

Central United Church



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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2025

STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS

STAFF

Thomas Beach
Darcy Fischer.....
Rev. Luke Haisa
Dasha Krasnozhen

Oksana Krasnozhen
Mary Lansdell

Maegan Lansdell-Cole

Roberto Montagni
Alena Naumchyk.....
Colleen Robarts
Peter Sheridan

Recovery Team Lead
Sunday Custodian
Minister
Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator
(September to December)
Music Director
Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator
(Retired June 2025)
Educational Assistant for Kids in Action
(January - June)
Treasurer
Principal Organist / Accompanist
Office Administrator
Recovery Team Lead

BOARD

Lori Bazin
Sandra Child
Marivic Dela Cerna.....
Rev. Luke Haisa
Bob Hindley
Newton Hislop
Edie Lee
Morgan O’Flanagan.....
John Patterson.....
Lucas Ramage
Diane Scheibner

Worship Chair
Regional Representative
Christian Development Chair
Minister
Finance Chair
Property Chair
Ministry and Personnel Chair
Recording Secretary
Congregational Care Chair
Outreach & Justice Chair
Board Chair / Stewardship Chair

TRUSTEES

Newton Hislop (Chair)
Bob Hindley
Diane Scheibner

WORKING GROUPS

Communications Team
Recovery Team
Tech Team

Claire Loberg & Colleen Robarts
Peter Sheridan & Thomas Beach
Colleen Robarts, Ivan Bacon
& Ilia Levykin

2025 STATISTICS

DECEASED


In Loving Memory



though
absent, you
are always
near

Arliemarie Beach
1950 - 2025

In Loving Memory



In hearts
of those who
who loved you, you
will stay.

James Stephen Cole
1961 - 2025

In Loving Memory



You are in
God's hands now
but forever in our
hearts

Denis Michael Grady
1953 - 2025

In Loving Memory



though
absent, you
are always
near

Ute Isolde Mullin
1949 - 2025

In Loving Memory



though
absent, you
are always
near

*Francil "Tony"
Eustace Nisbett*
1958 - 2025

In Loving Memory



though
absent, you
are always
near

Elizabeth Eva Reder
1937 - 2025

In Loving Memory



Until we
meet again, we
carry you in our
hearts

David Warren Reesor
1943 - 2025

In Loving Memory



Rest in
peace, you
will always be
cherished

Doug Michael Vandersteen
1964 - 2025

In Loving Memory



though
absent, you
are always
near

Kathleen Grace Webster
1965 - 2025

2025 STATISTICS

Adult Baptism

Adult Baptism April 20, 2025

*Wyan Berard
Damian Dunham
Paul Hobson
Johnny McIsaac
Cristl Porter
Jason Wong*



Infant Baptism

January 12, 2025

*Logan Josephine O'Flanagan
Daughter of Dillon & Morgan O'Flanagan*

November 16, 2025

*Harrison Stirling & Fletcher Alexander McQueen
Sons of Sean & Kristen McQueen*

Membership

May 4, 2025
Myleen Sacro

Weddings

May 17, 2025
Peter Dykstra & Lina Tenorio

June 7, 2025
Dema Levykin & Oksana Krasnozhen

July 5, 2025
Christopher Ocampo & Ruffa Mae Tongol

MINUTES

2025 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, MAY 25, 2025

2025 Annual Congregational Report

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2025

General

Rev. Luke Haisa led in prayer and then called the meeting to order at 12:44 p.m. He outlined the purpose of the meeting:

- to approve annual reports
- to approve 2024 financial statements
- to approve 2025 operating budget
- to elect Board members
- to provide updates on significant events

Pastor Luke asked for a motion regarding the conduct of voting.

Moved by Morgan Flanagan, seconded by Colleen Robarts, that voting be conducted by a show of hands unless a secret ballot is requested for a particular item. Carried.

Pastor Luke then moved to elect Diane Scheibner as chair of the meeting.

Moved by Newton Hislop, seconded by Lee Patterson, that Diane Scheibner be elected to chair this Annual Congregational Meeting. Carried.

Pastor Luke turned the meeting over to Diane.

Diane requested a motion to have Lori Bazin elected as recording secretary.

Moved by Marivic Dela Cerna, seconded by Edie Lee, that Lori Bazin be elected as recording secretary for this Annual Congregational Meeting. Carried.

Diane then asked for a motion regarding voting privileges.

Moved by Sandra Child, seconded by Newton Hislop, that voting privileges be extended to adherents. Carried.

Diane requested that everyone present please sign the Roll Call as sheets were being circulated, and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

Minutes of Last Annual Congregational Meeting

Diane asked if anyone had noted any errors or omissions in the minutes of the last Annual Congregational Meeting. Hearing none, she called for the motion.

Moved by Newton Hislop, seconded by Lorraine Anderson, that the minutes of the February 25, 2024, Annual Congregational Meeting be adopted as distributed with the Annual Report. Carried.

Adoption of Annual Report

Diane asked whether there were any questions regarding the 2024 Annual Report, then asked for a motion to adopt.

Moved by Lee Patterson, seconded by John Patterson, that the Central United Church 2024 Annual Report, excluding the Financial Report and Budget, be adopted as printed. Carried.

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Nominations

Diane reminded the meeting that a decision was made last year to eliminate the Nominations Team. Each Team is therefore responsible for finding its own Chair, who would, as such, serve on the Board.

Diane presented the names of Team Chairs whose terms are up and who have agreed to stand for re-election:

- Worship Team Chair - **Lori Bazin**
- Regional Representative - **Sandra Child**
- Finance Chair - **Bob Hindley**
- Property Chair - **Newton Hislop**
- Ministry and Personnel Chair - **Edie Lee**

She then reported that the following Teams have vacant Chair positions:

- Administration
- Communications
- Outreach and Justice
- Congregational Care
- Governing Board Chair
- Recording Secretary

Diane turned the meeting over to Morgan O'Flanagan to chair. Morgan then reported that Diane Scheibner has agreed to let her name stand for Chair of the Board and that John Patterson has agreed to stand for Chair of Congregational Care.

Morgan further indicated that it is recommended that the other Teams' Chairs (Administration, Communications, Outreach and Justice, and Recording Secretary) be left vacant at this time.

Moved by Morgan O'Flanagan, seconded by Denis Bazin, that Lori Bazin, Sandra Child, Bob Hindley, Newton Hislop, and Edie Lee be re-elected to their respective Board positions and that Diane Scheibner be elected to serve as Board Chair and John Patterson be elected to serve as Congregational Care Chair.

Morgan then invited further nominations from the floor. Calling three times for further nominations and hearing none, she declared that nominations cease.

Motion Carried.

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

UPDATES ON SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Library Update – Bill Moore

Bill indicated that it has been a year and a half since we ‘turned the lights back on in the Library’. He reported that over the past year, he has had three objectives for the Library: to refresh, to renew, and to become relevant.

To refresh the Library space, he has hung donated art, set up figurines and knick-knacks on the shelves, and endeavoured to make the space more welcoming for browsing and small-group meetings.

In the interest of renewal, two new sections have been added to the Library to perk interest: (1) “Local Interest” featuring Calgary history, hikes, walks and bike trails; and (2) “Canada Reads” which features the five finalists from the annual national competition.

In efforts to remain relevant, Bill has focused on providing more recent publications. 334 books have been added to the Library: 260 from donations from generous congregants and 74 newly published books also donated by congregants. The featured table at the Library entranceway each month focuses on different authors or themes.

In summary, Bill thanked Pat Gault for all his help and thanked Denis Bazin for his assistance with hanging pictures and lettering for the new signage. Bill shared that folks from Scarboro United were impressed with our Library following the Good Friday service, and said that we have a wonderful resource. Bill concluded his remarks by inviting everyone to come visit the Library each Sunday after morning services and said that he would love to help them find a good book.

Congregational Growth – Rev. Luke Haisa

Pastor Luke spoke about Central’s vision and desire to see the congregation grow in number. With this yearning on his heart and on the hearts of others, a team was formed specifically to focus on congregational growth. Along with Pastor Luke, the team consists of Pat Gault, Rina Tugade, Darbie Layos, and Imole Lapite. The team will explore ways to appeal to new people, develop new marketing ideas, encourage current congregants to invite family and friends, and reach out to residents of the surrounding community. Pastor Luke asked if anyone wished to join the team in its endeavours or had any ideas to share in this regard. With God’s help, we are embarking on a journey to grow our congregation.

Central Outreach Hub – Brad Pert

Diane acknowledged Lucas Ramage, who served as Youth Leader in this congregation quite a few years ago (Newton Hislop was in the group). He has returned to the church by volunteering with the Outreach Hub.

After showing a promotional video created by Lucas, Brad shared his report:

Central United Church in Calgary has a rich, century-long tradition of outreach, marked by compassion and adaptability. Over the years, the church has responded to changing community needs – from serving meals during the Great Depression, supporting addiction recovery in the 1970s and 80s, to helping launch organizations like CUPS and In From The Cold. The Outreach Hub continues this legacy, embodying the church’s enduring mission to help those in need.

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

The Outreach Hub began with a simple act of generosity: serving food to those in need, which quickly grew into a weekly rhythm of providing meals, conversation, and eventually clothing. As relationships deepened, the program expanded organically, attracting more guests and partners. Today, the Outreach Hub stands as a testament to Central United's ongoing commitment to serving the downtown Calgary community with compassion and flexibility, adapting to both the diversity and resilience of its neighbours. *(Full report is available upon request.)*

Brad then asked if anyone had any questions.

- Melven Dela Cerna asked what steps had been taken regarding safety and security?
- Brad said that access points are being monitored; there are people posted outside the washrooms for security. He said they are aware of concerns and are working on them. He invited feedback from the congregation: What makes it work for you?
- Melven said that there are people outside of our building under the influence of drugs and alcohol who make it difficult to navigate the sidewalks. There are also many people hanging out in the alley and using drugs. Perhaps more volunteers are needed.
- Lee Patterson asked how to give specifically to the Hub. Diane replied that you donate to the church and note 'Outreach' on your gift.

Financial Statements for 2024

As Chair of the Finance Team, Bob Hindley began by commenting that the way the Hub has evolved over the past couple of years is amazing! He then referred to his report on page 16 of the Annual Report and to the Financial Statement on page 48.

Operating Revenues

2024 revenues were \$287k – 5% less than budget of \$301k – 10% more than 2023

- regular donations were \$233k – 17% less than budget – 4% less than 2023
- room rentals were \$18k – 8% less than budget – 12% more than 2023
- specified Hub donations were \$28k – no budget or prior year
- we received \$9k in unbudgeted non-recurring miscellaneous income

Operating Expenses

2024 expenses were \$614k – 6% more than budget of \$579k – 13% more than 2023

- The success and growth of the Outreach Hub resulted in more expenses than anticipated
 - 2024 budget included an extra \$7k in Specified Disbursements for Hub expenses
 - we actually incurred \$9k in Hub Projects & \$19k in Hub Operating
 - Fortunately, these expenses were totally covered by the specified Outreach Hub donations
 - to improve visibility, we decided to add 3 new Hub-specific line items to the financial statement - Hub Revenue for specified donations, Hub Projects, and Hub Operations
- All 2024 Hub transactions were recorded using the 3 new line items

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

- church maintenance was \$40k – 58% more than budget – 153% more than 2023
 - Much of this was due to an unanticipated \$10,000 deductible payment related to a large insurance claim to repair physical and water damage caused by an intruder breaking into the building via a roof door above the parapet stairwell.
- utilities expense was \$34k – 12% more than budget - 13% less than 2023
 - lower rates offset by an unanticipated increase in the use of the building and kitchen.

Operating Deficit

The 2024 operating deficit was \$328k – 18% more than the budgeted deficit of \$278k

- combination of \$14k under budget on revenues and \$36k over on expenses

The 2024 operating revenues covered only 47% operating expenses.

Legacy Account

Total Legacy Fund income for 2024 was \$272k comprised of

- cash revenue of \$265k
- \$217k in bequests, \$35k in mortgage interest, and \$12k in other investment interest
- non-cash deferred revenue recognition of \$7k related to capital items
- only Legacy expense was non-cash building amortization of \$29k

And the result was a \$242k surplus.

Year-End Cash Position

At year-end, we had \$573k cash on deposit

- \$48k of this is restricted to specified purposes
 - \$28k in the organ fund & \$20k specified for Outreach Hub initiatives.

Investments

Bob provided a quick recap of the November 2021 property transaction involving the sale of the former Canadian Bible Society property and the option on our annex

- \$750k down payment used to repay all UCC indebtedness and to provide a modest legacy fund reserve
- The balance, at Central's request, was structured as a vendor take-back mortgage registered on the CBS land title
- serves as a secure investment that generates interest income
- spreads receipt of remaining proceeds over 3.5 more years with payments of \$25k per month
- final \$25k payment will be in December 2027
- Currently, the entire \$25k monthly payment is being used to cover our operating deficit, which is not the intended use of proceeds from an asset sale.

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Acknowledgements

Bob shared his sadness and shock in September to learn of the death of our colleague and Finance Team member, Ron Westcott. Ron served faithfully on the Finance Team for many years. His friendship, wisdom and expertise are sorely missed.

Bob then expressed his gratitude to:

- Roberto Montagni, our Treasurer, for his guidance and dedication to day-to-day finance matters
- Colleen Robarts, our Office Administrator, for the support she provides to Finance
- our offering counters, Bill Moore, Lori Bazin, Denise Longland, and Colleen Robarts
- and the many congregants who faithfully support the ministry here at Central, both financially and otherwise.

Final Comments

The operating deficits remain a serious concern for Central. The annual operating deficit for 5 of the past 7 years has exceeded \$200k. Without the Federal COVID support grants, it would have been all of the past 7 years.

We have been using proceeds from bequests and the 2021 property sale to cover the deficits. We have continued with the same operating model while holding out hope that the financial situation would improve following the major dip during COVID. It hasn't been improving. If we continue on the current trajectory, our finances will last only another 4 or 5 years, which isn't very long. I think it would be timely to undertake a strategic review.

Bob then asked if anyone had questions about the 2024 Financial Statement, and none were raised.

***Moved by Bob Hindley, seconded by Newton Hislop,
that the 2024 Financial Statements of Central United Church
be adopted by the Congregation. Carried.***

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Strategic Planning

Diane began by reminding the meeting of a couple of historical events that significantly contributed to our present financial circumstances – the water main break, which eventually cost us more than \$300k, and the COVID pandemic. We have had to rely on the United Church of Canada for financial assistance. With the property deal, we were able to pay off all our indebtedness, but we were hoping things would turn around after COVID. The mortgage payments we receive each month are keeping us going, but we will run out of money at the end of 2027.

Diane said that she has discussed our situation with the Chinook Winds Region, and if we are no longer able to sustain our operations, the Region is prepared to take over the building and allow the Outreach Hub to keep operating. The time is now to stop the status quo.

Diane indicated that she had sought advice from Kate Hoogendoorn. They brainstormed, took an intentional look at everything, and concluded that engaging the congregation is essential. Kate suggested that Diane contact Doug Nelson with The Discovery Group, who works extensively with not-for-profit groups. Diane subsequently met with Doug via Zoom, who emphasized the need for a clear strategic planning direction.

Diane spoke of Central's DNA – how we began as a mission post and, through the years, have continued to align our values with being a light in the community. She referenced Rev. Kaz Iwaasa and his passion for justice and outreach; the formation of CUPS, Inn From The Cold, and our partnership with Woods Homes' Youth at Risk – all projects birthed from or affiliated with Central – and now the Outreach Hub.

***'People of the Way' served their community.
God brings us to where we are – not to just exist but to actively participate
in strategic planning for the future.***

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Proposed Budget for 2025

Bob referred to the far-right column of the Financial Statement on pages 48-49, entitled 'Proposed 2025 Budget'. He stated that it is mandated that we have an approved budget to operate, although January to April have already passed, and he highlighted the following:

Proposed Revenue Budget

The 2025 proposed revenue budget is \$361k (a \$74k increase over 2024 actual revenues of \$287k)

- anticipates \$40k increase in normal donations
- anticipates \$22k increase in specified Hub donations (\$28k in 2024)
- includes \$12k in miscellaneous income (one-time Restorative Care reimbursement payments)
- anticipates a \$3k increase in room rentals.

Proposed Expense Budget

The 2025 proposed expense budget is \$643k with the following high-level breakdown:

- \$362k (56%) in personnel compensation
- \$152k (24%) in building-related costs
- \$ 50k (8%) in Hub-related costs
- \$ 79k (12%) for everything else

Personnel Compensation

This part of the budget is reviewed in detail with Edie Lee, Chair of Ministry & Personnel.

- includes 3% COLA for employees
- includes provision for a successor for the Children's Ministry leader
- excludes Children's Ministry assistant as of July
- includes Sunday custodian at 11 hours per week

Property

This part of the budget is reviewed in detail with Newton Hislop, Property Chair.

- \$25k for building maintenance
- \$20k for security
 - includes an extra \$16k for the upgrade of the building access/security/alarm system

Hub Projects – new expense budget category for 2025

- \$12k - planned basement flooring upgrades
 - funded by existing deferred specified donations

Hub Operating – new expense budget category for 2025

- \$38k - Hub operating expenses not covered by partner agencies participates additional specified Hub donations (as per revenue budget)
- Christian Development
 - \$7k - based on historical trends

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Congregational Care

- \$3k - based on historical trends

Stewardship

- \$1.5k - to fund grant application preparation

Worship

- multiple expense categories – all based on historical trends

Administration

- multiple expense categories – all based on historical trends

Outreach & Justice

- funded under Specified Disbursements – includes the following events:
 - Stampede Breakfast, Men's Retreat & Aaron's Journey - funding based on historical trends

Regional Representative

- funds for travel and meeting & seminar attendance included in 'Retreats & Seminars' category.

General Comments

The proposed 2025 operating budget results in a projected 2025 operating deficit of \$282k. Although the projected deficit is similar to recent years, both the 2025 revenue and expense operating budgets have increased. This is primarily due to anticipated Hub-related expenses offset by anticipated additional specified Hub donations. Other than that, our operating model has been fairly consistent over the years, and, therefore, expenses have been fairly predictable.

The continuation of high operating deficits is not a long-term sustainable situation. It's rapidly becoming a short-term issue, given that the monthly \$25k mortgage payments we receive will end in December 2027. I believe it has become important to look at more aggressive ways to progress towards a self-sustaining operating model.

The current model requires that we continue to subsidize operations using a vast majority of the funds from the 2021 property sale. This is not the intended use of these funds and represents a serious erosion of assets.

It remains important to maintain a healthy level of financial reserves as a contingency for unforeseen emergencies (such as the main water failure).

He concluded by reporting that the Board had reviewed and endorsed the proposed 2025 operating budget.

***Moved by Bob Hindley, seconded by Newton Hislop,
that the 2025 Operating Budget be approved by the Congregation of
Central United Church. Carried.***

Diane thanked Bob and the rest of the Finance Team for their dedication throughout the year.

May 25, 2025 Minutes continued

Additional Questions not yet covered

Roberto Montagni asked, "What's happening with the Affirming process?" Diane explained that we required more participation from the grassroots congregation. We have offered many opportunities for learning (e.g., focus groups, meetings, videos, articles, books, roundtable discussions, polls, etc.). We have been educating ourselves, but we don't have enough buy-in to "fly the flag under Affirm United". The Wedding Policy is still on hold, and any requests for same gender marriages will go to the Board for approval.

Roberto asked how we can pursue this matter further. Diane replied that 'if you want to take the initiative, go for it and see what participation you can get.' She said the short answer to this question is: the Affirming process is on 'Pause' due to lack of engagement.

Ratification Motion

Moved by Lori Bazin, seconded by Edie Lee, that all accounts, contracts, bylaws, proceedings, elections, appointments and payments of monies by the Board or by the Officers of the Board for the period from our last Annual Congregational Meeting to date, as the same are set forth or referred to in the Minutes of the Board be, and the same are hereby approved, ratified, and confirmed. Carried.

Diane thanked those who prepared the Annual Report and acknowledged Ivan for his assistance with the audio/visual. She expressed appreciation to the volunteers who had prepared lunch and invited folks to help with the cleanup after this meeting.

Diane encouraged everyone interested in the church's future to say, "Count Me In". She will collect the names of interested people, and an Ad Hoc group will be formed for strategic planning.

With no further items of business, Diane declared this year's Annual Congregational Meeting closed and thanked everyone for attending. The meeting concluded at 2:03 p.m.

Rev. Luke Haisa closed the meeting in prayer.

Diane Scheibner, Chair

Lori Bazin, Recording Secretary

2025 BOARD REPORTS

2025 Annual Congregational Report

BOARD CHAIR

DIANE SCHEIBNER

Reflecting on 2025, it has been full of both challenges and rewards.

With the overwhelming influx of media information about what is happening around the world, it is easy to get sucked into despair and helplessness.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we need to cling to the promises given and respond to the world's pressures as people living with the power of the Holy Spirit within us.

In Matthew 11:28, it is recorded that Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

During a busy and sometimes troubling year, it is hoped that those in our Community of Faith have consciously sought out the rest that comes from being connected to Jesus.

Those working through the AA Twelve Steps program of recovery move through Step One – admitting their powerlessness, Step Two – coming to believe in a Power that restores, and then Step Three – deciding to turn their will and their lives over to the care of God. From there, the other nine steps guide them to a means of recovery.

When the Board meets to deal with the business before it, the members approach all matters from the perspective of discerning God's will in each case. This leads to great discussion and respect among all participants.

Some of the things we grappled with were:

The Calgary Homeless Foundation invited us to apply for significant funding to become a Day Space in downtown Calgary.

We went through the application process. We were not the successful applicant, but we were tied for first place. The Foundation members were really impressed with what is happening through our Central Outreach Hub and have maintained close contact with us in the event that more funds become available and could be directed to the Hub.

The Calgary Alliance for the Common Good

Ryan Anderson from the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good requested the opportunity to meet with the Board to see if we would join the Alliance. The consensus was that this is an organization which we might be able to benefit from.

Our issue was that we are very engaged in finding our way forward as a Community of Faith with respect to thriving to serve our community faithfully. We could not commit to the time and energy to be full participants in the group.

Strategic Planning

Our Community of Faith is facing problems that mainline churches across the country are facing. There is a decrease in people attending worship services and a corresponding decrease in financial support to the Church.

There is an abundance of statistical information for why this is happening, but statistics don't help with how to deal with it in our home church. After discussing this with the Board, I brought up the topic at the ACM on May 25, 2025. I asked for people to indicate if they wanted to be part of a group that dealt with ways Central can Thrive to Faithfully Serve.

Board Report continued

There was a great response from people willing to grapple with this. The next thing was to find the best way to facilitate the process. Events were scheduled, then rescheduled for a variety of reasons. The year ended with nothing happening in this regard. From my own experience, when something is hard to get working, it is probably because we need to take a step back to see whether we are in line with God's plan.

While this was happening, we were ignoring the fact that there was already something thriving at Central. That was the Central Outreach Hub. I think there are lots of things to learn from why and how it is thriving.

This strategic planning opportunity hasn't been abandoned; it is just on hold while we get a clearer picture of how to implement it.

Central Outreach Hub

In 2022, the folks from the Recovery Ministry cooked a Sunday meal for people whose circumstances made them very vulnerable. It was deemed a success and worthy of doing again. At that time, Darcy Fischer declared it should be done every Sunday! That was the genesis of what has come to be known as Central Outreach Hub, or "The Hub".

The Apostle Paul writes to the Galatians (6:2-5) that we must "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. ⁴ Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, ⁵ for each one should carry their own load."

What The Hub has evolved into is a place where people are helped with their burdens through a process of being provided with food, clothing, and a multitude of services that help them reach a point where their burdens are reduced to loads they can carry themselves.

The Hub has grown into something no one ever imagined. There are agencies that come each week to serve people facing various life challenges. Elsewhere in this Annual Report, there is a detailed account of The Hub's work.

This significant growth means that it can no longer be run by volunteers. In the past year, two people (Bradley Pert and Tamara Llewellyn) have been identified as capable of managing the operations of The Hub, including writing grant applications for funding the current services being provided and for expansion in other ways.

At a special meeting of the Board on September 9, 2025, a motion was passed to enter into a short-term contract with Bradley Pert to serve as Day Space Coordinator and Peer Support Lead for the Central Outreach Hub. The contract was from September 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025.

Board Report continued

United Church of Canada General Council

We received a letter from the Program Coordinator, Member Engagement, advising that Rev. Luke has been elected to the General Council Executive. This is a great opportunity for Luke himself, as well as a way our Community of Faith can be more closely linked with the National Church.

As a Community of Faith, Central has had to deal with issues common to many churches. Be they dwindling congregations, aging facilities, lack of finances, or general fatigue. On top of all of this, we are bombarded by news of threats to society and the culture to which we have become accustomed.

This just reinforces the necessity that we not allow ourselves to be distracted by things over which we have no control, and instead urgently seek God's will in all matters before us.

I am grateful for all who have remained steadfast in your support of Central United Church, enabling us to live into our logo of:

The Church in the Heart of the City, with the city in its heart.

***Respectfully submitted
Diane Scheibner, Board Chair***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

TRUSTEE REPORT

NEWTON HISLOP

With the passing of Ron Westcott in 2024, it became necessary to update the names of the Trustees on the title of the Church and on the vendor takeback mortgage on the former Bible Society Building. This was timely since the purchaser of the former Bible Society Building requested an early payout of the mortgage.

One of the major participants with the Central Outreach Hub is Good Neighbours. They have been instrumental in getting donations to distribute to those less fortunate who access the services provided. They have also provided services to Central to offset some of the additional costs incurred in providing outreach. They are one of the partners that participate in our Vision of making connections and interactions with individuals and groups of varied interests, concerns, and expressions.

These are exciting times for the Church, and I look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Respectfully submitted
Newton Hislop, Chair

2025 Annual Congregational Report

FINANCIAL REPORT

BOB HINDLEY

OPERATING STATEMENT

The Operating Statement for 2025 (see page 56) shows an operating deficit of \$369,255. This is 31% more than the budgeted operating deficit of \$281,900 and 13% more than the 2024 operating deficit of \$328,190. Total 2025 operating receipts were \$351,141 and total 2025 operating disbursements were \$720,396. Operating receipts only covered 49% of operating disbursements.

RECEIPTS

Total 2025 operating receipts of \$351,141 were 3% less than budget (\$361,000) but 22% more than 2024 total operating receipts (\$286,757).

Regular donations of \$235,016 were 15% less than budget (\$276,000) and 1% more than 2024 (\$232,507). Specified Outreach Hub revenue was \$61,983, which was 24% more than the budget (\$50,000) and 125% more than 2024 (\$27,551). Many thanks to all for their donations to Central's ministries.

Rental Income of \$25,144 was 39% more than 2024 (\$18,027). Non-recurring Miscellaneous Income of \$24,498 was 182% more than 2024 (\$8,672) largely attributable to a property insurance claim and Restorative Care reimbursements.

DISBURSEMENTS

Total 2025 disbursements of \$720,396 were 12% more than budget (\$642,900) and 17% more than 2024 (\$614,947).

Salaries and allowances expense of \$327,052 was 4% more than budget (\$315,500) and 4% more than 2024 (\$315,433). The first 6 months required some incremental support staff hours related to office and Hub coverage.

Building maintenance expense of \$73,675 was 195% more than budget (\$25,000) and 86% more than 2024 (\$39,608). The Board approved a critical unbudgeted \$30,000 project to replace exterior doors. This was partially offset by a successful \$11,000 insurance claim for property damage. Other maintenance exceeded budget by \$19,000 due to increased building usage and items that couldn't be deferred.

Security expense of \$5,505 was 73% less than budget of \$20,000 and 19% more than 2024 (\$4,617). The budgeted project to replace the building access and security system was deferred due to over-budget building maintenance expense.

2025 utilities expense of \$40,740 was 7% more than budget (\$38,000) and 22% more than 2024 (\$33,500) attributable to tariff rates and higher than anticipated use of the building and kitchen.

Outreach Hub expenses of \$88,454 were 77% more than budget (\$50,000) and 221% more than 2024 (\$27,551). The Board approved an unbudgeted \$30,000 contract for a Day Space Coordinator position to manage Hub activities and to prepare grant applications. This proved to be a very good decision as, within 6 months, Central received confirmation of grants worth \$265,00 specified for Hub activities.

Finance Report continued

LEGACY FUND STATEMENT

Total Legacy Fund income for 2025 was \$55,768 comprised of \$48,651 of cash income (\$676 from Bequests, \$30,263 of mortgage interest and \$17,712 of other interest) and \$7,117 of non-cash deferred revenue recognition related to capital items.

The only Legacy Fund expense was non-cash building amortization of \$29,459.

INVESTMENT

Central's 2021 property transaction included the sale of the former Canadian Bible Society (CBS) property plus a 10-year option on Central's annex. Central held a vendor take-back mortgage registered against the land title of the sold CBS property. During 2025, the mortgagor inquired whether Central would consider discharging the mortgage in return for a \$10,000 bonus interest payment. The terms of the mortgage required the mortgagor to cover all expenses related to the discharge. Central agreed, and the payout of \$667,743 occurred in October and was deposited into our high-interest savings account.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

At the end of 2025, Central had \$1,156,813 cash on deposit. \$90,957 of this is restricted to specific purposes leaving available funds of \$1,065,856. The restricted funds consist of \$28,571 in the organ fund, \$12,386 specified for Hub initiatives and \$50,000 in specified bequest funds.

PROPOSED 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

Central's Proposed 2026 Operating Budget (see page 56) shows a projected operating deficit of \$196,800. Although concerning, this is a significant improvement over the actual deficits of prior years (2025 - \$369,255; 2024 - \$328,190; 2023 - \$283,228) as well as the budgeted deficits of prior years (2025 - \$281,900; 2024 - \$278,340; 2023 - \$259,500).

Large operating deficits have been an ongoing issue as we continue to seek ways to make progress towards achieving self-sustaining operations. It continues to be necessary to subsidize operations using funds from the 2021 property transaction and from bequests.

The most significant changes in the 2026 operating budget are the revenue and expense items for the Outreach Hub. The Hub has grown rapidly and has become a major component of Central's operating budget.

The Hub now has a detailed business plan with revenues based largely on grants (mostly confirmed amounts and some projected amounts) and expenses based on a detailed operating plan. Hub expenses have been budgeted at a more granular level to provide better visibility. Budgeted Hub revenue exceeds budgeted Hub expenses by \$80,000 which will help cover budgeted facility operating expenses of \$154,800 (maintenance, utilities, insurance and janitorial expenses).

Finance Report continued

The total revenue budget is \$660,000. Other than the \$346,000 in Hub revenue, it includes a modest increase in regular donations in anticipation of some growth in attendance and membership. It also includes an increase in room rental income based on a recent significant new room rental agreement with another one pending.

The proposed expense budget is \$856,800. Other than the \$266,000 in Hub expenses, it includes some reductions in staff costs and building maintenance costs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Finance wishes to express gratitude to our Treasurer, Roberto Montagni, for his ongoing diligence in handling accounting, reporting and regulatory matters, to our Office Administrator, Colleen Robarts, for her ongoing support and to our collection counters, Lori Bazin and Denise Longland.

***Respectfully submitted,
Bob Hindley,
Finance Chair***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

MINISTER'S REPORT

REV. LUKE HAISA

Beloved friends in Christ,

I look back over 2025 with gratitude to God and thankful for all of you, the people of Central. This past year, God was clearly at work among us: teaching us, stretching us, and shaping us for what lies ahead.

In the spring, our Lenten Study, 'The Lamb of God (Agnus Dei),' allowed us to journey through the mystery of sacrifice and redemption. Over five weeks, we explored how Scripture speaks of Christ as the Lamb, from the sacrificial system in Leviticus, through Isaiah's Suffering Servant, the imagery of ransom and redemption, the Passover, and finally the triumphant Lamb of Revelation. I believe many of us felt a renewed call to love and worship Jesus in our day-to-day walk.

The desire to see Jesus more clearly also led me to launch the 'Jesus Christ in the Old Testament' blog series, and it's still ongoing. I hope to answer the question: Where is Jesus in all of this? Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we are looking at how every law, sacrifice, and covenant finds its fulfillment in Christ. Indeed, the Old Testament isn't just history; it's His story.

We also spent time studying the Book of Acts. By looking at how the early church was born and how it grew against all odds, we are finding the blueprints to shape the future and growth of our Community of Faith.

I was so grateful for the time away at the Men's Retreat at Kasota East Camp. We finished our time there with a lakeside service and communion.

2025 was also a significant year for our connection to the wider church. Hosting the General Council of the United Church of Canada right here in our city was a massive undertaking, and I am so proud of how some members from our congregation stepped up to volunteer. It has also been an honour to be elected to the General Council Executive. This role is giving me a broader perspective on the challenges and hopes facing the church across the country. Alongside this, I began my Doctor of Ministry at St. Andrew's College. This is a demanding journey, but one I embark on with the hope that it will ultimately strengthen my ministry here at Central.

I want to express heartfelt thanks to the Central Outreach Hub for its very important work in the basement of our church. I am grateful for the volunteers who serve so faithfully, the partner agencies who walk alongside us, and the donors and grant providers whose generosity makes this work possible.

My thanks also to everyone who serves in different teams, those who volunteer in different capacities, and often, in unseen ways. Your service is noticed by God and appreciated by me. The life of this congregation is sustained by people who give of their time, energy, and gifts, often without recognition.

As we move forward, I am convinced that God is not finished with us. The same Spirit who breathed life into the early church, who calls us back again and again to Christ, is at work among us now. My prayer is that we will continue to listen to Scripture, to one another, and to the Spirit, and that we will have the courage to follow where God leads.

Soli Deo Gloria - to God alone be the glory!
Pastor Luke

2025 Annual Congregational Report

MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL

EDIE LEE

A growing interest among potential partners and agencies in co-locating with other service providers operating within the Hub at Central United Church (Central) has characterized 2025. As new groups identify their interests and needs, a greater focus on prioritizing and maximizing space is required. Staff members, congregants, volunteers, rental groups, visitors, and those who use the Hub's services are experiencing ongoing changes.

In this regard, Central and the Hub have benefited from the consistent volunteer leadership of Brad Pert and Tamara Llewellyn. Their time and skills have been instrumental in fostering respectful relationships among Hub service providers, users, and volunteers, as well as with Central's congregation and staff. They have actively participated with the Board, the Ministry, and Personnel Committee, and appropriate governance Teams to provide information and collaborate on developing creative solutions when challenges arise. This has been invaluable as the Hub evolves and the complexity of services housed outside Central increases. The ongoing collaboration is helping to 'create space' for the Hub while supporting staff, congregants and volunteers to navigate this new territory. Thank you to Tamara and Brad. It is becoming clear that ensuring continuity of leadership is a priority going forward. Thanks also to Sunday Custodian Darcy Fischer. He has pivoted as necessary during each iteration as the Hub continues to evolve. Through these changes, Darcy maintains his passion for this important outreach.

A variety of staffing adaptations have occurred in 2025. Office Administrator, Colleen Robarts, was on a medically supported Leave of Absence from mid January, returning to work on April 10. The bulk of this absence was covered by Robert Gregson, who was supplied by Diversified Staffing Services and worked 17 hours per week. This temporary coverage was useful in reviewing the effects of reduced church office hours and administrative coverage within Central's team governance model. At Colleen Robarts' request, her working hours were reduced to 20 hours per week, effective July 1.

Significant changes occurred within the Children and Youth Ministry. After eleven years of dedicated service, Mary Lansdell retired from her position as Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator effective July 31, 2025. Concurrently, Maegan Lansdell-Cole resigned as Educational Assistant for the Kids in Action program. Maegan held this position from June, 2022 to June, 2025. Mary and Maegan brought vitality and love to the Children and Youth Ministry. Our faith community was enriched as we participated in Sunday lessons with Miss Mary and shared in events hosted by our children and youth. We are grateful to each of you for your commitment, your time, your wisdom and your loving presence on this journey. Seeing Maegan's leadership skills blossom in her leadership role has been a cherished gift. I am confident that the seeds each of you has so gently nurtured with the children and youth at Central will continue to flourish. Thank you.

Dasha Krasnozhen was the successful candidate for the vacated Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator role. Beginning in late August of 2025, Dasha was supported by the Christian Development Team and Mary Lansdell with orientation to her new role. She was encouraged to envision new future possibilities for this ministry. Dasha brings a passion for working with children and youth. She has a significant background in music and in creative education, as well as teaching experience in music, art and dance. She describes having a lifelong connection to church ministry. We look forward to supporting Dasha in her new leadership role.

Ministry and Personnel Report continued

I wish to commend the leaders and participants in the music ministry at Central. Choir Director Oksana Krasnozhen continues to inspire our choir to lofty heights. Accompanist Alena Naumchyk's talents have given a new voice to Central's refurbished organ. Sunday mornings regularly sound like there are more than the numbered members giving voice to the music. Thanks to all who participate in the music ministry, from those who delight in the joy and beauty of what is being offered. The synergy of this musical collaboration enriches our spiritual journey.

The Cracked Pots faithfully serve in the evening Celebrate Life Recovery Service. Collectively, these musicians welcome, soothe, energize and offer opportunity for spiritual healing and/or renewal through their music. Thank you to Guy Plecash and Mary Lansdell for their leadership within this talented group. Thanks also to the individual band members for joyfully sharing their talents.

We remain grateful for the outreach work of the Celebrate Life Recovery Service. Thank you to Peter Sheridan, Thomas Beach and Darcy Fischer, who are unwavering in their support for those struggling with addiction in their lives and/or in their families. Some participants quickly attest to their life-saving and/or life-changing experiences arising from this ministry. Other individuals gratefully attest to fruitful lives as they return to serve others, informed intimately by what has made a difference for them.

There are times when leaders are left wondering about an individual, someone who passed through the doors briefly. They may never know what this stop on the way may have meant, nor what followed. Thank you to the leaders and to the wider recovery community, who collectively make a lasting difference in the lives that they touch. How does one measure such a potentially profound, yet at times nebulous, ripple effect?

This remains a time of transition for Central. Reverend Luke Haisa is offering thoughtful leadership both within our church community and the wider United Church of Canada. We are grateful for his presence. His ongoing learning will be a resource for us all. It is an added joy to have Josephine, Rev. Luke and their growing family in our midst. We are blessed.

My heartfelt thanks to the many active participants and volunteers in the congregational life of Central United Church. And thank you to those agencies and volunteers whose time and skills make the Hub at Central's widening reach possible.

We pray for guidance in the coming year as we live into our evolving future as a congregation, willing to continue making a difference in our community.

***Respectfully submitted,
Edie Lee, Chair
Ministry and Personnel Committee***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

SANDRA CHILD

I have served as your Regional Rep for several terms and take great joy in doing so. I attend regular monthly Board meetings and submit a written or verbal report for each meeting. During 2025, I attended several cluster meetings.

I served on both the United Church of Canada 100th Anniversary and the GC 45 planning committees and volunteered at the actual GC 45 meetings in August of 2025. What an incredible experience, and I saw several people I know from across the country. One of the experiences that has stayed with me since then is the connection I made with a few young people, and one young lady in particular. I was there only as a volunteer and was disheartened to hear that, as a group, they didn't feel listened to. I attended the service at Knox United for the installation of our new moderator, Kimberly Heath, and had a chance to talk to her at GC 45, as she was a member of Central United at one point. Here at home, I have made connections with our Youth and am glad to see them encouraged to serve in various capacities as they are able.

In May of 2025, I attended the Chinook Winds Regional Meeting in Lacombe, saw many friends, and participated in the choir. As you know, I love to sing. Moderator Carmen Lansdowne was our guest speaker.

Here at home in Calgary, I attended many planning meetings for the United Church of Canada's 100th Anniversary, helped to set up for the actual event and sang in the choir as well. I met so many great people who also served on the planning team.

I look forward to continue serving as your Regional Representative

***Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Child, Regional Rep***

May I serve with a listening ear and open heart.



**REV. DR. KIMBERLY HEATH
UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA MODERATOR**

2025 TEAM REPORTS

2025 Annual Congregational Report

CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT

MARIVIC DELA CERNA

Renewing our Ministry: A Year in Review from the Christian Development Team

***"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint."* — Book of Isaiah 40:31**

The Christian Development Team continued through another meaningful year of addressing challenges and celebrating achievements. Throughout the year, the Team faithfully nurtured the seeds of faith within our children, youth and young adults to instill a deeper sense of connection within our community.

Towards the middle of this year, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Mary Lansdell, along with Maegan Lansdell-Cole, who both transitioned from the Team. We are deeply grateful for their dedicated service, faithful leadership, and lasting contributions to our ministry. In September, we welcomed a new coordinator, Dasha Krasnozhen, who stepped into the role with enthusiasm and commitment to continuing the work of Christian Development within our congregation. Together with the support of Rina Tugade, they both lend a hand in leading the Youth in Action, under the guidance of Rev. Luke Haisa. Other members of the Team include Luz Tugade and Myleen Sacro.

Kids In Action (Children's Sunday School)

"Teach them his decrees and instructions and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave." (Exodus 18:20)

An important component of the future of Central rests in nurturing and strengthening our children's ministry. Central Church remains committed to sustaining a vibrant Children's Sunday School program that fosters meaningful connections among our young people through creative, engaging, and faith-filled learning experiences.

With the leadership of our Coordinator for Children and Youth Ministries, the program continues to offer a thoughtful blend of biblical teachings and essential life values, helping shape both faith and character. Part of the plan also is to incorporate more elements of music.

Youth In Action (YIA)

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

Central remains steadfast in its commitment to the spiritual growth and development of our youth, equipping them to serve faithfully in Christ's name. Through regular gatherings and Bible study sessions, they deepen their faith, strengthen their relationships with one another, and learn the value of active discipleship and service.

In addition to their spiritual formation, the youth participate in various fundraising initiatives that support their programs while fostering fellowship, responsibility, and teamwork. One such initiative is the annual Christmas cookie sale, which provides meaningful opportunities for them to use their gifts, engage with the congregation, and contribute to the broader mission and ministry of the church.

For a second time, the YIA received a \$4,500 grant from the Vision Fund. This will allow the YIA to provide hygiene kits which will be distributed through Central's Outreach Hub.

Christian Development continued

Serenity Saturday Prayer

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” (Romans 12:12)

The team continued to facilitate the monthly Saturday Prayer Group to further deepen personal spirituality and strengthen fellowship within the community. Held every second Saturday of the month at 3:00 PM in the Chapel, this gathering has become an integral part of our ministry life, fostering spiritual growth, intercessory prayer, and mutual encouragement among participants.

Let’s Talk C!

***“The unfolding of your words gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.” (Psalm 119:130)***

Entering its fifth year, the monthly Bible Study recommenced with an in-depth examination of the Book of James. This ministry continues to offer a structured setting for participants to grow in biblical knowledge and discern its practical significance in everyday circumstances. Through reflective dialogue and shared fellowship, attendees are spiritually equipped and encouraged to live out their faith with confidence and perseverance.

Filipino Fellowship

The Filipino community has been a dynamic and valued presence within our church family, reflecting our shared commitment to fellowship and welcome. Over the years, the church has provided a spiritual home where Filipino individuals and families can worship, nurture their faith, and honor their cultural traditions.

Through the Filipino Ministry, many have experienced connection, encouragement, and mutual care. This ministry has fostered strong relationships among newcomers and long-time residents alike, offering support as they adjust to life in a new country while remaining rooted in their heritage.

We give thanks for the continued witness of the Filipino Ministry, which reflects Christ’s love through unity, service, and shared faith.

Conclusion

The Team remains committed to advancing spiritual formation by cultivating an environment where individuals are encouraged to grow in faith and discipleship. By emphasizing both personal devotion and shared spiritual life, the ministry serves as a vital support in guiding members toward a deeper and more intentional relationship with God. Through Bible studies and prayer gatherings, participants are strengthened in their understanding of Scripture and in their ability to live out its teachings in everyday life.

The Christian Development Team also fosters a welcoming setting where individuals may explore their faith. In doing so, the ministry promotes a journey of faith that is both personal and communal, leading to continued growth and transformation within the body of Christ.

***Yours in Christ,
Marivic Solis Dela Cerna
Chair, Christian Development***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

MARY LANSDELL

Child and Youth Ministry Coordinator Report, January to July 2025

The last seven months in my work as the Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator at Central United Church - were absolutely wonderful!

We played games and made music together! We read the Bible and shared in Bible studies! We made crafts and celebrated God's creation! We hosted the Blessed Bagel Brunch for our Church Family! We joined in the Morning Service for Communion, Baptisms, service participation and special celebrations! We distributed bags filled with "Summer Essentials" to our Church's less fortunate neighbours. We broke bread together, we laughed, we cried, and we hugged.

Sunday, June 28, was my last day as the Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator. My daughter, Maegan and I performed a beautiful song; and, I was showered with fabulous retirement gifts!

After which, the children, youth and I headed to the Church gym. With the youngest being three years old and the older alumni attending, they were a great representation of my 11 years as their Sunday School teacher!

Then, the whole group walked down to the river and we prayed together. Afterwards, we went for bubble tea in Chinatown. Followed by a delightful time shuffling back to the Church, holding hands, endlessly chatting, smiling, and giggling. We were filled with appreciation and love for one another!

In July, I had a meeting with Dasha, the new Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator. We went through the Sunday School rooms and supplies. Followed by a discussion about the position's various tasks, procedures, policies and resources. Dasha was excited and ready to be Central's newest Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator!

Doing my final annual cleaning and purging of the Sunday School rooms turned out to be an unexpected pleasant experience. The rooms were filled with many beautiful memories that I shall carry in my heart forever!

I am blessed and honoured to have been the Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator. I extend much gratitude to my Church and to the extraordinary children and youth of Central!

***Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Lansdell***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES DASHA KRASNOZHEN

Introduction

This past year has been a meaningful and encouraging season for the Children and Youth Ministry. It was a year marked by growth, increased participation, deeper engagement, and many moments where children and youth stepped forward to serve, lead, and support one another. Through worship, learning, service, and fellowship, our young people continued to discover their gifts and strengthen their faith, while building strong relationships within the church community.

Despite the challenges that naturally come with busy schedules, school responsibilities, and growing commitments, the children and youth consistently showed enthusiasm, creativity, and a willingness to be involved. I am deeply grateful for the trust of families, the support of the congregation, and the dedication of volunteers who helped make this year successful.

Children's Ministry Overview

The Children's Ministry remained a joyful and welcoming space where children felt safe, valued, and excited to learn about God. Weekly programming focused on Bible stories, prayer, creative activities, music, and group discussions that encouraged curiosity and participation. The children were eager to ask questions, share their thoughts, and apply lessons to their everyday lives.

Throughout the year, we saw noticeable growth not only in attendance but also in confidence. Children became more comfortable reading Scripture aloud, participating in prayer, and helping one another during activities. The environment fostered kindness, patience, and respect, which was evident in how the children interacted with peers and leaders alike.

Youth Ministry Overview

The Youth Ministry continued to grow in independence, responsibility, and leadership. Youth were encouraged to take ownership of their roles within the church, whether through worship participation, service projects, or helping with younger children. This approach allowed them to develop leadership skills while strengthening their sense of belonging and purpose.

Youth meetings and activities emphasized open discussion, faith exploration, and real-life application of biblical values. The group showed maturity in conversations, respect for differing perspectives, and a genuine desire to support one another. This year especially highlighted how capable and committed our youth are when trusted with responsibility.

Youth Participation in Remembrance Day Service

One of the most meaningful moments of the year was the youth's involvement in the Remembrance Day service. The youth participated with great respect, seriousness, and understanding of the significance of the day. They assisted in the service through readings, presence, and active participation, demonstrating both maturity and compassion.

Children and Youth Ministries continued

Their involvement helped connect younger generations to the importance of remembrance, gratitude, and peace. Many congregants expressed how impactful it was to see youth honouring this moment with such sincerity. This experience provided a powerful opportunity for learning, reflection, and intergenerational connection, reinforcing the idea that youth play an important role in preserving and sharing our collective history and values.

Children and Youth Service

A highlight of the year was the children and youth-led service, which they planned and led largely by themselves. From readings and music to prayers and leadership roles, the young participants showed incredible dedication and teamwork. They took this responsibility seriously and worked together to ensure the service was meaningful and well-organized.

The service was received very positively by the congregation. Many noted the confidence, creativity, and spiritual depth demonstrated by the children and youth. This event was a powerful reminder of the importance of giving young people space to lead and express their faith. It strengthened their confidence and affirmed that their voices matter within the church.

Christmas Cookie Sale Fundraiser

The Christmas cookie sale was another major success this year. Both children and youth actively participated in baking, preparing, organizing, and selling cookies. This fundraiser not only supported ministry activities but also encouraged teamwork, responsibility, and generosity.

The event was well attended and warmly received by the congregation. Many expressed appreciation for the effort and enthusiasm of the children and youth. The fundraiser helped build community spirit and gave young participants a sense of accomplishment and pride in contributing to the church in a practical way. Overall, the Christmas cookie sale exceeded expectations and proved to be both financially and spiritually rewarding.

Church Christmas Concert and Choir Participation

Another significant highlight of the year was the church Christmas concert, which became a beautiful example of intergenerational worship and collaboration. Children and youth were invited to join the church choir for this special event, and they embraced this opportunity with enthusiasm, commitment, and joy.

Throughout the rehearsal period, the children and youth demonstrated remarkable focus and dedication. They learned the music quickly and with great care, paying close attention to melody, lyrics, and expression. Week by week, their confidence grew, and by the time of the concert, they were singing with assurance, unity, and genuine emotion.

During the concert, their voices blended beautifully with the adult choir, creating a rich, uplifting sound that moved the congregation. Many attendees commented on how moving it was to hear children and youth sing alongside adults, and how clearly the meaning of the Christmas message came through in their performance. The young singers sang with clarity, heart, and joy, reflecting both strong musical preparation and a sincere connection to the music.

Children and Youth Ministries continued

This experience not only strengthened musical skills but also fostered a sense of belonging and pride. Children and youth felt truly included in the wider life of the church, and the concert became a memorable and meaningful moment for everyone involved.

Integration of Music into Children and Youth Programming

Over the course of the year, there was a deliberate and successful effort to incorporate more music into the Children and Youth Ministry program. Music became an increasingly important part of weekly gatherings, special services, and seasonal events, enriching both worship and learning experiences.

Music was used not only as a performance element but also as a teaching and engagement tool. Songs helped reinforce biblical themes, encouraged participation, and created an atmosphere of joy and connection. Children and youth were encouraged to sing, move, listen, and reflect through music, making lessons more interactive and memorable.

As a result, many participants became more confident in singing, rhythm, and musical expression. Youth, in particular, showed increased leadership by helping guide songs, supporting younger children, and participating more actively in musical worship. The integration of music also strengthened collaboration between the Children and Youth Ministry and the church's broader music ministry, especially during services and events such as the Christmas concert.

Adding more music to the program has had a clear positive impact, deepening engagement, strengthening worship, and allowing children and youth to connect to faith in a creative and expressive way.

Community and Relationship Building

Beyond specific events, this year was rich in relationship-building. Children and youth formed stronger friendships, learned to support one another, and developed trust with leaders. These relationships are essential to the long-term health of the ministry and create a foundation where faith can grow naturally.

Parents and families were also supportive and engaged, which played a crucial role in the success of the programs. Open communication and collaboration helped ensure that children and youth felt encouraged both at church and at home.

Reflection and Gratitude

This year has shown that when children and youth are given guidance, trust, and opportunity, they rise to the occasion with dedication and heart. Their involvement in worship, service, and fundraising reflects not only their growth but also the strength of our church community.

I would like to sincerely thank all volunteers, parents, and church leaders for their continued support, encouragement, and trust. Your involvement makes this ministry possible and meaningful.

Looking Ahead

As we move forward, the goal is to continue nurturing leadership, deepening faith, and expanding opportunities for children and youth to serve and grow. With the strong foundation built this year, there is great hope and excitement for what lies ahead.

***Respectfully Submitted,
Dasha Krasnozhen***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

COMMUNICATIONS

CLAIRE LOBERG & COLLEEN ROBARTS

Theological Rationale

Communication is an essential part of our work as a Community of Faith (COF), the vehicle by which we share the “good news” of God’s love for the world. At all times, Central United Church (Central) is called to a high standard of ethical conduct in the use of its communication channels and social media platforms. The Board, working in collaboration with the congregation, the Minister and the Communications Team (Team), is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the content of the message that is transmitted and has final authority over any information that is transmitted.

The Communication team members are Colleen Robarts and Claire Loberg. We are tasked with creating content for and maintaining the Central: Website, YouTube Channel, Facebook and Instagram pages as well as the official Central United Church brand.

Documentation

In 2022, the Communication Team created a secure Document Repository for all Central Team Leads. This Repository is a central access point for Administrative documents required for group and event functionality. Documents included are:

1. Governance
2. Agreements and Procedures
3. Policies
4. FOIP, Event Requests, Bookings etc.
5. Structure
6. Central Team Objectives

The documents have been updated for 2024-2025 and are available as printable pdf’s or fillable pdf’s where appropriate. If new documents need to be added, please notify Colleen.

Website and Social Media

The Central Website, Facebook and Instagram sites are important tools in Central’s outreach. The loss of the sanctuary cameras mean that we can no longer stream services. This is a very unfortunate setback, and it means we must rely even more on the other online tools.

Our online sites are ever-evolving, but content must come from the Central Teams to remain current and relevant. Do not hesitate to request or offer content.

Unfortunately, we are unable to generate the website statistics report we had for previous years.

***Respectfully submitted,
Claire Loberg and Colleen Robarts***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

JOHN & LEE PATTERSON

**“Praise to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
The Father of Compassion and God of all comfort who comforts us
in our troubles, so we can comfort those in any trouble with the
comfort we ourselves have received from God.”**

1 Corinthians 1: 3&4

This is the scripture that we try to live out as the Congregational Care Team.

In February of 2025, Lee and I became co-chairs of the Congregational Care Team after Cristl Porter resigned for health reasons. We are grateful for her leadership in previous years. She is still on our team and advises us. We continue to pray for her health.

Lee, who is also my executive assistant, does the minutes, paperwork and emails. I chair the monthly meetings and represent the team on the Board. Our members are: Cristl Porter, Colleen Whelan, Sandra Child, Edie Lee, Fay Milk, Michael Adamowicz, Sally Corsino-Lagaspi, Lorraine Anderson, Bev Lynch, Roberto Montagni, Terry Stevens, Rina Tugade, Kayla Dawn, and Lee and John Patterson. We are always looking for new members, especially those who will eventually take our place. Pastor Luke is our staff representative. Some people we listed work behind the scenes, and we do not want to forget to thank them. Bev Lynch phones the shut-ins; Tania Bondoc phones the adults on their birthdays; Sally sends birthday cards to the children; and Sandra Child sends birthday cards to the youth. Sandra also looks after the connection cards and envelopes in the pews. These connection cards are prayer requests passed on to the prayer team.

Pastor Luke visits the hospital regularly and members in their homes. In the past year, Luke was accompanied by Colleen Whelan, Cristl Porter, Lorraine Anderson and John Patterson, among others. Pastor Luke has also visited on his own, taking the bus on cold wintery days.

Our activities this past year included the luncheon on Good Friday. On Mother's Day, with the assistance of the worship team, we did Mums for Moms, decorating the sanctuary, and delivered them to seniors and shut-ins. Thank you to those who helped with the delivery. In May and June, we distributed baby bottles as a fundraiser for Mainsprings Pregnancy and Family Support. Thanks to Fay Milk, who coordinated this. We also hosted the Strawberry Social to honour the music ministry that contributes so much to our worship service. In June, we had planned a picnic. It got rained out, so instead we had a beach party in the gym in November. Thanks to Colleen and Cristl, who helped organize the party, and thanks also to Marivic and Melven, who helped with the games, etc. It is nice to have events away from the church building, but with so many of our church members who don't drive, it is easier to have it at the church. It was well attended, and we will consider doing it again. In December, we do need to sign Christmas Cards and organize the delivery of poinsettias. Thank you to other members of the church who delivered plants and cards. Many of our team members do not have vehicles, so we need assistance from others. By doing that, the leaders of the church are visible which is important. It is a rewarding experience for both parties. Some Christmas cards were mailed out. We feel that, despite the cost of postage, it is still worthwhile. Many shut-ins are so happy to receive mail from the church.

Congregational Care continued

The most visible part of our team is the greeters. The greeters are the first smiling faces people see when they come through our doors. We have been able to recruit new greeters including some children and youth. We have noticed how members react to the young smiling faces.

Special thanks to Michael, our barista, who faithfully serves coffee. He is the ideal person for that role. We are hoping to recruit some people to assist him.

During the coffee hour, we often have cards available for the congregation to sign.

In closing while we were preparing this report we were amazed at everyone involved and everything going on here. We hope we didn't leave anyone out. Our sincere apologies if we did.

***Respectively submitted
John and Lee Patterson***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

LIBRARY REPORT

BILL MOORE

This past year was once again one of growth for our library, as there are now over 2,000 titles on our shelves! In an ongoing effort to display the diversity of our collection and encourage readership, we featured a variety of events during the year.

January	Best of '24	the best of the newest publications added in 2024
February	Prominent Authors	Commemorating Black History Month
March	Jesus	Lent
April	Canada Reads	Featured the 5 finalists in this year's competition
May	Jeanette Oke	Famed Southern Alberta author, to honour Mother's Day
June	First Nations	Commemorating National Indigenous Peoples Day
July	Prayer	In step with Pastor Luke's theme for the month
August	Calgary	Highlighting local hiking/biking trails and our local history
September	United of Church of Canada	In concert with General Council 45, being held locally
October	Various Weekly Displays	Celebrating "Libraries for Life" (National Library Month)
November	Jesus	Commemorating the Reign of Christ Sunday
December	Children's Books	Advent

In an attempt to spark interest in the library, we also featured two crossword puzzles for word addicts – “Biblical names beginning with J” and “favourite hymns.”

During December, the library issued an “Advent Challenge” to our Community of Faith! Commencing December 1st, everyone was challenged to read one chapter of Luke each day. What better way to know Jesus than to read His story, culminating with Chapter 24 on Christmas Eve?

Our library continues to add new books, leaning heavily on the United Church Book Store and Christian Books as the go-to sources. Our church family continues to make donations – each and every one is received with much gratitude.

Library continued

Although not a public library, I often refer to its policies for guidance. Many such libraries no longer feature “late fees” but rather charge people for their outstanding loans. Central’s library does neither, trusting in our members to return books and magazines in a timely manner. Our year-end inventory indicates that over 70 books are 6 months delinquent. Sadly, the church is but a microcosm of society; those who retain our books and magazines rob others of these resources. Typical shrinkage in the public sphere is 5%; although frustrating, we are doing a bit better, running a little below that average.

By its nature, the Archives section remains largely unchanged, but it remains of great interest to visitors. Of particular interest are the photos from yesteryear, when the membership was much larger than it is today. Visitors also applaud the inclusion of the pictures of our ministers as a crowning reference to our rich history. A new feature in Archives is “Memory Lane” – a monthly display of a photo album from the 1990s for your browsing pleasure.

Thanks to everyone who has continued to support our Library and Archives!

Respectfully submitted
Bill Moore, Librarian

Opening

We want to take a few minutes to show what this building, and your support, have made possible. Central United Church has a long tradition of outreach – and today, that legacy is not just alive, it's growing. We're going to walk you through the story of the Outreach Hub: how it started, what's happening now, and where it's headed. This isn't a side project. This is Central, living its purpose in real time.

A Legacy of Outreach and Enduring Impact

Outreach isn't new here. For more than 100 years, Central United Church has stood in the heart of Calgary as a place where compassion meets action. During the Great Depression, this church offered hot meals to the hungry. In the 1970s and 80s, we became a refuge for those struggling with addiction and isolation, hosting some of the city's first recovery meetings. We helped launch organizations like CUPS and In From The Cold – organizations that continue to serve Calgarians today. And we've consistently offered space and support to newcomers and those displaced by conflict around the world.

What makes Central's outreach significant is not just its longevity, but its adaptability. Each generation of this church has responded to the needs of its time, and while the programs have changed, the heart has remained the same. The Outreach Hub isn't a shift in direction – it's a continuation of this legacy. It reflects the same question this church has asked for over a century: "How can we help?"

The people we serve may look different than they did 100 years ago, but the mission is the same. We still feed the hungry. We still welcome the stranger. We still open our doors to those who have nowhere else to turn. And today, we do it in a way that reflects the diversity, complexity, and resilience of our downtown community.

How We Started

The Outreach Hub began with intention and generosity. One day, we decided to serve food – not because we had extra, but because we saw the need. A few people came in off the street to eat. The next week, more came. From there, it became a weekly rhythm – coffee, food, conversation. As we got to know people, we started to notice other needs. Soon after, we realized how many of our guests needed basic clothing. So we set up a table with donated clothes – whatever we could gather – and started giving them away. That table turned into a rack. That rack turned into a room.

What began as a simple act of sharing what we had grew naturally into something larger – a growing network of support and trust. Over time, the word spread. More people came. More organizations wanted to help. That early, faithful act of hospitality became the foundation for what we now call the Outreach Hub. We didn't set out to build a large program, we just responded to what was in front of us, week after week.

Outreach & Justice Team continued

How We've Grown

Alongside Good Neighbour and AAWEAR, the Outreach Hub thrives because of a growing network of trusted partners who work shoulder to shoulder in our space. We are proud to collaborate with organizations like The Alex, Siksika Family Services, SafeLink Alberta, Alpha House, Alberta Health Services, and many others – each contributing a unique role to the shared goal of serving our city's most vulnerable. These relationships are what transformed the Hub from a program into a true downtown service ecosystem.

What began as a meal became a multi-partner, multi-service community hub. Today, over 1000 people walk through our doors each week. The Hub distributes more than a ton of food and another ton of clothing weekly – all free. This is now a shared space where more than 20 organizations have coordinated services.

This is a powerful example of Central's generosity – to decide to open our doors and offer space so that grassroots community programs can survive and thrive. That decision wasn't small. It was a reflection of this church's values: choosing compassion over caution and impact over convenience.

Good Neighbour is one of our key partners – and currently Central's primary tenant. Good Neighbour (a volunteer-run community market) occupies Central's basement, offering free clothing, food, and everyday necessities to anyone in need, in a warm “take what you need” shop environment. After losing its previous space, Good Neighbour found a new home at Central, where the church provides the space. This partnership allows Good Neighbour to focus entirely on helping vulnerable Calgarians – from people experiencing homelessness or poverty to those simply struggling to make ends meet.

They've also expanded our meal services, now offering food on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays – significantly increasing our reach to those who may not have access to regular meals. Their ambition and drive have revealed new possibilities for how this space can be used. They see the church not just as a location, but as a canvas for building community – truly transforming it into a downtown hub of dignity, care, and connection. They've turned the space into a fully functioning, dignity-first store – free clothing, hygiene products, household items – no cost, no paperwork. All powered by community donations. Every item is sorted by volunteers. Guests can take up to 10 items per day. It is simple, it works, and people rely on it.

AAWEAR brings another essential element. Our relationship with AAWEAR really began through the creation of Reconnects, which they co-lead with The Alex. From there, AAWEAR's peer-led outreach team, composed of individuals with lived experience in addiction and poverty, became an integral part of the Outreach Hub. They pack wagons and head into the streets, offering supplies, support, and connection. Their work builds trust in ways that formal systems often cannot – trust that continues to grow every week here at Central.

This kind of work might be new for some of us. But for many in our congregation who come from cultures that value hospitality, community, and sharing as part of daily life and worship – this is familiar. It's a lived-out lifestyle of service. When we serve here, when we give here, when we cook or clean or listen – that's worship too. It's what Jesus taught: feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, care for your neighbour. That's exactly what happens every week in this space.

Outreach & Justice Team continued

Reconnects – A Pivotal Moment

A shining example of this collaborative outreach is the Reconnects: Pathways to Primary Care program now hosted at Central. Every week, Central Outreach and local agencies organize Reconnects as a kind of one-stop social services fair and wellness outreach event open to all. In a single morning at Central, a guest can share a hot meal, see a nurse for wound care or foot care, get tested for infections, pick up hygiene supplies or clothing, and even receive help replacing ID or finding housing – all free of charge.

It's a pop-up community hub that brings services directly to those who might not otherwise access them. Central United is proud to host Reconnects because it embodies exactly what the church has always believed: meeting people where they are, with practical care and compassion. The turnout has been remarkable – hundreds of attendees come each week – and the space itself is often filled with service booths and wellness stations, a vivid reminder that this sacred space doubles as a refuge for the weary and a bridge to a better life.

The Reconnects event is not just a resource fair. It's an opportunity for isolated individuals to reconnect with community and hope. By supporting this initiative, Central is literally opening its doors to neighbours in need to find healing and support in a welcoming, non-judgmental environment.

Who We Serve and Our Commitment to Reconciliation

We serve a wide range of people – unhoused individuals, newcomers and refugees, people living with addiction, trauma, or mental illness, and elders, youth, and families. Some visit weekly, others once a year. They come not just for food or clothing, but for connection and stability. Many have been turned away elsewhere or find traditional systems inaccessible. They know they can come here, and they'll be treated with respect.

The Outreach Hub is not only a support system, but it's a community. And part of building a truly inclusive and compassionate community is acknowledging and addressing the harms of the past period; that's why reconciliation is not an afterthought at Central, it's part of how we serve.

We work alongside Indigenous Elders and leaders to make space for cultural connection, ceremony, and healing. This past year, we hosted a Round Dance in our sanctuary – a first for many, and a deeply meaningful event where all Treaty 7 Nations came together. We've partnered with Siksika Family Services for events like Walking the Wolf Trail, an Indigenous health day focused on culturally grounded care. We've also participated in the Moose Hide Campaign, standing against gender-based violence and supporting Indigenous women and families.

In addition, we've co-hosted 'Feeding the People', a community meal and outreach day focused on reconnecting Indigenous Calgarians experiencing homelessness with their home communities and traditions. These aren't just events, they're opportunities for reconnection, restoration, and relationship-building.

Outreach & Justice Team continued

Central's commitment to reconciliation is practical, relational, and ongoing. We don't have all the answers, but we are committed to walking this path in partnership, with humility and care. We see guests begin to trust and care for one another, and to return not only to receive but also to help. We see former guests become volunteers. We see people bring others with them, introducing the space to friends or family in need. What's growing here isn't just a program, it's a network of care. It's a community being built from the ground up.

Behind the Scenes

This work doesn't happen on its own. It's volunteer-powered – from meals and sorting, to sitting down and listening. Many of our volunteers are former guests. Others are retirees, students, or members of this church. It's a broad mix, and it works.

The building itself plays a big role. In a city where space is scarce and expensive, Central provides it freely to partners. Our facilities – kitchen, gym, and basement rooms – are all used daily. Outreach programs wouldn't survive downtown without access to space like this.

We want to extend an open invitation to everyone in the congregation: come visit the hub. Walk through the space. See the community that you are helping create. This isn't just our project - it's yours. The Outreach Hub belongs to all of us, and your presence, your energy, and your participation are welcome. Whether it's lending a hand, sharing a meal, or simply witnessing the impact, you're all a part of what makes this place so special.

Closing

This is not a side project. It's not a charity add-on. It's Central United Church doing what it's always done: responding to needs with compassion, using what we have to serve others. Thank you for your support – past, present, and future. It matters. And it's making a difference.

***Respectfully submitted,
Brad Pert***



2025 Annual Congregational Report

PROPERTY TEAM

NEWTON HISLOP

After another year of challenges, we have replaced 4 sets of exterior doors, starting with the first street doors that were hit by a taxi cab at the start of 2026. We installed 7 new security cameras with more to go this year. We had numerous issues with the bathrooms and line plugs this year. We have now purchased our own auger, with thanks to Good Neighbour, to keep costs down, as a single call to a plumber is over \$500.

We replaced kitchen sink faucets and completed more repairs to the elevator. The boilers had been doing well, but this year we ran into larger problems with one of our steam boilers again. It is currently awaiting repairs. The boiler was installed in the 90's and is nearing the end of its service life. Modern boilers are about 30% more efficient, but this will require major pipework in the building.

I want to thank everyone for the past year and look forward to getting back to projects I have placed on the back burner while we deal with unexpected security issues this last year.

Respectfully submitted
Newton Hislop, Property Team Chair

2025 Annual Congregational Report

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

DIANE SCHEIBNER

In 2025, we continued to create the Invitation and Dedication prayers before and after the morning offering being taken. We do approximately 3 – 4 Sundays a month; Pastor Luke does the other Sundays. By doing this, we can inform the congregation of the many meaningful things our church is doing.

We also assisted with many grant applications supporting the Central Outreach Hub. Brad Pert and Tamara Llewellyn deserve the credit for writing the applications, and the results have been way beyond our expectations. We have received over \$200,000.00 in grants to be applied to 2026. These grants came from a variety of sources – some faith-based groups, some government services, and even some secular sources.

Stewardship is about more than giving money, although that is critical as well. Stewardship is about giving of time and talent. Giving time and talent is evident in the number of volunteers who come each Sunday to prepare lunch for folks living in our downtown community. They bring the food, do the cooking, serving, and cleanup, and provide companionship to those who are there.

Central United Church congregation lives into its logo, “A Church In The Heart of the City with the City in its Heart”.

It takes the generous support of your time, talent and treasure to allow the ministry at Central to thrive and bless the lives of those in our community.

***Submitted on behalf of the Team,
Diane Scheibner***

2025 Annual Congregational Report

WORSHIP TEAM

LORI BAZIN

The Worship Team is primarily made up of church staff, with a few others to assist in supporting the ongoing provision of deeply spiritual, Bible-based, relevant and inclusive worship experiences. Our mandate includes oversight of the sacraments of Communion and Baptism, as well as weddings, funerals, and special services (i.e. Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Christmas Eve). We decorate the Sanctuary and change the vestments for liturgical seasons and events. We also work with Congregational Care to assist with greeting/ushering, food hospitality, and fundraisers like 'Mums for Moms' and memorial Poinsettias at Christmas time.

As part of Central's participation in the United Church of Canada's 100th anniversary, we incorporated weekly prayer for Calgary United Churches, leading up to the June 8th city-wide celebration.

Jan 5	Central United Church	Mar. 23	Red Deer Lake United Church
Jan. 12	Campbell-Stone United Church	Mar. 30	Robert McClure United Church
Jan. 19	Chinese United Church	April 6	Scarboro United Church
Jan. 26	Fish Creek United Church	April 13	Southwood United Church
Feb. 2	Foothills United Church	April 20	Springbank United Church
Feb. 9	Forest Lawn United Church	April 27	St. Andrew's United Church
Feb. 16	Hillhurst United Church/Living Spirit	May 4	St. David's / Northminster United Church
Feb. 23	Knox United Church	May 11	St. Thomas United Church
Mar. 2	Lakeview United Church	May 18	Symons Valley United Church
Mar. 9	McDougall United Church	May 25	Wild Rose United Church
Mar. 16	Parkdale United Church	June 1	Woodcliff United Church

Some highlights from our worship services throughout 2025:

- January 12th – baptism of Logan Josephine, daughter of Morgan and Dillon O'Flanagan.
- March 5th – Ash Wednesday Noon service in the Chapel was well attended, including quite a few not from Central.
- March 9th – first Sunday of Lent, celebrated Holy Communion with children and youth partaking. Melven Dela Cerna made his debut as Communion assistant.
- April 13th – Palm Sunday, children and youth waved palm branches and played tambourines with the processional song.
- April 17th – Maundy Thursday evening service with Communion.
- April 18th – Central hosted the Good Friday service, along with Scarboro United.
- April 20th – Easter Sunday morning was a glorious celebration of our Saviour's resurrection and the evening Recovery service celebrated adult baptism in the hot tub, with support of many friends and family.
- April 27th – Youth In Action hosted an Earth Day service.
- May 4th – We welcomed Myleen Sacro as a new member to our congregation, and also acknowledged Red Dress day.
- May 11th – Pastor Luke was attending the Chinook Winds Region Annual General Meeting in Lacombe and Diane Scheibner shared the message. The sanctuary was decorated with 'Mums for Moms' and Fay Milk spoke and presented a video to kick off the Baby Bottle Campaign for this year.

Worship Team continued

Some highlights from our worship services throughout 2025, continued:

- May 25th – Choir's musical Sunday, followed by the Strawberry Social, followed by the Annual Congregational Meeting. Acknowledging African Liberation Day, the choir included a new song called 'God Bless Africa' in their repertoire.
- June 1st – we commemorated the 121st Anniversary of the placing of Central's cornerstone and celebrated with cake following the service.
- June 8th – Pentecost Sunday with Holy Communion. In the afternoon, there was a city-wide gathering to celebrate the United Church of Canada's 100th Anniversary at Knox United.
- June 15th – Father's Day, Trinity Sunday, and Rev. Tony Snow shared the Land Acknowledgement.
- June 29th – We celebrated the retirement of Mary Lansdell after faithfully serving as Sunday School Coordinator for the previous ten+ years. More recently, she was assisted by her daughter, Maegan Lansdell-Cole, which brought an even more loving and engaging experience to the children and youth ministry. During the service, Mary and Maegan sang "The Blessing" as their farewell.
- July 13th – Stampede Breakfast and The Cracked Pots provided music for morning worship.
- During the summer months, faithful servants graciously stepped in to share messages on the Sundays when Pastor Luke was away:

August 10 th ~ Bill Moore	September 7 th ~ Marivic Dela Cerna
August 17 th ~ Diane Scheibner	September 21 st ~ Thomas Beach
August 24 th ~ John Patterson	September 28 th ~ Myleen Sacro

- In October, we welcomed Dasha Krasnozhen to the Worship Team, as the new Children and Youth Ministries Coordinator. As well, Pastor Luke incorporated bible readings from the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets in morning worship services.
- October 5th - World Communion Sunday.
- November 16th – baptism of Harrison and Fletcher, twin sons of Sean and Kristen McQueen. It being Children's Sunday, the majority of the service was conducted by the children and youth.
- Saturday, November 29th – Many thanks to those who came out to help decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas.



Worship Team continued

- November 30th – first Sunday in Advent, celebrated Holy Communion.
- December 14th – rather than a ‘Christmas Musical’ per se, the morning service was devoted to singing many well-known Christmas Carols.
- December 24th – we gathered in the evening for a traditional Christmas Eve service with Communion.
- December 25th – we returned on Christmas morning for an intimate worship service in the Chapel, followed by a time of fellowship over coffee and goodies.
- December 28th – as per usual, Pastor Luke, Oksana, Alena, and the choir had the last Sunday of the year off. Many thanks to Bill Moore and Colleen Robarts for assisting in the service where traditional Carols were sung and stories of their origin were shared.

Looking back over the year, we are so grateful to Ivan Bacon for volunteering his time and talents as Tech Team Lead, working the sound system for both morning and evening services. Many thanks also to Ilia Levykin for his faithful service on Sunday mornings, and to Trevor Loberg and Abner Haisa for their ongoing assistance.

The Worship Team faced a few challenges in 2025. Our beloved Colleen underwent her second knee surgery early in the year and we had to work overtime to keep the services flowing – thanks to volunteers and a temp in the office. Along with the increased number of individuals being fed and clothed by the Outreach Hub in our basement, came some safety and security concerns. Cameras and other equipment were stolen and we no longer record Pastor Luke’s messages for posting online.

With the Worship Team supporting Pastor Luke, we all breathed a collective sigh of relief when Colleen decided to remain in her position as Office Administrator for another year before retiring. She is invaluable, not only to Luke, but to the Team and to the day-to-day operations of our church.

The Worship Team meets after church on the first Sunday of each month, excluding July and August, and was made up of the following people in 2025:

Lori Bazin (Chair)	Bill Moore (Member at Large / Recording Secretary)
Rev. Luke Haisa (Minister)	Melven Dela Cerna (Sacraments Representative)
Oksana Krasnozhen (Music Director)	Colleen Robarts (Office Administrator / Staff Support)
Mary Lansdell (Children & Youth) till June	Peter Sheridan (Celebrate Life Recovery)
Dasha Krasnozhen (Children & Youth)	Thomas Beach (Celebrate Life Recovery)

Our Team would happily welcome new members. In particular, there are certain volunteer roles which are most needed: Sanctuary Decorations coordinator; Wedding, Funeral and Baptism Coordinator(s); Recording Secretary; Congregational Care Liaison; and Memorial Fund overseer, working with Roberto Montagni, Treasurer.

I conclude this report by acknowledging the faithful commitment of each member of the Worship Team – and we are exceedingly grateful to every person who has worked behind the scenes or shared in our worship services throughout the year by reading scripture, offering prayers and other readings, or providing messages in Pastor Luke’s absence. We are all part of God’s Kingdom family and we strive to face the future with hope and confidence that God continues to have a plan for Central United Church.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Bazin, Worship Team Chair

2025 Annual Congregational Report

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Oksana Krasnozhen

The year 2025 was a truly successful and meaningful year for the Music Ministry, even though it was not without its challenges. It was a year filled with rich experiences, celebrations, worship, and faithful, devoted work. Throughout the year, the choir remained a vital and living part of the spiritual life of Central United Church, serving with dedication, love, and deep respect for worship.

During 2025, the choir participated in baptism services, helping create a prayerful and welcoming atmosphere through music.

The Music Director maintained ongoing, thoughtful, collaborative work with individuals leading sermons when the pastor was not present, ensuring continuity, unity, and spiritual depth in worship.

Throughout the year, several piano tunings were arranged, keeping our instruments in good condition and supporting high-quality musical worship.

The choir participated with great care and reverence in the Ash Wednesday service held in the chapel, offering music that reflected the service's solemn, reflective character. The choir consistently prepared special, beautiful anthems for Communion services, treating these moments with particular sensitivity and spiritual attention. Music for Palm Sunday and the Holy Week services was carefully selected, with especially expressive and meaningful hymns and anthems that supported the themes of each service.

The Good Friday service was held jointly with Scarboro United Church. Central United Church was the hosting congregation, and two choirs sang together as one. The accompanist for this service was Alena Naumchyk. Conducting responsibilities were shared equally between two Music Directors: Oksana Krasnozhen, Music Director of Central United Church, and Elizabeth Paynter, the Music Director of Scarboro United Church. This shared leadership and collaboration created a deeply moving and successful service.

The Easter service was celebrated with joy and beauty, and the Mother's Day service was also especially warm and meaningful. Volunteers Josephine Haisa, Niko and Gavy Setiaputra contributed their time and talents, and their involvement was greatly appreciated.

On May 25, the choir presented some of the most beautiful musical pieces performed throughout the year. This service was dedicated to expressing heartfelt gratitude to all choir members for their selfless and faithful service to the church. The day was celebrated with a Strawberry Social, a joyful moment of community and thanksgiving.

In June, Central United Church celebrated its anniversary. On this occasion, the choir performed historic hymns in their original editions, honouring the church's long and rich musical tradition.

At the end of June, a farewell service was held for Mary Lansdell, Children and Youth Coordinator, as she entered retirement. Special music was chosen with great care for this service, which became a touching, and deeply heartfelt farewell.

Music Director continued

In July, our wonderful accompanist Alena Naumchyk was on vacation. During this time, I fully assumed her responsibilities. The choir continued its work without interruption, as I served both as conductor and accompanist. No additional funds were required to invite paid musicians during this time.

Throughout the year, our volunteer singers and musicians played an essential role in supporting the Music Ministry. The primary volunteers were Josephine Haisa, Daria Krasnozhen, Niko Setiaputra, Gavy Setiaputra and Sofia Gherasimencova, whose dedication and willingness to serve were invaluable.

In July, a special prayer service was held in which the choir played a significant and meaningful role, offering numerous musical prayers. That same month, a wedding took place in the chapel, and I provided all piano music for the entire service, performing the music requested by the couple.

As in previous years, the choir prepared especially selected and carefully chosen music for important services such as Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, and the Advent season. During the fall and winter of 2025, the choir also actively participated in children's services, strengthening the connection between generations within the congregation.

For the Christmas services in 2025, the theme of traditional Christmas carols was chosen. Rehearsals were less intense than usual, which allowed Children and Youth to join the choir. This approach also encouraged the congregation to sing together with choir the familiar and beloved carols, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere of worship.

The Holidays Hurt service was also conducted with great care and sensitivity. The musical repertoire for this service was shared between the choir and the church band, Cracked Pots, allowing for variety and a broader musical expression.

Several new singers joined the choir during the year. Although they did not have formal musical training or education, their commitment, perseverance, and the attentive guidance of the Music Director helped them become confident and fully contributing members of the choir. As always, the choir continues to learn new musical works on a regular basis, singing in a wide variety of styles and genres.

Respectfully submitter
Oksana Krasnozhen, Music Director

RECOVERY TEAM

Peter Sheridan

Overview

This past year the Recovery Ministry has been steady in its purpose and consistent in its heart. While there hasn't been a lot that looks dramatically different from last year, the need remains real, and the ministry continues to provide a safe, welcoming place for people seeking hope, healing, and ongoing recovery. Every week, there are people who need counselling and support. We have assisted several in getting into treatment centres and some in getting housing.

Week after week, we've continued to show up—offering support, fellowship, and a space where people can be honest about where they're at and encouraged to keep moving forward.

Attendance

Attendance has fluctuated more than usual this year. On stronger nights, we've seen 40–50 people, and on quieter nights, it has dropped to around 20. That range tells us two things clearly:

- When people connect, the ministry is valued and needed.
- We likely need to strengthen how we invite, reconnect, and follow up so that fewer people drift away and more new people find us.

We are currently brainstorming practical ways to increase participation and strengthen consistency—not for the sake of numbers, but because people matter, and connection is a big part of recovery.

Pastoral Support and Communion

We've been grateful for the ongoing support of Pastor Luke, who has been attending the evening gathering on the third Sunday of each month. His presence has been encouraging and meaningful to the group. We have also enjoyed Communion every second month, which has added depth and a strong sense of spiritual connection and unity within the ministry.

Outreach Highlight – Stampede Breakfast

The Stampede Breakfast was another strong highlight of the year. It went very well and we fed well over 1,000 people throughout the day. We began with the traditional breakfast on Stephen Avenue Mall and then moved to the north side of the church, continuing to serve until the food ran out. It was a great day of hospitality, visibility in the community, and practical service - exactly the kind of outreach that reflects the heart of this ministry.

Recovery Team continued

Highlights – Men’s Retreat (Camp Kasota, Sylvan Lake)

One of the biggest highlights of the year was our Men’s Retreat in September at Camp Kasota (Sylvan Lake). It was a genuine success:

- The weather was excellent
- The company and fellowship were strong
- The teaching, sharing, and recovery focus connected deeply
- And the Creator certainly showed up in a powerful way

The retreat confirmed something important: when we step away from daily pressures and spend focused time together, people grow. Relationships deepen, hope returns, and recovery gains traction.

Because of how positive the experience was, we have decided to continue with a fall retreat, as it’s proven to be a much better time of year for participation, weather, and overall impact.

Looking Ahead

As we move forward, our focus will be on strengthening what we already do well while addressing the attendance fluctuations. Some key priorities include:

- Continuing to improve how we invite and welcome new people
- Strengthening connection and follow-up so people don’t feel forgotten
- Keeping the message clear: recovery is possible, and no one has to do it alone
- Planning for another Fall Men’s Retreat and building on the momentum from last year
- Building on outreach opportunities like Stampede that help people discover the ministry

Gratitude

This ministry continues because people keep serving. Thank you to the volunteers, leaders, and supporters who make the Recovery Ministry possible. Your consistency creates a place where lives can change. I want to particularly thank Thomas and Darcy for their continued support in the weekly service, and of course, the Cracked Pots for the positive uplifting music.

***Respectfully submitted,
Peter Sheridan, Recovery Ministry,***



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2025 Annual Congregational Report

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Bob Hindley

2025 OPERATING STATEMENT AND PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET

		2025 BUDGET	2025 ACTUAL	PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET
RECEIPTS				
	ENVELOPES	170,000	138,480	155,000
	LOOSE & VISITORS	3,000	2,796	4,000
	CONTRIBUTIONS NON-RECEIPTED	80,000	76,604	80,000
	RENTAL REVENUE & MISC INCOME	35,000	49,642	55,000
	SPECIFIED RECEIPTS	10,000	7,809	8,000
	UNITED CHURCH GRANTS		4,500	
	RECOVERY OFFERING	13,000	9,327	12,000
	HUB - DONATIONS	50,000	61,983	21,000
	HUB - GRANTS			325,000
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	361,000	351,141	660,000
DISBURSEMENTS				
OUTREACH				
	ASSESSMENTS	17,000	17,006	19,000
	SPECIFIED DISBURSEMENTS	7,000	7,418	7,000
	RECOVERY LEADERSHIP	28,500	28,512	29,000
	HUB PROJECTS	12,000	5,700	
	HUB OPERATIONS	38,000	82,754	
	HUB – CONTRACTED SERVICES			145,000
	HUB – SUPPORT POSITIONS			55,000
	HUB – PEER RECOGNITION			10,000
	HUB – PROGRAM SUPPLIES			22,000
	HUB – PROGRAM EQUIPMENT			12,000
	HUB – FACILITY OPERATIONS			12,000
	HUB – FACILITY UPGRADES			10,000
	TOTAL 100'S OUTREACH	102,500	141,390	321,000
SALARIES & ALLOWANCES				
	MINISTERS, MUSIC & PROG	172,000	171,238	175,000
	SUPPORT STAFF	92,000	102,406	78,000
	CONTINUING EDUCATION	2,700	2,573	2,700
	REWARDS & RECOGNITION	500	156	500
	CANADA PENSION	10,500	11,304	11,000
	EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	4,500	6,138	5,000
	UNITED CHURCH PENSIONS	15,300	15,650	15,000
	WORKERS COMPENSATION	1,500	1,734	1,500
	UNITED CHURCH BENEFITS	16,500	16,753	17,000
	TOTAL SALARIES & ALLOWANCES	315,500	327,952	305,700

2025 OPERATING STATEMENT AND PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET continued

TEACHING	2025 BUDGET	2025 ACTUAL	PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET
GUEST MUSICIANS – AM SERVICE	500	100	500
MUSIC –PM SERVICE	17,700	17,400	17,000
MUSIC & SUPPLIES	1,000	2,325	1,500
SERVANT APPRECIATION	500		500
SPIRITUAL FORMATION REG	500		
CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT	7,500	5,031	6,500
TECHNICAL MINISTRIES	2,000	1,764	2,000
CONGREGATIONAL CARE	3,000	726	2,500
RETREATS & SEMINARS	4,500	2,642	3,000
TOTAL TEACHING	37,200	29,988	33,500
ADMINISTRATION & MAINTENANCE			
OFFICE SUPPLIES & SOFTWARE	10,000	11,918	12,000
POSTAGE	1,000	25	1,000
TELEPHONE	5,000	6,553	6,000
BANK & CREDIT CARD CHARGES	2,500	2,507	2,500
STEWARDSHIP	1,500		1,000
WORSHIP SUPPLIES	5,000	3,114	4,000
UTILITIES	38,000	40,740	45,000
FLOWERS & DECORATIONS	500	722	1,000
INSURANCE	32,200	32,206	32,800
CHURCH MAINTENANCE	25,000	73,675	40,000
JANITORIAL	37,000	36,960	37,000
MAINTENANCE OF ORGANS	1,000		1,000
MAINTENANCE OF PIANOS	500	195	300
KITCHEN SUPPLIES	3,000	3,217	3,000
PROFESSIONAL FEES	500		
I T	4,000	3,461	4,000
COMMUNICATIONS	1,000	268	1,000
SECURITY	20,000	5,505	5,000
TOTAL ADMIN & MAINTENANCE	187,700	221,066	196,600
TOTAL RECEIPTS	361,000	351,141	660,000
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	642,900	720,396	856,800
DISBURSEMENTS EXCEED RECEIPTS	(281,900)	(369,255)	(196,800)

2025 LEGACY FUND STATEMENT

INCOME	
Bequests	676
Mortgage Interest	30,263
Investment Interest	17,712
Deferred Revenue Recognition - Capital Items	7,117
TOTAL INCOME	55,768
EXPENSES	
Amortization - Buildings	29,459
TOTAL EXPENSES	29,459
INCOME EXCEEDS EXPENSES	26,309

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025

CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash	1,156,813
Petty Cash	200
GST Receivable	3,917
Accounts Receivable	37
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$1,160,967
Property, Building & Equipment	795,905
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,956,872
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	1,001
Deferred Contribution (Organ Projects)	28,571
Deferred Contribution (Hub Project)	12,386
Deferred Contribution (Willison Estate)	50,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$91,958
Deferred Contributions (Building)	55,120
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$147,078
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$1,809,794
TOTAL	\$1,956,872

CASH POSITION STATEMENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025

		Opening	Closing	Net Change
		1-Jan-25	31-Dec-25	
FUNDS				
ATB	CASH ON DEPOSIT	135,005	36,524	(98,481)
OAKEN	OAKEN	437,715	1,120,289	682,574
		\$572,720	1,156,813	\$584,093

BEQUESTS ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR 2025

BEQUESTS & DONATIONS

Bequest Acknowledgements for 2025

Memorial donations have been received in memory
of the following individuals:


Michael Heron

Total Memorial Donations **\$676**



Central United Church

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