



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024

Central Presbyterian Church is situated on the Haldimand tract of land that is the traditional home of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral People. We acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws, and philosophies of the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this land today. We seek a new relationship with the Original People of this land, one based on honour and deep respect. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn here and reaffirm our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Groups and Organizations.....	2
Minister’s Message.....	3
Agenda.....	4
Annual Meeting Minutes taken on January 28, 2024	5
<u>Team, Staff & Group Reports</u>	6-20
Session Report.....	6
Statistical Report & Five-Year Statistical Comparison Report.....	7
Board of Managers.....	8-9
Congregational Development & Fellowship Team.....	9
Christian Education Report	9-10
Missions Team Report.....	10-12
Central Cares Team Report.....	12-13
Worship Team Report.....	13
Flower Guild Report.....	14
Choir Report.....	14
Hymn Sing Report.....	14-15
Communication Team Report	15-16
Online Ministry.....	16
Personnel Team Report	17
Restoration Fundraising Team	17-18
Welcome Team Report.....	18
Use of Church.....	18
Men’s Ministry	19
Attachments:	
Independent Auditor’s Report	
Financials	
Treasurers Report	

GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Church Office 519-623-1080
Church E-Mail Address office@cpcmail.ca
Church website www.centralchurchcambridge.ca
Minister: Rev. Dr. Aubrey Botha aubrey@cpcmail.ca
Children's & Family Ministry Coordinator: Jocelyn Versteeg jocelyn@cpcmail.ca
Office Administrator: Debbie McKeivitt office@cpcmail.ca
Custodian: Don Willis
Board, monthly, fourth Monday @ 7 pm, Interim Chair, David Shaw
Session, monthly, first Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Clerk: Dr. Lynda Pinnington session@cpcmail.ca

MUSIC

Praise Choir: Weekly, Thursdays @ 7:00 p.m.
President: Elizabeth Cresswell
Praise Team: Weekly, Tuesdays @ 7:00 p.m.

CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Nursery: Sundays during worship
Kidzone: Sunday mornings @ 10:00 am
Youth: Thursdays & Fridays @ 7pm

ADULT ACTIVITIES

Prayer Group Weekly, Tuesdays @ 2.30pm in the parlour.
Bible Study Friday mornings @ 10:00 a.m.
Contact: Carolyn Witzke 519-620-7346
Rugged Hands Men's Group
Contact: Scott McHardy 519-624-050

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



What a wonderful God we serve, who blesses us in so much abundance. Every year as I write this page for the Annual Meeting, I am humbled by God's work in our faith community here at Central.

We dream dreams and see them come true as we strive to follow God's guidance in our lives. This has been true again for this past year. God blessed us in abundance in so many ways. We see people

coming together and God's people caring for one another. The Alpha ministry has been an amazing tool in God's hand, and lives have been changed.

We are blessed with vibrant youth and family ministries. What a beautiful sight on a Sunday morning when the children leave for Kid Zone, and it seems the stream of children leaving just goes on forever. What a gift to have so many volunteers working, giving of their time and their talents. A special word of thanks to our greeting team for the amazing job you do at welcoming all of us on a Sunday. You are a blessing. What would we do without our sound, AV and livestream teams, thanks for keeping us "on the air."

Worship at Central is such an amazing experience and we thank God for the many volunteers that are part of our worship team, those singing in the praise choir and those using instruments and voices to lead us into God's presence. We are truly blessed.

The Missions team is one of God's greatest gifts to our church. Through them we are involved in so many lifechanging projects and serving opportunities, not just in our own city but far beyond our borders. Thank you for being a church that is prepared to look further than our own walls.

I look forward to serving God with you in this new year. My prayer for all of us is found in Paul's words to the Ephesians:

"²³ Peace be with you, dear brothers and sisters, and may God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you love with faithfulness." **Ephesians 6:23 (NLT)**

In His service,

Aubrey

**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 26, 2025
AGENDA**

1. Call to Order and Prayer
2. Motion: To appoint a secretary for the meeting
3. Motion: To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on January 28, 2024, as printed in the 2024 Annual Report
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Motion: To accept the Group Reports (pages 6-20)
6. Motion: To accept the 2024 Financial Reports, Auditor's Statement, and Treasurer's report as presented by the Treasurer
7. Motion: To accept the 2025 Budget for discussion
8. Motion: To approve the 2025 Budget
9. Motion: To appoint an auditor for 2025
10. Motion: To appoint members to the Board of Managers.
11. New Business
12. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES- January 28, 2024

The congregation met in Central Church Cambridge on Sunday January twenty-eight two thousand twenty-four at 11:20 am. The Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Aubrey J. Botha, opened the meeting with prayer. There were 78 people in attendance.

1. Moved by Peter Goudy, seconded by Barbara Barrie, that Lynda Pinnington be appointed secretary for the meeting. CARRIED.

2. Moved by Elizabeth Cresswell, seconded by Hank Nykamp, that the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on February 12, 2023, be approved as printed. CARRIED.

3. There was no Business Arising from the Minutes.

4. **Group Reports:** Moved by Barbara Barrie, seconded by Pat Couttie, that we accept the Group Reports as printed. CARRIED. Aubrey thanked all the people who contributed so much to the life and work of the congregation. He asked Jim Hetherington to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for all the wonderful work that is being done.

5. **2023 Financial Reports:** Moved by Sandy Barrie, seconded by Lorna From, that the 2023 Financial Reports, the Auditor's Statement and the Treasurer's Report be accepted. CARRIED. The Treasurer explained that we had a much better year in 2023, reducing the deficit that was created during the pandemic to about \$31,000.

6. **2024 Budget:** Moved by Barbara Barrie, seconded by Alistair McIlwraith, that we receive the 2024 Budget for discussion. CARRIED.

- The Treasurer reviewed the 2024 budget and suggested that we would meet all the projected expenses and completely pay off the deficit if each person in the congregation increased their weekly givings by \$8.00, as they are able.
- The Treasurer also encouraged people to consider using PAR for their regular offerings.
- Hank Nykamp asked about the status of the Restoration Fund
- Scott Beda asked how the amounts budgeted for Lesotho are determined. Aubrey explained that we pay the teachers' salaries directly into their bank accounts and that accounts are set up with the grocery store and the pharmacy that Rachel's Home uses. Greg Gowing added that all the Lesotho expenses are covered by fundraising and there is no line item in the budget for this.
- Hank Nykamp asked how much each person is expected to give in offerings. Peter Goudy responded that each person gives according to their own situation but perhaps if people could consider increasing their 2023 offering amount by ten percent that would be very helpful.
- Peter Vickery offered his services as a DJ for a fundraising event.

7. Moved by Linda Brown, seconded by Kim Hopper, that the 2024 Budget be approved. CARRIED. Aubrey asked Scott Beda to say a prayer of thanks for the many blessings we have received.

8. Moved by Scott Brunskill, seconded by Peter Goudy, that Mo Aflatounian be appointed auditor for 2024.

9. Moved by Peter Goudy, seconded by Elizabeth Cresswell, that David Pinnington be appointed to the Board of Managers. CARRIED. Peter also thanked Cathy Kaufman who is stepping down from the board.

10. Moved by Lynda Pinnington, seconded by James Brown, that we approve the Trust Deed, as prepared by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, for submission to the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington. CARRIED.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Alistair McIlwraith. The Moderator closed the meeting at 12:20 pm by leading everyone in the Lord's Prayer.

Session Report 2024

We started the year in January by developing our newest Strategic Plan. We agreed on seven Strategic Objectives. As much as we might like Aubrey to stay as our minister indefinitely, he has plans to retire in two years. For this reason, two of our objectives relate to having the new minister in place before he leaves to ensure a seamless transition.

- We will develop a succession plan for Central to call a new minister.
- We will implement the plan to call a new minister.
- We will identify skilled people to handle our social media needs.
- We will design a new church website.
- We will develop a process to ensure our website is informative, timely and current.
- We will establish a Congregational Development and Fellowship Team.

We are pleased to say that we are already well on our way to working on, and in some instances, already having completed these objectives.

During the year we said thank you to three elders who stepped down from active service: Petronella Read, Alan Robertson and John Saliba. We thank all of them for their service to this congregation as elders.

We mourn the loss of Peter Goudy who passed away suddenly as a result of an accident. Peter served as an elder for 42 years, was the Chairperson of the Board of Managers, a faithful choir member, longtime “bellringer” and most recently a member of the Restoration Fundraising Team. He was a dedicated volunteer and member of this church, and we shall miss him very much.

Our Youth Ministry Coordinator, Stephanie Armstrong resigned her position in October. We want to thank her for the time she spent at Central and for all her work in leading our Youth groups.

Finally, we want to say thank you to all our staff: Office Administrator Debbie McKeivitt, Custodian Don Willis, Children’s and Family Ministry Coordinator Jocelyn Versteeg and of course our Minister, the Rev. Dr. Aubrey J. Botha. We are truly blessed at Central to have such incredibly talented and dedicated people working with us to build God’s kingdom.

Elders on Session as of December 31, 2024

Sandy Barrie	Scott Brunskill	Elizabeth Cresswell	Pat Couattie
Lorna From	Bruce Jones	Margaret Macnamara	Denise McClellan
Alexander McIlwraith	Alistair McIlwraith	Dawn McIlwraith	Sheryl Millson
Alejandro Ortiz	Lynda Pinnington	Kevin Sullivan	Doris Taylor-Hendry
Horst Wohlgemut	Sharon Wohlgemut		
Leave of Absence:	Greg Gowing, Scott McHardy, Alison Senior, Jack Sims		

- *Lynda Pinnington*
Session Clerk

Central Presbyterian Church
Membership Statistical Report

January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024

*Communicant Members as of December 2023 *186

New Members 2024 6

Sub Total 194

Deaths 6

Transfers 2

Removed 12

Communicant members as of December 31, 2024 172

We are sorry to report that during the past year we lost the following members:

Henk Oudshoorn, Dr. Scott Geddes, Dr. Hank Nykamp, Peter Goudy, Carolyn Sutton and Carla DeVisser.

The church offers their condolences to the families and friends of those members.

5 Year comparison Statistical Report

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Communicant Members	279	276	273	264	186
New Members	2	2	12	7	6
Re-Instated					
Adherents					284
Transfer Out	1	0	2	2	2
Removals		1	7	11	12
Deaths	4	4	12	7	6
*Removals for Correction				6	
*Year End Member	276	273	264	245- *186	172
*Sunday School		42	48	26	16

*Sunday School; reflects in person attendance only for kid zone and junior youth.

*This year following adjustments we are identifying 284 adherents that worship with us.

* Following membership adjustments, we identified 186 members year ending 2023 so that 2024 is a more correct reflection of the roll.

Funerals for 2024: Henk Oudshoorn, Dr. Scott Geddes, Dr. Hank Nykamp, Peter Goudy, Carolyn Sutton, Carla DeVisser.

-Dawn McIlwraith, Standards Committee

The Board of Managers

The Board of Managers consists of the following members:

Acting Chair: David Shaw

Secretary: Ted Brown

Finance: Scott Brunskill, Treasurer

Property: Sandy Barrie

Personnel: Scot Sipa

Use of Church: Barbara Barrie

Session Liaison: Scott Brunskill

Members: Sue Sullivan, David Pinnington

The Board was deeply saddened this year by the passing of our Chair, Peter Goudy. Leading the Board was one of Peter's many contributions to Central. He had a great passion for serving the congregation and ensuring the Board was doing everything it could to help Central.

The Board meets on the fourth Monday of each month, acting as a committee of the session to manage the maintenance, contracting of landscape and snow removal services, finances, insurance, and non-pastoral staff of the church.

2024 Board of Managers Property Report

Under the guidance of Sandy Barrie, who has continued his exceptional work on building projects, we have achieved the following:

- Fundraising for Kitchen Repairs: The Board organized a pancake supper which was a complete success, filling the house and raising enough funds to repair the kitchen sanitizer.
- Sanctuary Ceiling: Plaster repairs and priming of the sanctuary ceiling have been completed. We are now waiting for a team to apply the finish coat.
- Narthex Door Restoration: The lower narthex doors were refurbished with new fabric and wood trim repairs, thanks to Peter Goudy and his team of volunteers.
- Contract Renewals: Successfully renewed contracts for yard care and snow removal at the previous year's prices.
- Tree Maintenance: The large flowering crab tree was pruned by volunteer arborists, addressing a long-standing need.
- Equipment Upgrades: Replaced the church's vacuum cleaner which had served for many years and installed a custom-fit door closer at the church office entrance, thanks to Scotty.
- Electrical Safety: An electrician upgraded electrical fixtures to enhance safety for youth activities in the basement.
- Safety Measures: Installed a safety gate at the top of the stairs leading to the Sunday school basement.
- Exit Uniformity: Fraser Lock installed push bar exits on two front doors to ensure all church exits are consistent.
- Maintenance: The custodian gave the two front doors a fresh coat of paint.
- Adolf Baier's Contributions: We are grateful to Adolf Baier for his multiple projects including new door stops, kitchen taps, a bulletin board, and his final project for the year, installing a safer handrail to the basement Sunday school.
- Boiler Maintenance: Replaced a temperature sensor on the boiler. The system is running will but requires occasional tune-ups.

- Downspout Replacement: Due to significant damage and its impact on the church basement, we decided to replace all downspouts with plastic once weather conditions allow. The Board would like to thank the anonymous donor who provided the funding for this important project.
- Window Repair: A window in the kitchen was damaged by rocks being thrown at it and was replaced for free after David Shaw negotiated with the contractor.

The Board of Managers appreciates the input from church members regarding repair and replacement needs. We thank God for your ongoing support of the church's work.

May God continue to bless the mission and work of Central Church in the coming year. We celebrate the faithfulness of God.

David Shaw, Acting Chair

Congregational Development and Fellowship Team

As part of our Strategic Plan developed in January of this year, we established the Congregational Development and Fellowship Team with the following purpose:

- To provide opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth
- To strengthen the sense of community within the congregation
- To make it easier for newcomers to integrate into the congregation
- To provide opportunities for leadership development to encourage more people to become involved in church life
- To provide an umbrella for Session oversight of groups in the church

While just established in April, the team has done an amazing job so far this year. We have started monthly Games Nights, developed a Volunteer Opportunities brochure, started the Volunteer Minute segment in the announcements to highlight opportunities for people to get involved, started Newcomer Buddies to pair up newcomers with people to help them learn about the congregation, and have planned an evening adult study similar to the Christ and Culture series for young adults. The Team also organized the Congregational Barbecue in June and the Christmas Potluck and Carol Sing in late November.

If you have an idea for a fellowship activity or small group, please let us know. We would be happy to help get other new initiatives started.

Our team: Carol Ann Achtymichuk, Terry Carney, Kim DeJong, David Haskell, Sheryl Millson, Lynda Pinnington, Jan Sparrow and Kevin Sullivan.

Christian Education Team

As I write this report, I am reminded time and again of how richly God has blessed the Central Church Family with growing and evolving programs which attempt to meet the needs of our congregation, no matter their age. As of August 27, I became the C.E. Team Leader, and I thank Alan Robertson for his leadership of this Team for many years. I also wish to express my gratitude to Shyla Mathai, Laura Falle and Linda Brown for their invaluable time and dedication to the C.E. Team.

Our dedicated staff, who plan and implement enriching age-appropriate classes and programming, are a true blessing.

On October 31 Stephanie Armstrong resigned from her position as our Youth Ministry Coordinator. We thank Stephanie for her work with our Youth over the past 3 years and we pray that God will continue to guide and hold her as she explores new paths.

Last February and again in November there was an opportunity for Parents, Youth and Elders to meet for dialogue concerning the Youth Ministry Programming and there are plans to continue these opportunities going forward.

Our Youth ran a successful Garage Sale in June, and they also collected your donations of household items for Value Village as a fundraising project. Some of our Youth members attended the 'Change Conference' in September. We are indebted to all the volunteers who provided support, transportation and accompanied the Youth on many occasions. We also sincerely appreciate the Congregation's prayerful and generous support for the various Youth projects throughout the year.

Our Children's and Family Ministry Coordinator, Jocelyn Versteeg has provided wonderful Kidzone programming for Sunday mornings as well as several Family-focused events throughout the year. These include a very successful Vacation Bible Camp and a delightful multi-generational Christmas Pageant. We are especially grateful for Jocelyn's generous offer to take on the leadership of the mid-week Youth Program through November, December and going forward until a new Youth Ministry Coordinator can be found.

Our long running Adult Bible Study group, led so capably by Carolyn Witzke, will continue with new studies in 2025. The newly introduced Young Adult Bible Study led by David Haskell has been a great success. We are blessed with the excellent lay- leadership Carolyn and David provide, and we sincerely thank them both.

I cannot adequately express my appreciation for the guidance and prayerful support of the present Team Members, Carolyn Witzke, Dawn McIlwraith, Alistair McIlwraith, David Haskell, Jocelyn Versteeg and the Rev. Dr. Aubrey Botha, and I pray that God will set our path and show us the way.

No matter the age group or program new Volunteers are always WELCOME!

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Cresswell

Missions Team

Our Team is always overwhelmed each year by your faithful and generous support for our two mission projects. These include our local mission, the Cambridge Food Bank, and our international mission, Rachel's Home, an AIDS/HIV orphanage and community school in Maputsoe, Lesotho, Africa. At the end of this year, as a third project, we decided to continue our support of a Chicken Project that Central began in 2018 in Cubulco, Guatemala.

We want to thank our congregation for all your support with your prayers, volunteer time, shared talents and financial assistance. All your donations to missions work at Central goes back 100% directly to these projects. The first half of the year was very quiet due to some health issues and other commitments by our team.

We began with our Summer Challenge event for the Food Bank, with a goal to collect 1000 jars of peanut butter. "Fill the Jar" began in June, and we quickly exceeded our target, so by Labour Day weekend we collected an amazing 1286 jars. The Food Bank has seen very high demand for food this year. A special thanks to the VBS kids and parents who helped us reach our goal. Thanks to Abby Ortiz who helped make a poster for our big board and Sybil and Greg who produced a very

colorful and informative poster to promote our three missions. Each month we are also highlighting a much-needed specific food item on screen.

Next, we hosted our Going the Extra Mile event from Thanksgiving until the end of November. This 5 km walk/jog/run/bike for Rachel's Home had 15 participants from young children to seniors. Thanks to our many sponsors, our major fundraiser raised \$8275.50 that will provide about 27 orphans with food, clothing, medications and vitamins, school supplies, and salaries for caregivers and teachers. Scott McHardy came up with a creative idea to give his sponsors a ride on his motorcycle or a ride in his vintage car, when the good weather comes. We especially want to thank Elsie who continues to work hard at managing this project. Unfortunately, we are not able to return to Rachel's Home for a mission trip, as the region is not safe. We have included a letter from Hilda later in this report.

As usual, Christmas was a very busy time for our Team. In late November we set up our "Mitten Tree" to collect donations of mittens, hats, scarves, and other winter apparel for children in need in our community. We continued to collect throughout the month of December and twice sent items to the Food Bank for distribution. There were some beautiful "home-made" items among the donations. White Gift Sunday, the day of the Christmas Pageant, was an opportunity to provide seniors in need in our community with much needed items such as winter clothing and toiletries. Many beautiful and caring gifts arrived and have been sent to the Food Bank for distribution.

Christmas stockings were hung on the pews on the day of the Christmas Pageant, and we raised \$2512.70, which will provide a nutritious Christmas meal for about 27 orphans at Rachel's Home. In addition, each child will receive a gift of a new set of clothing items including a coat, shoes, shirt and trousers for a boy and a dress for a girl. We will have pictures to show you in the New Year. Considering other financial demands such as our Restoration Project and regular budget needs, our congregation is incredibly generous during the Christmas season.

In November of 2018, our church participated in a trip to help a local church in Cubulco, Guatemala, build 3 Sunday School classrooms. When our team was there, they began a small chicken project. When the Ortiz family began their mission work in Cubulco in 2021 the chicken project continued and 12 families were provided with materials to build the coop, 12 chickens and 1 rooster, corn for part of the feed, and training to keep the chickens healthy. The goal is to provide food security to some low-income families and create a small business to help sustain them. Central raised \$7500 for the Ortiz family to promote the project when in Cubulco and the remainder of the funds have just been spent to provide corn for chicken feed which will last for 2-3 months. The project is going very well and growing. Our Team has now set a goal to raise \$6000 to provide 20 families with sufficient corn for 2025. God has truly blessed these families as we have been told today that \$5381.29 has been raised already.

Our Missions Team would like to say a special thank you to all those who continued to support our mission projects so generously throughout the year. Our church family is a truly loving and caring group!

Respectfully submitted, Sandy Barrie, Lawrence Cresswell, Greg Gowing, David Hendry, Denise McClellan (Chair), Sheryl Millson, Alejandro Ortiz, Doris Taylor, Grace and Henry Van Druten.

We have included a Christmas letter that Elsie just received from Hilda, the manager of Rachel's Home.

Dear Elsie,

Greetings from Lesotho. We had a very wonderful time with the children this Christmas and they enjoyed every moment. We are very grateful for making this day very memorable for all of us at Rachel's. The children look very beautiful in their new clothes and all thanks to the Presbyterian Church.

We praise God for everyone's health at Rachel's and every one of you. We know it has not been easy this year but through it all the Merciful God has protected us. We have 26 children at the moment and four teachers. As I mentioned earlier the factories are still closed and this has lowered the number of children in our school and now it is only the children from the orphanage that are attending school at Rachel's.

This year has been very tough on us in terms of finances so that we were struggling to provide transport, airtime, cosmetic, etc. Our classrooms have depreciated, and the painting has also worn out and there's a lot of repairs that need to be done on the playground. This year, because of the budget, we were not able to buy school shoes. We also need to buy some exercise books and accessories for the children. Our high school students are doing well and will fetch the reports from school on the 3rd and will send them together with a prospectus.

We are very grateful for all the help that you are giving to us and the children, and you are making so much difference. We wish you all the best for the new year and may the lord bless you and keep you and your family. May He protect and provide for your family, and we will keep you in our prayers always 🙏❤️

This year we experienced a very cold winter and also a very hot summer and there has been a lot of storms, but we are still standing. We are so grateful for life and praise God and thank you for being there always.

Shekina is also doing well at the university and this year we have Gloria, who will be going to university, and the other 2 boys, Thato and Baase, who are going to high school. We don't know what is going to happen and still waiting for their admissions at the schools so that we know exactly what we need.

Your Sister in the Lord,
Hilda

Central Cares Team

Central Cares is the ministry that extends a helping hand to those within our church family who are in need. It ensures that all our church family receive pastoral care and support for their physical and emotional well-being. This may include situations such as: recent bereavement of a loved one, recent surgery, have serious health and mobility issues (homebound so not able to attend church), serious vision and hearing issues, can no longer drive themselves, need help with meals, and struggling financially.

Thanks to all those who contribute generous donations to this important ministry throughout the year to make much of this care possible. Designated envelopes are available at each communion service for donations. Last year we received a very generous donation to help provide professional support for mental health issues. If you are struggling and need help, please contact Aubrey or the office.

Our church continues to provide a dedicated group of caring and loving volunteers who help those in need in so many ways. This includes hospital and home visits, prayer ministry, telephone ministry, connecting with our homebound, and urgent needs response such as providing meals, rides, and some financial help such as grocery gift cards.

Evelyn Gordon and Kay Mattear continue to make hospital visits when needed. Dawn McIlwraith and her band of prayer warriors meet faithfully each week and respond to any prayer requests as needed. We often ask our children and youth to participate in decorating bags and making cards.

At least four times a year we prepare and deliver gift bags to about twenty people who are homebound. We include small gifts, reading material such as Our Daily Bread and the Presbyterian Connection, cards, Central newsletters, and our mission project updates. Included are lots of yummy

treats. Thanks to Sarah Barrie for making some delicious and beautifully decorated Christmas cookies for the gift bags this December. We receive very appreciative calls and cards of thanks from our recipients throughout the year, and they know they are loved and not forgotten.

Please contact the office if you know of anyone who needs help or who would enjoy receiving a gift bag and a visit. If you would like to volunteer as part of our Central Cares Team, please contact the office. Central is a very caring church family.

- Denise McClellan

Worship Team

In the past year, we've had many wonderful times of worship, and we continue to livestream the service. Half a dozen screens (which may have more than one person watching) join us live most Sundays. The number of views significantly increases over the course of the week. This allows our congregation to join us even when they are away; however, we continue to encourage people to join us in person, as we are instructed, in Hebrews 10, which says "And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near."

This year we also created a new prayer ministry team to be available after the services most Sundays to pray with people who would like prayer. And with prayer being such an important part of our relationship with God, the prayer ministry has planned to have a New Year's Day Prayer evening on January 1.

Thanks to our volunteers

Thanks, this year for our praise team, choir and digital production teams and our new prayer ministry team, for all their hard work to ensure that in-person worship continues to happen. We also need to thank the flower guild for their work in keeping the sanctuary looking spectacular as it did this Christmas. And thanks to the praise team and choir for their leadership in this area.

None of this happens without the work of our volunteers and if you would like to help out, please speak to Alexander or Aubrey.

Alpha

This fall saw us run our 9th Alpha Course since 2016. The course had half a dozen guests and featured dinner and live talks by Alexander McIlwraith and Bruce Jones. Thanks to Bonnie McCrae for providing some of the salads and Doris Taylor and Barb Pulling for providing our deserts this session.

If you already taken the Alpha Course, there are ways you can get involved:

1. Invite your friends family and neighbours — the people you are praying for salvation for or people who might be asking questions about faith — to join us. Alpha is meant to build discipleship and doesn't run without guests.
2. You can also help out on an occasional basis by helping in the kitchen. Or
3. Join us on the team for an 11-week session.

Alpha also does not have a budget line. We determined early on that if God did not provide the funding for Alpha, we probably shouldn't be running the course, so we thank our generous donors to the program.

Alexander McIlwraith

Flower Guild

The Flower Guild is an amazing group of about 15 people who enjoy getting together to decorate the church for each season and special events. We meet in the church usually on a Tuesday or Saturday morning. First there is a planning meeting over a cup of coffee then one or two work parties. Of course, Christmas and Easter are our main events. We have extended our decorating to entrances and windowsills. Sometimes we need help with watering flowers and plants throughout. There are lots of areas in which to help. You may want to help for a season or a year.

Kathy Drew-Smith

Central Presbyterian Choir Report

Once again, this year the Central Choir was honoured to lead in worship through the Music Ministry. Under the continued leadership of Gwen Darling, the instrumental support of Katharine Rochester, the members of the Praise Band and the guidance of musicianship of Carrie and Brad Paddock we make a “joyful noise” weekly. We always welcome new voices to join us on Thursday evenings at 7 PM for rehearsal from September through mid June.

As much joy as presenting our music brings us, the Choir experienced great loss in 2024.

In February we said goodbye to Henk Oudshoorn, a longtime bass in the Choir among his many other musical talents.

In August our Choir Director Gwen experienced the sudden and unexpected passing of her daughter Pauline Duschene-Potts. Although not a member at Central Pauline was a great supporter of our Choir and often added her rich and beautiful voice to our anthems.

In October a former Choir member and librarian of the Choir Carolyn Sutton passed away.

And, of course, in October the Choir, and indeed the entire Congregation was devastated by the sudden passing of Peter Goudy who grew up in our congregation and raised his wonderful Tenor voice in song throughout his life in the Choir and in the Congregation. Each of these Children of God will be remembered for the blessings they so generously shared.

Respectively submitted,

Elizabeth Cresswell, Choir President

2024 Hymn Sing Café Report

The Hymn Sing Café Program began in 2019 and has become a much-anticipated monthly event throughout the community. It takes place at 2 PM in our sanctuary on the second Wednesday afternoon of February, March, April, May, October, November and December.

Hymn Sing Cafe attracts an average of 50-60 enthusiastic participants monthly and this December we welcomed 101 people! We are blessed to have very talented instrumental and vocal guest performers throughout the year, including a regular visit each May and December by an audience favourite; The David Durward Bell Ringers. This coming March Alison Lupton will make a guest appearance for which we are most grateful.

Doris Taylor originally suggested the idea to gather to sing hymns from our past to the Mission and Outreach Team. When approached, Ron Klinck was eager to take the 'ball and run with it'. Elizabeth Cresswell was asked to work along side Ron and lead the singing.

We sing a variety of beloved hymns that are not used in worship as frequently these days. So many people comment on our beautiful Casavant pipe organ which is played so expertly. Often our wonderful Shimmel grand piano is also used. Following an hour of raising our voices in song and praise delicious refreshments are served in the Fellowship Hall. The fellowship enjoyed during the café time is as popular as our singing time. We are very grateful to all the congregation members who provide the donations of home-baked treats.

We have a wonderful team of volunteers who make this program a great success. Our deep gratitude is extended to Denise McClellan who expertly coordinates the café portion of the afternoon and delivers our advertising flyers. We are blessed to have Dawn McIlwraith who also helps with our café. Alistair McIlwraith generously designs our flyers, and he also handles the technical aspects of our video and sound. A huge thank you to Debbie McKeivitt, our Church Office Administrator and Pat Couttie who prepare the Song Sheets and our Custodian Don. We also have a terrific group of volunteers who help set up, serve and clean up the café, greet folks and make them feel welcome. Their support is greatly appreciated. An extra thank you to David Rochester and Lawrence Cresswell who are always willing to lend a hand!

We were so blessed to have Ron Klinck's leadership to get things rolling through our first 3 years and doubly blessed to have Katherine Rochester so willingly take over at the organ and piano following Ron's untimely passing on December 29, 2022. My sincere gratitude to Katherine. Peter Goudy's advice was invaluable in guiding me to favourite hymns and taking the program leadership on occasion. We miss both gentlemen a great deal.

Finally, a huge thank you to Session and the Central Congregation for their continued support.

Come along and join us in 2025!

Respectfully submitted
Elizabeth Cresswell

Communication Team

The Communication Team has a mandate to work with other ministries within Central Church to facilitate the presentation and promotion of the word of God through word, media and technology. Our Team fosters the public face of Central Church through Instagram, Facebook, our website and regular newsletters. Major technological upgrades have enabled us to live-stream our Sunday services as well as weddings and funerals. This year, our exposure to social media and the community at large has been greatly expanded due to the expertise and efforts of members of the Communications Team.

1. During 2024, the Communication Team included Greg Gowing, Alistair McIlwraith, Sybil Johnson, Matthew Schmidt, Ingrid Talpak and Sharon Wohlgemut. This terrific group was able to enlarge our presence on social media through ongoing development skills and sharing of ideas. We thank Matthew Schmidt for his support and send him our best wishes as he completes his degree this year.
2. Kudos to Scott McHardy, Ted Brown, and Grace Van Druten for their faithful service and expertise with the audio-visual production of the Sunday services.

3. Greg Gowing produces the streamed services which bring an increasingly large audience to hear God's word. Each week, Greg coordinates both the audio and visual elements to produce a polished product for the at-home viewers. This year Adolf Coetzer joined Greg to help in this worthwhile outreach for Central Church. Greg also monitors the website, posts weekly calendars of events and updates pertinent information and collects and analyzes the statistics from user usage.
4. Ingrid Talpak and Sybil Johnson have been invaluable for their considerable expertise in the production and use of social media. They have been largely responsible for the increase in our social media presence with their advertising of coming events and posting Central activities.
5. Alistair McIlwraith is the 'man on the ground' for helping arrange events and provide technical support for many of the outreach activities at Central. Not only does he organize the use of church facilities but also helps with the audio-visual support for the Hymn Sing Café, Coffee@Central and other outreach activities.
6. The bi-monthly newsletter, "Central News" continues to be published with Sharon Wohlgemut writing the newsletter and Sybil Johnson using her graphic arts skills to make it beautiful.

Many thanks to the Communication Team for all their efforts!

Sharon Wohlgemut, Chair, Communications Team

Central's Online Ministry

Website

Our website saw a significant increase in traffic this year. As of December 21st, we had seen a 74% increase in active users. We saw very significant spikes in traffic on Valentines Day and during Lent. Our What is Love and What is Lent pages performed very well this year.

As part of our Google for Non-Profits account, we receive up to \$120,000/year in free advertising. This year, we consumed \$69,500 on advertising. This does not represent a cost to Central.

Again, this year, our most popular landing page (first page seen) was our "What is Love" page. This was the first year that we created and tracked a page describing Lent and Easter. This page also did very well. There is a real hunger out there for basic information about our faith. Our "What is" pages have become a huge outreach tool for us.

YouTube

Our services saw significant growth in online viewership this year. Our subscriber base increased by 68 during this period. As of December 21st, our subscriber base was 332.

Facebook

Over the course of 2024, our Facebook ministry saw significant growth in visits and followers, this despite a significant decline in the number of posts served up to users by the Facebook algorithm.

Instagram

This year, we welcomed two new members to our team. Ingrid and Sybil played a big role in generating content for our Instagram account. This had been a bit of a moribund ministry, but they breathed new life into it. As you can see, we saw spectacular growth in visitors and followers over the course of the year. By December 21st, our Instagram page had 360 followers. This represented an increase of 25%.

Respectfully Submitted
Greg Gowing

Personnel Team

The Personnel Team is a joint team comprised of selected members of the Session, the Board and the congregation. Current members are as follows:

Linda Brown	Congregation Representative
Jane McWilliams	Congregation Representative
Dale Ross	Congregation Representative
Jack Sims	Session Representative
Scott Sipa	Board of Managers Representative
Horst Wohlgemut	Session Representative

The Personnel Team oversees and monitors the personnel practices of the church within the framework of church polices and guidelines and current Federal and Provincial legislation. Meeting on an as-needed basis, the Team provides a leadership role in developing strategies for addressing Human Resources issues and makes suggestions to Session on these and also salary administration for our custodian, Office Manager, Music Director and Children and Youth Ministry personnel.

During 2024 the Team accomplished the following tasks:

1. Developed a plan for the seamless transition to a new minister in 2026. The plan was adopted by Session in November 2024.
2. Provided guidance in dealing with several personnel issues.
3. Helped with completing performance reviews for selected staff members.
4. Generated recommendations to Session and the Board for 2025 salary increases for Central staff members.

On behalf of the Personnel Team, I would like to express our thanks for the ongoing excellent services provided by our dedicated staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Horst Wohlgemut
Chair, Personnel Team

Restoration Fundraising Team

We had a very successful year with two outstanding tribute concerts, ABBA in May and The Beatles in October, both of which were supported by the congregation and the community at large. We had an Open House on September 21 which drew almost 400 people to tour the sanctuary and bell tower. There are many people walking in the downtown area on the weekends and we would like to have more Open Houses in the future, perhaps on summer Saturdays.

Our annual Update letter was mailed out just prior to the Postal strike in November, although it seems most people did receive their letters before things shut down. We started something new this year with the inclusion of a Christmas Card by which a donation can be made to the Restoration Fund as a gift.

On a very sad note, Peter Goudy, one of the most active members on the team passed away in October. Peter was a very creative person who came up with a lot of ideas, including hosting fundraising concerts, and we shall miss him very much. Peter was also the person who sent out the handwritten thank you notes that were so much appreciated by everyone who received one.

We were very grateful this year that the interest rates started to come down. This will help us tremendously in reducing the interest payments and allowing us to put more into paying down the

principle. We want to thank everyone in the congregation for their continuing support as we work to pay off our loans.

We have a great team and would be delighted to have some new people join us

Team Members: Peter Goudy, Lynda Pinnington, Ingrid Talpak, Horst Wohlgemut.

Welcome Team

The Welcome Team is responsible for ensuring that everyone, whether they are here for the first time or are lifelong members, receives a warm welcome on Sunday mornings. Every Sunday there are people attending Central for the first time and we strive to make sure they feel comfortable and want to return. We receive a lot of positive feedback on the friendliness of everyone in our congregation.

We have a wonderful team of greeters who faithfully greet people each week with a smile, a welcoming word and a listening ear.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to each of our greeters this year: Pat Couttie, Stacey Campagnoni, Pat Couttie, Denise McClellan, Lorne McClenaghan, Bonnie McCrae, George Neeb, Beverley Nykamp, Lynda Pinnington, Kevin Sullivan, Sue Sullivan, Shirley Wells, Horst Wohlgemut, Sharon Wohlgemut.

The Welcome Team also organizes our annual Welcome Lunch where we host all the people who have started attending Central in the past year. This year's lunch on April 14 was attended by 34 people. We are very blessed at Central to have a growing congregation.

The Welcome Team: Bonnie McCrae, Lynda Pinnington, Kevin Sullivan

Use of Church

While we missed the KW Symphony's Baroque and Beyond concerts that were scheduled in the spring of 2024, the musicians of the orchestra worked tirelessly to revive the orchestra. Central was able to host two concerts in aid of this worthwhile and successful effort. We wish the Symphony well and hope they are soon able to schedule a new series of concerts.

Alison Lupton and friends held a St. Patricks day folk concert. Our hardworking fundraising committee raised the roof and lowered the debt with two very successful events, ABBA and the Beatle Band.

The Advent season is always a busy time. Hope Story brought the Messiah to Central. This is the third year we have hosted this local mission. For the lovers of choral music, the Hope Canadian Male Choir brought Martin Mans (director), Martin Zonnenberg (organist/pianist), Johan Petersen and Pieter Baarsse from Holland to join their 60 male choristers. The final concert of the year, Sounds of the Season, was performed by the Galt Kiltie Band.

Respectfully

Alistair Mcilwraith

Weddings

Central was host for four weddings in 2024. April, June, September and November. How wonderful to be able to share in the beginnings of these new marriages.

Central participated in the Cambridge BIA Wedding Week event hosting wedding musicians for couples to review and possibly book for their own events. The event was very poorly attended and not well planned by the organizers, and I would not recommend we participate in 2025.

We have one wedding booked for 2025, and two more waiting for approval.

Barbara Barrie - Wedding Coordinator

Men's Ministry

The mission and purpose of the CPC men's ministry remains to:

- to develop a meaningful relationship with God and live fully devoted in following Christ making a difference in the lives of those under their care, under their influence, and in each of their lives.
- provide a balanced ministry to men through a ministry by men. Rather than only gathering to eat, fellowship, and work, men should help and mentor each other to grow in Christlikeness.
- appeal to all men of the church a ministry that is relevant to the needs and interests of all our men established in reaching out within Central Church and our community at large.

This year we continued to host three men's breakfast events.

- March 2nd with guest John Neufeld, CEO of House of Friendship who presented the expanding community services to people who are homeless, some of the root causes for men and women to become homeless, and to encourage us in our interest to develop opportunities for us to interact and develop a rapport with the marginalized population in Cambridge, especially within the area of our church.
- June 22nd with guest speaker Jaye Torley who spoke on the characteristics of being men of conviction and character so we can be better fathers and husbands. Today we face evidence of diminishing values in our community, the many philosophies and concepts that are contrary to our Christian faith and beliefs and how to stand up against these beliefs and trends that have become so acceptable by our community at large.
- October 26th with guest speaker Anthony Lee, a renowned professional basketball player, we heard powerful testimony of his journey from a youth raised in a Christian home and how his rise to fame and fortune led him to stray from his Christian values and beliefs. It was encouraging to hear of his recommitment to God in a powerful way that has him still playing basketball but being used in a remarkable way in ministry to people of all ages through his music, rap, and speaking opportunities.

The committee remains committed to developing group Bible studies and prayer/support groups for our men in 2025. One opportunity is to encourage our men to participate in the upcoming 'Christ in Culture' adult Bible Study.

The committee members include Kevin Sullivan, Paul DeJong, Alexander McIlwraith, Jim Hetherington and John Vos.

We value the prayer support by Central Church in our efforts to developing an effective and meaningful ministry in 2025 that will bring blessing to the lives of all our men and the ongoing ministry of CPC.

*Submitted respectfully,
CPC Men's Ministry Committee
December 10, 2024*