by the Building Committee. We are also considering enhanced lighting in the chancel area, in cooperation with the Building Committee and the AV volunteers.

We had no resignations to the Committee in 2021/22. Ann Collinson will be leaving the committee after June 2022. Heather McLearn's term as chair is completed in June 2022, and she will also be leaving the committee. Anne Haché has agreed to join us going forward.

During the past year, the activities of the committee included planning Sunday Worship under the guidance of Rev. Reaburn. We arranged and participated in planning special services for Remembrance Sunday, a lay-led service between Christmas and New Year's, Anniversary Sunday in February, Palm Sunday and Easter, and another lay-led service at the end of May. We also had a popular and well-received Carol Service in mid-December, just before the most recent shutdown.

Other tasks handled by the Worship Committee include recruiting volunteers for participation in worship services and for tasks related to the maintenance of the Sanctuary and Narthex and arranging for supply ministerial and music staff.

We would like to acknowledge the many contributions of our committee members:

- David Clare for volunteering his assistance at funerals.
- Anne Forbes for looking after our Communion and organizing Scripture readers for Sunday worship.
- Kathy MacNeil for performing as our committee secretary.
- Ann Collinson maintaining the Christ Candle and organizing hanging of banners in the Sanctuary.

Thanks to members of the congregation who have taken on the many duties which maintain and enhance our Sanctuary and our Worship:

- All those who have served our congregation as ushers and readers for Sunday worship.
- The youth of the congregation as they continue to participate in worship services periodically throughout the past year.
- Committee and congregation members who decorated the sanctuary for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Easter.
- The Audiovisual Team for their work arranging livestreaming and pre-recording Worship.
- Special thanks to Sylvia Thorne for her ongoing assistance and encouragement.

Summary

As I leave the position of chair of Worship, I would like to thank the members of the Worship Committee, our wonderful paid staff at RUC, and the congregation for your ongoing support. We are truly blessed to have an abundance of talents within our congregation and are grateful to those who have shared their gifts so generously.

Respectfully submitted, Heather McLearn, Chair

GROUPS

CHOIRS

The music ministry resumed some participation in the worship services this year. Our Senior choir resumed rehearsal and singing in services in late September, sharing hymns and anthems beginning on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 10th. The Worship and Covid Committees agreed that the Choirs could present their annual Carols by Candlelight Concert. The Men's and Senior Choirs began rehearsing special music for this event, on December 12th. This was a joyful musical evening, followed up on December 13th by the provincial announcement of more stringent Covid restrictions beginning December 17th. So, Thursday, December 16th, the choirs, with the assistance of our gifted AV team, were able to pre-record all the remaining Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany music to complete the season.

Neither the Men nor the Youth choir resumed after Christmas, but the Senior Choir was able to sing again during Lent and was well prepared for a music-filled Easter season, when Covid struck the choir itself. Several members were down with the virus, thankfully all recovering shortly thereafter. Our Easter special music presentation was thus limited to fewer anthems sung by a quartet and congregational hymn singing.

The Senior choir resumed once again in May and will finish the year singing in the loft. Throughout the year we have managed to have live singing in worship every Sunday, including small groups of choir singers or youth duets or solos when full choir was not recommended. The Music Ministry would like to express our gratitude to Rodger Middleton and Geoff Doane, without whom we would not be able to share our gifts as widely as we have shared them this past year. I am very much looking forward to reassembling Rockingham's three singing groups this coming Fall.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy MacNeil, Choir Director

MEN'S GROUP

The Men of RUC is an opportunity for all men of the congregation to gather, through service to our church, outreach to those in need and social activities. We focus on the spirit of friendship of men involved in our church. While we have 40+ men on our email distribution list, we typically have 10 – 15 ready and willing to participate in our various activities each year.

Outreach Projects:

Monthly Lunch Meetings: While our monthly lunch meetings continued this year, there were times when we could not meet due to the closing of restaurants. The cost of admission is new socks and/or underwear, good quality used seasonal clothing, gloves, toques, and mittens for **Brunswick Street Mission**. We kept in contact with the mission and fulfilled their need requests of not only the above noted items, but on one occasion a large quantity of toiletries. Coffee Shop Gift Cards were also a part of our monthly delivery to the mission. We thank all participants of this Outreach project which is also a social activity for the men of RUC. We also thank Freeman's on Dutch Village for their kind hospitality during these monthly events.

Fund Raising Projects:

The Charlie Murphy RUC Memorial Christmas Tree: We were able to carry on with the Memorial Christmas Tree in December. During the Pandemic, the Memorial Christmas Tree realized the largest sale of Ornaments since its inception.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper & Mother's Day Lobster Lunch: Both of these events were cancelled this year. The Shrove Tuesday was cancelled due to the Pandemic and the Mother's Day Lobster Lunch was planned but cancelled due to the high cost of Lobsters at the wharf.

Oscar: Our **2021 Oscar Campaign** began early in the year and ended on White Gift Sunday in December. It too was a great success. Our **2022 Oscar Campaign** began on April 17th and will end the Sunday following Thanksgiving. **Oscar** is an acronym for **Our Spare Change Aiding Rockingham**.

Projects around the Church:

Church Property Clean Up: A work party was held to clean up around the church entrance, The John Turner Memorial Garden, the area around the oil tanks and around the perimeter of the parking lot.

Provide support for Property & Maintenance Committee: The Property & Maintenance Committee continues to rely on support of the men of RUC on an as needed basis for projects around the church facility, inside and out.

Finances:**Men's Group Financial Report July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**

Opening Balance July 1, 2021		\$1,333.74
Receipts:		
Oscar 2020	\$5,646.75	
Memorial Tree	\$1,595.00	
Rhodie Fraser Yard Sale*	\$ 565.00	
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper*		
Lobster Takeout*		
Misc Amt Found from Previous Outing	\$ 10.00	
Total Receipts		\$7,816.75
Disbursements:		
Memorial Tree Purchase	\$ 40.00	
Transfer to Church Operating Fund	<u>\$8,000.00</u>	
Total Disbursements		\$8,040.00
Closing Balance May 19, 2022		<u>\$1,110.49</u>

***Accounting Notes:**

- a) Rhodie Fraser asked the Men of RUC to host a Yard Sale at her home. The sale took place on a Saturday and the Men of RUC received \$565.00 from the sale.
- b) Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 2022 and Mother's Day Lobster Take Out 2022 was cancelled due to COVID Restrictions and the high cost of lobsters.

Join our Email List: Stay in tune with the happenings of this group, the Men of Rockingham United. Simply send an email to rmiddleton@eastlink.ca requesting your name to be added and we'll keep you up to date on the group's happenings.

Respectfully Submitted, Rodger Middleton

WEBSITE – SOCIAL MEDIA

RUC's Website: Rockingham United has had a website for about 19 years. Work is done on the site on a weekly basis, to bring the weekly e-updates, order of service and any other news to our wider church community. Feel free to visit our website at www.rockinghamunited.org and take a look around at all the information available.

Website Traffic: Over the years the average annual traffic has remained steady. We use Statscounter and Google Tag Manager to track stats on use of the website. Most visits happen on Friday or Saturday of each week and are higher in the Fall to Spring months than in the Summer. Whether or not cookies were placed on the visitor's system when they were on our site depends on whether they have cookies enabled on their computer. Therefore, the First Time Visits and Unique Visits can be higher than Returning Visits.

Social Media: Rockingham United has accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These social media sites are maintained by the church office and Dianna Prest. Dianna looks after Facebook on a weekly basis and events that are occurring at Rockingham United get posted to these programs as well. Facebook has become a popular source for information on happenings at Rockingham United. Just prior to September 2020, our loft configuration was changed allowing us to livestream worship to our YouTube Channel. Our worship services have been a combination of streaming live and recorded videos as well as PowerPoint screens of words for hymns, prayers, etc.

Our website, YouTube Channel and our social media posts serve our congregation well, getting our message out to the church and wider community.

Respectfully Submitted, Rodger Middleton

CO-OP PLAYGROUP

Our playgroup began to meet for the year in September 2021 on Friday mornings from 10 – 12 in the church hall. We have had a regular attendance of 16 – 20 children each week. Because of COVID, we have had to forgo story time, singing and our food related activities. We also had to take a couple of breaks during the year due to COVID surges when the church was closed. We continue to mask up and keep our distance. We also do a regular cleaning of our toys. We will continue to meet until the end of June, 2022, and begin again in September when we hope to be

able to have story and singing time and celebrate special events with party food. For information about this group please contact Karen Middleton at 902-443-0580 or email at karenlm5@icloud.com.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Middleton

STATISTICS

Year ending December 31, 2021

Households under Pastoral Care – 319

Households Financially Supporting – 172

Number of Baptisms – 0

Number of Funerals – 7

Number of Marriages – 0

Average weekly attendance – 55 in person, 114 online