

OPERATING FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Year-to-date ending July 31, 2017

	Actual	Budget
RECEIPTS		
Contributions	100,104.72	102,666
Transfer to Outreach	-2,001.99	-2,053
Transfer to M&S	-8,007.98	-8,213
Fundraising	35.74	0
UCW	5,000.00	4,500
Church rentals	4,800.00	4,200
Interest earned	7,651.41	3,033
Other receipts	3,284.33	550
TOTAL RECEIPTS	110,866.23	104,683
DISBURSEMENTS		
Salaries & Benefits	85,530.12	86,558
Christian Education	48.72	292
Worship & Membership	2,269.88	2,771
Presbytery Assessment	2,756.06	3,000
Property	26,658.98	27,401
Administration	4,504.51	5,025
Stewardship / Fellowship	275.94	525
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	122,044.21	125,572
NET RECEIPTS / DEFICIT	-11,177.98	-20,889
CASH FUNDS ALLOCATION:		
Operating Fund	16,582.38	
Outreach Fund	1,911.84	
Memoriam Fund	2,143.54	
Building Fund	6,639.70	
Solar Panel Fund	1,256.75	
Men's Club	2,219.44	
Choir Fund	1,814.54	
Total Cash:	32,568.19	

Grapevine - Fall 2017



Sunday Brunch! September 10 after worship.
It's our way of welcoming everyone back
after the summer.

Time to get caught up on what everyone's been doing,
and on our plans for the fall.

Plan to be there! All your friends will be!

FONTHILL UNITED CHURCH

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From the Minister

I had a friend who seemed to live most of his life in a state of anxious panic. Whenever we met, he would complain about whatever seemed to be going wrong in his life. During a rare time when it all seemed to be going well for him, he didn't quite know how to handle it. So he started making plans that, had he carried them out, would have undermined his good fortune. He had been so used to going from crisis to crisis, that when he had no crisis to face, he threatened to create one. At least then, he would know how to handle it.

Sometimes church congregations get used to living in a state of anxiety too. When people get together, instead of celebrating what's right, they sometimes dwell on what's not the way they think it should be. What they forget is that there is always more that is right in a congregation's life, than is wrong. When everything is going well, we can find ourselves looking over our shoulder, expecting that some crisis must be sneaking up on us. I've been doing that lately but I haven't seen it.

Fonthill United Church is fulfilling its mission in many ways. In May and June the congregation responded to the needs of the people suffering from the famine in Africa. We raised \$6,464 for the Canada Foodgrains Bank. After our money was matched by the Canadian government, it bought over 100 tonnes of grain, enough to fill a railcar. It didn't solve the famine problem, the famine is too extensive for that, but it was a tangible expression of compassion. We are here to love our neighbours, and that includes our neighbours in Africa.

By the time you receive this issue of *The Grapevine*, the Pelham Syrian Refugee Constituent Group will be getting ready to welcome a refugee family assigned to us. There is an update from Lyn Taylor on this mission in this newsletter. The people of the Bible valued hospitality as a spiritual gift, and it's a gift we are ready to share.

Have you noticed that there are a lot of cars parked around the church during the week? In the past, the church was considered to be the centre of the community. We may look back on those times with nostalgia, but our doors open every day of the week. Many things happen at Fonthill United during the mid-week, including: concerts, recitals, music lessons, badminton, pickle ball, tai-chi, quilting, beavers, cubs and scouts, foot care, meetings and more.

Part of our mission is to provide a pleasant space for people in the community to come together and because our building is so well maintained, people are coming here. We are so fortunate to have Leslie Hoffman keeping it spotless and to have some volunteers who keep the lawn and gardens looking nice.

Our Pastoral Care Committee is fulfilling its mission. The committee meets with me every month to report on the visits and calls they made. Our friends at Fenwick United opened their doors to us again this summer and joined us for worship. After taking the summer off, our music director Bill Outred will be ready to lead the choir and the congregation in worship for another year. Our website got a makeover last winter. If you have friends or neighbours who are interested in Fonthill United Church, you can tell them they can visit the website before they visit us in person.

So much is going so well that it has me looking over my shoulder to see if I am missing anything. But there is grace in knowing when you are being blessed. The Fonthill United Church congregation does well to graciously receive God's blessing, with gratitude.

Discussion Group – The Sunday after-worship discussion group will resume on September 24. Over the summer I have been reviewing the available video resources and I found one that is vitally relevant to the times in which we are living. It is a series of talks by John Dominic Crossan based on his latest book called: *How to Read the Bible and Still Be a Christian: Struggling with Divine Violence from Genesis Through Revelation*. In this series we will grapple with Scripture's two conflicting visions of Jesus and God, one of a loving God, and one of a vengeful God, and how Christians can better understand these passages in a way that enriches their faith. People sometimes reject religion in general and Christianity in particular for being the cause of human violence. How do we answer them?

In our sessions we will watch a video and engage in discussion. Everyone is invited to join in. Come to as many sessions as you can. Come to ask questions and raise concerns or come just to listen. Many people have found that they come on Sunday as much for these discussions as they do for worship! We will begin at 11:00 and finish promptly at 12:00.

Remits Update – Last autumn’s discussion group centred on the remits that proposed significant changes to the governance and funding of the United Church. Every United Church congregation and presbytery was asked to vote on whether to approve them. The results of the voting on all but one of the remits was announced in July. All the remits passed, giving the national church the authority to institute a new governance structure and to make other changes. These changes will begin to take effect after General Council meets next summer and probably not before 2019. This will affect Fonthill United in that Niagara Presbytery and Hamilton Conference will be replaced by a Regional Council and there will be a new funding formula for the support of the national church. Council will be discussing the impacts of the changes as they are introduced.

Stewardship in 2017 – For the past 11 years, Fonthill United Church had a Committee of the same three people which conducted an annual program to help raise awareness of the value of gratitude and the response of generosity. After 11 years, they felt they had given all the leadership in stewardship they had to offer, however they all continue to serve the congregation in other ways.

At some churches, you might hear about financial support almost every week. People are continually asked to increase their regular offerings, to make special offerings, to give “*a loonie for this and a toonie for that*”. It’s like the music in an elevator: something everyone hears but no one pays attention to it. Yet you may hear the complaint that the only thing the church seems to care about is getting more money. The repeated appeal for support produces a culture of need and paradoxically, decreases generosity. We have made a deliberate effort *not* to do this at Fonthill United. The Stewardship Committee worked very hard to focus on generosity and abundance, (never on guilt), and to do it only once a year. And they were very successful!

I believe that has helped us to cultivate a culture of stewardship. Everyone understands how important this congregation is to us and that we all benefit from it. We do not need to be asked to give week by week. Being asked once a year is enough and we trust that those around us will be faithful by giving what they can. Throughout the year we may invite the congregation to support special projects. (This year we supported the Syrian Refugee sponsorship project and the extreme hunger appeal for the famine in Africa.) But that was money we raised *for others*. We only ask for support for Fonthill United Church once.

We plan to do that again this year. In October you can expect to receive the usual stewardship letter with the annual intentions form. We ask you to do the same as you do every year: consider how much you will give to support our congregation’s life together, fill in the form and return it to the church. Please remember, all contribution information is kept confidentially by the treasurer and the church secretary only. We thank you for your continued generosity.

Garry van Bruchem

Solar Panel Update – In 2011 we took advantage of the Ontario Hydro Micro Fit program to install solar panels on the church roof in order to generate carbon free electricity. We took out a loan to pay for the panels and to replace the roof at the same time. The solar panels have been working beautifully. As of the end of June they generated over \$66,000 which was applied to the loan. In two years the debt will be paid off and then we will have an additional revenue stream to support our ministry.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Sept. 10	Brunch! Our way of welcoming everyone back after the summer
Sept. 16	Men’s Breakfast
Sept. 24	Discussion Group begins
Oct. 1	World Communion Sunday
Oct. 8	Harvest Thanksgiving Service
Oct. 28	Roast Beef Dinner
Nov. 5	Remembrance Sunday
Nov. 18	“Homes for the Holidays” Christmas House Tour
Nov. 25	A Cappella Niagara Concert
Dec. 3	Advent 1 - Communion

ROAST BEEF DINNER

at Fonthill United Church

Saturday, October 28, 2017 ~ 6:00 pm

Tickets:

Adults \$15 / Children 12 & under \$10

Call the church office to reserve: 905 892-6433

Pastoral Care Committee

We continue to work with Garry to visit or call every member of Fonthill United. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to be a listening ear and to get to know each other a little more intimately.

It has become so evident to me that many of the folks in our congregation care so much for each other. The visits, phone calls and helpful acts that are done so quietly and consistently with love mean so much.

We continue to meet the first Wednesday of each month to work with Garry, to visit or call every member of our church. Our visits can sometimes be of a personal nature and our committee has always been bound by a circle of professional confidentiality.

To date we have completed 99 visits, in addition to the ongoing visitation carried out by Paul Owen.

A huge thank you to the members of the committee:
Sheila Laundry, Sharon Middleton, Joan Rigg, Joyce Teather,
Harland Young, Garry van Bruchem.

Submitted by Marleene Kretchman, Committee Chair

UCW Invitation

September 13 at 1:30 pm, downstairs in the church, is the start date and time for the United Church Women's group, the UCW.

If you enjoy the company of "like-minded" people, you will probably enjoy attending the UCW gatherings because we learn, we worship, we sing, we laugh, and we nourish our bodies as we support each other and support our church.

We have Dora Drennan as our treasurer, Betty Garner as our secretary, and Fran Dennis and I share the role of President. Programs are presented by a variety of groups who are very creative. Leah, Margaret, Janet and Carol are in charge of the program on September 13 and one wonders what they have planned, as there is never a dull meeting.

Now that the summer is coming to a close, once again, I look forward to seeing you at the UCW meetings on the second Wednesday of each month.

Sincerely, Trudy Pickersgill

The Fonthill congregation received a thank you letter from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank for our donation this summer to the Extreme Hunger Appeal. It reads as follows:

Thanks for partnering with us to help others!

In Matthew 25:35 we read: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."

On behalf of the Foodgrains Bank and its 15 member agencies, I want to thank you for remembering these words of Jesus by sharing to help those around the world who don't have enough to eat. These funds will be used by the Foodgrains Bank to meet the immediate food needs of people who are facing hunger, help people grow more and better food, and reduce malnutrition.

Thanks for being part of the mission to end global hunger!

Sincerely,

James Kornelsen,
Public Engagement Coordinator



Finance & Property Committee Report

It's hard to believe but summer is almost over and we will shortly be back to fall weather. We do hope you all enjoyed the summer.

To the end of July, the deficit in the Operating Fund amounted to \$11,177 which is \$9,711 below the projected deficit of \$20,888. This improvement is directly attributed to:

- Special one-time gifts of \$2,500.
- Capital gain on mutual fund holdings of approximately \$5,800. (see below)

Envelope givings, while slightly ahead of 2016, are below budget by \$2,420. Expenses are below budget by \$3,528.

The committee is pleased with the current position but we acknowledge the deficit will increase over the next two months and it will be a challenge to achieve a balanced position by year end. Our balance sheet reflects a very stable position with cash reserves of roughly \$297,000. The loan from the United Church for the solar panels has been reduced to \$20,657.

We want to acknowledge a gift of \$5,000 from the UCW representing proceeds from the Flea Market. This contribution exceeded budget and is very much appreciated.

From February through to April, the Finance Committee thoroughly reviewed our investment policy, but more particularly the \$150,000 which we held with Fiera Capital, the Toronto based investment firm that works closely with the United Church. At the time, the market value of our investment exceeded book value by approximately \$5,800. With the potential uncertainty in the markets it was decided that we should collapse those investments and the funds have been invested as term deposits with Edward Jones at various rates over the next four years. In the final analysis, it was agreed risk should be eliminated when investing these monies.

In May we announced a Fenwick based group had agreed to lease the upper hall for the summer to run a music camp. The temperature the first week was quite warm and they found the room got very hot in the afternoon. They subsequently sought out another facility and we released them from their obligation with us.

On the property side the following has been accomplished:

- Lighting upgrades in the sanctuary is complete and again our Thanks go to Lyn Taylor.
- Rusted plates at the bottom of the exhaust fan and the under-hang protecting the outside stairs to the lower hall have been repaired.
- We expect roof repairs to be completed in August.
- Special Thanks to all those looking after the lawn and gardens. The landscaping has looked great all summer.

We look forward to seeing you back at Fonthill United in September.

Submitted by Jim Bradley, Treasurer

News from the Pelham Syrian Refugee Constituent Group (PSRCG)

It has been a long time since we began our efforts to bring a Syrian Refugee Family to our community. Our group was formed in late December 2015 and we applied for a Blended Visa Office Referred case on January 16, 2016. Our goal was to raise \$50,000 by May 31, 2016 so we could support two families. We have actually raised \$37,310.55 to date. Our original goal was to apply for two BVOR cases because the government shares the cost in supporting the family in the first year. Because of the huge response from Canadians and the large number of refugees who were brought into Canada in December/January, the government put a hold on BVOR cases and we were required to change our application to a Private Sponsorship (PSR) which we were not permitted to do until April 2016. We were matched with a family of four; parents and twin boys, then 9 years old, on June 10, 2016. Since that time we have been waiting for the application to be processed by the government. The family passed their medical examinations and an initial interview. We have been told recently that they are in the queue for the eligibility interview. No date has been set for that interview but it could be the final one before they are approved to travel to Canada. This, however, is not certain at this point so we have no idea how long it will be until they are given a travel date. It could move quickly once they are approved.

On August 3, 2017 we received a call from the United Church of Canada asking if we would consider taking a BVOR case that had been referred to them by the Resettlement Operations Centre (ROC) in Ottawa. We were asked to provide a response by August 4, 2017. We did an email poll of the PSRCG members and it was a unanimous decision to accept the sponsorship of this family. It is a family of 6; parents and 4 young children from one of the hardest hit areas in Syria. We submitted the sponsorship documents on August 12 and were approved as sponsors on August 15 and have been told that the family should arrive within 4 to 12 weeks. They do not speak any English so this will be a more challenging settlement than the first family. The reason this is moving faster than our first family is because the government referred them with all approvals in place.

We will now be moving into full fundraising mode again and we know that Keith Rae has many ideas for fundraisers in the community that we sincerely hope you all will support. In the interim, the committee members are all busy preparing to receive our first family.

Lyn Taylor and Rhonda Baker, Co-chairs

The Fonthill Quilters hand-made gift for our Refugee family:



Some Thoughts from Trudy Pickersgill

When I attend the summer worship services in Fenwick United Church, three things make the service so enjoyable: seeing both the Fenwick and Fonthill members intermingling, of course the air-conditioning, and I enjoy looking at the painting at the front of the church.

I have always loved Warner Sallman's, "Behold I Stand at the Door and Knock" as it contains so many symbols. The painting is based on Revelation 3:20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

The symbols in the picture show Christ outside a door that has no handle on the outside. The door represents the door to our heart and it must be opened by the owner so that Christ can come in. There are weeds growing up outside the door which shows that the door has not been opened in some time. The light radiates from Christ as he represents the light of the world. To the right and above Christ's head, we see timbers that represent the cross and the way he died for us.

To summarize what I enjoy about the summer worship services in Fenwick: the joining together of the two congregations, the air-conditioning, the painting, and of course the sermons and music.

Thank you, Fenwick United Church!

"Homes for the Holidays" Christmas House Tour

Our committee is currently organizing Fonthill United Church's 14th annual "Homes for the Holidays" Christmas House Tour which is scheduled for **November 18**. Please mark this date on your calendars.

Vermeer's Garden Centre and Flower Shop, Le Village, Cox Home Furniture, Mary Luska Interiors & Fashions, Log Cabin Gift Shoppe, and Hamiltons of Pelham will all be participating once again and we ask for your continued support of these businesses.

Typically, we would ask for your help closer to the date with the baking of the scones, and then working on the day of the tour in some capacity, but we would like to encourage others to volunteer and take more of an active role during the early stage. For example, tickets will need numbering and folding. Volunteers could deliver flyers to a variety of businesses in the region (including all the Public, French, Catholic and Secondary schools). Assistance decorating the Church would be appreciated. Please contact Carolyn if you wish to become more involved.

When tickets are printed, any help you can offer in selling them would be appreciated.

In mid to late October, signup sheets for a variety of jobs (hosting, bake sale table, kitchen volunteers) will be on display in the Narthex. We rely on your support. As we have always said, the organizing of the house tour is the "easy" part....rounding up sufficient volunteers to "work" on the day is the "hard" part. There are two shifts each day for 2.5 hours each. We try to supplement congregational member volunteers with students who get credit for community service hours, but each year it seems more and more difficult to find sufficient volunteers.

And finally, the Bake Sale has been such a huge success and important part of the previous Tours, that we want to do the same again this year. We would hope that we could count on your wonderful baking skills and assistance in mid November!

Thank you for any support that you can provide!

Submitted by Carolyn van der Sluis and Virginia Haun