



As we settle into cooler autumn weather and the leaves start to turn, I am reflecting on this new journey in ministry together. Already Fonhill has been such a welcoming space and I am looking forward to getting to know all of you better over the coming months. I am still settling into many rhythms here at Fonhill and one of those is time in the office. If you want to drop by and chat, I will typically be in the office Wednesday starting around 10:00 am - my door is always open so please feel welcome at any time!

I have been introducing myself as the “student minister” but what does that really mean for everyone here at Fonhill? Formally, my time here at Fonhill United Church is my Supervised Ministry Education (SME) - a time when I get to be immersed in the life and work of this church as a primary place of learning, practice, and formation for ministry. I really hope to be in ministry long term so much of my learning is focused on building solid practices and resources that will make a lifelong call to ministry possible. In this process I also have the gift of being supported by my Educational Supervisor, who I meet with regularly, and the Connections Team here at Fonhill. The members of this Connections Team are Beverley Beamer, Margo Fraser, Sheila Laundry, Dick O'Brien, and Harland Young and I am deeply grateful for their support in this process. These are just a few people here in the congregation who will help share what they are experiencing and hearing, so that hopefully we can listen well for the Spirit and continually grow, learn, and transform in worship and learning together.

So, as we move into fall, I hope we can enter with a posture of curious excitement as we pause to notice God in our midst. My hope is that we can choose joy, persistence, and presence in this process. For me this is especially evident in the ways we see the rhythm of creation, where we see an inability to rush growth. As God reminds us, “though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed.” (Isaiah 54:10) I hope we can all notice God in our midst as we journey together through this season of learning.

Blessings,

Rowena Hetherington-Wilson



From the Council Chair

As I sit down to write this message I find myself reflecting on how quickly the summer seemed to pass. We once again enjoyed sharing services with our friends and neighbours from Fenwick United Church, but this year all services were held in our building despite the renovations underway. We said farewell to Rev. Dr. Gordon Crossfield and Wendy who completed their ministry with us at the end of July. Our choir and music director enjoyed a much-deserved vacation and our office administrator also enjoyed a summer break. Now, as autumn unfolds and routines resume, we embark on an exciting new chapter in our congregational life. I am delighted to welcome our new student minister, Rowena Heatherington-Wilson, whose journey with us began on September 2. Together, we can look forward to learning, growing, and serving side by side.

To support Rowena's learning journey, we have formed the Community of Faith Connection Team, consisting of five members. These members will undergo training at the end of September and will work closely with Rowena, Rev. Jane Capstick (her supervising minister), and Rev. Tanya Cameron (Office of Vocation representative). This commitment will span two years, during which our congregation will be supported by Rev. Barb McGill, our Pastoral Charge Supervisor. Rev. McGill is required to attend all council, trustee, and congregational meetings. She has already attended her first Council Meeting and we are very happy to have her support.

Renovations Update

Sincere thanks go to Janet and Dick Hamilton for their outstanding work in planning and managing the renovations to the Board and Friendship rooms. Their efforts included contracting trades, sourcing, carrying, and moving materials, as well as overcoming numerous issues. We originally hoped to have the renovations completed by the end of August but we first used the space for our council meeting on Sept. 16 and for coffee after service on September 21. There is a bit more work to be completed but we hope it will be finalized by the end of September. Janet and Dick have earned our deepest and sincerest gratitude.

Facilities and Technology

Jim Bradley and Rich Miller have also been instrumental during the summer, assisting with moving and storing furnishings to aid with construction and managing tenant relationships. Both have also worked diligently on acquiring screens for the sanctuary, consulting with key stakeholders about the best type, placement, and mounting methods to ensure visibility without intrusion. Jim has also made significant strides in securing donations to offset costs. Expert advice from Mike Russell and guidance from Bill Outred have further supported these decisions. Although we had hoped for completion by August's end, installation is still pending confirmation. We have advertised at E. L. Crossley for a computer class student interested in volunteering to run our program on Sundays, but interest has not yet materialized. Patrice prepared service templates and provided training to Sandra and me before leaving Fenwick United Church. Once the screens are installed, the program is ready—now we just need a volunteer to operate it each Sunday. Please tell me if you know someone who might be interested.

I have been looking into relocating the camera for Zoom to the back of the church where we plan to operate all our technology. This will get rid of a lot of the cords at the front of the sanctuary which has been identified on our insurance risk assessment as a hazard. I am continuing to research how best to accomplish this but rest assured, Aiden will remain in charge of operating Zoom and we will make sure to have a stable connection before making any changes.

Looking Ahead

The upcoming months promise to be busy as we gear up our programming for the season and plan for the future. The ongoing work of our congregation relies on the support of every member, and I thank you for

your commitment to our church and care for one another. As we approach our year end it will soon be time to look at our council and committee memberships. If you have an interest in a more active role in any capacity, please let any member of council know. Your increased participation will be very welcomed.

Submitted by Lyn Taylor, Council Chair



We started the fall season with our Pelham Cares Food Drive on September 6th. It was so successful - 69 pounds of food and a grand total of \$2,235.00 was received. By the generosity of the congregation, the committee feels that the monetary toy drive is a vital need in our community and we will again hold it during November and December.

We were so happy to welcome Rowena to our meetings and we were thrilled that Heather was well enough to attend our last meeting. Bill was also in attendance. We were able to plan all the Sunday services up to the end of the year.

Things that we discussed at our meeting of September 16th:

November 2: All Saints Day where we will honour those that have passed from our congregation with a white carnation.

November 9 : Remembrance Day

December 7 : Christmas Service with 4 Churches to be held at Fenwick United Church at 7:00 p.m.

December 14: Christmas Musical Sunday

Communion Services

October 5: World Wide Communion - Bill is providing extra musical talent. Marcela will be playing the cello.

November 30: Advent 1

December 24: Christmas Candlelight Service 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Cryslar, Interim Chair for Worship Committee



“We Want Your Participation”

The **book club** meets every last Thursday of the month at 1:30. Come and enjoy the discussions with people who like to read. Our next book we are reading is Hamnet by Maggie O’Farrell.

The **Social Afternoon** starts on October 7th and will meet weekly at 2 p.m. We play euchre; dominos and we talk, eat and laugh.

The **Nutrition Class** that makes learning fun is on October 23. at 10:30, and November 27th at 10:30. We are fortunate to have Diane Watters back.

We encourage you to bring a friend; it is a way to introduce them to our Church and the nice people.

If you are an early riser and would be able to greet at the door of our Church on Sunday morning we would appreciate you. Please sign the sheet in the Narthex.

I thought you might like the following:

Take time to think, it is the source of power;
Take time to play, it is the secret of perpetual youth;
Take time to read, it is the fountain of wisdom;
Take time love and be loved, it is a God-given privilege;
Take time to be friendly, it is the road to happiness;
Take time to laugh, it is the music of the soul;
Take time to give, it is too short a day to be elfish;
Take time to work, it is the price of success.

Respectfully submitted by Janet Hamilton, Chair



Ministry and Personnel Committee Members include: Patti Keller, Alvin Penner, Marilyn Richardson and Sandra Harding (Chair).

Reflecting back on the past few months, there has been more change within our church family recently. We are very happy to report that Reverend Rowena Hetherington-Wilson joined our church in September. She is leading our congregation with her inspirational words on Sunday mornings. Guidance is provided by the Fonthill United Church Connection Team as well as the Ministry and Personnel Committee for administrative functions.

Bill Outred, our Music Director, continued leading us and our choir with his musical gifts on Sundays. His music is inspirational to the spirit as is his witty sense of humour. We have also appreciated his leading us during the occasional Sunday service.

Sandra Palkowski, Bookkeeper/Office Manager has provided seamless operations and consistency in the church office and we greatly appreciate her efforts. She is always enthusiastic and helpful.

The M&P Committee continues to provide support to staff and is open to receiving feedback from our church members.

It is exciting times and we are looking forward to the many possibilities for the rest of 2025.

Respectfully submitted, Sandra Harding, Chair, M&P Committee



from the UCW Committee

We are excited to begin a new fall season after a summer of rest. Just before the summer break with all enjoyed a wonderful lunch at the home of Janet and Dick Hamilton, where we were able to confirm a donation towards the purchase of a much needed fridge in the kitchen. While our first September meeting was unfortunately cancelled at the last minute we hope and pray our gatherings during the next months will bring friendship, comfort, and ideas for our future meetings. Our mission has always been to come together in “Christian Witness, Fellowship and Service.” While the last few years have been difficult in many ways, the spirit and faith of the ladies of Fonthill United have never failed. Despite covid and the health of some members, I am confident we will continue to serve our Lord and each other whenever and wherever needed.

The ladies of Fonthill United still come when called upon. Whether to make coffee or cookies for events, help with the food bank, visiting shut-ins, bake tables, or funeral luncheons and more. As always our invitation to join us goes out to all ladies at Fonthill United. At the same time, please invite a friend or family member to join us for an afternoon of tea and fellowship. We encourage all to come.

Betty Garner, UCW Secretary



from the Finance & Property Committee

There is no question, the past 3-4 months have been a busy period for the Finance and Property Committee. We consider the renovations in the former Friendship and Board Rooms have really improved the lower area and made it more functional for many purposes.

To Janet and Dick Hamilton, our sincere THANKS on a job well done!!

Screens will be installed in the sanctuary within the next week, and both changes speak well for our future.

Financial Highlights:

- As of August 31st, we incurred a shortfall in the operating fund of \$4,721 vs a projected shortfall of \$21,342. We should note the budget could be adjusted downwards by approx. \$7,000, due to the timing of the new minister's arrival, which was projected for March 1st. Revenue, while slightly below 2024, is \$ 10,906 above budget due to an increase in member giving's and a onetime grant from the Extension Council. Compensation costs are below budget by \$17,534 and these savings are offset by higher costs incurred in general maintenance, i.e. heating equipment repairs, snow removal and a one-time payment to a consultant advising on potential long-term development plans.
- Reserves declined by \$20,000 and these funds were allocated to help with the renovations. Within the next week you will receive a request for a one-time donation to help with the overall cost of \$37,000. Full details are included with the request.

- In 2022, we arranged a loan from the Extension Council for \$9,200. We drew down approx. \$6,200 to assist with the redecoration of the Narthex. Under the terms of the loan, Extension Council would waive all payments and interest once the balance was reduced by 50%. In July we made a lumpsum payment on the loan of \$861 and all principal and interest payments are now waived. At the same time, we requested the limit on funds remaining to be drawn, be increased to \$5,000. Repayment will be at the same rate as the previous loan, consequently no increase in monthly costs. The additional funds will be used to help with the new screens in the sanctuary. (see below).
- Total assets on August 31st amounted to \$250,399, of which \$ 241,517 is cash. We view this position as positive.

Property Highlights:

- Over the past 2 months renovations have been undertaken in the former Board and Friendship Rooms and the improvements are noteworthy. In fact, this work should have been done some time ago. The projected cost, approved by The Trustees and Council, was \$35,000. As is always the case there were some minor adjustments, and the final cost will be close to \$37,000 plus HST. HST will be claimed when we file our year end return. We have allocated \$20,000 from reserves to help with the costs and have launched a fund-raising campaign to cover the balance. You will receive a separate letter shortly providing all details.
- In response to discussions over the past two years, a decision was made to install TV screens in the sanctuary. Two 85-inch TVs will be installed in the front of the sanctuary and one at the rear to accommodate the Minister and choir. At the same time, we will move the Zoom cameras to the back of the church where the entire system can be run from a control panel. Including the new Zoom camera the cost will be in the range of \$11,500. We have a generous anonymous gift of \$7,000 to assist with the project and the balance will be covered by the balance of the loan we had available from the Extension Council. It is worth noting we are one of the few churches in the area without visual equipment in place. They will be used to show the order of service, hymns and potential illustrations by the Minister in the sermon. In addition, they can be used at weddings and funerals to show pictures.
- In keeping with new instructions from the M.T.O., we must restrict access to the parking lot while the Montessori school is in session, or from 8:30 A.M to 3:30 P.M. This results from the tragic accident in Toronto where a car accidentally drove into a day care centre. The restrictions do not apply at other times. It is interesting to note that since the pylons were put in place, a minimum of 3-4 cars per day have driven around and over them to pass through the restricted area. We have reported this to the police.
- Rich Miller continues to monitor all instances where minor repairs are needed. Recent examples include adjusting locks on the front doors, repairs to the brick mortar on the south side of the building, and thermostat replacements in the upper hall and office. Keith Rae has been tending to new plants around the building and at the rear of the back parking lot. The Pelham Garden Club continues to care for the shrubs and other flowers around the building.

In conclusion, and now that the renovations are finished, we feel comfortable normal routines including social gatherings, games events, committee meetings, outreach programs etc will be back to their regular schedule. We acknowledge the renovations created some inconvenience, but we are sure you will agree it was limited to what will be gained by having this work done.

We would like to Thank You in advance for your favorable response to the fundraising campaign and as always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at 905-892-9511.

Jim Bradley, Chair, Finance and Property Committee

**TO MAKE A DONATION TO FONTHILL UNITED CHURCH,
YOU ARE WELCOME TO:**

- 1) Mail a cheque to the church at: Fonthill United Church, Box 926, Fonthill ON L0S 1E0.
- 2) Drop your cheque donation, anytime, through the mail slot in the exterior office door at the church.
- 3) Bring cash donations into the office when the church office is open.
- 4) Send an e-transfer to: fonthilu@vaxxine.com. The donation will be directly received by the church's envelope secretary and will remain confidential.
- 5) Sign up for the pre-authorized remittance program (PAR). By donating through PAR, you give your church the peace of mind that comes with knowing your financial support will reliably be there each month. Contact the church office at fonthilu@vaxxine.com (or call the office at 905 892-6433) to register.

Thank you for supporting the life and ministry of Fonthill United Church!