



VESTRY REPORTS  
FOR THE  
153<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING



23 FEBRUARY 2025  
CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER  
162 BLOOR STREET WEST, TORONTO, ON M5S 1M4

*We acknowledge with respect  
that we gather today to celebrate on the traditional lands  
of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and the Anishinabek Nations,  
and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.*

*This territory was the subject of the  
Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant,  
an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy  
and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations  
to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.  
This land is also covered by the Toronto Purchase.  
Today, Toronto is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island.*

*We pray that we may live more deeply  
into the calls to action from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission  
as we seek reconciliation among all people who call this land home.*



## Agenda for the 153rd Annual Vestry Meeting

### *Sunday, 23 February, 2025*

- 12:30PM      Opening Prayers  
Adoption of Agenda  
Appointment of Vestry Clerk  
Appointment of Parliamentarian  
Courtesies of the House  
Reception of Bishops' Letter  
Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting—February 25, 2024  
Approval of the Minutes of the Special Vestry Meeting—May 26, 2024  
Reception of all Written Reports  
Thank Yous  
Recognitions
- 12:50PM      **Financial Reports**  
  
Presentation and Adoption of 2024 Financial Statements  
Appointment of Public Accountant
- 1:45PM      **Budget**  
Presentation and Adoption of 2025 Budget
- 2:15PM      **Elections**  
Board of Management  
Members at Large, Advisory Board  
Members of Synod and Alternate Members of Synod
- 2:30PM      **Further Business**  
Board Chair Term Structure Change  
Social Justice Vestry Motion 2025  
Annual Motions  
Any Other Business
- 3PM          Concluding Remarks, Adjournment, The Doxology

## The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter to Vestries, 2025

*to be read or circulated on the Sunday of the parish's annual vestry meeting*



**Diocese of Toronto**  
Anglican Church of Canada

**To the clergy, churchwardens, and parishioners of the Diocese of Toronto:**

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

***“...be renewed in the spirit ...” – Ephesians 4:23***

In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese of Toronto is exhibiting a burgeoning health and vitality that inspires us daily. To God be the glory! As your bishops, as we travel around to visit our parishes, we have witnessed the Holy Spirit engaging in marvelous ways with people, groups and ministries right across this Diocese – from Mississauga to Minden, from Cobourg to Collingwood. The Season of Spiritual Renewal, this invitation to spiritual growth, has been enthusiastically received in so many ways, including the sharing of prayer resources, participation in online workshops, and our bishops' Advent study online. We are also looking forward to *#LiveLent: God's Story, Our Story*, a daily Lenten resource with a helpful guide for small group use.

We are excited that the next phase in this Season of Spiritual Renewal is called “Lift Up Our Hearts.” Over the coming year, large worship services will take place across the Diocese on five Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. Each celebration of the Eucharist will feature excellent music, moving testimony, and preachers from within our own Diocese, each with their own unique approach to spiritual renewal. We hope you will plan to join us for one or more of these marvelous gatherings. Come on your own, bring a friend, or hire a bus! We will see you there:

**March 22 – St. James Cathedral** (preacher: the Rev. Molly Finlay)

**March 29 – Trinity Church, Streetsville** (preacher: the Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas)

**May 31 – All Saints, Whitby** (preacher: the Rev. Gerlyn Henry)

**September 27 – St. James, Orillia** (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Rob Hurkmans)

**October 25 – St. Paul's, Bloor Street** (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley)

The call to spiritual renewal, however, was just the first of 20 Calls articulated in the Cast the Net strategic vision adopted by Synod and this Diocese in 2023. Over the coming year, you will hear us repeatedly emphasising the need for each congregation to review and consider all of the 20 Calls and then choose which two or three your parish will focus on. As you gather today for Vestry, this could be the perfect opportunity to start considering the question. A small group – the Netminders – has prepared resources to help you, which you can find on the [\*\*Cast the Net web page\*\*](#). While it's important to remember that no congregation could possibly answer all 20 Calls, we strongly believe that each congregation can consider two or three. Leading up to our diocesan Synod in November, we hope that every parish will be able to identify which of the Calls they are living into.

We are pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Varun Balendra ODT. A familiar face around the Diocese, Varun has served in many volunteer capacities over the years, and we look forward to working together in this new capacity. By the time of our diocesan Synod on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8, we expect that we will be introducing a new Secretary of Synod and a new full-time Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, whose primary focus areas will be supporting the work of the Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism (ABAR) and other DEI training, and supporting individuals and parishes to grow, build community, educate and engage.

Some other new faces at Synod may include guests from the Diocese of Brasilia. This past June, at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in the city of Brasilia, the two diocesan bishops of Brasilia and Toronto signed the covenant that brings our two dioceses into a companion relationship. Since the signing of our agreement, a small representative group from each diocese has been meeting monthly – in both Portuguese and English – to pray together and to plan events. For example, clergy from both dioceses will gather online for a joint study day on liberation theology on March 25. In the fall, a youth delegation from Brasilia will join our own youth at the Re-Charge youth retreat at Muskoka Woods camp. And we anticipate sending a delegation from Toronto to Brasilia in 2026. We have even developed a shared logo for our relationship that combines elements of each of our own logos: our Diocese of Toronto dove springing from their Ipe Tree. You can expect to hear more about this companion partnership as we enter into the second year of it.

Closer to home, the partnerships within our own Diocese continue to flourish. When we speak of casting the net, we are referring to the supportive, creative and collaborative ministry that occurs in each deanery and regionalization, between parishes and congregations, amongst church neighbours and colleagues. We are grateful to our hard-working and devout clergy and our dedicated lay leaders, especially churchwardens, treasurers, administrators, musicians and the countless church staff and parish volunteers who are Christ's hands and feet of ministry in our communities. We are so grateful for all of your faithful work in our parishes and beyond.

We have embarked on a feasibility study to discern if this is the right time for the Diocese to conduct a major financial campaign. Over the next six months, M&M International, a Toronto-based fundraising firm, will listen to parishes large and small, soliciting feedback on a case for support. It is proposed that if a campaign does go forward, the majority of funds raised will remain in the parishes, with a smaller portion supporting the 20 Calls at the diocesan level. Your feedback and commitment will make the difference as we look into this additional way of working together.

Lastly, we want to encourage each Vestry meeting to consider this year's social justice motion: "Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario." The Church has a role to play in calling on government for responsible actions in caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, to ensure life-saving protections for those experiencing addictions and other challenges. Please consider how your parish can speak up, and out, for those who require advocacy. As we anticipate going to the polls in the coming year – federally and provincially – let us remember our baptismal promises as we cast our ballots, choosing candidates who align with our values. And let us pray for them.

For it is in praying that we are drawn ever deeper into relationship with the Triune God and become more attentive to the will of our Heavenly Creator. In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, we ask every reader of this letter to commit more deeply to a life of prayer, that it may infuse your every day with Grace as you witness to the Love of Christ in your life and to the world.

In your prayers, please pray for all three of us, your College of Bishops, both in your personal daily devotions as well as your parish's weekly intercessions. Know that we are praying for you too, giving thanks for our common life together across our wonderful diocesan family.

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,

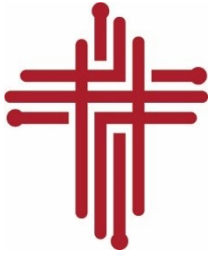
Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,

The Right Rev. Andrew J. Asbil  
Bishop of Toronto

The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw  
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

The Right Rev. Kevin Robertson  
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto





# Minutes of the 152nd Vestry Meeting

*Sunday, February 25, 2024*

The 152<sup>nd</sup> Annual Vestry Meeting of the Church of the Redeemer took place both in the church and on Zoom on Sunday, February 25, 2024. At 12:30 PM, The Venerable Steven Mackison, Incumbent, called the meeting to order and advised that it would be recorded.

After a moment of silence, Archdeacon Mackison remembered by name members of the community who have died since the last meeting: Sheila Connell, David Scott, Ann Moore, Keith Pankhurst, and Graydon Lee and Sean Eli Duck from the Common Table community. He then led the community in prayer.

1. **Adoption of Agenda:** It was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Dawn Lee that the agenda on page 3 of the Vestry Reports Book be adopted. Carried.
2. **Appointment of a Vestry Clerk:** It was moved by Henry Krol, seconded by John Sutton that Marjorie Wrightson be appointed Vestry Clerk. Carried.
3. **Appointment of a Parliamentarian:** It was moved by Anne Christy, seconded by Sylvia Keesmaat that Mary Pat Moore be appointed Parliamentarian. Carried.
4. **Attendance/Eligibility to Vote:** Attendance sheets were circulated for those in the church to sign. Zoom attendees registered online ahead of the meeting. Archdeacon Mackison explained who was eligible to vote: People 16 years of age or over, who are members of the Anglican Church of Canada, have been members of the congregation for at least three months, have been to church at least three times in the past year (including on Zoom), have not voted in another Vestry in another parish in the last three months and do not intend to vote in any other Vestry this year. The list of attendees is attached to these minutes.
5. **Courtesies of the House:** Archdeacon Mackison extended courtesies of the house to those not eligible to vote, inviting them to ask questions and participate in discussions. It was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Paul Pynkoski that courtesies of the house be extended to those in attendance who are not eligible to vote. Carried.
6. **Reception of Pastoral Letter:** Archdeacon Mackison referenced the pastoral letter from the College of Bishops included on pages 4-5 of the Vestry Reports Book. It was moved by Anne Evers, seconded by John Jemmott that the letter from the College of Bishops be received. Carried.
7. **Minutes of the Last Annual Vestry:** It was moved by Tony Crosbie, seconded by Pamela Thomson that the minutes of February 26, 2023, be adopted as circulated. Carried.
8. **Reception of All Written Reports:** It was moved by Nancy Luno, seconded by Henry Krol that all written reports on pages 20-44 of the Vestry Reports Book be received. Carried. Archdeacon Mackison expressed thanks to those who had submitted reports and for the hard work the ministry behind them represented.
9. **Recognition and Thanks:** David Burt, Churchwarden, spoke about all the activities represented by reports in the Vestry Reports Book and thanked the numerous volunteers who are actively involved in ministry. The number of both parishioners and others who serve at the Common Table is inspiring. He singled out Ann Cope, John Selles, John Sutton and Marjorie Wrightson for their extraordinary efforts. Mr. Burt also expressed gratitude to Redeemer's dedicated clergy, musicians and staff. Susan Graham Walker and Mary Pat Moore have pulled together a strong administrative and caretaking team. In conclusion, he thanked all whose contributions add value to the life of the community.

Archdeacon Mackison expressed thanks to the two outgoing board chairs. David Burt has served as chair of the Board of Management as well as being a tireless volunteer at the Common Table and working diligently with the Common Table Fundraising Committee. Richard Van Delft was on vacation and not able to attend the meeting. Archdeacon Mackison noted that Mr. Van Delft had served as chair of the Advisory Board, had spent countless hours at the Common Table and headed up the Martha League. He expressed thanks and praise on behalf of the community for their contributions.

Archdeacon Mackison reminded the community that at last year's Vestry meeting, two exceptional volunteers were recognized. As well as modest personal gifts, we arranged for lasting gifts to ourselves to express the gratitude of the community. To honour Ann Cope, a liturgical candle stand has been provided in the church. To honour Marjorie Wrightson, there will be an annual recognition at Vestry of someone whose ministry and support are quiet, capable, and humble. The award this year goes to Mary-Jane Wilson. Ms. Wilson thanked the members of Sunday morning worship teams for their ministry. Ms. Wilson was presented with flowers and a photo was taken with Marjorie Wrightson. Archdeacon Mackison then added that a donation would be made to Moorelands, formerly the Downtown Churchworkers' Association, in Ms. Wilson's honour.

**10. Presentation and Adoption of 2023 Financial Statements:** It was moved by John Selles, seconded by Lyn Sibley that the audited Financial Statements of the Church of the Redeemer, including the Independent Auditor's Report for the year ended December 31, 2023, be adopted as circulated.

Mr. Selles began with four expressions of gratitude. He thanked Nasir Qamar, bookkeeper, who is a pleasure to work with. Among the many tasks he has undertaken, Mr. Qamar has set up scanning so that all documents are available online. Mr. Selles then thanked Kriens~Larose, auditors. The audit was done offsite with files shared electronically. Mr. Selles also thanked committee members who provided him with information. Finally, Mr. Selles was grateful for participation by parishioners at Staying Connected and the pre-Vestry meeting. It is important that people's voices are heard.

Mr. Selles shared his screen, first referencing the Audited Financial Statements (attached). He drew attention to page 15 "Statement of Changes in Net Assets" that shows the status of our various funds. He pointed out that the auditor organizes things a little differently in the financial statements than he does in his pro forma reports that are used to make decisions on managing the operations of the church.

Mr. Selles then referenced his PowerPoint presentation (attached). After giving an explanation of the five funds – Church Operations, Common Table, Capital, Maintenance Reserve, and Refugee – he added that the Common Table is like a business sponsored by the church that is getting off the ground. Although it has an annual budget cycle, it is building momentum and will need longer to become a self-sustaining undertaking. As Archdeacon Mackison mentioned in his Charge to Vestry, the Common Table is working at building relationships outside the parish in the wider community.

Mr. Selles added the following comments:

- The auditor included a \$20K bequest for Youth Ministry in the Audited Financial Statements as 2023 income. Mr. Selles has deferred this amount to 2024 in his Pro Forma Budget when a Youth Worker will be hired.
- Although we had a \$129,087 unrealized capital gain on investments in 2023, we can't always count on this. A cautious approach has been taken in budgeting for 2024 revenue.
- A "Developer Grant" of \$250K for the Common Table was received in 2022. This was the first half of a \$500K commitment. Although our plan was to recognize \$100K per year over five years, we didn't realize that the Financial Statements recorded the entire \$250K as revenue in 2022. The auditor explained that the Common Table is a restricted fund, and funds cannot be restricted within a

restricted fund. Although \$100K of that grant did not show up in 2023 Common Table revenue as we originally intended, receipt of a \$80K bequest helped to make up most of the difference.

- Undesignated donations for Church Operations dropped off in the fourth quarter of 2023, whereas Common Table revenue finished the year strongly after a slow start. Both funds did not make their 2023 revenue budget targets. Graphs and data analysis slides were reviewed to explain what happened. Ron Waldie, on behalf of the Stewardship Committee, confirmed that the drop in donations during the fourth quarter was a surprise, but he believed we are well positioned with a plan and monitoring systems for 2024.
- In 2023, there was strong individual financial support for the Common Table.
- Church Operations and the Common Table are broken out as separate funds. This helps Common Table fundraising efforts with outside organizations that do not want to fund churches. We are able to reassure them that their donations will feed the hungry, not go to fundraising costs or church salaries.
- Looking ahead to the revenue goal for the Common Table in 2024, Bill Ryan added that their strategy would include increased promotional material, contacting current and recent donors and foundations, researching potential contributions from organizations that fund initiatives like the Common Table, the Sandwich Making Club, creating a database of donors, undertaking special events and investigating government funding.

#### Questions/Discussion:

- In response to a question about who the "ABC Residents' Association" was as a Common Table donor, Archdeacon Mackison explained that they had facilitated a \$500K donation from a developer, intended to staff the Common Table for five years. \$250K was received in 2022, and we expect to receive another \$250K this year.
- In response to a question about bequests, John Selles responded that we received two bequests in 2023 for a total of \$249K. One bequest was for capital and was used for the Getting Our House in Order project. The other was split between the Common Table and Youth Ministry.
- Pamela Thomson expressed thanks to Anne Keyes for her work on grant applications for the Common Table.
- Susan Graham Walker added that fundraising for the Common Table is a cooperative effort shared by members of our own community and others.
- David Burt noted that the division of Church Operations and the Common Table funds necessitated the creation of the Common Table Fundraising Committee. It only really got off the ground mid-year and began to produce results in the fourth quarter. A very productive planning session was held on February 2, 2024. The team has a roadmap for achieving goals this year.
- Archdeacon Mackison explained that we have had challenges with our Servant Keeper database. Matthew Waterman has cleaned it up so that it will help us more appropriately target donors, both for Church Operations and the Common Table.
- Peter Bennett expressed concern about pursuing government funding for the Common Table. He believed we shouldn't be asking for funding for something that the government should be doing themselves if we had proper government policy. John Selles referenced the benefits of the Investing in Neighbourhoods funding we have received in the past. Bill Ryan added that he would be looking at one-time funding for special projects rather than ongoing general funding from the government.
- Referencing the overwhelming need in society, Karen Visser pointed out that the Common Table is doing relatively well compared to larger organizations such as the Daily Bread Food Bank.



- John Sutton asked that the minutes note our gratitude to XYZ Storage for their generosity in gifts we do not see in our financial statements. They provide at no cost two storage lockers for our use, freeing up space in our building. This represents approximately \$10K per year. The owners of that company are great advocates for the Common Table and not only donate the storage lockers but are also behind the ABC Residents' Association and Yorkville Run support.

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

Archdeacon Mackison thanked John Selles for all his efforts.

- 11. Appointment of Public Accountant:** It was moved by John Selles, seconded by Craig Spielmacher that Kriens~Larose, LLP, be appointed public accountant to perform an audit of the general operating statements of the Church of the Redeemer for the year ending December 31, 2024. Carried.

Archdeacon Mackison thanked John Selles, Thomas Kriens and Nasir Qamar for all their hard work on closing our year-end.

- 12. Recess:** It was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Henry Krol that we recess for 10 minutes. Carried. Archdeacon Mackison declared the meeting in recess at 1:40 PM and called the meeting back to order at 1:50 PM.

- 13. Presentation and Adoption of 2024 Budget:** It was moved by John Selles, seconded by Tony Crosbie that the Church's 2024 Operating Budget showing total expenditures of \$1,491,865 and projected income of \$1,500,980 be adopted as circulated/amended.

It was moved by Peter Bennett, seconded by Francis Pillman that we move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the proposed budget. Archdeacon Mackison noted that the motion was already on the floor and that our normal process of a presentation and then discussion would allow for proposed amendments. Mary Pat Moore, Parliamentarian, thanked Mr. Bennett for the motion but stated moving into a Committee of the Whole was not common in meetings like this. She recommended keeping to our regular process. Motions for amendments could be made as appropriate. There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. The motion was defeated.

John Selles displayed a report showing 2023 Actuals and the proposed 2024 Budget (attached). He added the following comments:

- The 2023 budget for undesignated donations was \$770K and the actual was \$660K. The budget for 2024 is \$720K, between the two 2023 numbers.
- The goal for the Common Table is to reduce their current deficit.
- Based on experience, Church Operations will probably end up close to a balanced budget. Typically, \$25K is unspent at the end of each year.

Mr. Selles referenced the staffing plan in his PowerPoint presentation. Personnel represents two-thirds of our expense budget. Last year, there were more transitions and stabilization of our staffing. The 2024 budget includes moving Nat Edwards and Craig Martin to full-time employees. Susan Graham Walker has done a remarkable job creating policies and procedures to make Redeemer easier to operate. It is anticipated that she will be able to step back mid-year with Craig Martin taking on much of her role.

Although the Street Nurse and Youth Worker are "to be determined" at this time, there is \$50K in the bank for the former and \$20K for the latter. They will be added into the staffing plan if/when they are hired and are implicit in the passing of this budget.

With regard to expenses, since there will not be a Synod in 2024, there is no cost for that. Property expenses may be higher as we have a lot of deferred maintenance to address.

## Questions/Discussion:

- Susan Graham Walker explained the roles of Nat Edwards and Craig Martin. Mr. Edwards is the custodian and cares about the building. He supports the Common Table and prepares the church for worship. He thinks ahead and anticipates needs. Mr. Martin is responsible for managing the whole of the facility including contracts and relationships with renters. In the future, there may be other areas of administration he may have the skills and interest to take on, but this has not yet been discussed. Archdeacon Mackison added that Mr. Martin would be a valuable resource for the Property Committee.
- Archdeacon Mackison confirmed the Street Nurse and Youth Worker are considered part of the budget. They will be revenue neutral since we have funds on hand for both positions.
- In response to a question about why the Personnel budget wasn't increasing more given the addition of people and moving two from contract to full-time. Mr. Selles explained the importance of showing the monthly breakdown. Susan Graham Walker will be leaving mid-year, and Matthew Waterman will be done at the end of April. These savings will help offset the 3.5% COLA increase for all staff and the additional benefits for two new full-time staff. Mr. Selles expressed concern for maintaining sustainable Personnel costs in 2025 if we need to add staff.
- David Pabke referenced the 2023 Pro Forma Actual summary at the bottom of John Selles' report, showing actual revenue excluding the \$129K of unrealized capital gains. In order to provide an apples-to-apples comparison of 2023 budget vs actuals, Mr. Pabke believed that the \$35K in realized gains should also be removed, resulting in a \$210K deficit. Mr. Selles responded that the realized gain was part of the operating fund per the auditor. He questioned how the Board of Management would make decisions going forward if this amount is stripped out. It would mean the revenue goal would need to be higher if the assumption was made that this money was not going to be there in the future. Mr. Pabke's position was that with this amount stripped out, the fundraising goal would be more objective.
- David Pabke referenced the Diocesan Consolidated Trust Fund (DCTF) unrealized gains, believing we could never offset operating expenses out of those gains. The parish receives dividends, but the DCTF controls the capital. He believed changes in its market value should be shown outside the operating fund. John Selles agreed and explained that was why he showed it as he did. The \$129K of unrealized gains includes those from both the Fiera Fund and the DCTF. In clarifying what the DCTF is used for, Archdeacon Mackison added his belief that we would have access to the DCTF money if we wanted to buy a rectory. Mr. Pabke disagreed, and this was left as an unresolved academic question.
- Pamela Thomson asked who was going to take on administrative tasks to support ministry areas after Susan Graham Walker steps down mid-year. Susan Graham Walker explained that she was not leaving Redeemer and that she had yet to discern what her ongoing role would be in the parish. John Selles highlighted three line items in the staffing plan that could cover what Susan Graham Walker has been doing in this regard. Sara Lawson has taken on bulletin preparation. In addition, there is an unnamed Admin Support position and Contract Caretakers that could be called in as needed to help. These three line items are accounted for in the budget. Archdeacon Mackison added that we have no clear sense yet of what requirements will be when Susan Graham Walker transitions out.
- Peter Bennett expressed concern about how a Youth Worker would be funded in the future. Currently, it depends on one single bequest. In his Charge to Vestry, Archdeacon Mackison referenced our vision and that it would shape our budget. Mr. Bennett cited the disciples by the seashore who were taken out of their comfort zone by Jesus. Abraham and Sarah were invited to something new and unknown. He noted that undesignated donations were down in 2023, and he believes they will continue to go down. He believes the only thing keeping our budget at a reasonable level is that our diocesan

assessment is also going down. He did not believe we were being challenged as a parish with a vision of ministry.

- Peter Bennett moved an amendment to increase our undesignated donations for 2024 by \$30K and that we increase our Personnel budget by the same amount. Seconded by Pamela Thomson.

#### Discussion of the Proposed Amendment:

- John Selles referred to the setting of aspirational budgets that had been done in the past. Last year, the parish spent a lot of time on sustainability principles since we realized aspirational budgeting wasn't sustainable. He felt bound by these sustainability principles in crafting the 2024 budget. Mr. Selles suggested taking Mr. Bennett's comments and having a goal of overachieving the \$720K target this year, looking to 2025 when we need to address the fact that we are down a half clergy position and that other staff have been stretched to keep Redeemer going.
- Archdeacon Mackison added that if we want to adjust the revenue budget, we need to hear what the Stewardship Committee thinks. Addressing the future funding of a Youth Worker, he noted that of course we would want to maintain the position in 2025, but we do budgeting one year at a time.
- Ron Waldie provided a Stewardship Committee perspective. We did not do well in 2023, and this year we want to be successful in meeting the \$720K goal so that we will be confident of success in the future. He did not want to set the parish up for failure by setting an aspirational goal this year.
- Chris Ambidge pointed out that the question of funding a Youth ministry position in 2025 is a question for the 2025 Vestry, not this one. He also reiterated that we failed to meet our goal in 2023 and that the 2024 budget number is a significant increase over the 2023 actual. He stated he would oppose the amendment and encouraged others to do the same.
- Louise Fast noted that we have yet to study the results of last fall's parish survey. It would be hard to put personnel in place until we have done that review.
- Margaret Rodrigues commented on a helpful financial administrative assistant in the office. She didn't see that person on the staffing chart and wanted to ensure she was in the budget. Susan Graham Walker explained that our practice has been to invite people to work on contract in order to determine if they are a good fit for us and vice versa. That is the reason there are line items without names at the moment because we still need to determine who the right people are to take on those roles.
- Steven Mackison addressed the reference to vision and budgeting in his charge. We need to have a coherent and consistent vision for Redeemer. We need to study the survey results, revisit the 2020 strategic plan and consider feedback from parishioners in order to come up with a vision and a budget for 2025.
- Sylvia Keesmaat noted that at the pre-Vestry meeting we understood that a Youth and Children's Ministry was raised as a priority in the parish survey. Also expressed was the sense that we were rudderless, and she wondered if this was also a contributing factor to the drop off in donations at the end of last year. She asked that in fundraising this year the Stewardship Committee highlight that Youth and Children's Ministry is part of our vision going forward despite the fact that we only have funding for one year at this time.
- Christina Chang noted that we are still going through the process of Getting Our House in Order this year as we emerge after the three years of challenges related to COVID. We need to be conservative in our budgeting this year so that we meet our goals. At the same time we need to be aspirational in our vision so that we can be more aspirational in our budgeting in the future.

- Dawn Lee stated it was commendable that we are moving two contract employees to full-time. She was disheartened, though, to learn that Susan Graham Walker, who is indispensable, plans to leave her staff position mid-year. Ms. Lee hoped that whatever Redeemer's future is, it will include Susan Graham Walker. Steven Mackison echoed the sentiment that Susan Graham Walker is indispensable.

Before the vote was taken on Peter Bennett's proposed amendment to increase our undesignated donations for 2024 by \$30K and that we increase our Personnel budget by the same amount, John Selles commented that the current budget meets our staffing needs for the time being. He suggested taking Mr. Bennett's amendment under advisement today. By the time of the mid-year review, the Stewardship Committee will have had a chance to assess results year-to-date and visioning work will have been done to inform our review of staffing needs. At that time a special Vestry could be called to present a revised budget.

There being no further discussion on the proposed amendment, the vote was taken. The amendment was defeated.

Archdeacon Mackison highlighted that as a community we care about our ministry and value what we do. He acknowledged the last couple of years have been difficult for all staff, making sacrifices to keep going while needing to stay within the parameters of a sustainable budget.

There being no further discussion of the original motion to adopt the 2024 budget, the vote was taken. Carried with one abstention.

John Selles provided a brief overview of assets in the Capital Fund. After the upcoming final GOHIO fundraising, we will determine how much money we have to spend, and a special Vestry will be held to decide priorities and timelines. John Sutton added that we will only spend what we have. Funds are on hand to finish the window project. It is hoped that the upcoming final GOHIO fundraising push will generate more funds so that we can expand what we can do. He also noted that the amount in the capital accumulation account does not include amounts pledged to GOHIO that still have to be received.

David Pabke asked John Selles to confirm that based on 2023 financials, we have \$264,676 left to spend in the Capital Fund. Confirmed.

Mr. Pabke noted that the Operating Fund owes the Capital Fund \$157K and asked what the plan was to do this. Mr. Selles replied that in an ideal world there would be separate bank accounts for all funds. In reality, people give lump sums that they want distributed amongst various funds. To separate these on a regular basis would involve unnecessary bookkeeping and is a housekeeping issue. We can think of the Capital Fund as long-term source of cash and the Operating Fund as short-term.

Peter Bennett asked how the decision was made to spend money on stained glass windows when no money has yet been spent on the organ, AV equipment or lighting. Archdeacon Mackison responded that work on the windows was a priority so that they didn't fall out. When the final GOHIO fundraising push has been completed, the GOHIO team will provide options for future work. A special Vestry will then be held to agree on next steps. Mr. Selles added that \$30K has already been spent on AV equipment.

Archdeacon Mackison thanked John Selles at the conclusion of his presentation.

- 14. Elections:** It was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by John Sutton that the 2024 slate of officers be elected as circulated/amended. Archdeacon Mackison explained there would be an opportunity to add names.

Archdeacon Mackison thanked all who have served and explained that Karen Visser, who has been a vice chair of the Advisory Board is stepping down, although she will remain as a member of that board. In the normal course of events, vice chairs would step up to be chairs. Craig Spielmacher will be the new

Advisory Board chair and Lyn Sibley will be chair of the Board of Management. Henry Krol is the new Advisory Board vice chair and Anne Christy will be the new Board of Management vice chair. These positions will be ratified at the first meetings of the boards.

Archdeacon Mackison asked three times if there were any further nominations. There being none, the vote was taken on the circulated list. Carried. For the record:

*Board of Management (Up to 12 to be elected; maximum term 6 years)*

Pauline Walsh (term 6)	John Selles (term 3)
Lyn Sibley (term 3)	Murray Bryant (term 2)
Tony Crosbie (term 2)	Jeremy Graham (term 2)
Anne Christy (term 1)	Tom Evers (term 1)

*Members at Large of Advisory Board (6 to 8 to be elected; no fixed term)*

Craig Spielmacher (term 5)	Karen Visser (term 5)
Christina Chang (term 2)	Georgi Georgievski (term 2)
Dawn Lee (term 2)	Henry Krol (term 1)

*Members of Synod (4 to be elected; 3-year term) Alternate Members of Synod (1-3 to be elected)*

Anne Christy (term 3)	Sheree Drummond (alternate)
Henry Krol (term 3)	Richard Van Delft (alternate)
Wesley Acheampong (term 1)	
Karen Visser (term 1)	

Archdeacon Mackison welcomed the new slate.

- 15. Bequest Policy:** Archdeacon Mackison referenced the draft Bequest Policy (attached) that the Stewardship Committee had been working on for a couple of years and that had gone to the Board of Management for review several times. This document is coming to Vestry with the recommendation of the Executive Committee and the Board of Management.

It was moved by Ron Waldie, seconded by Sylvia Keesmaat that the bequest policy be adopted as circulated.

Discussion:

Peter Bennett explained that he had been consulted about the policy and had made some suggestions, but they were rejected. He stated that there had been an unspoken policy since 2005 or 2006 that 10% of an undesignated bequest would go to the wider church. As a parish, Redeemer has been blessed by generosity, but this policy doesn't reflect the same generosity. Donors must consult the church about restricted or conditional bequests, but we don't say anything about our being an Anglican Church, part of the wider Anglican Communion and our mission and vision.

Ron Waldie, on behalf of the Stewardship Committee, thanked Peter Bennett for his comments. The 10% issue is a complex one. In consultation with parishioners, the Stewardship Committee heard many times that we don't tell donors what to do with their money. They tell us. The policy as it stands reflects the will of the parish.

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

**16. Social Justice Vestry Motion 2024: Protecting and Advancing the Right to Housing:** Archdeacon Mackison drew attention to the motion and background information in the Vestry Reports Book.

It was moved by Anne Christy, seconded by John Jemmott that we, the parish of Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street, call on all levels of government to take the following measures to protect and advance the human right to housing:

We call on the Government of Canada to ensure that federal subsidies and incentives are targeted to those developers and projects that demonstrably address housing need and uphold the human right to housing by meeting clear conditions on affordable rents, non-displacement policies and eviction prevention measures.

We call on the Government of Canada to end the favourable tax treatment of Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and tax them at the regular corporate rate, with resulting revenues being directed toward the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

We call on the Province of Ontario to enact rent controls and vacancy controls on all rental housing and put restrictions on Above Guideline Rent Increases.

We call on the Province of Ontario to work with municipal governments to enact and enforce restrictions on short-term rentals to protect rental housing stock.

Discussion:

Peter Bennett was opposed to the motion because of the call to end favourable tax treatment of Real Estate Investment Trusts. Many people's pensions or social benefits rely on the tax structure for REITs. He did not think this motion had been thought out as carefully as it should have been and might have an impact on people trying to save for retirement.

Sylvia Keesmaat supported the motion but said a human right (housing) should not also be an investment. This is a contradiction and the two need to be uncoupled. People can invest in something other than REITs.

Stephen Allen supported the motion. He assumed the diocesan staff had done the necessary research in framing the motion. He found the background information helpful and supported the work of diocesan staff in preparing the background information and the specific aspects of the motion.

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

**15. Annual Motions:** It was moved by Tony Crosbie, seconded by John Sutton that any two (2) of the Churchwardens, Deputy Wardens and the Treasurer be authorized by Vestry to sign cheques or authorize electronic payments for all parish accounts.

In response to a question about the difference between Churchwardens and board chairs, Archdeacon Mackison explained that Redeemer operates both under its own by-laws and the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese. We ended up with a Board of Management when we were disestablished and then reestablished as a parish. The board chairs function as Churchwardens, and that legal term is used because the Churchwardens with the Incumbent form the Corporation, which is the entity authorized to act legally on behalf of the parish.

With regard to electronic transactions, John Selles advised that the months-long problem with e-transfers had been resolved and were working again.

There being no further questions or discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

It was moved by Henry Krol, seconded by Craig Spielmacher that the Treasurer be authorized to sign official receipts for income tax purposes on behalf of the parish for the ensuing year. Carried.



## 16. Any Other Business:

- **Getting Our House in Order:** Archdeacon Mackison expanded on comments he had made in his Charge to Vestry. The GOHIO campaign will be closed out in March and April in two phases. In March, there will be a matching campaign of \$20K for donations up to \$1,000. This could generate \$40K. In March and April, the GOHIO team will ask for targeted donations from individuals who have expressed an interest in specific items on the project list.
- **AV Technician:** Sylvia Keesmaat offered a vote of thanks to Morgan Yew for his AV support of Sunday morning services and meetings such as this.
- **Incumbent:** John Sutton stated that Redeemer is a complex place with complex challenges for the Incumbent. He added that Archdeacon Mackison is diligent in his time management and scrupulously honest in how he spends his time, likely to the detriment of himself and his family. Attendees responded with a standing ovation. Archdeacon Mackison thanked Mr. Sutton for his kind words and added that he loved being at Redeemer.

**17. Concluding Remarks:** Archdeacon Mackison thanked those who helped with the sandwich lunch before the meeting and the clean-up afterwards, all presenters and those who offered comments and contributed to healthy discussions, Susan Graham Walker for moderating the Zoom session, Marjorie Wrightson for taking minutes, Mary Pat Moore for serving as Parliamentarian and Morgan Yew for AV assistance.

Archdeacon Mackison added that he cares for us as a community and enjoys being our Incumbent.

**18. Adjournment:** There being no further business, it was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Christina Chang that the meeting be adjourned. Carried. All joined in the Doxology at 3:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marjorie Wrightson

**The following documents are available online:** <https://theredeemer.ca/governance/>

- Vestry Reports Book
- Attendance (available with official minutes but not posted online)
- Audited Financial Statements
- Treasurer's PowerPoint Presentation
- 2023 Pro Forma Actuals and 2024 Pro Forma Budget
- Bequest Policy

# Minutes of the Special Vestry Meeting

*Sunday, May 26, 2024*

At 1 PM, The Venerable Steven Mackison, Incumbent, invited Daniel Norman to gather the community in song. Mr. Norman led the singing of *Jubilate Deo* (rejoicing in God).

## 1. Opening Business

- a. **Greeting:** Archdeacon Mackison welcomed everyone, both in the church and on Zoom, and called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM. He advised that the meeting was being recorded. Participants on Zoom were noted, and signature sheets for those in the church were being circulated. Attendance sheets are attached to these minutes. Archdeacon Mackison then led the community in prayer.
  - b. **Adoption of the Agenda:** It was moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Paul Pynkoski that the agenda as outlined on slides 2 and 3 of the presentation (attached) be adopted. Carried.
  - c. **Appointment of a Vestry Clerk:** It was moved by Marg Creal, seconded by Pamela Thomson that Marjorie Wrightson be appointed Vestry Clerk. Carried.
  - d. **Appointment of a Parliamentarian:** Archdeacon Mackison explained that we have appointed a Parliamentarian at recent Vestry meetings. This role helps to adjudicate on process, advising the Chair and then a decision is made. This keeps our meetings running smoothly, based on a condensed version of Robert's Rules of Order. It was moved by Andrew Drummond, seconded by Anne Evers that Jonathan Batty be appointed Parliamentarian. Carried.
  - e. **Eligibility to Vote/Courtesies of the House:** Archdeacon Mackison welcomed all to the meeting but clarified the eligibility to vote. To do so, one must be a member of the Anglican Church of Canada and of this congregation for at least three (3) months; have attended regularly scheduled services of worship with this congregation at least three (3) times in the past year; be of the full age of sixteen (16) years; have not voted as a member of another vestry during the previous three (3) months; and do not intend to vote in any other vestry during the coming year. Archdeacon Mackison invited all others to ask questions and participate in discussions. It was moved by Tony Crosbie, seconded by Anne Christy that courtesies of the house be extended to those in attendance who are not eligible to vote. Carried.
2. **Statement of Purpose:** Richard Van Delft, Co-Chair of the Getting Our House in Order Campaign, advised the community how overjoyed he and his co-chair, Joan Robinson, were with the generous response during the past year of fundraising. Mr. Van Delft then read for the record the Statement of Purpose for this Special Vestry:

At our Annual Vestry in 2023 we passed a motion to raise funds for Getting Our House in Order projects and to restore funds to the Capital Investment Fund used for the Air Handler project.

Now that the formal fundraising campaign has ended, we need to decide on a plan going forward to continue getting our house in order.

3. **Report: "With Gratitude":** Joan Robinson, Co-Chair of the Getting Our House in Order Campaign, referenced slides 10 and 11 in the Vestry presentation (attached) in thanking those who had donated and pledged. The timeline for final pledges to be received is 2026. After reiterating her gratitude for the generosity of the community, she indicated additional gifts would be welcome, even though the formal campaign is over.
4. **Approved Projects and Restoration of Funds:** Ms. Robinson drew the community's attention to the list of approved projects and restoration of funds from the 2023 Vestry on slides 6-8 of the Vestry presentation

(attached), noting that the stained-glass windows and outside westside lighting were virtually complete, but that the other projects and restoration of funds remained to be addressed.

- 5. Treasurer's Report:** Archdeacon Mackison explained that John Selles, Treasurer, was in England and not able to attend the meeting. He did, however, provide a financial update that Archdeacon Mackison presented as displayed on slide 13 of the Vestry presentation (attached). He noted that an anonymous donor had given us \$50,000 in seed money in 2021, before the Getting Our House in Order campaign was launched. With funds received to date plus outstanding pledges, we have total donations of \$813,252. So far, we have spent \$488,575.07 - \$226,762.44 for the air handling system and \$261,812.63 for the stained-glass windows and portions of the sound and lighting projects. That means that currently we have \$324,777 available.
- 6. Property Report:** Archdeacon Mackison explained that John Sutton, who would normally present this report, was in Australia on a family matter. He walked the community through Mr. Sutton's update on slides 15-17 of the Vestry presentation (attached). Archdeacon Mackison explained that \$34,008 had already been spent on the sound system because the system had failed, and work needed to be done. He also drew attention to the inadvertent initial misreading of a quote for lighting that has now been adjusted. The current total of all items is \$1,360,207.

Since chairlifts and elevators are expensive, a member asked for background and how many quotes the \$30,000 budget for the chairlift to the third floor was based on. Susan Graham Walker replied that John Sutton had approached one company for an estimate. Archdeacon Mackison confirmed this is a rough budget number.

In response to a question about whether we would apply for a grant for a chairlift, Susan Graham Walker replied that the Trillium Fund, that had been a source for such funding, is no longer giving grants to Anglican, Roman Catholic or Lutheran churches. Archdeacon Mackison added that, contingent on today's motion being passed, we would pursue funding for any projects if available (such as the organ project), and if received, the budget would be adjusted accordingly.

- 7. The Motion:** Prior to reading the motion, Archdeacon Mackison provided some context. Over the last couple of years, we have already accomplished a lot. Despite uncertainty in the economy, we decided at Vestry 2023 to undertake a Getting Our House in Order fundraising campaign. It is a testament to the generosity of the community and our commitment to this place that we achieved 80% of our goal. The Getting Our House in Order (GOHIO) Committee considers all projects on the original capital list plus the restoration of investment monies to be important. We want to complete everything, with all undesignated bequests being directed to finishing projects. Archdeacon Mackison then advised that we have recently been made aware of a bequest of approximately \$300K that will be coming to Redeemer.

Archdeacon Mackison then read the motion:

Moved by Joan Robinson, seconded by Richard Van Delft, that this Special Vestry honours the commitment made during the 2023 Vestry to fulfil all Getting Our House in Order projects and capital fund restoration (for the air handling repairs) with proceeds from current funds raised and pledged, and current and future undesignated bequests.

Discussion:

- In response to a question, Archdeacon Mackison confirmed that this new bequest means we are just approximately \$246K short of the total required funds, rather than \$546K.
- A member expressed concern that administration of GOHIO funds should not be left with a committee. Instead, the whole parish, with their various viewpoints, should be consulted. The concern is that we will be short of money, and specifying the use of undesignated bequests to cover any shortfall seems to

preclude any future campaigns. One item cited as not on the list is the outdoor sign. This parishioner thanked Joan Robinson, Richard Van Delft and John Sutton for the amazing work they have done.

Archdeacon Mackison responded:

- When the Executive and the joint boards approved the motion, it was the intention, rather than to have the whole community prioritize the list, to honour everyone who had given to the campaign and to honour all commitments.
- There will be other capital needs not on this list. The Board of Management has passed a motion to work with the Property Committee this year on a list of ongoing capital needs and a plan to be presented at the next annual Vestry.
- Another reason not to prioritize projects at this Special Vestry is that many of them are moving targets.
- The committee membership includes titles only and should not be part of the motion because the people in those roles may change over time.
- There was confusion about whether the committee composition had been circulated with eNews prior to the meeting. It appears to have been, but may have been overlooked. It is on the meeting handout (attached) as well as on slide 21 of the Vestry Presentation (attached).
- **Proposed Amendment:** Prior to reading her proposed amendment, Anne Evers thanked Joan Robinson and Richard Van Delft for all the work they had done. She also apologized for not raising this sooner. It became clearer for her after the recent board meeting. Her amendment would prioritize finishing projects with current funds raised and pledged, and current capital investment funds. Future undesignated bequests would be used to restore the investment fund. This way we would not need to wait to undertake projects until the funds arrived. At the time Ms. Evers originally drafted the motion, there was the potential of having to use \$500K of investment funds. With the news today about a \$300K bequest, only \$200K would be required. She then read her proposed amendment:

Moved by Anne Evers that this Special Vestry honours the commitment made during the 2023 Vestry to fulfil all Getting Our House in Order projects with proceeds from current funds raised and pledged, and current capital investment funds. Future undesignated bequests would be used to restore the investment fund.

Archdeacon Mackison asked for a seconder for this amendment. Pamela Thomson will second it.

Discussion:

- A member asked that the schedule of projects (attached to these minutes as Schedule 1) be appended to the motion so that we are clear what projects are involved. Archdeacon Mackison confirmed that the schedule would be appended for the corporate record to whatever motion is eventually passed.
- Another member first spoke in support of the previous request to append the list of projects to the motion. They then spoke in favour of the proposed amendment. We have taken money from the investment fund in the past for capital projects, and the list before us are capital items. We have been wary of taking funds from the investments to fund shortfalls in our operating budget for fear of depleting the account. Since we have money in the bank and we have capital needs that will position us to be more welcoming, we should proceed with those now rather than waiting for donations to come in during future years. As for the prioritization of items, we should do projects in a logical, practical manner.

With regard to how we approach projects, Archdeacon Mackison referenced the Principles for Discernment and Principles for Remaining Projects on slides 22 and 23 of the Vestry Presentation (attached).

- A member clarified that the intention of the proposed amendment would be to remove restoring the capital investment fund from the list of physical building projects. These would be two separate entities. When all building projects are completed, we would then have to restore to the capital investment fund money previously taken out for the air handling project plus any additional funds taken out to complete projects. The member cited capital funds taken out over the years for worthwhile projects. Although we said we would repay that money to the capital investment fund, we have put it off for a long time. In this case, we said from the outset of the Getting Our House in Order project that restoring funds to the capital investment fund would be a priority. For many parishioners, this may have factored into their decision to support the campaign. For this reason, this member will not support the amendment.
- A member who is also a former Board of Management chair was not unsympathetic to the amendment as a proposed option. They pointed out that it is important to consider the process leading up to the original motion, which was discussed by the boards and approved at a joint boards meeting. They did not think this amendment should go forward without parish leadership being involved in agreeing to any changes.
- A member spoke against the amendment. Our normal process would have been to fundraise for the air handler project and then undertake it when the money was on hand. In this case, that was not possible. They did not agree with going against the wishes of Vestry 2023 to restore funds to the capital investment fund. This change of direction would have long term consequences. They had contributed to the campaign on the understanding restoration of funds was part of the project, not “skippable”.

Archdeacon Mackison added that these concerns were discussed when crafting the original motion.

- Anne Evers clarified that her amendment did not say the capital investment fund would not be repaid. In response to a question from Archdeacon Mackison, Ms. Evers confirmed the intent of her amendment would be to take further funds from the capital investment fund to complete physical projects as needed. With the new \$300K bequest, however, she thought this withdrawal amount would be limited. As well, these projects would be done over time. Money would not all be taken out now. If we first repay the capital investment fund, her concern is that costs for building projects will rise and some items that are more invisible might not be done because we would have run out of money.
- Another member spoke in favour of the amendment. We are still committed to restoring the capital investment fund, but this approach would help us mitigate cost increases over time. Although this member heard what was said about parish leadership being involved in discussions and the wording of the original motion, they pointed out this meeting had been called to discern the way forward, and if the assembled participants felt we should proceed along the lines of the proposed amendment, we should do so.
- Archdeacon Mackison clarified that we currently have \$324,777 available for projects, including pledges still to come in. Although we anticipate receiving the new bequest in the next year, it isn't money in the bank at this point. Given these considerations, he has concerns about what that would mean for withdrawals from investments if we approve the amendment. As well, he wondered what leadership on the boards would think given what they had voted on.

Kasey Visser, who was at the joint board meeting, spoke only for herself. Things are clearer now than at the meeting. Her preference is to spend money as we have it.

Another member who was on the Board of Management when funds were withdrawn from the capital investment fund for air handler repairs provided some context. John Selles, who has served as Treasurer multiple times, has explained that the capital fund earns money each year. It is acceptable to take out annually what has been earned for the operating fund if needed, but money should be withdrawn from the core capital only for emergencies. Other recollections were noted, but without the Treasurer being in attendance, we hesitate to make any conclusions.

A third member who had been at the joint board meeting wished they had spoken up then. They question the wisdom of restoring the capital investment fund before completing building projects. The physical projects will attract more people, who in turn will become contributors.

- In response to a question about whether our investments were making money for us, Archdeacon Mackison showed slide 27 in the Vestry presentation that the Treasurer, John Selles, had prepared to show the status of the Investment Fund. Its value at March 31, 2024 was \$1,126,480. The parishioner who had raised the question noted two bullet points on the slide showing that dividends purchased additional fund units and that the value per unit has increased. The value of our investments has grown at the same time as costs for projects are increasing.
- A member who didn't realize Redeemer had a capital investment fund was surprised to learn it only has \$1 million in it. They would be nervous about tapping into it for Getting Our House in Order projects in case a really serious emergency came along.
- Paige Souter, who has a 20-year background in fundraising, cautioned that it was important to maintain the integrity of the intention of a campaign. The implication of the proposed amendment, by lowering the priority of restoring the capital investment fund, is in effect removing it. This could put at risk future donations. There could be short-term wins by completing physical projects, but long-term implications of not honouring some donations.
- A chat comment from a member on Zoom was read into the record:

I have a concern that this amendment would permit all approved projects to move forward even if there are negative variances in the project implementations that exceed our original estimates. There should be a "not to exceed the original estimated value of the projects" to constrain unfettered spending down of the capital fund in the context of the framing of this amendment.
- In response to a question about whether donors had specified restoring the capital investment fund on their donations, Louise Fast, a member of the GOHIO Committee, explained of 178 donations, only three specified intentions. These were the narthex kitchen, the windows and not using their donation for the organ. Paige Souter clarified that since restoring money to the capital investment fund was part of the original campaign and we asked people to donate, not designate, anyone who donated may have done so on the understanding restoring the capital investment fund was included. This expectation is as legitimate as those who donated by specifying a facet of the campaign.
- Another member pointed out we were raising money to spend on projects, and one of them was paying back the capital investment fund. They didn't feel we had done a very good job of looking after that money over the years. We have taken out more than we should have and



not paid it back. This member was pleased we were going to pay the air handler money back, and they were influenced by this in donating to the campaign. They believe it is a basic principle of fundraising in the church that if we say we are going to do something, we do it. We should honour the original Vestry motion and the original motion before this meeting. The amendment goes too far in changing the intention of the original motion.

- Another member agreed with the comments made by the previous speaker and also believed Paige Souter's comments about the integrity of campaigns are important for future fundraising.

Archdeacon Mackison acknowledged this was very difficult. The original motion was carefully worded to respect the original intention of the community that all projects would be completed. The judgment was made that this Special Vestry would not prioritize items, trusting the smaller committee with those decisions. For these reasons, Archdeacon Mackison cannot support the proposed amendment.

The proposed amendment was read again prior to a vote being taken.

Moved by Anne Evers, seconded by Pamela Thomson, that this Special Vestry honours the commitment made during the 2023 Vestry to fulfil all Getting Our House in Order projects with proceeds from current funds raised and pledged, and current capital investment funds. Future undesignated bequests would be used to restore the investment fund.

The vote was taken: 9 in favour, 14 against and 1 abstention. The amendment was defeated.

Archdeacon Mackison thanked everyone for the passion and care that had gone into this honest discussion, with disagreements being voiced in a healthy way.

- **Vote on the Original Motion:** Archdeacon Mackison read the original motion again:

Moved by Joan Robinson, seconded by Richard Van Delft, that this Special Vestry honours the commitment made during the 2023 Vestry to fulfil all Getting Our House in Order projects and capital fund restoration (for the air handling repairs) with proceeds from current funds raised and pledged, and current and future undesignated bequests.

Discussion:

- In response to a question, Archdeacon Mackison confirmed that Schedule 1 of projects would be attached to the motion.
- In response to a question, Archdeacon Mackison confirmed that there was no timeline attached to restoration of the capital investment fund.
- One member commented that by defeating the amendment, the attendees were implying that the restoration of the capital investment fund should be prioritized and that should go into the original motion. That was not the universal understanding of the defeat of the amendment.

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

Archdeacon Mackison noted for the record that Schedule 1 would be attached to the motion.

8. **Committee Composition:** A motion was crafted with input from several members starting from the content of slide 21 in the Vestry presentation (attached).

Moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Joan Robinson that that a committee be formed to oversee allocations of the GOHIO projects (as stated in schedule 1) until all projects are completed and funds for the HVAC air handlers are restored to the capital

investment fund (referred to as Fiera Fund in Schedule 1). The committee will be composed of:

- GOHIO Co-Chairs,
- Property Committee member,
- Board of Management member,
- Advisory Board Member,
- Executive Committee Member,
- Treasurer,
- Facilities Manager, and
- Project Manager(s) for GOHIO projects

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken. Carried.

**9. Closing Remarks:** Archdeacon Mackison thanked all members of the GOHIO Team: Louise Fast, John Sutton and co-chairs Joan Robinson and Richard Van Delft. He also thanked Susan Graham Walker for arranging lunch and for running around with the microphone during the meeting; Ann Cope for preparing the exceptional slide presentation; Lyn Sibley for moderating the Zoom session; Morgan Yew as A/V maestro extraordinaire; Jonathan Batty as Parliamentarian with gusto; and Marjorie Wrightson as minute taker. Finally, he thanked all for their generous support of GOHIO.

**10. Adjournment and Doxology:** There being no further business it was moved by Andrew Drummond, seconded by Richard Van Delft that the meeting be adjourned at 3 PM. The meeting closed with the Doxology.

/mlw

**The following documents are available online:** <https://theredeemer.ca/governance/>

- Attendance Sheets (attached to the official minutes but not posted to the website)
- Vestry Presentation
- Vestry Handout
- List of Projects (Schedule 1)
- Zoom Chat

## ADVISORY BOARD—*Henry Krol*

*While we recognize and take on the challenges of doing our best in our various ministry areas, our overriding sentiments are gratitude and optimism.*

My oversimple description of the roles of the boards at Church of the Redeemer is that the Advisory Board is tasked with being dreamers, and the Board of Management is tasked with being reality checkers. Yet, while there is a distinction between the two, the reality is that both boards aim to have our eyes on Heaven and our feet on the ground. We acknowledged that reality by sometimes meeting separately but also sometimes having joint meetings to share our insights with each other.

The Advisory Board is made up of representatives of the many and diverse ministry areas at Church of the Redeemer. We gathered monthly to discuss various facets of our community's life, to reflect on where we've been, take stock of where we are, and plan for where we aim to go. This past year, we were represented by:

- ✧ Stephen Allen (Indigenous Solidarity Working Group)
- ✧ Christina Chang (Member at Large)
- ✧ Deb Deacon and David Townsend (Redeemer Explorers)
- ✧ Anne Evers (Music)
- ✧ Georgi Georgievski (Member at Large)
- ✧ Grant Jahnke and Andrew Scorer (Creation Matters)
- ✧ Henry Krol (Refugee Settlement Committee and Vice-Chair)
- ✧ Dawn Lee (Member at Large)
- ✧ Steven Mackison (Incumbent)
- ✧ Lyn Sibley (Chair of Board of Management)
- ✧ Paige Souter (Assistant Curate)
- ✧ Craig Spielmacher (Chair)
- ✧ Karen Visser (Member at Large)

While we recognize and take on the challenges of doing our best in our various ministry areas, our overriding sentiments are gratitude and optimism. We are incredibly grateful for the inspired pastoral leadership of Steven Mackison and Paige Souter as well as for the ever-supportive leadership of our outgoing Chair, Craig Spielmacher. And we look forward, in 2025, to continuing to serve the world God loves.

Henry Krol



*One of the priorities that emerged in the 2023 parish survey and reiterated at the 2024 Vestry meeting was the need for a dedicated staff person for children, youth and family ministry. The addition of Lor Maroney in July has shown how vital this ministry is to the growth in faith of our young members.*

In 2024, the children at Redeemer continued to grow and care for one another, and engage in creative, artistic and dramatic learning as well as continued liturgical animation. We are working to rebuild trust with our youth cohort, and to find solutions that work with their busy and varied schedules.

## Highlights

- ✧ children continued to participate in the liturgy by now an essential and beloved part of the Redeemer community
- ✧ in spring, underwent hiring for part-time Child, Youth and Family Minister position hired Lor Maroney, with official start in July
- ✧ **Welcome Back Sunday** attended by many families, youth (and adults!)
- ✧ in September, transitioned to a combination of liturgical participation and learning time downstairs during the service (a rotation of Godly play, drama, art and creative activities)
- ✧ during **Season of Creation**, children learned about sustainability and stewardship and worked with volunteer Nancy Luno to revitalize the outdoor garden space and plant a pollinator garden
- ✧ leading up to **All Saints**, children engaged in learning, culminating in an art project displayed on the foyer doors
- ✧ November **Rock Eucharist** (Taylor Swift) enjoyed enthusiastic participation from children and youth, including glow bracelets and a popular dance floor, with children choosing to sit at the altar during the homily
- ✧ December's **Cozy Christmas** made a deliberate choice to shift emphasis from performance to authentic engagement and invitation into the Christmas story
  - ✧ children engaged with specific scenes, discussing the context, how characters felt and reacted, then filmed their interpretation without a prescribed script
  - ✧ prerecorded scenes were edited together by Morgan Yew and played on screens, combined with congregational music by Dan Norman and Mike Daley, readings by a member of the youth group, and culminating in a live nativity scene and intimate Eucharist
  - ✧ during the service a “cozy zone” was provided with carpets, blankets and stuffed animals, inviting all families to gather in a relaxed manner

## For 2025

- ✧ **Celebrating Black History** on February 16 – children will be deciding how to participate
- ✧ **Pancake Brunch** on March 2 – children and youth invited downstairs to celebrate and socialize before the beginning of Lent
- ✧ **Good Friday** 2025 – continue All Ages Liturgy
- ✧ with the children's cohort firmly established, hope to focus and **revitalize the youth** – more difficult as scheduling has been tricky and attendance is more sporadic (i.e. youth do come on Sundays, but rarely more than one or two on any given week)
- ✧ opportunities for service, social activism: integration with ISWG, Common Table, etc.
- ✧ would love to reopen call for volunteers, especially for Sunday morning youth activities
- ✧ hope to find ways to integrate with youth from other Toronto parishes, especially to foster connections made at the 2024 Youth Conference

- ✧ the unscripted nature of the nativity scene allowed visitors and families who had not participated in the prerecorded scenes to participate as much or little as they wanted – some chose to grab a costume from the back, others to remain seated in the cozy zone
- ✧ celebrated steady attendance for children's programming, including one new family arriving mid-fall – a core group at around 10 children, with 1-3 visitors or semi-regular families attending occasionally
- ✧ youth less steady: 2-3 families attend occasionally with more at special events; have established youth zone in transept and will be working to make specific youth programming on Sundays



## CATECHESIS—*Paige Souter*

This year Redeemer offered a five week Catechesis program during the season of Lent. This was a time of preparation for parishioners wishing to receive the sacraments of Baptism or Confirmation/Reaffirm and Reception into the Anglican Church at the Easter Vigil. Catechumens and Candidates explored many aspects of faith as followers of Jesus, including scripture, discipleship, sacraments, community and prayer.

We are deeply thankful to Ann Jervis, Steven Mackison, Paul McLean, and Katy Waugh for sharing their wisdom and expertise in these sessions. These were lively and nourishing conversations. Thank you to the choristers who helped to animate our time of prayer. And thank you to Craig Spielmacher and Georgi Georgievski for coordinating the program.

And we especially give thanks to God for James Mackison and Mini Singh who celebrated Confirmation, for Maureen Clark, Stewart Cruikshank and Sharon Kirby who were Received into the Anglican Church, and Kasey Visser who Reaffirmed her faith. We give thanks for their commitment to Christ and for their sponsors who walked with them.

Respectively Submitted,

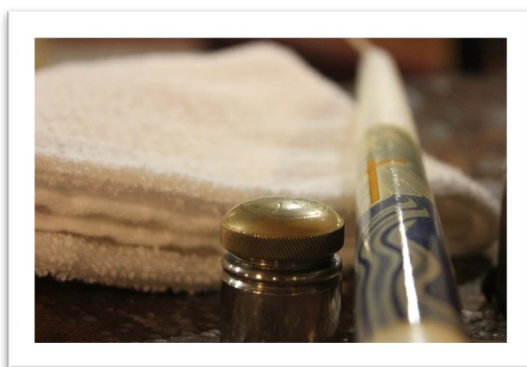
The Rev. Paige Souter on behalf of the Catechism Team

### For 2025

Redeemer is responding to the Diocesan Season of Renewal by offering a new Catechesis program called *Living in God's Love*.

In the first half of the program, *Longing for More*, participants are invited to deepen their relationship with God, one another, creation, and the Church.

The second half of the program, *What We Believe*, is a formational process for people wishing to receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil. This will be a time of deepening the awareness and learnings that emerged in part one, as well as explore what it means to live in God's love as an Anglican.



## REDEEMER EXPLORERS—*David Townsend and Deb Deacon*

*Redeemer Explorers focuses on small-group engagement and experiential learning as well as larger events. We try to coordinate with the diverse educational initiatives of other parish ministry areas.*

Over the last year, the Sunday Explorations series has been a staple of programming with 45-minute drop-in sessions, facilitated by a variety of volunteers. The topics are diverse: reflections on the day's Scripture readings, conversations on central tenets of Christian faith (a series we call "Thinking About"), expressions of faith in contemporary culture, and more. The sessions begin at 9:30AM Sunday mornings downstairs in the boardroom and typically draw between 15 and 20 participants, with the occasional "packed house" of around 25.

We organize two book discussion group series each year, one in Lent, and Summer Readers in July/August. Registrants read and discuss the chosen book in groups of about a dozen, with in-person and Zoom options on offer. These book groups generally attract about three dozen participants. Last summer's selection was John Philip Newell's *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening What Our Souls Know and Healing the World*.

Other 2024 events included a talk last June by former Canadian ambassador to Israel Jon Allen on prospects for peace and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians; co-sponsorship of the annual conference of Voices for Peace in November; and an Advent Labyrinth Walk in December.

The membership of the committee currently includes Deb Deacon, John Deacon, AJ Finlay, Susan Graham Walker, Ann Jervis, Paul Pynkoski, Joan Robinson, David Townsend, and Richard Van Delft. Deb and David currently co-chair the committee, which meets monthly.

### For 2025

#### Sunday Explorations

We enthusiastically welcome suggestions for topics and volunteers to lead them.

#### Redeemer Readers

Coming up for Lent 2025 is *Borders and Belonging: The Book of Ruth, A Story for Our Times*.





*The Young Adults value that Redeemer is rooted in scripture alongside a deep commitment to social justice.*

After the Young Adults restarted in the fall of 2023, the group connected well and continued to grow this past year. We met monthly on the second Sunday for social events, so that the group could get to know each other, and welcome newcomers in. The WhatsApp group was active, both to organize other informal gatherings, as well as discussions about things going on at Redeemer, and spiritual questions and resources. It has really become an active community this year, with folks connecting at church on a weekly basis to sit together or chat at coffee time.

In the fall, the young adults decided they wanted to add some Bible discussions. Our Incumbent, Steven, joined us for a couple of gatherings to figure out how we wanted to shape those discussions, as well as for an engaged session in early December where everyone shared a scripture passage that was meaningful to them. Individuals expressed a desire for discussion where we take the Bible seriously, yet where there is also space for lots of questions, doubt, nuance, and different ways of understanding it. The Young Adults value that Redeemer is rooted in scripture alongside a deep commitment to social justice.

We said farewell to Erika Bauder as co-lead of the Young Adults group in October when she and her partner moved out of the city. We are so grateful for her role in getting the Young Adults going again, and her enthusiasm for connecting people. Mini Singh has joined as co-lead and has already organized a number of popular social events.

Some highlights of 2024 events have included:

- ✧ Board Games in the loft
- ✧ Toronto Comics Art Festival, including seeing Yani Feng's display
- ✧ Doors Open Toronto
- ✧ Dundas West Fest, including cheering on Finn K-W's circus performance.
- ✧ Lunches after church, including a Thanksgiving farewell to Erika.
- ✧ Garlic Festival on Spadina
- ✧ Bowling at the Ballroom Bowl



### For 2025

In 2025, the Young Adults look forward to continuing to build community and find ways of engaging faith and connecting more to Redeemer.

The usual schedule is a social gathering after church on the second Sunday of the month, and a Bible discussion on the fourth Sunday. We met in January for bowling and a discussion of *Lectio Divina* with our Assistant Curate, Paige. This has been paused for the Catechesis/Living in God's Love series happening after the service until Easter, as a number of the Young Adults are attending that.

Carol Scovil will be stepping aside from her role with the Young Adults as she takes on a new role in the life of the parish. Stay tuned in the eNews or contact Mini Singh to find out what social activities will be happening during that time. The regular monthly schedule will resume after Easter.

## CREATION MATTERS—*Grant Jabnke*

*Creation Matters is The Redeemer's eco-spirituality group. We meet monthly to centre ourselves in creation; to learn about and reflect on the state of the world in which we live; and to bring more awareness of creation into the life of the church.*

An active, committed member of the Redeemer community was heard to say at coffee time after a service, "I have no hope for the future of the planet given what I see of our faltering commitment to action that could actually change the course of things. It's not going to happen. I have nowhere to talk about that."

Where can we Christians come together to share, learn and support one another in our lived experience of the present global environmental crisis and the impact it will increasingly have on our children and grandchildren? What is the meaning of this "hope" we are called to as Christians? Where can we pause in the midst of our active lives, ask pressing questions and regain equilibrium to continue our work as vessels of hope, light and healing? Sharing these concerns and learning with and from each other is part of the mission of Creation Matters @ Redeemer.

Throughout the past year as we delved into this year's core theme "Who do we choose to be in turbulent times?" individual members volunteered, month by month, to lead the group in experiencing their personal practices for mitigating the burden of grief and concern and maintaining vitality for their areas of commitment.

Profound conversations emerged concerning how we make sense of our spiritual journeys in these times, facing head-on the increasingly devastating results as the planet labours under escalating human assault despite repeated international target setting exercises and in the face of heroic efforts to mitigate the emerging crisis.

On a spring morning in May, we moved out into creation and undertook our annual birding expedition at Colonel Sam Smith Park on Lake Ontario led by veteran birders Katherine and Joyce Mills. The early morning weather was perfect this year and the timing ideal to catch the peak of the chorus of the spring migration.

Collaborating with Redeemer Explorers in leading the Summer Readers program in July and August led to further collaboration, this time with Redeemer Pilgrims, in a "mini pilgrimage" to Toronto Island in August where forty Redeemer folk gathered at St. Andrew's by the Lake for an energizing creation centered Eucharist followed by lunch at The Riviera cafe—the one on the Island, not in France.

Members of Creation Matters often articulate our gratitude for the existence a circle of Christians in which to share our faith journeys on this sublime planet and rekindle hope and energy in the company of other spiritual pilgrims.



*We call upon church parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) to develop on-going education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Call to Action # 59.)* [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2015/trc/IR4-8-2015-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-8-2015-eng.pdf)

## Highlights and Notable Moments:

### 1. Book Group:

The ISWG organized one book group which took place in October, 2024. The book was *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Eighteen people took part - some in-person, some via zoom. This hybrid model provides an option for participation in the book groups.

Kimmerer is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and a State University of New York Distinguished Teaching Professor of Environmental Biology. She is the founder and director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment.

In the response to the survey sent to participants, several people said they had encouraged family or friends to read the book.

### 2. Visiting Indigenous Scholar – Douglas Sanderson:

Douglas gave a talk on June 15, 2024 entitled: *Indigenous is the New Orientalism – Identity, Ambiguity and the Creation of Pretendians* which explored Indigenous institutions, post-colonialism, reconciliation and rebuilding community.

### 3. Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit People: Called to Remember and Honour

For the past several years, Church of The Redeemer has demonstrated a commitment to remember and honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and Two Spirit People. On May 5, 2024, this was acknowledged at the beginning of the service. Redeemer's bell was tolled on Mondays at noon on June 3 – 7- 10. The bell was tolled by students from a nearby primary school. A red dress was hung at the church. Red

## For 2025

The ISWG is planning a book group in the fall of 2025.

Douglas will give his first talk in 2025 on Saturday, May 24. He will be one of three speakers at a Symposium at Church of The Redeemer which will focus on the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

The ISWG plans to have the bell tolled at noon hour on several Mondays in June. We need to consider other strategies so that more Anglican and churches from other denominations join us in taking time to remember and honour murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls and Two Spirit People.



Dress Day was inspired in 2010 by Jamie Black, a Métis artist based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This is the link to the final report of the Public Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

#### 4. Symposium:

New for 2025. The details are in the box to the right.

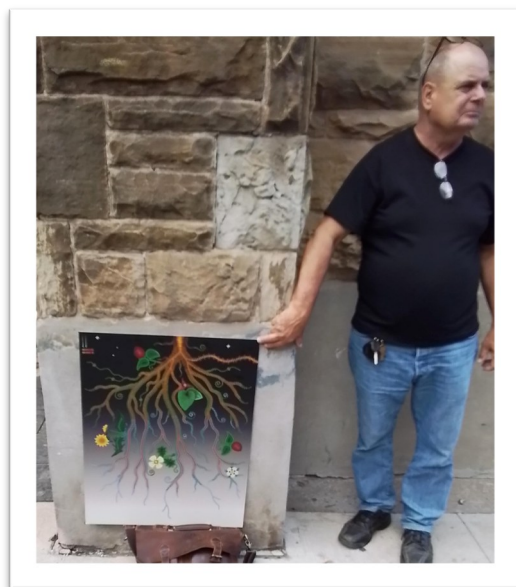


#### 5. National Indigenous Day of Prayer:

Jonathan Hamilton-Diabo was the guest preacher on June 23, 2024. His sermon was well received. Jonathan is Mohawk from Kahnawake, near Montreal. He is Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream in Theology, June Callwood Professor in Social Justice and Special Advisor on Indigenous Issues at Emmanuel College.

#### 6. The Mural:

See update for 2025



#### For 2025

A Symposium on the *Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action* will take place at Church of The Redeemer on **Saturday, May 24**. The TRC's Calls to Action were presented to Canada in June, 2015. The Symposium will focus on the implementation of the Calls to Action. There will be three guest speakers: 1) Douglas Sanderson - his theme will be The Spirit of Reconciliation; 2) Douglas Sinclair, creator of *Indigenous Watchdog*. It monitors the implementation of the Calls to Action; 3) The Ven. Rosalyn Kantlaht'ant Elm, Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Indigenous Ministry, the Diocese of Huron will facilitate the discussion. Plans are being made to have snack foods made by an Indigenous chef.

The National Day of Indigenous Prayer will be on June 22, 2025. An Indigenous person will be invited to preach, in consultation with Steven Mackison.

Donald Chretien will complete the mural by the end of March, or earlier. The plan is to have a dedication on Sunday, June 22. Members of the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group will collaborate with Steven Mackison in planning the dedication. A note - Donald is not painting the mural. He is digitally designing it. The digital file will be sent to Club Ink, the company that will transfer the digital images onto the panels and mount the panels on the cement parging section of the west wall along Avenue Road. Donald's web site is: (<https://donaldchretien.com/>)

## 7. Supporting Indigenous Initiatives:

The Indigenous Solidarity Working Group seeks to support Indigenous led initiatives. Here are some examples from 2024.

### 7.1 Mohawk Landing Ceremony – Tyendinaga – May 19, 2024:

Several members of the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group attended the Mohawk Landing Ceremony which commemorated the landing on May 22, 1784 of about twenty Mohawk families who had been displaced by the American – British conflict. The families landed on the shores of the Bay of Quinte.

### 7.2 Grassy Narrows River Run - September 18, 2024:

Grassy Narrows First Nation, (also known as Asubpeeschoseewagong Anishinabek is located in northwestern Ontario. Between 1962 and 1970, the river system the community depends on was poisoned as a result of a pulp and paper company dumping nine tons of mercury into the English-Wabigoon river system. Grassy Narrows First Nation continues to struggle for just compensation. It is one of the most serious environmental disasters in Canadian history.

A walk in support Grassy Narrows First Nation took place in Toronto on September 18. Members of the parish took part in this walk.

### 7.3 Orange Shirt Day:

Orange Shirt Day is an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day intended to raise awareness of the individual, family and community inter-generational impacts of residential schools.

See <https://orangeshirtday.org/>

Andrew Wesley preached the sermon on Sunday, September 29. He was well received.

### 7.4 Spirit Garden:

The Spirit Garden was officially opened on September 30, 2024. The Spirit Garden is a new permanent space at Nathan Phillips Square to honour Residential School Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities. It will also honour the diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultural traditions. The Spirit Garden project was led by Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre in partnership with the City of Toronto. The Diocese of Toronto provided financial support. Members of ISWG attended the opening ceremony. The Spirit Garden is well worth a visit.

## For 2025

The Landing Ceremony will occur on May 18, 2025. Members of Church of The Redeemer will be encouraged to attend the Landing Ceremony.

The ISWG will be inviting a guest speaker. Members of Redeemer will be encouraged to wear something orange.



## 8. Heart Garden:

In partnership with the children in 2025



## 9. Indigenous Healing Garden:



Watch for more details in Summer 2025.

## 10. Film by Alanis Obomsawin

Look forward to this in Spring 2025

## 11. Communications:

The Indigenous Solidarity Working Group communicates its program activities via *Our Common Life and Our Common Worship*. A member of the ISWG continues to prepare and distribute (electronically) a bi-weekly newsletter with a focus on Ontario events and news about Indigenous issues from Ontario and Canada wide. The ISWG informs the parish about Indigenous events taking place in the Toronto area.

## For 2025

The ISWG would like to work with the children in planting a heart garden. The Rev'd Paige Souter is discussing the proposal with Lor Maroney, Minister of Children, Youth and Families. The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society came up with the idea for a heart garden and has prepared a learning guide titled *Spirit Bear – Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams*. Children learn how to make a heart. A message from a child may be printed on the heart. A stick is glued to each heart. The hearts are then planted in the garden. A heart garden is intended to honour those who attended Residential Schools.

The ISWG is also proposing to plant an Indigenous Healing Garden on the east side of the church. As the area where the Healing Garden would be planted is owned by Colliers, a member of the ISWG has contacted Colliers to discuss the idea. Cedar, tobacco, sweetgrass, sage would be planted.

Alanis Obomsawin is an acclaimed Indigenous film director. The Indigenous Solidarity Working Group is planning to show one of her films that addresses reconciliation prior the Symposium in May.

When promoting Indigenous events such as pow wows, the ISWG will make every effort to coordinate a Redeemer presence at these events.



## 12. Indigenous Justice Coalition:

For several years a member of the ISWG has provided leadership to a network of churches in the downtown area. Efforts are being made to encourage representatives from other churches to take on leadership responsibilities.

### Concluding Comments:

The ISWG appreciates the support from the Redeemer community. The ISWG is grateful to Michael Cheena, a Peer Support Mentor with Council Fire. Michael is a Residential School Survivor. He keeps us informed of Indigenous events in Toronto and major issues of concern to Indigenous people. The ISWG welcomes new members to join us in the journey of reconciliation.

## REFUGEE SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE—MJ Wilson

*...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me...*

The Committee's sponsorship agreement of Abdikadir, Asho and their children ended in January 2024. However, members of the Committee continued to assist the family with school issues, health concerns, employment opportunities and the very challenging search for permanent accommodation. Abdikadir's family decided to relocate in Canada, arriving in Edmonton in January 2025, and our latest communication with Abdikadir indicates that the family is settling in well.

The Committee met in September 2024 to orient new members to the Committee. AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance) training for new members was begun and the certification processes for new members were outlined. The Committee discussed the challenges in securing affordable housing in Toronto. We learned more about the Blended Visa Office Referral (BVOR) program, a Canadian government program that refers refugees to potential sponsors and provides some financial support to the newcomers during the sponsorship period.

The Committee met again in December 2024 and, having ensured that we had sufficient financial resources, decided to sponsor a single refugee. Coincidentally, a new list of refugees awaiting sponsors under the BVOR program was available. We applied through AURA to be a sponsor and were excited to be matched to a single refugee – Lemlem!

Looking forward to the Committee's 2025 activities, Lemlem will arrive in Canada on March 4. We continue with our pre-arrival tasks and are gathering the resources of time, talent, and material goods needed to support Lemlem's settlement in Canada.

The Committee extends a warm welcome to the following new members: Celine Cheung, Susanne Hunter, Anna Ierullo, David Pabke, Francis Pillman, Mary-Jane Wilson.

We also wish to express our deep gratitude to the retiring members of the Committee for their steadfast work in past refugee settlements: Anne Christy, Susanna Jacobs, Bill and Mary Horan.

Finally, we offer our thanks the Church of the Redeemer community for your ongoing support of our Committee and of refugee settlement in Canada.

*As the Trans Ministry at Redeemer and in the Diocese continues to grow, it is the hope trans individuals, their families and allies will continue to feel supported at Redeemer.*

The following are 2024 transgender ministry activities in which I hope to continue to be involved during 2025. Some will be carried out at the specific request of the Diocese, since I have retired as the diocesan trans ministry lead as of January 2025.

### Redeemer Activities in 2024

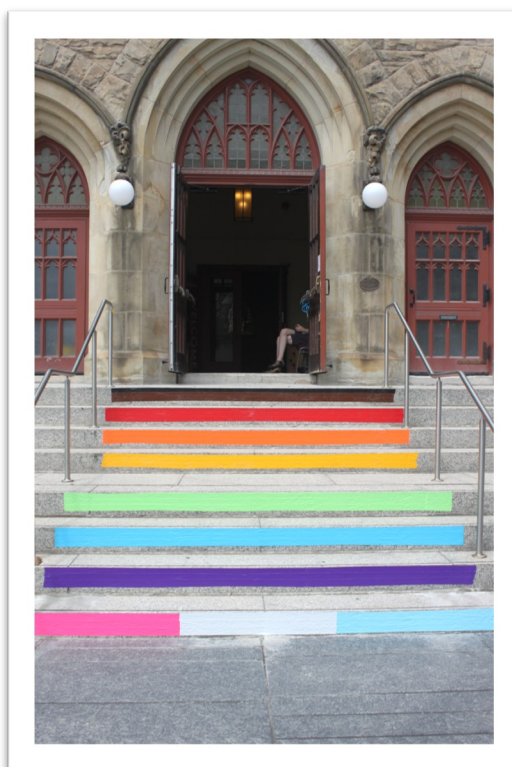
I provided consultation and advice to individuals, families and groups on request. In addition, I have been volunteering at the Common Table on Fridays and been involved with the Bayview Hospital chaplaincy training program. In the Fall 2024 the first Redeemer Trans Day of Remembrance was held with Bishop Riscylla Shaw preaching. An updated version of the booklet *Selected Transgender-Related Services* was produce and is being distributed to agencies and churches.



### For 2025

I hope to:

- ✦ Assist Chris Ambidge with the LGBTQ+ table at conferences or meetings as required.
- ✦ Continue to organize the Trans Anglicans group in Trans Walk at Pride
- ✦ Help at the Pride Walk in June for Anglican participants
- ✦ Support the Trans Day of Remembrance service on November 23
- ✦ Preach and deliver trans-related workshops at other parishes on request
- ✦ Liaison with other transgender-related ministry groups in other provinces, countries, etc.



## MUSIC AND WORSHIP—*Dan Norman*

*In 2023 the Music Ministry at Redeemer provided musical leadership for Sunday morning Eucharists, Taizé services, Bach Vespers, Rock Eucharists, Festal services, midweek services, Zoom services, House and Garden Eucharists, Catechesis events, and Common Table parties among other events.*

### Touchstones from 2024

In 2024 the Music Ministry at Redeemer provided musical leadership for Sunday morning Eucharists, Taizé services, Bach Vespers, Rock Eucharists, Festal services, midweek services, Zoom services, House and Garden Eucharists, Catechesis events, and Common Table parties among other events.

- ✦ The music ministry worked with community partners, the Cantabile Chamber Singers and the Mozart Project, to enhance some of our worship experiences. We also welcomed in musical communities to help lead services like Sacred Harp Eucharist, and Yeshe Satsang.
- ✦ We continued to innovate special services like EarthSong, Advent carols, and the Holy Week services that lead us to the Triduum.
- ✦ We changed our Taizé services to create two new ways of worshipping: Be Still, an evening of chanting and contemplation, and Taizé Eucharist, an Anglican eucharistic service punctuated by the music of the Taizé community.
- ✦ We provided musical support for the Season of Creation service at St. James Cathedral.
- ✦ The choir welcomed new members and partnered with the music programs of St. Paul's Bloor St., and St. Simon & St. Peter at a special fund-raising performance in December.



### Dreams for 2025

In 2025 we plan to work hard to help the congregation find their voice; through education, encouragement, and experimentation. Every single community member can contribute to a vibrant liturgical expression full of a diverse spectrum of music.

In 2025 we hope to continue to grow our diversity of musical sources and genres, for both congregational music, and choral music.

In 2025 we hope to experiment with music, especially in worship services outside of the usual Sunday morning rhythm. Liturgical expressions on Sunday evenings and mid-week can be testing grounds for new ideas, new pieces, and new languages.

In 2025 we hope to complete our work on the George Black Psalter Project; digitizing George's psalms and canticles and making them freely available to churches throughout the world.

In 2025 we hope to partner with musicians and musical groups connected to us through the Anglican church, through Sacred music in general, and through regional musical overlap.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Norman (Director of Music)  
Mike Daley (Assistant Director of Music)  
Jill Daley (Musician in Residence)

## MARTHA LEAGUE—*Richard Van Delft*

*All dinner parties start with a host. This particular host casts out an invitation with everyone's name on it and can't wait to see you at the table. He's been hosting it for over 2000 years.*

What is a host's hoped-for response to this familiar question before a dinner party, "Would someone like to help set the table before the guests show up, please?" Of course, the welcome answer is, "We would love to help set the table and make this event a wonderful occasion!"

This is where the Martha League steps up to the proverbial plate. Martha was the beloved friend of Jesus, who was distracted in the kitchen while preparing the meal and wanted a little help to get things ready. This Martha is also the superhero many doers in the community at Redeemer love to love for her sense of responsibility. They bring that responsibility to our table washing, ironing, and folding our best linens for the feast we share when we meet in communion with Jesus, our host at this feast.

2024 had a team of six dedicated people making sure this table had been set. And, 2025 has seen a new member join the group. The Martha League is a part of the Redeemer community. We want everyone to know that we use our finest linens for our worship and these linens belong to everyone. They are allowed to be touched and handled by anyone wishing to be part of the family.

The art of the laundry may be precise, but is not difficult. If you have an iron itching to be fired up, come and help! After all, the host couldn't be happier to stuff a ton of guests around the table!

## TUESDAY MEDITATION—*Lilian Junkin*

Throughout 2024, the Tuesday Meditation Group has been meeting at 12:15 to 12:45PM, mostly in the Chancel but at times in the Boardroom downstairs. I am grateful to Tony Crosby for stepping in and leading the group some weeks last Spring, when I had health issues to deal with.

During 2024 the group has grown and most Tuesdays we are now 10 to 12 participants gathering for meditation. There are currently 15 persons I consider regular attenders and another 5 or so that join us from time to time. As before, some come to Redeemer for other church services as well, while others worship at other churches in the city.

The format for the meditation group sessions remains much the same as before, with my reading a quote to start us off and gather our thoughts, then silent meditation for 20 to 25 minutes, and finally we close with a prayer. The books from which I select the quotes differ, however, and that can at times add a different focus or flavour to the meditation experience.

As always, new participants are welcome whether they have previous experience as meditators or are new to the practice. To those who come to try it for the first time, I provide some helpful hints before we start, even though there are really no "shortcuts". As with so much else in life, meditation is learned by meditating.

Prayerfully yours,

Lilian Junkin

## ZOOM MODERATORS GUILD—*Anne Lee*

*For those who greet the gathered community each Sunday morning on Zoom, saying, “Good morning, I will be moderating this morning’s service. You are encouraged to participate in the responsive portions of the service and sing in your homes...” we give thanks.*

Moderators: Lyn Sibley, Sylvia Wang, Janet Read, Jonathan Tardif, Anne Lee

Throughout 2024, the Zoom Moderators Guild has faithfully supported the church's virtual worship and fellowship. A total of 52 services were moderated. Ten *Staying Connected* sessions, as well as the pre-vestry and vestry meetings were supported by the group. In addition, a member took on the task of preparing the moderator's bulletin for the clergy and music team for the 9AM Zoom services, providing us with a bird's-eye view into the careful planning and coordination of each service.

The 9AM service continues to draw a dedicated online congregation, with an average of 30+ attendees. Following the service, approximately 8 to 10 members stay on for coffee time, where the Zoom community shares a spirit of fellowship. Conversations are often diverse, where some gatherings feature personal reflections, while others delve deeply into discussions on topics such as climate change, psychology, community engagement, and current events. These conversations often inspire further exploration through book recommendations, YouTube channels, and blogs, fostering rich dialogue and learning within the group.

We look forward with great anticipation to continuing this ministry in 2025, trusting that it will be a year of meaningful connection and fruitful discussions.

In service,  
Anne Lee

## PASTORAL CARE—*The Rev'd Paige Souter*

*Caring for each other is an important part our lives as disciples of Christ. We journey with each other holding out our hands to be a compassionate presence. This is the foundation of the ministry of the Pastoral Care Team. It is a dynamic ministry that includes conversations over coffee or tea or a meal, by zoom or phone or text, or on a walk or in an office, that is scheduled or spontaneous.*

It has been an incredible year of presence for the Pastoral Care Team. This is a ministry of presence with members of the Redeemer community needing care and support and with each other on the team. Just as Jesus sent the disciples out two by two to bring healing to all they met, pastoral care is not a solitary ministry but one lived out as a team. This collaborative ministry of ordained and lay members is a growing ministry at Redeemer.

This past year has been formational for the Pastoral Care Team. Together we have explored and learned how to listen deeply for God's presence, both in one's own lives and in the lives of parishioners for whom we provide pastoral care. This has included training to serve as pastoral visitors who bring holy communion and the ongoing offering of lay anointing.



Pastoral Care at Redeemer also includes celebrating Holy Eucharist in the community.

We are grateful to Abigail Young and Catherin Emerson who host House Eucharist, welcoming twelve people into their home each month. Thank you to Kasey and Michael Visser who host the seasonal Garden Eucharist. It is a delight to join with twelve parishioners in their beautiful garden. And each month we celebrate the Eucharist at Hazelton Retirement Community, where up to twenty people gather to pray and worship. Several residents now attend Redeemer's Sunday services.

In response to the Holy Spirit's presence in our community, Pastoral Care reimagined Redeemers Gifts from an initiative to provide gifts to parishioners facing difficult circumstances to a ministry of presence. Steven, Paige and many Honorary Assistants visited with parishioners in need, bringing God's healing presence. In addition, we continued the work that started in 2023 to reimagine Blue Christmas. This year it was offered a few days before Christmas animated by prayers and Taizé music.

In 2025 we look forward to more members of the Pastoral Care Team being licenced as Lay Anointers, and all members being licensed for Home Communion.

Please keep the Pastoral Care Team in your prayers, as we pray for you.

Respectively Submitted,

The Rev. Paige Souter on behalf of the Pastoral Care Team

Tony Crosbie

Georgi Georgievski

Sharon Kirby

Susan Scott

John Sutton



## AV TECH—*Morgan Yew*

In 2024, I adapted some of what was learned from time spent with generous tech teams in churches across the diocese, designing workflows that made solo-operating cameras and in-person/online sound easier to manage. Somewhat abstractly, this allowed us to benefit from normalized dynamics online, automated handling of graphic overlays and secondary camera operations, creative camera placement, and stable interoperability of various components for different kinds of functions and forms of worship at Redeemer. Materially, much of the workflow saves us on future investments as I've converted the functions of certain tools into button presses.

At a tangible level for our growing on-line community, I have been able to focus on:

- ✦ Updating the bell-ringing video to reflect the calendar year
- ✦ Improving our capacity to livestream processions from nearby parks so that those in the church building who aren't able to join the procession and those online are able to participate
- ✦ Placing a camera in the centre aisle which helps to show processions and the altar more clearly
- ✦ Utilizing our camera placement to help those participating from home feel more like they are in the worship space alongside those in the building.
- ✦ Incorporating the information in eNews into slides for use both in the livestream and on the screen in the welcome area providing those who don't yet receive our communications with information about the

community and upcoming events.

- ✦ Making it possible for ISWG and Redeemer Explorers (among others) to livestream the guest speakers they host at events, expanding the reach of their programs
- ✦ Livestreaming weddings and funerals for members of our community, enabling friends and family from around the world to be present for these important moments.

## In 2025

We will continue to professionalize and refine how worship is experienced in-person and online. Much of this will involve utilizing money raised by the GOHIO campaign. Improved sound and hearing assist will be priorities. During that process I will continue to experiment behind the scenes with how worship is experienced, adding improved graphic overlays when designs are ready.

Following our year-end stewardship campaign, I look forward to applying some of what was learned about sometimes disparate parts of the community to co-form a Discord server for us to gather on. More on that soon.

## PARISH OPERATIONS MANAGER—*Susan Graham Walker*

*Susan served as our Parish Operations Manager from June 2022 to 2024. We are grateful for the leadership she offered to us during a time of tremendous change, being the steady hand helping to navigate us through all that came our way. We continue to be grateful for the many ways she shares her wisdom and leadership within our community.*

The time since June 2022 has been remarkable. Emerging from the pandemic, everything – except our faith – seems to have shifted. It shifted enough for me to say yes to stepping into the Redeemer Operations role.

This is a new era, we have an opportunity to learn new ways of being God's people in this place, on this corner. That is part of what helped me say 'yes'.

The time in the role wasn't always easy, but it has been rewarding and it got my feet on the floor every day with a worthwhile vocation.

As I stepped aside from the role in June – and I shared these thoughts on the last Sunday before I moved away from the office and back into volunteer roles - I am grateful for **three** things – they were present before the pandemic and endure now:

### **Thankful for Leadership**

I am grateful for the opportunity to have been within the staff and volunteer team under Steven's leadership – I admire Steven's intentional, grounded and thoughtful commitment to the gospel and to us is unwavering. I am grateful for the opportunity to see how the larger ministry team works – from the inside.

It is a hallmark of Redeemer that what is accomplished is a collaboration among volunteers and staff, clergy and lay folk – a collaboration that is shared among many. In my role in the past 24 months I am particularly thankful for

- ✦ Being at the staff table and seeing how worship is shaped with care and thoughtfulness by Steven, Paige, Ann, Dan and Mike;
- ✦ Being guided and supported by the Board chairs – Sheree Drummond, Ann Cope, David Burt, Richard van

Delft, Lyn Sibley, Craig Spielmacher

- ✧ Especially grateful for the wisdom of the Human Resources Committee – Frances Humphreys, Carol Ritter, Mary Pat Moore, Marg Creal, Avery MacLean, Craig Spielmacher, Tim Hadwin

### **Thankful for Ministry**

The meaningful work of our community where we are grounded in the baptismal promises which articulate God's call to each of us – to serve in so many ways that support our own community members and the wider world; to learn, grow and deepen our faith; to come together in worship that encourages, inspires and challenges. All we do is rooted in these sacred acts.

### **Thankful for this Redeemer community**

You are my colleagues, friends and fellow pilgrims. I remain engaged in the life of our community – perhaps even more deeply knowing what goes on to make it happen. I continue to support, contribute and serve.

## GETTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER

*As a place that brings joy, community, and service to our corner of Avenue and Bloor, we have much to celebrate, particularly the generosity of the members of the parish and their belief in our need to provide a cared for and sustainable space offering worship and welcome to every person who graces the doors of our spiritual home.*

Fundraising initiatives continued as the Getting Our House In Order (GOHIO) Team worked toward reaching the fundraising goal. Matthew Waterman joined the staff for the first quarter of the year and tracked donations and pledges making it possible to have up-to-date fundraising reports. In April, as a result of a generous anonymous donor, a final matching campaign was held. The GOHIO Team continued to approach Individuals to invite them to support specific initiatives.

### **During a Special Vestry held on May 26, 2024, the community passed the following motions:**

Moved by Joan Robinson, seconded by Richard Van Delft, that this Special Vestry honours the commitment made during the 2023 Vestry to fulfil all Getting Our House In Order projects and capital fund restoration (for the air handling repairs) as stated in Schedule 1 with proceeds from current funds raised and pledged, and current and future undesignated bequests.

#### **The second motion:**

Moved by Chris Ambidge, seconded by Joan Robinson that a committee be formed to oversee allocations of the GOHIO projects (as stated in schedule 1) until all projects are completed and funds for the HVAC air handlers are restored to the capital investment fund (referred to as Fiera Fund in Schedule 1). The committee will be composed of: GOHIO Co-Chairs, Property

### **For 2025**

#### **Organ Work**

In preparation for the kitchen renovation, the organ was wrapped in protective plastic and although the organ will be played selectively, it will still be part of our worship experience.

Contracts were signed to fix costs in place for work on the organ. The current organ bench will be replaced with an adjustable model, and the organ console will be made moveable, including a wireless connection. This work is expected to be completed by the summer.

The contract for the Pitman Conversion was signed with Casavant. The work will take place in 2026-27.



Committee member, Board of Management member, Advisory Board Member, Executive Committee Member, Treasurer, Facilities Manager, and Project Manager(s) for GOHIO projects

The Implementation Team met on September 4, 2024 and agreed the funds borrowed for air handling repairs would be restored to the Capital Investment Fund through an anticipated undesignated bequest expected to be received by the end of the year.

The cash flow reconciliation as of November 2024 is as follows:

Cash received up to November 28, 2024	\$753,509
Pledges to be received in Q4 – 2024	\$85,000
cumulative total	\$838,509
Pledges & estate Q1 – 2025	\$313,000
cumulative	\$1,151,509
Pledges Q2 – 2025	\$10,000
cumulative	\$1,161,509

We can report that 93% of pledges were completed in 2024, with the expectation of approximately 98% fulfilment by the end of 2025.

The most important project for GOHIO was the stained glass. Through the generosity of the parish, our beloved stained-glass windows, particularly in the chancel area, were restored, repaired and protected. In addition, electrical circuitry near the kitchen and in the Chancel was upgraded and outside westside lighting was replaced.



### Kitchen Renovations

The contract to renovate the main floor kitchen was signed and renovation began on January 20. Even though the kitchen is unavailable, coffee continues to be an important part of the Sunday experience and is served from the catering cart located at the back of the worship space. Renovation is anticipated to be completed by spring.

### Future Projects

Future projects include upgrading lighting, audio and video in the worship space and installing a stairlift to the third floor to provide much needed accessibility.

Grateful thanks to all who contributed to support Getting Our House in Order. As a place that brings joy, community, and service to our corner of Avenue and Bloor, we have much to celebrate, particularly the generosity of the members of the parish and their belief in our need to provide a cared for and sustainable space offering worship and welcome to every person who graces the doors of our spiritual home.

GOHIO Team: Richard Van Delft, Joan Robinson, John Sutton, Louise Fast, Steven Mackison



## COMMON TABLE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE—*David Burt*

*...the **immediate focus** will be on reconnecting with past donors, identifying and engaging new potential donors and providing all with regular news about Common Table activities, issues and successes.*

This dedicated group is focused on supporting the Redeemer's very important effort to provide food and other care to the homeless and disadvantaged in our community. Unfortunately, that need continues to grow and the sources of charitable funds are being stretched.

The Committee includes both parishioners and non-parishioners - Anne Keyes, Peter Burgess, Dan Richards, Rob French, Bill Ryan, Jonathan Hines and David Burt - with great support from the Redeemer's clergy, staff and John Selles (Redeemer Treasurer). Thank you all for your efforts!

In 2024, there was a concerted effort (spearheaded by Anne and Bill) to solicit donations from charitable foundations and past donors, with some success. Dan was instrumental in developing a network of teams from local businesses to come in to prepare sandwiches for our outreach carts. We are also blessed with 70 other volunteers who spend at least one morning a week to help in the kitchen or outreach activities. We are very thankful for the leadership of Mike and Jill Daley, and Trisha Haldane, who orchestrated the very successful Christmas in the City concert.

We are facing strong head-winds. Wish us well and please get in touch if you have any suggestions about potential support!

### For 2025

In 2025, the Committee will increase its efforts to expand financial and other contributions. These initiatives will include establishing an efficient database of past and potential donors and providing all with regular updates on Common Table activities and needs.



# COME AND SEE: VISIONING WORKING GROUP

*...the **immediate focus** will be on reconnecting with past donors, identifying and engaging new potential donors and providing all with regular news about Common Table activities, issues and successes.*

The members of the Visioning Working Group are Louise Fast, Joan Robinson, Jim Boyles, Susan Graham Walker, Paige Souter, Susanne Hunter, Steven Mackison

In response to concerns raised in the 2023 Vestry Meeting, a small group of Redeemer members gathered to explore how to involve the parish in developing a vision statement to describe what we as a community are called by God to be and do.

Representatives of the Visioning Working Group met with the Joint Boards on November 26, 2024 and obtained their endorsement for moving forward.

The discernment process had already begun. In October 2023, the Incumbent and Board Chairs invited responses – either electronically or on paper, to an in-depth survey asking the question, “Who are we?” The deadline was December 31, 2023 and 84 responses were received. A preliminary report to Staying Connected was presented in February 2024.

Time has elapsed and circumstances have changed! To move forward we started by sharing the survey results and invited members to take time to reflect on what you see and hear; what is still true, what is different now, what does all this mean?

Survey analysis responded to four key questions and appeared in *Our Common Life* over four weeks, starting with the January 22, 2025 issue:

“Who Are We?” – January 22

“What Do We Do Well?” – January 29

“What Are the Areas of Struggle?” – February 5

“Who Is God Calling Us to Be” – February 12

The summary is an important starting point for discernment. These results create a touchstone for where the parish was at the end of 2023. Going forward, the Visioning Working Group plans opportunities for members of the parish to participate in looking at our collective future together.

## For 2025

In 2025, the Redeemer leadership is inviting all of us to continue the journey, perhaps even a pilgrimage, to discern God’s call for our community and the invitation of Jesus to “Come & See.” Our faith calls us to observe, reflect and be curious about what God is up to in our midst and what that means for our journey with Jesus as individuals and a community.

There will be various opportunities to come together to explore where we hear God’s call and how we embody that invitation as we move forward as a community. More plans for Biblical reflection on “Come & See” (John 1:43-51) and small group discernment opportunities will follow in the coming weeks. Join us on the path as we:

- ✦ Discern: Listen deeply to one another through this liminal time as we look toward God’s future for us
- ✦ Seek Diversity: Commit to hearing all the voices in our community
- ✦ Dream: Seek a visionary perspective while continuing our commitment to sustainability.
- ✦ Develop: Name how we intend to live into our future as a renewed and renewing community.

On May 25, 2025, a Special Vestry will be held to explore what we have discovered about God’s call for us as a community. We invite ALL in our community to reflect and pray and listen and participate in this journey.

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—*Lyn Sibley*

*Based on feedback from the parish, the Board of Management will be making a concerted effort to communicate the parish more frequently about the deliberations and decisions of the board – starting with an introductory video in March.*

The Board of Management, which meets monthly, is responsible for overseeing the finances, property, and personnel of the church. This year, as approved at the 2024 annual vestry meeting, the board members were: Murray Bryant, Anne Christy, Tony Crosbie, Tom Evers, Jeremy Graham, Steven Mackison, John Selles, Lyn Sibley, Craig Spielmacher, and Pauline Walsh. Every other month a Joint Boards meeting was held to allow for communication and coordination between the Advisory Board and the Board of Management.

The Executive committee, existing of Anne Christy, Henry Krol, Steven Mackison, John Selles, Lyn Sibley, and Craig Spielmacher, also meets monthly. The Executive Committee considers issues of immediate concern and makes recommendations to the Board.

The Board highlights of 2024 include the following.

- ✦ Held a special vestry meeting where it was decided how best to prioritize the spending of money raised through the Getting Our House in Order (GOHIO) fundraising campaign, and formed a GOHIO committee to oversee the execution of the GOHIO projects. Thank you to Joan Robertson and Richard Van Delft for leading the GOHIO fundraising campaign and the GOHIO committee. See the GOHIO report on page 41 for more details on specific projects.
- ✦ Approved and started recruiting a full-time office administrator and a new Director for the Common Table. Thank you to the HR committee (Avery MacLean, Tim Hadwen, Mary Pat Moore) for all of their advice and guidance.
- ✦ Established a visioning committee to review the 2023 parish survey, report back to the community, and make recommendations to the Board of Management and Advisory Board. Thank you to Jim Boyles, Susanne Hunter, Susan Graham Walker, Louise Fast, and Joan Robinson along with Steven Mackison and Paige Souter for their work on this. (See page 43 for their report)
- ✦ Drafted and are currently piloting, a policy on promoting external third-party fundraising campaigns (e.g. PWRDF's fundraising for the Mishamikoweesh Water Partnership).
- ✦ Supported a very successful year-end fundraising campaign -- thanks to the hard work of the stewardship committee (Ron Waldie, Susan Graham Walker, Murray Bryant, and Paige Souter) and the generosity of the congregation.
- ✦ Discerned approaches for making the ministry of the Common Table sustainable in the coming years.

All of this would not be possible without the hard work of the board and the staff, and the support of key volunteers including Chris Ambidge, Ann Cope, Susan Graham Walker, and Marjorie Wrightson.

Looking to the coming year, we are excited about welcoming our new office administrator, Common Table director, and full-time associate priest. We anticipate receiving the final report from the visioning committee and look forward to implementing their recommendations. Based on feedback from the parish, the Board of Management will be making a concerted effort to communicate the parish more frequently about the deliberations and decisions of the board – starting with an introductory video in March. Stay tuned!



*Overall, the walls, wires and pipes of Redeemer were challenged in 2024, but due to proactive maintenance, addressing urgent repairs, and planning for future improvements we continue to ensure the Church of the Redeemer remains a safe and welcoming space for its community.*

Over the past year many challenges were faced by the Church. Our goal was to maintain and improve the church's facilities, yet we had to react to many disruptions due to aging equipment and events.

Early in the year, there were meetings with the neighbouring office building management who were planning work between the buildings. Concerns were addressed to prevent water seepage or other possible damage, and ensuring emergency egress during the construction as hoarding and barriers surrounded us for much of the year.

A scary incident occurred in March when a kitchen socket blew out, prompting a swift response to ensure safety. Common Table staff organized an evacuation of guests in an orderly fashion, as the fire department investigated to give the "all clear" that there was no danger.

The annual Redeemer Work Day in April saw volunteers engaging in various maintenance tasks, including cleaning, painting, and minor repairs. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Throughout the year, we investigated several companies to improve internet connectivity and upgrade the church's outdated phone system.

In April, a sewer blockage was serviced and our fire alarm and emergency lighting inspection took place, identifying necessary upgrades. Elevator repairs were completed to fix a hydraulic oil leak, and ongoing HVAC issues were a major focus. Despite multiple attempts to resolve the air conditioning problems, including fluid flow confirmation and balancing, the system remained problematic, leading to considerations of seeking alternative HVAC service providers. The church experienced hot conditions from summer to fall due to the delays in getting the air conditioning repaired, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to the congregation for their patience and understanding during this time. Recurring sewage backups required extensive plumbing work and emergency cleanup services.

In June, we continued exploring options for better internet service and initiated a fiber installation and telecom upgrade in July with NEWT Cloud. We clarified insurance coverage and ensured fire code compliance following the fire at St. Anne's.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff and volunteers, whose tireless efforts have been instrumental in maintaining and improving our beloved church. Special thanks to Nat and Lloyd, our custodians, for addressing many situations. Nasir Qamar, our bookkeeper, went above and beyond his duties to facilitate upgrading our internet connection and phones, which will increase the quality and stability of streaming our services and events. The technology will also provide savings on the monthly bills for internet and phones. Additionally, we appreciate the congregation's patience and support throughout the year, especially during the challenging periods of maintenance and repairs. A special thank you goes out to Craig Martin for his continual work addressing the many issues that occurred during the year, ensuring that our church remains a safe and welcoming space for all. He has started developing a manual for church operations, aimed at improving the operation of the church's facilities. Overall, the walls, wires and pipes of Redeemer were challenged in 2024, but due to proactive maintenance, addressing urgent repairs, and planning for future improvements we continue to ensure the Church of the Redeemer remains a safe and welcoming space for its community.

*P.S. Redeemer was mouse free in 2024.*

Ideally, a property report should be a blank page. Everything went fine and nobody got hurt. Ideally, you wouldn't have to read about how many times the sewer backed up (it was three times), or how the AC did or didn't work (mainly it didn't), or how an electrical cable got severed, or that time that...

Now: we all know that the physical building of Redeemer is not an ideal place, so I thank the congregation, staff, volunteers and renters for their understanding and flexibility during the events that I ideally would not have had to mention.

### For 2025

The Property Committee are taking estimates from new HVAC companies in the hope that air conditioning problems won't appear in next year's report. That's the main project for the first part of the year. General maintenance throughout the year, of course.

There were positive notes for 2024, though. I will let GOHIO cover their achievements, but the chancel windows were a major delight to see completed. There was a successful Work Day in April where some congregants made repairs to outdoor lighting and doors; interior painting; cleaning of china; Baptismal Font maintenance; and some smaller jobs that were necessary but not necessarily seen. Lloyd painted both stairwells on the south side as well as the bathrooms on the main and second floor, and parts of the foyer.

Many thanks to Property chair Tom Evers and consultant John Sutton. Thanks to the custodial team of Nat Edwards and Lloyd Simangan, and Nasir Qamar for IT and technical support.

Please feel free to contact me at [property@theredeemer.ca](mailto:property@theredeemer.ca) if you have any questions or comments.



## STEWARDSHIP—*Ron Waldie*

*We can summarize our mission in three words:*

*Inspire, Invite and Thank*

These three words summarize the goals and mission of the Stewardship Committee. From the perspective of the Stewardship Committee, the one thing that again stands out in 2024 is our gratitude for the incredible generosity of the Redeemer community. Your generosity meant that we were, again, able to sustain our ministry. Once again, you have inspired us! Your Stewardship Committee remains focussed on ensuring that our financial resources are sufficient to sustain the rich array of programming that makes this place so dynamic and special.

We also know that our ministry inspires you to give. For us, the inspiration comes from each of you and from the wonderful work you support. Our invitations for further support will come as we track our financial progress over the year. Thanking you for that support is the constant and most pleasurable component of our mission. We look forward to your continued support in 2025.

## HUMAN RESOURCES—*Avery McLean*

*The key focus for the Human Resources Committee is to advise on the right plan for staffing the Church of Redeemer.*

In 2024, the Human Resources Committee was composed of Craig Spielmacher (departing member), Avery MacLean, and Tim Hadwen. Our incumbent The Venerable Steven Mackison also attends HR meetings, joined by Board of Management Chair Lyn Sibley as agendas require.

This year the Committee has been busy developing interim and long-term solutions needed for planned leaves and retirements of key staff members of The Common Table. We especially enjoyed participating in the recruitment of the Minister for Children, Youth and Families, a position supported by a generous bequest.

The HR Committee provided advice to the Corporation in these key areas:

- ✦ interview panel for the Minister for Children, Youth and Families (Lor Maroney)
- ✦ recruitment strategy and job description for the Church of the Redeemer Administrative Assistant (fulltime position, recruitment underway)
- ✦ job description and recruitment strategy for The Director, Common Table
- ✦ backfilling strategies for Common Table staff during leaves of absence

The Committee carefully assessed staffing, prudent use of financial resources, and the fair and equitable treatment of staff. Documentation of policies and job descriptions provide transparency for our valued staff members.

We thank Susan Graham Walker for her leadership of the parish Administrative and Operations portfolio offered through the first half of 2024, which proved invaluable for our planning purposes throughout the year. We also thank Craig Spielmacher for maturing Redeemer's HR policies, among other significant contributions during his tenure with the HR Committee.

## PARISH REGISTER

*This report is based on the parish registers for 2024*

### *Baptism*

Grayson Ruichi Maranger

*We receive you into the household of God.  
Confess the faith of Christ crucified,  
proclaim his resurrection,  
and share with us in his eternal priesthood.*

### *Confirmation*

James Wallace Canning Mackison  
Mini Singh

### *Reaffirmation of Faith*

Maureen Clark  
Stuart Cruickshank  
Karen Visser

### *Reception into the Anglican Communion*

Maureen Clark  
Stuart Cruickshank  
Sharon Kirby

*Strengthen, O Lord, your servant with your Holy Spirit;  
empower them for your service;  
and sustain them all the days of their life.  
Amen.*

### *In Memoriam*

Myra Ann Moore  
John Torrance Stevenson

Keith Alan Pankhurst

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.*



PARISH REGISTER

Marriage

Eryn Michelle Le Mesurier and Jesse David Marble  
Yimin Pearl Wang and James Victor Newman  
Tamara Mitchell and Christopher Neil

*May they so live together that the strength of their love  
may enrich our common life and become a sign of your faithfulness*

ATTENDANCE

Average Sunday attendance on Zoom at 9AM	29	Easter Vigil	Church = 108
Average Sunday attendance at 10:30AM	140	Easter Day	9AM = 23 10:30AM = 264
Average Sunday attendance at 7PM	21	Christmas Eve	3PM = 102 7:30PM = 165
Average Sunday attendance at Compline	4	Christmas Eve	10:30PM = 158
Average Weekday Mid-day Prayer attendance	6	Christmas Day	10:30AM = 38
Average Weekday Mid-week Eucharist attendance	6		

# MOTIONS

## **1. Adoption of Agenda**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the agenda on page 3 of the Vestry Reports book be adopted.

## **2. Vestry Clerk**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that Marjorie Wrightson be appointed Vestry Clerk.

## **3. Parliamentarian**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that Mary Pat Moore be appointed Parliamentarian.

## **4. Courtesies of the House**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that courtesies of the house be extended to those in attendance who are not eligible to vote.

## **5. Reception of Bishops' Letter**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the letter from the College of Bishops be received.

## **6. Minutes of Last Annual Meeting**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the minutes of February 25, 2024 on pages 6 to 15 be adopted as circulated/amended.

## **7. Minutes of Special Vestry Meeting**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the minutes of May 26, 2024 on pages 16 to 22 be adopted as circulated/amended.

## **8. Reception of all Written Reports**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that written reports on pages 23 to 49 of the Vestry Reports book be received.

## **9. Financial Report: Church 2024**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the audited Financial Statements of the Church of the Redeemer, including the Independent Auditors' Report for the year ended December 31, 2024 be adopted as circulated/amended.

## **10. Appointment of Public Accountant**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that Kriens~Larose, LLP, be appointed public accountant to perform an audit of the general operating statements of the Church of the Redeemer for the year ending December 31, 2025.

## **11. Church Budget 2025**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the 2025 Operating Budget for Church Operations and Common Table be adopted as circulated/amended.

## 12. Elections and Appointments

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the 2025 slate of officers be elected as circulated/amended.

### ***Board of Management (Up to 12 to be elected; maximum term 6 years)***

Lyn Sibley (term 4) - chair	Jeremy Graham (term 3)
Anne Christy (term 2)	Sheila Crummey (term 1)
Susan Graham Walker (term 1)	James Newman (term 1)
Carol Scovil (term 1) vice-chair	Ron Waldie (term 1)

### ***Members at Large of Advisory Board (6 to 8 to be elected; no fixed term)***

Karen Visser (term 6)	Christina Chang (term 3)
Dawn Lee (term 3)	Henry Krol (term 2) - chair
Deb Hinton (term 1)	Susanne Hunter (term 1)
Scott MacLeod (term 1)	Salome Pinto (term 1) - vice-chair

### ***Members of Synod (4 to be elected; 3-year term)***

Wesley Acheampong (term 2)  
Karen Visser (term 2)  
Peter Bennett (term 1)  
Lyn Sibley (term 1)

### ***Alternate Members of Synod (1-3 to be elected)***

Chris Ambidge (alternate)  
Richard Van Delft (alternate)

## 13. Revision to the Term Structure for Board Chairs

Moved by Anne Christy, seconded by Karen Visser

**Whereas**, the current term structure for board leadership consists of a four-year commitment, including two years as Vice Chair and two years as Chair;

**Whereas**, a three-year term structure, consisting of one year as Incoming Chair, one year as Chair, and one year as Outgoing Chair, would provide greater flexibility, encourage broader participation, and enhance leadership succession planning;

**Whereas**, reducing the term length would allow for a more dynamic leadership cycle, bringing fresh perspectives to board leadership more frequently while maintaining continuity through the Outgoing Chair's advisory role;

**Therefore, be it resolved that**, a revised board leadership structure be adopted, wherein the leadership term shall consist of a total of three years, structured as follows:

1. **Incoming Chair** (Year 1): Serves as a preparatory and support role, gaining insight into the responsibilities of the Chair.
2. **Chair** (Year 2): Assumes full leadership responsibilities and presides over board meetings and organizational matters.
3. **Outgoing Chair** (Year 3): Provides continuity and advisory support to the new Chair while concluding any ongoing initiatives.

With the understanding that a term may be extended at the request of the board.

**Be it further resolved that**, this amendment shall take effect February 23, 2025, and transitional provisions shall be established to ensure a smooth implementation of the new term structure.

#### **14. Social Justice Vestry Motion 2025: Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario** *(see below for background information)*

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that we, the parish of Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street, in the Diocese of Toronto, urge the Province of Ontario to reverse the planned closure of safe consumption sites in Ontario, and to lift the ban on the creation of new sites, in order to expand life-saving harm reduction services to Ontarians.

#### **15. Annual Motions**

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that any two (2) of the Churchwardens, Deputy Wardens and the Treasurer be authorized by Vestry to sign cheques and authorize electronic payments for all parish accounts.

"Moved by NN, seconded by NN" that the Treasurer be authorized to sign official receipts for Income Tax purposes on behalf of the parish for the ensuing year.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE VESTRY MOTION 2025—*Motion and Background***

**We, the parish of Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street, in the Diocese of Toronto, urge the Province of Ontario to reverse the planned closure of safe consumption sites in Ontario, and to lift the ban on the creation of new sites, in order to expand life-saving harm reduction services to Ontarians.**

Ontario is currently in the midst of a deadly overdose crisis, which claims an average of seven lives every day.<sup>1</sup> Safe consumption sites, also called supervised consumption sites, (SCS) are on the front lines of this crisis, having reversed more than 21,000 overdoses in the province between March 2020 and January 2024.<sup>2</sup> Each one of these is a life saved. The sites offer an indoor, supervised space for people who use drugs to do so safely, with clean equipment and boxes for the safe disposal of used needles. They also have healthcare workers and other staff on hand to reverse overdoses, address other health issues, and connect people to other supports, including treatment. No death has occurred within an overdose prevention site since they were opened.

In 2018, the province put in place a cap of 21 such sites in Ontario, but has only funded 17. A few other supervised consumption sites in the province have received federal approval but no provincial funding. Two of these, in northern Ontario, have closed due to a lack of funds, while one in Toronto has continued to operate through donations. Other communities, such as Barrie, Cobourg, Oshawa, and Orillia, remain without such sites, despite demonstrable need in those communities.<sup>3</sup>

In August 2024 the provincial government announced a ban on supervised drug consumption sites within 200 metres of schools and childcare centres. On Nov. 18, 2024, the province introduced Bill 223, the "Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act," which, in addition to implementing this geographic ban, prohibits municipalities or any other organizations from starting up new sites. As a result, ten SCS are slated to close by March 31, 2025, five of which are in Toronto. Another Toronto SCS, the Moss Park site on Sherbourne St., will also close, as the location is subject to redevelopment and a move to a new location would count as a "new" site under the ban.

Concerns about safety near the sites reached a fever pitch after a mother of two was killed by a stray bullet not far from the South Riverdale site in July of 2023. This is indeed a tragedy. Yet the external review commissioned by the province in the wake of the shooting, while making recommendations concerning safety, security, and community engagement, did not recommend the closure of the site, but noted "a clear need for the services" in that location and recommended that the site continue to receive provincial funding.<sup>4</sup>

The province claims that crime rates are higher near supervised consumption sites, but has not provided statistics to back up this claim, despite repeated requests to do so. Rather, analysis of data from the Toronto Police Service indicates that incidents of most types of crime dropped in neighbourhoods with SCS, often to a greater degree than in neighbourhoods without sites, and for crime rates which did not drop, there was no significant difference in the change of crime rates between neighbourhoods which had opened sites and neighbourhoods without them.<sup>5</sup>

It is also worth noting that supervised consumption sites are located where they are because these are areas that already see high levels of drug use. Closing the sites will not change that fact. Indeed, the sites' closure would lead to more public drug use, in parks, alleyways, and coffee shop washrooms; more discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia in public spaces; more blood-borne disease from the sharing of needles; and more likelihood of people overdosing and dying in public. This does not equate to greater safety for anybody in the community, including the children the province ostensibly wishes to protect.

Moreover, by responding to overdoses quickly, safe consumption sites reduce the strain on first responders and emergency services, saving taxpayer dollars. Without these sites, demand for ambulances and emergency rooms will only increase, leading to longer wait times for anyone who needs emergency medical treatment.

Along with the announced closures, the province announced an investment of \$378 million to open "Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment" (HART) hubs. While investment in treatment is welcome, several aspects of the announcement are problematic. Firstly, the name unjustly conflates the issues of homelessness and drug addiction. Most people with a substance use disorder are housed; and even though the experience of homelessness can cause people to increase their substance use, many people experiencing homelessness do not have substance use disorders. Moreover, the amount to be invested in the HART hubs is insufficient to meet the need for either treatment beds or supportive housing across the province. Further, the proposed HART hubs would be barred not only from providing supervised consumption, but also from providing sterile injection equipment, a proven public health measure which has been in place for decades, which is known to be a crucial tool in preventing the spread of blood-borne disease and infectious and bacterial complications. This flies in the face of medical best practice.

Supervised consumption sites take a harm reduction approach to drug use. Recognizing that some people use drugs, and may not be ready, willing, or able to stop doing so entirely, harm reduction focuses on meeting people where they are, without ignoring or condemning them. By offering a place of support that meets people where they are, and respects the inherent dignity of each human being, these sites not only keep people alive to get treatment, but offer a place of community and compassion. These sites should not be seen in opposition to addiction treatment, but as part of a continuum of care available across our province.

"Jesus met people on the margins where they were, with compassion and respect," says Keren Elumir, an Anglican who works as a nurse at the Moss Park site. "Everyone we meet is made in the image of God and loved by God. Harm reduction is holy work."

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, <https://odprn.ca/occ-opioid-and-suspect-drug-related-death-data/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://amho.ca/amho-news/addictions-and-mental-health-ontario-calls-for-community-driven-and-evidence-based-approach-to-expanding-addictions-care/> These figures are a lower estimate than that given by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/city-push-for-treatment-services-harm-reduction-marred-by-provincial-announcement-9391095>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-08/moh-consumption-treatment-service-review-unity-health-en-2024-08-19.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation. Supervised Consumption Services in Toronto: Evidence and Recommendations (Toronto, November 2024).

## **Additional Resources** (Ctrl + mouse click to open)

[Auditor-General's Report on Implementation and Oversight of Ontario's Opioid Strategy](#), (December 2024)

[Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation report: Supervised Consumption Services in Ontario: Advice and Recommendations](#), (November 2024) Includes analysis of 13 years of homicide data and 9 years of Toronto Police Services data on impact of SCS on crime rates in their local neighbourhoods.

[Report from Toronto's Acting Medical Officer of Health](#) on anticipated service impacts for emergency responders and Toronto Public Health due to closure of SCS (January 2025)

[Myths and Facts](#) about Supervised Consumption Sites

[Personal stories](#) from those who see the importance of supervised consumption sites: including neighbours, people who use the sites, frontline workers/volunteers and more, in Toronto and in other parts of the Diocese.

Our [Vestry Motion Video Q&A](#) is a 16-minute video responding to some questions and misconceptions about Supervised Consumption Sites.

[Sites Save Lives](#) website (includes additional resources and information)



# CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

162 Bloor Street West Toronto, ON M5S 1M4

416.922.4948

[office@theredeemer.ca](mailto:office@theredeemer.ca)

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

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