

2022

# Okotoks United Church

## ANNUAL REPORT



# Table of Contents

## Page

Introduction.....	3
Land Acknowledgement .....	3
Diverse and Inclusive .....	3
Mission .....	3
Message From the Ministers .....	4-5
Message From the Board Chair .....	6
2022 Year in Review .....	7-11
Ministry and Personnel Report .....	12
OUC Living Faith Story .....	13-15
Outreach and Justice .....	16
Youth Group .....	16
Staff and Contractors .....	17
Chinook Winds Regional Council .....	18
AGM Agenda 2023 .....	19
Minutes - 2022 AGM .....	20-22
Benevolent Fund .....	23
Harmony Group Financials .....	24
OUC 2023 Budget .....	25-27
OUC 2022 Financials .....	28-29
2022 Leadership .....	30-31
Acknowledgements .....	32
Contact .....	32

# Introduction

Okotoks United Church uses an annual report to update progress on the church's vision, show how donated funds are used, and give insight into how each ministry area specifically uses the funds designated for its purposes.

The desire of the staff and officers of the church is to use this tool to provide accountability to those who support our ministries.

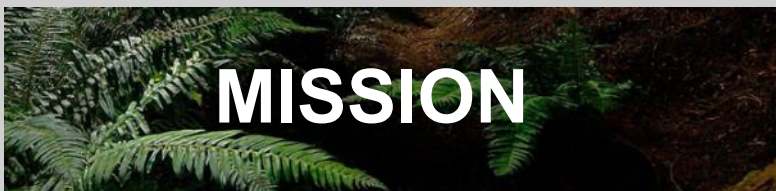
For past annual reports, please check our website.

## Land Acknowledgement

Okotoks United Church meets on the lands of the people of Treaty 7. These are the lands of the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney-Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) First Nations. We acknowledge with respect the history, spirituality and culture of the Indigenous Peoples on whose land we worship. This site is of great spiritual significance to the Blackfoot people. We will live with respect on the land and in peace and friendship with its people.

## Diverse and Inclusive

Everyone is welcome to our services including people of all colour, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion, education, socio-economic status, or gender. Okotoks United Church is currently engaged in the Affirming Ministry Process.



*With God's help we are:  
Following Jesus,  
Reaching Others,  
Changing Lives.*

# Message from the Ministers

---

***“Eye has not seen, ear has not heard,  
nor has it so much as dawned on anyone  
what God has prepared  
for those who love God.”  
1 Corinthians 2:9***

There are few more important or valuable qualities in human life than hope. It is one of the three major virtues found in our Christian scriptures and we are of all people, full of hope. We continue to believe, beyond any evidence, that God continues to show up and work in the world.

I have seen hope show up in the most serendipitous and surprising ways this past year as we have navigated a highly unpredictable year. People have been tenacious and intrepid as we planned events and carried them out, not knowing what the result might be. This is indeed hope in action.

Hosting suppers; distributing winter wear; providing comfort through prayer shawls and Christmas treat bags; donating supplies to Rowan House; providing school lunches; regular worship services; Bible Study; Youth Group; Christmas Markets and so much more in every Community of Faith served to not only encourage our own people but those we served. These are the hopeful things we do year-round and why we continue to do what we do. Our Faith Communities remind people that God is still at work in the world providing for needs, bringing healing and hope.

I believe that hope is more important than ever these days as we wait to see what God is “up to” in our world. With all of the changes in our churches and the church at large; with the departure of Rev. Matthew and the possibilities ahead; with the uncertainty and disequilibrium caused by COVID and other viruses still very much evident in the world, we need hope more than ever.

Our Boards and short-term Executive have worked hard this past year to develop Community of Faith Profiles and put resources in place until we determine next steps. While decisions have been and will continue to be made, we can never know for sure what is best or what the future brings. This is as it should be. This is the nature of hope. We hope because we cannot know anything for certain.

You give me hope. All of the little things I see people doing each day to support each other and the church. Your kindness, generosity, forgiveness and compassion all serve to make our communities safe and welcoming.

We look forward to 2023 and to whatever God has in store for us.

Rev Julia Kimmett

# Message from the Ministers

---

***“.... Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus  
— and in that moment, he disappeared from their sight.  
They asked each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us  
as we walked and talked with him along the road?’”  
-Luke 24: 31-32***

It is an odd and disorienting experience, to compose a report that will be distributed six months after the time of writing. When you read this, our pastoral relationship will have already been concluded for some time. I can only imagine what might be emerging in its stead!

Nevertheless, for eight months of 2022, we journeyed side-by-side: through news of war in Ukraine; through difficult deaths and illnesses in our own families and communities of faith; through celebrations like Pride Festival in Okotoks and a UCV backyard potluck picnic in June; through an intense, ten-week Bible Study titled *Exodus, Jesus, and Us*; through sermon series such as *And a Little Child Shall [Read] Them, Where Do We Go from Here?* and *Freeing Jesus*; through COVID-waves and quarantines; through a variety of Holy Week services; through joyful Youth Group events; and through the process of my resignation and planning for next steps.

In the midst of these major occasions, there were all the “smaller” happenings too: short encounters in the hallways, pastoral conversations in the office, informal coffee chats... filled with our personal stories of the past, opinions of the present, and feelings of the future.

For *all of that*, I am so grateful. It was an incredible privilege to accompany each other through all of the extraordinary milestones *and* every-day moments of ministry together.

In such a way, we echo and embody how the Holy accompanies each of us: not just in the “mountain-top” experiences, when we are dazzled by the awe-filled presence of the divine, nor only in the “valley” times, assured, as we are, that the sacred Shepherd walks with us, but also in all the *winding roads* that take us back-and-forth between the two extremes. It is in those winding roads—those short encounters, pastoral conversations, and informal chats—that, even if we do not recognize it at the time, “our hearts burn deep within us” (Luke 24:32) as well.

Looking back over the past eight months, I can now see many moments when *my* heart was burning deep within *me*: burning with the presence of the risen Christ, filled with the warmth of Holy light. I take all these glowing embers with me, as I move into a new pastoral relationship—

and I hope that *you, too*, can carry similar life-giving glimpses of Christ into *your future*, with whatever, and whomever, it might bring.

With hope and love,

Matthew Heesing

<><

# Message from Board Chair

---

## Board Chair Report for 2022 Annual Report

Our current Board consists of Curtis Carlson, Karen Jones, Julia Kimmett, Ian McNeill, Janet Page, Carol Price, Richard Puttee, Sally Salter and myself. We meet monthly for the ongoing financial and operations concerns and sometimes more often for a specific issue. I am very thankful to work with this group of faithful, committed people.

There are many individuals and teams, staff and volunteers who perform much of the actual day-to-day operation of the church. Without the time and energy of all the people in our church, none of the Board's plans could be accomplished. Thank you to all who participate in ministry in any way. Because of your ministry, people are greeted at the door by a friendly face, we have music in our worship services, dishes are done, cookies are baked, sidewalks and parking lots are cleared of snow and flowers bloom in our front property. Thank you to Rev. Julia and Rev. Matthew who care for us in many ways. Thank you to our contractors who keep our building clean, balance our books, organize congregational care, play piano, lead choir and run the sound system. You are all essential to this faith community.

### Highlights of 2022:

- This year we agreed that our security system that operates our doors and alarms needed to be replaced. The new system is now up and running reliably.
- We continued to sail the COVID seas as the waves rolled in and out.
- Saying goodbye to Rev. Matthew was hard but we wish him and his family well in their new church in Cochrane.
- Through a short term executive team, made up of Rev. Julia, the Board Chairs and Ministry and Personnel representatives, the partnership with United Church in the Valley continues to run smoothly. Each church is assessing its own needs and looking to how we can continue to strengthen our relationship. We will know more about what this will look like in early Spring 2023.
- Our latest project has been developing a Community of Faith Profile – a requirement of the United Church of Canada. Part of that has been a Living Faith Story – a picture of our church's culture, ministries and guiding principles. **Faith, Community and Outreach** are words that keep coming up to define Okotoks United Church. They form the basis for our story. It has been a very helpful exercise. We have been encouraged with the picture that has emerged and it has helped us focus on present priorities and future plans.

I would encourage anyone who wants to be a part of the future direction of this church to consider joining us on the Board. You will enjoy the constructive debate, collaborative spirit and friendly relationships that make serving as a leader fun and rewarding. We are looking for people with varied backgrounds to bring fresh perspectives to the challenges we face.

Blessings to you all for 2023,

Karen Pryznyk, Board Chair



# 2022 Year in Review

---

## Mission Possible

### Mission Possible Baseball Camp July 2022

It had been 3 years since a mission possible team had travelled to the Dominican Republic to work in the barrio of Maria Auxiliadora due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However in July a small team (Gary Dzurka, John Dzurka and Curtis Carlson) made the journey to host an eight day baseball camp for 75 children.

Through several generous donations they were able to bring down hundreds of pairs of baseball shoes, gloves, bats, baseballs, helmets and new uniforms for the camp and to help support the new baseball program at the TEARS school. Prior to the camp there was no organized program for the girls in the community. However, a math teacher from the TEARS high school volunteered to take on teaching a group of 18 interested girls and has continued the program after the camp ended.

There are now close to 100 children in the community baseball program and plans are in place for a second baseball camp in July of 2023. This year Reverend Julia and Olivia Herbst will be joining Gary, John and Curtis with hopes to expand the number of children that can attend the camp.

*Submitted by: Gary Dzurka*



## School Lunch Program

The School Lunch Program is thriving while serving seven schools within our community. The program made over 15,000 lunches supporting 58 families in 2022. We would like to thank our volunteers for their commitment, time and support. May the program continue to strengthen and grow in 2023, and beyond.

*Submitted by: Brian and Shannon Olson*

# 2022 Year in Review

---

## Jacket Racket

Our annual winter clothing collection and give-away ran from October 18 to November 5 on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings. A total of 236 people (including several newcomers to Canada) dropped by to find warm winter gear for their families. Twenty Okotoks United Church volunteers happily made it happen. The St. Vincent de Paul Society, through Christ the Redeemer School District and St. James Catholic Church, collected many bags of clothing. Some of the remaining clothing was kept here to be distributed as needed. Whatever we couldn't use this year was sent to a shelter in Lethbridge and a several families in Eden Valley. These lovingly knit hats (photo) went to a Christmas party for Elders and Children in Morley. And people have already started dropping off clothing for the 2023 Jacket Racket!



*Submitted by: Karen Pryznyk*

## Book Club

No one would suggest the Fireside Book Club always stays on topic. In fact, some of our more interesting conversations and revelations of members' interests and knowledge result from our diversion. Our 8 regular members meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 in the second floor Conference Room of the church from September to June. We all suggest books that we think will be of general interest and generate lively discussion then vote for our top 10 favorite which become that year's book for each month. Topics reflect our interest in social justice, the environment or just pure entertainment. The list for each year can be found on the church website. Over the past four years we have lost 3 cherished members; Sharon Parsons, Amy Mounkes and Donna Enns. We miss their wisdom and their humour and, as a result, value the friendships we have established all the more. Anyone who enjoys reading is welcome to join us either on a regular basis or just when a particular book sounds like one that interests you.



*Submitted by: Janet Page*



# 2022 Year in Review

---

## Mid-week Worship



Come and find the quiet centre. That's the invitation to the mid-week service held every Wednesday at 10 a.m. It is a short, contemplative service modeled on the Taizé style of worship from a monastery in France. Short simple worship songs are repeated many times allowing worshippers to learn and internalize the words, even carrying the songs with them into the week to be drawn on as needed for comfort and encouragement. There is a short meditation, a time of silence to consider the teaching and a closing prayer. Come. You will be blessed.

*Submitted by: Karen Pryznyk*

## Healing Pathway

The Healing Pathway ministry of OUC as well as many others continued to be on a roller coaster hoping for return in person and practice.

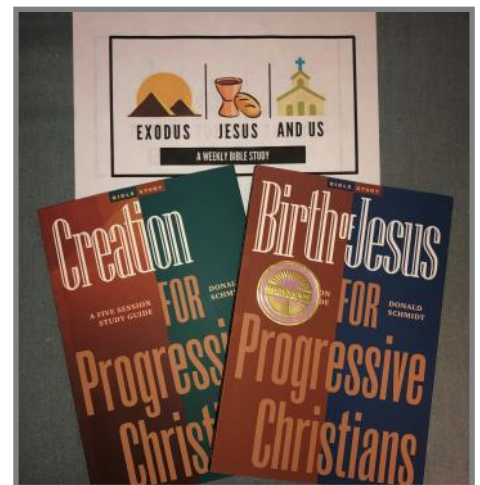
That moment of return came in April 2022. Following the guidelines of AHS and the approval of OUC Board we offered Healing Pathway sessions in person again. Before connecting with recipients we offered healing sessions to each other. Although we stayed connected through Zoom for two years, it was a very healing moment to experience God's healing presence and touch in person again.

*Submitted by: Gisela Dyck*

## Bible Study

There are about twelve people in our church who like nothing better than to delve into scripture, ask questions, debate and discover. This year they covered Exodus, Jesus and Us, a study prepared by Rev. Matthew about the injustices the Israelites faced in Egypt, how they resisted and how, eventually, were released. It led to a deep dive into the "empires" people are enslaved to in this modern age and what people can do to resist. In the Fall, with Rev. Julia's guidance and additional research, they dove into two book studies for progressive Christians – one on Creation (did you know there are five creation accounts in the bible?) and one on the Birth of Jesus (spoiler alert: your nativity scene may not be exactly accurate). Every week they share their personal stories, wisdom and questions as the bible comes alive yet again.

*Submitted by: Karen Pryznyk*



# 2022 Year in Review

---

## Pride Fest

### **Together With Pride – Okotoks United at Pride**

Okotoks United Church joined hundreds of other people in Okotoks on June 4th, 2022 to celebrate the first Okotoks Pride Festival to be held in downtown Okotoks. In preparation for the festival we hosted meetings of the planning committee from Okotoks Pride in our space. A team of about six volunteers baked over 300 cookies and decorated them with rainbow icing hearts and flags. Our kitchen was a colourful and happy place that day! More volunteers set up our booth on Saturday June 4th and handed out cookies, tattoos and hugs. It was quite the party!

*Submitted by: Karen Pryznyk*



## Harmony Group

The Harmony Group welcomed three new members in 2022. In addition to supporting Okotoks United Church and the community providing catering for memorial luncheons, other events the group supported include turkey pot pie, antipasto, and green pepper jelly sales, as well as the annual OUC Christmas Market.

*Submitted by: Judy Niven*



# 2022 Year in Review

---

## Partnership Between Diamond Valley (formerly Turner Valley)

### Three-Community Partnership

On August 1st, 2021 a new partnership was formed between Okotoks United Church, St. Andrew's United Church (De Winton) and United Church in the Valley (Diamond Valley). All Communities of Faith signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding that would take the partnership to June 30th, 2024. The partnership meant that resources, including ministers, and programs would be shared among the faith communities. Ministers would alternate leading worship within the communities and would share in offering programs (such as youth group, bible study, justice work, etc.)

In spring of 2022, Rev. Matthew Heesing (the minister called to United Church in the Valley) indicated that due to personal reasons, would be asking for a change in call. That change took place as of September 2022.

A short-term Executive Team consisting of the Chairpersons and M & P Chairs of each Community of Faith along with Rev. Julia Kimmett was convened to look at providing direction and continuity for all three congregations. The Team met regularly to coordinate worship and to discuss areas that needed to be considered for the future of the partnership. Information was disseminated to each Community of Faith on a regular basis and feedback was solicited.

Each Community of Faith was tasked with creating Living Faith Stories that will be posted on ChurchHub. Looking to the future, Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge will be creating a job description in preparation for issuing a Call and the work continues as we look at how we can better serve our communities through each congregation.

Short-term Executive: Traci Fontana-Wegelin (Chair UCV), Dianne King (M & P Chair UCV), Mark Dutkoski (Chair SAUC), Wayne Stordahl (M & P SAUC), Karen Pryznyk (Chair OKUC), Sally Salter (M & P Chair OKUC), Rev. Julia Kimmett

# Ministry and Personnel

---

The role of the Ministry and Personnel Committee (M&P) is to provide support and assessment for all staff and contractors of Okotoks De Winton PC, aiming to maintain positive working conditions and relationships for the team in their various capacities within the church congregational life. As I reflect on 2022 I am humbled and awed by the passion and dedication of our amazing team of staff, contractors and volunteers. The passion and dedication of each person combine to make our two congregations vibrant and caring communities.

2022 in review:

Committee members were Sally Salter, Jack Parsons, Stewart Thomas and Wayne Stordahl. At year-end we had 2 permanent staff members & 7 contracts for the two churches combined.

April

Gail Lafond was contracted as the Congregational Care Liaison for Okotoks United Church.

May

Rev. Matthew Heesing requested a change in pastoral relations from United Church in the Valley effective August 24, 2022. This significantly impacted the Three Church Partnership and the related staffing.

June

A team from all three congregations began meeting to plan the staffing of the Three Church Partnership for the period August 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. This included Julia returning to full-time ministry for that period and infilling the worship calendar for all three congregations with pulpit supply. Diane Willis announced her plans to retire August 31, 2022

August

Lorna Schiefner was hired as our new Office and Facilities Administrator effective August 15, 2022.

October

Gail Lafond resigned from the Congregational Care Liaison contract.

We formally said good-bye to Diane Willis after 5 years as our Office and Facilities Administrator.

General

We continue to support staff and contractors via face-to-face meetings, phone calls and emails. Provided support and assistance to the Boards in their discussion of the 3 Church Partnership in light of Matthew's departure.

Performance Reviews were completed for both Matthew and Julia and an Exit Interview was conducted with Matthew.

There are too many people to thank individually, so on behalf of the M & P Committee and the congregations of Okotoks De Winton Pastoral Charge let me extend blessings and heartfelt thanks to each employee, contractor and volunteer for your generosity of time and talent. Also my personal thanks to the members of the M&P Committee for their support and wisdom.

Sally Salter, Ministry & Personnel Chair

# OUC Living Faith Story

---

## *Okotoks United Church Living Faith Story*

Okotoks - De Winton Pastoral Charge is located approximately 20 minutes south of Calgary, Alberta. It is comprised of two congregations. Okotoks United Church is located in Okotoks, a town of approximately 30,000 people. St. Andrew's United Church is located in the hamlet of De Winton within Foothills County.

### Okotoks United Church

We see ourselves as a living story of God's call to be the church. Within that story we have identified outreach, faith and community as being particularly important to us as a community of faith.

- Outreach which we describe as making a difference, helping others, following in the way of Jesus. Changing lives gives meaning and pride to the community.
- Faith makes us distinct from other community groups, it is our foundation, it is the reason we do what we do.
- Community is both who we are and who we connect with. We see ourselves as a progressive faith community, with a focus on social justice and outreach.

## **History**

Our presence in Okotoks dates back to the 1880's through both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. On June 24, 1917 the Methodist and Presbyterian churches joined to become The United Church of Okotoks, a full 8 years before The United Church of Canada was created. The resulting United Church of Okotoks met in the Methodist building which had been built in 1906. We worshiped in the beautiful brick church on the corner of Elma Street and Centre Avenue for nearly a century.

In 2002, with proceeds from the sale of the church building and a financial commitment from its members, the congregation purchased the Ginger Tea House property, turning it into a centre for mid-week activities and outreach programs. An addition with a sanctuary and chapel was completed in 2011. The sanctuary was designed to be a multi-purpose facility, acting as both a space for worship and a space for performing arts groups in the community to hold events. The sound system was updated in 2022.

There are two themes that run through these momentous decisions: working together to support our community and being physically located in the heart of the community so that we are both visible and available. These themes continue today.

## **Structure**

Okotoks United Church uses a Governing Board and Board of Trustees structure. We employ an Office and Facilities Administrator to oversee the building and provide support to the minister, boards and volunteers. We also have a contract Bookkeeper.



# OUC Living Faith Story (cont'd)

---

Okotoks United Church has 147 active households under pastoral care. Like most churches attendance has declined in recent years. Prior to 2019, Sunday attendance was in the low 100's. In 2019 and the pre-Covid months of 2020 attendance was in the mid-80s. Our average attendance today is in the mid-50s. The congregation is predominantly over 60 years of age but we do have some younger families.

At Okotoks United Church, we strive to be good stewards of our resources. We maintain several separate Funds that give us a snapshot at any time of where we are financially. We know that money and our budget are indicators of what we do and how we do it. Money is simply a tool to help us do what we want to do: build a world where all are safe, loved and supported no matter their age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or even beliefs. If God is a God of love, as we believe, all are welcome and deserve to be cared for.

## Outreach

Community outreach and social justice have always been at the core of who we are, both locally and internationally.

Locally we have maintained a physical presence in the heart of Okotoks, we are visible and available. To meet many of those local needs we have a well-endowed Benevolent Fund. Our close working relationship with the Okotoks Family Resource Centre allows us to provide support to families in need across the Foothills region. Other examples of our local outreach are our support of the local PRIDE committee in establishing a local PRIDE festival, our annual Jacket Racket which provides warm clothing to the community, the School Lunch program which provides nutritious meals through the school system, our support for Recovery Groups who meet in our space and support for affordable housing initiatives.

Our building is used by a variety of groups from Okotoks. Rooms are used by groups to hold meetings, hold a variety of classes and host gatherings on local issues. Our commercial kitchen, which meets Alberta Health regulations, is well-used for food preparation.

We have a history of overseas support and mission education trips starting with a trip to Guatemala in 2006, Africa in 2008 and in 2012 we began a long term relationship with T.E.A.R.S. (<https://www.tearsdr.org>) in the Dominican Republic and Partners in Deed ([www.partnersindeed.com](http://www.partnersindeed.com)) of Calgary. Over the years we have sent 8 teams to serve the community of Maria Auxiliadora in the city of La Vega. These teams support community development projects in the areas of education and health care. We have worked alongside in-country volunteers to paint, built walls, move rocks and dirt, plant trees, serve meals, coach baseball and worship with the local community. Ten years into the relationship we have seen the school grow from a few classrooms to providing education from preschool through high school. Medical and dental clinics have been established as well as a new soccer field that supports a soccer program for the whole community and a summer baseball camp.

In partnership with St. Andrew's United Church and Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge we have an active social justice group looking at issues that impact our local community and how we can make a difference. The current focus is affordable housing.

# OUC Living Faith Story (cont'd)

---

The Chinook Winds Region maintains their administrative offices in our building. The Region maintains two offices on the 2nd floor and hosts regular meetings of its committees and groups in our building.

## **Faith**

Our worship goal is to provide relevant, thought-provoking, meaningful messages. Sunday worship takes a mostly traditional format with scripture, sermon, prayer, and hymns from VU and MV. We do have a choir. We also support other non-traditional worship styles including, but not limited to, Easter Sunrise Service at the Okotoks Erratic, Maundy Thursday services, a Blessing of the Animals service, and table groups with communion.

Midweek Worship started at Okotoks United in September of 2021 as a way to provide a short, simple, contemplative worship service during the week. This service is an opportunity for individuals to “come and find the quiet centre,” “catch their breath and pause,” and “be reminded of God’s presence.” Up to this point, these services have been in the style of Taizé Prayer and leadership is shared amongst the attendees.

For us, faith formation also takes non-worship forms. We have a weekly bible study and we sometimes hold special events or workshops, such as a workshop on aging. Traditionally our bible study group chooses two themes or topics for the year, one for the fall and one for the winter. In some years, a third theme may be chosen to highlight a specific part of the liturgical calendar, e.g. Advent or Lent. While the leadership often comes from our minister, the members of the bible study take an active role in the weekly discussions.

We have a small Sunday school which we are working at revitalizing. Our youth group is held in conjunction with St. Andrew’s United Church and Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge. The youth meet monthly sharing a mix of play time and growth time.

## **Community**

We are an open, compassionate and caring faith community. We encourage each other with unconditional, non-judgemental love as we strive to meet each other’s needs. Our goal for congregational care is every person cared for. Reaching out, supporting, encouraging and compassionately caring for one another is part of being a faith community. Sometimes, regardless of age or life stage, we all need help and support to get through life’s challenges. And so, we serve one another through kindness, humility, patience and gentleness – always aware of God’s great love.

Current congregational care is done through a network of activities, including but not limited to member call outs, volunteer visitation (phone and in-person), prayer shawls, prayer team, card ministry, and Healing Pathway ministry. The minister provides urgent congregational care as needed.

Small groups and informal gatherings are another way we look after ourselves with activities like book club, soup and sandwich luncheons, coffee hour, the annual turkey supper, and the Harmony Group. Our book club chooses a wide range of books to read each year with topics ranging from faith, to social justice, to mystery, to biography. The Harmony Group functions much like a UCW, raising funds and sharing fellowship in the kitchen and around the table.

*Submitted by: Sally Salter*

# Outreach and Justice

---

In the spring of 2022 we launched a new initiative – the Outreach and Justice Group. Drawing people from Okotoks, St. Andrew's and United Church in the Valley, we met monthly for a pot-luck dinner and discussion around the nature of outreach and justice and what we could do as the church. Applying our faith to such issues, we agree that our tradition has a long-standing practice of caring for those who struggle to get a strong footing in our society. Looking at various aspects of many subjects related to justice, we debated just how to do justice and how it is different from charity. The food was good and the conversations lively. Fall 2022 saw us settling on Affordable Housing as our primary focus for the year. In November Lauren Ingalls from Westwinds Community Housing joined us to educate us about what affordable housing looks like in Okotoks and the surrounding area. We will continue to ponder



*Submitted by: Rev Julia Kimmett*

## Youth Group

---



Meeting monthly on a Friday night, youth from United Church in the Valley, St. Andrew's (De Winton) and Okotoks continued to enjoy each other's company and planned activities. Matthew and Marlee Heesing led the group the first half of the year. In the Fall Rev. Julia and Olivia Herbst took over leadership of the group. It is a wonderful, lively group of young folks with an abundance of energy. Games, treasure hunts, outdoor activities and good discussions keep the group engaged and interesting. Youth from grades six and up make for a diversity of ages, experience and opinions. All are welcome and it always promises to be a fun time.

*Submitted by: Rev Julia Kimmett*

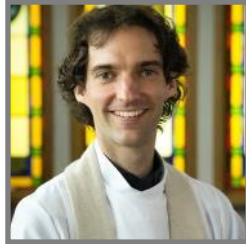
# Staff and Contractors

---

## Staff



Rev. Julia Kimmett  
**Minister**



Rev. Matthew Heeing  
(to August 2022)  
**Minister**



Lorna Schiefner  
**Office and Facilities  
Administrator**

---

## Contractors



Pat Reader-Downey  
**Choir Director**



Sophia Su  
**Accompanist**



Audra Brown  
**Bookkeeper**



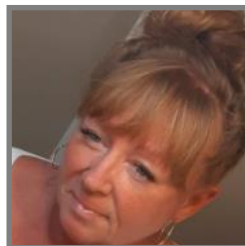
Sally Salter  
**Congregational Care**



Keith Bayley  
**AV Technician**



Betty-Lou Bayley  
**AV Technician**



Toni Ferris  
**Custodian**

# Chinook Winds Regional Council

---

In The United Church of Canada a regional council is a grouping of communities of faith within a defined area. Laypeople and ministers meet to oversee the work of the church within each region. There are 16 regional councils in The United Church of Canada.

Okotoks De Winton Pastoral Charge is a member of Chinook Winds Regional Council. The role of the Chinook Winds Regional Council is to encourage and connect communities of faith of The United Church of Canada in Central and Southern Alberta. Chinook Winds Region extends from south of Highway 13 in Alberta to the Canada-United States border.

The Regional Council staff work diligently to keep our communities of faith in touch in many ways, including:

- monthly virtual ‘town-hall’ meetings with inspiring speakers and opportunities to gather together to share our stories.
- other events and webinars. Some to inspire, some to provide emotional support, some to teach and some to share ideas.
- a weekly newsletter to keep us up to date on happenings in the Region and the wider church.

The 4th annual Regional Council General Meeting was held in Red Deer May 5th to 8th. The theme was A Place at the Table. Rev. Janet Gear, the theme speaker, spoke about learning the languages of faith (the first language is life). She asked, “What is your faith leading you to do?” because how we live our faith is most important. She also discussed “Hope” – look around and see God’s blessing at work. How the church lives expresses what it believes just like how individuals live expresses what they believe. Her final message was “differences do not divide, our judgement of others creates division”. We also conducted the business of the Region, including a motion that the Chinook Winds Region continue the process of becoming an Affirming Regional Council. This process is about discerning, within our region, what it means to be Public, Intentional and Explicit in our declaration of solidarity with the 2S LGBTQAI+ community and our Affirmation that all people will be included in our Regional ministries, and in all aspects of the Region’s life and leadership without limitations based on identity, expression or orientation.

Our United Church creed states ‘We are not alone, we live in God’s world.’ Being part of the Chinook Winds Region is a tangible reminder of how true this is.

Sally Salter



# AGM Agenda - 2023

---

**Agenda  
Okotoks United Church  
Annual General Meeting  
February 19, 2023  
After morning worship service  
Okotoks United Church**

Opening Prayer – Rev. Julia Kimmett

Opening Remarks – Welcome – Karen Pryznyk

1. Election of Secretary
2. Election of Chairperson
3. Motion to permit adherents to vote on all matters pertaining to the work of Okotoks United Church.
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes from AGM of March 6, 2022
6. Three Church Partnership review and future plans
7. Approval of 2022 Annual Report
8. Presentation of 2022 Financials
  - a. Motion to Approve 2022 Financials
  - b. Update on RBC Mortgage pay down
9. Presentation of the 2023 Budget
  - a. Motion to approve the 2023 Budget
10. Board Report
11. Election of Board members
12. Election of Trustees
13. Election of Chinook Winds Regional Representatives
14. Election of Committee Members
  - a. Ministry and Personnel
  - b. Nominating Committee
15. New Business
16. Benediction – Rev. Julia Kimmett
17. Motion to Adjourn

*Submitted by: Karen Pryznyk*

# Minutes - 2022 AGM

---

## Okotoks United Church Minutes of the Annual General Meeting March 6, 2022

**Present:** There were 58 persons in attendance via Zoom: 49 Members, 6 Adherents, 1 Visitor, 2 Clergy. A full list of attendees is available in the church office.

**Opening Prayer:** Rev. Julia Kimmett opened the meeting at 1:03 pm with a prayer.

### **Opening Remarks.**

Karen Pryznyk thanked Rev. Julia Kimmett and reminded us that we were doing God's work in the best way we know how. She also thanked everyone for attending our second Zoom AGM and for their continued support of the church.

Karen then advised everyone how the Zoom AGM would function primarily by raising one's hand when wishing to speak then unmuting oneself when acknowledged. Voting would be done by asking for abstentions, Ian McNeill would be the scrutineer and how to join the conversation if attending by phone.

### **1. Election of a Secretary**

Moved by Joe Muhle, seconded by Karen Jones that Janet Page be elected as Secretary. Carried.

### **2. Election of Chairperson**

Moved by Karen Jones, seconded by Stewart Thomas that Karen Pryznyk be elected as Chairperson for congregational meetings for 2022. Carried.

### **3. Motion by Members for Adherents to vote**

Moved by Sally Salter, seconded by Ian McNeill that adherents be permitted to vote on all matters pertaining to the work of Okotoks United Church. Carried.

### **4. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Carol Price, seconded by Audra Brown that the agenda be approved as presented. Carried.

### **5. Approval of minutes from Feb 21, 2021 AGM**

Moved by Judy Niven, seconded by Ellie Shaver that the Minutes of the Okotoks United Church Feb 21, 2021 AGM be approved as presented. Carried.

### **6. Three Church Partnership Review/ Q&A**

Rev. Julia Kimmett and Rev. Matthew Heesing were asked to present their review of the Three Church Partnership and take any questions.

Rev. Matthew gave an overview of how the partnership functions effective August 2021. All aspects of ministry will be covered but each minister will be responsible for specific areas of ministry between the three Communities of Faith.

Rev. Julia asked for feedback or questions. There were only positive comments regarding the Partnership.

### **7. Approval of 2021 Annual Report**

Moved by Desiree Hart, seconded by Marilyn Carlson that the Annual Report be approved as presented. Carried.

Joanne Dzurka and Gerhard Dyck were thanked for making the report possible.

# Minutes - 2022 AGM (cont'd)

---

Stewart Thomas was thanked for his years of service as church Treasurer and for remaining on the Board to ensure a smooth transition for Carol Price who has agreed to become the new Treasurer in the Fall.

## 8. Presentation of the 2021 Financials

Carol Price presented the 2021 Financials and offered to answer any questions. None were asked.

**Moved by Carol Price, seconded by Betty-Lou Bayley to approve the 2021 Financial Report. Carried.**

## 9. Presentation of the 2022 Budget

Stewart Thomas asked if we were planning a turkey supper this year if COVID restrictions were lifted and, if possible, to have it in person with one sitting instead of two.

**Moved by Carol Price, seconded by Karen Jones that the Budget be approved as presented.**

## 10. Board Report

Karen Pryznyk, Board Chairperson, thanked the Board members for their work and encouraged anyone who cares about their church to consider becoming involved in a leadership role either on a committee or on the Board, saying the rewards of involvement and community are worthwhile.

## 11. Election of Board Members

- a. Stewart Thomas - is stepping down from the Board
- b. Ian McNeil - has one more year to serve in his current term
- c. Karen Jones- has one more year to serve in her current term
- d. Karen Pryznyk - has two more years to serve in her current term
- e. Janet Page - is standing for re-election for another 3-year term
- f. Richard Puttee - is standing for re-election for another 3 year term
- g. Carol Price - is standing for re-election for another 3 year term
- h. Curtis Carlson - is standing for re-election for another 3 year term
- i. Sally Salter - has agreed to let her name stand for election for a 3 year term

The question was asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

**Moved by Karen Jones, seconded by Audra Brown that Sally Salter be nominated to the Board of Okotoks United Church. Carried.**

**Moved by Ian McNeill, seconded by Gisela Dyck, that the following people be elected to the Board of Okotoks United Church: Janet Page, for another 3 year term; Richard Puttee, for another 3 year term; Carol Price, for another 3 year term; Curtis Carlson, for another 3 year term; Sally Salter, for a 3 year term. Carried.**

## 12. Appointment of Trustees

Currently serving are Bill Calder, Marilyn Carlson, Gary Dzurka, Pat Reader-Downey, Desiree Hart, Michael Scappaticci and David Wedderburn.

There were no further nominations from the floor.

## 13. Election of Chinook Winds Regional Representatives

2021 Representatives were Sally Salter and Carol Price. Carol has stepped down from this role and the offer was made to anyone who would like to take this role to advise Karen Pryznyk or a Board member.

# Minutes - 2022 AGM (cont'd)

---

Moved by Carol Price, seconded by Janet Page that Sally Salter be elected as the Chinook Winds Regional Representative for the year 2022-2023. Carried.

## 14. Election of Committee Members

### a. Ministry and Personnel

Members for 2021 were Sally Salter, Melanie Toews and Jack Parsons. Melanie Toews has stepped down. Stewart Thomas has agreed to serve on this committee.

**Moved by Dean Salter, seconded by Karen Jones that Stewart Thomas be nominated for election to the M&P Committee. Carried.**

### b. Nominating Committee

There are currently no members on the Nominating Committee. This leaves the job to the Board at this time.

## 15. New Business

### Change to Okotoks United Church Bylaw 1.2.2

(As per the UCC Manual 2022-B.7.3.2: Term of Office - the congregation or pastoral charge is responsible for setting the term of office for the elected members of the governing body.) The Board

would like to change bylaw 1.2.2 to allow for more than two terms for

Board members. People who are on the Board love to serve the church this way and there doesn't

seem to be any reason to stop them from doing so after two three-year terms. They will still have to

be re-elected every three years and, of course, step down at any time they choose.

#### i. Current:

Term of Office

A Board member (including the Chair) shall be elected for a three-year term. A

A Board member shall serve no longer than two consecutive terms in any capacity and then must vacate the Board for at least one year.

#### ii. Proposed

Term of Office

A Board member (including the Chair) shall be elected for a three-year term. A

Board member may serve unlimited consecutive three-year terms.

There was some discussion regarding the value of Board members serving limited terms vs. unlimited terms and leaving when they felt ready.

**Moved by Diane McNeill, seconded by Ellen Kneiss, that the Okotoks bylaw 1.2.2 be amended to say "Term of Office: A Board member (including the Chair) shall be elected for a three-year term. A Board member may serve unlimited consecutive three-year terms." Carried with one abstention.**

## 16. Benediction - Rev. Matthew Heesing

Rev. Matthew offered the Benediction and thanked everyone for their warm welcome.

## 17. Motion to Adjourn

**Moved by Sally Salter, seconded by Karen Jones that the meeting be adjourned at 2:17 pm.**

Recorded by Janet Page

# Benevolent Fund

---

The Benevolent Fund exists to support the emergency needs of the community on a one-time basis. It is a confidential service managed and dispersed by the minister(s) of both Okotoks and St. Andrew's Communities of Faith.

The Benevolent Fund is funded solely by contributions from both Communities of Faith. No operating funds are designated to the Benevolent Fund.

People are very grateful for the assistance as it often buys them some time to access other resources if needed and to get on their feet. Please see below for this year's Benevolent Fund Income and Dispersals. This year was an unusual year in that we dispersed less than expected and donations were healthy. We can anticipate greater need this year as the economy struggles.

## Income 2022

Cash - \$15,305

Gift Cards – Approx. \$200

## Dispersals 2022

Cash - \$7,269.75

\*Housing (Includes temporary [hotels]) - \$4,896

\*Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Water) - \$2,160.42

\*Other - \$213.33

Gift Cards - \$925.00

\*Groceries or Gas

Thank you for your contributions. I always tell benefactors that this is only possible because of your generosity.

*Submitted by: Rev. Julia Kimmett*



# Harmony Group Financials

---

Opening Balance, January 1, 2022		\$4,066.74
Income		
Christmas Market	\$,3396.84	
Turkey Pot Pie Sales	\$3,707.29	
Memorial Services Catering	\$2,291.47	
Accounting Credit	\$21.06	\$9,416.66
Expenses		
Donation OUC	\$8,000.00	
Outreach and Fellowship	\$356.47	
Office Supplies	\$67.19	\$8,423.66
Closing Balance, December 31, 2022		\$5,059.74

*Submitted by: Ellen Kneiss, Treasurer  
Okotoks United Church, Harmony Group*

# OUC 2023 Budget

## OKOTOKS UNITED CHURCH FINANCIAL BUDGET 2022

FUND ONE	2022	Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
INCOME				
GENERAL FUND INCOME	192,470.50	196,000.00		206,000.00
INVESTMENT INCOME	2,419.40	0.00		0.00
PROGRAM INCOME	491.05	500.00		250.00
RENTAL INCOME				
Rental Income & Magazines	12,456.25	5,300.00		11,300.00
Chinook Winds Region	18,000.00	18,000.00		18,000.00
Wedding & Funeral Rent	3,400.00	1,100.00		1,800.00
OTHER INCOME	10,014.79	6,611.96		6,220.00
FUNDRAISING INCOME				
Turkey Supper income	7,270.00	8,750.00		7,500.00
Other Fundraising Income	3,562.90	1,500.00		3,500.00
TOTAL INCOME	250,084.89	237,761.96		254,570.00
EXPENSES				
SALARIED STAFF	130,346.06	142,266.92		137,129.08
CONTRACT STAFF	30,197.48	32,819.21		32,183.40
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE	9,024.88	8,775.00		8,800.00
UCC EXPENSES / COSTS	11,632.87	11,759.00		12,394.00
CHURCH PHONES	3,618.80	3,660.00		3,650.00
INTERNET	479.70	500.00		700.00
COMPUTER EXPENSES	1,026.71	1,200.00		2,100.00
BUILDING INSURANCE	10,733.96	9,765.00		7,900.00
UTILITIES	28,052.63	19,773.66		28,404.00
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	17,995.09	27,213.00		23,834.00
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	804.21	1,840.00		1,920.00
AUDIO VISUAL EXPENSES & FURNITURE	874.04	500.00		2,500.00
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	1,938.96	4,450.00		2,450.00
CHOIR / MUSIC	1,791.50	1,400.00		1,800.00
OUTREACH	330.67	600.00		250.00
FELLOWSHIP	0.00	0.00		1,300.00
MINISTRY EXPENSE	4,758.75	2,550.00		5,700.00
OTHER EXPENSES	209.73	100.00		800.00
FUNDRAISING EXPENSES				
Stewardship & Other Fundraising Expense	291.70	1,100.00		500.00
Turkey supper expense	2,369.06	1,700.00		1,700.00
WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS EXP	2,310.00	1,750.00		2,150.00
Repayment of CEBA Loan	0.00	0.00		20,000.00
Transfer to Contingency Reserve	0.00	0.00		2,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES (Not including Mortgage)	258,786.80	273,721.79		300,164.48
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	-8,701.91	-35,959.83		-45,594.48

# OUC 2023 Budget (cont'd)

## FUND TWO INCOME

	2022 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Banking Interest	0.33	0.24	0.24
TEMP. RESTRICTED INCOME			
Mission Possible	6,411.54	1,500.00	7,000.00
Benevolence (Min)	16,840.75	16,000.00	14,000.00
School lunch program inc	28,289.86	25,000.00	36,000.00
Outreach (Third Floor)	4,500.00	4,500.00	5,000.00
Healing Touch	400.00	300.00	250.00
Affordable Housing	0.00	2,000.00	0.00
Affirming Ministry	60.00	500.00	250.00
Kids Ministry	115.00	0.00	0.00
Contingency Reserve	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
Mission & Service	13,213.00	11,000.00	12,000.00
Memorials / Legacies	100.00	350.00	0.00
TOTAL RESTRICTED INCOME	69,930.48	61,150.24	76,500.24
TEMP.REST. EXPENSES			
Mission Possible Exp	9,707.88	1,500.00	7,000.00
Benevolence (Min)	8,485.67	18,000.00	12,000.00
School lunch prog expense	31,066.32	25,000.00	36,000.00
Outreach Fund Exp	245.46	2,500.00	2,500.00
Healing Touch Exp	0.00	0.00	0.00
Affordable Housing Exp	0.00	0.00	0.00
Affirming Ministry expens	573.35	2,500.00	1,200.00
Contingency Reserve Exp	804.08	0.00	0.00
Mission & Service Exp	13,951.00	11,000.00	12,000.00
Bequests/Memorial Exp	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL RESTRICTED EXPENSES	64,833.76	60,500.00	70,700.00
EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES	5,096.72	650.24	5,800.24

# OUC 2023 Budget (cont'd)

FUND THREE		2022 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
	CAPITAL FUND (Building)			
	Mortgage Fund (EP)	44,266.60	47,000.00	35,000.00
	Interest	2,191.45	0.00	625.00
	Total Income	46,458.05	47,000.00	35,625.00
UCC	UCC Principle Paid	136.34	136.34	139.78
	UCC Interest Paid	11,623.66	11,623.66	11,620.21
RBC	RBC Principle Paid	17,571.87	17,571.87	176,577.81
	RBC Interest Paid	6,865.53	6,865.53	3,513.18
	TOTAL PAYOUTS	36,197.40	36,197.40	191,850.98
	Surplus / (Deficit)	10,260.65	10,802.60	-156,225.98

MORTGAGE SUMMARY	Dec. 31, 2011	Dec. 31, 2022
2022 UCC Mortgage Balance	500,000.00	464,873.04
2022 RBC Mortgage Balance	650,000.00	176,577.81
BALANCE	1,150,000.00	641,450.85
TOTAL PAID DOWN FROM 2011		508,549.15

\* Fund 3 shows a significant deficit due to Okotoks United Church paying off the Royal Bank mortgage in July of 2023. The deficit will be covered by money in the mortgage fund as well as \$102,500.00 Fund 3 GICs to be cashed in.

# OUC 2022 Financials

## Balance Sheet Consolidated - December 2022

	Fund 01 - GEN- ERAL FUND	Fund 02 - DESIG. FUND	Fund 03 - CAPI- TAL FUND	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>				
BANK ACCOUNTS				
CHEQUING ACCOUNTS				
RBC Gen- eral Account	\$45,748.64			\$45,748.64
Temp Rest. in Cqg Bank in Bldg - 03		\$81,965.14		\$81,965.14
			\$38,315.19	\$38,315.19
Subtotal Chequing Ac- counts	\$45,748.64	\$81,965.14	\$38,315.19	\$166,028.97
OTHER ACCOUNTS				
Benevolent Ministers Acct		\$36,548.56		\$36,548.56
GIC Invest- ments	\$47,500.00		\$102,500.00	\$150,000.00
Subtotal Other Accounts	\$47,500.00	\$36,548.56	\$102,500.00	\$186,548.56
Subtotal Bank Accounts	\$93,248.64	\$118,513.70	\$140,815.19	\$352,577.53
CASH ON HAND				
Petty Cash	\$200.00			\$200.00
INVESTMENTS				
ACCOUNTS RECEIVA- BLE				
GST Receiv- able 2022	\$867.06	\$31.17		\$898.23
CAPITAL ASSETS				
BUILDINGS				
Buildings, Improve- ments			\$3,580,715.93	\$3,580,715.93
EQUIPMENT				
Furniture and equip- ment			\$144,295.82	\$144,295.82
Subtotal Capital Assets			\$3,725,011.75	\$3,725,011.75
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$94,315.70</b>	<b>\$118,544.87</b>	<b>\$3,865,826.94</b>	<b>\$4,078,687.51</b>



# OUC 2022 Financials cont'd

## Balance Sheet Consolidated - December 2022

### LIABILITIES

#### LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

#### MORTGAGES & LOANS

RBC Construction Loan		\$176,577.81	\$176,577.81
United Church Loan		\$464,873.04	\$464,873.04
CEBA Loan	\$20,000.00		\$20,000.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>	<b>\$641,450.85</b>	<b>\$661,450.85</b>

### EQUITY

#### UNRESTRICTED

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$74,315.20		\$74,315.20
-------------------------	-------------	--	-------------

#### RESTRICTED

Equity in Cap. Assets		\$3,028,272.49	\$3,028,272.49
-----------------------	--	----------------	----------------

#### TEMP.RESTR.IN CHEQUING FB

#### DONOR RESTRICTED

Mission Possible Fb	\$9,369.63		\$9,369.63
MP Non-D Balance	\$1,135.96		\$1,135.96
Benevolent Fb	\$41,009.59		\$41,009.59
School lunch program FB	\$27,505.74		\$27,505.74
Outreach Fund FB	\$14,774.86		\$14,774.86
Second Minister Fund	\$1,740.25		\$1,740.25
Healing Touch Fb	\$2,836.90		\$2,836.90
Healing Touch Donations	\$1,250.00		\$1,250.00
Affordable Housing	\$2,850.00		\$2,850.00
Affirming Ministry	\$2,468.88		\$2,468.88
Empowering the Promise		\$196,103.60	\$196,103.60
Kids Ministry Fb	\$2,065.25		\$2,065.25
Contingency Reserve	\$7,323.21		\$7,323.21
<b>Subtotal Donor Restricted</b>	<b>\$114,330.27</b>	<b>\$196,103.60</b>	<b>\$310,433.87</b>

#### PASS THRU FUNDS

Mission & Service Fund	\$919.60		\$919.60
Memorials / Legacies	\$3,295.00		\$3,295.00
<b>Subtotal Pass Thru Funds</b>	<b>\$4,214.60</b>		<b>\$4,214.60</b>

#### Subtotal Temp.restr.in Chequing Fb

	\$118,544.87	\$196,103.60	\$314,648.47
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>\$74,315.20</b>	<b>\$118,544.87</b>	<b>\$3,224,376.09</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$94,315.20</b>	<b>\$118,544.87</b>	<b>\$3,865,826.94</b>

# Leadership 2022

---

## Board



Rev. Julia Kimmett  
**Minister**



Rev. Matthew Heesing  
**(Minister  
to August 2022)**



Karen Pryznyk  
**Board Chair**



Carol Price  
**Treasurer**



Stewart Thomas  
**Treasurer to  
March 2022**



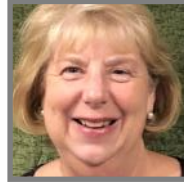
Janet Page  
**Secretary  
to July 22**



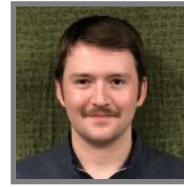
Ian McNeill  
**Property &  
Maintenance**



Richard Puttee



Karen Jones  
**Secretary**



Curtis Carlson  
**Youth**



Sally Salter  
**Ministry and Personnel**

---

## Trustees



Rev. Julia Kimmett  
**Minister**



Rev. Matthew  
Heesing  
**Minister  
to August 2022**



Gary Dzurka  
**Chairperson**



Dave Wedderburn



Pat Reader-Downey



Michael Scappattici



Bill Calder



Marilyn Carlson



Desiree Hart

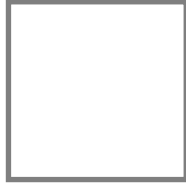
# Leadership 2022

---

## Chinook Winds Regional



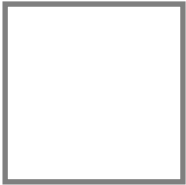
Sally Salter



Vacant

---

## Nominating Committee



Vacant



Vacant

---

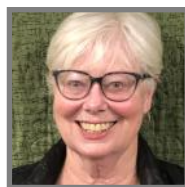
## Affirming Ministry Committee



Rev. Julia Kimmett



Janet Page



Carol Price



Stewart Thomas

# Acknowledgements

This annual report was prepared for Okotoks United Church. Thank you to all of the people who submitted reports and photos.

- Prepared by: Lorna Schiefner and Karen Pryznyk
- Proofread by: Gerhard Dyck

---

## Contact

Okotoks United Church

43 Riverside Drive  
Box 507  
Okotoks, AB  
T1S 1A7  
Phone: 403-938-4357



[www.okunited.ca](http://www.okunited.ca)