

**St. Albert United Church
Annual Report
2020 – 2021**



Our Mission:

As followers of Jesus, we cultivate spaces where everyone has room to grow; we share God's hope for the Earth.

**Annual General Meeting
June 20, 2021**

Our Staff

Ministers: Rev. Mervin Gallant & Rev. Deborah Hoekstra

Office Administrator: Laurie Symbaluk

Treasurer: Sandy Skogstad

Music Director: Margaret Ward-Jack

Organist: Donna Graham



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Table of Contents

Minutes of AGM Nov. 2020	1
Rev. Mervin Gallant	2
Rev. Deborah Hoekstra	3
Council	4
Property Committee	5
Board of Trustees	6
Worship & Education Committee	7
United Church Women	9
Outreach Committee	9
Music Ministry	10
Ministry and Personnel	11
Rites of Passage	11
Community Refugee Committee of St. Albert	12
Living in Right Relations	13
Broadview Discussion	13
Finance Report	14
Affirm Team	14
Budget	16



Annual GM Minutes Nov. 2020

In person and by Zoom

Chair Troy Sartison called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. welcoming all present in person and electronically.

Rev. Mervin Gallant opened the meeting with prayer.

Appointment of Recording Secretary: Motion: to appoint Susan Waldie, Board Secretary, as recording secretary for the Annual Meeting of St. Albert United Church, November 15, 2020. Moved by Frank Parker, seconded by Alice Hinds. Carried

Troy Sartison led the congregation in the Holy Manners Covenant.

Appointment of Parliamentarian: Motion: to appoint Holly Parker Parliamentarian for the Annual Meeting of St. Albert United Church, November 15, 2020. Moved by Val Ellis, seconded by Vi Oko. Carried

Confirmation of Quorum: Holly Parker asked for a show of hands of membership present. Quorum established.

Extension of Privileges to Adherents: Motion: that the members present grant voting privileges to adherents present for the business of the Annual Meeting, November 15, 2020. Moved by Robert McDonald, seconded by Bruce Partington. Carried

Approval of Agenda: Motion: to approve the agenda as presented. Moved by Janice McGregor, seconded by Mike Anhorn. Carried

Approval of the minutes: Motion: to approve the minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting of

St. Albert United Church, November 17, 2019. Moved by Lionel Larcombe, seconded by Nelda Arnst. Carried

Motion: to appoint Betty Welsby, Susan Waldie, and Ken Hutchinson as representatives from St. Albert United Church to Northern Spirit Regional Council and to grant the SAUC Council the authority to appoint a fourth representative. Moved by Wendy Poirier, seconded by Larry Wyatt. Carried

Troy Sartison thanked all persons who have contributed to the work and worship of St. Albert United Church. Special thanks were given to Betty Welsby -retiring from SAUC council, Beryl Watson – retiring from her position finding readers and service assistants, and Kathie Zalasky – retiring from leading the United in Bronze bell choir.

Report from Finance: On a prerecorded message, Ken Hutchinson reported on the current financial position of St. Albert United Church. He then responded to questions.

Approval of the Budget: Motion: to approve the budget for the year July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 as presented. Moved by Ken Hutchinson, seconded by Lionel Larcombe. Carried

Minister's Report: Rev. Mervin gave a heartfelt thank you to everyone for all their support during the past months. He and Rev. Deborah have appreciated it more than we can know.

Closing Prayer: Rev. Mervin Gallant provided the closing prayer.

Motion to Adjourn moved by Dave Patterson. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.



Rev. Merwin Gallant

My first thought about an annual report for the past 12 months was tongue in cheek – “Create YouTube (or later livestream) worship; Zoom; Zoom; Zoom; Zoom... (oops forgot one)... Zoom! Repeat weekly!”

As true and mind numbing as that summary is at one level, it would miss the many meaningful interactions that those technological marvels afforded us. For those with access, there was the weekly connection and inspiration of the holy that made its way through the glitches and occasional frozen screen. The myriad Zoom meetings represented personal (albeit virtual) connections over coffee, in Bible study and UCW meetings, in discussion groups and book studies. We had phone calls to check in with each other and to provide pastoral care. There were remote gatherings for meetings where important community decisions could be made and planning sessions that kept us in contact with the broader community groups and organizations that we have traditionally supported.

Yet, there is no doubt that the last year and a half has put a strain on us as individuals and as a community of faith. Not being able to gather in physical community takes its toll and each one of us is affected differently, which requires compassion, patience and persistence in our efforts to support and encourage each other. I know one of my biggest concerns about the past year is for those who are falling through the cracks – especially those in our community of faith who were not able to access any of the above mentioned technological possibilities.

As governments are beginning to lay out their re-opening plans, we as a congregation also need to consider how we will approach the future. There are familiar customs and opportunities that we long to reinstate as soon as possible. Yet, we know in our heart of hearts, the future will insist on changes to meet the real needs that have been revealed and/or have developed as the pandemic has persisted.

Regathering physically may be reinstated on some particular date, but psychologically how will

we respond? How soon will we be comfortable in large crowds? We may jump at the chance to hug a family member, but what about proximity to a stranger without a mask? We may gladly get up earlier and travel to the church for a 10:00 AM worship service, but how will we support those who feel more comfortable accessing the livestream or tape of the service from their own home? Part of us wants to get back to “normal,” but what parts of the slower pace of the pandemic time do we want to nurture moving forward or what lessons have fermented about social inequities do we want to discard to make the future an improvement over the past?

These questions and more can be addressed as part of a review of our SAUC vision statement and goals as a congregation that Church Council already has on its agenda for the fall. It will be important for as many people as possible to participate in the process that has yet to be planned. We may be tired after long months of restrictions and separation but as we emerge into whatever new reality lies ahead, we will need to be invigorated by the Spirit of God’s love. The vision of Christ’s concern for the most marginalized and vulnerable amongst us must guide us into a renewed future if the church is to take up our mission to help transform the world into the divine vision of the Kin_dom of God.

That being said, I know that there are many people who have been helping us do exactly that in the past and throughout the pandemic. I do not have space to name everyone who has given of themselves above and beyond to ensure the church not only survived but thrived over this past year and a half. Folks who looked after the physical plant of our building, the team of volunteers who ensured worship and Sunday school and pastoral care continued as best we could, the amazing technicians who enabled us to continually improve our communications, and all of you who figured out the technology enough to join us in worship, study and caring for one another. Last, but not least, I thank our staff team who gave their all and supported each other.

Blessings!!!

Merwin Gallant



*Rev. Deborah
Hoekstra*

Because of COVID-19 and other challenges, this has been a time of constant change, a time of uncertainty, a time of reevaluating what it means to be church and community. As we have entered the second year of pandemic times the church has been reminded it has a broad mission not confined to any one place or time.

Leading to lockdowns and the need to stay at least six feet apart and to wear masks, the pandemic has caused us to question what is essential in our personal life, our church life and our faith life out in the world. We have faced grief and loss and disappointment. There have been financial changes. There have also been wonderful and creative ways in which ministry and community has happened and continues to evolve.

We have been vividly reminded that church is much more than a building or a collection of buildings. The church of Christ, reflected in the community of faith that is St. Albert United Church, is grounded in love, justice, compassion, and radical hospitality. As such it is called to minister with folks inside the building and with God in the world beyond its walls.

We have found new ways to be open to the Holy Spirit, to discern where God is calling us, and to creatively pursue this ministry in ever-changing times. We have needed to question what the church will look like in the future, how our world will rearrange itself, and what our place will be in it.

Meanwhile, many of us have been asking how we should respond to the call of God going forward. The question before us is: "What are the core things that we believe God has called us to do together, and how can we accomplish those things in new ways, given our current realities?"

This means that most of our usual church activities have not occurred. When we think of ministry at St. Albert United Church, we have known that it is not only what happens within the walls of the church but what inspires us to take our faith beyond the walls out into our community. That has been the gift of these months.

Although we have not been able to meet in person as a faith community, we have stayed connected, shared our blessings and sorrows, gifted each other with prayers, phone calls, deck visits, cards and letters and virtually held each other in the palms of our hands.

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter. Perhaps this has been the year in which we have had an opportunity to rethink our priorities both in our personal lives and in our call to faithful discipleship. When it is safe and viable to do so, we will take with us new learnings and leave behind the things which have weighed us down and held us back.

I would like to thank all those who have provided leadership during these unprecedented times as well as the entire congregation for their acceptance of our COVID responses. From the Church Council to UCW, to musicians and singers, to AV and property folks, to finance and rental teams, to Sunday School programmers and worship leaders, to gardeners and sanctuary decorators, to volunteers of all ages serving on circles, teams and committees, THANK YOU!

To each one who has tuned to YouTube, live-stream worship services, joined a Zoom meeting or gathering, I am so pleased you have found comfort and connection.

On a personal note, I want to express my appreciation for the understanding and support I received from Church Council and the Ministry and Personnel folks as I experienced a health crisis. I want to say a particular "thank you" to Rev. Mervin Gallant who supported me with grace and compassion during my extended medical leave.

Thank you to Laurie Symbaluk as she continues to support the work of ministry.

To Amy Bautista, the creative force behind engaging the children and young families of this church in learning about faithful living. To Margaret Ward-Jack and Donna Graham for finding the ways to enjoy music during live-stream worship.

As we move into a church year here at St. Albert United Church, I am open to new experiences and full of anticipation for the coming year. We will still have to deal with online and live-stream worship and zoom meetings/bible studies, but we are also beginning to look at how we may be church once we gather again in-person for worship, study, support and play.

I pray for your well being especially in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. I urge you to stay connected with God in your own way while public worship is suspended. (ex .take time to pray, read and engage scripture; take in live-stream and on-line worship services, walk with the Spirit in natural surroundings). Stay safe and be kind on yourselves and others, not letting the stress and worry of these days keep you from living Christ-like lives in your homes, in your neighbourhoods and with family and friends.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Deborah M. Hoekstra



Council Report June 2021

Wash, rinse, repeat! The past year has been a trying time for everyone as we all do our part to end the COVID-19 pandemic and to return to a pre-Covid world. Our daily routines have been greatly changed and we have all learned to adapt to a world where masks and social distancing are the rule of the day.

We have all been forced to make great sacrifices during this worldwide crisis and even though we are all feeling various degrees of Covid fatigue, we can finally see an end to this pandemic on the horizon as vaccinations continue steadily.

Throughout the pandemic, St Albert United has continued to be a community of friends and worshippers who have continued to care for one another, and the work of the church has continued regardless of whether our building was open or closed.

Council, and other church groups have continued to meet virtually and our Worship and Ministry team has continued to find ways to bring our community together in worship.

Last summer, the Re-Open Team at SAUC came up with a carefully considered plan to restart in-person worship and we were able to accommodate small groups safely through most of the fall until the second wave of the virus forced us to close once again. The ministry team and the dedicated A/V team at the church found ways to share these services virtually as well and once our internet upgrade was completed in January, we were able to start live-streaming services.

At times, the learning curve has been steep as we have sought to embrace these new technologies and we have appreciated everyone's patience as we try to refine the quality of the broadcasts. Besides adding a second, portable camera to the sanctuary, we have also expanded the sound booth at the back of the sanctuary to accommodate an additional person and the necessary equipment to produce the worship services.

As you can imagine, most of the work that council has done this past year has been centered around our response to Covid-19 and the challenges that the pandemic has created, but we have also tried to keep an eye on the future of our church. Though we have had to table discussions for the past few months, council plans to go through a visioning process with our congregation. It has been a few years since we have done an exercise like this and it is time to focus on plotting our course for the future so stay tuned for more news this fall.

Our partnership with the Community Refugee Committee of St Albert, (CRCSA) continues and we are getting closer to the arrival of the two sponsored families. Their fundraising efforts are ongoing and progressing nicely.

Another area which council has focused on is the pastoral care within our community of faith. We know that many of us have been feeling isolated and that staying connected with one another is both difficult and necessary. We continue to seek ways to connect with those who are unable to connect online,

and we have several ideas which we hope to initiate in the near future.

With the end of this fiscal year, the terms of three of the members of council will be coming to an end as well. We would like to recognize and profoundly thank Cheryl Watson, Donna Wyatt and Nelda Arnst for their valued contributions serving on council these past years. You will be missed around our virtual table. We will be seeking to fill these vacancies on council, and we encourage anyone who is interested to reach out to express their interest.

As this challenging year comes to an end, I would like to say thank you to the amazing, generous, dedicated, tireless, loving, and faith-filled people who make St Albert United Church such a special place. Through difficult times, your energy and your caring for one another continues to inspire and astound me and I am grateful to call SAUC my church home.

I pray that over the next few months, the vaccinations and other measures continue to lead us toward a time when we can, once again, fill our sanctuary and worship side by side.

Blessings from SAUC Council,

Troy Sartison (Chair)
Susan Waldie (Secretary)
Cheryl Watson
Nelda Arnst
Donna Wyatt
Stephen Fitzpatrick
Mike Anhorn
Ken Hutchinson



Property Committee 2019–2020

This past year has been a very trying year for everyone but your property team has kept smiling, most of the time, and been working hard on various projects to ensure the Church, inside and outside, is well maintained.

- A new winter contract was required in late 2020 for snow removal and we feel, as properties, that the contractor did a fabulous job! (You may not all have recognized this with the Church being closed.)
- We then were required to take a look at putting a contract in place for the spring, summer and fall grounds maintenance. (Decided against utilizing volunteers to help with this due to the Covid situation.) A tender was put out for this contract and then, prior to acceptance, the team decided to put an addendum to the contract which would then include Winter Snow removal. This in turn makes all grounds maintenance mesh with only one contractor involved. We were very successful and now have a two year contract with Do-All Landscaping Company.
- Preventative maintenance is carried out by the team every month and so far so good – no big issues or concerns.
- We have taken a look at the defibrillator heart machine and replaced the pads with new pads. Another set of pads will be ordered in a few months. Reason for this was to try and obtain a new set of pads that show a different end date. This method was recommended by the company.
- We have trimmed the bottom few branches of the fir tree at the front door of the Church and it looks so much better. This trimming will deter the garbage build up, which was unpleasant, from under the tree.
- Bob Poirier kindly visited the Church every day during the cold weather to ensure the mechanics of the facility were all working and in order. Thank you Bob.

- A new emergency light has been installed in the office.
- A solar panel has been installed on the shed which will give more light inside when needed.
- The security camera with electric door lock, outlined in last years' report, has been installed for office staff safety.

We, properties, have worked extremely hard and diligently to keep your Church building in good order so that you, the congregation, will have a facility that is comfortable and friendly to worship in when COVID-19 is finally behind us and the Church once again opens its doors for worship. We are aware that a "building" is not actually the church, the people are the church, but isn't it wonderful to have the capability to worship in a well maintained facility!

Mike Anhorn
 Bob Poirier
 Gordon Welsby
 Neil Lonsbury
 Myra Lonsbury, Coordinator



The Board of Trustees

The current Trustees for St. Albert United Church are Bruce Partington (Chair), Susan Waldie (Secretary), Iris Chodan, Howard Johnson, Michael Anhorn, Robert Poirier, Bobbee Healy and Revs. Mervin Gallant/Deborah Hoekstra.

The role of the Board of Trustees is an oversight role. When things are being taken care of well, the Trustees have a minor role in the life and work of the church.

This past year has been that kind of a year. Thank you to all the volunteer hours that made this possible. A special thank-you to all the members of SAUC that have adjusted to the new COVID-19 world and the challenges that it have come with it.

The Board of Trustees works with the Property Committee to look after our building and grounds. The day-to-day operation and maintenance of the church property is the responsibility of the Property Committee. In the fall the trustees and members of the Property committee have a joint walk around to note anything that might require attention (due to COVID-19 the walkabout was postponed for 2020.) The trustees worked thru a drainage agreement (similar to the agreement developed for the same scenario in 2017) with the contractor building a new dwelling to the west of our property. Thanks to members of the congregation who continue to step up with special call funds to finance the replacement of the much needed property upgrades, specifically upgrades to the AV system that allowed for our ministry team to provide zoom meetings/services thru the pandemic. Kudos and a huge thank-you to all the committees and ministry personal who put in unimaginable endless hour to facilitate the continued operations of St Albert United Church..

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees,

Bruce Partington



Worship & Education Committee

Committee Members: Amy Bautista, Stephen Fitzpatrick (Council representative), Rev. Mervin Gallant, Donna Graham, Rev. Deborah Hoekstra, Holly Parker (Chair), Wendy Poirier, Margaret Ward-Jack, Betty Welsby. Ad Hoc Members: Lori Sartison, Donna Ward, Audrey Zalasky

This past 2020-21 church year has been a time of adaptation, change, and flexibility.

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed us to approach services and fellowship in a whole new way. The closure of the church building from July through September was followed by a limited reopening with reduced attendance, but then a second closure in November. We quickly adapted to these changes with recorded services from our Ministers' homes at first, then from a closed sanctuary before being able to live-stream our services as of mid-January 2021.

Thankfully, **Rev. Mervin** and **Rev. Deborah** were both willing to continue to venture outside their respective comfort zones to create online services via YouTube! This became much easier once they learned how to lengthen the recording time beyond 15 minutes, but they (and we) are especially grateful for the switch to live streaming of worship.

Thank you to our resident web expert **Kathy Hutchinson** for her work in having our services available on the website Sunday mornings plus archival services that can be watched at any-time. Thank you to **Elizabeth Anderson** for her posting to and management of our Facebook site.

We will continue to worship online as we await increased vaccinations/lower case counts so we can safely worship together in person again but are committed to continuing our live streaming in order to reach beyond our walls. The Audio/Visual system is becoming more complicated as we do more with the system.

The committee is proposing an honorarium for an AV Technician to run the AV equipment for services (Sundays, Christmas, Easter, etc) with a volunteer as an assistant.

HUGE thank you to **Wade Hayden** and **Lionel Larcombe** for their volunteer work recording services earlier in the year and now managing the live streaming. A separate camera has been added to allow for different image/angles during the services. Thank you to **Luke Sartison** for manning this camera. Rev. Mervin and **Troy Sartison** are also thanked for their uploading of services in the time between the YouTube videos and live streaming.

We want to recognize **Amy Bautista**, for her leadership in our Sunday School and Youth ministry programs and Time for All Ages story recordings. HUGE thank you to Amy for all she has done and continues to do for the children.

The "Virtual Vacation Bible School - Imagination Station" ran in late July with 23 children in 'attendance' wearing their artist berets and putting their "Creation Crate" art supplies to good use. They jumped online each morning to worship, sing, pray, and get their inspiration for art! At the end of the morning, they met together online to talk about their learning and their creative ideas. They celebrated at the end of the week with a physically distanced church parking lot art show. Thank you to: **Amy Bautista** (VBS director), **Deirdre Brown** (off-camera music master), **Betty Welsby** (beret sewer and Creation Crate preparer), **Deborah Hoekstra** (Creation Crate preparer), **Kathie Zalasky** (Creation Crate preparer), **Percy Zalasky** (art show table mover), and **all the Imagination Station Parents** who took time each day to make great art and learning happen for their children remotely - this was only possible with their support.

Our Sunday School year was online but still so much fun! The children's fall program focused on the Beatitudes with the Time for All Ages stories matching up with the online lessons.

The Advent/Christmas program was ambitious with families receiving a craft box to create their own Advent wreath, Sunday lessons about 4 Advent candles, a Wednesday evening Advent candle lighting with Rev. Mervin (and other interested church members), and lighting the Christ Candle during the online PJ service on Christmas Eve. Special activity packages were also picked up by families for use during the PJ service.

In 2021, Amy collaborated with **Shannon Brink** from the Christian Reformed Church for music and activities shared by both children's programs. Coronado-Gibbons United Church, Sedgewick Church, and Grace United Church children's programs are also sharing the same programs. In January and February, the focus was on the miracle stories. March and early April focused on the Lent/Easter stories with a Padlet challenge for the 40 days of Lent and an Easter kit based on the Resurrection Egg. Thank you to **Janice McGregor** for her excellent work supervising the Lenten Padlet experience. Post-Easter sessions were all on the Lord's Prayer. Rev. Deborah prepared a mid-week bible study for kids from mid-May to mid-June.

The Youth program (Grades 7 - 12) has been in a 'pause' mode for this past church year. The program is event-based, activity-based, Sunday-morning-in-person-based rather than zoom-based for the youth and leadership who have been very zoom-based in other aspects of their lives this year. They are all looking forward to resuming their in-person activities when allowed. Rev. Mervin has done regular messaging with some of the youth through the year.

Worship throughout the year has been supported by many volunteers who so willingly offered their time and gifts to our worship experiences when we were allowed to meet in-person plus some providing their help as part of the Sunday service in-church team for online worship: sanitizers, greeters, ushers, service assistants, readers, storytellers, lay leadership leaders, musicians, communion coordinators, communion assistants, communion servers,

baptismal assistants, audio/visual and sound technicians, sanctuary decorators, vocal and handbell choristers, banner and flag attendants, and those who tidy the sanctuary after each service on Sunday. Thank you for these contributions of time, talent and treasure – ensuring that St. Albert United is a vibrant, welcoming church. In addition, many thanks to all the Lay Leaders (**Val Ellis, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Holly Parker, Troy Sartison, Susan Waldie, Betty Welsby** and **Gord Welsby**) and the **Affirming Ministry, Living in Right Relations**, and **Outreach** committees and **Rev. Tyler Powell** who have stepped forward to help lead worship services (~1 in 4). Extra thanks to these folks and Rev. Mervin for all the efforts to provide coverage while Rev. Deborah was off on sick leave. We are grateful for her return to good health.

We would specifically like to thank **Margaret Ward-Jack** for her music leadership of the congregation and special music; **Donna Graham, Debbie Gallant**, and **Karla Boddez** for piano and organ playing during our services; **Lorna Walker** and Holly Parker for their bell choir directorships; Betty Welsby for her work as our Sunday School liaison, **Marcus Hoople** for his decorating of the sanctuary for Christmas and Lent/Easter; **Irene Hill** for her decorating outside the church; **Wendy Poirier** who looks after the communion elements; **Shannon Larcombe** for her work as baptismal assistant; **Beryl Watson** for her many years of coordinating the ushers, readers, and service assistants and **Donna Wyatt** and Betty Welsby for taking on this duty; Lionel Larcombe, Wade Hayden, and Luke Sartison for their audio/visual and sound technicians work; Amy Bautista for leading the PJ Christmas Eve service; and **Laurie Symbaluk** for her work in the office on our behalf.

When we are able to worship in-person again as a congregation, if you are interested in learning about or becoming a communion coordinator, or if you are willing to be a communion assistant or communion server, please be in touch with any member of the Ministry of Worship and Education committee.

Our committee would encourage you to consider Power Point/Grapevine sponsorship. This an opportunity for anyone in our congregation to sponsor the Sunday Power Point/Grapevine for \$25.00. You may sponsor 'just because' or the sponsorship can be in honour of a special occasion or a loved one.

Respectfully submitted, Holly Parker, Chair



United Church Women

The Units met outside in the church yard in June ,July and August. We met in the Friendship Hall in September and October and have been holding Zoom meetings since. A large THANK YOU to Rev. Mervin for setting up the Zoom meetings.

In October and November we held a Bakeless Bake Sale and the Congregation was very supportive in helping us raise \$2600.00. Rough plans were made to hold an outdoor bake sale in June, we decided to wait until August or September hoping conditions would be better.

We have managed to still support the non -profit organizations that we help, hoping that we can hold another fund raiser in the fall.

The low point in our year was losing Mavis Branston on Good Friday. Mavis was a close and dear friend to all of us. She is deeply missed.

We appreciate the time Mary Heathfield has spent sending cards to members of the church who have experienced a health issue or a loss of family. This Sunshine Position was originally for UCW members only, but has been extended to church members.

We are hopeful that we will be back in the church building in September for our meetings, and can re-organize and move forward. The Officers from 2020 volunteered to stay in place through 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Sargent



Outreach Committee

St. Albert United Church Outreach Committee for 2020-2021 was chaired by Percy Zalasky. Active members included Betty Mackey, Alice Hinds, Lauren Wright, Marilyn Nelson, Kathy Packford, Lorna Allen, Irene Suavé, and Joanne Wilson-Symonds.

This year's planning and activities were curtailed by the continuing impact of COVID-19 on our world. With in-person church services cancelled we had to use other means to fund-raise and implement our limited program. For our Christmas activities we appealed to the congregation to donate to the Christmas Project Fund. In short order we had raised over \$5000 which we distributed to the Mustard Seed (\$1381), Bissell Centre (\$1381), the St. Albert Community Village (\$1000), and No Room In The Inn (\$1167.50.) In addition, we sent \$1000 from our budget to the St. Albert Community Village Bridge Fund.

At the end of December and on May 23, we provided lunch for the ICPM, feeding 250 of the inner-city folks each time. Due to COVID, lunches had to be purchased, bagged, and dropped off.

This has been a challenging year for our committee, but with vaccinations finally catching up, there is hope that next year will bring normality, and a resumption of activity.

Despite the altered state of activities, our generous congregation stepped up to support them. You are all part of our outreach and we thank you in these trying times and look forward to your support in the coming year.



Music Ministry

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on St. Albert United Church's musical groups this year. Restrictions and an abundance of caution prevented the choir from meeting during the year and limited the ability of the bell choirs to rehearse. Since September 13, a dedicated group of singers has provided music ministry during in-person services, when they were taking place in the fall, and our virtual worship services. Thank you to Amy Bautista, Fenya Fitzpatrick, Lori Geisbrecht, Margaret Mitchell, Troy Sartison, Adam Skogstad, Pam Sutherland, Ed Toop and Margaret Ward-Jack. I would particularly like to thank Amy for her significant contributions to the music ministry both as a singer and for her leadership in selecting Time for All Ages songs that aligned with the on-line Sunday School curriculum. Gifted singer/song-writer Shannon Brink joined Amy in Sunday School implementation and wrote two songs specifically for the program.

We also appreciate the work of organist/pianist Donna Graham whose talents were an integral part of our weekly worship services. She was assisted by alternate pianists Deborah Gallant and Karla Boddez.

Our dedicated volunteer handbell choir directors faced challenges as COVID protocols changed during the year. Our thanks go to Lorna Walker, director of United in Bronze, and Holly Parker, director of Genesis Ringers for their efforts throughout the year. It was wonderful to have live handbell music in

participation of ringers Judi Florence, Holly Parker and Kathie Zalasky during the Easter Sunday service.

United in Bronze (Lorna Walker)

United in Bronze Handbells began weekly rehearsals on **September 14, 2020** with adhering to social distancing and masking protocols. We shared three pieces at the **October 4** in-person, worship service.

We continued to rehearse in October but in early November moved to online rehearsals via Zoom. We were able to meet one more time in November, and record three selections of music to be inserted into online worship services during the **Christmas** season.

Rehearsals were suspended in November in accordance with the government restrictions on musical rehearsals and performances. We attempted to resume rehearsals in March and met twice, before again suspending our in-person rehearsals, this time for the remainder of the Spring 2021. We hope to resume Handbell ringing, in the fall of 2021.

Genesis Ringers (Holly Parker)

Genesis Ringers had in-person restriction-appropriate weekly rehearsals from **September 14 to November 9**. We played 3 bell pieces in church on **October 19**. We had one by-zoom rehearsal on **November 23** with the ringers using at home items (labelled spoons, etc) in place of real bells and going through their hand-and-arm motions while a recorded version of the bell music played in the background. We were all surprised at how well it worked! We were not able to resume ringing after the end of November but are hopeful we will be able to gather again in fall 2021.

Choir Connections

Although the choir didn't meet in person this year, we stayed connected through bi-weekly Zoom calls. Since keeping in vocal shape is a real challenge when singers are not singing regularly, we started bi-weekly "Choral Workouts" on February 13 that continued until the end of May. These Zoom sessions provided an opportunity to

vocalize together, sing favorite hymns and start learning a few new anthems. We are certainly looking forward to the day we can sing together in-person again.

Submitted by
Margaret Ward-Jack
Music Director



Ministry and Personnel

The Ministry and Personnel Committee of St. Albert United Church consists of members: Anne Caroll, Joan Johnston, Gord Welsby, Audrey Zalasky and Donna Wyatt. We serve as a liaison between staff as well as members of the congregation. The committee is responsible for regularly reviewing the working conditions, responsibilities, and compensation of all pastoral charge staff and for making recommendations needed as a result of these reviews to the governing body.

Our church has been closed for in-person services for a major portion of this past year due to the pandemic. We appreciate the work of all the staff in accommodating the changes that have been made to adhere to the Alberta Health Services regulations. The music ministry of Margaret Ward-Jack and Donna Graham has worked to provide music for the services that were offered through *YouTube* and now *Vimeo*. Our office administrator, Laurie Symbaluk has been working from home. Rev. Mervin Galant has been working from home and carrying the responsibilities of providing church services and group meetings electronically. We are pleased that Rev. Deborah Hoekstra has returned to service following a sick leave from the end of October until mid-April. We are grateful to all the volunteers who have assisted the staff in making the changes that were needed.

Members of the M and P Committee have completed performance reviews for each member of the staff, except Rev. Deborah.

This will be completed later in the fall. Meetings were held via Zoom throughout the year. Approval for leaves for vacations, continuing education, illness, and bereavement were considered throughout the year. The committee kept in touch with the Restorative Care Plan administrators during Reverend Deborah's sick leave. We have been monitoring the financial support needed to support all members of our pastoral charge staff and have made recommendations for cost savings.

Donna Wyatt,
Chair of Ministry and Personnel



Rites of Passage

Marriages 2020–2021

Ivan Borkovic and Judith Haughian

Baptisms 2020–2021

Callum Harvey
Penelope Stoddard
Everly Ann Denis

Annual Statistics for the Year of 2020

Total Confirmed Membership	344
Households on Pastoral List	373
Identifiable Giving Households	343
Members Removed by Death	4
Total Giving's to Pastoral Charge	\$284,730.00

In Loving Memory 2020-2021

Ray Wright
Richard Watson
Jean Thornton
Doris Jerrett

Olive Hetherington
Mavis Branston
Bill Tomarras
Ethel Kerr



Community Refugee Committee of St. Albert

Serving Greater Edmonton Area (January 1—December 31, 2020)

There are two highlights of note for the reporting period:

- St. Albert United Church agreed to become the Sponsorship Agreement Holder for two more families who are currently in Beirut, Lebanon. They are relatives of the original family. We wish to acknowledge the important role that SAUC Council has played in demonstrating leadership of the Congregation through their financial pledge of this important work. There are twelve family members in this group: four adults and eight children. The men in the family are brothers of the woman we sponsored in 2018-2019.
- We are thrilled to report that we were approved by the Department of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to sponsor the two new families.

The CRCSA had one face-to-face meeting and three virtual meetings during the 2020 year. The main activity was fundraising which was initiated in the Fall of the year. Our individual energy was focused on keeping connected with the family we sponsored in 2018-2019 while making sure they were managing well while developing their own independent resourcefulness. This is in keeping with identified Canadian values of potential Canadian citizenship.

We are grateful for the support of past members who have moved on to other projects. Early in 2020, we welcomed several new members to the larger committee, including a new treasurer. An important new initiative was including the originally settled family members and also the senior members of the new families we are undertaking to sponsor when their travel documents are finalized. The presence on the committee of our new friends is beneficial as we continue to learn about and from each other.

The bank balance was \$18,638.23 as of November 15, 2020.

This accounts for monies left in reserve from the 2018-2019 sponsorship.

Committee Members:

Judy Evans (Chair), Roy Thorpe (Treasurer); Barb Riley, Becky and Michael Mackey; Cheryl Dumont, Deborah Hoekstra, Delores Mowles, Carol Sims, Bryan Evans, Ahmad AlAbbas, Jamila and Issam AlAbbas, Muna Abdulhussain, Marian Oberg, Qassem Masalmeh, William Wells, Helen Arnott.

Personal Comment: It is with deep gratitude that I acknowledge the tremendous work undertaken by Judy Evans in her capacity as Chairperson of the CRCSA Serving Greater Edmonton. She has brought a new team together with grace and fortitude, persistence and thoughtful insight.

Financial Report (CRCSA Serving Greater Edmonton)

Carry forward from December 31 2019	\$18,338.70
Donations	5,080.00
Grants	3,000.00
Interest	4.46
	26,423.16
Expenses	
Cheques/deposit book	135.48
Balance December 31, 2020	\$26,287.68

Looking Ahead:

January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

The budget projected for this year is available for those who are interested. We are grateful for the generous initiative of a St. Albert donor who has undertaken to match all donations, dollar for dollar, from now until May 31, 2021.

Donations January 1, 2021—April 30, 2021 were \$16,360.00.

\$1,805.00 of this was received in April and qualifies for the matching donation and interest of \$2.28.

Submitted by: Helen Arnott

May 10, 2021



Living In Right Relations Committee

LIRR has had a less than fruitful year for obvious reasons.

We did have a special church service on May 2 (Red Dress Sunday) with most knowledgeable speaker Stephanie Harpe... remembering the thousands of Indigenous Women and Girls who have perished over the years.

On June 20th, LIRR is joining with the Outreach Committee to conduct the Indigenous Sunday Service, concentrating on being good Neighbors.... such an appropriate topic.

Members from both committees will conduct the Service.

Submitted by
Marilyn McSparran



Broadview Discussion Group

Since the United Church Observer morphed into the Broadview magazine with the inauguration of the very first issue in 2019, our group has continued to meet to discuss current issues related to spirituality, justice, and ethical living.

We have been meeting for about 8 years now, but who's counting?! There are 12 people on our distribution list and we have about 8 on average at every monthly meeting. We take turns choosing the articles. The leadership rotates among us.

During the past year our monthly discussions focused on one or three articles ranging from such esoteric topics as "growing church", to raising better boys, to church in pandemic, to living with dementia, to drinking problems in older women, to medical assistance in dying (MAID), to Arctic meltdown, to LGBTQ2 inclusion, to Black Jesus, and everything in-between.

This year we will complete the year with our final meeting before our summer break on June 23 at 10:30 am! Everyone and anyone are welcome to join us for a lively Zoom discussion thanks to our congregation's membership for the second year.

Just so you know, there are Broadview discussion clubs all across the country, including an online national discussion group, all held by Zoom for now. Broadview magazine under the name of the United Church Observer was initiated in 1938 in an amalgamation with two other magazines, but can trace its history back over two centuries. It is a journal associated with but independent of, the United Church of Canada, Canada's largest Protestant denomination. It is well worth the subscription price of \$25 a year for 8 issues. Jocelyn Bell is the Editor/Publisher.

Everyone is welcome!

Submitted by
Helen Arnott
June 1, 2021



Finance Report to AGM

A year ago, we presented you with a six-month budget anticipating a loss on operations. Last fall we presented you with a budget for the whole year anticipating a \$26,000 deficit. I come before you at this AGM to say that with one month remaining, we anticipate a surplus of \$5,000-\$10,000. And net current assets of \$5,000 – \$10,000.

Last year we ended up with a surplus of \$1,060 and net current assets of \$11,250. Due to Covid our Audit Committee has not been able to review Last year's statements. When they have reviewed the financial statements, we will bring them to an AGM or SAGM.

The budget sheet shows that we anticipate getting \$29,600 in Government funding and only received \$14,500. The amount we received was correct. Much of it was included in last year's financial statements.

This miracle is the result of our combined efforts, funding from the government and insurance payments to cover Rev. Deborah's sick leave.

The hard work such as the ongoing effort of Wade, Troy and Lionel to get our services on-line and eventually live streamed, the commitment that Amy has made to delivering "Time for all Ages" to an ever-expanding group of people extending beyond our congregation and Rev Mervin's efforts through the time that Rev Deborah was on sick leave have kept us worshipping throughout this pandemic.

The donations that you, our members and adherents have given to our church far exceeded our expectations. Your one-time and ongoing donations are the base that we rely on. We as a congregation need to continue to work together to support the church that we want to be.

The finance committee, like many committees, is in need of a succession plan. Several members of our committee have been on the committee for many years. We are looking for some new eyes and minds to continue our work. We are not

faced with imminent desertions, but rather the need to get new people in place so that we can pass the torch.

I would like to thank Sandy for all her work in accessing government funds and Lionel, Bruce, Scott, Howard and Mervin for their care and attention that has been a key to our committee.

Ken Hutchinson

For the Finance Committee



Affirm Team

Sure, it's been yet another year under the grim auspices of the pandemic, but your Affirm Team is still out there! Our team is committed to our mission of being fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

- We remain under the national umbrella of Affirm United, and still have regular digital contact with our brilliant Edmonton coordinator, Shylo Rosborough!
- As a team, we collaborated on our sixth annual Affirmiversary service on October 18th – six years of being a recognized Affirming Ministry!
- We continue to communicate with and support Outloud PFLAG St. Albert (they were the ones selling the cool rainbow masks at our Affirmiversary service)!
- Although celebrations are sadly scant due to COVID, we still support and proclaim **Pride** this month of June, with our rainbow flag majestically fluttering above our door!
- A group of St. Albert public school teachers invited us to meet with them as part of their **SOGI 1 2 3** program (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) designed to give educators the skills, training and support they need to support inclusivity efforts at their schools.

- An Affirm Team delegation also met with **St. Paul's United Church** in Grande Prairie to share our experiences in becoming Affirming, as they are exploring this as well!
- **Rev. Mervin** was interviewed for a documentary by two University of Alberta journalism students about our congregation's support of the LGBTQ2S+ community!

With any luck, a successful summer of vaccinations will enable us to “come out” and share even more engaging activities as we continue to ensure that SAUC is the place where everyone has room to grow!

SAUC Affirm Team

Stephen Fitzpatrick

Rev. Mervin Gallant

Ken Hutchinson

Lionel Larcombe

Shannon Larcombe

Betty Mackey

Marilyn Nelson



St. Albert United Church Budget

Revenue	2019-20	11 month - May21	Budget 21-22	Note 1
General offering	\$265,120.00	\$284,730.00	\$305,000.00	
Fund Raising	\$10,920.00	\$30.00	\$5,000.00	Note 2
Rental Revenue	\$38,650.00	\$19,860.00	\$25,000.00	Note 3
Other Revenue	\$13,500.00	\$1,920.00	\$3,800.00	Note 4
Government Grants	\$28,650.00	\$14,500.00	\$10,000.00	Note 5
Total Revenue	\$ 356,840.00	\$ 321,040.00	\$ 348,800.00	
 Expenses				
M&P	\$222,820.00	\$205,020.00	\$250,000.00	
Property	\$86,400.00	\$68,850.00	\$95,825.00	
Assessment	\$16,100.00	\$15,830.00	\$19,040.00	
Office	\$13,650.00	\$12,080.00	\$14,000.00	
Worship/CD	\$11,200.00	\$1,450.00	\$15,810.00	Note 6
Outreach and In- clusion	\$1,230.00	-\$440.00	\$2,200.00	
Council, Pastoral care	\$4,380.00	\$2,470.00	\$1,000.00	
Total Expense	\$355,780.00	\$307,970.00	\$397,875.00	
 Net Loss	 \$1,060.00	 \$13,070.00	 -\$49,075.00	

Note 1 This budget has been prepared on the assumption of full operation this fall

Note 2 There are no specific fundraising plans currently in place.

Note 3 Includes Pollywogs and the anticipation of gradual resumption of rentals

Note 4 Gift Cards, Paper bin, Weddings, Funerals

Note 5 Benefit from repaying CEBA loan

Note 6 Includes paid support for sound/AV/live streaming