



# 2024 Annual Report

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FROM THE  
*Pastor's Desk*

In 2024, we were blessed to celebrate our 165 years together as a church family: Bella Amu created a new banner for the sanctuary wall, the Sunday school planted a hydrangea in our Anniversary Garden, there was a display of historical items and photos, we held an evening of sharing memories and music, dressed up in historic clothing, and we were blessed by the preaching and fellowship of Rev. Dr. Andrew Stirling.

In addition, last year saw us engage together in "Life on the Frontline," our Healing services, including our very well-attended Shattered Joy service in December, and we welcomed about 40 new people into worship with us, 22 of whom became official members.

I am very grateful to our church leaders, and all who serve the Lord in many beautiful ways! It was sad to have Pastor Kwaku leave us as he pursues his calling to ordination in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, but what an answer to prayer it was to welcome Noah Toth as our new Youth Leader, and Kate Hendriks as our Communications Coordinator.

As always, I am very optimistic for the year ahead of us as we trust the Lord to continue to lead and bless us so that we may be a blessing to others, both inside and beyond the church family. As you read the following reports, continue to praise the Lord with me for His abiding grace and faithfulness proven to us throughout last year.

In His love,  
*Pastor Greg*

**Congregational Designated Minister**



2024 began with a wonderful church wide study of "Life On The Frontline." My role was to support the small group leaders in preparation for the study and to provide group leadership in January, prior to a leave of absence for February and March. Upon my return, I was blessed to be included in worship support roles on many occasions.

I continued to lead the Men's Study Group (MSG) in partnership with Pastor Colin. (More information on the progress of MSG is in a separate report.) I was also privileged to be a member of the Church Growth Team and the Volunteer Growth Team and to be included in retreats held in 2024.

Pastoral care continued in a variety of formats including visitation, telephone and e-mail. There was significant growth in the need for grief counselling, both individual and group. I expect this kind of ministry to grow in the coming year.

I feel both privileged and blessed to serve and to be a member of the vibrant, loving congregation of Byron United Church.

*Ric Graham*

## THE LEADERS' BOARD

2024 was an exciting year as the third year of focusing on the **Growth of our Church**. At each of our monthly Leaders' Board meetings we focused on one of our three growth areas.... **Church Growth, Spiritual Growth** or **Volunteer Growth**, and reviewed plans that were being considered by that Growth Team for the months ahead. We met via Zoom technology each month except July and August. We also held a full-day in-person Planning Retreat in November to review our **Growth Vision & Plan**. Members of the three Growth Teams joined us that day as we reviewed and celebrated our 2024 accomplishments and clarified our goals for 2025. It has been rewarding to see the variety of ways in which we are **CONNECTING, GROWING** and **SERVING** within our church and beyond.

Throughout the year the Leaders' Board oversees the work of all church teams and events. We make decisions on behalf of Session, during the time between Session meetings and recommend to Session decisions which require approval of the Elders. However, it is the work of the three Growth Teams that has been the catalyst for overall growth we have experienced this year. We wish to thank the members of these three teams for their time and creative ideas. We particularly thank Pastor Greg for his leadership of these three Growth Teams.

It is also through the numerous teams within the Elements that we are actually moving forward in accomplishing our goals. The Leaders' Board wishes to thank the many men and women who lead or serve on those church teams. The generous sharing of your time and talents has been a major factor in making God's plan for our church become a reality.

The Leaders' Board consists of the seven Element Facilitators, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Chair, Vice-Chair and Senior Pastor. Three of these positions had no one in that role for all of 2024. For that reason, we initiated a process of including **Members at Large** as full Leaders' Board members to provide additional input into our decision-making discussions. Sandra Collier volunteered to serve in that role from September 2024 to January 2025. The members of the Leaders' Board for 2025 are included in the Governing Bodies report on the final page of this Annual Report. We owe a huge thank you to all members of the Leaders' Board for their dedicated efforts and considerable additional time on behalf of our church family throughout this past year.

The reports that follow are organized by groupings of Elements for **Connect, Grow** and **Serve** so that you can see some of the ways in which these groups of Elements share their specific focus. Those individual reports detail what Connecting/Growing/Serving really mean for our church family.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Linda Peck, Chair of the Leaders' Board



## SESSION

Session is the governing body of our church which makes decisions on behalf of the congregation about all aspects of our church life. It is made up of all Elders, plus the Senior Pastor. It is a privilege to work with such dedicated church members. At their meetings, the Elders receive information about the life and work of our church. The Leaders' Board presents items which require Session review or decision.

During 2024, Session met five times for regular meetings in alternate months from September to May. All meetings continued to be held via Zoom conference calling technology. We were pleased to put behind us the time spent in earlier years dealing with pandemic protocols. In January Session supported a return to refreshment/fellowship time following worship. In March the Elders supported returning to our pre-pandemic process for serving Holy Communion by passing trays of Elements in the pews. The first such celebration was on June 2, 2024. Session also supported ceasing our quarterly newsletters and moving to a monthly expanded Special BUC Wheat edition to include congregational information. In November, Session began reviewing suggested amendments from the Governance Team for the Church's 2010 **Liability Plan** to revise wording for consistency with current UCC and legislative terminology. This will continue during 2025.

Duties of Elders include visits to members of the congregation, discussion of the special BUC Wheat editions, and service during celebrations of Holy Communion. Most of our Elders have a visiting district. Quarterly contacts with families in their district occur in-person or by telephone. Please give them a warm welcome whether they visit you in-person or by phone. Take a moment to let them know if you have any comments or concerns that should be brought to our attention and how we can better support you throughout the year.

During 2024, we established some supportive strategies for all our Elders. These included a "**Day of Encouragement**" in April, organized by our Volunteer Growth Team. An **Elder Role Description** was developed, discussed and approved, which was forwarded to the congregation for information in the spring. The **Day of Encouragement** will again be held in April 2025.

We began 2024 with 36 Elders. Three additional Elders, Connie Baker, David Osiri and Linda Sampel were elected by the congregation at the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting. Sadly, at our January 2025 Session meeting, we spent time remembering the lives and contributions of two faithful Elders, Deb Farrell and Connie Baker, who both went home to the Lord that month. The list of Elders to be elected for 2025 can be found in the Governing Bodies report at the end of this Annual Report.

I wish to thank all Elders for their dedicated leadership of our church. Special thanks to Pastor Greg for his caring commitment to growing our church numerically, and in spiritual maturity and service to others. We also appreciate the ongoing pastoral care support of both Ric Graham and Pastor Colin Lauchlan, and their additional leadership in many other ways. To our church administrator, Shelley Mercer, our custodian David Smith, our music coordinator Tom de Gryp, our coordinator of Sunday school & Sunday Youth programs Andrea Smith, our Youth Leader, Noah Toth, and our Communications Coordinator, Kate Hendriks, Session says "THANK YOU" for all you do on a weekly basis for all of us. We especially appreciate the flexibility of all our staff during the many changing circumstances during recent years.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Linda Peck, Chair of Session

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Each congregation of the United Church of Canada is required to have a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees holds legal title to all Church property for the benefit of the local congregation as part of the United Church of Canada.

The Board of Trustees meets as required and in 2024 the Board met on five occasions. The Board yearly reviews the insurance needs of the congregation and arranges for the appropriate coverage. The Board is responsible for the administration of estate funds that have been bequeathed to it. Currently, the estate funds are invested with Libro Credit Union and through RBC Wealth Management.

The Board is thankful and appreciative of those members and adherents who think of the Church when making estate planning decisions. On the direction of the Session, the Board is also in the process of dealing with the request of the City of London for a LTC Bus Shelter Permanent Easement on Boler Road.

Tom Dean  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees as of December 2024

## **GROWTH VISION & PLAN**

In 2014, after years of gradual decline, the Lord gave us a vision for a growing, vibrant congregation, as we developed our "Growth Vision & Plan." In 2019, we had grown and had the 20<sup>th</sup> largest average attendance in The United Church of Canada. The pandemic changed everything for everyone! In late 2022, we created two new teams: "Church Growth" and "Spiritual Growth" but these teams, together with our even more recent "Volunteer Growth Team" didn't get into full swing until 2023. They have accomplished much, which you can learn more about in their respective reports later in this document.

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Average Attendance*	88	121	137
National Ranking in UCC	13 highest**	18 <sup>th</sup> highest**	not yet available
New Attendees (continuing)	11	34	33
Official New Members	13	20	22
General Fund Givings	\$369,000	\$382,000	\$409,000

\* Plus children, youth, teachers, and nursery volunteers in attendance.

\*\* includes online worshippers.

Thank you for your prayerful support and participation in what the Lord is doing in us and through this church family to bless people of all ages!

Respectfully submitted by,  
Pastor Greg



## WORSHIP ELEMENT

The **Worship Element** assists in planning and supporting worship services and prayer ministries. Members of the Worship Team schedule greeters, elevator operators, operate the sound board and are responsible for music ministry, multimedia and nursery volunteers. Other responsibilities include preparing for Holy Communion and planning and coordination of funerals/celebrations of life.

The average in-person attendance for Sunday worship services in 2024 was 137, an increase from 121 in 2023. Other church members continued to view weekly services through livestream on Sunday mornings or through the YouTube videos posted online.

**Sunday Worship Service Highlights** during 2024 included:

- Welcoming 22 new members to Byron United Church.
- Pastor Greg's sermon series "**Life on the Frontline**", the "**165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**" sermon series focusing on our Methodist heritage, our own congregation's history and our future growth through the preaching of Rev. Dr. Andrew Stirling and the "**Advent Artwork**" sermon series depicting the four virtues of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love through the sharing of copies by famous Christian painters.
- The **165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations** also included a new banner for the sanctuary created by one of our youth, Bella Amu, the planting of a new perennial by our Sunday school children and the celebration of Holy Communion using our historic communion sets and candles.

**The Prayer Team** offered the "Prayers of the People" each Sunday and planned several Sunday evening "Praise and Worship Services" throughout the year concluding with the annual "Shattered Joy" service for those experiencing grief or loss in their lives.

**The Music Ministry** led by our wonderful choir and musicians and music director Tom, continued to share their gifts of music and song each Sunday. Stevie Sliders also blessed us with their performances during the year.

We continue to be blessed and thankful for the **Worship Team** by their devotion and service to the Lord.

**Worship Team Members:** Rev. Dr. Greg Brawn, Tom de Gryp, Marie Sample, Allie Stephens, Jennifer Tennant, Dave Rusciolelli, Worship Element Facilitator

Respectfully submitted by,  
Dave Rusciolelli, Worship Element Facilitator

### Marriages

There were no marriages registered at Byron United Church during 2024.

MADE TO  
**WORSHIP**  
PSALM 95:1  
~\*~



## REPORT OF THE MUSIC COORDINATOR

I ended last year's report with a statement that we "look forward to another year of renewal" in the wake of the trials and challenges of the pandemic – and – that is exactly what the Lord blessed us with. The choir built in numbers, strength and purpose; the praise band settled into more consistency, and we strengthened our bonds of musical friendship and faith with other churches in Byron.

Having had COVID challenges during the Christmas season of 2023, we were pleased to stretch out in the spacious sanctuary of St. George Catholic Church for our annual 4 choir Festival of Lessons and Carols. The choirs of St, George, St, Anne's Anglican Church and our own choir joined with the Stevie's Sliders Trombone Choir to, again, present the largest choral music event of the year in the Byron community. The many trays of special Christmas baking and goodies provided to the congregation by the three church choirs was an added treat for the evening.

Advent and Christmas were a busy time as well with the Shattered Joy service and Christmas Eve services at 6:00 for the family service lead by Don Baker and the Praise Band and the 8:00 carol service lead by the choir.

This year we also reintroduced a brass quartet during the Easter service as well as welcoming the addition of the "Sliders" trombone choir to a service in July. Although we always enjoy our guest musicians, it was particularly special to have our own Sophia Brawn share her amazing talent on several occasions with flute solos and accompaniments.

Hymn Books. Again, my report wouldn't be complete without encouraging folks to give the hymn books a big hug every Sunday morning. There is so much more there than just lyrics. It can be a great experience to prepare for worship by looking at the hymns prior to the service to appreciate the messages and insights within them.

Blessings all as we look forward to another year of wonder and awe in the presence of our Lord and Saviour.

Tom de Gryp, Music Coordinator, Organist and Choir Leader

*"The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: He is good; his love endures forever."  
2 Chronicles 5:13*



## PRAYER AND HEALING MINISTRY

The BUC Prayer Team exists to invite the Spirit of Jesus to intervene in the lives/needs of people in our congregation. We each pray throughout the week, citing a confidential list of 30 to 40 situations that have been shared with us. In addition, we gathered together in person and via Zoom every Tuesday morning at 11:00 until 12:00. Although several of our members are thousands of miles away, we are definitely ONE in the Spirit as we pray for our church, our Pastors, our community, and our world.



We consider it a privilege and a blessing to serve the Lord thru the Ministry of Prayer. As well as supporting the Leadership and Ministry of the church, we have upheld many members of the congregation as they and their loved ones have faced the stresses of illness, surgery, bereavement and other concerns.

Three times a year, special services of Prayer and Healing are organized by the Prayer Team in May, September and early December. The December service is a Blue Christmas service entitled "Shattered Joy," which offers a comforting milieu for all who are experiencing loss and who find the joy of Christmas tinged with grief.

This year saw the highest attendance at the Shattered Joy Service: approximately 80 people attended and were deeply comforted by the Peace and Beauty of the service. As always, our amazing choir added so much to the transcendent quality of our time together. If you are desirous of confidential prayer for any need in your life, please speak to any member of the Prayer Team, any of our Pastors, or the Church Office.

The members of the Prayer Team are Susan Badcock, Tina Birkholm, Helen & Ed Cooper, Margie Ferguson, Sherri Hillman, Pastor Colin Lauchlan, Marg LeBlanc, JoAnn Myatte, Joan & Ron Nicholls, Val & Jerry Reid, Don Scanlon, Donna Shortt, and Sally Waddell.

Home Pray-ers are Gwen Estabrooks, Jan Simmons, Jan Williams, and Rick & Deena Young.



## FELLOWSHIP ELEMENT

Fellowship has continued with coffee service after worship each Sunday throughout 2024. We have had some members of our coffee team retire as well as a few new members join us. Like all teams we continue to look for new people to join us. Over the year, there were a few funerals that Allie Stephens and her team provided beverages for as well as serving the catered foods the families brought in.

We assisted with serving the cake at Tom De Gryp's celebration of 25 years of faithful service as our choir director. The monthly Wednesday evening services gave us the pleasure of serving the desserts and enjoying the casual but meaningful time of worship. During September we helped as needed with the 165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events. We look forward to 2025 as we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Church of Canada.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jan Harding

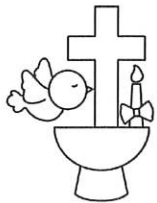
## NEW MEMBERS

### Received by Profession of Faith, Baptism and Re-affirmation of Faith

Towbai Kai Abdelsala	Joan Hunter	Judy McLarty
Tamara Chapman	Maureen Johnston	Pamela Moores
Heather Davidson	Mike McBride	Earl Mullin
Cathie Dietrich	Sheila McBride	Joyce Mullin
Ruth-Ann Downie	Erin McCormick	Deborah Odufuye
Kevin Dupuis	David McKelvey	Deborah Savage
Kevin Fleishhaker	Derek McLarty	Nelly Wendo
Janice Hendriks		



At the end of 2024, our number of members was 337 from 231 households, plus 73 adherents.



### Welcomed into the Church by the Sacrament of Baptism

Claire Ann Lucille Tracey, daughter of Shawn & Hilary Tracey  
Cole William Patrick Tracey, son of Shawn & Hilary Tracey

## IN MEMORIAM

People within our church family who passed away in 2024:

Mary Loree	January 7
Ruth Bailie	February 23
Patricia Hurrell	April 15
Chris MacKinnon	April 21
Ken Jackson	June 5
Roland Dobler	June 16
Arnold Dally	September 29
Glenn McCann	November 5
Helen Rosevear	December 3
Marjorie White	December 24



## FUNERAL LUNCHEONS

In the past year, the Funeral Lunch Team had the opportunity to be of service to a number of families. Our new process is to advise families to make arrangements for catered food - for example, sandwich trays, cheese trays, vegetable or fruit platters, and sweets. Once delivered to the church, the team ensures they are set out for the funeral attendees to enjoy following the service. The team also prepare and serve refreshments as required. The team, in conjunction with the church custodian arrange tables and chairs with tablecloths and centerpieces to offer an inviting atmosphere for the family and their guests. All clean up is also taken care of by the team. This new process seems to be working quite well for both the families and volunteers!

Submitted by,  
Funeral Luncheon Team

## **CARD MINISTRY**

Cards are sent to those in our church family when there are health problems, bereavements, special birthdays and anniversaries. We also send cards to our young people graduating from high school, college or university. Baptism and new members cards are also sent.

In 2024, the following were sent:

- 30 birthday cards to those over 90
- 42 anniversary cards to those celebrating over 50 years
- 26 get well and thinking of you cards
- 20 sympathy cards
- 5 graduation cards
- 2 baptism cards
- 22 new members cards
- 33 Easter cards to our shut-in members



Respectfully submitted by,  
Jan Williams

## **AGELESS GRACE**

Ageless Grace is an exercise program that is done while sitting on a comfortable chair and moving to 60s music. These exercises help maintain flexibility and movement without placing stress on the body. Our group meets every Tuesday at 10:00 in the church gym. There is no cost to attend. Participants bring a donation for Byron Cares Food Bank. Newcomers are always welcome.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cindy Knight, Instructor

## **PICKLEBALL**

The sport of Pickleball has grown tremendously throughout North America, and our numbers at BUC have also seen the same growth. We now have 22 players playing Tuesdays and/or Fridays. We divide the times into two 90-minute periods so everyone gets plenty of playing time. Ten players are church members, and the others are friends (3 have joined the congregation). Each player donates \$2 to a church group who make sandwiches for Arc Aid. Food is distributed to people in need in London through Ark Aid.



Playing keeps us active, social and mentally alert. All of our players have had excellent growth in skills, and we have some fun rallies. Unfortunately, due to the number of players we cannot add any others.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Dave Wagg

## 19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

On Friday, May 31, 38 players participated in our 19th annual golf tournament held at Dorchester Golf Course. Everyone had fun, fellowship, and shared a delicious meal together. Everyone was a winner thanks to the generous donations by Byron businesses and members and everyone left with a prize. This year's winner of the Murray Dale Trophy was the team of Dave Tennant, Greg Thurston, Ed Cooper and K. Dunlee. Closest to the pin for the ladies was Laurie Gardner, no one reached the green for the men and Ken Benjamin was closest to the centre line. Mark your calendars for the 20th tournament on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Thanks to everyone who participated.



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS ELEMENT

The Community Connections Element includes the Church Growth Team. The purposes of this Element are to communicate to the congregation and to promote the church to the community with the goal of attracting new people to Byron United Church. We have recently added the position of Community Coordinator to assist with reaching these goals. Kate Hendricks has been a wonderful addition to the team.



We have been strengthened by many new families who have joined our church. Our congregation has grown in size and in diversity. We are also encouraged by a growing Sunday School and Youth Group.

## **CHURCH GROWTH TEAM**

In 2022, this Team was created. Its purpose is to discern and try various approaches to bring new people into the congregation, especially young families and people under the age of 50.

Last year, this team accomplished much, including hiring Kate Hendriks as our part-time Communications Coordinator in November. Kate is able to ensure that our online and print communications happen frequently and professionally (taking over for myself, who had less time and ability). In March, we held our annual Easter Treasure Hunt, led by Andrea Smith, with about 90 children participating. April saw about 30 people attend a presentation about Alzheimer's disease. In June, we hosted a Bike Safety day in coordination with London Police Services, seeing about 60 children attending. In August, we initiated Pastor Kwaku and Andrea Smith providing a week-long day-camp for youth, with 10 youth participating! Pastor Greg planned and led monthly community-style worship services with adults and youth at table groups in Bethel on Wednesday evenings. While not all of these events drew new people into our church family, each was a blessing to many in our wider community and planted seeds about who we are as God's people.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Greg

## **WEDNESDAY YOUTH**



Our Youth Group continues to thrive. About 6 to 10 teens and young adults meet each week with Pastor Greg, Andrea Smith and Noah Toth. We have been blessed with the addition of Noah, Youth Leader, to our church staff. Each week the Youth enjoy dinner, Bible study and activities. The group includes youth from our congregation and from the community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jen McKay

## **ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

Two AA Groups met here at Byron United on a weekly basis. One group met on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. And the second group met on Wednesday evenings from 8:00 to 9:30 PM.

## **MONDAY BRIDGE**

Monday Bridge is for women and men and begins at 11:30 AM until about 3:00 PM. Seven rounds are played with the winning team moving to the next table and switching partners. There is an average of 35-40 players in attendance. This is a very welcoming group with an emphasis on friendship. Newcomers are always welcome, and it is not necessary to have a partner. Pat Orcutt is in charge of the group. Margot and Dieter Franke look after the refreshment time and Ruth Dean remains as Treasurer. It is a most enjoyable time of playing bridge and engaging in fellowship.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ruth Dean

## FRIDAY AFTERNOON BRIDGE

During the past year, approximately 12 to 16 men have met weekly for socially competitive Bridge. This is an outreach activity of Byron United Church as all men from the community are welcome to participate. Almost half of the players are members of BUC. The men assemble between 12:00 and 12:30 and the games run until 3:30. There is a \$5.00 charge to cover expenses which include cookies and coffee, small monetary prizes and a contribution to BUC for use of the facilities. As in previous years, the men made voluntary contributions for a charity during the month of December. This year it was decided to donate the funds to the Ark Aid Mission.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Coates

## 84<sup>th</sup> LONDON SCOUT GROUP

The 84<sup>th</sup> Scouting Group would like to thank the Byron United Church congregation for your continued sponsorship of our program and the gracious provision of facility time and storage space. We could not run this program without your support.

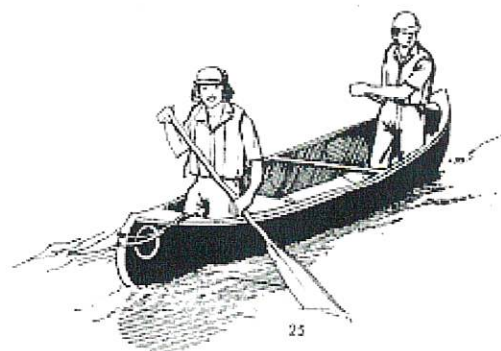


The Scouting program is heavily dependent on our adult volunteers to run the program and provide the opportunities for so many youth to encounter new experiences and learn valuable skill with the focus on Scouts Canada's mission "To help develop well-rounded youth, better prepared for success in the world." If you have an interest in Scouting or helping to provide youth with fun adventures, please contact me. Training is provided and you can learn right along with the youth.

The 2024 Scouting year saw our group continue to run in tandem with the 73<sup>rd</sup> London Scouting group. We share meeting space, equipment, and resources as well as Leadership teams. This has allowed our group to continue to operate despite the lack of adult volunteers.

The 84<sup>th</sup> Scouting Group started the year with just 7 scouts in the Scout Troop all of which were reaching the higher end of the age range for scouts. We had no Beavers or Cubs as we lacked the volunteers to run those programs.

The Scouting year was full of adventures for the youth. We held our winter camp at the Cabooes at Sylvan Scout camp in January. We had lots of snow and several youth slept outdoors in a tent on the snow. We built Cub Kars and attended the Scout/Guide Sunday service here at the church in February. We had a tour of the Cronyn Observatory at Western in March. In April we went rock climbing at the Junction and later had a tour of the Ornge Helicopter station at the airport. Early May was our next camp at the annual Can/Am camp held at Attawandron Scout Reserve and in late May we had a tour of the Jet Aircraft Museum at the airport. We held one last camp at the Bryson Centre on Windermere Rd before we had a summer break.



In September we reconvened and saw our Scout troop fall to 4 youth since most started high school and became too busy to attend.

We held our annual Scout Apple Day fundraiser the week after Thanksgiving and then we held our fall Scout tenting camp in late October at Camp Sylvan's Pinewoods. We canoed at Sharon Creek Conservation Area, put together Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes, participated in the Byron Legion Remembrance Day parade and ended the year with our annual Christmas pizza party and movie night.

The 4 remaining youth participated until the end of the year but did not reregister for January 2025. To prevent our group from becoming inactive, we have started 2025 by reviving our Beaver Colony. We now have 6 Beavers in our group.

I am deeply indebted to our volunteer Scouters: **Adam Kristoferson, Janet Taylor, and Robert van Dam** who selflessly devote their time and talents to better the lives of our Scouting youth. Thank-you!

Adam and I are running the Beaver Colony on Mondays and then all three of us help with Cubs/Scouts on Thursdays.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert van Dam  
84<sup>th</sup> Group Commissioner

### **COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

The Communications Team continued to meet once a month to discuss and plan communication strategies; the church's website, digital sign, magazine advertising, and current information from the Church Growth Team.

Pastor Greg continued to post messages on Facebook (Meta) and Instagram. His weekly BUC Wheat emails have been a wonderful means of keeping members informed. Our quarterly newsletter was discontinued in 2024 and incorporated into Pastor Greg's Special Editions of BUC Wheat.

Our primary source of communication was our website ([www.ByronUnited.ca](http://www.ByronUnited.ca)). This year we were able to upgrade our website providing more flexibility, including a simple cellphone format. On our home page you will find "online" worship services, upcoming events, staff, and opportunities.



Kate Hendriks has been hired as the new Communication's Coordinator. She will now update our social media platforms, web site and digital sign.

Respectfully submitted by  
Dave Wagg



# PHOTOGRAPHY

Dave Chambers is our Church Photographer and Pastor Colin took many of the photos for our supplement to our Photo Directory! We are blessed to be able to capture so many wonderful people and events in the life of our congregation!





## DISCIPLESHIP ELEMENT

The Discipleship Element focuses on providing opportunities for all members of the church family to deepen their relationship with God and strengthen their Christian walk. In addition to Sunday School and Sunday Youth, various Bible studies, Christian video and book studies are offered throughout the year in small group and short-term workshop formats. Everyone is encouraged to use the church Library and RightNow Media to take advantage of a wide variety of resources for all ages and stages of faith formation.

Small groups met in-person, online or used a hybrid format as needed. In September our beloved Pastor Kwaku Asumadu discerned he should pursue his ministry training within the Presbyterian denomination. Although we are sad to lose him we pray God's continued blessings upon Kwaku's future ministries in His kingdom.

In November we welcomed Noah Toth to the Sunday and Wednesday Youth leadership Teams. He has been a blessing to all involved.



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH TEAM

Focused on strategies to promote the spiritual growth and maturity of adults in the church family, the Team members, Rev. Greg Brawn, Rev. Colin Lauchlan, Don Scanlon, Andrea Smith, Sally Waddell and Angie Brawn met monthly to discuss and initiate opportunities for the congregation to continue maturing as deeply committed followers of Jesus Christ.

Some initiatives included the church-wide Life On The Front Line sermon series with Sunday Testimonies from various members sharing their "front line" experiences of God working in and through them.

Periodically, from the pulpit and via BUC Wheat, people are encouraged to join a small group, read a Christian book, the Bible or a daily devotional.

## NURSERY

Nursery care during worship restarted and has been a blessing to young families. All of our Nursery, Sunday School and Youth volunteers have up-to-date Police records checks and vulnerable sector screening. If you feel called to serve in this vital ministry, please contact the church office.

## SUNDAY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

We thank God for the growth we are seeing in the Sunday School, both numerically and, more importantly, spiritually. Throughout 2024 many wonderful progressions have occurred. Families have come together for meals, church building and evangelistic activities and celebrations led by Holy Spirit. All of this has resulted in a closer-knit community for the children and another fruitful year of sowing more and more seed in their little hearts. Our lessons throughout 2024 examined God's purposeful work in and through people like Moses, David, Esther, Elijah, Elisha, Mary and Joseph. We also spent time focusing on the Armour of God and on His promises for us found in

Psalm 91. It was a year in which we saw families of many nations attend the church, and so we finished the year with a celebration of Jesus birth, recognizing that He came to bring “the nations” back to Himself in His unity and in His love.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Andrea Smith



## **SUNDAY YOUTH**

Sunday Youth was led by Pastor Kwaku and offered the young people a wonderful opportunity to study the Bible each Sunday.

Youth were invited to take part in a summer camp led by Kwaku and Andrea. The week long camp was a wonderful extension of Sunday Youth and Wednesday Youth experiences. Everyone was encouraged to grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus and with one another. Most of those that participated continued to attend Sunday Youth and/or Wednesday Youth throughout the rest of the year.  
Praise the Lord!

Pastor Kwaku's time with the Sunday Youth ended in September and the Sunday Youth were sad to see him go.

This group then joined the Sunday School group for the fall.

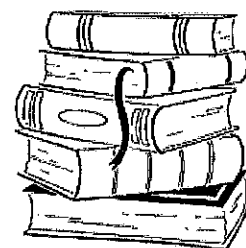
Noah Toth accepted the position of Youth Leader in November. The youth have really responded to his calm and compassionate leadership as well as his wonderfully relatable Bible lessons.

We are so thankful for the Lord's faithfulness!

Respectfully submitted by  
Andrea Smith

### **CHURCH LIBRARY**

The contents of our Library, located near the church office, continue to grow with donations from many generous church members. We have worthwhile study guides and DVDs regularly donated by our church's many small groups. We gladly accept all donations of Christian books and continue to be open to suggestions for materials you would like purchased, or ways in which the Library could better serve our church family. If you would like to be part of the Library Team, please don't hesitate to contact the Church Office. No experience required and the duties are quite light.



Respectfully submitted by,  
Angie Brawn, Discipleship Facilitator

### **SMALL GROUPS**

We have had Small Group Ministries in Byron for many years. A variety of topics and Bible studies are explored depending on the interest and expertise of the group. The groups vary in size, ranging from six to thirty members each.

There are a number of groups who meet regularly. Some are open to everyone, some for women only, there is a men's group and there are a few couples' groups. They all gather at different times of the day and evening with varied schedules of frequency and topic of study. As varied as the groups are, the common theme is the building up of relationships with one another and most importantly the growth in one's Christian Walk.

Small groups at Byron meet in several different ways depending upon the group's preference. Some meet in homes, others at the church and there is still the opportunity to meet on Zoom for those not wishing to meet in person. In other words - there is something for everyone!!

Here are seven reasons to be in a Small Group:  
(Excerpts taken from an article by Rick Warren Entitled "Why Start a Small Group")

1. You will understand the Bible better in a small group.
2. You will feel like part of God's family.
3. Prayer will become more meaningful to you.

4. You will be able to handle stress and pressure better.
5. You will have a natural way to share Christ with friends, relatives, and at work.
6. You will develop leadership skills you never knew you had!
7. You will deepen your understanding of worship.

If you are interested in joining a Small Group, please contact Allie Stephens at [stylist@gmail.com](mailto:stylist@gmail.com) or call her at 226-777-4934.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Allison Stephens

### MEN'S STUDY GROUP

During 2024, the Men's Study Group met every Wednesday morning over the year with short breaks in the summer and at Christmas. Pastor Colin and Ric Graham continued to share leadership of the group.



The year began with the Men's Group participating in the church wide study of Life on the Frontline. Over the rest of the year, the men studied Colossians, Being Human, More than Prayers: Seeing Jesus in the Psalms and Who Is Jesus? - all topics supported by the video series offered through RightNow Media. The Men's Study Group continues to grow in numbers with 23 now on the mail list and continues to be a great way to share and grow in our Christian faith.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ric Graham

### HEART AND SOUL

Small groups provide a meaningful way to connect with God and other members of our church family during the week. The **Heart and Soul** small group provides opportunities for women to meet for weekly Bible study throughout the year. We invite women from beyond our church family as well, to grow in our understanding of God's Holy Word. Presently we have more than 40 women involved with an average of 28-30 attending each week.



During 2024, we continued meeting in-person for our weekly gatherings. We meet for two hours on Wednesday mornings in the church from 9:30 to 11:30, from September to end of May, except during the month of December. Our first hour includes singing praise songs, sharing of some "Food for Thought" ideas, and a time of fellowship. We then divide into two smaller groups for our Bible study discussions. Throughout 2024 we studied the Gospel of John. This study will continue in March 2025. In January/February we paused that study to participate in the six-week church-wide **Life on the Frontline** program and in the church-wide **Discipleship Explored** eight-week study.

We are grateful for Deborah Hiley's leadership of one Bible study group. Helen Keenlside co-leads the second group with me. God remains our central focus and continues to inspire us each week. We include a time of prayer for ourselves and others. It has been my privilege to lead the Heart & Soul group for several years, experiencing the joy of connecting, growing and serving with sisters-in-Christ.

We welcome new members at any time. Please contact me at [linda.peck@sympatico.ca](mailto:linda.peck@sympatico.ca) for further information.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Linda Peck



## MINISTRY ELEMENT

*“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.” Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)*

The Ministry Element falls under SERVE, with a purpose to “guide and equip people for Christian service and leadership, and to encourage and support congregational Teams in their ministries.” Serving others is a simple way of serving God!

The life and work of our congregation is blessed by the many volunteers who have responded to God’s call to lead and serve faithfully. Using your God-given gifts in service to our Lord is sincerely valued and appreciated. We pray that God is preparing the hearts of His people to use their God to serve in new ways. Whether you are a long-time member or new member, as you read this year’s Annual Report please prayerfully consider how you can use your time and talents in serving our Lord through His church in 2025!

The Ministry Element also has responsibility for monitoring and reporting on our congregational, denominational and government policies to ensure we are compliant, through the Governance Team. The Ministry & Personnel Team also reports to the Ministry Element. Reports from these Teams can be found following this report.

## MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL TEAM

The purpose of the Ministry and Personnel Team is the provision of ongoing support and guidance to our staff. The Team is also involved in the determination of the budget for staff salaries. Additionally, the M&P Team is responsible for responding to any personnel related questions or concerns.

During 2024, our Team was delighted to add three new members. We are happy to have Joel Dell, Kate Brawn and Don Van Vliet add their knowledge and expertise to the Team.

M&P is also pleased to welcome two new members to the staff, Kate Hendriks and Noah Toth. We are confident that they will be terrific additions to the strong leadership of our Church.

Team Members: Joan Estabrooks, Connie Constable, Joel Dell, Kate Brawn, Don Van Vliet, and Paul Coates

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Coates, Chair, Ministry & Personnel Team

## **GOVERNANCE TEAM**

Governance involves monitoring congregational, denominational and government regulations and policies for compliance by our congregation and staff and advising church leadership of new requirements or of areas where our church needs to take action. The Governance Team's primary focus in 2024 was on reviewing the Liability Plan, with proposed amendments approved by Session in November. We hope to complete the review of the remainder of the plan in 2025.

A comprehensive review of our Occupational Health and Safety Act policies and procedures was also completed in 2024 with the support of an external Consultant, with ongoing work to be done in this area in 2025.

In His Service,  
Anita Bacon, Ministry Element Facilitator

## **VOLUNTEER GROWTH TEAM**

About 24 months ago, we created the Volunteer Growth Team within the Ministry Element to help with the following: a) Recruit, b) Equip, c) Encourage, and d) Thank our volunteers! The team meets monthly and has initiated the following: placing volunteer needs on the screen before worship and in BUC Wheat, celebrate volunteer teams and groups most Sunday mornings, hosted an "Elders Day of Encouragement," and completing reference checks for volunteers when needed. We are in the process of preparing another "Elders Day of Encouragement" and arranging volunteers to share testimonies about the impact their ministries have on others and themselves.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Greg

“ EACH OF YOU  
SHOULD USE WHATEVER GIFT  
YOU HAVE RECEIVED  
TO SERVE OTHERS,  
AS FAITHFUL STEWARDS OF  
GOD'S GRACE  
IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS. ”

*~ 1 Peter 4:10, NIV ~*



## MISSION ELEMENT

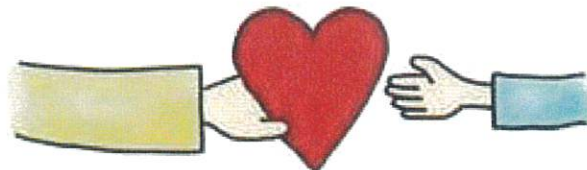
The purpose of the Mission Element is to share the love of Jesus Christ with those beyond our church family. This Element coordinates the mission appeals to the congregation. The Mission Element presently has no Facilitator. There are two Teams in this Element; the Byron Cares Food Bank and the Outreach Ministry. Please read the separate report for each of these Teams. Thank you to everyone who has so generously given your time and resources to support those in need in our local community and abroad during 2024.



### OUTREACH TEAM

Your Outreach Team appreciates the strong support and encouragement received from the congregation of Byron United Church. Once again you have helped so many people in our local area as well as throughout Canada and around the world. Your kindness and generosity inspire and encourage these ministries of Outreach:

- **Ark Aid blue bins:** The blue bins across from the office are regularly filled with good, warm clothing thanks to the generosity of our loving congregation.
- **Sunday Samaritans:**
  - our Sunday Samaritans, Ken and Diane Minshull regularly pick up and distribute the items from the blue bins to appropriate locations. Most of the items go to Ark Aid; while others are taken to Rotholme Women and Family Shelter, Indwell, the Men's Mission or sometimes Byron Cares Food Bank, when required.
  - Sock-it-to-'Em & Undie Sunday: 375 items distributed, plus \$140 to purchase more.
- **Mennonite Central Committee:** items were collected to make at least 100 hygiene kits, which were distributed internationally.
- **Mission Sunday** special guests: Julie Ryan of INDWELL Community Engagement Coordinator, spoke about providing supportive, affordable housing in London.
- **Samaritan's Purse:** 62 shoeboxes were delivered; \$870.00 forwarded.
- **Southdale Chaplaincy:** \$3,000 in Angel Tree Christmas gifts to children & families.
- **Tom de Gryp** is an Outreach champion. He successfully completed his goal to bicycle 1,000 km. around SW Ontario and raised just under \$2,000 for the work of Outreach. We are humbled and grateful for his very significant contribution to the Lord's work, and *God's blessings to all of you* for your prayers and support as well.



SERVING OTHERS



**OUTREACH MINISTRY EXPENDITURES FOR 2024**  
**AND SUGGESTED PLEDGES FOR 2025**

	<b><u>2024</u></b> <b><u>EXPENDITURES</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b> <b><u>PLEDGES</u></b>
<b><u>LOCAL NEEDS</u></b>		
L'Arche	1,500	2,000
Ark Aid	4,000	4,000
Karis Disabilities (Christian Horizons)	1,000	1,000
Cruxifusion	1,000	1,000
Daily Bread Layette Gift	200	200
ELUCO Campers (Camp Kee-Mo-Kee)	2,500	2,500
ELUCOC	2,000	2,000
Fresh Start (Rehoboth)	2,300	2,500
Indwell	2,500	3,500
London Community Chaplaincy (LCC)	3,500	2,300
London Community Chaplaincy (Angel Tree)	3,000	3,500
Mission Services of London	3,000	4,000
Sunday Samaritans	751	1,000
YFC- Connect, After School, YFC Sports	2,500	2,500
<b>LOCAL TOTAL</b>	<b>29,751</b>	<b>32,000</b>
<b><u>INTERNATIONAL NEEDS</u></b>		
Canadian Foodgrains Bank	5,000	5,000
Latin American Mission - Pieters	2,500	2,500
Sleeping Children Around the World	2,500	2,500
Samaritan's Purse	870	(whatever is given)
<b>INTERNATIONAL TOTAL</b>	<b>10,870</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Emergent Needs (Harvest Hands)</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>3000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>41,621</b>	<b>45,000</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>40,902</b>	
<b>EXCESS RECEIPTS VS. DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>-719</b>	
<b>RESERVE CARRIED FROM 2023</b>	<b>4,001</b>	
<b>RESERVE TO CARRY FORWARD TO 2025</b>	<b>3,282</b>	

## BENEVOLENT FUND

Your donations to our Benevolent Fund are used by Pastor Greg to anonymously assist people who need financial support, both within and beyond our church family. In 2024, \$6,984 was distributed to help people pay rent, utility bills, purchase medical prescriptions, assist with purchasing eyeglasses and vehicle repairs.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Greg

## BYRON CARES FOOD BANK

The Byron Cares Food Bank experienced many blessings in 2024 including having St. Aidan's Anglican Church join us in our shared ministry with St. George's Catholic Parish, St. Anne's Anglican, Byron Community Church and Byron United Church. Another highlight for 2024 was being blessed with many, many boxes of Amazon Smiles where goods were donated from Amazon which we in turn shared with our clients and several other organizations in the London area. We continued to receive wonderful weekly deliveries from Harvest Hands as well as bread from the Knight's of Columbus.

It was by God's grace and through the generous 'gifts' of our partnering churches and the Byron community that we were able to provide for a record number of 2098 client visits supporting over 7,186 household members in 2024. This was a substantial increase from 2023 where we served 1472 clients and 2022 where we served 639 clients.

Thank you to the Byron United Church congregation for your prayers and ongoing financial support. We are also very grateful for our 50+ volunteers who generously shared of their time throughout the year as we served our neighbours together.

***But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19***



Respectfully submitted by,  
Lorilee Down

## SPREADING LOVE

A group of women began meeting in the fall with the sole purpose of spreading love. How you ask? By making bagged lunches for Ark Aid to deliver to encampments. These brown bag lunches include peanut butter and jam sandwiches (hence the spreading), cookies and a granola bar. Every Monday, this group makes 130 lunches which are picked up by Ark Aid that afternoon.

The group have been so appreciative of support they have received from the Pickleballers as well as frequent donations of bread which amounts to 15 loaves each week.

Each "spreading love" session begins with prayer for Ark Aid and their staff and volunteers who so beautifully support the marginalized community and for the recipients of the lunches that they might come to know Him and experience His grace and love.

Submitted by  
Allie Stephens



## ASSETS AND FINANCE ELEMENT

As Facilitator of Assets and Finance, my task is made easy by the excellent leaders of the three areas I am responsible for.

**Stewardship:** Is led by Gary Coutts who does an excellent job of guiding the team in developing programs to encourage not only our material gifts but also our spiritual and volunteer gifts. The team recently sent out a letter to all members of the congregation with a status report. Thank you to Gary and his team.

**Finance:** Is led by Brian Roth who took over from the one and only Ruth Dean. Brian has introduced new methods in developing the 2025 Budget encouraging all team leaders to be frugal in creating their budgets. The differential between budget and actual is likely to be narrower than in previous years.

**Property:** Is led by Greg Thurston who does an excellent job of leading his team and keeping the Church property in the great shape that it is in. Greg is also part of the Health and Safety implementation team and David Smith, our custodian, is taking training in all aspects of this important area.

To all of the team leaders and members of their teams I offer my sincere thanks for the dedication to our church family.

Respectfully Submitted  
David Tennant, Assets and Finance Element Facilitator

## PROPERTY TEAM

The Property Team had, what I would consider, a fairly usual year in 2024. We completed our usual tasks such as routine painting, leaf pick up, general yard work around the church, and putting up and taking down decorations for various seasons. One big job that we did complete was to paint the lower half of the gymnasium. We also gave the dividers a fresh coat of paint at this time. Plans to paint the upper have are under consideration. We also had to take on the role of raccoon re-locators. A wayward raccoon had made its home in one of the large exhaust fans located in the ceiling of the gym. We opened the housing on the roof and watched as the little critter scampered away. We installed chicken wire inside the housing to ensure that it did not return.



The Property Team consists of Joel Dell, David Smith and Greg Thurston. We welcomed 2 new members in Don Sinclair and Mike Dickinson. We had to bid a sad farewell to long term member Terry Lane. Terry has decided not to return to the team for this year. We would like to sincerely thank Terry for his many years of volunteer service at the church, his hard work, expertise and stimulating conversation skills will be missed. We are always on the lookout for new members,

no experience or particular skill set is necessary. If you would be interested in joining this team, please contact the church office. We generally meet on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 till 12:00.

Respectfully submitted by  
Greg Thurston, Property Team Chair

### MEMORIAL AND HONOUR FUND

The Memorial and Honour Fund receives gifts in memory of individuals directed to the Church with no specific purpose designated by the donor. These gifts must be used to benefit the congregation in the long term and must also be of benefit to the entire congregation.

The fund started 2024 with a balance of \$37,644. During the year, the fund received donations in memory of Ken Ashton, Bruce and Jack Shortt, Mary Loree, Ruth Bailie, Gay Allman, Dorothy Wright, Roland Dobler, Robert Brawn, Jean and Denis Quayle, and Trudy Toivonen. The balance of the fund as of December 31, 2024 was \$40,218. Thank you for your donations to the Memorial and Honour Fund.

Respectfully submitted by  
Shelley Mercer

### STEWARDSHIP TEAM

The Byron United Church Stewardship Team consists of Sandra Collier, Ruth Dean, Ron Carruthers, David Tennant, Gary Coutts, (Chair) and Pastor Greg Brawn.

Christian Stewardship is defined as the faithful and effective use of all the gifts entrusted to us by God. Christian Stewardship allows us to acknowledge our blessings and live out our ministry, to nurture faith in Christ and serve the world God loves.

Our entire congregation is a Steward of Byron United Church. The Stewardship Team works to encourage all congregational members to step up and participate by giving the gifts that God has entrusted to you, including your **time**, your **talents**, your **skills**, your **treasures** and your **physical resources**. Thank You for your continuing support of our many ministries in 2024.

#### The Stewardship Team:

- Updates projected ongoing budgetary restraints
- Updates the **Annual Stewardship Letter**
- Assists with the 5-Year Budget "**What If Projections**" in conjunction with the Finance Team
- Updates / administers "**Planned Gifts Program**"
- Promotes "**PAR**" participation. (monthly Pre-Authorized donations)

Your continued participation in this ministry is thriving. Our congregational leaders continue to act as trustworthy Stewards of your faithful offerings. With God's help, the Stewardship of Byron United Church will continue stronger than ever.

**Thank you and God bless you for your faithfulness and ongoing support.**

Respectfully submitted by  
The Stewardship Team

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**INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER'S REVIEW ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

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To the Members of Byron United Church

I have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of Byron United Church (the organization) that comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2024, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

*Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO), and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

*Practitioner's Responsibility*

My responsibility is to express a conclusion on the accompanying financial statements based on my review. I conducted my review in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements, which require me to comply with relevant ethical requirements.

A review of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements is a limited assurance engagement. The practitioner performs procedures, primarily consisting of making inquiries of management and others within the entity, as appropriate, and applying analytical procedures, and evaluates the evidence obtained.

The procedures performed in a review are substantially less in extent than, and vary in nature from, those performed in an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Accordingly, I do not express an audit opinion on these financial statements.

*Conclusion*

Based on my review, nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe that the financial statements do not present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Byron United Church as at December 31, 2024, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with ASNPO.

London, Ontario  
March 11, 2025

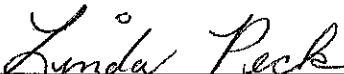
*Charles R. Summers Professional Corporation*


Authorized to practise public accounting by the  
Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	2024			2023
	GENERAL FUND	RESTRICTED FUNDS	ENDOWMENT FUND	TOTAL
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Bank and cash on hand	91,494	91,915		183,409
Short - term investments (notes 2, 4)	150,000	42,089		192,089
Total bank and investments	241,494	134,004		375,498
Accounts receivable and interest accruals	2,743			2,743
Harmonized sales tax receivable	3,747	554		4,301
	247,984	134,558	-	382,542
<b>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT</b> (net of amortization - note 5 )		425,821		425,821
<b>LONG TERM INVESTMENTS (note 3)</b>		34,496	58,600	93,096
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	247,984	594,875	58,600	901,459
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued	-			-
Payroll deductions payable	-			-
Deferred contributions - (note 6)	-	35,704		35,704
	-	35,704	-	35,704
<b>FUND BALANCES (note 2)</b>				
General Fund - unrestricted	247,984			247,984
Capital Asset fund		425,821		425,821
Outreach Fund		3,281		3,281
Memorial Fund		40,218		40,218
Anniversary Fund		43,925		43,925
Benevolent Fund		11,415		11,415
Trustees Bequest Fund		34,511		34,511
Endowment Fund			58,600	58,600
	247,984	559,171	58,600	865,755
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; FUND BALANCES</b>	247,984	594,875	58,600	901,459

Approved by the Board:

  
 Chair, Leaders' Board

  
 Treasurer

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	2024										2023
	GENERAL FUND	CAPITAL ASSET FUND	OUTREACH FUND	MEMORIAL FUND	ANNV FUND	BENEVOLENT FUND	M & S FUND	TRUSTEES' BEQUEST FUND	ENDOWMENT FUND	TOTAL	
<b>BALANCE - beginning of year</b>	230,332	442,684	4,001	37,644	42,486	3,297	-	32,439	58,600	<b>851,483</b>	862,092
Receipts	482,503	-	40,902	2,574	1,439	52,365	1,430	2,072	-	<b>583,285</b>	532,838
Disbursements	464,851	16,863	41,622	-	-	44,247	1,430	-	-	<b>569,013</b>	543,447
Excess (shortfall) of receipts	17,652	(16,863)	(720)	2,574	1,439	8,118	-	2,072	-	<b>14,272</b>	(10,609)
<b>BALANCE - end of year</b>	<b>247,984</b>	<b>425,821</b>	<b>3,281</b>	<b>40,218</b>	<b>43,925</b>	<b>11,415</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34,511</b>	<b>58,600</b>	<b>865,755</b>	<b>851,483</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	2024			2023
	GENERAL FUND BUDGET	GENERAL FUND	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL
<b>RECEIPTS (note 2)</b>				
<b>General Fund</b>				
General fund donations	435,694	450,201		450,201
Rental Income	17,000	18,332		18,332
Other Revenue	7,200	4,595		4,595
Investment Income	8,500	9,375		9,375
<b>Restricted Funds Receipts</b>	-	-	100,782	100,782
<b>Total (A)</b>	<b>468,394</b>	<b>482,503</b>	<b>100,782</b>	<b>583,285</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>				
<b>General Fund</b>				
Personnel	308,522	309,177		309,177
Property	65,050	56,587		56,587
Administration	20,175	19,942		19,942
Worship	37,000	31,646		31,646
Fellowship	2,000	2,408		2,408
Discipleship	8,200	3,127		3,127
Ministry	1,750	3,218		3,218
Mission	20,597	20,444		20,444
Community Connections	29,800	18,302		18,302
Stewardship	300	-		-
<b>Restricted Funds Disbursements</b>	-	-	104,162	104,162
<b>Total (B)</b>	<b>493,394</b>	<b>464,851</b>	<b>104,162</b>	<b>569,013</b>
<b>EXCESS RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSMENTS (A)-(B)</b>	<b>(25,000)</b>	<b>17,652</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>	<b>14,272</b>
				<b>(10,609)</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements



**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	2024			2023
	GENERAL FUND	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL	TOTAL
<b>Excess (deficiency) receipts over disbursements</b>	<b>17,652</b>	<b>(3,380)</b>	<b>14,272</b>	<b>(10,609)</b>
ADD items not requiring an outlay of cash				
Amortization	-	16,863	16,863	16,863
	17,652	13,483	31,135	6,254
<b>Operating activities</b>				
(Increase) decrease in HST receivable	6,022	1358	7,380	(556)
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable and interest accruals	1,850	-	1,850	(7,985)
Increase (decrease) in payroll deductions payable	-	-	-	(4,343)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable	-	-	-	(5,965)
Increase in deferred revenue		14,223	14,223	21,481
	7,872	15,581	23,453	2,632
<b>Investing activities</b>				
Purchase of long term investment (GIC)		(34,496)		-
<b>Net change in bank and investments</b>	<b>25,524</b>	<b>(5,432)</b>	<b>54,588</b>	<b>8,886</b>
Bank and investments balance, opening	215,970	139,436	355,406	346,520
<b>Bank and investments balance, close</b>	<b>241,494</b>	<b>134,004</b>	<b>409,994</b>	<b>355,406</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**1 PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

The mission of Byron United Church (the "Church") is to celebrate and share the good news of new life in Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry and mission in this church family, our community and beyond.

The Church is an unincorporated *Pastoral Charge* under *An Act Incorporating The United Church of Canada*. The Church is registered as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act and is therefore exempt from income taxes.

**2 SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

These financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO), the more significant of which are outlined below.

**Fund Accounting**

The Church follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions whereby assets, liabilities, revenue and expenditures are segregated into specific funds depending on their purpose.

The General Fund accounts for the Church's program delivery and administrative activities.

The Capital Asset Fund reports the property and equipment of the Church and the related amortization.

The Endowment Fund reports resources contributed for investment to generate revenue to fund the operation and programs of the Church. The investments of the Endowment Fund are not available for use. Investment income earned on resources of the Endowment Fund is reported in the General Fund unless otherwise restricted by contributors of funds for endowment.

The Memorial and Honour Fund reports resources contributed as memorial and honour donations to be used for the benefit of the whole congregation in the long term.

The Benevolent Fund reports resources contributed for use at the discretion of the Pastor for the benefit of members and others in need. The benevolent fund also accounts for the foodbank.

The Anniversary Fund reports resources contributed through bequests from estates and donations from individuals and other sources to be used for the launching or expansion of programs and activities approved by the Leaders' Board and the Session.

The Trustee Bequest Fund reports resources specifically donated to the Church to be used at the discretion of the Trustees.

The Outreach Fund reports resources contributed to support local, national and international charities.

The Mission and Service Fund reports resources contributed that are specifically directed to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada.

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**Cash**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less which are available on demand. These are carried on the balance sheet at face value.

**Investments**

Investments are cash held in term deposits with original maturities greater than three months. These are carried on the balance sheet at their market value.

Investments of the Endowment Fund are recorded as long-term investments because the funds will never be available for use by the Church.

Investments of other funds have maturities of up to three years, some with optional redemption dates. Management intends to redeem the investments at the earlier of the first redemption date or maturity. When this date is within the next fiscal year, these investments have been classified as current assets.

**Property and Equipment**

The property and equipment are accounted for in the Capital Asset Fund. During the year, the Capital Asset Fund expensed amortization of \$16,863 (\$16,863 in 2023). This is a non-cash item. Property and equipment is stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Property and equipment is amortized over their estimated useful lives at the following rates and methods:

Buildings	70 years	Straight line	Organ	50 years	Straight lin
Furniture, fixtures and equipment	10 years	Straight line	Sign	15 years	Straight lin
Carillon	20 years	Straight line	Parking lot	25 years	Straight lin

**Pension Plan**

The Church is a member of a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan with other entities within the United Church of Canada. The Church is solely responsible for making the required contributions as defined under the plan and has no benefit or liability if the pension plan is over or underfunded as regards to the defined benefits to be paid out. Because of this, the Church accounts for its pension plan as a defined contribution plan and records the pension contributions as expenditures as incurred.

**Revenue Recognition**

Restricted contributions related to general operations are recognized as revenue of the General Fund in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. All other restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the General Fund in the year received or receivable if the amount to be recorded can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assumed.

Other income (rent, program fees, etc) is recognized as revenue when the services have been

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

provided and there is reasonable assurance of collection.

**Financial instruments policy**

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in income. All other financial instruments are reported at amortized cost, and tested for impairment at each reporting date. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale, or issue of financial instruments are expensed when incurred.

**Measurement uncertainty**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit enterprises requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates. Measurement uncertainty relates mainly to the estimated life of property and equipment and the fair value of monetary assets as set out in note 8.

**Contributed services**

Volunteers contribute time to assist the Church in carrying out its programs and services. Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

**3 LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>Sanderson Endowment</b>		
Fairstone Bank, 4.54%, due July 19, 2027	\$25,000	\$25,000
Interest earned to be transferred to the General Fund and applied to Christian education in the Church. Interest received during the year was \$1,125		
<b>McNiece Endowment</b>		
Fairstone Bank, 4.540%, due July 19, 2027	<u>33,600</u>	<u>33,600</u>
Interest earned to be transferred equally between the Outreach Fund and the General Fund. Interest received during the year was \$1,512		
Total – Endowment Fund	<u>\$58,600</u>	<u>\$58,600</u>
<b>Trustees Bequest fund</b>		
Libro Credit Union, GIC, 4.5% due May 2026	<u>\$34,496</u>	<u>-</u>

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**4. SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>General Fund</b>		
Bank of Montreal, GIC, 3.4%, Redeemable December 2025	\$100,000	\$100,000
Bank of Montreal, cashable GIC, 2.5%, Redeemable December 2025	<u>50,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>
Total – General Fund	<u>\$150,000</u>	<u>\$150,000</u>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>		
Anniversary Fund		
Bank of Montreal, GICs, 4.5%, Redeemable August 2025	\$30,040	\$30,040
Memorial and Honour Fund		
Bank of Montreal, GIC, 4.5%, Redeemable August 2025	12,048	12,048
Trustees Bequest Fund		
Libro Credit Union, GIC. 4.5%, due May 2024	-	<u>32,434</u>
Total – Restricted Funds	<u>\$42,089</u>	<u>\$74,522</u>

**5. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

At the end of the year the property and equipment is summarized as:

	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	2024 Net Book Value	2023 Net Book Value
Land	700	-	700	700
Buildings	767,199	432,062	335,137	346,099
Organ	121,766	43,830	77,936	80,371
Carillon	2,976	2,976	-	-
Sign	15,167	13,143	2,024	3,035
Furniture	162,601	162,038	563	1,124
Parking lot	47,341	37,880	9,461	11,355
	<u>1,117,750</u>	<u>691,929</u>	<u>425,821</u>	<u>442,684</u>

**6. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS**

When donations are made to the Church with the requirement to be used for a specific purpose, the funds are considered restricted funds and can only be used for that purpose. At the end of the year, the benevolent fund held donations made to the Church specifically for the purpose of purchasing food for the foodbank of \$35,704 (2023 - \$21,481). These funds will be used in 2025 for food purchases.

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**7. LEASE COMMITMENT**

The Church has a lease with respect to some of its office equipment. Future minimum lease payments as at December 31, 2024 are as follows:

2025	\$ 2,496
2026	<u>\$ 2,496</u>
Total lease payments	<u>\$ 4,992</u>

**8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The Church is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments and has a comprehensive risk management framework to monitor, evaluate and manage these risks. The following analysis provides information about the Church's risk exposure and concentration as at December 31, 2024:

**Credit risk**

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The Church is exposed to credit risk through its investments.

**Liquidity risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk than an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The Church is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of investments, obligations under operating lease, contributions to the pension plan and accounts payable.

**Market risk**

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Church is mainly exposed to interest rate risk and other price risk.

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument might be adversely affected by a change in the interest rates. In seeking to minimize the risks from interest rate fluctuations the Church manages exposure through its normal operating and financing activities. The Church is exposed to interest rate risk primarily through its investments

Other price risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate risk) whether those changes are caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or its issuer or factors affecting all similar financial instruments. The Church is exposed to other price risk through its investments.

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**9. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE**

The Church has a budget that anticipates future financial and volunteer support to provide programs to its members and the community at large. The Church is dependent of the continued financial and volunteer support of its members and volunteers to continue to carry out such work.

## **FOREWORD TO THE 2025 BUDGET**

At the beginning of 2024, we were still somewhat in a recovery mode from Covid and there was some uncertainty as to what the year would have in store for us. Thankfully, as the year unfolded, we could all see a more positive sense of normalcy returning to our lives and our church was blessed with the continued growth of new members.

Last year we had asked the congregation to increase givings by 3.2% compared to 2023. Meeting this target would have still left us with a budgeted \$25,000 deficit. However, thanks to your generosity and commitment to our Lord's work, we surpassed our budgeted givings by more than \$12,000 by year's end. That was just one of the many areas where we exceeded expectations. Overall, our income from all sources topped projections and expenses were more than \$28,000 below budget. The combination of these two factors helped us to not only meet our budgeted deficit of \$25,000 but we completely eliminated it resulting in a \$17,652 surplus for the year. This gives us a healthy financial foundation as we begin 2025, with General Fund reserves totaling \$247,984.

Looking ahead to 2025, we recognize that the new year will present its own set of financial challenges. The Finance Team acknowledges that in each of the last three years the church has passed budgets with \$25,000 deficits. While we have been blessed to meet those challenges to this point, financially speaking it is not sustainable for us to continue running them over the long term. The budget this year is designed as a small first step in gradually returning the church to a balanced budget position. I must stress that the steps taken will be small, and taken over however many years might be required. While we work towards realizing our financial goals, it is important to note that we will always remain focused on our number one priority, ensuring that we continue to fulfill our mission and deliver our programs effectively. Our healthy reserves of more than \$247,000 will support us in this effort.

The 2025 budget calls for a \$44,000 shortfall in revenues, but thanks to generous one-time donation(s) of member(s) who have pledged \$25,000, the deficit has been reduced to \$19,000, down from \$25,000 in 2024. To help us meet this goal we are asking the congregation for a 4.0% increase in General Fund giving.

We thank you for your generous support in 2024 and ask that you give prayerful consideration to the church's financial needs in 2025 and respond in the Spirit and Joy of His Love.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Brian Roth & The Finance Team



## PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

	2024 BUDGET	2024 ACTUAL	2025 BUDGET
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Ongoing General Fund Givings	393,694	405,832	438,527
Loose Collections	1,000	3,369	3,200
Other Revenue (sales, hospitality, misc.)	7,200	4,595	5,745
Rental Income	17,000	18,182	17,500
Investment Income	8,500	9,374	6,548
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>427,394</b>	<b>441,353</b>	<b>471,520</b>

This budget requires an increase in Ongoing General Fund Givings of 4.0%

### **DISBURSEMENTS - CONNECT ELEMENTS**

#### **WORSHIP**

Musicians (band, soloists, pianists)	24,000	23,811	24,500
Mid-week Services	8,000 *	1,553	~
Music	1,200	355	700
Pulpit Supply	800	2,100	1,500
Soundboard	500	352	500
Decorations/Flowers	500	277	350
Music Copyright Licences	400	393	450
Multimedia	300	332	400
Instruments plus Maintenance	300	2,272	300
Communion/Baptism Supplies	300	7	100
Banners	200	88	200
Special Worship Services	150	106	10,000 *
Christmas Eve Gifts	150	0	150
Nursery	100	0	50
Drama Team	100	0	~
<b>WORSHIP TOTAL</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>31,646</b>	<b>39,200</b>

#### **FELLOWSHIP**

Refreshments & Meals	1,000	1,485	1,700
New Members	600	623	600
Card Ministry	400	300	400
<b>FELLOWSHIP TOTAL</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,408</b>	<b>2,700</b>

	2024 BUDGET		2024 ACTUAL		2025 BUDGET
<b>COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS</b>					
<b>ADVERTISING</b>					
Social Media Advertising	9,500	*	4,365		7,000 *
Print Advertising (Magazine, Paper)	8,400	*	8,511		6,400 *
Growth Advertising Campaign	3,000	*	320		1,000 *
Photography	1,000		0		100
Web Site	500		468		500
Printing	400		922		100
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>22,800</b>		<b>14,586</b>		<b>15,100</b>
<b>(COMMUNITY) CONNECTIONS</b>					
Community Events	5,000	*	2,139		2,500 *
Mid-Week Youth Group	2,000		1,577		2,000
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>7,000</b>		<b>3,716</b>		<b>4,500</b>
<b>COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS TOTAL</b>	<b>29,800</b>		<b>18,302</b>		<b>19,600</b>

**DISBURSEMENTS - GROW ELEMENT**

**DISCIPLESHIP**

Sunday School	2,000		1,002		2,000
Alpha Course (Food & Child Care)	2,000		0		1,000
Sunday Youth (Sr. & Jr. Youth)	2,000		0		500
RightNow Media Subscription	1,000		985		1,000
Audio-Visual	400		0		200
Small Group Resources	200		1,030		750
Library & Periodicals	100		110		100
CD & DVD Ministry	100		0		~
New Initiatives	400		0		200
<b>DISCIPLESHIP TOTAL</b>	<b>8,200</b>		<b>3,127</b>		<b>5,750</b>

**DISBURSEMENTS - SERVE ELEMENTS**

**MINISTRY**

AR Watershed Annual Mtg.	800		238		300
Training/Supplies/Conferences	500		70		200
New Initiatives	250		2,910		250
Pastoral Care Travel (Pastor Colin)	100		0		0
Police Record Checks	100		0		50
<b>MINISTRY TOTAL</b>	<b>1,750</b>		<b>3,219</b>		<b>800</b>

	2024 BUDGET	2024 ACTUAL	2025 BUDGET
<b>MISSION</b>			
(United Church General Council) National			
Assessment Fee	20,397	20,397	22,108
New Initiatives	200	47	200
<b>MISSION TOTAL</b>	<b>20,597</b>	<b>20,444</b>	<b>22,308</b>

Our financial support to Christian charities is not part of our General Fund expenses.

Please see our Outreach report on page 22 for information on our Mission gifts totalling \$41,621

## ASSETS & FINANCE

### Administration

Financial Review	6,325	5,977	6,500
Photocopier	3,600	3,477	3,850
Office Supplies	4,000	2,722	3,500
Computers	4,000	5,918	6,000
Bank Charges	1,250	994	750
Membership (CCCC)	550	550	580
Postage	450	304	450
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>20,175</b>	<b>19,942</b>	<b>21,630</b>

### Property

Utilities	29,000	22,411	26,000
Maintenance & Supplies	19,250	18,188	18,500
Insurance	14,800	15,263	17,095
Equipment (new/repair)	2,000	726	1,000
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>65,050</b>	<b>56,587</b>	<b>62,595</b>

### Stewardship

Printed Resources	300	0	300
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300</b>

<b>ASSETS &amp; FINANCE TOTAL</b>	<b>85,525</b>	<b>76,529</b>	<b>84,525</b>
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## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Senior Pastor

Salary (includes housing)	86,126	86,126	88,813
Continuing Education	2,500	2,489	2,500
Travel Allowance (55¢/km)	300	712	300
Employer's Share of Benefits	21,539	21,680	23,022

	2024 BUDGET	2024 ACTUAL	2025 BUDGET
<b>Congregational Designated Minister (1/2 time, 20 hours per week)</b>			
Salary	30,681	30,681	31,601
Unpaid Leave of Absence	-3,540	-3,540	0
Travel Allowance (55¢/km)	250	28	250
Continuing Education	225	290	225
Employer's Share of Benefits	631	630	727
<b>Support Staff (Office, Custodial, Music, Sunday School/Youth &amp; Communications Coordinators)</b>			
Salaries	141,579	141,852	158,887
Employer's Share of Benefits	26,231	26,548	28,712
Gifts/Payroll Admin. Fee	1,500	1,532	1,600
Cont. Ed./Travel/Hiring Expense	500	0	4,000
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES TOTAL</b>	<b>308,522</b>	<b>309,027</b>	<b>340,637</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>493,394</b>	<b>464,701</b>	<b>515,520</b>
<b>REVENUE - DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>-66,000</b>	<b>-23,349</b>	<b>-44,000</b>
<b>EXTRAORDINARY DONATIONS</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR YEAR</b>	<b>-25,000</b>	<b>17,651</b>	<b>-19,000</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVE AT DECEMBER 31, 2023</b>		<b>230,332</b>	
<b>TOTAL RESERVE AT DECEMBER 31, 2024</b>		<b>247,983</b>	
<b>*CHURCH GROWTH PLAN DISBURSEMENTS</b>			

**BYRON UNITED CHURCH**

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**March 10, 2024**

Notice of this meeting was given via two of the Church's Friday email communication (BUC Wheat) and verbally during the in-person and online video worship service two successive weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

**MINUTES**

The duly-called Annual Congregational Meeting of Byron United Church was held as a Hybrid Meeting in the sanctuary and via video conferencing on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. Linda Peck, as Chair of Session, acted as meeting chair in order that the following enabling motions could be made:

**Welcome – Process for voting on motions**

Chair Linda welcomed everyone. Linda and Pastor Greg explained the general processes for the Zoom Hybrid meeting including the process for voting on motions and for asking questions.

**Voting Privileges**

Chair Linda explained that the 2023 *Manual of The United Church of Canada* provides specific rules regarding when adherents may vote.

- **Adherents may vote at meetings of the congregation if the full members decide to allow adherents to vote. The decision may allow voting rights on all matters or only specified matters. (B.3.7.2)**

Chair Linda stated that only members may vote on this first motion.

**MOTION:** Moved by Dave Rusciollelli, seconded by Dean Radloff, that voting privileges be extended to all adherents present today. Carried.

**Motions to Elect Chair and Recording Secretary of the Annual Congregational Meeting**

For each of the following two motions, Chair Linda asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor for either of these positions. There were none.

**MOTION:** Moved by Gloria Austin, seconded by Paul Coates, that Linda Peck be elected as Chair of the Congregation and any Congregational Meetings up to the election of a Chair of the Congregation at the next Annual Congregational Meeting. Carried.

**MOTION:** Moved by Jack Scott, seconded by Ric Graham, that Ruth Dean be elected as Recording Secretary of the Congregation and any Congregational Meetings up to the election of a Recording Secretary of the Congregation at the next Annual Congregational Meeting. Carried with one abstention.

Linda Peck then thanked the congregation for their confidence that she is able to fulfill the responsibilities of Chair for Congregational Meetings.

1. **Call to Order:** Linda Peck called the meeting to order at 11:52 a.m.
2. **Opening Prayer:** Pastor Greg Brawn
3. **Accepting and Raising Reports for Discussion:**

**2023 Annual Congregational Meeting – March 12, 2023 (pages 41-45)**

**MOTION:** Moved by Helen Keenlside, seconded by Jim Sample, that the Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of March 12, 2023 be accepted as printed. Carried.

**Team and Group Reports**

**MOTION:** Moved by Don Scanlon, seconded by Terry Lane, that the Annual Reports of the Groups and Ministries be accepted as printed. Carried.

Chair Linda thanked the team leaders for preparing their reports, Shelley Mercer, for overseeing the whole process ensuring it was sent out on time, Pastor Greg for the electronic distribution and the volunteers who distributed hard copies of the Annual Report.

**2023 Financial Statements (pages 26-35)**

Ruth Dean provided an overview and highlights of the 2023 financial statement. A budget had been passed which showed a deficit of \$25,000. Thanks to the generous and faithful support of members of the congregation, the General Fund at year end showed a deficit of \$6,198. She thanked Deb Farrell for her invaluable support in the past and Shelley Mercer for her assistance with this year end. She also thanked Brian Roth for being willing to serve as Treasurer going forward. She explained that on the advice of the accountant, a separate Benevolent Fund bank account was opened which contains the money designated to Pastor Greg for the needy as well as the money given for the Byron Cares Food Bank. It was added that the Leaders' Board authorized Chair Linda Peck and Co-Treasurer Ruth Dean to review the 2023 financials for accuracy. They have now signed off on them.

**MOTION:** Moved by Ruth Dean, seconded by Barb Chinnick, that the 2023 Financial Statements be accepted as printed. Carried.

4. **Celebrating 2023:**

**Slide Show Presentation** – Pastor Greg provided a slide show of highlights of 2023. He will include the slide show in Tuesday's BUC Wheat as well.

**In Memoriam** – Pastor Greg Brawn read the names of people within our church family who passed away in 2023. He then offered a prayer recognizing and thanking God for those who have served us here at Byron United Church.

5. **Looking Ahead to 2024:**  
**Elections:**

**a) Session**

Chair Linda noted that three Elders have an asterisk beside their name. They have been recommended by the Leaders' Board to become new Elders and have attended their first Session meeting as "Acting Elders".

**MOTION:** Moved by Jack Scott, seconded by Robert van Dam, that the members of the Congregation listed as Elders on page 46 (of the Annual Report Book), be elected as members of Session. Carried.

**b) Chair of Session**

**MOTION:** Moved by Jerry Reid, seconded by Wendy Dickinson, that the following member of the Congregation be elected as Chair of Session: Linda Peck. Carried.

**c) Trustees**

**MOTION:** Moved by Anita Bacon, seconded by Don Scanlon, that the members of the Congregation listed as Trustees on page 46 (of the Annual Report Book) be appointed as Trustees. Carried.

**d) Members and Chairs of Teams**

**MOTION:** Moved by Connie Baker, seconded by Mary Lou Van Vliet, that the members and chairs of the Teams listed on page 46 (of the Annual Report Book), be elected to these Teams. Carried.

Chair Linda noted that it is gratifying to see additional people offering to serve our church in these leadership roles. Anyone can join any of the Planning Teams during the year by just contacting the Chair of that team.

**e) Treasurer**

Chair Linda commented that in 2023 Ruth Dean and Brian Roth shared the Treasurer's position as Co-Treasurers.

**MOTION:** Moved by Dave Rusciollelli, seconded by Linda Sampel, that the following member of the Congregation be elected as Treasurer: Brian Roth. Carried with one abstention.

**f) Regional Council Representatives**

Linda provided background information including the following: Congregations with more than 300 resident members can have four (4) lay representatives to Regional Council. We have 338 resident members. Brian Roth has agreed to allow his name to be put forward to continue in this role. We thank Angie Brawn for serving as a Lay Representative in 2023.

**MOTION:** Moved by Lorilee Down, seconded by Angie Brawn, that the following member of the Congregation be elected as lay representative to Antler River Watershed Regional Council: Brian Roth. Carried with one abstention.

**g) Signing Officers**

Chair Linda explained the need for six signing officers.

**MOTION:** Moved by Carolyn Scott, seconded by Anita Bacon, that any two of the following people be authorized to sign cheques and other account documents for the General Fund, the Memorial and Honour Fund, and the Benevolent Fund accounts on behalf of Byron

United Church: Stephanie Carruthers (Trustee), Gary Coutts (Finance Team Member), Ruth Dean (Finance Team Member), Linda Peck (Congregational Chair), Brian Roth (Treasurer), Jim Sample (Finance Team Member). Carried with three abstentions.

**Appointment of Accountant for Financial Review:**

**MOTION:** Moved by Ruth Dean, seconded by Donna Newcombe, that Charles R. Summers Professional Corporation be appointed as the public accountant for Byron United Church to review the financial records of 2024. Carried.

**6. 2024 Budget:**

Linda stated that hired staff, the Pastor, the Congregational Designated Minister, and any members or adherents who are family members of the above are not allowed to vote on the 2024 budget.

Brian Roth presented the 2024 budget printed in the Annual Report on pages 37-40 noting that it is calling for a 3.2% increase in ongoing general givings over 2023, and including anticipated one-time extraordinary givings of \$41,000, will result in a \$25,000 deficit.

**MOTION:** Moved by Brian Roth, seconded by Jim Sample, that the 2024 General Fund budget of \$493,394 be accepted as printed as a commitment to the life and work of the congregation, recognizing the Leaders' Board's authority to adjust expenses within Elements. Carried with five abstentions.

Chair Linda expressed the church's sincere gratitude to Ruth Dean, Brian Roth and Shelley Mercer for their diligent work for the past six months in preparation of this budget, and also to the Finance Team members who reviewed the draft budget prior to its final presentation to the Leaders' Board and then to Session.

**7. Community of Faith Profile Updates – 2024 – Required by Antler River Watershed Regional Council**

Linda explained that each congregation is required annually to complete four profile documents with statistical and other descriptive information about our church life. This year we updated sections that were the same as 2023 and also completed new sections that were required by the Region. All four profiles were forwarded to the congregation for review via BUC Wheat at the end of February.

**MOTION:** Moved by Jack Scott, seconded by Helen Keenlside, that the Living Faith Story Worksheet, Demographic Worksheet, Financial Viability Worksheet and Real Property Worksheet for Byron United Church for 2024 be approved as presented. Carried.

**8. New Business: None.**

**9. Perspectives from the Pastor and Congregational Designated Minister:**

Ric Graham reported by Zoom from Spain. He was very positive about the strength of our church and felt that we have come from merely surviving to thriving. There were technology improvements which benefited those worshipping in-person and those still worshipping online. He highlighted the special entertainment evenings, the Alpha course and the bereavement course as just some of the positive events and programs which took place. He



stressed that the Leadership listens to the Lord for wisdom and strength. He said that he is blessed and inspired by the members and staff of Byron United Church.

Pastor Greg shared his positive feelings in relation to 2023. The church was open for worship every Sunday. As new attendees came from around the world, they were made to feel welcome by placing the flag of their home country on the pulpit. While we were sad to see Deb Farrell retire, Greg thanked Shelley Mercer, our new Church Administrator, for her contribution to the work of the church and was pleased that Kwaku Asumadu joined our staff as our Youth Pastor. The Photo Directory was a major project that was completed with the work of Angie Brawn and Colin Lauchlan. Seventeen new members were welcomed in November and we were able to have the special Christmas services once again. Pastor Greg stated that he is full of optimism and excitement to see what the Lord will do at Byron in 2024 as our congregation continues to be faithful and thankful.

Thanks: Chair Linda thanked Pastor Greg and Ric Graham for their spiritual leadership, and Pastor Greg for his ongoing support to all of us. She also thanked all who attended the meeting whether in the Sanctuary or via Zoom. The strength of Byron United Church is our reliance on prayer and our faith in our Lord Jesus to guide us through whatever challenges may come our way. COVID produced many challenges but we are growing again with the many new members. Today is a time of celebration and thanksgiving for all the Lord has done for us.

**10. Benediction:** Pastor Greg Brawn

**11. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

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**Chair: Linda Peck**

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**Recording Secretary: Ruth Dean**

\*New Team Members

\*\*New to this Position

## 2025 Governing Bodies & Planning Teams

### SESSION

David Tennant (chair)\*\*  
Ruth Dean (secretary)  
Anita Bacon  
Angie Brawn  
Ron Carruthers  
Bob Coates  
Paul Coates  
Sandra Collier  
Connie Constable  
Tom Dean  
Wendy Dickinson  
Gwen Estabrooks  
Cathy Goetz-Perry  
Jan Harding  
Harry Huffman  
Helen Keenlside  
Marlene Law  
Jen McKay  
Diane & Ken Minshull  
David Osiri  
Linda Peck  
Dean & Jan Radloff  
Jerry Reid  
Brian Roth  
Dave Rusciollelli  
Linda Sampel  
Don Scanlon  
Allison Stephens  
Jeanne Taylor Hopkins  
Jennifer Tennant  
Dave Wagg  
Pastor Greg Brawn

### TRUSTEES

Pastor Greg Brawn (chair)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (secretary)\*\*  
Stephanie Carruthers  
Bob Coates  
Gary Coutts  
Dean Radloff\*  
David Tennant  
Robert van Dam

### LEADERS' BOARD

David Tennant (chair)\*\*  
Linda Peck (vice-chair)\*\*  
Ruth Dean (secretary)  
Anita Bacon (Ministry)  
Angie Brawn (Discipleship)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Fellowship)  
Jen McKay\* (Comm. Connect.)  
Brian Roth (Treasurer)  
Dave Rusciollelli (Worship)  
David Tennant (Assets\Finance)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Mission)  
Pastor Greg Brawn

### WORSHIP

Dave Rusciollelli (Facilitator)  
Tom de Gryp  
Marie Sample  
Allison Stephens  
Jennifer Tennant

#### Prayer Team

Don Scanlon (co-chair)  
Sally Waddell (co-chair)

### FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ (Facilitator)  
Jan Harding (spec. events coord.)  
Diane & Ken Minshull

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Jen McKay\* (Facilitator)

#### Church Growth Team

Pastor Greg Brawn (chair)  
Ruby Bowry\*  
Ric Graham  
Kate Hendriks\*  
Jen McKay  
David Tennant

#### Mid-Week Youth Team

Noah Toth\* (leader)  
Andrea Smith  
Pastor Greg Brawn

### MINISTRY

Anita Bacon (Facilitator)

#### Volunteer Growth Team

Pastor Greg Brawn (chair)  
Anita Bacon  
Ric Graham

#### Ministry & Personnel Team

Paul Coates (chair)  
Kate Brawn\*  
Connie Constable  
Joel Dell\*  
Joan Estabrooks  
Don Van Vliet\*

#### Protection Oversight Team

Barbara Bentley  
Tom Dean

#### Governance Team

Anita Bacon (chair)  
Sandra Collier  
Michelle Morant

### DISCIPLESHIP

Angie Brawn (Facilitator)

#### Spiritual Growth Team

Pastor Greg Brawn (chair)  
Angie Brawn  
Pastor Colin Lauchlan  
Don Scanlon  
Andrea Smith  
Sally Waddell\*

#### Sunday School/Sunday Youth

Andrea Smith (coordinator)  
NoahToth\*

### MISSION

\_\_\_\_\_ (Facilitator)

#### Outreach Team

Helen Keenlside (chair)  
Stephanie Carruthers\*  
Ken\* & Diane Minshull\*  
Val Reid  
Dave Rusciollelli  
Gaye Whaley

#### Byron Cares Food Bank Team

Lorilee Down (chair)  
Tina Dobkowicz  
(+ members from other congregations)

### ASSETS & FINANCE

David Tennant (Facilitator)

#### Finance Team

Brian Roth (chair)  
Ron Carruthers  
Gary Coutts  
Ruth Dean  
Jim Sample  
David Tennant

#### Property Team

Greg Thurston (chair)  
Joel Dell  
Mike Dickinson\*  
Don Sinclair  
David Smith

#### Stewardship Team

Gary Coutts (chair)  
Ron Carruthers  
Sandra Collier  
Ruth Dean  
David Tennant

Pastor Greg supports each team.

## NOTES

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**Sunday, March 23, 2025**  
**In the Sanctuary Following Sunday Worship**  
**-Hybrid Meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing-**

Welcome – Process for voting on motions

Motion to extend voting privileges:

Motion: "That voting privileges be extended to all adherents present today."

Motions to elect Chair and Recording Secretary of the Annual Congregational Meeting:

Motion: "That David Tennant be elected as Chair of the Congregation and any Congregational Meetings up to the election of a Chair of the Congregation at the next Annual Congregational Meeting."

Motion: "That Ruth Dean be elected as Recording Secretary of the Congregation and any Congregational Meetings up to the election of a Recording Secretary of the Congregation at the next Annual Congregational Meeting."

1. Call to order
2. Opening Prayer - Pastor Greg Brawn
3. Accepting and raising reports for discussion
  - 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2024 (pages 42-46)
  - Team and Group Reports
  - 2024 Financial Statements (pages 26-36)

Motion: "That the Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of March 10, 2024 be accepted as printed."

Motion: "That the Annual Reports of the Groups and Ministries be accepted as printed."

Motion: "That the 2024 Financial Statements be accepted as printed."

4. Celebrating 2024
  - Slide Show Presentation – Pastor Greg Brawn
  - In Memoriam – by Pastor Greg Brawn
5. Looking Ahead – 2025

Elections

a) Session

Motion: "That the members of the Congregation listed as Elders on page 47 be elected as members of Session."

b) Chair of Session

Motion: "That the following member of the Congregation be elected as Chair of Session: David Tennant."

c) Trustees

Motion: "That the members of the Congregation listed as Trustees on page 47 be appointed as Trustees."

d) Members and Chairs of Planning Teams

Motion: "That the members and chairs of the Planning Teams listed on page 47 be elected to these Teams."

e) Treasurer

Motion: "That the following member of the Congregation be elected as Treasurer: Brian Roth."

f) Regional Council Representatives

Motion: "That the following member of the Congregation be elected as lay representative to Antler River Watershed Regional Council: Brian Roth."

g) Signing Officers

Motion: "That any two of the following people be authorized to sign cheques and other account documents for the General Fund, the Memorial and Honour Fund, and the Benevolent Fund accounts on behalf of Byron United Church:

\*Stephanie Carruthers (Trustee)

\*Linda Peck (Leaders' Board Vice-Chair)

\*Gary Coutts (Trustee)

\*Brian Roth (Treasurer)

\*Ruth Dean (Finance Team Member)

\*Jim Sample (Finance Team Member)

Appointment of Accountant for Financial Review

Motion: "That Charles R. Summers Professional Corporation be appointed as the public accountant for Byron United Church to review the financial records of 2025."

6. 2025 Budget

Motion: "That the 2025 General Fund budget of \$515,520 be accepted as printed as a commitment to the life and work of the congregation, recognizing the Leaders' Board's authority to adjust expenses within Elements." (See pages 38-41)

7. Amendments to Limits for Exceeding the Annual General Fund Budget

Motion: "That the *Governance Structure & Practices of Byron United Church – Policy B – LIMITS FOR EXCEEDING THE ANNUAL BUDGET* be reworded as:

"The annual General Fund budget for Byron United Church can only be exceeded with the following authority:

- Leaders' Board for up to \$5,000
- Session for \$5,000 up to \$20,000
- Congregation for more than \$20,000."

8. Community of Faith Profile Updates - 2025 - Required by Antler River Watershed Regional Council

Motion: "That the Living Faith Story Worksheet, Demographic Worksheet, Financial Viability Worksheet and Real Property Worksheet for Byron United Church for 2025 be approved as presented."

9. New Business

10. Perspectives from our Congregational Designated Minister and our Pastor

11. Benediction – Pastor Greg Brawn

12. Adjournment