

# **FONTHILL UNITED CHURCH**



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

## *In Memoriam*

*Those of our Fonthill United Church family  
whose lives we celebrated in 2016*

Paul Howes	February 13
Alfred Angle	February 26
Doris Garner	March 15
Phyllis Duggan	March 23
Co Ravenek	April 17
Margaret Smith	August 11
Margaret Haist	October 24
Ken Williams	November 26
John Ritchie	November 29
Carol Baird	December 15

*In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God.*

**1.0 Opening:**

Rich Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Rev. Dr. Garry van Bruchem thanked Rich for chairing this meeting in John McGregor's absence and opened in prayer. He then read the "In Memoriam".

Moved by Bob Laing and seconded by Joan Wells that Gail DeKoning be the recording secretary.

**Carried**

The voting privileges were explained.

Moved by Bill Laing and seconded by Marian McDonald that supporting adherents be given voting rights on temporal matters.

**Carried**

**2.0 Minutes of the 2014 Annual Congregational Meeting:**

Moved by Marvin Myhre and seconded by Steve Bronn that the Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting held February 8, 2015 be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

**3.0 Committee & Church Group Annual Reports:**

Garry started the reporting by saying that this is his 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. He said there have been many changes in the congregation due to death, moving, sickness or people just leaving our congregation. There has also been a change of focus of our church from survival to mission and ministry. He said he will start his twelve (12) week sabbatical in April then follow that with his vacation and Rev. Alan McLean will fill in. He reminded us that in 2017 it will be our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Garry thanked the congregation leaders on the committees. He then thanked Gail DeKoning, Patrice Walker and Bill Outred and the choir for their dedication to the church and also thanked people who struggle to get here for making the effort. He said there is a kind and gentle manner at our church and we are as a family. Then he thanked Leslie Hoffman for keeping our church clean and presentable and said she "feels the love in every corner."

Property: Brian McDonald, new to the committee, thanked Jim Bradley for the encouragement and faith he has in him. He is thankful for support of our ministry of community and church and also thanked those who have been here before us.

Membership & Personnel: Marian McDonald, new to this committee, said she was fortunate to have a strong staff. She invited everyone to talk to her about anything. She thanked her committee: Ron Dowd, Sandra Harding, Rich Miller, Keith Rae and Diane Rawsthorn.

Choir: Alvin Penner said the choir has new music to learn this year and will teach some to the congregation. He said they participated in services such as Good Friday, Lessons, Carols & Cookies, and Fenwick Anniversary Sunday. The choir has also had several soloists sing as well as Bill Outred and Brian Mosior. They have had funerals for three long time members of the choir but also have had some new members. They heard new technology at Central United where Bill played new hymns on his phone which was hooked up to the PA system so they could all hear it.

UCW: Betty Garner said they were growing programs, had guest speakers and arm chair travelling, and that fundraising events help our church, community and others. She invited all ladies to attend their meetings.

Brain Waves: Trudy Pickersgill reported that this has been changed to Brain Power. The program helps people understand how the brain works and why it fails. It opens up the idea of mental health and illness and said that dementia is not a disease of the young.

**3.0 Committee & Church Group Annual Reports (cont'd):**

Town Square Manor: Harland Young explained that 20 years ago, Fonthill Baptist had a \$35,000 legacy to help start it off and Holy Trinity Anglican and Fonthill United joined with them. Their Board of Directors is chaired by one of our church members. Harland is the Property Manager but is retiring in May/June so he is looking for someone else to come on the Board. He thanked everyone who participated over the years.

Moved by Ron Kretchman and seconded by Trudy Pickersgill that all committee reports, except the Financial Report, be adopted as presented. **Carried**

**4.0 Financial Report:**

Jim Bradley reported positive results this year overall. 90% was due to our generosity and commitment to this church. \$8,300 Operating Fund deficit is manageable but would like to see it at \$0. \$5,000 was transferred from the Memorial Fund as well as \$3,734 from the Enduring Gifts Fund. He said there are good tenants renting the church and he asked us to let people know space is available. UCW gave \$5,000; the House Tour raised \$8,500 for the Operating Fund and has raised \$40,000 since starting so it is a very valuable fundraiser and \$1,000 from the House Tour proceeds was given to the Pelham Syrian Refugee Constituent Group for refugee resettlement costs. \$5,345 was raised by our church for the Syria Relief Appeal and it was matched by the Canadian Government. 2015 Expenditures were \$205,704 compared to \$204,179 in 2014 due to snow removal. Worship & Membership Committee had budgeted \$1,000 for organ repairs but were not done. Bill Outred said it will hopefully be done in 2016. Expenses were up slightly with \$3,000 for sundry repairs such as the front door and gym door repairs. The John Sands Concert brought in \$560 and the solar panel revenue is \$10,500. The loan is down to \$34,000 and will hopefully be paid off in 3-4 years which is very positive. There is \$9,000 interest to be paid over 2-3 years. \$5,500 has been paid by the UCW towards building projects, and the Capital Campaign to help cover building repairs has raised \$16,900 to date by the congregation. Unplanned expenses included the furnace room pump for \$800, the Security fire alarm control panel replacement will be \$2,900 less 5% discount, and the Capital Campaign will be extended into the new year. The Finance Committee is very pleased with the year and Jim thanked the committee and congregation.

Moved by Jim Bradley and seconded by Sheila Laundry to adopt the Financial Operating Statement for 2015. **Carried**

A question was asked concerning a Men's Club speaker talking about restructuring of the Presbytery and the 61% Assessment increase. This increase will now be capped at 10%.

Another question asked was where the HST Receivable on the balance sheet comes from. It was explained that a percentage of all the HST paid by the church is able to be claimed back, so the amount claimed for 2015 shows as a receivable until a cheque is received.

It was asked what the life of the solar panels was – it is a 20-year contract and there should be 12-13 years without debt so the money should flow into the Operating Fund at that point. Repair for the solar panel monitor was \$700-\$800 and we should have them inspected. The panels should exceed the term of the contract.

Moved by Jim Bradley and seconded by George Rooke to adopt the budget for 2016 with disbursements of \$213,020. **Carried**

Jim thanked the Committee who meet 2-3 times a year: Keith Rae, Ken Brydon, Ralph Watters, and Steve Bronn, and also thanked the church secretary, Patrice Walker. He welcomed Brian McDonald to the Property side of the Committee and Ron Kretchman to the Finance side. He thanked people who do things behind the scenes for the Property Committee – Rich Miller, John Donald, Bruce Stayzer, Keith Rae, Wilton Boyd, Barb Peszle, Brenda Peszle, Ralph Laundry, Trudy and Don Pickersgill, Ralph and Virginia Haun and anyone else he may have missed.

**5.0 Election of Officers:**

**5.1 Nominations for Council**

The following list of nominations for the 2016 Council was presented: Garry and Harland Young went over the names prior to nominating and Council was asked who would be willing to stay on another year.

Jim Bradley (Treasurer)  
Gail DeKoning (Secretary)  
Ron Dowd  
Betty Garner (UCW rep.)  
Janet Hamilton  
Ralph Haun (Shepherd Visitors rep.)  
Marleene Kretchman  
Sheila Laundry  
Brian McDonald  
Marian McDonald  
John McGregor (Chairperson)  
Richard Miller (Past-Chairperson)  
Barbara Peszle  
Brenda Peszle  
Keith Rae (Trustee rep.)  
Joan Rigg  
Garry van Bruchem (Minister)  
Harland Young

New member to Council is Marleene Kretchman.

Moved by Harland Young and seconded by Brian McDonald that the new Council be elected.

**Carried**

**5.2 Nominations for Niagara Presbytery Representative**

Harland Young, Sheila Laundry, Brenda Peszle

**5.3 Nominations for Niagara Presbytery Extension Council**

Jim Bradley

**5.4 Nominations to Board of Cave Springs Camp**

John Donald, Janet Hamilton

**5.5 Nominations to Town Square Manor Representatives**

Tove Bowman to the second year of a second 2-year term, Diane Rawsthorn to the first year of a second 2-year term.

Moved by Trudy Pickersgill and seconded by Joan Wells that the nominations for items 5.2 to 5.5 be elected.

**Carried**

**6.0 Other Business:**

**6.1 Pelham Syrian Refugee Constituent Group**

Lyn Taylor and Keith Rae gave an update on the Pelham Syrian Refugee Constituent Group. Representatives from Fonthill United, Fenwick United, Pelham Community Church and Bethany Christian Reformed Church as well as people from the community and people with no church affiliation comprise this committee and decided to make an application through the United Church of Canada as they were already an SAH (Sponsorship Agreement Holder) registered with the government. Fonthill United Church Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding and our church will have oversight of this project. We have already received a request to support four families so we need to obtain the necessary funds quickly to be able to accept an application for a family. Rhonda Baker and Lyn Taylor are the co-chairs and Keith Rae is chair of Fundraising and Communications. Keith thanked Lyn for all her work to get the process started and he said he is privileged to be a member of the group. There will soon be a media announcement. The United Church of Canada is the Sponsorship Agreement Holder and it will be a Blended Visa-Office Referred program where we will share the costs for one year with the government; each providing for 6 months of costs. Start-up costs such as appliances, furniture, etc., are the group's responsibility and our fundraising goals are to settle two families, but one at a time. \$50,000 is the overall aim with \$12,000 needed in the bank before we can apply for a family. Corporations and Service clubs as well as other groups will be asked to help. Fenwick and Fonthill RBC banks have agreed to accept donations and Fenwick will be the home bank where the account is opened.

**7.0 Expressions of Thanks:**

Rich Miller thanked Marion Egarter, on behalf of the congregation, for her dedication to the Outreach Committee, and Fran Dennis for her dedication to the Harvest Dinners and also Bruce and Louise Stayzer, and Mike, Karen and Courtney McIntee.

Harland Young thanked everyone involved for allowing him to be here after his sudden medical emergency. He listed those already remembered at the annual meetings since 2012 and presented flowers to our 2015 recipients: Eleanor Hughes and Joan Wells who have both been members since childhood, and Keith and Ruth Rae for their lifetime commitment to the congregation.

**8.0 Adjournment of Annual Meeting:**

Moved by Jim Bradley and seconded by Ron Kretchman that the meeting be adjourned. **Carried** Garry thanked Janet Hamilton for making the soup and Barb Peszle and Brenda Peszle for their help with lunch.

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Rich Miller,  
Past Chair of Council

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Gail DeKoning,  
Secretary of Council

## **Church Council Membership 2016**

Jim Bradley (treasurer)  
Gail DeKoning (secretary)  
Ronald Dowd  
Betty Garner  
Janet Hamilton  
Ralph Haun  
Marleene Kretchman  
Sheila Laundry  
Brian McDonald  
Marian McDonald  
John McGregor (Chairperson)  
Richard Miller (Past Chairperson)  
Barbara Peszle (to August)  
Brenda Peszle (to August)  
Keith Rae  
Joan Rigg  
Garry van Bruchem (Minister)  
Harland Young

### **Church Committees**

#### Ministry Committee Chairs:

Worship & Membership: Brenda Peszle and Barbara Peszle (to August)  
Janet Hamilton (September to December)

Christian Education: Richard Miller

Pastoral Care: Marleene Kretchman (from September)

Stewardship & Outreach: Lyn Taylor

#### Administrative Support Committee Chairs:

Finance & Property: Jim Bradley

Ministry & Personnel: Ronald Dowd and Marian McDonald

#### Board of Trustees:

Bob Laing (Chairperson)

Keith Rae

Lyn Taylor

Marvin Myhre

Bruce Stayzer

### **Other Group Representatives**

Niagara Presbytery: Sheila Laundry, Harland Young

UCW: Trudy Pickersgill (President), Dora Drennan (Treasurer)

Town Square Manor: Tove Bowman and Diane Rawsthorn

Cave Springs Camp: Janet Hamilton and John Donald

## Minister's Report – 2016

I'm very pleased to be making this, my 11<sup>th</sup> annual report as your minister. After 11 years I have the distinction of being Fonthill United Church's longest serving minister in 41 years, and the second longest serving minister in 175 years of the congregation's history. It's also been my longest ministry in the 37 years since my ordination. I've stayed as long as I have because each year has brought new opportunities for service and I continue to experience your ongoing support. This annual report is longer than most but there is much on which to report from this past year.

*Sabbatical* – The time away was a wonderful opportunity for spiritual renewal and discernment. I was very glad for our partnership with the Fenwick congregation and for the ministry of the Rev. Alan McLean during my absence. This meant that the 12 week sabbatical came at no cost to the congregation and I could be confident that when I got back, everyone would still be here. I'm grateful to you for allowing me this time away and to Alan for his preaching and pastoral care ministry during my absence.

*Transitions* – In the life of every congregation the years bring changes and during this year we experienced more changes than the usual.

For the past 11 years, the *Stewardship Committee* has been made up of the same three people who conducted our annual program. Their aim was to make us more mindful of God's gifts and to inspire the congregation to gratitude and generosity. Lyn Taylor, Gail DeKoning and Harland Young served the committee faithfully but at the end of this year they felt they had run out of ideas and were ready to let this responsibility pass on to other hands. Their work has benefitted the congregation in many ways. Their encouragement has resulted in a high proportion of members who support the church through the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) program. The people using PAR have been among our most faithful supporters. The generosity of all our supporters has enabled us to carry out our ministry year after year. The Stewardship Committee has also overseen the Local Outreach contributions and made the nominations for elections at the Annual Meeting. When a committee ceases to function, we entrust Council to assume its responsibilities as best it can, and we hope that others will pick up these tasks. But as they leave it, I want to express my thanks to the members of the Stewardship Committee for their faithful service all those years.

In another transition, the work of the *Shepherd Visitors* was taken up by the *Pastoral Care Committee* appointed by Council. In a congregation with a high proportion of older people, pastoral care is all the more important so I am delighted that the new committee was willing to take the appropriate training at the Welland hospital, to do one or two visits each week, and to meet with me monthly. This will enable us to extend our pastoral care ministry more widely. The former Shepherd Visitors will be invited to continue visiting as part of the new Pastoral Care Committee. And because the Pastoral Care Committee reports to Council, Council will be able to take a more active role in how we care for one another.

For the past several years, "the twins" *Barbara and Brenda Peszle* played a prominent role in the life of our church. They served as co-chairs of the Worship and Membership Committee, took turns as lay readers, occasionally led services, gave leadership on Council and contributed to our congregational life in many other ways. They are both enrolled as students for the ministry at the Atlantic School of Theology. The Master of Divinity program requires that they serve an internship and since there was no opportunity for them to do this within Niagara Presbytery their search has taken them to Hamilton Presbytery. Council expressed thanks for their involvement in letter and wished them every blessing for their future, but we will miss them. Fortunately, *Janet Hamilton* agreed to take their place as chairperson of the Worship and Membership Committee.

Things are also changing in our relationship to the *Fenwick United Church*. For about ten years we have both benefitted from this partnership. We began sharing summer services when the Rev Elizabeth Agnew was the minister, continued through the vacancy with the Rev Eric Bacon, and then during all of Alan McLean's ministry. Alan officially retired at the end of 2016 but Presbytery appointed him to continue at Fenwick for the next 18 months as a part-time retired minister. During that time the congregation is supposed to make decisions about their future ministry and what they decide to do will have implications for Fonthill too. Alan and I are planning to share services following the usual pattern for the summer of 2017 but beyond that there may be another transition ahead for us.

More transitions are being proposed by our parent denomination, the United Church of Canada, through a process called *Remits*. During the fall, I spent a significant amount of time exploring these remits during our after church discussion groups so that Council's vote could be an informed one, and I led several discussions at the Presbytery meetings and with other congregations. If enacted these changes will affect many aspects of life at Fonthill United.

Since I began my ministry at Fonthill United, *Ron Dowd* has been chairperson of the Ministry and Personnel Committee. I don't know how many years he served before I came but we can anticipate another transition. In 2016 Ron and Marian McDonald functioned as co-chairs but in 2017 Marion will be nominated as chairperson. Ron plans to stay on the Ministry and Personnel Committee for another year before retiring. And since I began my ministry, *Ralph Haun* has served on Church Council. Ralph did not speak often but when he did speak, it was with a wisdom worth hearing. I extend my thanks to both Ron and Ralph for having served the church so faithfully.

Transitions are opportunities for others to take up the work of the church with fresh ideas to renew our energy and enthusiasm for it. The transitions of 2016 bring to mind the words of an old hymn that is not in *Voices United* but is based on Psalm 34.

Through all the changing scenes of life,  
In trouble and in joy,  
The praises of my God shall still  
My heart and tongue employ.

Looking ahead to 2017 I already see many opportunities that will present themselves. I hope that the *Syrian family* we have agreed to sponsor will arrive and that we will all respond to them with love and compassion. We will be marking a significant *anniversary* in 2017, our 175<sup>th</sup>. The service on April 30 and the lunch should be a grand occasion to celebrate our history. It will be our turn to host the joint *Good Friday* service in 2017. A new *Discussion Group* is planned to begin in February and I'm looking forward to establishing a new routine with the new *Pastoral Care Committee*.

I want to finish by telling you how fortunate I feel for the people I work with every week.

In addition to being an efficient administrator, our secretary *Patrice Walker* has excellent judgement so I consult with her regularly about congregational matters. She has a lovely and gentle way with the people of the congregation and I regard her as part of our team.

In addition to being a gifted organist, pianist, soloist and choir director, *Bill Outred* has, what I call a pastoral presence. In emotionally difficult circumstances, he knows how to be helpful, what to say and what not to say. His role in the church is primarily musical but his ministry is always with people.

Although *Leslie Hoffman* is not technically an employee of the church, she has been a gift to the congregation. Since she began I have not heard one complaint about the building not being clean enough or ready for whatever activity we have planned. But I appreciate her just as much for all the ways she finds to be helpful to families when they are here for a funeral service. When Leslie is present I know everything will go as it should and that the family will feel cared for.

Finally, I want to thank *everyone who supports the ministry* of Fonthill United. At a time in history when many congregations have had to amalgamate or close, or reduce their ministry to part-time, we have not had to concern ourselves with survival or how we will keep the lights on. This is all thanks to you. Every Sunday after worship, I come downstairs to my office to find the counters at the office table counting the morning offering. I do not know what any individual gives but I am both amazed and grateful for what you all do together. May God bless your generosity and our life and work together.

Your minister,  
Garry van Bruchem

### **Chair of Council's Report**

Church Council met nine times during 2016. At these meetings Council:

- received several new members to Council
- heard guest speaker Mayor Dave Augustyn give an overview of the development of East Fonthill
- continued to support the receiving of Syrian refugees
- received and revised our Membership Roll pending new financial levies by the United Church
- studied and voted on the General Council Remits which could make for fundamental changes in the United Church of Canada, beginning in 2018
- approved the formation of a committee of Pastoral Care
- adjusted and completed membership of the church committees to serve in 2017.

Council offers its thanks to various groups in the church who have organized events during the year. Among these events were the Christmas House Tour, and the Flea Market in April, as well as some smaller but still significant events. Members of our congregation continue to show remarkable commitment to our church. This commitment is appreciated by all members of this Council!

Submitted by John McGregor,  
Chair of Council

## **Worship and Membership Committee Report**

This year Fonthill United Church met the challenge with regards to our minister, Garry van Bruchem, being away for twenty (20) consecutive weeks, March 28 to August 14, comprising of five weeks vacation, three weeks study and twelve weeks of sabbatical. Everyone in the congregation missed him but we were appreciative of his needs. Rev Alan McLean covered ministerial duties for eighteen of those weeks. Eleven weeks were joint summer services with Fenwick United. Our committee feels the quest for meaningful worship was met due to the contribution and efforts of the ministers involved.

With the unexpected resignation of Barbara Peszle and Brenda Peszle, the co-chairpersons of this committee, it was difficult but not impossible to perform our duties to the congregation. We were able to meet our responsibilities because of the support of everyone in the Church.

**The Worship and Membership committee responsibilities** are set out in the constitution and we try our best to achieve them:

### **Worship:**

Helen Wismer has been tireless in recruiting persons to be lay readers, ushers, servers and greeters. We thank all who have graciously accepted her requests.

Under Beryl West's conscientious eye, our pulpit supplies have always been available when needed.

Our sanctuary continues to be decorated by Virginia Haun, and her work is always appreciated.

Beryl has also been our intermediary with Bill Outred, our music director. We are thankful to have Bill, such a caring person, who carefully chooses the music and directs the choir with skill and passion. The level of commitment shown by Bill and the choir lends itself to the worship service.

There were two requests for Baptism. In May, Oliver David Atkinson was baptized and in June, Nathan Patrick Donald was baptized, both by Rev Alan McLean.

### **Membership:**

In conjunction with Council, the Membership Roll was revised to reflect a more accurate list of members. This task was not taken lightly, and some names were removed to update the list. Membership statistics are included with this report.

As the community of Pelham is growing, our church is seeing more people visit; we have tried to welcome them and contact them after their initial visit, inviting them to be part of our family.

Announcements in the local paper have been numerous as we have been working hard to keep the community involved in our activities. We have also been responsible for the Grapevine, which helps keep the congregation up to date on Church plans and activities. Thanks to all the committees and groups who submit information to this appreciated form of communication.

Our web site is a major source of information. We try to keep it updated.

Our Church has submitted most of its historical records to the United Church Archives in Toronto for safe keeping. The list of what has been submitted can be found on our Web Site. If you do not have access to this type of communication and you would like something printed out, let us know and we will do our best to accommodate.

So much of our communication is done by the church secretary. Many thanks go to her for her tireless efforts.

**Our hopes for next year:**

As part of this committee’s responsibilities:

1. We are to encourage and arrange more opportunities for fellowship and to encourage the Friendship Group, Men’s Club and other social groups within the congregation. In the next year we would like to move closer in achieving this goal. It is important for the church family to get to know each other better and in that light, be able to support one another, not just in times of crisis, but all year round.
2. We are asked to contact visitors and new people in the community and invite their greater involvement. To achieve this task we are asking for you to step forward and join the Worship and Membership Committee.

Respectfully submitted by Janet Hamilton

**Membership Statistics**

	<u>December 31, 2015</u>	<u>December 31, 2016</u>
Total Membership, Resident & Non-resident	256	183
Non-resident Membership	15	4
Resident Membership	241	179
Activity in the year:	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Received by Profession of Faith	8	0
Received by Certificate or otherwise	6	0
Removed by Death	8	7
Removed by Certificate or otherwise	0	66

Submitted on behalf of the Membership Committee

**Outreach and Mission & Service Report**

Under the Outreach program, donations of \$300.00 each were sent to Hope House, Brock Chaplaincy, Cave Springs Camp, Pelham Cares, Habitat for Humanity, Bethlehem Place, Thorold Community Care, Women’s Place of South Niagara and Resource Association for Teens. An additional donation was made to Cave Springs Camp representing donations received from the members of the congregation.

The United Church of Canada Mission & Service received \$14,481.86 from Fonthill United in 2016.

Submitted on behalf of the Stewardship & Outreach Committee



## **Shepherd Visitors Report**

On December 7, 2016 at a meeting of the Pastoral Care Committee which included Garry van Bruchem along with Marleene Kretchman, Elaine White, Ruth Rae and myself of the remaining Shepherd Visitors, at my suggestion it was decided that the role of the Shepherd Visitors be incorporated into that of the newly formed Pastoral Care Committee. Marleene Kretchman has agreed to represent those of the former Shepherd Visitors who will continue to visit and support those members of the congregation with whom they have established a long-term and meaningful relationship. The former Shepherd Visitors are asked to submit a monthly visitation report to Marleene in order that she can pass on this information to the Pastoral Care Committee (PCC) in order to keep the PCC apprised of what visits and contacts are being made, what news needs to be shared and what special support needs to be given. This approach was agreed upon by all members of the PCC and by those present representing the now former Shepherd Visitors.

The current members of the former Shepherd Visitors include: Margret Bousfield, Sharron Bradley, Jack Gray, Ralph Haun, Marilyn Richardson, Ruth Rae, Joan Wells, Elaine White, Peggy Palmer, Marleene Kretchman and myself. If, for any reason, any former members of the Shepherd Visitors do not wish to continue with their visiting under the new PCC, please inform Marleene Kretchman.

I would like to congratulate and say thank you to all those who have served over the years as members of the Shepherd Visitors. Your visits and support given have meant much to those with whom you have shared both your life and your time. If you have any questions about the change being made, please contact me. Thank you.

Submitted by Paul Owen

## **Pastoral Care Committee**

The Shepherd Visitors have, over the years, established a wonderful, meaningful connection with our congregation as caregivers and friends. From this foundation has grown the new Pastoral Care Program that continues in the spirit of the Shepherd Visitors.

On December 7, 2016 the members of the Pastoral Care Committee, Sharon Middleton, Joan Rigg, Sheila Laundry, Joyce Teather and Marleene Kretchman met with Garry van Bruchem, Paul Owen and those who are still active Shepherd Visitors. We mutually decided that we would act as one group of Pastoral Caregivers, continuing in the commitment to providing ongoing support to everyone at Fonthill United.

The Pastoral Care Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month with Garry to discuss our visits and any concerns that arise. Anyone who is visiting is welcome to attend these meetings so that we can mutually support each other and those we are visiting.

The goal is to facilitate ongoing, open communication between visitors and Council. As Chair of the Committee, I report to Council as to the number of visits and any concerns that may arise.

In coming together on December 7, we agreed that in becoming one caregiving group there are so many benefits, in terms of communication, avoiding duplication of visits, and mutual support.

I look forward to working with everyone involved as together we continue to care for each other. This defines Fonthill United.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marleene Kretchman, Chair of Pastoral Care Committee

## Stewardship Committee Report

The Stewardship Committee consists of Gail DeKoning, Lyn Taylor, Harland Young and Rev. Dr. Garry van Bruchem.

### Vision

- *To ensure a year round program rather than a few weeks campaign*
- *Ensure Stewardship speaks to the soul and is not seen as a fundraising initiative*
- *Focus on generosity and abundance, not guilt*
- *Celebrate the various ways we as individuals and collectively as a congregation demonstrate our Stewardship*
- *Continuously move toward "living the vision" vs. "paying the bills"*

### Goals

- *All initiatives should focus on time, talent and treasure*
- *Promote the use of PAR*
- *Ensure we have Stewardship Activities/Presentations year round*

Over the past eleven years, the Stewardship Committee has been striving to achieve the Vision and Goals outlined above. We believe with your help and participation over the years, the program has been successful and we sincerely thank you for your support.

The Theme for our Stewardship Program this year was “**Spirituality and Community...gifts we share.**” We are grateful to Marvin Myhre for sharing such a personal and inspirational story with us at one of our morning worship services. It takes courage to share a faith story, particularly when it is so emotional. Thank you, Marvin, for sharing your gift. The following are the highlights of the results from our Stewardship Program for 2017:

- 1) 93% of Council Members returned their Intention Forms. 100% of Council Members on PAR returned their forms.
- 2) 81% of all PAR Contributors returned their Intention Form.
- 3) 9 contributors returned an Intention Form for the first time.
- 4) Intentions are up \$19,125.00 over the previous year.
- 5) 36.13% of our contributors are on PAR.

Thank you to all who participated in the program by returning your Intention Form. If you are interested in switching to the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR), please contact Patrice at the church office and she will assist you. It is an easy and convenient way to make your contribution and helps provide our congregation with a steady cash flow even when you can't make the church service. It is just like paying your utility bills through your bank account and you can make adjustments at any time if your circumstances change.

The current members of the Stewardship Committee have been in place since the program first began in 2006. We all feel that we have taken the program as far as we can and that it is time to pass the baton to others with fresh insights and ideas. We sincerely thank you for your support and patience over the years as we tried different things to energize the program and keep it interesting and relevant. We will continue to support Stewardship and have resources to share with those who are interested in taking over the leadership position.

Respectfully submitted by  
Lyn Taylor, Chair

## Finance Committee Report

Detailed statements for all accounts and various funds are included at the end of the annual report.

Prior to any adjustments at year-end, a deficit of \$5,009 was evident in the Operating Fund. This compares to a pre-adjusted deficit in 2015 of \$8,734 and a projected deficit of \$31,770. To cover this position, \$2,700 of undesignated funds are being transferred from the Memoriam Fund and \$2,309 from the Enduring Gifts Fund. Total expenses amounted to \$204,324 compared to actual expenditures in 2015 of \$205,704 and projections of \$213,020. Financial highlights which impacted the Operating account in 2016 include:

- Envelope givings were actually \$536 below 2015 but \$9,793 higher than the budget. Actual income, after one time entries to the Operating Fund amounted to \$195,115 compared to \$194,770 last year. While some revenue categories reflect minor adjustments, the trend remains positive and revenue has been consistent over the past three years.
- We did receive a grant from the Niagara Presbytery Extension Council of \$16,000 which covered approximately 50% of capital expenses we had incurred in fiscal 2014-2015. \$4,200 of this amount was for the Operating Fund, \$8,400 is being held to cover planned roof repairs in the spring and \$3,400 was placed in the Building Fund.
- Our contribution to Outreach and M&S amounted to \$18,102, the same as 2015.
- Rental income increased \$2,000 and we continue to explore other opportunities to increase income from this source, as it does help cover fixed base expenses.
- Actual expenses reduced \$1,380 year over year. Expenses continue to be closely monitored.
- Investment income declined \$3,343 because of lower interest rates.
- The House Tour contributed \$8,325 in 2016. This is after \$500 donations each to Pelham Cares and the Syrian Refugee Fund. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of this event to our finances.
- Solar panel revenue amounted to \$10,983 and the loan has been reduced to \$25,790. The loan should be paid in full in 30 months at which point this revenue goes directly to the Operating Fund.
- Donations from the UCW amounted to \$6,100 and the Men's Club contributed \$1,000. Special Thanks to these groups.

Overall, we consider the 2016 finance results positive and a continued reflection of the members' strong commitment to Fonthill United.

We are projecting members' contributions to the Operating Fund for 2017 at \$175,000 compared to actual \$179,793 in 2016. The slight reduction reflects current circumstances of which we are aware. After our 10% contribution to M&S and Outreach, projected income for the Operating Fund is \$184,850 vs. \$199,315 in 2016. This reduction recognizes \$5,600 last year was from the E.C. grant and special givings, and there were other increases in revenue which may not be repeated.

Expenses are projected at \$215,062 compared to \$204,324 in 2016 and \$205,704 in 2015. Major expenses continue to be those covering compensation and property. We are projecting a deficit of \$30,212 for 2017. We appreciate that for the past several years, actual results were significantly better than projections but as in the past, we do follow normal accounting principles and protocols when completing the budget.

As Chair of the Finance Committee I feel blessed to have Keith Rae, Ralph Watters, Ron Kretchman, Steve Bronn, Rich Miller, Brian McDonald and Ken Brydon as members of the committee. These individuals provide excellent support and commitment throughout the year and it is a privilege to work with them. We are also very much aware of the contribution made by Patrice Walker in everything she does around Fonthill United. Special Thanks is also extended to the organizing committees of the House Tour and the Flea Market.

Thanks to all members for your continued contribution and support to Fonthill United. It does make a difference and we can all be very proud of positive trends in our financial position.

Jim Bradley,  
Chair of Finance & Property Committee

## **Property Committee Report**

Again this year, the level of volunteer support we have received from a number of members on completing a variety of tasks around the church has been amazing. These tasks include working on the lawn and gardens, changing bulbs and other things which wear out, shoveling walks and ensuring melting materials are applied, and on it goes. This support goes a long way to help us minimize maintenance costs and it is sincerely appreciated. Thank You!

Over the past year some of the major repairs/functions completed include:

- Fixed locks on both the front and side doors.
- Replaced major valves in 3 spots on the heating radiators.
- Had the city remove a large tree which was becoming a safety issue for the parking lot.
- Installed two new handicap parking spots in the parking lot.

Projects underway for completion in early 2017 include:

- New lighting in the sanctuary. The renovated fixture has met all expectations and a schedule is being completed to update the remaining fixtures.
- Complete roof repairs. This work was partially delayed because of weather in the fall and will be done in early spring.

Our building and the overall property is generally in a good state of repair however, and like a lot of other churches, the asset is old and in many cases some of the equipment is obsolete. This makes it very difficult to obtain replacement parts and drives up the cost of most repairs.

As mentioned in the "Finance Report" during the year, we did receive a grant from the Extension Council which permitted us to recover a portion of some costs we had spent late in 2015. As a result we have a balance of \$4,915 in the Building Fund which will help with any future projects.

In conclusion, once again THANKS to all of you that spend countless hours "just doing things around the church." This commitment and dedication ensures things do get done and is much appreciated.

A special Thanks is also extended to Keith Rae, Brian McDonald and Rich Miller who look after property issues on behalf of the Finance Committee and to Patrice who handles all rental enquiries and acts as our contact with all tenants.

Jim Bradley,  
Chair of Finance & Property Committee

## **Board of Trustees Report**

Board of Trustee Membership: Bob Laing (chair), Marvin Myhre, Keith Rae, Bruce Stayzer, Lyn Taylor (Secretary), Rev. Dr. Garry van Bruchem.

This was a quiet year for the Board of Trustees. There were no major issues requiring our attention. The Insurance Policy was renewed with Sheehan & Rosie Ltd. for another year, expiring in June 2017.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lyn Taylor, Secretary

## **Ministry and Personnel Committee Report**

The M&P Committee consists of 6 members, 3 men and 3 women. They are Co-Chairs Ron Dowd and Marian McDonald, Sandra Harding, Diane Rawsthorn, Rich Miller, and Keith Rae.

As the year began, M&P gave full approval to Rev Garry van Bruchem to undertake his sabbatical in combination with his vacation and study leave from the end of March until his return 20 weeks later in August. Fortunately, Rev Alan McLean provided coverage during all but two weeks of Garry's absence. The congregation showed a sincere interest in Rev Garry's sabbatical plans and gave full approval and support to his absence. When Rev Garry returned he submitted a full report to M&P, the congregation, and he spoke to various groups within the congregation.

At the Church Council meeting on January 19, 2016, the M&P Committee for 2016 was appointed and the members were named as above.

On Sunday, January 31, 2016, at the 2015 Annual Congregational Meeting, Co-Chair Marian McDonald made a presentation that introduced the members of the committee and briefly outlined the roles and responsibilities of the committee members.

A meeting was scheduled for February 25, 2016; however, due to heavy snow fall and unsafe roads it was cancelled.

On April 14, 2016, the committee met and spent time getting to know the newest member of the team, Diane Rawsthorn. At that meeting the current role descriptions of paid staff were distributed and Co-Chair Ron talked to the committee about the roles of M&P within the church.

On August 30, 2016, committee members and their partners gathered for a potluck at the home of Brian and Marian McDonald.

In preparation for the budget submission for 2017, Ron and Marian met with Patrice Walker on October 12, 2016 and with Rev Garry and Bill Outred on October 20, 2016. At these meetings role descriptions were updated, performance reviews were undertaken, and staff shared their goals for the upcoming year.

In order to help members of the congregation get to know M&P committee members, they—the members of M&P—provided support to Rev Garry throughout the service on November 20, 2016. They greeted people upon arrival, distributed bulletins, gathered the offering and, during “A Minute for Ministry and Personnel,” Marian McDonald introduced the team and set out the roles of the committee.

Respectfully submitted by Marian McDonald  
Co-Chair, M&P Committee

### **Town Square Manor**

Town Square Manor is a life lease apartment building located at 55 Town Square in Fonthill, consisting of spacious one and two bedroom units. The nine member Board is made up of three residents and two from each of Fonthill United, Holy Trinity Anglican and Fonthill Baptist churches. This Board operates as a non-profit. In consultation with Cannon Greco Management Limited, the Board controls finances, sets policy and procedures, and oversees a part-time staff.

In 2016, Tove Bowman served the second year of a second two-year term as a Board member and Diane Rawsthorn served as Chairperson in her first year of a second two-year term.

Town Square Manor is an excellent facility which offers much for the seniors of Fonthill. Anyone wishing further information might check out the website: [www.townsquaremanor.ca](http://www.townsquaremanor.ca) or contact Harland Young-Life Lease Sales at 905 892-0927.

## Friendship Group Report

The Friendship Group met twice in 2016:

March ..... 27 members and friends attended the March 6 Sunday matinee performance of “Mary Poppins” by the Port Colborne Operatic Society. 24 of the group joined together afterwards to enjoy the evening meal at Swiss Chalet, Welland.  
Committee: Bob Laing, Pat Laing, Dora Drennan.

December.... After the church service on December 11, 22 members and friends attended the Christmas time gathering for dinner at the newly renovated Swiss Chalet, Welland, with all of us seated together at a long table in the back room.  
Arrangements were made by Virginia and Ralph Haun.

Anyone wishing to be a part of the Friendship Group is asked to please contact President, Virginia Haun.  
Pat Laing, Secretary

## Choir Report

Fonthill United is lucky to have a well-balanced choir of 18 members who greatly enjoy singing. In fact, 11 of our members also sing in various community choirs found throughout Niagara. We joined with other United Church choirs for the Good Friday service at Central and the December 4 evening carol service held at Fonthill. We also sang at Lessons, Carols and Cookies, and performed a concert at Lookout Ridge. Each week the choir sings two anthems which help to reinforce the message being preached. We sang at several funerals including one for former choir member, Margaret Haist. A few members sang solos and duets during the year at Fonthill, and at the combined summer services at Fenwick when the choir is not active.

On December 18 the choir presented a Christmas cantata. Bill Outred selected the music and wrote and read the script which tied everything together in a very meaningful way. Bill provides outstanding musical leadership at our services every Sunday. His preludes help to set the mood for worship and his rousing postludes send us joyfully on our way. Bill’s solos and guitar playing have also added greatly to our worship, as demonstrated by the beautiful Christmas Eve candlelight service.

The choir enjoyed a pot luck dinner in January, and a year end BBQ in June. We are looking for additional members in the choir. During the winter, when several of our members head south, we often only have 12 people in the choir loft. If you enjoy singing, come and join us at 7:00 pm on Thursday nights. You will be warmly welcomed.

Submitted by John Donald,  
Choir President

## Choir Financial Statement

Fund Balance at January 1, 2016:	\$1,080.69
Donations received	342.49
Expenses	<u>(108.64)</u>
Fund Balance at December 31, 2016:	<u>\$1,314.54</u>

## **Niagara Presbytery Report**

Niagara Presbytery is the third official court of the United Church of Canada, serving as the umbrella group for all of the United Churches in the presbytery. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month.

Harland Young and Sheila Laundry are the two official representatives from Fonthill United Church; Harland serves on Property, Sheila serves on Potentials. Jim Bradley serves on the Presbytery Extension Council.

A major focus this year was the discussion and the voting on the remits, the questions that came out of Comprehensive Review Task Force Report from last year. Rev. Garry van Bruchem took a leadership role in this task, in his position on the Faith and Order Committee. Not only did he provide excellent leadership to our own congregation but also led discussion in other churches and at Presbytery.

There have been several changes in Niagara Presbytery. As churches have closed, Property and the Extension Council have spent much time overseeing closures and the distribution of money from the sale of assets. This grant money has been a godsend for many of our churches struggling with buildings repairs. With the closing of churches, the membership of Presbytery has diminished. An aging population and a smaller group of churches have meant that some committees are struggling and attendance is certainly down at the meetings. However, there are still many things to celebrate.

A very successful youth conference hosted by Silver Spire United Church was held in September of this year, involving several churches in Niagara. There were celebrations for Caribbean Workers, a service for the first woman ordained in the United Church and a benefit in support of the Steven Lewis Foundation. Vacation Bible School operated in a smaller number of churches but reported a successful summer.

Barbara Peszle continues her education as a candidate for Ordered Ministry.

Harland and Sheila will be serving another year on Presbytery and would be more than happy to welcome another member or visitor.

Respectfully submitted by Sheila Laundry and Harland Young

## **United Church Women's Report**

The United Church Women's Group has, through the grace of God, had another successful, fun, enlightening, gratifying year. I can think of so many other adjectives, but it is suffice to say this group of ladies have again come together in "Christian witness, fellowship, and service."

Our monthly meetings every second Wednesday of the month have seen a slight increase of ladies attending. It is always encouraging to see new faces and comforting and heartwarming to visit with our regulars, especially those who have been with the group since the beginning. Each month brings a social gathering, short devotions, and programs from educational (travelling solo) to interest (slides and talks of many travels) to pot lucks and lunches out. Our ladies also pride themselves in still hosting dinners at the church, to helping whenever needed: bakes sales, funeral lunches, Men's Group spaghetti suppers, and Christmas House Tours to name a few.

As in the past we continue to support the Church and local groups financially. Due to our ladies generously giving of their time and finances, we have been able to continue our gifts to those in need.

May I end, as always, extending an invitation to all ladies of the church who would like to join us for a light afternoon of friendship. Whether you can make the occasional meeting only, or regularly, you will be greeted warmly. Also the hot tea and dessert are wonderful.

Respectfully submitted, Betty Garner, UCW Secretary

## United Church Women - Treasurer's Report 2016

Balance at January 1, 2016: 1,630.87

**Receipts:**

Return of 2015 Offerings	1,387.25	
Bake Sales & Dinners	2,200.50	
Flea Market	5,765.00	
2016 Offerings	1,159.75	
Lessons, Carols & Cookies	310.00	
Use of Kitchen	100.00	
Donations	100.00	
Miscellaneous	24.00	
Total:		<u>11,046.50</u>
		12,677.37

**Disbursements:**

Mission & Outreach *	3,100.00	
Church: New electrical for freezer	479.12	
For pump repairs	500.00	
Flea Market	4,755.00	
General Fund	1,000.00	
Dinner and Reception Expenses	566.50	
Niagara Presbyterial Dues	125.00	
Christian Children's Fund (from L,C&C)	305.00	
Coinage Fees	12.50	
New cheques	46.83	
Miscellaneous	661.18	
Total:		<u>11,551.13</u>
Balance at December 31, 2016:		<u>1,126.24</u>

\* Mission & Outreach disbursements:

Brock Chaplaincy	100.00	
Hope Centre	1,200.00	
Cave Springs Camp Building Fund	500.00	
Habitat for Humanity	100.00	
Women's Place of South Niagara	300.00	
Open Arms Mission	400.00	
W.D. & Relief Fund	500.00	
	3,100.00	

Respectfully submitted by Dora Drennan, Treasurer

## Fonthill United Church Men's Club

It has come to that time of the year when we report on our year past. It does not seem that a year has passed by that quickly. We held six breakfasts during 2016 including six presentations of which 4 were travel logs.

In January, Rev. William Thomas spoke on General Council's 2015 report on changes coming down stream. In February, Brenda and Barbara spoke of their trip to Israel and Mount Sinai. In March, Rev. Alan McLean spoke of his trip to Egypt. In September, Rev. Garry van Bruchem spoke of his Sabbatical Wilderness Retreat Trip. In November, Stephen Bronn from Edwards Jones spoke on Estate Planning. Finally in November, Marvin spoke on his and Helen's trip to Hawaii. All in all we did a lot of traveling in 2016.

In April, we held our Spaghetti Supper which turned out to be rather successful. We also transferred \$1000.00 to the Operating Fund leaving a balance of \$1046.19 in the Men's Club Fund. Our hope is that we will be as successful in 2017.

Submitted by  
Marvin Myhre, Keith Rae, Richard Miller and Harland Young

### Men's Club Financial Report

Fund Balance January 1, 2016:		941.63	
<u>Breakfasts:</u>			
Receipts	425.00		
Expenses	<u>186.50</u>		
Net:		238.50	
<u>Spaghetti Supper:</u>			
Receipts	970.00		
Expenses	<u>103.94</u>		
Net:		<u>866.06</u>	1,104.56
<u>Donations:</u>			
Transfer to Fonthill United Operating Fund			<u>(1,000.00)</u>
Fund Balance at December 31, 2016:			<u>1,046.19</u>

Submitted by Harland Young, Treasurer

## ***“Homes for the Holidays” Christmas House Tour Report***

The 13<sup>th</sup> annual ***“Homes for the Holidays”*** Christmas house tour took place on November 12. Virginia Haun, Carolyn van der Sluis, Sharron Bradley and Patrice Walker organized the event.

Local designers decorated five houses and provided table centerpieces for the refreshment area in the church. Virginia Haun decorated the Narthex, stairs and exterior of the church. We welcomed back Vermeer’s Garden Centre and Flower Shop, Cox Home Furniture, Le Village, and Mary Luska Interiors and Fashions. Hamiltons of Pelham and Rice Road Greenhouses and Garden Centre were new additions to the tour. Other supporting sponsors include Sobey’s, Sweet Thoughts, Fonthill & District Kinsmen and Century 21 Real Estate.

Tickets were sold by our church secretary, participating decorators, and congregational members. All congregational members were called and encouraged to participate in the bake sale and the response once again was overwhelming. As well, congregational members and students from E.L. Crossley, Notre Dame and Centennial volunteered on the day to either host in homes, or staff the kitchen, bake sale table, and refreshment areas.

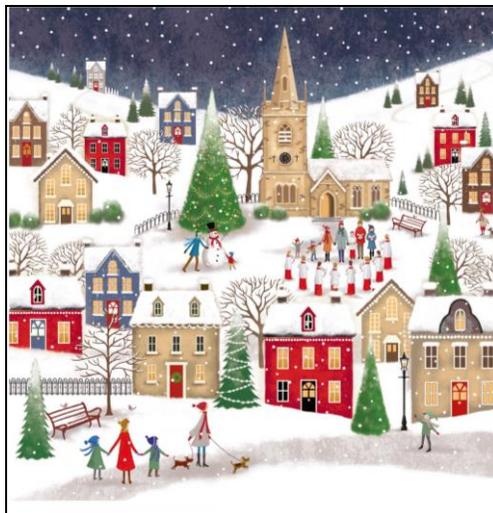
The true reasons for the success of this fund raiser lie in the co-operation and support that the decorators give to us, the beautiful homes on display, and the many, many volunteers who host in homes, bake scones and cookies for the bake table, work in the kitchen/refreshment area on the day, sell tickets, post flyers, etc., etc.

The Committee extends its sincere appreciation to all who contributed – it was indeed a community effort that ensured the ***“Homes for the Holidays”*** House tour and Bake sale were successful.

The next tour is tentatively scheduled for November 18, 2017.

Ticket Sales & Donations	\$ 8,171.00
Bake Sale	<u>\$ 1,982.50</u>
Total raised	\$10,153.50
Less expenses	<u>828.51</u>
Net proceeds	\$ 9,324.99

Respectfully submitted by Virginia Haun and Carolyn van der Sluis



## **Pelham Syria Refugee Committee Report**

It has been one year since we began our initiative to sponsor a Syrian Refugee family and we continue to wait for notification of their approval and an arrival date. We have been matched with a family of four and have received an application number. We have raised \$ 36,641.55, which is invested in an interest bearing account until the funds are required. All the preliminary work has been done but at the moment, the committee has not been meeting since there is little we can do until we are given an arrival date.

The family is currently in Lebanon and the last time I was able to communicate with the applicant was December 15. They were having some problems with their Internet connection and we had been out of touch for some time. In their note they said they are “not very welcomed guests in Lebanon and it is hard to live in such circumstances.” They also said they knew that the processes take time but did not expect that it would be this long and I have to say, neither did we.

We continue to contact our United Church Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) for help but they have not been able to get any information from the government. We have also been working with the Mayor of Pelham who has contacts in the Federal Government, hoping to get a meeting so we can move the application forward. We have reached out to another contact with the Federal Liberal Government with the help of Jim Bradley and provided information for them to see if they can track down any reason for the delay. Our next step is to try to meet with our local MP and ask for his assistance.

While it is little comfort, we are not the only group in this situation. There are many sponsors still waiting for their families. We remain committed and will continue to do everything possible to ensure our family’s application gets approved as soon as possible. If any of you have any political contacts and think you may be able to help, please contact either myself, Rhonda Baker or Keith Rae.

Lyn Taylor, Committee Co-chair

## **Cave Springs Camp**

Cave Springs Camp is a United Church camp located in a beautiful setting at the base of the Niagara Escarpment in Beamsville. The camp provides Christian camping experience for children ages 5-16 years old. Through the *Reach For The Rainbow* program, children with special needs are also welcomed at camp. In 2016, over 500 campers attended Cave Springs Camp - more than half of these campers took part in camp activities during the day, and returned home at night. This day camp program was expanded last year and will continue to grow.

The camp is used by many school groups in May, June, September, and October. These rentals provide much needed revenue for the camp, and often result in students signing up for summer sessions. The camp is also used by corporate, church, and youth groups for day and overnight stays. In recent years, there has been a steady growth in the rental of the camp for weddings. The outdoor chapel provides a beautiful rustic setting in the woods, especially in the fall when the leaves are changing colour.

Several maintenance projects were carried out at the camp during 2016. The roof to Hoxie Hall was replaced, sections of the road coming up to the camp property were repaved, the girls’ washroom was made accessible to wheelchairs, the pool was repaired and repainted, the chimney and fireplace were rebuilt in the picnic pavilion, and work was completed on several of the cabins.

The proposed new building, Legacy Hall, will provide much needed facilities at the camp. It is hoped that we can start construction in the fall of 2017. This building will allow the camp to be used for at least three seasons of the year, and will allow greater rental opportunities.

Cave Springs Camp greatly appreciates the many generous donations made by members of Fonthill United Church, and the UCW. With ongoing support, the camp will continue to grow and will provide life-changing experiences for the youth of the Niagara Region.

Submitted by John Donald, Cave Springs Camp Board Member

## Fonthill Community Scouting Report 2016-17

This year Fonthill Community Scouting has 37 youth registered in Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Venturers with 14 leaders.

There are 24 Beavers, aged 5 to 7 years, who meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30. The Beavers have learned their motto and promise about sharing, having fun, loving God and helping to take care of the World. They have been busy: visited the Pelham Fire Station; met with a Niagara Regional Police Constable and a representative from the SPCA; built tool boxes that were donated to Habitat for Humanity; built their own obstacle course; and, participated in a family hike and many active games. Planned adventures include a sleep-over camp, more family hikes, the Swim to Survive program, a vertical skills night, a visit to the local library, Beaver Buggy races, a STEM science night, a visit from the Region of Niagara Recycling, and an overnight trip to the Canadian War Plane Museum.

There are 7 Cubs, aged 8 to 11, who meet on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00. The youth have learned their motto and promise, been working on earning their badges, raked leaves at the Church, hiked in the local area, and participated in crafts and games. They attended a camp in Port Colborne, participated in the Santa Claus parade, and went Christmas carolling at the Woodlands of Sunset. Soon they will be building and racing their Kub Kars. An additional camp is being planned including a sleep-over at the Church.

There are 6 Scouts and Venturers, aged 11+, who meet Wednesday evening with four leaders (i.e. 2 for each group). So far they have had an orienteering course in and around Marlene Stewart Streit Park, visited the fire hall with the Beavers, and participated in a cooking camp with some of the St. Catharines troops. They helped with the Pelham Cares Food drive, participated in the Santa Claus Parade, completed their knife permit, and took a road trip to Bass Pro store to learn about tying flies. They regularly practice knot tying and lashing. Many of them are becoming very good cooks by experimenting with different recipes at camp. The Scouts and Venturers are looking forward to: a winter camp, first aid training, archery, a friendship camp in May, completing the cigar box guitars, continuing their initiation into fly fishing with a three part program. Before the scouting year is over they will complete their fire, stove and lantern permits.

Funds have been raised from Scout popcorn sales and donations for apples. Furthermore, the Scouts will be selling garden mulch in the Spring. Fonthill Community Scouting is especially indebted to those local businesses that permitted our youth to offer apples to their customers during our apple day fund-raiser in the fall. These contributions allow our team of volunteers to provide more interesting activities at a reasonable cost to all the participants.

Fonthill Community Scouts and its two sponsors/partners, Holy Trinity Anglican Church and Fonthill United Church, appreciate the contributions of Wayne Brown, Pierre Leroux, Kent Ratcliffe, Chris Irwin, Wendy Hetherington, Mike Kant, Lora Brown, Leah Marie, Natalie Repchull, Matt Jones, Mike Fikkema, Euan McKendrick, Curtis Cheel, Greg Davidson. Those who would like to be a volunteer (serve on the Group Committee or be a leader) please telephone Rich Miller (United Church liaison.) This is a good way to contribute to your community and participate with our youth in a fun/educational program.

Submitted by Richard Miller, Church Liaison