

March, 2024

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## Renewing energy and breaking new trails

---



**Submitted by the Congregational Board to the Annual  
Congregational Meeting March 17, 2024**

**Ron Wiebe, Chair**

Kally Walsh (Past Chair)

Norman Jones

**Peter Forton, Treasurer**

Heidi Simmons

James Stevens

Elsa Dondenez

**Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones (ex officio)**

William Blevins

Margrét Kristjansson

---

204 Lakeview Avenue

Pointe--Claire, QC, H9S 4C5

514.695.3337

[administrator@cedarparkunited.org](mailto:administrator@cedarparkunited.org)

<https://www.cedarparkunited.org/>

---

## Cedar Park United: A Community Working Together

Cedar Park United is more than the sum of its parts - **Staff**, and **Ministry Teams**, as well as **Trustees, Regional Council Reps** and **Administrative & Task Teams** work tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to help make everything happen, but this is by no means all of the people who volunteer, contribute and make Cedar Park United their Church home, wherever they are. The Board wishes to thank every one of you.

### **Nakonha:ka Regional Council Representatives**

Rev. Dr. Elisabeth R. Jones                      Rick Sheffer

### **Trustees**

Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones, Chair              Jeannie Blevins                                      Stephen Cheasley

Cameron Fortin                                      William Harvey                                      Terry Taylor

### **Staff & VAMs**

Rev. Dr. Elisabeth R. Jones, Minister                      Douglas Knight, Music Director              Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière, Church Administrator

Martha Randy, Family and Youth Ministries & Communications Coordinator              Terry Wiebe, Coordinator, Congregational Care for Seniors                                      Rev. Wendy Evans & Rev. Cathy Hamilton, *Voluntary Associate Ministers*

We continue to offer the Annual Report both as a stand-alone PDF document that can be printed, and as a more interactive experience on our website, where we can retrace our footsteps and revisit events with complementary visuals and share it with everyone. Be sure to check out the [ACM space on the website](#).

- [Minister's Message](#)
- [In Memoriam 2023](#)
- [Membership](#)
- [Message from the Board Chair](#)
- [Highlights of the Year Just Passed](#)
- [Financial Report](#)
- [Annual Congregation Meeting 2023 Minutes](#)

---

## Minister's Message

*Rev. Dr. Elisabeth R. Jones*

What to say, honestly, about the year 2023 in the life of Cedar Park United? I've puzzled long over this dilemma; do I "accentuate the positive?" Certainly. But that's not the full picture, and I believe it's worth naming just some of the difficult elements also, so that you will read the pages which follow as a testament to the resilience of this congregation and its ongoing commitment to living God's Dream, "no matter what."

We began 2023 feeling like we were re-inventing everything about being and doing "church." Worship attendance, volunteer participation, community gathering patterns, age demographics, and giving and donation patterns have all changed significantly during the COVID years. It was barely consoling to read the research telling us that this has happened to every faith community across North America. We needed to figure out God's future for OUR congregation, and we needed to go back to basics on pretty much everything.

The Board engaged in a six-month discernment and visioning retreat process, ably facilitated by Ms. Patty Evans, a skilled and experienced church facilitator, who listened and guided us to insight and courage to make bold steps for new times.

Those who make up our staff team (Elizabeth Chown-Lafreniere, Douglas Knight, Martha Randy, Terry Wiebe) had to reinvent and reconfigure the parameters of their responsibilities to respond to this changed landscape, seemingly every month!

Meanwhile, stalwart volunteers managed the finances, developed technical skills to livestream worship and support digital ministries, guided renewed and re-energized ministries like healing pathway and food security and social justice and congregational care, while others dared break new ground to initiate new ministries of creation care, or created a concert series from scratch to showcase our renovated sanctuary. This adds up to thousands of hours of discernment, trial and error, repositioning, and rebuilding in every area of our community's life and ministry; hard, exhausting work for all involved.

I am supremely grateful for the support given by staff and lay leadership to enable me to take a three-month sabbatical to renew my spent energy after the marathon of Covid-time leadership, and renew my passion for the call God has for Cedar Park United, so that I returned eager to work with the Board through the late fall to create a congregational strategic plan for 2024 and beyond, which, we have discovered, is not a road map with a defined destination, but rather a "**Community Compass**" – an orientation of our best efforts to be a Christian community that seeks to shine as a

---

beacon of progressive Christian thought and action, offering radically welcoming, vibrant, creative and relevant ministry to all members, participants, visitors and neighbours, wherever they are, whether onsite, or online.

A LOT has changed since March 2020 (when the Pandemic began), but two things remain constant: God's Dream for the world's wellbeing, and Cedar Park's commitment to play our part within that Dream as faithfully and courageously as we can.

Thank you to each of you who helped us to rebuild, renew, retool, and break new trails in 2023.

## **In Memoriam 2023**

We cherish their memories, and grieve their loss

### **CPU Members**

William Kyle                      April 2023  
Madeleine Claudi                June 2022

### **Friends, Relatives & Loved Ones**

William Walker  
Oscar Herrera Pinto

*With thanks to Jeannie Blevins, CPUC Roll Clerk*

## **Membership**

Jeannie Blevins, our CPUC Roll Clerk for the last 33 years (and resident chronicler!) keeps a firm grip on our Membership Roll. This year, we recorded 141 members as per the United Church of Canada guidelines, but as we know, our community welcomes so many more, from near and far.

---

## Message from the Board Chair

*Ron Wiebe*

During the last year of renewal, as we seek to reimagine the future of a Cedar Park United that both includes valued traditions and establishes new and deep connections, I am reminded of, and inspired by, the following:

“Where there is no vision, the people perish; but happy are they who keep God’s law.”

*Proverbs 29:18.*

So what does that mean? People without vision are people without a future. Any successful endeavor requires a vision. The word “vision” means the ability to see what is not visible to the eye, but rather seeing things that are invisible - or in other words, seeing things through God’s eyes.

It is a well known fact that the people who *are* Cedar Park United invest their time, their talent, their treasure and their prayers to see God’s Dream (vision) lived out through them.

I would like to challenge whoever reads this brief message to be a part of, or to continue to be a part of *God’s Dream, God’s Vision* in a world of injustice, inequality, loneliness, poverty, the marginalized and the disenfranchised.

God’s Dream does not happen in one day, but day-by-day through our hands, our hearts and our wallets.

Come and join God’s Dream, God’s Vision.

Helen Keller was once asked “What would be worse than being born blind?” She replied, “The only thing worse than being blind is to have sight without vision.”

..

### **Board Retreats**

In 2023 the Board engaged in a months’-long discernment process, and engaged an experienced and wise external facilitator, Ms. Patty Evans, who led us in two two-day retreats in June and October to help us discern who we are in 2023, and what God is calling us to be and do as a community of faith, moving forward into 2024 and beyond. The results of this discerning process identified these key identities and calls, which form the key directions of a Strategic Plan we are calling our

#### **COMMUNITY COMPASS**

- We are, and want to continue to be a progressive beacon
- We want to foster and enhance our worship and spiritual lives in ways consistent with our core identity and values
- We want to practice radical hospitality, and serve as a supportive caring community,
- We want to use all our resources as sustainably as possible, including our building, our paid contractor and staff team, our volunteers, and our financial resources.

---

## Highlights of the Year Just Passed

Cedar Parkers time and again show what it means to offer welcome - be it radical or warm (and usually both!) - to everyone who walks through our doors, visits our garden, or connects with us online. From long tables indoors and out, to hybrid Worship and Instagram, we continue to grow our community and live God's Dream. Read on to learn more...

### **Worship – online, onsite, and elsewhere**

**Rev. Elisabeth** notes that in 2023 that **Worship** has continued in hybrid fashion, enabling up to half our community to participate from home, or work, or even vacation. We're still learning how to use the versatility of our sanctuary for different worship experiences, such as a baptism at the centre of the labyrinth, or the comforting fullness of our Christmas Eve by candlelight. Guiding our worship planning is the desire to create opportunity for all to experience God's presence, love, challenge and welcome, in community. With stability comes opportunity, and we are now rebuilding the lay-reader team, and reinstating the seasonal "Worship Imagineers" events so that more people can participate in planning and leading engaging worship.

Our [YouTube channel](#) and [Sunday Soul Food](#) (subscription email) enable us to share our worship far beyond our walls, and beyond the constraints of time. Recordings and transcripts enable more people to be nourished by God through our worship offerings.

Recognizing the time crunch for many families, we hosted seasonal [Doing Differently](#) afternoon events which helped families with children to connect with the Christian story in age-appropriate and multi-sensory ways. Sunday morning Children's Worship spent as much time as possible in the Backyard Oasis where their experience of God's goodness in creation becomes tangible and transformative.

**Douglas Knight** and the CPU Church Choir provided live music for Sunday services, singing inspirational anthems and leading the hymn-singing. Rehearsals took place in the sanctuary, but those unable to attend in person had the option to participate via Zoom.

In addition, an augmented choir of 40 singers, which included members of the congregation and invitees, rehearsed for 2 months to present the return of the Christmas Choir Celebration - to great acclaim. More than \$1,000 in freewill offering was collected in support of the West Island Mission.

### **Family & Youth**

Pictures say a thousand words about these events, so click on the links to find out more and be inspired by the liveliness of our families and youth and the creative ways we met them where they are in 2023:

- 
- [Winter Wild Church \(Loving the Land\)](#)
  - [Doing Easter Differently](#)
  - [Youth Spirit Quest](#)
  - [Vacation Creation Camp](#)
  - [Youth trick or treating for hunger](#)
  - [Doing Advent Differently](#)
  - [Youth Christmas Eve Prep event](#)

2023 saw an exponential increase in our Mini Connections private Facebook group (now at 121 members) and strong growth and belonging in in-person participation on Wednesday mornings.

The participation of our youth in our **Supper Together** event and our families in the pilot of [Wednesday Community Connections](#) showed how interconnected we have become as an all-ages community.

## Learning & Growing

**Joanne Kalan** reports Christian Development activities of 2023 were community-driven and encompassed all of God's gifts. Midrash Zoom meetings anchored our year with fascinating conversation within and beyond our local community by turning the ancient wisdom of the Bible.

During May, Christian Development sessions continued our reconciliation journey with the spiritual exploration series "*One Drum, More Voices*" to reconnect our spirits with the sacred Earth and the Creator, through poetry, ritual and community. Creation Time invited conversation about nature and the gardens at CPU for the "*Equinox Spirit Exploration*" on a sunny September afternoon in the backyard Oasis.

Faith Discussion Gatherings started the year collaboratively with the Social Justice team by delivering donated food to the West Island Mission. During Lent, FDG gathered online and in the lounge for a hybrid meeting to study the book "*We Make the Road by Walking*". We were enlightened during Advent with FDG's "The Paper Bag Pageant and Christmas Reflections" when we learned from Advent artwork, hymns, songs, and the meaning of the Christmas pageant through Rev Elisabeth's "Paper Bag Pageant".

**Dawna Wieppert** reports that the **Womens' Group** was well-attended throughout the year, and members enjoyed lively and engaging discussions and presentations on a variety of topics, with **Patrica Jones** coordinating the group on Zoom until May 2023.

**Dick Hovey, Gary Spiller** and **Ernie Bauer** report that the Men's Group, now a smaller group of 19, adopted a new programming focus after conducting a survey. Meetings included an opening lunch in September,

---

an October photo presentation delivered by Rod Leroy and Richard Bastien on a trip to the Holy Land. Rev E presented UCC's organizational goals in November. We ended the year with lunch! There are normally 8-10 attendees.

**Caring - connections, comfort and healing**

Terry Weibe and Rev. Elisabeth describe Congregational Care ministry as adding another layer to the pastoral care offered by our Minister. It provides spiritual, emotional, social and practical care, tailored to each situation. By monitoring the congregationalcare@cedarparkunited.org inbox, and through monthly reviews of the congregational list, they stay in touch with members, especially those living alone, and offer support as needed. In 2023 we also:

- Planned for and provided care during Rev. Elisabeth's sabbatical
- Organized and hosted onsite "Connections" sessions in seniors' living complexes where Cedar Parkers reside
- Maintained the the Comfort Food Freezer, and added a Comfort Pantry to extend our support to those experiencing food insecurity or facing other challenges
- We began planning and laid the groundwork to 'revamp' the Care Clusters established during Covid-era, and are looking forward to building on this network with a new focus on the long-term wellbeing of all in our community.

**Pat Jones** reports that after a second flood (and a lengthy wait for repairs) that the Oasis room is once again available for **Healing Pathway** ministry. You can sign up for a one-hour session given on Mondays from 2-5pm from our website at: [cedarparkunited.org/healing-pathway](http://cedarparkunited.org/healing-pathway), where, if you are not familiar with this ministry, you can also read more about it. We have been quietly nurturing the west island community for the past 21 years. This Healing Pathway experience is there for you.

**Sharing - time, talent and treasure**

**RevE, Marthy Randy** and **Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière** report that CPU's ongoing and steadfast commitment to **Social Justice** in 2023 included:

- Sandwich-making for [Bread & Beyond](#) to feed unhoused people, initiated by our Youth Spirit Quest group, became an ongoing programme labelled with notes of encouragement created by Cedar Parkers near and far.
- Becoming the West Island drop-off hub for Bread & Beyond and you donated items for Essentials Boxes.
- You answered appeals from Chez Doris for hygiene items, West Island Mission for non-perishables (including Hallowe'en for Hunger) and Optométristes sans frontières for used eyeglasses.
- Delivered 6 harvests of fresh produce from CPU gardens to



---

West Island mission

- Supporting Action Refugiés Montreal through Ride for Refuge.

### **Grants Team**

The **Grants Team** researches funding opportunities and prepares applications. **Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière** and **Janet Cheasley** report that in 2023 we received \$4,000 from 2 foundations, and \$2,000 from a Quebec government seniors grant, and applied again to the New Horizons for Seniors program

### **Theatre Cedar Park, Cedar Park Rentals & Maintenance**

Our venue increases our revenue! **Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière** reports that **Theatre Cedar Park** hosted a number of concerts and town-hall-style meetings and the Community Hall and other areas welcomed a craft fair, a film crew lunch, an all-day learning session, and several dinners, meetings, and private events.

We shared our space with a variety of community groups, including Les Petits Freres, Corbeille de pain, Meals on Wheels, and Highland dancing and line dancing classes, not to mention the ever-popular **Line Dancing** classes organized by our own **Susan Knight**.

In addition to routine maintenance, **property**-related expenses included everything from fixing leaky plumbing, trimming tree branches that were fouling electrical wires to eradicating a wasp infestation. Additional electrical work was done to accommodate the portable generator while a Project Team awarded a contract for an on-demand generator.

The unexpected ice storm and extended power failure during Holy Week resulted in a second major flood, requiring extensive clean up and renovation. Cedar Parkers generously paid the \$10,000 insurance deductible. Thank you. We shared our main floor space with the daycare to minimize the impact on the children and maintain our rental income and offered all building users alternate space. We are blessed with excellent tenants, volunteers and contractors who care for our building and grounds.

### **The Great Outdoors**

**Jamie Stevens, Joanne Kalen and Elsa Dondenaz** report that in addition to the partnership with Urban Seedlings, where a new raised bed was installed to grow vegetable for West Island Mission:

- We planted a Healing Garden with the *Three Sisters* - beans, corn and squash. The bumper crop of butternut squash was distributed to interested CPU'ers at the Longest Table in September, and was transformed into soup and other dishes for the comfort freezer!
- We started a new program in partnership with our Family and Youth Ministries: [Vacation Creation Camp](#). Camp counsellors

---

took care of the ‘campers’ - the leafy residents in our garden - all summer, and ensured a bountiful harvest. Their beautiful painted birdhouses became ‘house of hope’ message stations, installed around the property.

- We completed the landscaping of our Healing Garden with the installation of a dry creek and rain garden, and extension of the thyme lawn.

### **Behind the Scenes - M&P**

**Jamie Stevens** reports that in addition to the usual behind the scenes work, M&P provided support to our staff during Rev. Elisabeth’s 3-month sabbatical, which she took from June to September to minimize the impact on congregational life.

### **Communications & Tech Team**

**Martha Randy** reports that we’ve unified our outward-facing communications by switching staff and key volunteer email addresses to @cedarparkunited.org, and continued to build our internal collaboration via Google Workspace and Canva for nonprofits. We grew in our numbers of online followers/subscribers on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Sunday Soul Food](#) through our presence as a dependable, inspirational progressive voice, and provided onsite posters that echoed this online presence and included QR code “doors” to participation.

The core team of **Norman Jones**, **Karlheinz Schuler**, and **Jamie Stevens** continues to welcome crew members into the team that provides support for hybrid worship. Other activities included:

- Solicit and act on feedback to improve the hybrid worship experience.
- Planning for new online and hybrid initiatives to support Community Compass objectives.
- Providing AV support to rental groups on a case-by-case basis. We are exploring how this can be streamlined and simplified to bolster our space rental opportunities

### **Special Projects**

#### **Staff confession:**

That if truth be told, the whole of 2023 felt like a special project, as we embraced the challenge of rebuilding our community after the impact of the COVID years. We were re-learning how to be together, and how to be in our renovated and flood-repaired spaces again.

An absolute highlight of 2023 was the Spring Concert series, during which we were able to hear the acoustic range and possibility of our building, complete with a rented grand piano. The talents shared in this series, by Cedar Parkers, and others, were virtuosic.

Other “special projects” are reported elsewhere in this Annual Report. Some “one-off” projects have become pilot or starter projects for new avenues of radical care, welcome, social action for our faith community to participate in in various ways.

---

**Voices for Hope  
Community Choir**

**Douglas Knight** and the Voices for Hope Community Choir continued with weekly sing-alongs from February to the end of May. In September, the choir was back in performance mode, presenting two concerts per season. The 35-member *Voices for Hope Community Choir* put on a benefit concert December 9, 2023 that included a Christmas carol sing-along. Proceeds of \$1,360 were donated to Montreal City Mission.

**Trustees**

Despite the many challenges CPU faced in 2023, it was a quiet year for the Trustees, who on more than one occasion stood ready to help with booster funds to assist with the flood (in April 2023), and the resulting need to install additional flood mitigation systems, and the potential shortfall of our operating budget. In neither case were funds required from the reserve, thanks to the generosity of members of the congregation.

Trustee member involvement in the congregational finance team, and with the property insurance portfolio has meant that the Trustees are closely connected to the rebuilding of the community that has happened in 2023.

The Trustees manage the reserve fund, which includes a community account, GIC, Micro Credit MTL investment interest, and a hedge fund investment.

Opening Balance Dec 31, 2022	\$106,975.50
Closing Balance, Dec 31, 2023	\$114,019.43
Increase	\$7,043.93

**Nakonha:ka Regional  
Council**

**Rick Sheffer** reports that this past year has been one of transition for the Regional Council, with Executive Minister Rev. Rosemary Lambie retiring and the appointment of Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, who brings extensive and varied experience to the role. Most recently, Eric served in the position of *Responsible for Ministries in French, General Council Office of the UCC*. Prior roles included *National Director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society* and *National Director of the New Democratic Party*.

A major highlight in 2023 was the launch of the Strategic Plan for the Regional Council in tandem with the launch of the Strategic Plan for the national Church. CPU members may remember the launch of the Plan in the shared worship with the West Island Cluster in July where the body of the fish represented the plan. This is a major focus of the Region going forward into this next period, so stay tuned by subscribing to the Regional Newsletter at <https://nakhakaucc.ca/newsletter/>.

In this period of reflection as we plan for the future, it's important that we work together at all levels.

---

## Financial Report

### Financial Results for 2023

As the worst days of the Covid epidemic seem to slip behind us, we shift our gaze from our rear-view mirror to look forward to an examination of our strategic direction and determine how we can best live out the dream of God. Our customary momentum is returning to many aspects of our church life. Attendance in onsite and online worship is up, our space is being more effectively utilized to host concerts, dinners and an increasing variety of community events and the Community Compass is helping to guide us towards a Cedar Park United that will continue to be responsive, relevant, vibrant and sustainable in the years to come. Once again, thanks to your generosity and commitment, we have been able to overcome a budgeted deficit for 2023 and generate a small financial surplus for the year. This is the kind of miracle that every Church Treasurer likes to see unfold! Thank you! Now, let's have a look at the numbers.

Buoyed by a strong response to a year-end appeal, Local Donations rose dramatically year-over-year, to \$230,671, which was \$18,671 better than budget and \$18,699 better than the prior year. Space use rentals benefitted from the reopening of our beautiful sanctuary and the resumption of activities post-Covid, exceeding budget by \$7,511 and the prior year by \$15,379. Grant and Other Income benefitted from an insurance claim settlement of \$7,203 and a government grant of \$2,000. Largely as a result of these increases, Local Ministry Income at \$339,304 was \$39,398 better than budget and \$22,864 better than 2022. Total Ministry Income, which includes Mission and Service Donations was \$350,979, exceeding budget by \$30,733 and last year's figure by \$18,853.

**Local Ministry Expenses** for the year were \$336,031, exceeding budget by \$14,509 and 2022 numbers by \$28,611. The major reason for this overage was the April 5<sup>th</sup> power failure and flood, which caused significant damage to the basement levels of the church and church hall, including the daycare. These expenses, totalling over \$17,000 appear in the Maintenance and Supplies category, which overall was \$19,111 over budget and \$18,667 worse than the prior year. Flood related expenses incurred by the church were partially offset by amounts paid in excess of the \$10,000 insurance deductible which appear above in Grants and Other Income. Savings, in comparison to budget, totalling \$7,338 in the aggregate were also realized in several expense categories including Building Renewal, Communications and Christian Development.

After Mission Expenditures of \$12,075, total Ministry expenses of \$348,106 were recorded which are \$6,244 worse than budget and \$24,325 higher than those recorded in 2022.

Deducting Total Ministry Expenses from Total Ministry Income, a surplus of \$2,873 was recorded in 2023 which is \$24,489 better than budget and \$5,472 lower than the 2022 figures.

#### **Grant Highlights in 2023:**

In addition to the Grants and Other Income previously detailed, CPU obtained a grant of \$29,000 in April of 2023 From the United Church of Canada related to the completion of the Sanctuary Renovation project. Proceeds of this Grant have been retroactively applied against the total cost of this project. Certain donors who originally made Dedicated Donations to the Sanctuary Renovation

---

project have agreed to repurpose those donations and apply them against the cost of purchase and installation of an automatic generator to ensure the continued operation of critical building infrastructure and maintenance of a safe environment in the event of a power failure. The estimated pre-tax cost of this project will be approximately \$27,000. The project, begun in late November is scheduled for completion in the coming weeks. Sufficient funds are being held in reserve accounts to cover the entire quoted cost.

### **Balance Sheet Cash Balance**

From a Balance Sheet perspective, Current Assets stood at \$146,362 as at year-end largely consisting of Cash Balances in our bank accounts and term deposits totalling \$128,799 (Does not include funds held by Trustees). The balance of this category includes prepaid insurance and a deposit to the supplier for our Generator Project.

Our Cash Balance was significantly reduced in December upon repayment of the required \$40,000 of the the \$60,000 originally advanced to us under the CEBA program. As we repaid this loan prior to the deadline date set by the Government of Canada, we benefited from \$20,000 of debt forgiveness, which was taken into income in 2022 (for internal statement purposes and 2021 on our external Review Engagement Report).

While our Cash Balance appears very healthy, much of it consists of deferred contributions (\$41,864) which are destined for specific purposes (e.g. General Building Renewal, Generator Project, Sanctuary Renovation) as well as for satisfaction of other Current Liabilities totalling \$75,086. The latter consist primarily of Accrued Liabilities of \$38,133 (accrual for Vacation Pay and Generator) and the Syrian Education Fund (Social Justice Payable) totalling \$28,221. When these are applied against the Cash Balance, an amount of \$29,413 remains which can be utilized for general operating purposes if required. This will provide much needed working capital to help us launch our Community Compass initiative.

### **Proposed Budget for 2024-Funding the Community Compass**

During 2023 the Board undertook a strategic planning exercise to set a path to determine what our church community was going to look like over the next 3 to 5 years. As a result, we have created the Community Compass Initiative to help guide our actions and programming going forward to ensure that we remain relevant and responsive to the needs of our changing and growing community of faith, all of this within a framework that promotes sustainability and effective stewardship of resources. Many initiatives have been identified under the four pillars of the Community Compass but more will likely emerge as we move forward under the plan.

Change brings opportunity but it can also bring uncertainty. We are in a dynamic climate of change. In this climate, budgets must be forward looking and not based solely on extrapolation of past results. It is much more difficult to forecast the future than it is to review the past. The budget as drafted is intended to provide an envelope of funding sufficient for us to fund the initiatives thus far identified in the Community Compass and enable others to be undertaken as they are identified, validated and implemented.

---

Consistent with the above, this year's budget has been significantly reformatted to provide the reader with a better understanding of where and how investments are being made in pursuit of our mission, guided by the Community Compass priorities.

Looking at the major sources of funding for these investments, Local Donations are projected to continue to grow, increasing by \$11,772 to \$242,443 for the year. Space rentals, the largest component of which are attached to the daycare lease, are forecast to increase by \$12,163 to hit \$100,000 in 2024 as renters increasingly become aware of our beautiful and functional spaces for a variety of needs. Forecast Grant Income of \$16,875 includes proceeds from the Good Samaritan Grant, the Vision Fund Grant for Spirit Quest and other grants currently being pursued. Combining all of the above, Local Ministry Income is forecast to grow from \$339,303 to \$363,818, an increase of \$24,515. Social Justice revenues include monies applied from the Syrian Education Fund and Food Security funding. Mission and Service donations at \$8,040 are forecast to decline by \$957. When added to Local Ministry Income, these donations result in Total Ministry Income of \$379,559, an increase of \$28,580 over 2023 figures.

It is when we begin to review the Expense side of the equation, we begin to see the changes in budget formatting alluded to earlier. We hope that these changes will enable you to have a better understanding of where and how investments are being made in pursuit of our Mission.

In previous years, compensation costs for both UCC salaried employees and contract service providers (FYMC, CCCS, Music Director) were all combined under the "Staff" category. It was difficult for the reader to tie expenditures (particularly staffing costs) to specific areas of church programming without the support of a Narrative Budget. These formatting changes should provide additional transparency and understanding of the numbers presented.

One challenge of doing this is that Expense categories have now been changed which makes comparison to previous years' numbers difficult. This year's budget provides notes to help in this regard.

Other than the change in staffing costs which has previously been identified, other expense categories included under Salary Expense and Administration show modest change. The UCC Assessment has increased by \$1,378 and the newly renamed Professional, Consulting, Financial category shows a \$4,958 reduction from 2023 figures, which included a special expense for a professional facilitator to assist with the strategic planning exercise undertaken in 2023. Total Salaried Employee and Administration expenses are projected at \$195,650 for the year.

Similarly, Church Building expenses show a modest increase of \$1,026 to \$87,295 but this is because decreases in Maintenance and Supplies (no flood this year) of \$8,951 will largely be offset by an increase in Building Renewal Expense of \$8,964 (miscellaneous building repairs and installation of accessibility ramp).

The most significant changes in budget content and format are included in the Congregational Activities section of the budget. In this regard, we are endeavouring to ensure that our people resources are closely aligned with our Community Compass objectives. In order to prepare a budget, certain assumptions must be made. The following are reflective of the direction proposed and supported by the Lead Minister, Board and the Finance Committee. Below are the key assumptions which we envisage being implemented.

---

A recent study on our donor distribution has shown that a significant portion of our donors in both numbers and amount of donations are worshipping with us Online or in a hybrid format, Online and Onsite. In recognition of this, it is being proposed that we expand our ministry in the digital space under a new category called Communications and Digital Ministry. This Ministry will focus not only on our current digital delivery model but also explore and support the creation of new and innovative ways to expand the outreach, appeal and functionality of our digital offerings. The budget of \$15,572 for this expense category includes the estimated cost of a paid Coordinator.

Another key assumption is in the area of how we connect with our community, where we propose a new category called Community Engagement. This expanded category will encompass support for how we engage not only with families and youth, and seniors, but all members of our community. It will play a vital role particularly as relates to the implementation of the Progressive and Radical Welcome and Hospitality beacons of the Community Compass initiative. The estimated budget for Community Engagement will be \$31,985 and includes the estimated cost of a paid Coordinator.

Results of the latest congregational survey of our Music Ministry indicate satisfaction with many aspects of the Ministry's current model but also a desire to see more variety in music, and a greater diversity of musicians. We therefore propose exploring opportunities to collaborate with the many talented amateur and professional musicians who are members and/or friends of Cedar Park, as well as engaging with other professional musicians to further enhance the worship experience. For budget purposes we are retaining the lion's share of the 2023 cost of delivery of the Music Ministry (\$30,416) in the 2024 budget.

The Community Compass teams are continuing to define the details of their initiatives, which will in turn help define the coordinator roles and responsibilities for these new categories. It is hoped that implementation of these changes can start by the midpoint of this year and the budget is structured to give effect to this timeline.

In total, Local Ministry Expenses are forecast at \$363,418. Combined with Social Justice and M & S disbursements, Total Ministry Expenses are forecast at \$379,559 and produce a balanced budget for 2024.

This budget is undoubtedly ambitious but it is innovative and aspirational and provides an envelope of funding sufficiently large to permit investment in delivery of existing and new programs and in expanding our outreach. All of this will be critical to our ability to follow our Community Compass towards a bright, meaningful and sustainable future, consistent with our Mission and the Dream of God.

In closing, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the Finance Committee for their time, dedication and diligence in fulfilling their important responsibilities, specifically, Paul Clarke, Stephen Cheasley, Ron Wiebe, Norman Jones, Jim Gates, Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones, and Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière.

I have particularly enjoyed and appreciate the outstanding contribution of our bookkeeper, Steve Cole, since my appointment as Treasurer in September of 2022. Steve will be officially retiring after the ACM on March 17<sup>th</sup>, after ten years as a volunteer in this role. To say that he will be missed is a

---

massive understatement. I too, regrettably, will be exiting my role as Treasurer after that meeting. Fortunately, we have two competent and eager volunteers who have recently engaged with our congregation to fulfill these upcoming vacancies. As Treasurer, Richmund Ninson Abeka-Afari has both accounting and business management experience in his native Ghana. As Bookkeeper, Maria Pagliuca has graciously stepped forward to assume this role. She has an accounting diploma from Dawson College and extensive experience in accounts receivable and accounts payable accounting and management. Both Steve and I will make ourselves available to assist in the transition of roles and provide any necessary training. The Finance Committee will also be providing assistance and support during and after the initial transition period.

I also wish to thank all of the members, adherents and friends of Cedar Park who have given generously of their time, talent and treasure, through some very difficult times in recent years, enabling us to start our new Community Compass journey on a sound footing. I have been so impressed by the resilience and commitment of you all. This augers so well for the future of our church community.

**Financial Statements and Review Engagement Report**

The accounting firm of Rowen & Hu CPA Inc. was appointed at the Annual Congregational Meeting in March of last year to prepare a Review Engagement Report (RER) on Cedar Park's financial statements for 2023.

The RER was compiled based on internal financial statements, notes and supporting materials provided, variously, by Norman Jones CPA, Steve Cole CPA, Jamie Stevens (Chair Ministry and Personnel), Elizabeth Chown Lafrenière (Administrator), and the Treasurer. The RER also consolidates the financial statements of the Board of Trustees of CPU with the internal operating statements of the Church, with certain adjustments. These differences which are consistent with the required presentation of the statements under ASNPO (Accounting Standards for Non-Profit Organizations), include the accounting treatment for grants, differences in the classification of certain revenues and expenses, the incorporation of fixed assets, and the inclusion of the Trustees Accounts in the statements. A reconciliation of the surplus of the RER and our internal statements is shown hereunder. Both balance to the dollar.

Surplus from Internal Financial Statements	\$2,873.05
Add Interest and Investment Gain from Trustees Accounts	\$7,043.93
Subtract Interest Expense Imputed on CEBA Loan	\$ 769.00
Surplus from ASNPO Financial Statements (RER)	\$9,147.98

**For more details on the proposed budget and the internal financial statements, please refer below (following pages). Copies of the Review Engagement Report are available onsite at the Annual Congregational Meeting or by request at [treasurer@cedarparkunited.org](mailto:treasurer@cedarparkunited.org).**



## CPUC Income Statements(Internal) 2022 & 2023 Budget 2024

	2022 <u>Actual</u>	2023 <u>Actual</u>	2024 <u>Proposed Budget</u>	Budget vs <u>2023 BI(W)</u>	Foot Notes
<b>MINISTRY INCOME</b>					
Local Donations	211,972	230,671	242,443	11,772	
Funding Gap				0	
Designated Donations	0		0	0	
Memorial Gifts	0		0	0	
Freewill offerings	423	3,853	4,500	647	1
FundScrip, SheetMusicPlus	102		0	0	
Space Use	72,459	87,837	100,000	12,163	2
Weddings, Funerals	1,915	550	0	(550)	
Grants, Other, Interest	29,569	16,392	16,875	483	3
<b>LOCAL MINISTRY INCOME</b>	<b>316,440</b>	<b>339,303</b>	<b>363,818</b>	<b>24,515</b>	
Social Justice	5,249	2,679	7,701	5,022	4
Mission & Service Donations	10,437	8,997	8,040	(957)	
<b>MISSION INCOME</b>	<b>15,686</b>	<b>11,676</b>	<b>15,741</b>	<b>4,065</b>	
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY INCOME</b>	<b>332,126</b>	<b>350,979</b>	<b>379,559</b>	<b>28,580</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Salaried Employees UCC	210,197	207,382	168,683	38,699	5
- Telephone and Internet	1,326	1,461	2,160	(699)	
- Office Equipment and Supplies	4,552	5,885	5,965	(80)	
- UCC assessment	9,768	11,829	13,207	(1,378)	
Professional, Consulting & Financial	5,428	10,593	5,635	4,958	6
Salaried Employees & Administration	231,271	237,150	195,650	41,500	7
- Heat and Power	23,972	24,023	23,730	293	
- Maintenance & Supplies	31,369	50,036	41,085	8,951	8
- Insurance	8,526	9,974	11,280	(1,306)	
- Building Renewal	5,746	2,236	11,200	(8,964)	9
Church Building	69,613	86,269	87,295	(1,026)	
- Congregational Supplies	1,382	2,888	2,500	388	
- Communications & Digital Ministry	833	1,104	15,572	(14,468)	10
- Community Engagement	678	1,849	31,985	(30,136)	11
- Minister's Pastoral Expenses	2,186	2,450	0	2,450	
Music Ministry	1,457	4,320	30,416	(26,096)	12
Congregational Activities	6,536	12,611	80,473	(67,862)	
<b>LOCAL MINISTRY EXPENSES</b>	<b>307,420</b>	<b>336,030</b>	<b>363,418</b>	<b>(27,388)</b>	
Social Justice	5,924	3,079	8,101	(5,022)	13
Mission & Service Donations	10,437	8,997	8,040	957	
<b>MISSION EXPENSES</b>	<b>16,361</b>	<b>12,076</b>	<b>16,141</b>	<b>(4,065)</b>	
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY EXPENSES</b>	<b>323,781</b>	<b>348,106</b>	<b>379,559</b>	<b>(31,453)</b>	
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>8,345</b>	<b>2,873</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(2,873)</b>	14

### Notes

1. Largely Expense Recovery Community Dinners
2. Forecast Increase Space Usage
3. Includes Good Samaritan Grant, Vision Fund Grant and others in progress
4. Includes Syrian Refugee Draw plus Food Security
5. 2024 represents UCC Salaried Employees Only. Service Providers reclassified below.
6. Reduction in Facilitation costs re Strategic Plan 2023. Change in category name.
7. 2022 & 2023 includes Service Providers as well as Salaried Employees.
8. Cleaning plus Routine Maintenance and Supplies. No flood this year!

9. Miscellaneous building repairs, ramp.
10. 2024 includes compensation for Digital Services Coordinator plus Sundry
11. 2024 includes compensation for Community Engagement Coordinator (combines FYMC and CCC) plus expanded program.
12. Formerly Music Worship and Praise. Restructured Program
13. Includes Bread and Beyond (sandwich making) and Syrian Education Fund expenditure
14. Balanced Budget



## Current Assets & Liabilities

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
RBC Chequing A/C	63,018	85,463
Tangerine Savings A/C	79,123	40,999
Petty Cash	36	25
Net Cash	<u>142,177</u>	<u>126,487</u>
Accounts Receivable	6,593	5,540
GIC(one year renewable)	2,312	2,312
Prepaid Expenses	10,678	12,024
Current Assets	<u>161,759</u>	<u>146,362</u>
Accounts Payable	0	2,450
Accrued Liabilities	23,770	38,113
<u>Programs</u>		
Voices for Hope	1,887	4,270
Broadview	280	150
Cedar Park Coffee House	836	836
Healing Pathways	2,546	1,046
Program Advances	<u>5,549</u>	<u>6,301</u>
Social Justice Payable	28,662	28,221
Mission & Service Payable	165	0
Current Liabilities	<u>58,147</u>	<u>75,086</u>
Benevolent Minister Fund	3,250	3,225
Community Projects	12,234	7,143
CEBA Loan	40,000	0
Reserve Discretionary Fund	3,070	3,070
Outdoor Garden	3,501	1,162
General Bldg Renewal	3,000	6,000
Technology	5,557	5,653
Generator	0	9,150
Sanctuary Renovation	6,462	6,462
Deferred Contributions	<u>77,073</u>	<u>41,864</u>
Assets less liabilities/deferred	26,540	29,413

---

## Annual Congregation Meeting 2023 Minutes

CEDAR PARK UNITED CHURCH  
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
Sunday, March 19, 2023

The meeting, having been duly publicized and constituted, was held synchronously, using video conferencing and on site at Cedar Park United at 11:20 am. Kally Walsh called the meeting to order, declared a quorum, and chaired the meeting. Patricia Becker Schuler recorded the minutes.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones opened the meeting with prayer and read the names of those of the community who have died since the last annual meeting.

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1.1 Acknowledgement of appointment of Chair and Recording Secretary for this meeting.

1.2 Enabling Motion: Moved by Norman Jones, seconded by Cheryl Roscoe that all adult adherents - that is those for whom Cedar Park is their church home - may speak and vote on motions and proceedings of this meeting and that voting be by show of hands onsite, and by Zoom poll. All subsequent votes were dealt with in the same way.

Carried

1.3 Approval of Agenda: Moved by Margrét Kristjansson, seconded by Elsa Dondenaz that the agenda for this meeting, as printed, and projected, be approved.

Carried

1.4 Approval of the Minutes of Annual Congregational Meeting 2022: Moved by Cheryl Roscoe, seconded by Nancy Walsh, that the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting, as circulated, printed, and published in the Annual Report be approved.

Carried

### 2. ANNUAL REPORT 2022

2.1 Acceptance of the Annual Report (excluding financials): The Annual Report was published and circulated digitally (and was made available in print media to any who requested).

**Motion**: Moved by Elsa Dondenaz, seconded by Betsy Starr, that the Annual Report for 2022, excluding the financial reports and budget proposal, as printed and published, be accepted and approved. (Zoom poll votes 8, 1 abstention).

Carried

2.2 Treasurer's Report: Peter Forton presented the Financial Report. The powerpoint presentation, in combination with the published financial statements, constitute the report.

---

**Motion:** Moved by Peter Forton, seconded by Steve Cole that the Review Engagement Report and the 2022 Financial Report be approved.

(Zoom poll votes 8, 1 abstention).

**Carried**

**2.3 Appointment of Independent Accountant to review the 2023 Financial Statements:**

**Motion:** Moved by Peter Forton, seconded by Dick Hovey that Mr. James Rowen, CPA, be appointed as an independent accountant to review Cedar Park United Church's financial statements for 2023.

**Carried**

**3. VISION AND MINISTRY FOR 2023**

**3.1 Ministry Vision and Priorities for CPU 2023:**

Anyone who watched the February Update video by Board Chair, Kally Walsh, and Rev. Dr. Jones, will already be somewhat familiar with the broad outline of our proposed ministry priorities for 2023. This version was shared in more detail at the Annual Congregational Meeting (March 19, 2023), as the foundational vision which underlies the now approved budget for 2023. As we said in that February video, we spent time listening to and analyzing the responses to November's "CPU Asks" programme. These five priorities arise directly from what we (as the Board) heard from Cedar Park members and friends.

1. Fellowship, Worship, Discipleship
2. Ground and centre our care within the community
3. Listen and discern for a sustainable future in a changed context
4. Strengthen partnerships and collaborations
5. Using our building as host/platform for engaged witness and connection

**3.2 Proposed Budget for 2023:**

An overview of the 2023 Budget was presented by Peter Forton.

**Motion:** Moved by Peter Forton, seconded by Dick Hovey that the Budget for 2023 be approved as presented. (Zoom poll votes 7, 1 abstention).

**Carried**

**4. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**4.1 Report of the Nominating Committee:**

Cheryl Roscoe presented the report on behalf of the committee, summarizing that the following people, have agreed to stand for election to the Congregational Board of Cedar Park United for 2023:

Kally Walsh (Chair)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term to end Feb. 2024
William Blevins	2 <sup>nd</sup> term to end Feb. 2024
Jamie Stevens	2 <sup>nd</sup> term to end Feb. 2024
Norman Jones	2 <sup>nd</sup> term to end Feb. 2025
Ron Wiebe	1 <sup>st</sup> term to end Feb. 2024

---

Margrét Kristjansson	1st term to end Feb.2024
Peter Forton	1 <sup>st</sup> term to end Feb. 2025
Carol Horn (on temporary leave)	1 <sup>st</sup> term to end Feb.2024

The following people, having completed a discernment process, have agreed to stand for election to the Congregational Board of Cedar Park United for 2023, serving an initial 2 year term:

Heidi Simmons	1 <sup>st</sup> term to end Feb. 2025
Elsa Dondenaz	1 <sup>st</sup> term to end Feb. 2025

Moved by Nancy Walsh, seconded by Barb Forton, that these people be elected to serve in these positions. (Zoom poll votes 8/8). **Carried**

Completing their terms in February 2023, with our thanks for their service:

Cheryl Roscoe  
 Jacqueline Snider  
 Paul Clarke  
 Andrea Nugent (NRC rep.)  
 Reverend Ian Smith (VAM)  
 Dr. Alyson Huntly (VAM)

#### 4.2 Regional Council Representatives 2023:

The following person has agreed to serve as our representative to the Regional Council until the rise of that Council in May 2023:

Frederick Sheffer

A special thanks to Andrea Nugent for her years of service.

#### 4.3 Acknowledgement of Trustees:

Trustees are as follows: Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones (Chair, ex officio), Terry Taylor, Cameron Fortin, Jeannie Blevins, Bill Harvey, and Stephen Cheasley.

#### 4.4 Recognition of Retiring Officers and Others:

Rev. Dr. Elisabeth Jones, on behalf of the entire congregation thanked those retiring from the Board. She also thanked our Voluntary Associate Ministers, Rev. Wendy Evans, and Rev. Cathy Hamilton for their continued support and contributions to the well-being of our congregation. A special thanks and expression of gratitude to our dedicated staff for their ongoing commitment and tireless work.

#### 4.5 Enabling Motion re: Board and Trustee appointments until next ACM:

**Motion:** Moved by Elsa Dondenaz, seconded by Cheryl Roscoe, that the congregation authorize the Board to respond to emerging needs or vacancies on the Board, and to make appointment of one or more persons for a special term ending at the next Annual Meeting. Any such

---

appointment will be preceded by the normal discernment process.

**Carried**

4.6 Election of Chair and Secretary of the Pastoral Charge:

**Motion:** Moved by Cheryl Roscoe, seconded by Noreen Cole that Kally Walsh be appointed as Chair of the Pastoral Charge until the conclusion of the next Annual Congregational Meeting in 2024. I further move that the board appoint Margrét Kristjansson as recording secretary for the Pastoral Charge until the conclusion of the next Annual Congregational Meeting.

**Carried**

5. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion:** Moved by Elsa Dondenaz that the Annual Congregational Meeting be adjourned and that the Minister be called upon to close the meeting in prayer.

**Carried**

---

Kally Walsh, Chair

---

Patricia Becker Schuler, Recording Secretary