

2023 Annual Report

Brechin United Church

www.brechinunited.ca

CORE VALUES STATEMENT

As people loved by God and as followers of Jesus

We seek to:

- welcome and accept all who come to Brechin**
- grow in our Christian faith through meaningful worship, music, prayer, and learning opportunities**
- nurture our faith community with genuine acceptance, through mutual respect, commitment, honesty, forgiveness, and gratitude**
- reach out with love and justice to the local community and to the world**
- to care for creation and work as a community of faith to address climate change through education and action**

(adopted March 2022)

MISSION STATEMENT

**“At Brechin United Church,
we seek to know Holy Mystery
as shown to us through the life and teachings
of Jesus Christ.
On our faith journey, we endeavour to nurture
spiritual development and growth
and to be a just and loving example
of service and discipleship
that reaches out to community and all creation.”**

(October, 2018)

Affirming Vision Statement: As an Affirming Ministry we boldly declare that we fully welcome and include the full participation of *all* people in the life and work of the Ministry as we journey together, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, marital status, mental or physical ability, beliefs, cultural backgrounds, or economic circumstance. We are dedicated to being good stewards of God's world, working and living towards justice and wholeness for *all* God's people.

Please bring your copy of the Annual Report to the A.G.M.

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MINISTER'S REPORT

What a year it's been! What a joy it's been to gather here with you for worship, fellowship, learning and fun. How amazing it's been as so many people came together to bring out the best of this building and be beloved community here. Your efforts were noticed and appreciated. Truly, thank you.

In the book *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going*, Susan Beaumont reminds us that 'a new start is not synonymous with a new beginning. The new start happens in response to an event—the building is opened, the new pastor arrives, the new worship service begins. A new beginning happens when the people are spiritually and emotionally ready to move out of liminality and into a new chapter of life' (page 18).

We started gathering here at 2020 Estevan in December 2022, and we have been living in to this era of new beginnings ever since. If anyone was under the impression that everything would be settled and smooth sailing once we were in to the new building, they will have found themselves corrected this year! It is my hope that we will have noticed a need for intentional, prayerful, curious and persistent engagement with this place and one another to make this the church home we'd dreamed it would be. The readiness which Beaumont speaks of is nurtured in community and guided by faith. In some ways this year would have been much easier if readiness were simply bestowed!

Our reports here include many specific and significant activities in response to--or made possible by--returning to Estevan Road. There are smaller, accumulating moments too which I hope we will cherish, like the growing sense of recognition and community with the residents of the building we get to bump into in the parking lot or the elevator. There are threshold moments that passively remind us of the challenges and ultimate relief of arriving. For instance, in the fall of 2020 I bought an umbrella tree, excited to have such a nice plant to liven the place up when we moved in. By the time we did move in, it was too tall to transport in my car; the Wards kindly helped me move it here with their truck when the weather warmed up.

Each time we have hosted a large crowd, we have learned something new about our space. Our first potluck with our friends from Hope Lutheran, the grand opening, memorial services for beloved friends, the tea for David and I, and our dessert auction punctuated a year full of worship, loaves and fishes, team events and community groups. Thank you to everyone who showed up, and ensured this was a place of welcome. When we hosted all our United Church neighbours from Cedar, St Andrew's and Trinity for Good Friday and for a covenanting service for Rev. Fanning and Rev. Helps, what a joy it was to experience worship together--and to realize, like the distribution of loaves and fishes when Jesus fed the crowds, somehow there was enough seating and parking for everyone. Yet more indication that God is good.

Looking forward, early in 2024 we will begin our grant-funded 'Time for Renewal' process: A year long series of workshops and themes to help us reflect, learn and plan. By summer 2024 I will have been with Brechin for 5 years, which means I will be eligible for a sabbatical. Although a date for this has not been discussed, I am glad we have the Time for Renewal process underway to inform my discernment on what to study.

Martin Luther, of reformer fame, is quoted in saying 'God writes the Gospel not in the bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars'. Whatever 2024 has in store for us, I hope it involves gathering, reflecting on the bible, and then going out, and finding the gospel scattered and inscribed in all of Creation and everyone we meet.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Tif Bradford-McNaughton

COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – 2023

2023 has been very exciting for everyone at Brechin United Church as we settled in and became part of our community at 2020 Estevan Road. After the first month or two we began to realize how technologically advanced our new building was and what a steep learning curve we all would have in order to be able to fully utilize our new surroundings. Just getting access to the building for all who require it has proved to be a bit of a challenge at times!

The Property and Redevelopment teams were especially busy as they were trying to fit all of our churchly belongings into the new storage spaces we'd been allocated and to determine what deficiencies in the building envelope had to be addressed first (we're still working on some of them). The kitchen helpers did a tremendous job packing everything away and learning all the idiosyncrasies of the coffee machine, dishwasher and induction stove. We now have a Food Services permit as well, so we are officially up and running.

Reverend Tif and our Office Manager Cindy had to adjust to many new systems and a different internet provider and with the help of a team of volunteers, we began to efficiently manage our daily office routines and internal and external bookings for the rooms in our new church space. More recently, a special Audio Visual team has been training themselves in every facet of how our new system works and our on-line worship experience has been improving on an almost weekly basis. We surely wouldn't be anywhere near where we are today without the thoroughly dedicated group of staff, contractors and volunteers that call Brechin their community of faith!

And what a community we are truly turning out to be. We are blessed to be able to host a weekly Loaves and Fishes Free Food Market and to provide beverages and a snack to our clients when they arrive. We're also fortunate to be able to share our meeting rooms with many people living in the building who meet regularly for coffee or games nights and with many of the community groups who operate in the wider Nanaimo area. We were happy to provide a space for L'École Océane summer camp during July and August as well.

In the coming months, we will all be encouraged to take part in a facilitated planning and visioning process, funded by a Provision grant from Pacific Mountain Region. This will enable all of us to move into the future with a more discerning outlook on what Brechin United Church is meant to be and do. In addition, two working groups comprised of council members and the congregation will consider 1/ the feasibility of sharing our space with another community of faith and 2/ how we might focus on ways to welcome more people to join our Brechin family. These initiatives will set us in good stead to better manage our finances into the future.

As you will note when you read all the reports of teams and groups from the past year, much has been accomplished in 2023, and we are all looking forward to our future together as we explore possibilities for 2024 and beyond. Please contact a team chairperson or working group member if you would like to contribute to any of the items mentioned above - we could certainly use your talents and ideas!

Blessings to you all and Best Wishes for a healthy and invigorating year ahead!

Rob Russell, Chair, Brechin United Church Council

TRANSFERS OF MEMBERSHIP

Transfers In:

Kathryn Baverstock	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Stephen Baverstock	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Marie Ducharme	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Rob Stredulinsky	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Uli Stredulinsky	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Jane Wiebe	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Bruce Allan Wilson	Transferred In	June 18, 2023
Linda Marie Wilson	Transferred In	June 18, 2023

Transfers Out:

Joan Taylor	Transferred Out	January 24, 2022
Norman Taylor	Transferred Out	January 24, 2022
Christina Snow	Transferred Out	June 17, 2022

MARRIAGES

Nicholas Peter Korn & Kyla Rawn Jensen

September 2, 2023

FUNERALS CONDUCTED

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Service Date & location:</u>
Robert Ross McCormick	December 29, 2022	April 1, 2023; BUC Nanaimo
David Sheldon Fearon	January 8, 2023	February 11, 2023, BUC Nanaimo
Berna Dennison	March 28, 2023	May 6, 2023, BUC Nanaimo
Patrick Daniel Flathers	April 28, 2023	May 13, 2023, BUC Nanaimo
Edna May Donaldson	August 9, 2023	September 7, 2023, Nanaimo City Cemetery, Bowen Road - interment

IN MEMORIAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Duane Partee	February 24, 2023
Betty Doreen Deighton	October 3, 2023

CHURCH STATISTICS

Membership

Church Membership (active - on roll)*

Worship

Infant Baptisms

Adult Baptisms

Marriages

Funerals (by Brechin)

Services of Communion 10:30 a.m.

Outside Services (Eden Gardens/Berwick/Wexford)..

Average Attendance (Sept. & Nov.) (10:30am) ...

Range of Attendance (Sept. & Nov.) (10:30am) ...
(in-person only, live-streaming not included)

Stewardship

Identifiable Givers:

General

Mission and Service

Number of Households represented

Group Enrollments

Church School (including teachers)

Choir

Women's Friendship

Prayer Circle

Pastoral Care

	2021	2022	2023
Church Membership (active - on roll)*	147	100	108
Infant Baptisms	0	0	0
Adult Baptisms	0	0	0
Marriages	0	1	1
Funerals (by Brechin)	3	2	5
Services of Communion 10:30 a.m.	12	12	12
Outside Services (Eden Gardens/Berwick/Wexford)..	3	5	10
Average Attendance (Sept. & Nov.) (10:30am) ...	53	54	84
Range of Attendance (Sept. & Nov.) (10:30am) ... (in-person only, live-streaming not included)	0-78	48-61	77-99
Identifiable Givers:			
General	92	96	133
Mission and Service	46	45	48
Number of Households represented	92	96	133
Group Enrollments			
Church School (including teachers)	0	4	10
Choir	14	13	30
Women's Friendship	28	46	27
Prayer Circle	2	4	5
Pastoral Care	10	12	9

ROLL MEMBERSHIP *(in detail)

Members Active (December 31, 2022)	100
Non-resident members.....	3
Transfers in	8
Received by Profession of Faith	0
Received by Confirmation/Adult Baptism/Special Permission ..	0
Transfer from Inactive File to Active	0
.....	<u>0</u>
.....	111
Members Temporarily Living Abroad	0
Removed – Other (correction of Historic Roll record)....	0
Transfers Out	0
Removed by Death	<u>3</u>
.....	3
Total Active Membership December 31, 2023	108

BRECHIN UNITED CHURCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
In person and via Zoom
March 5, 2023

1. Call to Order – Rob Russell called the meeting to order at 11:28 am. The quorum is 20 full members, and we have a quorum present. There were 54 in attendance in person and 6 in attendance via Zoom. Rob Russell acknowledged that we are gathered on the traditional lands of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.
2. Voting members – An adherent of Brechin United Church is a person who has contributed to the life and work of Brechin for a period of at least three (3) months. **Motion:** That all adherents and members may vote on all matters brought to the congregational meeting today. **M/S** Val Neilson / Kris Jensen **Carried.**
3. Approval of Agenda – **Motion:** **M/S** Darlene Darby / Val Neilson that the agenda be approved. **Carried.**
4. Approval of Minutes of March 6, 2022 Annual General Meeting – Page 9-11 – **Motion:** **M/S** Kathy Torhjelm / Darlene Darby that the minutes be approved. **Carried.**
5. Rob Russell remarked that the reports from the Leadership Teams and the work of other dedicated Brechin folk have been summarized in the Annual Report. Each report will be noted and if anyone has questions, please raise your hand. Rev. Tif will monitor the Zoom participants for questions.
6. Receipt of Reports: See the Table of Contents, page 3.
 - a. Minister's Report – Page 4
 - b. Council Chairperson – Page 5
 - c. Pacific Mountain Regional Council Report – Page 12
 - d. Communications Team – Page 12
 - i. Brechin Social Media – Page 13
 - ii. Website and Online Directory – Page 13
 - iii. Communicable Disease Prevention Plan Team – Page 14
 - e. Faith Formation & Spiritual Development Team Report – Page 15
 - i. Broadview Discussion Group – Page 15
 - ii. Labyrinth, Going Deeper, Tai Chi & Healing Hands Report – Page 16
 - iii. Library Report – Page 17
 - iv. Making Space – Page 17
 - f. Ministry & Personnel Report – Page 17
 - g. Brechin 4 ACTION Report – Page 19
 - i. Loaves & Fishes – Page 20
More volunteers are always welcome.
 - ii. Reaching 'Out' – Page 21
 - iii. Refugee Report – Page 22

- h. Pastoral Care Team Report – Page 23
 - i. Men's Group Report – Page 24
 - ii. Women's Friendship Group Report – Page 24
 - iii. Prayer Circle Report – Page 25
 - iv. Yoga Report – Page 25
 - v. Community Drumming Circle – Page 25
- i. Property Team Report – Page 26
 - Vote of gratitude to Keith Allen for all his hard work.
- j. Redevelopment Team Report – Page 22
 - Votes of gratitude to Val Neilson and Randy Manikel for all their hard work.
- k. Friends of Brechin Wall Report – Page 27
- l. Fundraising Team Reports – Page 28
 - Save The Date - A Trunk Treasures Sale will be held in the parking lot on May 13, 2023.
- m. Worship Leadership Team Report – Page 28
 - i. Music Report – Page 30
 - Many thanks to Tim Weger for all of his hard work

M/S Keith Allen / Darlene Darby that the reports be accepted as presented. **Carried.**
All teams are to be commended for their time and hard work.

7. Trustees – Page 31

8. Nominations Report with Proposed Council Team Members for 2023 – Page 32

Thanks to Christine Robertson for her hard work for 6 years as secretary. Rob Russell presented her with a card and bouquet.

Gloria Le Gal did a good job recruiting new team leaders and members.

Motion: M/S: Grace Skomorowski / Lynn Burrows that the Nominations Report be accepted as presented. **Carried.**

Council Team Membership – Page 28

Brechin 4 ACTION – Julia Roberts is not able to continue.

Pastoral Care – Anne Harris-Freed is joining the team.

9. Other Teams & Contact Persons (not on Council) – Page 33

10. Financial Report – Page 35 – 37

Motion M/S Bruce Wilson / Pauline Johnson that the 2022 Financial Report be approved as presented. **Carried.** Many thanks for all of Blaine Wilkins hard work. A member asked about the future costs related to staying in the building, nothing is known at this time. We do have a deficit, but we will have groups renting the facilities starting in the near future, and fundraising plans are underway. If anyone is in non-church groups that might be interested in rent space, encourage them to call the office.

11. 2023 Financial Budget – Page 39 – 40 – **Motion: M/S** Darlene Darby / Keith Allen that the 2023 budget be approved as presented. **Carried.**
12. 2023 Mission & Service Fund Goal – **Motion: M/S** Marilyn Huffman / Val Neilson that the 2023 covenant for donations to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada by Brechin United Church be \$25,000.00. **Carried.** In order to meet this commitment, the M&S programme needs to be promoted more, possibly have the Minute for Mission every Sunday.
13. Other Business: - none
14. Closing Remarks and Welcoming New Council: Thanks to all Council members and other volunteers who have worked steadfastly through this last year to prepare us all to begin a new chapter in our new Brechin space. We look forward to discerning our path ahead together with great anticipation!
15. Rev. Tif McNaughton closed the meeting with a prayer.
16. Motion of Adjournment – **Motion:** Moved by Linda Braid at 12:18 pm. **Carried.**

Rob Russell, Chair

Christine Robertson, Secretary

PACIFIC MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year: Monthly town hall meetings with the Region on Zoom***Hosting the PMRC executive meetings at Brechin in April***Including PMRC executive members in our Grand Opening celebrations***attending PMRC annual meeting in Abbotsford in early June***sharing information with council and congregation regarding remit vote on autonomy for Indigenous Churches***unanimous vote in favour of the remit by Brechin Council

Goals for the coming year: To attend town halls and other relevant events offered by the Region throughout the year. To attend the PMRC General Meeting in Vancouver from May 30-June 2/24 (hopefully in person) and vote on behalf of Brechin United Church on proposals.

Report of financial activity: Gratitude for the financial help with sending two reps to the annual meeting in Abbotsford.

Members: Susan Ward - second representative
Kathryn Baverstock – alternate

On a personal note, it has been my privilege to serve as representative to the Region for the past six years. We will continue to have two representatives and one alternate going into 2024.

Submitted by: Valerie Neilson

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM REPORT – 2023

Bulletin Report – Marilyn Huffman

I have enjoyed working with Cindy this past year and we have very much appreciated the cooperation of those requesting announcements in the bulletin. For those who might wonder why we are asking some things, we need announcements submitted by 2:30 Wednesday afternoon to give Cindy time to prepare the bulletin for me to proofread and have ready for emailing out on Friday. Sometimes unexpected things can come up in our lives which slow the process down so we have built in some time for those. We also ask that announcements be as brief as possible, outlining the Who, What, When and Where with no detail, or as little as possible, and include a contact person's information and or Website. Posters most often go in as attachments and, with approval from Rev. Tif, go on the bulletin board. Unless it is an exceptional circumstance, we usually limit times announcements are in to three weeks in an attempt to keep the number of announcements down and fresh.

Respectfully submitted:
Marilyn Huffman

Facebook Report – Ian Gartshore

Brechin United has two Facebook pages, one for the general public, including our own members and adherents, and a private discussion group. There are currently 295 people who follow our public page and 23 who follow our discussion group.

The average post on our public page is seen by about 80 people, but some posts are seen by as many as 326 people (for our cookie walk!).

Posts are of two types: insightful ones about Christianity that offer a very different perspective than most people are familiar with regarding the Christian faith. The other purpose is to announce events and causes near and dear to our church, such as the cookie walk, support for LGBTQ+ refugees fleeing persecution, special worship services, and the like. An average of about one post a week is made.

Our public page could be better utilized to invite people to visit and perhaps join our congregation and/or become involved in our missions.

Submitted by: Ian Gartshore

Website Report – Doug Cochrane

The website is running smoothly with most submissions for inclusion fitting within the guidelines set by the committee.

The committee would like to thank Lynn Burrows for her work on the Brechin 4 Action pages.

Submitted by:
Doug Cochrane, et al

FAITH FORMATION & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT – 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year:

1. Brian Pankratz led a study group on the book Building God's Beloved Community edited by Taylor Crossant. It started in February for 15 members for approximately 12 weeks, followed by a pot luck dinner in the fall.
2. The Sunday school program was available usually every week with limited attendance for the first 7 months of the year. Starting in September it was only offered once monthly with limited attendance until resuming weekly offering for the advent season.
3. Our White Gift Sunday took place December 10th with our donations going to the Island Crisis Care Society.

Goals for the coming year:

1. To continue to build our Sunday School attendance.
2. To offer book studies to engage and educate our community of faith.
3. To build our team membership.
4. Remind Brechin members the Spiritual Growth Fund is available to help with 50% of costs to attend workshops, and other related spiritual growth opportunities.

Report of financial activity: See 2023 Financial Report

Members: Darlene Darby (Chair), Suzanne E. Sykes, and Gwen Boyd

Submitted by: Darlene Darby

BROADVIEW DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT - 2023

Highlights of the year: In 2023 we met on Zoom on a Thursday afternoon in January, March, May, August, September, November, and December, typically in the month following receiving the magazine. Notification of the meeting was put in the Friday announcements the week before the meeting.

A small group gathers for lively discussion, with each of us commenting on articles that were particularly meaningful. In December, we were very fortunate to be joined in our discussion by the writer of one of the magazine articles, Dennis Gruending, a brother-in-law to Henry and Judy Wiebe.

Goals for the coming year: We plan to continue to meet as we have in the past. We encourage others to participate.

Report of financial activity: There is no cost for this group.

Submitted by: Kathy Torhjelm

GOING DEEPER, LABYRINTH, TAI CHI & HEALING HANDS REPORT - 2023

Going Deeper:

The Brechin 4 Action team initiated the zoom discussion on *Braiding Sweet Grass*, in the winter and spring. The Brechin 4 Action team initiated the zoom discussions on the book *True Reconciliation* in the fall.

Report of financial activity: None

Members: We have 17 participants in the zooms. They were from Brechin United Church, Nanaimo, Gabriola Island, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

The Going Deeper zooms will no longer be offered at Brechin United Church.

Labyrinth walks:

We had weekly in-person labyrinth walks on Mondays in the fall. An in-person Labyrinth Solstice Walk was held on December 20.

Report of financial activity: None

Members: 8

We will continue in January.

Labyrinth Zooms:

We hosted weekly Zooms last winter, spring and fall.

Report of financial activity: None

Members: We have 52 participants in the zooms. They were from England, Panama, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Ontario, Salt Spring Island, Ladysmith, Gabriola Island and Nanaimo.

20% of the participants are from Brechin United Church

The Labyrinth zooms will no longer be offered at Brechin United Church.

Tai Chi and Healing Hands:

We are not meeting at present.

Goals for the coming year: We don't have plans for continuing at this time.

Report of financial activity: None

Members: None

Submitted by: Anne Nesbitt

BRECHIN CHURCH LIBRARY – 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year: I am about a third of the way through checking each book for damage, ensuring it is in the correct category, and that in some way it supports (and at least does not contradict) Brechin United's Mission Statement of inclusiveness and progressive theology, and commitment to Right Relations with Indigenous Peoples as stated in our land acknowledgement. Thank you everyone who donated books to the library.

Goals for the coming year:

1. The Library Task Group will be creating a computerized catalogue which will serve as a permanent record of our holdings, and where books can be searched by topic, title, author.
2. To expand and update our collection through the purchase and donation of books. To this end we will be creating a list of books we need and inviting folk to donate them.
3. To increase and improve our holdings for children and youth.

Report of financial activity: See financial total in the 2023 financial report.

Members: Suzanne E. Sykes, Librarian; Marilyn Matson, Linda Allen, and a task group of volunteers in 2024.

Submitted by: Suzanne E. Sykes

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL REPORT – 2023

Highlights of the year: M & P met numerous times over the year, either in person or via Zoom as a team, or individually with Rev. Tif, Cindy Gillespie (Office Administrator), Tim Weger (Music Director) or Allison Abuloc (AV/ Tech contractor and Ministry student). The team appreciated the expertise offered by Allison for the preparation of the Sunday morning power point services during the year and the training she provided to the newly formed Power Point team. We are very grateful to Kathy Torhjelm and Matt Haapala who have assumed leadership with Brechin's technology. Congratulations to our Music Director, Tim, who has worked exceptionally hard over the year with the music program and choir, now with 30 members. Our thanks to Rev. Tif, Cindy and Tim for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Thank you to Christine Robertson who replaced Cindy, in the office, during her summer vacation.

M & P sponsored the Live and Silent Dessert Auction on September 23. Our thanks for the contributions from so many members with a special thanks to Anne Manikel and Val Neilson for their extra hours of support.

The team assisted and joined in the celebration of three special events in the new church this past year: our **Open House**, April 29, 2023, **Tif and David's Afternoon Tea** on

July 5, 2023 and a **Covenanting Service** on November 5 for two local United Church ministers. Thanks to Rev. Tif and Tim for their hard work at this event.

Goals for the coming year:

1. Continue with annual performance appraisals with staff and contractors.
2. Work with Rev. Tif to develop a plan that will enable her to reduce her hours of work.
3. Revise the contract with our Office Administrator
4. Renew our Music Director's contract

Team Members: Linda Braid, Leah Caitlin, Chris Carolan, Eileen Carolan, and Kathy Torhjelm

Submitted by: Linda Braid, Team leader

BRECHIN 4 ACTION (FORMERLY MISSION & OUTREACH) REPORT - 2023

Summary of the year:

- 3 well-attended **Climate Action workshops** planned and hosted by our Climate Action sub-group. 2 were facilitated by Brenda Riley. Whelm King representing the Nanaimo Action Pledge assisted towards the end of the second workshop. ("From Concern to Action")
- Work on organizing **Carpooling** of/for Brechin members and encouraging more bus transit on Sundays in Nanaimo.
- Participation in the Green Faith Circle events, vignettes for Season of Creation series including personal actions being taken to combat Climate Change (leaves of hope).
- investigation into the use of the land triangle at Brechin for vegetable garden or fruit trees.
- COP28 information including prayer vigil.
- Creation of a **Brechin 4 ACTION service booklet** for Brechin's Grand Opening as well as a B4A display board. Doug Cochrane created a **Brechin 4 ACTION web page** on Brechin's website. We were also provided with **our own bulletin board** next to the kitchen to showcase B4A activities & information.
- **2 Indigenous workshops:** "Traditional Indigenous Drum Gathering" facilitated by Patrick Alec Jr. (at Brechin) and an Indigenous Walking Tour of Departure Bay by Dave Bodaly. Well attended.
- A successful **fall series of Reconciliation Workshops** ("Building Bridges" followed 3-4 weeks later by "Paddling Together" facilitated by Kathi Camilleri. Keeping to a smaller number of participants (i.e., around 20) was quite helpful.
- We continue giving a monthly "**Minute for Mission**" - usually the 3rd Sunday of each month.
- Assisting team member Mark Jarvis by helping to advertise his warm clothing drive for the homeless – this giving of clothing to the homeless/near homeless took place at Thanksgiving and again at Christmas.

- **Labyrinth zooms:** We hosted weekly Zooms last winter, spring and fall. There are 52 participants in the Zooms. They are from many places including some from England & Panama! 20% of the participants are from Brechin UC. In the fall, the Labyrinth Zooms were no longer offered via our Brechin Zoom platform as Anne Nesbitt started using another Zoom platform rather than risk changing to “Team”.
- **Labyrinth in-person walks** were held on Mondays in the fall. An in-person Labyrinth Solstice Walk was held on Dec. 20. Members are 8. We are continuing in January 2024. There is a 4-person team (Anne Nesbitt, Marg Barrie, Colleen Crossland, Heather Smith) – all members of Brechin UC – planning how to move forward with the in-person Labyrinth walks.
- **Going Deeper book discussions:** The B4A team initiated the Zoom discussion on *Braiding Sweet Grass*, in the winter and spring then initiated the Zoom discussions on the book *True Reconciliation* in the fall. We have 17 participants in the Zooms. These were associated initially with our B4A team but then moved to Faith & Formation during 2023. The Zoom discussions are no longer being offered via Brechin UC as Anne Nesbitt is using another Zoom account.
- We are exploring with Blaine, the possibility of Brechin changing its financial Institution from RBC to an institution more community and environmentally friendly in addition to being close to Brechin (either Bank of Montreal on Estevan Rd. or Coastal Community Credit Union on Labieux). RBC is the largest NA financier in fossil fuel (Over 42 billion \$ invested in 2023 alone!)

Goals for the coming year:

- More climate action workshops and action including exploring the possibility of having solar panels on the roof at Brechin UC and Brechin Hill residence.
- Another series of Reconciliation workshops facilitated by Kathi Camilleri, Fall 2024. Building Bridges will be on Oct. 16th followed by Paddling Together on Nov. 13th. We will be applying for UC Justice & Reconciliation grant money for these.
- We would like to address diversity issues in the Nanaimo Community, find a partner to show/discuss Daniel Elliott’s documentary “Winds of Change”, and host an event with Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society to honour the work of the cultural support team at our Reconciliation workshops.
- We look forward to having sub-groups to minimize discussion at our monthly B4A meetings. (i.e. The Climate Action group and Reconciliation group.)

Report of financial activity:

- We received a grant from the UC of Canada Justice & Reconciliation branch for \$3,760 to cover our Fall 2023 Reconciliation workshops. Donations were \$302. Amount of grant funds left over from 2022 were \$49.63. Income total was \$4,111.63. Expenses were \$3,992 leaving \$119.63 to either return to the UC Justice & Reconciliation Committee or to keep for applying to our 2024 Fall workshops.

- Climate Action: One of our teammates covered the food expenses of two of the workshops. Our B4A fund covered the third workshop's food, candle gift and the two \$50 honorariums for Brenda Riley. Overall cost to our Brechin 4 Action fund was \$143.48.
- The 2 stand-alone Indigenous workshops (Patrick Alec Jr & Dave Bodaly) both paid for themselves + left us with a profit of \$120 that was transferred to Brechin's General Funds (participants paid a small fee.)
- In September, \$2,575.15 was moved out of our B4A account into Brechin's General account.
- Amount left in our B4A account as of Dec 31st, 2023, should be \$342.66.

Members: Marg Barrie, John Bullas, Lynn Burrows, Vickeri Cochrane, Colleen Crossland, Pauline Johnson (for Reconciliation), Anne Nesbitt, Shelley Serebrin & recent new members Scott Boyd and Mark Jarvis. Also, Allison and Tif when they have the time.

Submitted by: *Lynn Burrows* B4A Chair (ending 2023)

LOAVES AND FISHES AT BRECHIN – 2023

Highlights of the year: In 2023 we were excited to begin food distribution at our new Brechin Church. Clients were able to wait inside in the Arbutus Room and enjoy coffee and goodies before selecting their food in the Birch Room.

Some of the highlights of the year include:

- We provided 5,915 food hampers to 3,446 households. There were 8,049 clients served (a significant increase from the previous years). We continue to observe that many people are unable to meet their food needs without making use of Loaves and Fishes, and that every week there were new clients registering for food.
- The grocery stores are exceedingly generous in providing us with food. There is an abundance of bread, meat and vegetables, as well as staples. The clients are, without exception, extremely grateful for all that is provided to them.
- In December 2023 we expanded the hours of our usual food distribution on Tuesday afternoons as well as providing Christmas hampers. It was a busy time, but very well received by our clients.

Goals for the coming year:

- The Brechin co-ordinators, Linda Braid, Kathy Torhjem and Doug Cochrane will continue to work with Loaves and Fishes to provide food and hospitality for those in need in Nanaimo.

Report of financial activity:

- Brechin members generously donated \$6473.00 to Loaves and Fishes in 2023, a significant increase from 2022.

Members: The number of willing volunteers is very heart-warming. Currently we have about 50 dedicated volunteers who ensure that clients receive a wide and generous selection of nutritious foods in the Birch Room and hospitality in the form of a warm welcome, coffee and a sweet in the Arbutus Room. We are always in need of more volunteers, and we would happily welcome anyone who would like to help. Training is provided.

In summary, I would like to commend all the volunteers for their kindness to everyone who comes, and thanks to all the clients, whose cheerful presence adds so much to every Tuesday afternoon. I have so appreciated the resilience and patience of everyone involved as we live in these times of extraordinary change. It is such a pleasure to be there!

Submitted by: Kathy Torhjem

REACHING 'OUT', BRECHIN UNITED LGBTQIA2S+ AND ALLIES REPORT - 2023

Reaching Out is a group of LGBTQIA2S+ persons and Allies in Nanaimo, BC. We are a proud ministry of Brechin United Church, which is an 'AFFIRMING' congregation. This group is about connecting with each other, and the greater LGBTQIA2S+ community, and our allies, building community by socializing, and enjoying conversation, and discussions on any number of topics relating to (but not exclusively) to LGBTQIA2S+ issues.

As we move together in support and acceptance with self-awareness as our goal, we often find the need to educate ourselves about different ways of showing support to marginalized persons. This part of our mandate defines the concept of 'reaching out' to others.

We are well into our 8th year of operation now (started in fall of 2015) and continue to thrive. We are thrilled to be back in Brechin's new facility with all the amenities – no more lugging equipment in/out. Our attendance numbers are improving well since COVID and our 'Zoom' operations. It isn't always feasible to have someone with a computer/camera/mic to provide a Zoom link for those from out of town and/or unable to physically get to the meeting, but when we can, we like to offer that option.

Once again, we have enjoyed picnics in the park, a bowling night and our annual Christmas potluck as well as a number of guest speakers sharing their story, or the story of the organization they are working with that is relevant to our RO mandate/mission.

Our attendance varies from month to month – anywhere from a dozen or so people up to 30+ attending. This year we celebrated our 'Allies' in October, which we intend to continue to do on an annual basis if we can. Our 'Allies' are vital to us, and an asset in every sense of the word. They stand with us in our fight for acceptance and equality in a world where there are constant threats to marginalize and restrict those rights and freedoms.

Our Planning Committee (Tim Weger-facilitator, Blaine Wilkins, Holly Smith, and Leah Caitlin) tries to meet sometime every second week of the month to plan the next meeting, and discuss the workings of RO. We are so very grateful for their commitment to working together to make Reaching Out the vibrant community that it is. We are in desperate need of more people to help with the planning as it is a huge load for those of us on the planning committee, and if one of us cannot make it for whatever reason, the load is even heavier.

We look forward to doing more of the same in 2024, with guest speakers, social activities and of course our usual presence in Nanaimo's annual Pride Parade. We meet the first Wednesday evening of every month, at 7 p.m. in Brechin's Arbutus Room. Coffee/tea and water are always provided, and we bring a snack to share if we can. Thank you to Brechin for your continued love and support, and providing us with such an awesome facility.

Respectfully submitted by Facilitator, Tim Weger

REFUGEE REPORT – 2023

Brechin United Church continues to be involved in sponsoring LGBTQ refugees through our affiliation with ROAR (Reaching Out Assisting Refugees). Blaine Wilkins serves as Chairperson and Anne Manikel as Brechin Refugee Coordinator liaising with the SAH (Sponsorship Agreement Holder), The United Church of Canada.

This year we celebrated the arrival of Newcomers #4 & 5, a couple from Uganda who had resided in a refugee camp in Kenya for many years. They are doing exceptionally well as they attend classes at VIU and work part-time. We also welcomed Newcomer #7 from Afghanistan with the help of a sponsorship group on Gabriola, including Brechin's own, Sally Bullas. Our prayer is that Refugee #6 will be on his way to Canada any day now. Meanwhile, Sponsorship Group (SG) #8 is in the process of applying for a refugee, and SG#9 and SG#10 are becoming trained and organized. ROAR always welcomes new folk interested in joining a Sponsorship Group, especially from the Brechin United congregation who have been a part of every group over the past five years.

Financially, ROAR is in a very good position with funds largely being held in the Brechin Refugee account. Its use is restricted for that particular purpose. The balance in the Refugee account at year-end is \$69,845. During the year, much of the interest earned on this fund was credited to the Refugee Account with Council's blessing. These funds were mostly raised through three major ROAR fundraisers; the On-line Auction, the Picnic en Blanc and the triple Matching Grant Campaign at year-end.

On behalf of ROAR, we wish to extend our utmost gratitude to the people of Brechin United Church and the wider community who faithfully contributed to our fundraisers and supported these newcomers through their prayers.

Respectfully submitted by
Anne Manikel, Brechin Refugee Coordinator

PASTORAL CARE TEAM REPORT – 2023

We were overjoyed to be able to resume meeting in person in 2023 and made the decision to discontinue an every family callout as we did through Covid. We do still stay in touch with many in our congregation who are unable to attend service or join on Zoom; if you are not one of those people, or know of anyone who would like a call, please contact one of our team and we would be happy to do so. Through to the end of November we sent out 34 cards and 15 prayer shawls were given out. We are most grateful to those of you who contribute yarn and/or make the beautiful shawls that are so gratefully received. Since we don't know who all contribute to this I will not name anyone but know we are truly appreciative of your beautiful work.

Mary Boyd started a prayer circle which we are very happy to see going again, prayer is a very important part of our team mission.

Once monthly services at Wexford continued with a small number of their residents attending and enjoying the fellowship, and we are grateful to Tim for volunteering to play the piano for us. Gwen Boyd and Eveline de Koning provided special music for us at the December gathering and was enjoyed by everyone. Allison Abuloc assisted in the leadership at some of these gatherings. Some services were held at Eden Gardens earlier in the year but discontinued later on, unfortunately only Rev. Tif and Anna Parkin were available to attend those from Brechin but we are hopeful those will resume in the New Year.

During the year we hosted five Celebrations of Life, a thank you pot luck lunch for Hope Lutheran Church and assisted at the Grand Opening in April. Since these were the first events of their kind in our building they were learning experiences and we will continue to fine tune things as needed. Thank you to the very able people who worked so hard at them and to the extra people who come on board our team to assist at these events. We arranged a Newcomers event and hosted a Pastoral Care Workshop led by Rev. Tif, Allison Abuloc and Gloria Le Gal.

Thank you to the many folks who have been faithful greeters throughout the year; we continue to work with those people on having the collection of the offering go more smoothly and are most appreciative of your patience in what has seemed like an endless number of changes. It has taken a year to get to a place where we think we might now have it right!! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

A number of us gathered together to address Christmas cards for congregation members and passed them out at a service and mailed the remaining ones.

My wonderful team members this past year have been Rev. Tif, Gloria Le Gal, Barb O'Neill, Susan Ward, Mary Boyd, Linda Braid, Diane Morris and Marilyn Russell. All of us will be staying on and we will be welcoming back Jackie Little. We are hopeful that there are others in the congregation who would be interested in joining our team.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Huffman

MEN'S GROUP REPORT - 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year: The men's group is a men's social activity group with a service component, usually meeting monthly, with no age or circumstance restriction. Membership is free, open and flexible. The group re-convened in January of 2023 after a Covid-19 break. Highlights of the year included:

Travelogues: Canada/US, Newfoundland

Talks: Underwater photography, Anthropology, Aviation Safety, Astronomy, Artificial Intelligence

Service/Volunteering: Loaves and Fishes

Coffee and Muffin Get-togethers

A planned visit to Sagsitshun (Newcastle Island Marine Park) was cancelled due to a storm and will be re-scheduled next year.

Submitted by: John Bullas, Rob Russell, co-coordinators

WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP GROUP REPORT - 2023

Our group resumed meeting again in March with 27 women on our callout list. Events of note were Bonnie Haapala showing us and speaking about her stained glass process and showing some of her beautiful creations. We had a potluck lunch at the church in June and a final meeting in September. No one was willing to take on coordinating it and the group decided to disband Women's Friendship as we know it. The \$100.00 in our Bank account was donated to the Spiritual Growth Fund leaving a nil balance, and the money was accessed for the Women's Retreat in October at the Bethlehem Retreat Center. Our last meeting was in September.

A number of the women from the Women's Friendship group also attend the Ladies Who Brunch at Smitty's each month which is organized by Susanne Body and attended by a number of other women from the congregation as well; there are 26 women on Susanne's email list and from 10-21 attend depending on the month. Any women not presently on that list are most welcome to ask to be on it.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Huffman

WOMEN'S DAY RETREAT – 2023

Brechin's first Women's Day Retreat was held on a beautiful day October 4th at Bethlehem Center. Our facilitator was Lynn Haley.

The theme for the retreat was “Joy in the Journey”, focusing on bringing joy into our lives and seeing the joy in our lives. Time was spent in a group setting, small groups, and time for self. Lunch was well received and very good, provided by the retreat centre. We had 36 participants with one on the wait list. After a successful event, another retreat is planned for October 16th, 2024. Limiting to 30 participants.

Submitted by:
Linda Wilson

PRAYER CIRCLE REPORT - 2023

Brechin's Prayer Circle has continued to meet monthly over the past year. Diane Morris, Barb Curry and Peggy Jensen are members of the team. Reverend Tif joins us as often as her schedule permits. We offer prayers of support, healing, compassion, and love on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Prayers for justice and in solidarity are a regular component of our meetings as well. We meet on the third Tuesday of each month in the Chapel at Brechin.

Thank you to everyone who has contacted one of our team with personal, community and global concerns for prayer. We will continue to hold members of Brechin and our extended family in our prayers, along with those in our wider community here in Nanaimo and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Boyd
Coordinator, Prayer Circle

YOGA CLASSES AT BRECHIN REPORT - 2023

Classes began in January in our new building.

Each Monday morning 2 Yoga classes are offered. A Seniors Yoga class and a Chair Yoga class. These classes have been very well attended and at least 40 different people have come to the classes.

We are very grateful for this new space in the Arbutus room and also the cupboard space to store all the Yoga Equipment.

We have raised considerable funds for the church through donations from the students. Much gratitude to all the students.

Anne Harris Freed

COMMUNITY DRUM CIRCLES/UKULELE JAM – 2023

Highlights of the year: At the drum circles in the spring, the turnouts were smaller. There was a noise complaint from the building back in February. Val Neilson had a chat and a letter was sent to Tibor about the times run, etc. Since then, we have had no issues and moved back into the Arbutus room. The September drum circle saw our largest number at 22 participants. October and November dropped back down to our usual 10 to 12. I don't keep a record of donations but my guess is we contributed a little over \$500 to Brechin Outreach over 7 sessions.

In February, I made an announcement in church that we were starting a ukulele group with successful results. This is for fun and community building and not intended to raise donations.

We have usually 12 active participants. We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in the month. We even played a few numbers at our Christmas Carol Singalong. Val & Colleen, who are members, quite often accompany Tim on Sunday mornings.

Goals for the coming year: We will continue to have our drum circles the last Friday of the month for January, February, March, April, May, September, October, and November. Ukulele will continue as well with breaks at Christmas and summer.

Financial Activity: Approximately \$500. - \$600.

Submitted by: Richard Freed

PROPERTY TEAM REPORT - 2023

Property Team Report Highlights (or summary) of the year: 2023 has been a challenging year for the Property Team as we learned how to manage the modern technologies in the church building. All the systems in the building such as HVAC, lighting, washroom fixtures, kitchen equipment, security and AV capabilities required a lot of time to understand and master. With the assistance of the various trades for warranty issues and internet and You Tube searches team members learned how to manage the various systems. We tried, where possible, to take on routine maintenance tasks such as filter changes and battery replacement in the washrooms, to keep expenses under control.

A cleaning contractor, Simply the Best, was engaged to do the weekly cleaning tasks.

Matt Haapala took on the task of understanding the working of the audio-visual systems and has trained several volunteers on how to use the AV equipment for church services and live streaming.

The Property Team leader works with the Office Administrator to give prospective user groups an orientation to the building and its facilities and programs users and church

members for access to the building using a key fob or JustIN mobile app. A Task Force was struck in the spring to develop policies and user rates for our facilities.

The Property Team and church staff have developed an excellent working relationship with the management of The Residences at Brechin Hill.

Goals for the coming year: As we enter our second year in the building, we hope to train more team members on the building systems to have people available to troubleshoot issues, as necessary. As well we work on promoting our facilities to community groups. The Team will be monitoring the remediation of construction deficiencies identified with TL Housing. Work on the remediations should begin early in 2024.

Report of financial activity: Team members purchase required supplies as needed and submit receipts for payment.

Members: Keith Allen (team leader), Rob Russell, Kris Jensen, Bruce Wilson, Rob Stredulinsky, Randy Manikel, Matt Haapala

Submitted by: Keith Allen

REDEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT - 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year: Getting more comfortable with the new space and resolving some deficiency issues***significant media coverage and interest in the church and housing***awards won for new Vancouver Island commercial building including for our eco-friendly project***a memorable celebration for our Grand Opening***submitting a final list and photos of deficiencies to TownLine

Goals for the coming year: Although the redevelopment team has disbanded, there is still work done by other leadership teams in this area. We strive for continued relationship building between the church and the residents, and resolution of all deficiencies.

Report of financial activity: None

Members: Randy Manikel (co-chair), Kathy Torhjelm, Linda Braid, Keith Allen, Tif Bradford-McNaughton

Submitted by: Valerie Neilson

“FRIENDS OF BRECHIN” WALL REPORT – 2023

The “leaves” continue to grow on our “**Wall**” with an addition of 17 new leaves added throughout 2023. Donations received for this year were \$3,310., for a total of \$15,705. since the church building was completed.

We believe that many of us derive great pleasure and comfort in viewing **The Wall** and remembering the lives and contributions of devoted people who have served the ministries of Brechin United Church. Some of us have added the names of other “saints” who have played an important role in influencing our faith journeys. We invite anyone to add a name through the application form available in the office.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Manikel & Marg Barrie

FUNDRAISING EVENTS REPORT – 2023

Congratulations and many thanks to all those Brechin members and their friends and family members who made 2023 a very successful year with these “fun-raising” events: On May 13, 2023 “**Brechin Bargains**” took place outdoors. Thanks to the Worship team, many donations were set out on display for curious buyers who stopped by and took advantage of the deals. \$1,600 was raised that morning. The “**Back Pack**” outdoor barbecue and games event, on September 10, raised \$110 for Brechin. 😊

On Saturday afternoon, September 23, 2023, approximately 100 friends filled the Cedar and Birch rooms for our “**Live & Silent Dessert Auction.**” Delicious desserts, along with tea and coffee were served while guests visited and bid on 71 silent auction items. The highlight was listening to our two talented auctioneers, Randy and Rob, who did their very best to raise funds during the auctioning off of 17 items. The crowd was thoroughly entertained by the competitive bidders! Our grand total raised that day was just under \$9,500! Special thanks to everyone who made this event such a success. Our next auction will take place in 2025. 😊

December was another busy month with a **Christmas Singalong** on December 1, organized by Richard and Anne Harris Freed, their ukulele friends and Tim Weger, our Music Director. We also appreciated help from Angela who prepared the power point music for the crowd to follow. Donations were accepted at the door. 😊

Lastly, we were very grateful for our members and friends who baked and assisted with our Annual **Christmas Cookie Walk** on Saturday, December 2. Thankfully the weather cooperated and attracted a large number who chose from a variety of treats in the 90-minute period. With the donations collected Friday evening at the Singalong, along with Saturday’s Cookie Walk, Brechin raised \$2,670! Well done everyone! 😊 See you next December, 2024.

Submitted by: Linda Braid

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT – 2023

In 2023, we reviewed past services, taking note of constructive suggestions and doing our best to rectify things to make them more acceptable and more inclusive. We prepared for future services and events.

At our first meeting in January we decided that it would add to our service if we had a short “Time of Silence” before lighting the Christ Candle to prepare our hearts and minds for worship. We made some decisions concerning Brian Pankratz training. We approved Peggy spending some time with Jan Laurie to appropriately design our worship space. January 8th was the first Epiphany Star Dust Event. January 15th we blessed the Baptism bowl.

In February we approved the use of our facility for Taize in April, May and June. Rev. Bert Ramsey was our pulpit supply on February 12th. Rev. Tif introduced a Lenten Tenebrae and the weekly extinguishing of purple candles.

In March we began planning for the Grand Opening which took place April 29 (secular) & April 30 (church service). We decided we wanted to ask Rev. Randy Antle to be our guest speaker. Some members of the team cleaned up the chapel before the Grand Opening.

April 2nd we returned to “coming forward Communion”. Lent and Easter were very busy. Good Friday joint service with Trinity and St. Andrew’s was hosted by Brechin in 2023. Our student Allison prepared the service for the sunrise event at Kin Hut. We rang out the bells on Easter Sunday for the first time in our new space. Rev. Tif announced that she and her fiancé David would be getting married on July 6.

June 18th; what a wonderful day! We celebrated the transfer to our congregation of Stephen & Kathryn Baverstock, Marie Ducharme, Rob & Uli Stredulinsky, Jane Wiebe, Bruce & Linda Wilson. We followed this service with a picnic at Bowen Park which included a barbeque and celebratory cake. 50 people attended.

Linda prepared cards so people on PAR would have something to put on the offering plate.

In September Val prepared a new list of readers. We initiated this in order to give new people an opportunity to participate in worship. Minute for Mission is to be included in the service for the 3rd Sunday of the month. An acknowledgement of Birthdays and Anniversaries will be included in the service on the 1st Sunday of the month.

Back-Pack Sunday was September 10th. This service was followed by our Fall Picnic. This was our first picnic at 2020 Estevan. There was a very good attendance and a lot of fun.

On November 5th we hosted the Covenanting Service for Rev. Sarah Fanning and St. Andrew’s UC and Rev. John Helps and Cedar UC. Trinity UC also joined us.

Several of the Team members are attending the book study on “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going” lead by Rev. Tif.

We updated Worship Guidelines and Pamphlets.

The Blue Christmas service was at Cedar UC. Rev. Tif took part in this joint service. We would like to thank Rev., Bert Ramsey, Rev. Maxine Pirie, Brian Pankratz, Allison Abuloc, Rev. Anne Manikel, Rev. Randy Antle, the Brechin 4 Action Team and the Stewardship Team for their Pulpit Supply and Leadership in 2023. We thank Rev. Peggy and Rev. Kris Jensen for leading the Communion component of services when our students were leading. We would like to thank Rev. Gwen Boyd for providing remarkable devotionals for our meetings. We have had some wonderful special music over the year for which we are very thankful.

We had services on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

What is in our future? We will continue to strive to provide a meaningful and enjoyable worship experience for all who attend Brechin United Church, both in person and from home. We are very happy about our increased attendance and will endeavor to make the worship experience such that you will encourage others to come.

We are happy to turn over the organizing of our picnics and wiener roasts to the newly formed Fellowship Team.

Team members 2023 were: Rev. Tif McNaughton, Grace Skomorowski (Team Leader), Peggy Jensen (Recording Secretary), Val Neilson (Statistician), Tim Weger (Music Director), Gwen Boyd, Diane Thomas, Linda Wilson.

Respectfully submitted by: Grace Skomorowski

MUSIC REPORT – 2023

This past year has been an adventure I will always treasure. I love what I do, and I love the people with whom I do it – making music together, in worship to our loving Creator! It has been exciting re-arranging the new space, and working to decorate it in a way that is comfortable, and pleasing to the eye. We appreciate the strategic placing of banners, managed so efficiently, thanks to Doris Toms. In the latter part of the year, thanks to the donation of an anonymous donor, we were able to add to the choir risers, allowing for the continued growth that our own choir is experiencing, as well as making the space more marketable to other groups to rent.

The choir has grown to at least double in size to what it was at the end of last year and it continues to grow almost monthly. I now have 30 on my roster...if they all showed up at once, I believe our risers would be pretty full. We have an eclectic group of people who love to sing, who have varying degrees of expertise and talent. I am so grateful that we have a group willing to work together to help each other – including their leader (moi) who's ability to read notes is quite limited. Some of our members have faced challenges of one sort or the other, and others in the group have stepped in to help and support where/when they can. It truly is a family! I must acknowledge, and thank Val Neilson for stepping in to play notes that I don't read, and Charlotte Richardson for stepping in to

direct when I am too concentrated on playing the piano. Both Val and Charlotte also graciously help with note reading and timing, etc. Also, a huge thank you to Christine Robertson, our music librarian, who looks after all our distribution and collection of music, and the filing of it. She is a huge asset and does her job so efficiently and faithfully, without fanfare! Thank you as well to Richard Freed for his faithfulness on the drum, and John Bullas who has also done so on occasion when available. It adds so much!

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the sound and AV team, who weekly puts so much work and effort into providing this service to the entire congregation! Thank you to all involved!

During the summer months, July and August, the choir gets a break – with no Thursday night practices. However, I retained the Sunday morning 9:30 a.m. practice time, to practice for the service. I asked those who wish to make themselves available to come if they were able. We were blessed with at least half of our choir members continuing their leadership to the congregational singing on Sunday mornings.

We have been utilizing the talents and abilities of several within the congregation, for singing specials, and/or playing pre-music before our Sunday morning services. The addition of ukuleles in some songs adds a dimension and texture to our worship services. This has been a tremendous blessing to the congregation, and to those involved. Many thanks to all who participated, and gave of themselves.

The church has put much thought and contemplation into the use of our church organ. We had a professional from Calgary, come and assess what it would cost to get it cleaned, speakers repaired and hung to bring it to good working order. We found out it was going to cost around \$10,000 to do all that, and the decision was made to not go forward with such a costly endeavor given that we seldom use it (I can't play two instruments at once), and we have a keyboard with a beautiful organ sound. IF we can get a decent price for it, we would be interested in selling it and if not, then it is there for us to use when/if we needed it for special occasions.

Starting in the New Year, we will be working towards a fund-raiser April 27th, 2024. This will be an afternoon of music, song and decadent desserts. Keep your eyes and ears open for more news on this as tickets will be limited – but the fun will not be!

Many in the congregation have expressed how the choir is such an inspiration to them in their worship experience. Their joy and freedom of expression has and continues to permeate the sanctuary and provides an atmosphere of worship, involvement and blessing that they look forward to every week.

We will continue with more of the same in 2024, plus always looking forward to new adventures in music and worship, utilizing and promoting the talents and abilities of those within our congregation, as we all focus on bringing praise and glory to God, our creator!

Respectively submitted, by Tim Weger (Music Director)

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE TEAM REPORT – 2023

The newly revived Stewardship & Finance Team met for the first time in May of this year. Members include Anne Manikel, Terri Donaldson, Charlotte Richardson, Randy Manikel and Blaine Wilkins (Treasurer).

The responsibilities of the Team include: overseeing the resources of the church (both financial and human), encouraging contributions to these resources, supporting the Treasurer in providing detailed financial statements, identifying any financial concerns and drawing them to Council's attention, providing Stewardship education to the congregation and overseeing the financial management of Brechin's Mission & Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. Brechinites continue to strongly support the Mission & Service Fund with \$15,336. donated in 2023.

Each month, the S & F Team have met to review the financial statements prepared by the Treasurer, to plan and execute a comprehensive Stewardship Campaign, and to discuss ways in which Brechinites might be encouraged to further support the ministries of Brechin United Church. To this end, an updated Bequest Brochure was created and a monthly "Did You Know" financial snapshot was implemented. Generous bequests throughout the last five years have made all the difference in sustaining the ministry of Brechin, especially throughout the years of construction and Covid. During the campaign, Sunday services focused on a sermon about "Money and the Bible", as well as skits on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance), Legacy Giving and "An Attitude of Gratitude". Since the campaign the congregation has responded very well with the numbers of PAR donors increasing, as well as regular PAR users upping their monthly donations. The Stewardship & Finance Team are still very concerned about the pattern of annual deficits that have seriously increased the drain on Brechin's limited reserves.

This concern was brought to Council in November at a special meeting to discuss a variety of ways in which to ensure the ongoing viability of Brechin United Church through 2025. Council agreed to strike two working groups: to explore partnership possibilities with other communities of faith thus increasing our rental income, and to explore ways to attract newcomers thus increasing our donor base. Members of the congregation are invited to be a part of these groups.

The Stewardship and Finance Team would welcome any Brechin members or adherents who are comfortable with financial statements to augment our very small team.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Manikel, Team Leader

FELLOWSHIP TEAM – 2023

Highlights (or summary) of the year:

Being the first year for the Fellowship Team which was created in the fall, our only activity during the year was games night.

Goals for the coming year:

“Souper Sunday”, soup and bun in January

Games night will continue each month

Valentine’s event

Spring and Fall BBQ

Group outing

Report of financial activity: None

Members:

Linda Wilson - Chair

Bruce Wilson – Co-chair

Theo Johnstone

Submitted by: Linda Wilson

BRECHIN UNITED CHURCH TRUSTEES – 2023

Lloyd Robert Russell
204-5620 Edgewater Lane
Nanaimo, B. C. V9T 6K1
(250) 758-4084

Beverely Diane Thomas
6861 Schook Road
Nanaimo, B. C. V9V 1A1
(250) 390-1899

Kathleen Winona Torhjelm
945 Highview Terrace
Nanaimo, B. C. V9R 6K5
(250) 753-5778

Judith Anne Wiebe
5212 Fillinger Crescent
Nanaimo, B. C. V9V 1H7
(250) 729-0680

NOMINATIONS REPORT– 2024

CHURCH COUNCIL:

Term Expires End of:

Chairperson – Gloria Le Gal	2025
Vice Chairperson – Darlene Darby	2025
Secretary – Eileen Carolan	2025
Treasurer – Blaine Wilkins	2026
Past Chairperson – Rob Russell	2025
Pacific Mountain Region Reps:	
– Susan Ward	2025
– Kathryn Baverstock	2027/2030
Alternate: – VACANT	2024

Team Leaders:

Faith Formation & Spiritual Development – Darlene Darby	2025
Ministry & Personnel – Linda Braid	2025
Brechin 4 ACTION – Lynn Burrows	2024
Pastoral Care – Marilyn Huffman	2026
Property – Keith Allen	2024/2027
Stewardship & Finance – Anne Manikel	2026
Worship – Grace Skomorowski	2026

Trustees – Kathy Torhjelm, Rob Russell, Diane Thomas, Judy Wiebe

Council Team Members:

Faith Formation & Spiritual Development – Darlene Darby, Gwen Boyd, Anne Manikel, Suzanne Sykes

Ministry & Personnel – Linda Braid, Chris Carolan, Eileen Carolan, Leah Caitlin, Kathy Torhjelm

Brechin 4 ACTION – Lynn Burrows, Marg Barrie, John Bullas, Colleen Crossland, Pauline Johnson, Anne Nesbitt, Shelley Serebrin, Mark Jarvis, Scott Boyd

Pastoral Care – Marilyn Huffman, Mary Boyd, Linda Braid, Gloria Le Gal, Jackie Little, Diane Morris, Barb O'Neill, Marilyn Russell, Susan Ward

Property – Keith Allen, Kris Jensen, Randy Manikel, Rob Russell, Rob Stredulinsky, John Ward

Stewardship & Finance – Anne Manikel, Blaine Wilkins (Treasurer), Terry Donaldson, Randy Manikel, Charlotte Richardson

Worship – Grace Skomorowski, Gwen Boyd, Peggy Jensen, Val Neilson, Diane Thomas, Linda Wilson, Tim Weger (Music Staff), Tif Bradford-McNaughton (Clergy)

Other Teams &/or Contact Persons:

Communications – Doug Cochrane (website), Ian Gartshore (Facebook), Matt Haapala (AV), Marilyn Huffman (Bulletin)

Fellowship – Linda and Bruce Wilson

Library – Suzanne Sykes, Darlene Darby

Loaves & Fishes Foodbank – Kathy Torhjelm, Linda Braid, Doug Cochrane

Men's Group – John Bullas

Reaching Out – Tim Weger

ROAR (Reaching Out Assisting Refugees) – Blaine Wilkins, Anne Manikel

Yoga – Anne Harris-Freed

Drumming – Richard Freed

Ukulele – Richard Freed

PLEASE NOTE: All of our teams are working extremely hard and would welcome fresh hands and hearts to carry out the various ministries of Brechin United Church. Please consider where your gifts and interests lie, then contact the Team Leader with your questions or offerings of support.

Brechin United Church

Balance Sheet as at 12/31/2023

ASSET

Current Assets

Petty Cash	171.25	
Chequing Bank Account	<u>5,701.44</u>	
Total Cash		5,872.69
Investments		203,210.19
GST Receivable	<u>673.34</u>	
Total Receivable		673.34
Total Current Assets		<u>209,756.22</u>

**Note 1*

Capital Assets

Property	<u>347,000.00</u>
Total Capital Assets	<u>347,000.00</u>

TOTAL ASSET	<u><u>556,756.22</u></u>
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LIABILITY

Current Liabilities

Total Current Liabilities	<u>0.00</u>
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Trust Accounts

Building fund	26,435.08	
The Spiritual Growth Fund	460.05	
Mission & Service	0.00	
Loaves & Fishes	0.00	
Memorial Funds	4,868.20	
The Piemakers' Fund	0.00	
The Legacy Fund	63,205.82	
Brechin4Action Fund	462.56	
Workshops & Events Grants	8,311.50	
Ladies Friendship Group Fund	0.00	
Nanaimo Community Refugee Fund	79,621.53	
Total Trust Funds		<u>183,364.74</u>
Total Current liabilities		<u>183,364.74</u>

**Note 2*

TOTAL LIABILITY	<u>183,364.74</u>
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EQUITY**Retained Earnings**

Retained Earnings - Previous Year	373,391.48
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Total Retained Earnings	<u>373,391.48</u>
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TOTAL EQUITY	<u>373,391.48</u>
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LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u><u>556,756.22</u></u>
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5 Year Comparison of Revenue and Expenses

	Actual 2019	Actual 2020	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	Actual 2023
Revenue					
Donations to Local Expenses & Open Offerings	135,123	126,065	115,050	111,155	131,285
Bequests	20,000				
Facility Rentals, Fundraising and Other Revenue	19,458	27,754	28,386	46,068	33,741
Total Operating Revenue	174,581	153,819	143,436	157,223	165,026
Revenue from Fund Accounts	25,471	29,930	45,828	44,239	33,910
Total Revenue	200,052	183,749	189,264	201,462	198,936
Expenses					
Overhead	39,570	37,731	35,932	36,929	42,421
Payroll	148,140	140,132	145,845	155,085	146,820
General & Administrative	12,342	5,886	7,488	9,448	9,695
Total Operating Expense	200,052	183,749	189,264	201,462	198,936
Total Expense	200,052	183,749	189,264	201,462	198,936
Surplus or Deficit	0	0	0	0	0

Donation Details

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# Identified Donors to Local Expenses	108	102	91	96	122
# Donors enrolled in Preauthorized Remittance	53	51	51	48	56
Bequests Received	20,000			99,261	
Donations to the Mission & Service Fund	26,023	24,177	18,301	15,426	15,366
# Identified Donors to the Mission & Service Fund	68	56	45	45	48
Donations to Loaves & Fishes Food Bank	10,745	10,132	7,852	5,830	5,925

Notes to 2023 Financial Statements

*Note 1 - Investments

Opening Balance Jan 1, 2023	211,903
Redeemed or Matured Investments	223,903
New Investments Purchased	215,210
Closing Balance Dec 31, 2023	203,210

Type of Investment	Maturity	Rate	Amount
One Year Non-Redeemable	Jan 4, 2024	4.25%	10,000
One-Year Cashable	Jul 29, 2024	Variable	51,275
One-Year Non-Redeemable	Jul 31, 2024	5.00%	10,935
One-Year Non-Redeemable	Jul 31, 2024	5.00%	75,000
One-Year Non-Redeemable	Jul 31, 2024	5.00%	25,000
One-Year Cashable Prime-linked	Oct 23, 2024	Variable	6,000
One-Year Cashable Prime-linked	Dec 22, 2024	Variable	15,000
One-Year Cashable Prime-linked	Dec 29, 2024	Variable	10,000
Total Investments:			203,210

*Note 2 - Trust Funds

	Opening Balance Jan 01, 2023	Receipts to fund	Withdrawals from fund	Closing Balance Dec 31, 2023
Restricted Funds				
Mission & Service Fund	0	15,371	15,371	0
Loaves & Fishes Fund	0	6,473	6,473	0
Nanaimo Community Refugee Fund	69,444	33,429	23,251	79,622

	Opening Balance Jan 01, 2023	Receipts to fund	Withdrawals from fund	Closing Balance Dec 31, 2023
Unrestricted Funds				
Building Fund	28,519	6,449	8,533	26,435
Legacy Fund	97,116	0	33,910	63,206
Memorial Fund	4,868	0	0	4,868
Spiritual Growth Fund	972	100	612	460
Brechin4Action Fund	3,023	4,281	6,841	463
Workshop & Events Fund	0	8,311	0	8,311
Pie Makers' Fund	852	0	852	0
Fellowship Group Fund	57	211	268	0

Trust Funds held separately from Brechin operating funds

Restricted Funds:

Donations made for specific purposes which are collected and regularly forwarded to other charitable organizations.

1) **The Mission & Service Fund**

Donations received are forwarded monthly to the United Church of Canada.

2) **Loaves & Fishes Fund**

Donations received are forwarded monthly to the Loaves & Fishes Community Food Bank (Nanaimo).

3) **Nanaimo Community Refugee Fund**

Donations received must be held in trust and are currently used exclusively for the support of LGBTQ refugees through Brechin's affiliation with ROAR (Reaching Out Assisting Refugees).

Unrestricted Funds:

These are funds which have been received by donations, grants, gifts or bequests that are held for use as directed by the Council and Trustees of Brechin United Church:

1) **Building Fund**

This fund originated many years ago as a way to finance repairs to our old church building. Currently these funds are used for the purchase of furniture and equipment. Going forward, there may be additional purchases to be made from this fund for modifications to the space. Any unspent money in this fund can be used for operating expenses in the future.

2) **Memorial Fund**

This fund was established to receive gifts in memory of departed members that could be used primarily for the purchase of permanent items in our church.

3) **Spiritual Growth Fund**

This fund was formed by a family gift to be used to allow congregation members to study or attend special events pertaining to spiritual growth.

4) **Brechin4Action Fund**

This fund accepts grants and other revenue which is used to mount special workshops attended by the community at large for such things as Reconciliation and Climate Action.

5) **Workshop & Events Fund**

This fund was established to account for grants and revenue to fund other congregational events, other than those led by the Brechin 4 Action Team.

6) **Pie Maker's Fund**

This fund furnished most of the kitchen ware and equipment in the new building and is now depleted and has been collapsed.

7) **Fellowship Group Fund**

In the past, this group has donated money for various concerns. The group raises funds in many ways and disburses money at the group's direction.

***Note 3 - Legacy Fund**

This fund was established to receive bequests. In order to fund the 2023 deficit, an amount of \$33,910 was taken from the Legacy Fund as operating Revenue. This is the reason that even though Brechin had a year-end deficit of \$33,910, the 2023 Income Statement shows as Net \$0. Profit/Loss.

***Note 4 – 2024 Budget Deficit**

We have forecast a deficit for 2024. However, with the recent formation of two Working Groups tasked with exploring ways to increase Brechin's visibility in the community and ways to increase revenues from facility rentals, we are addressing this deficit with the goal of breaking even by the end of 2024.

Brechin United Church Revenue & Expenses 2022 & 2023 and 2024 Budget

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
REVENUE			
Revenue			
Local Contributions	109,494	126,295	133,000
Open donations	1,661	4,990	5,500
Weddings and Funerals	872	622	700
Special Events & Fundraising	8,943	14,086	14,000
Miscellaneous Revenues	467	2,537	2,000
Donor Wall	11,395	3,461	4,000
Restorative Care Program Revenue	22,830	0	0
Facility Rentals	0	7,995	12,000
Investment Income	1,561	5,040	4,000
Total Operating Revenue	<u>157,223</u>	<u>165,027</u>	<u>175,200</u>
Revenue from Legacy Fund	17,017	33,910	*Note 3
Revenue from Transitional Exp. Fund	27,223		
Total Revenue From Funds	<u>44,239</u>	<u>33,910</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>201,462</u>	<u>198,937</u>	<u>175,200</u>
EXPENSE			
Overhead Expenses			
Moving & Temporary Space Expense	20,118	549	0
Electricity	2,215	4,386	4,500
Equipment Service & Agreements	919	1,140	2,000
Insurance	3,608	9,528	10,500
Janitorial Supplies	316	1,583	1,600
Contract Janitorial Services	660	14,827	15,000
UCC & Region Assessments	6,512	5,108	5,750
Repair & Maintenance General	0	1,908	3,000
Telephone & Internet Expense	2,582	1,340	1,500
Shared Building Expense	0	1,978	3,000
Kitchen Supplies	0	76	300
Total Overhead Expense	<u>36,929</u>	<u>42,421</u>	<u>47,150</u>

Payroll Expenses

Wages & Salaries	103,096	100,247	94,654
Contracted Music Services	20,295	18,150	19,000
Wedding & Funeral Compensation	200	0	300
Minister Travel Expense	1,853	855	1,000
Minister's Continuing Ed & Book Exp	1,555	1,227	1,640
Employee Benefits	26,097	23,813	25,840
Pulpit Supply	1,989	2,528	3,000
Total Payroll Expense	155,085	146,820	145,434

General & Administrative Expenses

Newspaper Advertising expense	367	0	0
Bulletins, Inserts & Service Supplies	291	351	300
Website Expense	207	90	300
Envelope & Stewardship	486	499	0
Sunday School & Christian Develop't	0	575	500
Office Expenses	2,493	2,600	2,600
Bank Charges	442	422	425
Broadview Magazine Expense	15	0	100
Fellowship Pastoral Care	55	60	125
M&P Committee Exp	73	28	125
Miscellaneous Expense	2,724	2,394	2,500
Library Expense	0	225	225
Music Expense	429	429	500
Brechin4Action Committee Expense	100	131	200
Subscription Expense	76	122	125
Bookkeeping and Payroll Expenses	1,690	1,770	2,100
Total General & Administrative	9,448	9,695	10,125

TOTAL EXPENSE	201,462	198,937	202,709
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NET INCOME	0	0 <i>*Note 3</i>	-27,509 <i>*Note 4</i>
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Respectfully submitted by:
Blaine Wilkins
Treasurer