



# CHARLESWOOD UNITED CHURCH

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November 2021

Dear Friends

In Ephesians 1 Paul says to an early church, “I never cease to give thanks for you”.

As we launch our annual Stewardship Pledge Campaign there is more to be thankful for than I can possibly express. It is likely that we will move through 2021 without gathering as a congregation a single time. And yet we remain a lively and engaged community of faith. We worship and pray and sing and teach and meet and serve. All in the midst of a global pandemic. I never cease to give thanks for you.

Thank you.

## **At the Threshold of a New Century**

In 2022 Charleswood United Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Our church began as a Local Union Church, a coming together of Methodist and Presbyterian families living in the rural community of Charleswood, southwest of Winnipeg. This was three years before the formal union that created the United Church of Canada. It started with Sunday School and some rented space. A handful of people creating Christian community in a room just a few blocks away from where our 1200 family 20,000 sq./ft., congregation with a half million dollar annual budget gathers today.

United Church statistics for 2020 show that Charleswood is the third largest congregation in the country for “households under pastoral care”, a measure of the number of people who consider a congregation their church home. (We are only slightly surpassed by First-Met in Victoria BC and Bedford United in Nova Scotia). Our ancestors 100 years ago could scarcely have imagined the vital and continuous ministry that they were setting in motion.

Celebrating our centennial is going to be a bit of a challenge but not in the ways that matter most. We will have to figure out how and when we can cut cake together, but the Spirit who gives life and energy and vitality to the church is within you and there are a myriad of ways to celebrate that.

Thank you.

## **A Thriving Church in a Disruptive Time**

In 2021 my colleague at Westworth United Church, Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd published a book called "Thriving Churches" based on her research on the 14 most vibrant United Church of Canada congregations in the country. 'Thriving' is a rather subjective term and should not be confused with 'largest', (size is not the primary indicator of vitality), nonetheless she based her choices on statistical evidence as reported in the Annual Yearbook of the United Church. Charleswood was on that list of thriving churches and was included in the book.

Statistics for 2020 are going to be profoundly shaped by the pandemic that arrived in March that year and has kept us closed from in-person worship and community activities ever since. But in the midst of this incredible upheaval, Charleswood adapted and flourished. There are 2,694 congregations in the United Church of Canada. One of the statistics reported annually is the number of financially supporting households in each church. In 2020 Charleswood ranked first! With 479 contributors, there was no congregation in the country who responded to the pandemic with the breadth of support that Charleswood received.

That accolade belongs to every one of you! You saw a church that could not serve you in the ways to which you have become accustomed and yet you offered your support in a measure unequalled in the denomination. In return we launched an online ministry in order to sustain our collective hope and provided adjusted outreach opportunities so we could continue to serve the world God so loves.

Thank you.

## **Sailing but Not Soaring**

In a pandemic one's expectations must change. The church is no exception. Public Health measures have prevented us from accessing almost every familiar revenue stream except for offerings and donations. There have been no fundraisers, rent, Fall Suppers, or receptions. Doubtless they will return. But in the meantime we have striven to meantime the essentials of a ministry including worship, pastoral care, children's ministry, music, and outreach. We did not come into the year hoping to increase programs or end the year with a surplus. Our goal has been to continue as best we are able and to break even at year's end.

At the end of October we seem to be in a position to do just that. Our balance on the year shows a surplus of \$13,853 which includes \$15,000 from Manitoba Block Grants. In other words, you have sustained us and kept us on pace to break even as we hoped. Also, at the end of October we have received gifts to the Mission and Service Fund of \$46,101 which is a mere 3.7% behind where we were this time last year. We continue to sustain the wider church along with the local.

For our Stewardship Pledge Campaign we are asking for more of the same. Confident that a season of growth will return we have not raised our numerical goals but rather ask you to contribute generously during this interrupted time when other sources of revenue are less available to us.

Thank you.

## **An Invitation to Contribute To Our 100<sup>th</sup> Year**

I believe much joy and renewal is coming to Charleswood United Church in 2022. Not only will we be returning to the fullness of life that is the hallmark of our life together but we will have ample reason and opportunity to celebrate our centennial. One hundred years of ministry is both an ending and new beginning...with your support.

- Please look to the Pledge Card attached to this email and consider a pledge for 2022
- Respond by email [office@charleswoodunited.org](mailto:office@charleswoodunited.org) or letter mail by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. You may also phone your pledge to our Office Administrator Janet Ammeter at 204-832-3667
- Consider moving to PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) if you have not already done so. If you are on PAR, please consider facilitating an increase.
- Avail yourself of the e-transfer donation option (information at: [www.charleswoodunited.org/donate](http://www.charleswoodunited.org/donate))
- Let us know if you prefer to continue using envelopes as we have not ordered a full complement of 2022 envelopes to save costs. Alternatively feel free mail or drop off cheques or use envelopes leftover from previous years.

Thank you again and again.

Grace and peace,  
Michael

# AT THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW CENTURY

## 2022 Stewardship Pledge Card



### Local Offering Goal



\$358,000

### Mission + Service Goal



\$60,000

### Building & Property



\$45,000

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Envelope #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I use:  PAR

Post Dated  
Cheques

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Envelopes

Monthly Envelopes

## LOCAL OPERATIONS

With thanksgiving for God's many blessings and to further the work of Charleswood United Church in this community and beyond, in 2022, I/we generously pledge:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for local operations, including expanding staff resources

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for Building and Property Fund

OFFICE USE  PAR Change  
 PAR Recorded  
 ChurchWatch Recorded

Please Check:  Weekly

Monthly

Annually

## MISSION & SERVICE FUND

With thanksgiving for God's many blessings and to further the work of Charleswood United Church in this community and beyond, in 2022, I/we generously pledge:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the Mission & Service Fund of the United Church of Canada

Please Check:  Weekly

Monthly

Annually

Please contact me to discuss the donation of securities

Please contact me to discuss enrolling in or increasing PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance)

**Thank you for your generous support of God's mission at Charleswood United Church**

Please email pledge card to the church by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Thank you.