



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025

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.

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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
(On Leave May 1st, 2025 – April 20th, 2026)
Interim Children & Family Ministry Coordinators:
Elsie & Elrey Botha childrensministry@cpcmail.ca

Office Administrator: Debbie McKeivitt office@cpcmail.ca
Custodian: Don Willis
Board, monthly; fourth Monday @ 7:00 pm, Chair, Chuck Philips
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.
Carrie Paddock

CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Nursery: Sundays during worship
Kidzone: Sunday mornings @ 10:00 am

ADULT ACTIVITIES

Prayer Group Weekly, Tuesdays @ 2:30pm in the parlour.
Contact: Dawn McIlwraith

Alpha Thursday evenings @ 6:30pm
Contact: Alexander McIlwraith

Women's Bible Study Friday mornings @ 10:00 a.m.
Contact: Carolyn Witzke 519-620-7346

Rugged Hands Men's Group
Contact: Scott McHardy 519-624-0502

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



What an amazing church family we have here at Central! As you read through the pages of this report you will feel the heartbeat of a worshipful, vibrant, caring, and growing body of believers. There is a welcoming warmth that flows from and in this church that comes only from walking in the Spirit.

We share in a great adventure as we listen to God's heartbeat and follow in his footsteps as he guides and teaches us to be his faithful servants. For in all we do we always have to seek his guidance and his will, in every program, in every ministry, in every decision we make in this church. That is why you will find that there is growth on so many levels because in all we do our goal is to first seek his kingdom and his righteousness (Matt.6:33).

We have so much to be grateful for but even more that humbles us in the face of our Lord because he has blessed us far beyond what we could ever dream or conceive. I am sure that in the year to come he will challenge us even more to walk with him in the guidance of the Spirit as we face many new and exciting challenges to be his faithful servants in a growing and constantly changing city.

We are blessed with so many volunteers that freely give their gifts and time. Thank you to each one of you for all your hard work. I thank God for the wise leadership that Central has been blessed with. Thank you for the way in which you lead and care for all the people at Central. It is truly an honour to serve the Lord with you.

Our mission to be a Jesus church where everyone is welcome is more than just words. Read the story of this family in the following pages and you will see what I mean. We are truly blessed! My prayer for the new year is this invitation from Jesus:

*28-30 "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." **Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)***

In His service,

Aubrey

**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2026
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 26, 2025, as printed in the 2025 Annual Report
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Motion: To accept the Group Reports
6. Motion: To accept the 2025 Financial Reports, Auditor's Statement, and Treasurer's report as presented by the Treasurer
7. Motion: To accept the 2026 Budget for discussion
8. Motion: To approve the 2026 Budget
9. Motion: To appoint an auditor for 2026
10. Motion: To appoint members to the Board of Managers.
11. Motion: To appoint Kathy Drew-Smith as a trustee at Central Church to join current trustees George Barrie, Robert Deans and Jack Sims.
12. New Business
13. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES- January 26, 2025

1. Call to Order and Prayer

Time meeting called to order: 11:24 AM

Prayer led by: Rev. Aubrey Botha

2. Motion: To appoint a secretary for the meeting – David Shaw

Proposed by: Chuck Phillips. Seconded by: Barbara Barrie

Result: Passed

3. Motion: To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on January 28, 2024, as printed in the 2024 Annual Report

Proposed by: Elizabeth Creswell Seconded by: Kevin Sullivan Discussion: Amendments (if any):

Result: Passed

4. Business Arising from the Minutes - NA

5. Motion: To accept the Group Reports (pages 6-20)

Proposed by: Barbara Barrie Seconded by: Sharon Wohlgemut

Discussion: Aubrey listed every group in the report. Highlights of his comments are as follows:

Membership Committee – membership rolls are being updated for Aubrey's eventual retirement. 2024 was a hard year for Aubrey with many valued members of the congregation passing away.

Christian Education saw a lot of change this year. Best wishes to Stephanie who ran the youth group as she pursues her new interests. Thanks to Jocelyn for all her hard work with the children's classes

Missions We need prayers for a national Mission to take shape for the church

Central Cares still have a little bit of funds left from a donation for mental health.

Worship Team was thanked for the great work they do every week.

Thanks to the **Flower Guild** who work to make the church beautiful every Sunday.

Thanks to the **Choir** – the Hymn Sing Café is a great outreach activity.

Thank you to **Don our Custodian**, who does so much behind the scenes, keeping the church clean.

Board of Managers – Sandy Barrie recognized for the huge amount of time he dedicates to the church. Special thanks to **Ingrid Talpak** for helping with the plastering work.

Communications Team – Thank you to **Ingrid** who does so much work for this team. This team is growing in importance with today's technology.

Online Ministry - Greg Gowing mentioned that 1/3 of our ministry is now online. 60-90 in weekly attendance depending on the day. Thanks to **Greg** for leading this effort.

Restoration Fundraising Team Ended the year with a surplus in the budget. An additional \$40K in donations, much of which was from outside sources, was applied to the loan at the end of the year.

Use of Church Allistair McIlwraith and Barbara Barrie were recognized for their work in organising the many church events.

Result: Passed

6. Motion: To accept the 2024 Financial Reports, Auditor's Statement, and Treasurer's report as presented by the Treasurer

Proposed by: Mary Hetherington Seconded by: Chuck Phillips

Discussion: Scott Brunskill spoke to the congregation about the report which was in the annual report. The congregation was thanked for helping the church go from a deficit of \$30k in November to a surplus of \$11k at end of year.

Result: Passed

7. Motion: To accept the 2025 Budget for discussion

Proposed by: Robert Deans Seconded by: Pat Couttie Discussion:

Offerings are asked to be flat in 2025 vs 2024. There was a small COL for Staff of 2.75% requested. Expenses for the year are up only \$4000, which is mostly utilities.

Gerda Burgsma asked how projects were brought up to the Board and the appropriate Board members were pointed out to her. More volunteers are required to finish the great plastering work done in the sanctuary by Ingrid and Sandy.

Result: Passed

8. Motion: To approve the 2025 Budget

Proposed by: Sandra Goodwin Seconded by: Gerda Burgsma

Result: Passed

A Prayer was offered up by Aubrey for the year ahead for the church and the good work it is doing in many areas of the budget.

9. Motion: To appoint an auditor for 2025

Proposed by: Scott Brunskill Seconded by: Barbara Barrie Discussion: Scott asked that Mo Aflatounian be approved as auditor. Mo did the work last year.

Result: Passed

10. Motion: To appoint members to the Board of Managers

Proposed by: Sue Sullivan Seconded by: Barbara Pulling Discussion: Chuck Phillips was nominated to join the Board. Other volunteers were asked for, but none stepped forward.

Names of new members: Chuck Phillips.

Result: Passed

11. New Business

Item 1: Elizabeth Creswell reminded everyone to fill out the survey for Aubrey's replacement

Decision or Action: just a reminder – no actions the committee in charge of gathering the data under Horst's direction will be meeting soon.

Item 2: Aubrey mentioned that the church will be looking for new elders in 2025.

Discussion: just a FYI, no discussion. Aubrey did mention the following statistics: There are 27 Presbyterian congregations in Waterloo/Wellington area. Of those only 12 have ministers. Of those only 7 have full-time ministers. Central is very fortunate to be one of those 7.

12. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Time meeting adjourned: 12:17PM

Closing prayer by: Rev Aubrey Botha

Signature of Secretary: *David Shaw* Jan 26, 2025

Session Report 2024

This year we continued working on our Transition Plan to call our next minister to coincide with Aubrey's retirement in the spring of 2027. The congregation completed a Transition Planning Survey where we identified the qualities we most want to seek in a new minister. Using this information, we developed a Congregational Profile which will be sent to candidates to describe our congregation and our community. The Presbytery approved our transition plan and appointed the Rev. Dr. Mark Richardson as our Interim Moderator. Mark will oversee the Search process and will begin work with us in January 2026. We also appointed a Search Team representing a broad cross-section of the congregation: Joe Brunskill, Scott Brunskill, Elizabeth Cresswell, David Pinnington, Katherine Rochester, Monty Steenson, Grace Van Druten, Storme Viggers and Horst Wohlgemut.

This spring we had an election of new elders to meet the needs of our congregation. Stacey Campagnoni, Paul DeJong, Janice Guenard, Peter Vickery and Samantha Vickery were ordained in June. Unfortunately, due to a change in work commitments, Peter and Samantha Vickery had to step down before they were able to start on the session.

On September 28, we welcomed the Rev. Cathy Stewart and two elders who attended the Sunday worship service and conducted a visit with the congregation, the Session, the Board of Managers and Aubrey on behalf of the Presbytery.

In October, we had the most incredible surprise when Tracy Medel of Kingsville Ontario came to the church with a book she had found in a thrift shop in Leamington. It was the journal of Central's first minister, the Rev. James Dickson. The book is in remarkable condition for its age and contains invaluable historical details about our congregation, our community and even our country. We are indebted to Ms. Medel for returning the book to us. We are working to ensure the book is properly stored and archived for future generations.

Finally, we want to say thank you to all our staff: Office Administrator Debbie McKevitt, Custodian Don Willis, Children's and Family Ministry Coordinator Jocelyn Versteeg, Elrey and Elsie Botha who have stepped in to lead that Ministry during Jocelyn's maternity leave 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, 2025

Sandy Barrie	Scott Brunskill	Stacey Campagnoni	Elizabeth Cresswell
Pat Couttie	Paul De Jong	Lorna From	Janice Guenard
Bruce Jones	Denise McClellan	Alexander McIlwraith	Alistair McIlwraith
Dawn McIlwraith	Alejandro Ortiz	Lynda Pinnington	Kevin Sullivan
Doris Taylor-Hendry	Horst Wohlgemut	Sharon Wohlgemut	Margaret Macnamara

Leave of Absence: Greg Gowing, Scott McHardy, Sheryl Millson, Alison Senior, Jack Sims

Submitted by
Lynda Pinnington,
Clerk of Session

Central Presbyterian Church Membership Statistical Report

January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025

*Communicant Members as of December 2024 *172

New Members 2025 16

Sub Total 188

Deaths 4

Transfers 0

Removed 4

Communicant members as of December 31, 2025. 180

We are sorry to report that during the past year we lost the following members:
Alice Poland, Sandra Goodwin, Maureen Murphy, Robert Sanders and Peter Coleman.
The church offers their condolences to the families and friends of those members.

5 Year comparison Statistical Report

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Communicant Members	276	273	264	186	172
New Members	2	12	7	6	16
Re-Instated					
Adherents				284	268
Transfer Out	0	2	2	2	0
Removals	1	7	11	12	6
Deaths	4	12	7	6	5
*Removals for Correction			6		
Year End Member	273	264	245- *186	172	180
*Sunday School	42	48	26	16	16

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

*This year we are identifying 268 adherents that worship with us.

Funerals for 2025: Alice Poland, Sandra Goodwin.

-Standards Committee

Board of Managers

The Board of Managers consists of the following members:

Chair: Chuck Phillips

Secretary: Ted Brown

Finance: Scott Brunskill, Treasurer

Property: Sandy Barrie

Personnel: Scott Sipa

Use of Church: Barbara Barrie

Session Liaison: Scott Brunskill

Members: Sue Sullivan, David Pinnington

At the 2024 Annual General Meeting, I was very pleased to be able to return to the Board and subsequently, to be elected by the Board as the Chair. It is a real honour to be able to work with such experienced and passionate individuals, anxious to do whatever they can to ensure the congregation is well served and operations run smoothly. I took over as Chair from Interim Chair, David Shaw who has energetically supported the Church in many different roles. On behalf of the Board, I'd like to express our gratitude to David for stepping up in sad & difficult circumstances after Peter Goudy passed away in 2024.

The Board meets on the fourth Monday of each month, and we act as a committee of the Session to manage the maintenance, contracting of landscaping and snow removal services, finances, insurance and overseeing the employment relationship for non-pastoral staff of the church.

It was another busy year at Central, as the attached reports highlight. As we all know, the beautiful building we operate from is old and requires proactive maintenance and repairs. We also host many groups over the year, which requires careful coordination. We are fortunate to have highly experienced staff, which is one of the reasons things (usually!) run so smoothly.

We finished the year with a surplus, due to good collections but also thanks to some unexpected rental income associated with the filming of the Handmaid's Tale in and around the church building last year. Scott's reports will highlight these issues, and his budget proposals will outline Church finances absent this one-time rental income pick-up. We all look forward to answering your questions during the review of the reports in this Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted,
Chuck Philips

Congregational Development and Fellowship Team

Some highlights of our activity in 2025: Organized the annual Church BBQ and Christmas Potluck and Carol Sing. Ran the Sunday Night Lecture Series focusing on Christ and Culture. Men's Breakfast and Ladies' Brunch ran throughout the year. Nametag Sundays.

We hosted Welcome Back Sunday and held our Welcome Lunch earlier in the year. We will continue to do this periodically when we've assessed that there are enough folks who have made Central their home in the past two years or so.

We will revisit most of these activities and add to the list in 2026! Plans for the coming year: Various Fellowship Events. First one on Saturday afternoon, Feb. 21st. Small Group Assessment. Getting a handle on interest and commitment, seeing where this leads. Finding a community Service Project for the congregation to support. Continued promotion of volunteerism at Central.

Current Team Members: Jan Sparrow, Kim DeJong, Terry Carney, Stacey Campagnoni, Darren Schmidt

Respectfully submitted
Kevin Sullivan
Team Lead

Christian Education Team

2025 was another successful year for many of our programs and a year with its challenges too. God has richly blessed our congregation with creative, talented and dedicated volunteers who support our staff to provide engaging Adult & Young Adult Bible Study, Alpha, Kids Zone, Vacation Bible School and Family Ministry programming. Without these wonderful folks and the support of the congregation we could not function! Our new Young Adult Bible Study group had an average attendance of 10-12 weekly under the leadership of David Haskell from Sept. 2024 - May 2025. We thank David for the leadership he provided.

With the invaluable leadership and organization of our Family Ministry Coordinator Jocelyn Versteeg we were able to make a smooth transition on May 1 to welcome our Interim Children and Family Ministry Coordinator and Summer Program supervisor Braedon Shaw during the first four months of Jocelyn's Maternity Leave. Using the detailed manual that Jocelyn provided, Braedon managed our Kids Zone and VBS programs as well as the volunteer roster; the new curriculum change-over and supervised the Summer Students among his many duties. We deeply appreciated his four months of strong leadership at Central. Braedon was fortunate to have the creative energies of our 4 excellent Canada Summer Jobs Students; Jenna Haveman, Abby McGrath, Chance Clair Simamu and Joe Brunskill. Our thanks as well to Carolyn Witzke (Adult Bible Study) and Alexander McIlwraith (Alpha) for their dedicated leadership throughout the year. An extra note of appreciation to Braedon and Jocelyn for their excellent organization in programming for the added Kids Zone children during the combined worship services with Grace Bible Church this year.

In September God once again blessed Central with two experienced, creative and razor focused women (plus Lulu) to steer our Family Ministries which is filled with excellent programming through to Jocelyn's return on May 1, 2026. We are so fortunate to have Elsie and Elrey guide our children and support our volunteers so capably and we thank them sincerely. In October these amazing ladies began to prepare the Children for a pageant filled with Carols, and choreographed song and dance to celebrate 'The Promise of Christmas' followed by a reception on December 21.

A Search Team has been created to find someone to fill the role of our 'Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator' and we know God will guide the right candidate to us.

My deepest appreciation to the Congregation for your prayers and on-going support and the C.E. Team members Jocelyn Versteeg, Dawn and Alistair McIlwraith, Carolyn Witzke and Rev. Aubrey Botha for their dedication to this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Cresswell
Christian Education Team Leader

Children & Family Ministry

September – December 2025 We are thankful to report on the growth and blessings of our Children's Ministry over the past four months.

September Start-Up We began the ministry year in September with Children's Church for the first three weeks. This time allowed us to get everything organized, settle into routines, and intentionally build relationships with the children and their families. The children enjoyed this time very much, and it helped create a welcoming and joyful environment. During this period, we had an average attendance of 10 children each week.

Kids Zone (Sunday School) Following the initial weeks, we launched Kids Zone (Sunday School) using the Group Curriculum – *Simply Loved*. The response from our teachers has been very positive. The curriculum is well organized and engaging, and we make sure that all materials are prepared and set up ahead of time, so teachers only need to prepare the lesson content at home.

To better meet the needs of our children, we organized Kids Zone into three age-appropriate groups:

- **JK & SK:** average attendance of 4 children
- **Grades 1–3:** average attendance of 8 children
- **Grades 4–6:** average attendance of 4 children

We are encouraged by the consistency and engagement in each group and are planning to continue with the *Simply Loved* curriculum, starting Quarter 2 in January 2026.

Family Events: We hosted two family events, both of which were a great success:

- **Fall Family Event:** A visit to Brantwood Farms, with 20 people attending (including adults). Families enjoyed fun fall activities and fellowship.
- **Christmas Family Event:** 10 children participated in building gingerbread houses and watching a Christmas movie. It was a joyful and relaxed time together.

Children’s Ministry Lunches: During this period, we hosted two special lunches that were both very meaningful and successful.

The first lunch was a Volunteer Appreciation Lunch, organized to thank our volunteers for their dedication and faithful service. It also provided an opportunity to build relationships, strengthen our team, and encourage fellowship among those serving in the ministry. The lunch was very well received, and it was encouraging to see volunteers enjoying time together in a relaxed and appreciative atmosphere.

The second lunch was a Family Fellowship Lunch, created to give our families an opportunity to get to know one another better and to enjoy time together outside of regular ministry activities. Families shared a wonderful time of fellowship, conversation, and connection, which helped strengthen relationships within our church community.

Both lunches were very successful and served as a great encouragement to our volunteers and families. They helped build unity, strengthen relationships, and create a welcoming and supportive environment within the ministry.

Christmas Pageant: Preparation for the Christmas Pageant began in October, with practices held on Sundays. Twelve children, ranging in age from 3 to 12 years old, participated in the program. Due to the wide age range and group dynamics, the pageant was presented in a slightly different format this year.

The congregation received “**The Promise of Christmas**” very positively. Many shared encouraging feedback, and the fellowship time afterward—with hot chocolate and cookies—was well enjoyed. It was truly a wonderful way to end the year on the Sunday before Christmas.

Appreciation and Thanks: We would like to express our sincere thank you to all our volunteers and teachers who faithfully serve in the Children’s Ministry. Your time, preparation, flexibility, and love for the children do not go unnoticed. Because of your commitment, our children experience a safe, welcoming, and Christ-centered environment each Sunday.

We are also grateful for your willingness to embrace new routines and a new curriculum, and for the joy and patience you show as you build relationships with our children and families. Your service is a true blessing to this ministry and to our church family.

May the Lord continue to strengthen and bless you as you pour into the lives of our children.

Looking Ahead: Over the past four months, we have seen growth in the Children's Ministry, along with lots of laughter, joy, and meaningful connections. We are grateful for how the Lord works in the lives of our children and families.

We pray that 2026 will be a blessed year for our Children's Ministry and that our children will continue to grow in their faith and love for Jesus.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsie & Elrey Botha

Missions Team

Our Team is once again deeply appreciative of your strong and faithful support for our three mission projects. This year we added the international Chicken Project in Cubulco, Guatemala, to our local mission, the Cambridge Food Bank, and our international mission, Rachel's Home HIV/AIDS orphanage and community school, in Maputsoe, Lesotho, Africa. All our missions work relies on fundraising apart from Central's operating budget and 100% of your donations go directly to our projects. We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to such a loving and caring congregation, for your support by prayers, volunteer hours, shared talents, and generous financial assistance.

Our first event of the year to support our Food Bank was a Talent Night on Sunday April 6. The event was well organized by Scott Beda, featuring talent from Central and our local community. It was a truly wonderful evening with many diverse talents and all ages, including Becky Barrie and her dog! We collected \$1675.00 and 4 containers of food items. It was a fun evening for all, and we hope to repeat it this spring. Next, we hosted our yearly summer food challenge, from June 1 to Labour Day. The goal for "Stir the Pot," cans and packages of soup, was 2500. The goal was quickly surpassed, and we reached 3155. Thank you to the children and parents at VBS who also helped us out. Way to go, Central! Meeting our goal also insured we would have a familiar "green-haired visitor." We also continue to collect food items at each Sunday service, selecting a much-needed monthly item.

Christmas is always a very busy time for us to support the Food Bank. On December 14 we hosted our White Gift Sunday, donating gifts for our seniors in need. There were many beautiful gifts circling our tree, including books, games, toiletries, winter clothing items, and treats. The Mitten Tree continued through December to collect winter clothing items, such as socks, scarves, mitts, and hats, for children and youth in need in our community. Through your amazingly generous support, twice we were able to pack up many items to distribute for Christmas, including those homemade. You also brought food items to our Christmas Eve service to help one in nine households in our county who live with food insecurity. Thank you for your loving response to help our Food Bank.

When we decided to continue our Chicken Project which was begun in 2018, and bless about 20 poor families in Cubulco, you stepped forward again. We raised more than \$6,000 to provide corn to feed the chickens for a year. Each family received materials to build a chicken coop, about 12 chickens, 1 rooster, and enough chicken feed for a year. Thanks to our team member, Alejandro Ortiz, who manages the project with a local church that he helped to establish when on his recent missionary trip. These families are blessed with a sustainable project of a small business, which gives them food security and an additional income from selling extra eggs and chickens. On May 25 we hosted a Mission Night for Guatemala and Alejandro gave a presentation to update us on the success of the project. We hope to continue supporting this project along with our partner church and community in Cubulco.

On July 13 Central hosted a Sunday Supper and Service in Spanish for some local migrant farm workers from Mexico and Guatemala. They work in our local fields and greenhouses. This was an opportunity to show our appreciation to these hard workers, who leave their homes and families

behind. We offered a time of joy, fellowship, and Christian teaching in Spanish on their one day off in the week. In this outreach program, Alejandro from our team and Pastor Julio from Stratford hosted a soccer game for them at a local park after which they all came back to Central for the evening. Through your kind and generous donation of \$961.00 and volunteer help, the workers had a wonderful evening with a delicious BBQ, praise songs, and a talk by Bruce Jones. Unused donations went to our Food Bank.

For Rachel's Home, we hosted our major annual event Going the Extra Mile, a 5 km walkathon, from mid-October to the end of November. We had 12 participants who found sponsors within Central and their family, friends, and neighbours. These funds provide food, clothing, meds, caregivers' and teachers' salaries, school supplies and uniforms, heat, etc. There are many in Central who support Rachel's Home through the year and help with their further education. We thank Elsie Botha for all her hard work in managing this project with Hilda.

On December 21, the night of the Christmas Pageant, we placed stockings on the pews to collect funds for a Christmas lunch, a gift of new clothing and new shoes for the orphans. The response was wonderful and in total we received \$14, 700.01 for the stockings and walkathon events.

On December 28, we received this letter from Hilda who oversees the work at Rachel's Home.

"Dear Elsie,

Greetings from Rachel's Home, Lesotho. We are doing well and hope that you are doing well also. It is festive time, and everyone is excited here. The children are happy because they are enjoying the meals and had their new clothes on for Christmas Day, thanks to your Presbyterian Church. 2025 has been a very challenging year for us, we are very grateful that it is almost ending, we are looking forward to 2026.

Most of the people lost their jobs in the factories around us, resulting in fewer students at our school, and our children had to be the only ones at school. Our number dropped from 45 to 28 and in this way, we lost some income because they were paying and that was helping a lot at the orphanage. We have 23 children at the orphanage at the moment and are all doing well at home and in school and we are grateful for that. Our high school girls are doing well and doing their final year in 2026, and Shekina is doing her final year in 2026 and will be graduating from university. We have 2 boys that are also going to secondary school next year and we are still looking for scholarship for them.

It is that time of the year again whereby we have to start preparing for school because January is here already. The children don't have stationery and school uniforms, as some have grown up and they don't fit any more. There's lots of needs at Rachel's Home at the moment, but because of the economic situation right now we've learned to survive without. Our playground is not in good condition, our buildings need more renovations, our toilets also need some renovations, we have lots of broken chairs and windows, and some ceiling needs to be fixed, and many more.

We are very grateful for all that you are doing for us and the children at Rachel's Home. The food that you are providing for us has been a great help and has changed their lives. The salaries are playing a major role because the children have two caregivers and two teachers that are committed and taking care of the children. The children were beautiful at Christmas Day with their new clothes, and they really enjoyed their Christmas lunch, and we are very grateful for everything that you are doing. May the Lord bless you all and please keep doing the great work and be blessed. We wish you all the blessings in 2026 and may all your families and your children's families be blessed. Your sister in the Lord, Hilda."

In closing, our Missions Team extends a special thank you to all those who supported our mission projects throughout the year. Session also thanks you for your contribution to Presbyterians Sharing at the national level. Central is truly a caring church family.

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

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, serious health and mobility issues (homebound so not able to attend church), serious vision and hearing issues, no longer able to 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. We also have some funds 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.

We want to thank Evelyn Gordon and Kay Mattear who continue to make hospital visits when needed. Thanks to Dawn McIlwraith and her band of prayer warriors who meet faithfully each week and respond to any prayer requests as needed.

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 delicious treats. Thanks to Sarah Barrie for making some delicious and beautifully decorated Christmas cookies for the gift bags this December. This Christmas our children's ministry created some beautiful Christmas cards that we included in our homebound gift bags. Thanks to those who visit and deliver the gift bags. Many of our recipients express their thanks for being remembered and loved by their Central church family.

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.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise McClellan
Sandy Barrie

Worship Team

In the past year, we've had many wonderful times of worship. We continue to livestream the service and have 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." We also continue to encourage people to like, subscribe and share to help us grow our social media reach, which has been a goal of the Communications Team.

Our prayer ministry team hosted an evening of prayer, praying for our congregation, city, province, country and world on January 1, which was well attended. 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 again on New Years Day. The prayer ministry team continues to be available after the services most Sundays to pray with people who would like prayer.

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, please speak to Alexander or Aubrey.

Alpha

Curious about faith? You're invited to Alpha, a welcoming course that explores the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly, open environment—no pressure and no judgment.

Each evening includes a shared meal, a short talk, and time for honest discussion. All are welcome. Come as you are and bring a friend! Register: Contact the church office or email alpha@cpcmail.ca

This fall saw us run our 10th Alpha Course since 2016. This course was small but still featured dinner and live talks by Alexander McIlwraith and Bruce Jones.

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 on an occasional basis by helping in the kitchen.

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.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexander McIlwraith

Flower Guild

A wonderful group of members met to decorate the sanctuary for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas this year.

I was thrilled to have a group of fifteen attend our first Christmas decorating workshop along with the four extra volunteers that did the heavy lifting required to bring the trees up from the basement. Thank you, Sandy Barrie, Scott Sipa and Laura and Richard Griffin, for your help.

A big thank you to those church members that supported the Memorial Poinsettias project. You made it possible for us to add 25 beautiful red and white plants that beautified the sanctuary.

A special thanks to those that kept plants watered and looking healthy for the month. We are always happy to have new members join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Barrie

Central Choir

When it comes to making 'a joyful noise', the Central Choir continues to provide Music Leadership throughout the Seasons of the Church Year. Under the directorship of Gwen Darling and instrumental support of the Praise Band musicians, Laura Falle and Katherine Rochester the Choir meets weekly to prepare praise pieces and anthems. We also presented a secular selection from 'Fiddler on the Roof' for this year's Talent Show.

We were blessed again this year to perform with the talented trumpeter Gerald Achtymichuk and professional musician and recording artist Allsion Lupton.

We experienced sadness with the passing of Dennis Reid, dear husband of Petronella and the retirement of long-time member Evelyn Gordon.

And in September we said farewell to our dear Gwen Darling when she made the decision to move back to her home area of Port Hope after more than 20 years as part of the Central Family and the past 10 plus years as our fearless leader! We wish her well and know this is a positive move for Gwen, but we still miss her!

In the meantime, Carrie Paddock has been providing consistent leadership and musical expertise, and the Choir continues with this blessing! We welcomed several new folks to join us for the Advent and Christmas season and we are so grateful!! We are always assured that the 'Lord will Provide'!

Thank you to everyone in the Choir and Praise Team for your hours of dedication and to the Congregation for your prayers and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Cresswell
Central Choir President

2025 Hymn Sing Cafe

Again, this year our 7 monthly Hymn Sing Cafe's proved to be a very successful community outreach ministry. Our average attendance was 50-60 people, and the majority remained for the time of fellowship and delicious refreshments. Most attendees are not necessarily affiliated with Central Church, but everyone greatly enjoys the opportunity to sing their favourite old hymns, hear the rich sounds of our excellent pipe organ and the beautiful grand piano. They also look forward to gathering with friends, new and old. The generous loose change donations enable this ministry to successfully cover any costs incurred. We are blessed to have wonderful volunteers who provide baked treats and welcome our audience. These folks are all truly appreciated.

We were especially grateful this year for our very talented guest performers Allison Lupton, David and Katherine Rochester and the David Durward Bell Ringers under the direction of Nancy Kraus who perform at our May and December Hymn Sing's each year. This is a wonderful tradition. We are very grateful for the continued support of our Session, the Central Congregation and the wider Community.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to Richard Neff for playing the Bells in the Tower as people approach the church, to Debbie McKeivitt, our Church Administrator, and Pat Couttie for Song Sheet preparation, Denise McClellan for taking care of our advertising and also to Denise and Dawn McIlwraith for managing the delightful hospitality of the Cafe, to Alistair McIlwraith for providing the Sound and Video technical assistance, to David Rochester for his assistance, to our Church Custodian Don and most importantly my deepest gratitude to Katherine Rochester for her advice, guidance and boundless musical gifts.

Join us on Wednesday afternoons at 2 PM on February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, October 14, November 11 & December 9, 2026, and bring your friends!

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Cresswell

Communication Team

The Communication Team has a mandate to coordinate with other Teams within Central Church to present and promote our message through the written word, media, and technology. Our team presents the public face of Central Church through Instagram, Facebook, our website and regular newsletters. Our Sunday services are livestreamed as well as funerals and weddings.

This year, our presence on social media continued to expand through the efforts and expertise of the members of the Communications Team. As well, the Team's creativity in graphic arts and visual presentation was used to help design the "Central Profile" which will be used in 2026 in our search for a new minister.

1. In 2025, our Team included: Greg Gowing, Sybil Johnson, Alistair McIlwraith, Denise McClellan, George Neeb, Storme Viggers, Ingrid Talpak, and Chair, Sharon Wohlgemut.
2. Many thanks to Scott McHardy, Ted Brown, Grace Van Druten, Paul DeJong, Greg Gowing, and Adolf Coetzer for their faithful service and expertise with the audio-visual production of our Sunday services.
3. Greg Gowing produces the streamed services which have brought an increasingly large audience to Central services and Aubrey's sermons. Greg also maintains the website, posts weekly and monthly events, and collects and analyzes user statistics. Adolf Coetzer has joined Greg in this venture.
4. Ingrid Talpak and Sybil Johnson are invaluable for their considerable expertise in the production and use of social media. This creative duo has been largely responsible for the huge increase in our social media presence. This year they also updated our Central branding to provide consistency in our public profile.
5. Alistair McIlwraith is crucial for arranging events at Central Church. He is the public interface between Central and outside rentals, and he sets up events and provides technical support for many Central activities.
6. Sharon Wohlgemut continues to produce a monthly newsletter which contains pertinent information on dates and events within the congregation.

The efforts of this creative and lively Team serve to make Central a strong media presence in our community.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Wohlgemut

Central's Online Ministry

We cannot report for the full year, because submissions to the Annual Report must be submitted before the end of the year. As a result, these numbers do not include much of the Christmas season. However, this is in line with the reporting practices we've had in previous years. For the purposes of this report, the reporting period was January 1, 2025-December 11, 2025.

Website

Total Page Views	Total Users	Active Users	Average Session	Bounce Rate
61,560	31,779	30,732	1:22	39.9%

When compared to last year, page views and total users are down about 25%, but user engagement, measured in terms of the number of users who actively engage with our website and the length of time they engage with our website was up.

The lead cause for the decline in total users was our Google Ad campaign. Our ads were served up 449,000 times. This represents a decline of 115,000. We had 20,000 fewer visits to our website resulting from our Google Ads campaigns. Despite this, the “cost” of our campaign rose \$12,600 to \$79,600. Of course, those costs are entirely theoretical, given the fact that, as part of our Google for Nonprofits account, we receive up to \$120,000/year in free advertising.

Simply put, for several years, we had very few competitors for the ad space we were consuming. In 2025, our ads faced stiffer competition for space on Google search. We have worked hard over the past few months to stabilize our advertising performance, and we have also worked to improve the content of our website. As a result, we witnessed modest improvements in the final quarter.

Demographics

Our website audience is, by far, our most diverse. First, the United States is our largest audience. This is followed by Canada, South Africa, India and the United Kingdom. Our website audience is our youngest audience. Based on the available information (which is incomplete) 18–24-year-olds is our largest cohort and 55–64-year-olds is our smallest.

Team: Our website was maintained primarily by Debbie McKeivitt and Greg Gowing

YouTube

Total Views	Total Watch Time	New Subscribers	Total Subscribers
7,304	1,875.2 Hours	72	410

Our YouTube viewership saw solid growth over the course of 2025, with increases in total views of 28% and total watch time of 38%. Our subscriber base grew by 21%. Our average viewership for our full service was 80 views/week, while our average viewership for sermon only videos was 37 views/week.

Demographics

YouTube demographics and geography are harder to interpret, but roughly half of our viewership appears to have come from Canada. The United States, India, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands appear to be our largest foreign audiences. It’s all but impossible to glean, age or gender demographics from YouTube insights.

Team: Our YouTube channel and livestreaming was primarily maintained by Greg Gowing and Adolf Coetzer, though we occasionally dragged in Alistair and Alexander McIlwraith to help.

Facebook & Instagram

Total Views	Reels	Photos	Stories
68,957	36,317	15,098	6,322

Our Facebook and Instagram ministry has continued its trend of steady growth. Overall viewership was up 2.9%. Facebook followers increased by 26. We now have 542 followers. Instagram followers saw substantial growth with an increase of 323 followers, bringing our total number of followers to 567.

Facebook Demographics

Unlike our website and YouTube channel, our Facebook and Instagram audience is much more local. More than 85% of our Facebook visitors were Canadian and more than half were from Waterloo

Region. Foreign viewers came from South Africa, the United States, Brazil and the United Kingdom. Facebook’s audience tends to be older, and our Facebook page is no different. Just shy of 60% of our Facebook audience is 55 or older.

Instagram Demographics

As expected, our Instagram audience is considerably younger than our Facebook audience. Our largest cohort is 35-44 years old, followed by 45–54-year-olds and 25–34-year-olds. Our Instagram visitors are primarily local, but the pattern isn’t quite as dramatic as Facebook. 78% of our visitors are from Canada and 51% are from Cambridge or Kitchener. Our foreign visitors came from the United States, Uganda, Nigeria and Brazil.
Team: Our Facebook and Instagram pages were maintained by Sybil Johnson and Ingrid Talpak.

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Gowing

Personnel Team

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

Linda Brown	Congregation Representative
Dale Ross	Congregation Representative
Jane McWilliams	Congregational Representative
Jack Sims	Congregation 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 policies 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 salary administration for our custodian, Office Manager, Music Director and Children and Youth Ministry personnel.

During 2025 the Team accomplished the following tasks:

1. The Team assisted the Profile Team in generating a congregational questionnaire which elicited preferred characteristics in a new minister and an overview of the congregation.
2. The refined questionnaire was circulated to each member of the congregation. The tabulation of the completed questionnaires was used as the basis for the development of our Church Profile.
3. The Church Profile was approved by Session in early fall and sent to the Presbyterian Church in Canada’s Ministry and Church Vocations group.
4. Guidance was provided for dealing with several personnel issues, including interim staffing to fill an extended maternity leave and searching for a person to serve as the Youth and Young Adults Group.
5. Assistance was provided for completing performance reviews for selected staff members.
6. Recommendations were generated for Session and the Board for 2026 salary increases for Central staff members.

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

We also appreciate the significant time and effort over the years that Jane McWilliams has made as a member of the Personnel Team. Her experience and wise counsel will be missed.

Respectfully submitted,
Horst Wohlgemut
Chair, Personnel Team

Restoration Fundraising Team

We continued this year hosting fundraising concerts: the Waterloo County Teachers' Choir on May 4 and a Tribute to the 100th Anniversary of the Grand Ole Opry on October 24.

We had an Open House on September 20 which not only drew people to tour the sanctuary and bell tower but also resulted in some people returning to our worship service the next day. 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.

2025 marks the fifth year of our initial Restoration Fundraising Campaign. To start the next five-year cycle, we thank Sybil Johnson and Ingrid Talpak for designing a new brochure and campaign theme which we used on our annual update letter in November.

We were very grateful this year that the interest rates have continued their downward trend. 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.

This year we welcomed Elizabeth Cresswell and Janice Guenard to the team. We encourage others in the congregation with creative ideas, marketing and/or fundraising expertise to join us.

Team Members: *Elizabeth Cresswell, Janice Guenard, 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: Stacey Campagnoni, Pat Couttie, Denise McClellan, Lorne McClenaghan, Bonnie McCrae, George Neeb, Beverley Nykamp, Lynda Pinnington, Barb Pulling, Karen Steenson, 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 March 2 was attended by 21 people. We are very blessed at Central to be able to host such events.

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

Use of Church

When we are discussing the function of the Use of Church committee, we are only looking at the groups from the community who rent the church for events such as concerts and training. To do this we have to schedule around the many events that happen in our church programs for children and youth events, adult studies, banquets, weddings, funerals, fundraisers, and the many other things that happen in the life of an active church.

It was an eventful year at Central. We started by hosting the cast of the Handmaids Tale as they filmed the series finale here in Cambridge. The production crew had 500 people to keep warm, feed and all the other things necessary – busy days!

The acoustics and instruments at Central have always attracted classical musicians. The Cambridge Symphony Orchestra featured two concerts featuring special artists on our grand piano. This extraordinary program includes Mozart's Overture to The Marriage of Figaro, Tchaikovsky - Swan Lake Suite, and Beethoven's beloved Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major.

We were delighted to provide assistance to the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony players association after the orchestra's financial difficulties created by the COVID pandemic. They performed two concerts earlier in the year. In the past the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony Orchestra performed the "Baroque and Beyond" series of concerts and I am happy to say that in December the KWSO was with us again with a David Fallis conducting "French Connections", a program featuring interesting music by both well-known and lesser-known French composers.

Hope Story, a local missions organization, presented The Messiah, always a very popular event at Christmas.

Allison Lupton performed in November. She is a multiple CFMA nominee for "Traditional Singer of the Year" and "Vocal Group of the Year" as well as Folk Music Ontario's "Songs from the Heart" grand prize winner for "One More Day". Allison can count herself securely among Canadian folk music's finest contributors.

Respectfully submitted,
Alistair McIlwraith
Barbara Barrie

Weddings

Central hosted three beautiful weddings spread over the year. Winter, summer and autumn. All lovely couples starting out together. I was thrilled to be able to help these couples navigate through the rehearsals and ceremonies with as little stress as possible.

It was also nice to make available the Fellowship Hall for rehearsal dinners. This has become a popular choice for couples to have a simple catered meal after their rehearsal without having to change locations. An easy way to start the celebration!

2026 has three weddings booked at this time. April, May and September.

Thank you to my support staff that makes these events possible. Katherine, Alistair, Paul and Don as well as the music team that assist in making the sanctuary transition from service to wedding and back again run as smoothly as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Barrie

Central Presbyterian Church Men's Ministry Report 2025

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

- 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.

Committee members include Kevin Sullivan, Paul DeJong, Alexander McIlwraith, Jim Hetherington, John Vos and Andrew Campagnoni.

This year we organized 2 breakfast events:

- February 22nd featuring Mark Kitzman, currently Director of Development and Communications for Trans World Radio who shared his diverse professional and faith journey with World Vision Canada, Mercy Ships Canada, and SAT-7 Canada. He also shared information on Every Man A Warrior program. We appreciated having Professor David Haskell shared his personal testimony.
- June 24th was our first off site event, "Wing-Night" at Chuck's Roadhouse. An evening of wonderful fellowship, sharing some life experiences all over great wings, burgers and other good food.
- August 19th, we enjoyed our "Bar-b-Q Under The Tent" event and despite the rain it was a fun evening challenging us to ladder rope throwing, bocchia ball, putting and chipping and other activities. Jim mastered the grill with good food and Darren Schmidt shared a meaningful devotion.
- November 1st our guest was Dr. Derrick Mueller executive director with Association for Christian Schools International. He shared how his life and spiritual growth was shaped through many severe personal challenges and that failing is God's process in developing us to become who and where we need to be. That through pain and perseverance we find our deep sense of purpose.

Moving forward into 2026 we are committed to fulfilling the purpose of our ministry to men by planning for the following opportunities and events to engage our men in fellowship and their spiritual development.

- Quarterly breakfast events
- Barbeque nights
- Bible study opportunities
- Golf tournament (open to all church members)
- Reaching out to "Ministry To Margins" with the interest to participate in their ministry.

Each committee member sincerely values the prayer support by Central Church in our efforts to developing an effective and meaningful ministry that will bless and enrich the lives of every man, young and old at Central Church.

Submitted respectfully,
CPC Men's Ministry Committee